

Old Rendcombian Society

NEWSLETTER



2000

26th ISSUE

Editor
W.J.D. WHITE

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Society Officers 1999-00

At the annual general meeting in July 1999, the following officers were elected:-

President:	Michael Miles (1943-50)
Chairman:	Neil Lumby (1968-73)
Vice-chairman:	Mrs Sally Morris (1978-80)
Secretary:	Mrs Jane Gunner (1975-77) Whiteway Farmhouse, The Whiteway Cirencester, Gloucestershire, GL7 7BA Tel: (01285) 658627 Fax: (01285) 658717 e-mail: jane@r2g2.co.uk
Treasurer/school rep:	Chris Wood (1965-71; staff: 1976-) 9 Hammond Drive, Northleach, Cheltenham, Glos. GL54 3JF Tel: (01451) 860871 e-mail: woodc@rendcomb.gloucs.sch.uk
Committee members:	Douglas Payne (1940-48) Richard Tudor (1973-80) Julian Comrie (1946-54) Alex Brealy (1980-87; staff 1994-) Hamish Auld (1985-92) (staff 1998-)
Hon. auditor:	David Williams (1966-71)
Newsletter editor:	Bill White (staff 1961-97) 3 Jessop Drive, Northleach, Cheltenham, Glos, GL54 3JG Tel: (01451) 860943

Minutes of the 66th Annual General Meeting

Held on Sunday 4th July 1999 in the Reading Room, Rendcomb College

Present: Frank Dutton (36-44), Philip Griffiths (40-53), Dick Margetts (35-43), Brenda Binks, Peter Binks (35-41), Nigel Green (61-69), David Williams (66-71), Sally Morris (78-80), Ted Jones (40-48), Michael Miles (43-50), Laurence Wragg (56-63), Chris Wood (65-71) (staff), Bill White (staff 1961-97), Jane Gunner (75-77), Julian Comrie (46-54)

1. Apologies

Rev Hussey (staff 74-78), Neil Lumby (68-73), Simon Webb (91-98), David Wragg (92-97), Simon Wormleighton (68-75), Brian Smith (65-72)

2. The minutes of the 65th annual general meeting held on 28th June 1998 were signed as a correct record.

3. Matters arising out of the Minutes of the Meeting held on 28th June 1998

The chairman reported that as yet the publishers had not responded to the order from the society for two dozen of Ernest Neal's book, Badger Man.

4. Hon. Treasurer's Report

The treasurer presented the figures and explained that the deficit of £370 was in the main the result of the problem being experienced by the college accounts department which meant there were still some subscriptions to be paid across. He drew the meeting's attention to the money which was still being held under the Kathleen James appeal. He reported that the librarian was waiting the requests for big, special books before drawing on the fund.

The treasurer then put forward the accounts for adoption. It was proposed by Julian Comrie and seconded by Peter Binks and passed unanimously. He expressed his thanks to the hon. auditor. The treasurer then proposed that the subscription for next year should be £54.00, this was seconded by David Williams and passed unanimously.

5. Election of Officers

Chairman: Neil Lumby, proposed by Michael Miles, seconded by Bill White

There were no other nominations. Neil Lumby was voted in unanimously
Vice Chairman: Sally Morris, proposed by Julian Comrie, seconded by Ted Jones
There were no other nominations. Sally Morris was voted in unanimously.
The secretary had received a nomination from Michael Miles which was seconded by Julian Comrie for Richard Tudor to become a member of the committee. Simon Wormleighton had offered to step down from the committee to allow Richard to take his place. Thanks were expressed to Simon Wormleighton in his absence for his contribution to the society. Richard Tudor was voted in unanimously.
Julian Comrie chaired the remainder of the meeting in Neil's absence.
The secretary thanked Julian on behalf of the committee for all the work he had done for the society during his three years in the post. Particularly the work on the minutes, society rules and committee handbook, which was nearing completion.
Ted Jones then thanked all the committee members on behalf of the society.

6. Travel Bursary

The secretary reported that seven applications had been received this year from which two had been awarded £250 each. She circulated the file containing applications and reports.
The acting chairman wished to draw members attention to the excellence of Jack Garland's report on his visit to Israel, extracts from which had been published in this year's newsletter.
The president then explained to the meeting that there had been a late entry for the travel bursary from Alistair Nye, who was abroad doing a similar caring project to the two girls awarded this year's bursary. He therefore requested permission from the meeting for this award to be made out of the money from the president's appeal. This was agreed unanimously and Alistair Nye was awarded £200.

7. Society Rules

The acting chairman reported that some minor amendments were needed.

8. The acting chairman thanked the college through Chris Wood for once again allowing the society to hold its reunion there.

9. Any Other Business

Chris Wood explained to the meeting that a summer ball was planned for 8th July 2000 which would require moving the A.G.M. for one year. It was felt that as many younger members attended the hockey reunion, it might be held then. Notification could go Out with the ball mail drop and unaudited interim accounts could be presented. This was agreed.

The secretary reported a past parent had requested copies of the newsletter. The meeting agreed to refer this back to the committee.

The meeting closed at 12.47 and adjourned for an excellent buffet.

Dates of Future Reunions and Sports Fixtures

Saturday 17th June 2000	Cricket fixture 2 p.m. Tennis fixture
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Teas will be available in the Pavilion but there will be no buffet lunch this year.

Saturday 8th July 2000	Summer ball
Sunday 3rd December 2000	Rugby fixture
Sunday 11th March 2001	Hockey fixture
Sunday 8th July 2001	Cricket fixture (provisional)

Sports Contacts

Please ring well in advance if you wish to play, referee or umpire in any of the fixtures.

Rugby:	Mike Slark 01285 831712
Ladies hockey:	Chris Wood 01451 860871(H), 01285 831383(W) woodc@rendcomb.gloucs.sch.uk
Mens hockey:	Alex Breal 01242 517668(H), 01285 831383(W)
Ladies netball:	Sandy Westhead 01453 883235(H), 01285 831383(W)
Cricket:	David Essenhigh 01285 831295(H) or woodc@rendcomb.gloucs.sch.uk
Tennis:	Steven Croft 01285 860753, Peter Croft 01285 860753

Summer Reunion - July 1999

There was a modest gathering for the summer reunion at which farewell presentations were made to John and Patta Tolputt and Graham Smith. Those who were able to attend enjoyed an excellent buffet, as always, and plenty of opportunity to meet other members of the society. While some OR's supported the annual cricket match on 'top', quite a few took part in a tour of the college or wandered round familiar and less familiar haunts on their own.

Among those present were:

Staff & former staff

Mr & Mrs J.N. Tolputt (headmaster 87-99)
Mr W.J.D. White* (staff 61-97)
Mr & Mrs D. Essenhigh (staff 69-)
Mr & Mrs C.J. Wood* (65-71, staff 76-)
Mr C.C. Burden (staff 63-97)
Mr & Mrs J.R. Dennis (staff 59-82)
Mrs C.J. Sudbury (staff 86-96)
Mrs V. Fell (staff 34-73)
Dr G.J. Smith (staff 74-99)

O.R.s

Mr J. Muirhead (31-35)
Mr L. Wragg (56-63)
Mr A. Wilson & Guest (69-76)
Mr A. Dainty (51-55)

Mr F.C. Raggatt & guests (20-26)
Mr & Mrs N.J. Green (61-69)
Mr & Mrs A. Brain (29-37)
Mr E.A. Jones (40-48)
Mr & Mrs P. Binks (35-41)
Mr & Mrs M. Miles (43-50)
Mr & Mrs A.R. Margetts (35-43)
Mr & Mrs P.A.T. Griffiths (40-43)
Mr D.J. Payne* (40-48)
Mr & Mrs J. Comrie* (46-54)
Mr & Mrs N. Dakin (62-68)
Mrs J. Gunner* (75-77)
Mrs S. Morris* (78-80)
Mr & Mrs J.D. Williams* (66-71)
Mr M. Lancaster (54-57)

* committee

Total number 45

Acknowledgements

Alistair Wilson (1929-36)

The college has learnt with deep gratitude that it is to receive a very generous legacy in memory of Alistair Wilson. The intention is to spend some of the money on equipment for the science lab but also to provide a more permanent memorial to him, possibly in the form of a sundial on the upper terrace.

At Rendcomb

The following members of the society have sons or daughters at the school:

OR's J.M. Webb, D.A.N. Hogarth, D. Uzzell (dec'd), J.R. Gunner

Staff and former staff: C.C. Burden, J.D. Stutchbury, K. Ewing, P. Sykes, K. Taplin

Old Rendcombian News

Christopher Stratton (1977-82) wrote to say that he regretted that he would be unable to come to the ball as he will be on holiday after the Royal Show at Stoneleigh where he has been a steward for seven years. He was elected a Fellow of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors a couple of years ago. Recently he and his boss, an equity partner of James & Loster Lea, took their rural chartered surveyors department to Smith-Woolley where he is now an associate. The arrival of his two daughters precluded further involvement in competitive rowing for Warwick Boat Club and his sporting activities are now confined to cycling. Until recently he was hon. sec. to the British Racing Mechanics Club. His interest in motor racing continues, however - he assisted his best man in attempts to compete in the Austin Healey Challenge over three years and to rebuild an MG midget. He is also chairman of the Fabric Committee for the Parish of Warwick. (He also wonders why one can see the benefits of a classical education only with hindsight!!).

Commander Thring (bursar 1981-94) writes to say that apart from running a small estate (as unpaid bursar!) he seems to have taken on too many commitments but so far they have not interfered too much with golf,

fishing and shooting. His wife is still in the antiques business in Tetbury and Wincanton. They both much enjoyed a recent holiday in Zimbabwe and South Africa.

Nick Miles (1975-80) writes from his new home in Geneva. "The 'Genevois' really know how to live well in a very pretty, peaceful and international city - only 300,000 inhabitants, beautifully organised. I can get to work in five minutes and to the airport in five minutes by car, yet live in a very tranquil compound right on the lake!"

Nick Carmichael (1989-96) has finished the third year of his French degree at Exeter university, which he spent teaching English in a lycée in the south of France, also playing rugby and generally soaking up the sun. He has now returned to Exeter for his final year. His brother **Chris** (1986-93) lives in London and works for a media company.

Simon Beales (1981-83) moved to Brighton three years ago and established a company, Mind's Eye, which specialises in commercial radio, video production and internet marketing. He says Brighton is undoubtedly the coolest town in Britain and life is great!

Francis Lee (1983-90) has finished his casualty job at King's College Hospital and is now at the Maudsley Hospital on psychiatry rotation. He says that this has not been as easy as everyone had said but he has done three months and it is starting to get a little easier. He is enjoying London and sees **Andrew Mackinnon** (1983-90) occasionally - he has just taken his Pt 2 MRCP.

David Tyler (1965-70) has been appointed finance director of Great Universal Stores.

Rebecca Knightly-Brown (1992-94) is a second lieutenant with the Royal Signals in Colchester. She read biology at Leeds on leaving Rendcomb, then she travelled in North America and the Philippines before going to Sandhurst.

Giles Somers (1990-95) is finishing an M.Sc. in biochemical engineering which he says is as boring as it sounds!

Alan Shield (1929-34) wrote to say that he had moved to a bungalow to be near his eldest son. **David** (1966-73), he says, is still doing well with T.W.I and was recently promoted to Senior Vice-President Engineering and Production (it is a U.S.A. company - hence the long-winded title) and thoroughly enjoys the work. He is still keeping up his love of music and, apart from singing in his local church choir, he sings with the West London Vocal Ensemble.

Dominic O'Connor (staff 1986-93) is at the Abbaye Notre Dame in Fontgombault - 60km east of Poitiers and 3 1/2 hours south-west of Paris. He would be pleased to see anyone who is in the area.

Mark Webb (1972-79) has set up a new firm of chartered surveyors in Cirencester with a business partner. They will focus on supplying professional land agency services to farmers and land owners in the area. They believe the time is right to specialise more on the agricultural sector, despite falling farm incomes.

Paul Heppleston (1956-62) visited Rendcomb last autumn and made a generous donation of books and equipment to the biology department.

Francis Barton (1988-95), whose recent academic achievement is noted elsewhere, is working as a children's worker at St. Luke's Church in Cheltenham for a year. This involves helping out for 12-15 hours per week at the local primary school, which he enjoys.

Kristie Sellars (1989-91) visited Rendcomb last autumn with her American husband. They were on their honeymoon in the Cotswolds.

Bob Edy (1959-67) has become priest-in-charge of Ducklington, Oxon. This was made possible by reducing his hours as deputy head at Henry Box School, Witney. He says this is a ground-breaking initiative in this part of the diocese and in line with the bishop's vision for the care of churches in rural areas. Henry Box School is still the focal point of the family's lives. Their daughter, Charlotte, is in the first year of her G.C.S.E. courses. Bob has reduced his teaching, but retains his responsibilities for personnel and curriculum matters. His wife, Ruth, is bringing classics to the masses and even hitting national headlines with her joint G.C.S.E. classes

involving a local independent school. Their older daughter, Rhoda, has moved within OUP and is now assistant marketing manager for music books, classics, theology and philosophy - liaising with authors about how to promote their books.

William Nesham (1965-70) writes: "I had to return briefly to England (from Australia) in May '95 for my father's funeral. (William's father was vicar of Down Ampney and Poulton - ed). At that time I closed my business which was essentially a one-man band, and went to work for my largest client as computer systems manager. I have been quite happy there these last four years. but I am beginning to feel the prospect of change - partly as the company changes, partly as I do. In the interim, one of the conditions of my job was that I could continue to look after old clients. This was expected to take a few hours a week and last for a year or two. However, for one such 'old client' things changed dramatically and I found myself effectively doing two jobs. While this was exhausting for two years. it has afforded me the chance to buy a flat in this very pleasant part of Sydney - a 'genteel' suburb on the north shore of the harbour, just a ten minute run into the city. I don't have harbour views or an 'executive entertaining' area, but four years ago I wouldn't have thought I would have had a hope of buying here - barring a lottery win! I do enjoy receiving the newsletter and scan the O.R. news for the dates 1965-70." *

* Any more news from OR's of this period? - ed.

Jessica Naish (1987-89) writes to say that she is working with lots of different schools and young people's organisations using her theatre skills in education. She is director of the Rough House Theatre in Bristol and also on the education team at Westonbirt Arboretum.

Greg Dorey (1967-73) is on leave in England until July before being posted abroad again. Anyone wishing to get in touch with him should contact Bill White.

Mark Raven (1974-79) has set up a car hire business in Stroud. He has 19 new cars out on self-drive hire and the business is expanding "at an alarming rate". He still gardens furiously (happy memories of gardening P.W. - for some! - ed.) and thinks it is perhaps fitting that he lives at what used to be a thriving nursery business!

From **Rudy Dühmke** (1993-96) "The news from home is that **Vici** (1993-97) is in the final year of her basic degree in architecture, after which she hopes to spend a year abroad in Spain or Italy (doing absolutely nothing according to me, but gathering essential work experience according to her). **Anna** (1989-91) has finally qualified as a lawyer this winter, and is working in Munich at the moment, but will have an eight week stay at a New York law firm this spring. I am currently in my fourth year at Guy's King's and St. Thomas' Medical School, and gladly still enjoying the course (although I am clearly the only one in the family who is not about to jet off somewhere). I used my third year to graduate in radiological sciences and even managed a surprisingly good result (especially since the day before my last exam FC Bayern Munich lost the Champions League final in a fashion that left me traumatised for weeks)."

Julian Madeley (1985-92) writes: "I took a year off after finishing at Rendcomb, and spent six months teaching and travelling in India. This whetted my appetite for both Asia and teaching, and when I completed my politics degree at the University of the West of England in 1996, I packed my bags and set off for Bangkok, Thailand. I soon found work teaching English in a language school, and really enjoyed travelling around the city, teaching company employees. I got myself an apartment and after six months found myself settled into a Bangkok expat. lifestyle, making sojourns to Cambodia, Laos and Malaysia whenever I got the chance. Thailand's a great place to live. The people are very open, the food's amazing and the lifestyle relaxed and easily affordable. Despite the pollution, traffic problems and lack of architectural delights, Bangkok's a fascinating city. An oasis of tranquillity is never far away from the maelstrom. After a year there I decided to do a teaching course and look for a new job, and in April 1998 started work at a university on the outskirts of greater Bangkok. Surrounded by paddy fields, it was a long commute from my smog-engulfed downtown apartment, but was worth it. I made some good friends there, and started an English language video club. However, in April this year, I decided that if I didn't leave Bangkok then, I never would. The world is far too big a place to ever let that happen so I took the four and a half hour flight to Saka, Japan and got a train to Kyoto, the ancient capital city of Japan. After reading a lot about the city I decided to go for a three week holiday and look around for a job. The first thing I noticed, however, was not the beautiful temples, shrines and geisha entertainers as the guidebooks lead you to believe, but how freezing my Bangkok-tuned body felt. Still, spring was on the way and the cherry blossoms were just starting to bloom, so Kyoto's charms grew on me. Nine months later I'm still there, teaching at a language school and attempting to communicate in a language which still leaves me embarrassingly tongue-tied. I've also turned my hand at Japanese food, which is

a lot easier to eat than cook. However, Kyoto is a beautiful city, and the Japanese can be a very generous people if you make an effort to understand their culture. I hope to get into teacher training next year, and stay in Japan for at least another year. I still really enjoy my teaching, and love the variety of working in a language school. I've learnt a lot. I keep in touch with quite a few of my year, the class of '92. If anyone wants to drop me a line in Japan, send me an email to jrmadeley@hotmail.com. I'd love to hear from you. Best wishes for 2000."

Tim Dyke (staff 1976-1981) has been teaching and directing drama at Blundell's School since leaving Rendcomb. He has now abandoned it completely and taken up photography as he is now running the school magazine and termly newsletter. He says he is having great fun with zoom and fish-eye lenses and hundreds of action shots of sport. OR's will remember his drama productions at Rendcomb - and also taking part in PHAB. He says that his wife, Sally, has discovered a new talent for flower arranging, so the house is full of fantastic arrangements and he gets hay fever all the year round! His elder son is in the sixth form at Blundell's and his young son is in the junior school.
(Sally used to type out the early newsletters in their foolscap/Gestetner format and help with their dispatch).

Christopher Morshead (1974-77) writes: "I left the RN after 21 years service back in December 1998 and then undertook some 8 months training at Cranfield in Bedfordshire to get my commercial pilot's licence and a flying instructor's rating. August saw me move to Redhill, starting my new job as a flying instructor with Redhill Flight Training, part of the Cabair group of companies. The school, where we teach the private pilot's licence course and associated upgrades, is based at the airfield adjacent to the town. Since starting I have been wondering why it took me so long to take up flying full time! While I enjoyed my time in the Fleet Air Arm it was clearly time to move on and try something new and, some four months down the line, this was clearly the right move. We operate four Cessna 172 4-seater aircraft from Redhill and I currently have 17 students on my books which means my programme is full to capacity. I am looking forward to a few of them qualifying for their licences in the spring which will ease the pressure on my flying programme a bit! Currently I am flying over 50 hours per month with ground school on top of that but this is winter and the so-called quiet season. What mid-summer will be like is anyone's guess! For those around, my weekends are Tuesday and Wednesday, as Saturday and Sunday are our busiest days."

Peter Binks (1935-41) wrote recently to Jane Gunner. "It was exciting visiting Rendcomb College again. The weather was kind to us. We had not seen Dick and Nan Margetts for 50 years. We visited Vera Fell at her house and Mr and Mrs Tarrant at the Forge in Rendcomb. The Tarrants have relatives half an hour's drive from here so we have made contact with them. We did enjoy having a cup of tea with you and meeting your family. We have a lot of photos to remind us of all these things. After leaving Rendcomb we met many friends and relations in Birmingham, Hexham and Peebles. In all we met 90 people and visited all the houses we have lived in. The traffic in the Birmingham area is terrible. We had a wonderful holiday but finally realise that Australia is the best country to live in. It is warmer here, our health is better and here there is more space. On our return I was given a Commonwealth Recognition Award for senior Australians in the federal electorate of Casey. We were flown to Canberra ACT for two days and treated like VIPs. I have also been awarded a 20 year certificate for voluntary work at a garden centre for disabled and a badge for 50 year membership of the Institution of Electrical Engineers (CEng., M.I.E.E.)."

Nick Price (1973-80) gave a talk to the sixth form last Autumn as part of a careers convention organised by Mike Slark. He gave a presentation about a career in the City and attempted to predict future trends. He is currently running an internet company called telephonebook.co.uk which provides search facilities for companies.

Chris Norman (1987-94) emigrated to Canada in March. He is going to work in the banqueting department at the Chateau Lake Louise Hotel in the Rockies where he earlier did a year's work experience and met his future wife.

Andrew Perrin (1990-95) is a lance corporal in the Royal Signals. He joined the army in 1997 and, after training in Cambridgeshire, was posted to Blandford for a year to do his trade training. While there he was in the hockey team that won the Major Units Hockey Cup in 1999. He was then posted to Bulford. In June 1999 he spent three weeks in Canada doing adventure training in the Rockies, based round Banff. He went snowboarding with the Royal Signals last December for training and team selection - and again in February. At the end of February he left for a six month tour in the Falklands, manning the telecommunications at the airport.

Sam Cato (1990-92) went to Exeter University on leaving Rendcomb and graduated in biology and geography. She lives in London where she is a 'headhunter' for Hanover Matrix. She keeps in touch with many friends among O.R.s of her time at Rendcomb, including **Mark Valentine** and **Chris Carmichael** who were also at Exeter, and also regularly gets together with **Tania Sayegh**, **Zoë Davies**, **Sarah Thayne** and **Tatty Renny**.

Simon Scott-White (1982-87), a farmer and a former student at Cirencester Agricultural College, featured recently in an article in the Daily Telegraph about big cats in the Coln Valley which runs from Northleach to Fairford. "I first saw these big paw prints in Cadmore Wood", he says. "The prints were about four times the size of those of a domestic cat. I didn't think any more about it until a few weeks later, when a neighbour said he saw a large cat-like creature run from the wood and cross the lane." He goes on to list various other sightings and happenings. Definitely a case for Sherlock Holmes!

Richard Dunwoody (1975-81) was among the guests at the millennium lunch given by the Lord Mayor of London, Lord Levene, on November 2nd. Later last year he announced his retirement as leading jump jockey with 1699 winners. Medical experts had come to the conclusion that further damage to a neck injury could result in his losing the use of his right arm. His victories included two Grand Nationals (On West Tip in 1986 and Minnehoma in 1994), a Gold Cup in 1988 and The Champion Hurdle in 1990. Remarkably he had spent only one night in hospital, after breaking his sternum in a fall from See More Business, despite 669 falls in a career of 10,000 rides. The marketing firm which he has already set up will give him a new focus. He appeared on 'This is Your Life' in March.

(We hope to include an article by Richard next year - ed.)

David Mabblerley (1959-66) was a fellow and tutor in plant sciences at Wadham College, Oxford from 1976-96, and also Dean and Keeper of the Gardens. He then went to the University Leiden in the Netherlands as Leidsuniversiteitsfonds Professor, later becoming Honorary Research Associate at the Royal Botanic Gardens in Sydney and director of the Sir Joseph Banks Archive Project. He has been appointed chief executive officer of Greening Australia, a leading revegetation agency in Australia. Since migrating to Australia in 1996, he has published two dozen scientific papers and three books, besides a second edition of "The Plant Book". He is co-author of Walter Lack's 'The Flora Graeca Story' (OUP 1998).

Carol Edwards (née Vernon) who was assistant matron for a time in the 60's got in touch recently after happening to find the Rendcomb web site. After Rendcomb, she worked in a domestic science college in Leicester and was then married. She has three children and a 2 1/2 year-old grandson. She now lives near Mold in North Wales and works in the student services department at Deeside College.

Robin Bowen (1963-70) featured in a recent article in the Guildford News and Mail on the human faces behind the long arm of the law. "The Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) has been in place since 1986 and all solicitors who prosecute in cases at Woking belong to its ranks. One of the most regular of these is Robin Bowen. A 48 year-old bachelor who lives locally, he joined the CPS when it was first set up, after spending some time working in the private sector doing a mixture of both civil and criminal cases. He claims that it was after he himself became the victim of a crime that he decided to become a prosecution lawyer. And a remarkably effective one too. The diffident manner is deceptive in that it masks a shrewd grasp of facts and a dry sense of legal humour. Many a defendant has underestimated Robin Bowen to his or her cost, but what is also underestimated is his compassion. Refusing to comment on whether prison is or is not an effective deterrent, he says that in his role as a prosecutor, what he thinks "doesn't come into the equation", it not his job to decide who gets what punishment. However he does admit to sometimes waking up in the middle of the night and thinking about a case and says that in the past "victims were all too often not too carefully looked after." But now the CPS has a national policy on victims and witnesses. Yet Mr Bowen also acknowledges that, with regard to the so-called criminals, not everything is black and white. He says: "It's not a case of baddies and goodies - rather you are prosecuting a case on behalf of the public at large, and, while the victim is important too, it is that which is the important factor."

(This has been reproduced with due acknowledgements to the Guildford News)

Laura Donovan (1992-99) gave the address at evensong in St Peter's, Rendcomb at the end of the lent term.

O.R. Website

Colin Hitchcock (1971-78) has produced an excellent unofficial OR website to be found at

www.rendcombian.org.uk. Pupils at the school have shown a lot of interest in the website and Colin says the addition of a guest book seems to have stimulated more interest. He tells Chris Wood "Most of the 'unofficial' photos I've used are ones which I took, plus one or two maybe from the school magazines of the 70's. I can't remember exactly what resolution I scanned them at - maybe 300 dpi. The pictures in the web pages have been downsampled to fit though - except for the large 'official' pics. These I sized to 2600 pixels across, which was an arbitrary choice trading off clarity of the picture against size and speed of download. I think they're around 475kb or thereabouts, which is probably acceptable to download for most people. I used Adobe Photoshop to prepare the pictures - this involved scanning the big ones in two halves and stitching them together again, as my scanner is only a cheapish A4 model. The main web pages were made with Microsoft Frontpage 2000, and the newsletter ones with Microsoft Publisher 98. All the programs have their particular strengths - I'm not sure I'd use Publisher again though. I got the text from the newsletters by scanning them and running through Xerox Textbridge OCR, which did a reasonable job but left a fair amount of required editing. I thought the end result was probably worth it though, and would still like to complete the set with the early issues, if anyone could produce copies."

Obituaries

The society has learned with much sadness of the deaths of the following and extends its sincere sympathy to their families.

Sir David Wills CBE TD

Apart from his father Noel Wills, Rendcomb's founder, there can be no member of the Wills family who has made a bigger contribution to the survival and development of Rendcomb College than David Wills. A key contribution was also made by David's uncle, the first Lord Dulverton and his son the second Lord Dulverton. It was during the first world war that the idea of Rendcomb took root and gradually grew in Noel Wills' mind. But the second world war brought such radical changes in British finance and education that it was impossible for Rendcomb to survive on its pre-1939 basis.

The first task that faced David Wills when he became chairman of trustees was to put the school on a sound financial basis. Before 1939 the main source of income for the school was the generous gift of the founder and his family, but because of the rapid inflation during the war the investments into which these gifts had been placed by 1945 produced far less real income. In this task he managed to secure two key allies. His modesty, his education and his charm made it difficult to say no to David. He persuaded his uncle, Lord Dulverton, to make further generous donations and Colonel Godman, chairman of the county council and chairman of the governors, managed to negotiate a deal by which the county council paid a fee for the Gloucestershire Foundationers entering from primary schools. Previously their entire cost had been met by the Foundation. When I arrived as headmaster in 1961 the governors had already, under David's prompting, made the second key decision in Rendcomb's post-war history which was that the school, previously limited to about 90, must be expanded. It was clear to David that the post-war expansion of state education made it essential for Rendcomb to have a larger sixth form with a fuller range of subjects if it were to continue to offer a good education.

During these years David Wills was the key figure in the governing body. He worked very closely with Colonel Godman but the initiatives came from David. His financial acumen was perhaps not surprising as he came from a very successful Bristol business family. He was quick to diversify Rendcomb's investments when wider powers were granted to the trustees. But he was enormously interested in the wider horizons of the twentieth century world in which he saw education and international co-operation as two of the most vital ingredients, and knew many of the leading figures of the day, some of whom were induced to give the address on founder's day.

He rarely missed a meeting and took a detailed and active interest in the expansion of the school and the design of the buildings, particularly of the arts block and the extension of the old rectory which owe much to his suggestions. He was also a keen supporter of the idea of single study bedrooms,



which at that time were very rare in public schools, as he felt that it gave the opportunity of greater development to the individual. These were incorporated in the new wing of the college.

His third key decision was to seek the further expansion of the sixth form by the admission of girls. This was suggested to him by the founding of Britain's Atlantic College, an international co-educational sixth form college in South Wales, in which he was closely involved. He arranged for me to spend a day there and then to go to Gordonstoun, the only reputable school at the time with a purpose built co-educational boarding house. This in some ways formed the basis for the design of Park House.

He was the most unassuming of men. He was a frequent visitor to Rendcomb particularly when building was in progress. He used to come in comfortable country clothes often accompanied by two black labradors who were impeccably behaved, trained even to sit through a governor's meeting without making a sound. Slightly shy in manner, never forward to speak, he usually made the decisive contribution in a quiet but persuasive way. So he continued his father's work and the college is still fortunate today as Tom Wills, David Wills' nephew, has maintained the family commitment to Rendcomb.

A.O.H. Quick

Sir David Wills, the younger son of the founder, Noel Wills, died on December 10th 1999 aged 82. He was chairman of the trustees from 1947 to 1983 and a governor from 1951 to his retirement in 1985. The development and success of Rendcomb College has depended to a great degree on the support and generosity of members of the founder's family of which Sir David's long service as a trustee and governor is an outstanding example. Indeed it could be said that his belief in the founder's ideals and his vision for the future are largely responsible for Rendcomb as we know it to-day. There were perhaps two particular spheres of which this is especially true. Firstly his skilful management of the trustees' investments during his long term as chairman ensured for Rendcomb financial support to a degree unknown to most small independent schools. Secondly, as a result of his connections with Atlantic College, a co-educational international boarding school, Sir David was a prime mover in urging the governors to admit girls into the sixth form in 1972. By taking this decision, the governors retained (or resurrected) Rendcomb's reputation as a 'progressive' school for which it acquired some standing after its foundation in 1920. Very few independent boarding schools had made this move at such an early date. This venture was an immediate and resounding success due in part to the astute selection of candidates by the headmaster, Roger Medill. From this beginning, it was in time a natural progression for Rendcomb to become the fully co-educational school of to-day.

Sir David appeared to be essentially a modest man, and I doubt that he would have wanted much mention to be made of his generous personal gifts to the college, but it seems inappropriate not to mention a few because they indicate how his influence was felt in the every day life of the school. In 1951, Mrs Sinclair, the founder's widow, and Sir David financed the purchase of a 10 acre extension to the games field. In 1953 gifts from Sir David and Lord Dulverton provided for the redecoration of the main college building, removing the last traces of the decoration of the Victorian mansion. In the same year, Sir David provided 10 new rugby posts to allow the college to change from playing football to rugby - the XV defeated Sir Thomas Rich's 2nd XV 16-0. In 1960 the Dulverton Trust and David Wills provided the new swimming pool. In 1963 Sir David donated the hard tennis courts in front of the Old Rectory and also those beyond Park House in 1980. In 1981 in conjunction with the chairman of the governors Sir Louis Le Bailly, Sir David inaugurated the Michael Wills Lecture in memory of his brother, killed in action in 1943, to promote the study of science and engineering. In Sir David's death the college has lost a great friend and benefactor to whom we all owe a very real debt of gratitude.

W.J.D.W.

Full obituaries of Sir David appeared in The Times and The Telegraph mentioning Rendcomb and putting it in the context of all his other charitable work.

David Sells (staff 1955-83) died on February 12th in a Bristol hospital. He had suffered from increasingly poor health over the past two years and this had worsened considerably after a series of mini-strokes last September. He moved from Rendcomb to Bristol five years ago to share a house with Eric Blencowe.

A memorial service, taken by the chaplain, was held at Rendcomb on March 4th at which **Lawrence Wragg** (1956-63) and Professor the Reverend Gordon Dunstan (a former governor) spoke movingly about David and his memorable contribution to Rendcomb. The service was well attended by OR's, many with their wives, by former staff and by all four headmasters since 1961. A collection was made for the Friends of Rendcomb scholarship fund to mark David's long service as secretary to the Friends of Rendcomb. John Willson and David White played the organ.

Among those OR's present were: B. Freeman, C. Ekin, I. Pengelly, H. Wilson, M. James, S. Wormleighton, J. Dixon, B. Knapp, D. Tovey, J. Webb, P. Sayers, R. Weston, J. Dow, R. Bowen, N. Dakin, J. Gunner, O. Medill, N. Blencowe, E. Blencowe, N. Green, D. Marshall, J. Comrie, S. Morris, Mr and Mrs Knapp, Mr and Mrs Holdaway, Mr and Mrs Essenhig, Mr and Mrs Wood, Mrs Gent (née Anstee), Mr Partridge, Mr Dennis, Mr and Mrs Sells (nephew), Mr White, (also representing R. Law), Mr and Mrs Tolputt, Mr and Mrs Medill, Mr Quick, Mr Holden, C. Hartley (née King), Mr Burden.

The following tributes have been received, more may appear in the next newsletter.

From **Eric Blencowe** (1976-83)

Readers of the Old Rendcombian will remember David for his erudition, his skill as a schoolmaster, his humanity and his sense of humour. I also remember these characteristics as a pupil. But David was so much more than these that most others were not privileged to perceive. In the mid-1980s, David had retired and was working on a number of school-related projects. Together with governors and trustees, he was on the 'Future Policy Working Party', looking at options for the future size, composition, and accommodation of the college. This was a mammoth task for the Working Party, and led ultimately to the building of Lawn House and Stable House, and the



development of a fully co-educational school system as well as a number of other things. David was the secretary, but had great influence owing partly to his exacting - and almost immediate - preparation of the minutes of Working Party meetings, and his thoughtful and objective analyses of the issues facing the FPWP. I know this not from experience, but from many conversations with him and others on the Party who had first-hand experience of his skills.

David also wrote the second volume of the History of Rendcomb College, the first having been completed by Kathleen James. I know the immense effort which went into this enterprise, because I used to visit David at weekends and proofread his manuscript (or print-outs). He worked for so long at his computer that he eventually became unable to watch television or read in the evening to relax. He soon developed an interest in 'talking books', which became one of the few ways for him to unwind during that challenging period.

The History was received with general acclaim. As a person with a very limited interest in historical works, and one who had already read all the text several times (though not exactly in the final order), I did not expect to enjoy the final product. However it was only when I did read the book itself that I saw how few words were wasted. (I say few to make allowances for my own literary inadequacies, I actually found none.)

In the meantime, David was running and expanding the Friends of Rendcomb, a charitable trust established to assist pupils or would-be pupils with financial support where deserving cases became, without their being able to do anything about it, financially embarrassed. The vision of the trust was quite in line with the founder's vision for the school. Though not in the event a practical vision for a school in the 20th and 21st Centuries as Noel Wills had hoped, it provided guidance for the Friends of Rendcomb. David gave 12 years of dedicated service to the Friends until ill health forced him to step down as its very efficient and committed secretary. We are lucky to have John Webb as a successor.

It is an honour that the idea of his being remembered by a dedicated scholarship under the Friends was accepted. I asked him about the possibility last year. It was not a morbid discussion but I wanted guidance. Interested and dedicated though David was to the principles of the Friends, David was not interested in ceremony, and did not see any virtue in such remembrance. But then it might have appeared immodest had he opined otherwise.

He was the kind of person who made a success of anything to which he turned his hand - colleagues and pupils from the 1950s and 1960s generally remember David not for his gardening prowess (indeed for much of that time he had no garden at all) but he transformed his garden at No. 17 Rendcomb into a haven of peace and beauty over a period of some nearly 30 years. There were many afternoons I recall falling asleep under the trees in his small orchard, especially after completing a particularly demanding piece of proof-reading!

From 1995 he lived in my house in Bristol, which I took over from people whose idea of a garden was a large area in which to dump general rubbish. Mowing the grass was replaced by pouring petrol over it and trying to burn it. David and I took to the repair and redesign of the garden with great enthusiasm. I confess that all the inspiration for its design came from David, and most of the work. I had abandoned him to look after the house

from 1996 to 1998 while I worked for the United Nations in Germany. Each time I returned for a five-day break, I found the house looking as if no one was living there, it was just absolutely tidy. I also found successive improvements in the garden, many of which had required considerable strength. I must say I considered David's gardening achievements - for a 76 year-old - remarkable. It was in this garden that I have planted an already quite well-developed magnolia tree, which flowers there now, in his memory. I do not doubt that it would have a better chance under David's skilful care, though I shall try to do him justice, and shall enjoy it.

The last years of David's life in Bristol were happy ones. We visited his many friends in Catalonia twice - in 1992 and 1998. He had forged friendships there some 31 years ago. He had been holidaying in Catalonia with Roy Elliott, a former Rendcomb woodwork teacher, and recently retired from the headmastership of Sandwich School. During the time of General Franco the public speaking of Catalan was illegal and books and references in that language were also proscribed. However, in spite of that atmosphere. David decided to, and succeeded in learning the language by listening to audio-tapes recorded by his friends. A member of the UK Catalan Society, he collected some rare books and perfected the language over time. I was privileged to share in his friendship with his Catalan friends, and shall continue it myself.

During our time in Bristol we entertained frequently. David was a consummate host and a rather good cook. I learned many recipes from him which were delicious, even though they may have involved the slight expansion of the waist. We had a number of regular visits from OR's including Roy Elliott (see above), Charles Ekin (1979-83), Ben Freeman and Oliver Medill (1976-83).

David will be sorely missed.

(Eric Blencowe has worked for the Department of the Environment (now Environment, Transport and the Regions) in international wildlife conservation since 1992. He spent three years in Germany working for the United Nations Environment Programme as head of the intergovernmental agreement on the conservation of bats in Europe, and is now a wildlife policy adviser back at the DETR.)

From **L. de V. Wragg** (1956-63) "It comes as something of a shock to realise that I have known David Sells for 44 years. There is much that could be said about him in consequence. Shakespeare divided a man's life into seven. In *Ein Heldenleben*, Richard Strauss chose six aspects. I shall not attempt to cover quite as much ground.

First impressions are always important, especially to a young schoolboy. I came to Rendcomb (a little late, as it happens) a year after David joined the staff. He then had a reputation as a disciplinarian. He was not a candidate to be 'played up'. Possibly his time in the Royal Artillery enabled him to convert blackboard chalk into a silent but deadly weapon of unerring accuracy to restore the inattentive Rendcombian to full alertness. Equally impressive to a schoolboy perhaps was his deadpan face when on duty - he rarely registered emotion, and was seemingly never surprised by anything. This first impression was a considerable contrast to the genial man I got to know later in the school.

He was always a casually yet impeccably dressed figure, with not a hair out of place. When supervising games (hockey and rugby) 'on top' he was again neatly dressed in a white sweater and black shorts, and had unrelenting energy as he ran all over the field, exhorting players to greater efforts, and then led the way briskly back to the college. He was a tidy man living in tidy quarters. John Tooze (see photo), then director of music and of an artistic temperament, could not understand it. "Sells' room doesn't look lived in", he opined. David responded "Tooze's room looks wallowed in". And when one thinks of his fine handwriting, whether on the blackboard, in exercise books, in pithy and unerringly accurate school reports or - later - in letters, it is tempting to suggest that 'neatness is all'. Tempting, but wrong.

Once initial mutual suspicions had disappeared, David proved to be an excellent, inspiring teacher and one could look forward to his lessons, appreciate his very considerable intellect, mastery of the matter in hand and his encouragement. He appeared never to be caught off guard by any question, or by the random by-ways of a classroom debate, and had a seemingly



endless reserve of erudition and knowledge.

Like so many Rendcomb staff, David did not restrict himself to a single subject. Not only did he teach English as well as French and German (and his readings of Kipling's books and poems will remain in my memory) but, for example, he clearly loved music and knew far more about it than seemed reasonable for someone without the formal label 'musician'. Boys went to sleep on the top floor of the college listening to the distant sounds of Beethoven's Emperor concerto on David's record player. Later he introduced us to Schubert's songs - it's impossible to forget the impact of David talking about and playing records of *Heiden Röslein* and *Erlkönig*. His own musical accomplishments were more modest - he would probably have agreed that he was a better listener than performer when it came to singing.

Outside the classroom, David was full of surprises. Being seated on his table in the dining room was much appreciated because one would be treated to a week of good humour, dry wit, surprising assertions challenging conventional thoughts and impromptu demonstrations of the art of fine living and good manners. One learned not to oppose David's apparently contrarian views without careful thought. All too often, it turned out that he was right.

His amiable valedictory "non troppo" when announcing lights out was meant to be observed. Too much subsequent noise would cause him to manifest himself in the dormitory doorway as silently as a spectre on a rampart. He had an astonishing knowledge of what was happening all round the school (when asked how he knew, he would reply loftily "I have my sources"), and an uncanny instinct as to what was about to happen. If a misdemeanour were committed, unlike Macavity, David was often to be found promptly at the scene of the crime.

David gave his time freely to all. He told how, on his 8th birthday, his father had called him into his study and told him that from then on, he would give him half an hour of his time every day. This had obviously made a great impression on him, and may account for his willingness to give his own time. I do not remember David ever saying that he was too busy to talk to someone. If his door was closed (which was rare), a magisterial "Come" would invite entry and an arrangement to meet a little later.

He once or twice expressed frustration that 'people' (with no differentiation made between colleagues and pupils) thought that he either did not work, or had none to do, because he was so often seen around college when colleagues were still busy preparing lessons or marking work. He said that his secret was simple - get work out of the way at once. He exemplified Wellington's dictum: "My rule was always to do the business of the day in the day."

There were few aspects of Rendcomb life which he did not influence at some time. He started the literary society for senior boys because he perceived a complete absence of any cultural activities for them. Late into the evening at the end of society meetings, David's sense of humour and gift for mimicry were fully revealed. He had an endless repertoire of tales, many of which must have dated from his time in the army, and which we heard with delight - and indeed amazement. He also passed on useful hints, such as how to extinguish a mess fire at the end of an evening. David realised that true gravitas is not often associated with a reputation for excellent mimicry and so we were treated to these talents all too rarely. His precision with accents and language appeared in a different context - coaching boys needing regional accents in plays - here too he would not accept second best. He also advised us that to realise the full force of an oath, it was essential to pronounce it with bright northern vowels, rather than the flat and drawled vowels of received pronunciation.

He was quick to prick the bubble of pomposity, even when it involved him. He recounted how, as a schoolboy returning home for the holidays, he needed to change railway stations in London, and had approached a cab driver with the question: "Is your taximeter cabriolet available for hire?"

His productions of school plays were masterly, and it was a privilege to have even a minor part in them. Rehearsals were a combination of terror and fun: if one's lines had been mastered, one joined a splendid club of co-workers enjoying David's wit and inventiveness. These talents appeared in a different guise in the much-enjoyed entertainments at the Christmas parties, where he became the producer, director and, very often, writer.

One can think of many great partnerships of words and music: Gilbert and Sullivan, Flanders and Swan, Mozart and da Ponte for instance, but Sells and Tooze - using, it must be said, much of the same material at times - probably brought more joy to the inhabitants of Rendcomb. David willingly produced the first sketches written by pupils, even modifying the ending of one sketch at the very last minute so that he could pour a bucket of cold water over one of the cast. I had never realised that a single bucket could hold so much.

He possessed immense, quiet, authority, rarely needing to raise his voice. On those mercifully rare occasions when he had cause to address the senior school about its current and serious shortcomings, he was heard in profound silence. Again, no words were wasted, but the impact, even on the more boisterous members of the school, was considerable. Once the sessions were over, there was little of the jocular nitpicking that was the norm under other circumstances.

As one grew up, it was easier to appreciate David's capacity to look ahead and to plan. He was quick to see the way ahead, and was a good organiser. He made thinking about strategy seem deceptively simple. He used to

chide Rendcombians for their conservatism (quite correctly). He himself was always thinking about the future and change, rather than about the preservation of the status quo.

It would not be right to describe David as self-effacing, but he did have a tendency to hide his light under a sometimes less than watertight bushel. He appreciated recognition from those he himself held in esteem. He held clear opinions on all matters, and about his pupils and colleagues, but he never said anything detrimental about them, irrespective of the provocation to do so. In this and in many other ways, he demonstrated an immense personal integrity.

After leaving Rendcomb, for me as for so many, David became a most trusted friend and adviser. Again, his door was metaphorically open to all and I suspect that we will never know of his many private acts of kindness, generosity and support to Old Rendcombians.

His words of advice travelled well. During a year's

teaching near Paris, I had misgivings about my intended teaching career, and consulted David on my next visit to England. He listened patiently to my account, and at the end of it said "That's very interesting, but you have left one thing out." I could scarcely believe that I had not told all. "The pupils. In my book, any schoolmaster who does not put his pupils first is in the wrong job." I had to concede that he was right (and indeed, that was precisely what he himself had done), and the course of history was duly changed for the better. Many years later, when a school governor appointing teachers and headmasters, that same test never let me down.

David in retirement had another surprise in store. He became (or revealed himself as) a talented gardener. In a literal way he thus accomplished Voltaire's concluding words in *Candide* - everything we had seen of him in the school had exemplified the philosophic aspect.

It is not possible so sum up such a gifted and complex man as David in a few paragraphs. Everyone who knew him will think of much not mentioned here. It is difficult to thank someone like David for the many things he gave so freely over so many years. So for myself, and on behalf of hundreds of Rendcombians and others who were fortunate enough to know him, I say "Thank you, David."



Major Peter Birchall died on 28th February 2000 aged 92.

He became a governor in 1947 and gave outstanding service in this capacity to the college. As chairman of Gloucestershire Education Committee, his advice and interest in the college was always greatly valued. He took over as chairman of the governors on the death of Colonel Godman in 1978 and continued until 1980 when he decided to resign, regretting "that he had not the gift of eternal youth." He agreed however to continue to serve as a governor until 1985. David Sells wrote in the College History: "Major Birchall had served Rendcomb in countless ways since 1947 and would be hard to replace. His quiet, kindly, cultured and cerebral presence would be greatly missed. One of his last acts at Rendcomb was the splendid gift of £1,000 to the library."

Raymond Butler (1922-27) died in May 1999 aged 88.

For many years Raymond had been a staunch supporter of Rendcomb and of the Old Rendcombian society, and regularly attended the summer reunions. He was born in 1910 at Guiting Power and attended Upper Slaughter Elementary School from which he won a scholarship to Rendcomb. He had intended to follow his father and take up farming, but, as it was a bad time for farmers, he decided to turn to banking and joined the Westminster Bank. He was with the bank in Aylesbury, Henley and Jersey before joining the navy as an electrician at the outbreak of the second world war. He saw service in West Africa and with Mediterranean convoys. After the war, he returned to the Westminster Bank firstly in Somerset and then in Cheltenham, marrying his first wife Phyllis and where their daughter, Anne, was born. After his first wife's death, he married Stella, who regularly accompanied him to O.R. functions and was with the Westminster Bank in Winscombe, Somerset. He was treasurer of the Bath and Wells Show for many years. He enjoyed woodwork on the lathe, ancient history and reading his Greek Testament. Jane Gunner, Colin Burden and Bill White attended the funeral service in his beloved Upper Slaughter.

Nicholas Walter (1945-52) died in February.

The obituary in The Daily Telegraph stated that, after national service in the R.A.F. where he learnt Russian, he read history at Oxford. He began work as a journalist for *Which?* and later was chief sub-editor of The Times Literary Supplement. As a student he was involved in the Labour Party, but later abandoned his earlier political convictions in favour of anarchist ideals. His book 'About Anarchism' was widely translated and gave him a reputation in Europe and the United States. In Britain however he was best known as a humanist, often writing and broadcasting about a movement which he claimed was not anti-religious, simply non-religious.



A 1924 college postcard sent home by Raymond Butler

Angus Cochrane (1982-89) died unexpectedly in June 1999.

The moving service at St. Peter's, Stratton, was attended by many of Angus's contemporaries at Rendcomb. Among them were: Ann-Marie Chapman, Sarah Deacon, Matthew Faircloth, Julian and Lydia Fellows, Chris Huck, Grant Hughes, Roland Martin, Lucy and Stephen Merrett, Jessica Naish, Russell Ogden, Aubrey Powell, William Sherwood, Vaughan Tredwell, Jason Vernon, Dan Houseman, Claire Mallindine, Julian Norbury, Gemma Noyce, Lara Haine, Jane Gunner, Chris Wood and the headmaster.

Richard A Childers (1928-29) died in August 1996

Tributes

The following tributes have been received to **Rev. A.G. Granston Richards** (staff 1930-45), whose death was announced in the last issue of the newsletter.

From **Michael H.C. Martin** (1926-33)

"Dickers" we called him out of respect and affection. One in a million. Intellectually there was hardly a subject he could not talk to you about reliably and convincingly. Spiritually, long before the vogue for 'pastoral care' came into school life, he had an instinctive ability to understand his pupils' difficulties and weaknesses. I shall always be grateful to him for two reasons.

Firstly, finding I was a bit slow on the uptake in some aspects of mathematics, he coached me by correspondence twice weekly during one summer holiday, setting and correcting my work for an examination which I managed to pass. Secondly, he had a great interest in soccer tactics and strategies and as the college goalkeeper I was helped considerably by his explanations to me as regards positioning myself correctly to save a goal. "Imagine the two goal posts form the base line of a triangle and the goal shooter the moving apex. You position yourself in this imaginary triangle so as to give equal cover left and right. It's all a question of geometry."

From **Ted Jones** (1940-48)

"I attended the funeral of A.G.G. Richards at Clayton parish Church in Sussex yesterday. AGGR, known to his Rendcomb pupils as 'Dickers', taught maths at Rendcomb from 1931 to 1940 when he also took over the

teaching of physics when Jack Fell was called into the R.A.F. Dickers left Rendcomb in 1945 as he wanted to get up the teaching and admin ladder. He, with the James and Neal, was a main strength of teaching in the 1940s. During the 1960s he became a minister of the Church of England and in recent years he has looked after some Sussex parishes, including that of Clayton. His popularity in the parish was very evident by the very full attendance for his funeral. The small Saxon/Norman church was packed for the service, with standing room only.

I remember him as an active and committed teacher, with a strong character and strong opinions. In addition to teaching he conducted the physical training for most classes and he was also a referee at soccer. I understand that, like his good friend and colleague Ernest Neal, he had a strong and early Christian upbringing. The Richards and Neals both lived in the college flats above the stable block and they remained on close terms after leaving Rendcomb.

Two of the Richard's sons were at Rendcomb from the mid-1940s. Both were very able, academically and otherwise. Sadly Stephen died in the late 1970s. Michael (1947-56) and his brother Paul (not at Rendcomb) organised the funeral and the buffet reception afterwards. Michael took a DPhil in physics at Oxford and taught for some years at Sussex University, but is now a psychotherapist. Paul read physics at Cambridge, did his higher degree at the California Institute of Technology and now lives in New York, teaching at Columbia University. Both Michael and Paul gave good tributes to their father, whose younger (early 90s!) brother Charles gave a reading, as did Dicker's grandsons. In all he had a good and well attended send off although the weather was unkind and wet.

From **J.F. Roper** (1932-36)

So far as I was concerned AGGR was a maths teacher, and a very good one. He managed to get me to understand higher maths which I needed to become an engineer. It was hard work for him and for me. But it was not as a maths teacher that I remember him most. He had a very wide knowledge and many interests, and he was the first teacher (and very unusual in 1934) to organise and participate in a cycling tour with four of us in Germany. He had realised that Hitler was coming into power, and the need for us to understand what was happening. To undertake such a tour with four of us on our first experience outside Britain was a tremendous achievement. Whether we learnt much about the political upheaval going on was immaterial. We met German people of our age and were able to exchange views. This was a friendship with AGGR and his family that lasted many years.

From **Douglas Payne** (1940-48)

Michael Richards (1947-56) has informed me that his father died peacefully on 6th April 1999 in his 94th year. He will be lovingly remembered by his family, friends and parishioners. The funeral was at Clayton Church on Tuesday April 20th at 12 noon. If you would like to make a donation in Dick's memory, the Church Times' Train-a-Priest fund is suggested. Further details may be had from Michael Richards, 65 Southover High Street, Lewes, BN17 1JA. Tel: 0127 347 8244

In his note Michael Richards stated that in his declining years 'Dickers' lost touch with several OR's with whom he had maintained contact until then, and therefore I am passing on the above information to all who were mentioned by him in our correspondence, in case any one of you wishes to send condolences.

The following material has been compiled from our correspondence.

From '31 to '40 he taught mathematics at Rendcomb but in 1940 he had to assume responsibility for physics when **J.B. Fell** was called up. In addition he had a T branch commission in the RAF, teaching ATC cadets in Cirencester. In the latter years these included the college unit formed belatedly as a public response to the war effort. After 14 and a half years at Rendcomb he found that he had left promotion prospects rather late so he had to "rush about gaining the requisite experience." These included two years as a lecturer at Alsager Emergency Teachers' Training College and 2 years in post grad. teacher training at Bolton T.C., until he was appointed principal of a Monotechnic College at St Albans in 1957. He confessed that his heart was really in the 'largely defunct segregated high I.Q. sector'. During this period he was ordained as a non-stipendiary minister in the C. of E., continuing his work in education before and after ordination as well as being a clergyman. He was vicar of a parish in Watford for 7 years while running the expanding St Albans technical school.

He took early retirement in '69 and became a beneficed clergyman of 2 parishes near Luton. After retiring from his living in '74 he moved to the South Downs and became Rural Dean of St. Albans in '75. In 1980 he retired once more only to receive the cure of two downland parishes as N.S.M. This he relinquished in '82 but continued thereafter to preside at occasional services.

and to **Alistair Wilson** (1929-36) from **Ted Jones** (1940-48)

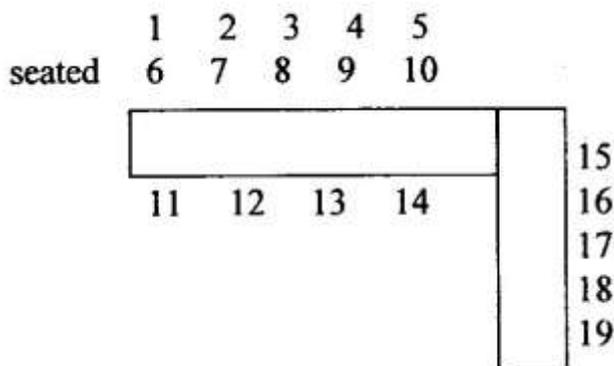
"I was sorry to see Dr Alistair Wilson's tribute in the May '99 newsletter. When I was working in the Inter-University Council during the mid-1970's - the IUC's remit was to assist the younger Commonwealth

universities in the development of their teaching and research programmes - we were always looking for experienced British academics and professional people who were able to take up periods of up to three months with a young commonwealth university. When I received Alistair Wilson's c.v. and papers, I was interested to see that he had also been at Rendcomb, and got in touch with him, for him to have a working period of several months in both teaching and research in microbiology at the University of Malaya in Kuala Lumpur. Mrs Wilson accompanied him for the assignment. They were at the university during one of my visits to Malaya and it was very evident that both of them, and also the university staff and students, enjoyed their time there, and Alistair made a very good impression with his cheerful and lively personality and his good teaching and research skills. I recollect that Alistair had a brother in aviation in Hong Kong at that time, who had also been at Rendcomb.

Coincidentally, the University of Malaya - University Malaya as it is also known - was the place where I met another OR, Willy Willets, in the late 1970s. Willy was then the curator of an important collection of oriental art and ceramics at the University that the U.M.'s vice-chancellor, Professor Ungku Aziz, had acquired from a collector in Singapore. Willy's role was to set up the collection and keep it in good care for the U.M. I had previously encountered him when he gave a lecture on pagodas at Rendcomb in the mid-1940s. He was by then a leading figure on oriental art and ceramics, but confess that I found his lecture dull and the thing that I most remember was his use of the word 'circumambulate' around a pagoda, rather than walk around one! Willy was very hospitable to me during my visits to the U.M. and retained a great affection for Rendcomb. He was also enthusiastic about the achievements of the People's Republic of China. He was in many ways very unconventional in style but was an interesting and articulate person, very knowledgeable in his professional field. His obituary was in the 1995 O.R. newsletter."

1950/51 London Dinner

M.H.C. Martin has sent a photo which includes AGGR. He has named most of the OR's present - the editor would be glad to know the missing names!



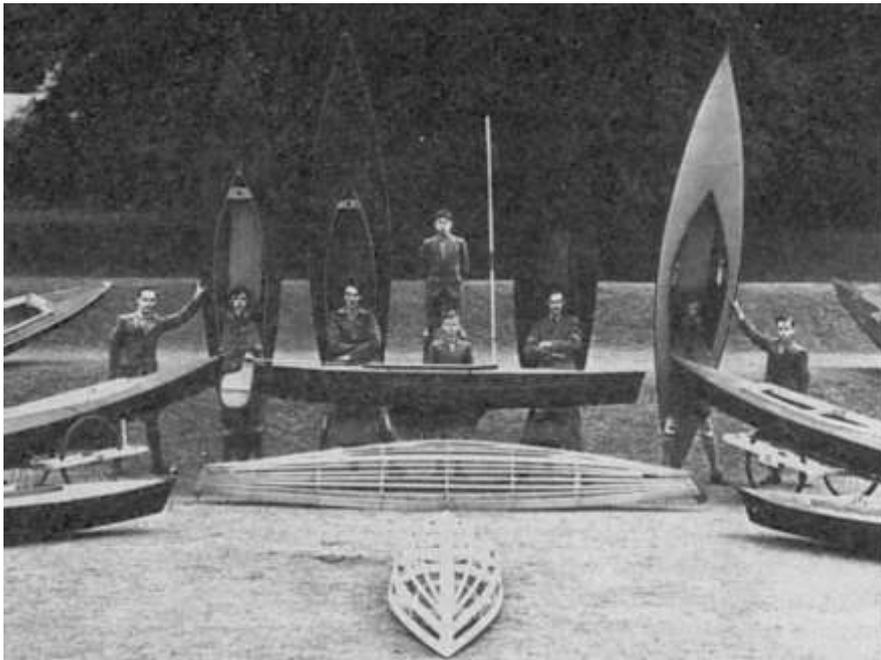
- 1 A.G. Granston Richards
 - 6 M.H.C. Martin
 - 7 C. Sidgwick
 - 8 J.C. Maslin
 - 9 A. Browning
 - 10 J.F. Miller
 - 11 J.H.A. Muirhead
 - 12 D.C. Vaughan
 - 13 N. Dalton
 - 15 N.A. Perkins
 - 16 L.B. White
 - 17 ?F.C. Raggatt
 - 18 D. Dakin
 - 19 D.W. Lee-Browne
- (2, 3, 4, 5, 14 unknown to me - 17 uncertain)

Rendcomb Recollections

From **Michael Levett** (1934-42)

Having left Rendcomb College in 1942 to join the Fleet Air Arm as a seafire pilot, serving mainly in the Far East, and then on to Cambridge for degrees in history and law, the 'old school' rapidly faded into the background. It was only a few years ago after a visit and subsequently receiving the newsletter that past memories have started flooding back.

Familiar names of wonderful teachers like **J.C. James, Robin Wilson, E.S. Neal** and **Richards**, who managed to coach a mathematical moron through junior matric. Contemporaries like **Frank Dutton** and his comments on the old lake have galvanised me to put pen to paper. Well remembered are the founder's day canoe regatta as mentioned in the History of Rendcomb Vol. 1. In the photograph shown of this event yours truly was on the extreme right with **Basil Lumby** in bow. The enclosed official photograph taken in 1938 illustrates the importance that was taken of these activities. Note the sailing rigging and the bicycle trailers so that we could tow our canoes to other locations. I even had mine available at Sandwich, Kent and then later on the River Cam for my sojourn at Cambridge.



Another story mentioned concerns enemy action in the early 40's. I still have in hand the souvenir retrieved which is a metal plate bearing the words 'VENTIL FUR B-STAND'.

Other memories revolve around country hikes, long runs and bicycle trips to the swimming baths in Cirencester, and Cheltenham to peer over the walls of the Ladies College. Dare I mention climbing the tower after dark or moving Lee-Browne's three-wheel Morgan inside the hall next to Saul?

Having married a Canadian girl met during flying training at Kingston, Ontario, we emigrated to Canada in response to the discouragingly slow business world of 1953. We are now pleased to talk about our four children, all university graduates and our nine grandchildren.

Twenty years in data processing and computers was followed by 18 years as an international marketing professor and business consultant. A further five years, after official retirement date, was spent doing both of these jobs in such exciting places as China, Russia, Africa, Singapore, Malaysia and Hungary plus several assignments in the Netherlands. I find myself surprisingly fit at 76 years. It must be those wonderful all-encompassing healthy programmes initiated by Kurt Hahn and implemented by W. Lang. I am now very much involved in such activities as drama, university credit courses, choir, book club, film and wine societies and church outreach. Perhaps all of this is testament to the well rounded education supplied by Rendcomb and the motivation it inspired.

From a very, very old (!) O.R.

"**Dutton, Jones, Kitto, Petter, Reed, Smith, Statham, Whittle**" went the roll-call for the little bunch of frightened 10-year olds that made up the intake at Rendcomb in 1944, when the total number in the school was seventy-two. World war II was still in progress, food rationing still in force and, with the almost total all-male monastery-like isolation of the place, the school felt like a prisoner-of-war camp. The routine even included

the Tuesday 'Public Works' (slave labour) afternoon, when we all tramped out into the park to cut down huge trees (no conservation-minded Green Party in those days) to fuel the school's antiquated and largely ineffective central heating system. We knew little of what was happening in the outside world - I guess we didn't care that much - and no teacher that I can remember ever tried to explain it to us. Of course, there was no t.v. or radio and our only contacts with the outside world were a few newspapers in the library, with half a dozen boys trying to read each paper at the same time.

The in loco parentis, pipe-puffing headmaster, **Denis Lee-Browne**, (who we were all convinced was living off champagne and caviar while we existed on dripping sandwiches!) was a frightening figure to small impressionable boys, and it wasn't until we were in the 4/5th forms that we figured him out as a well-meaning, impulsive man who loved the sound of his own voice and made some pretty weird decisions - viz. owning a gas-guzzling vintage Bentley during petrol rationing!

Our latent sexual urges that weren't run off on the sports fields were directed into pathetic attempts (all unsuccessful, as far as I know) to seduce the young, and, sometimes not so young maids that were employed on kitchen and cleaning staff rooms duties. When we weren't doing that, another macho and totally insane 'dare' game we played was climbing out of the dorm window and circumnavigating the entire building by walking around the crumbling, foot-wide 30-40 foot high stone ledge that ran round (and I guess still does) the second floor - and this in the dark of night! That all the participants in the madness survived is more by luck than judgement.

Besides Lee-Browne, among the rest of the staff there was the impressive Welshman **J.C. James** (for some reason known as 'Yammer'), assistant headmaster and history master. He was also the senior cricket coach (reputed to have turned out once for Glamorgan) but, perhaps more importantly, was a member of the Oxford/Cambridge (in those days) School Certificate and Higher School Certificate Examination Board, which set the history examination papers. The charming **Kathleen James**, JC's wife, taught us English literature in the 6th form.

Other staff members at the time included the soft-spoken physics master who replaced **A.G.G. Richards** in 1946 on his demob from the RAF, **Jack Fell**, who DWL-B always implied had single-handedly invented radar, and the distinguished 'Badger Man', **Eggy Neal**, who taught biology, neither of whom I got to know well given my shortcomings in their subjects.

There was also a strange but very talented old art master called **Mollineux** who had fought in World War I and used to tell stories about crawling through no-man's land at night between the trenches to whack Germans over the head with a pick-axe handle!

[REDACTED]

I guess the staff member who had most influence on my life was the music master, **John Tooze**, who was entirely responsible for my going to Cambridge. He joined the staff in my fourth year (I think) and I owe no-one a greater debt of gratitude.

In this unique and rather peculiar educational establishment, there was not a single member of staff who had had any commercial or industrial experience, so on leaving we all had to make our careers the hard way, some more successfully than others. But if all this makes the Rendcomb of the 40's and 50's sound like DotheBoys Hall I do it an injustice, but it was a bit odd, to say the least. However, I was always bored brainless in the holidays and couldn't wait to get back to school so they must have been doing something right, and I look back on it now with great affection.

Keith Statham, 1944-1953

From another old O.R:

It has long been a source of wonder that any trees in the 'Wilderness' or park remain standing after the campfires of so many generations of 'wild men', troglodytes and outlaws. I remember a night in the early '50's, I think. **D.W. Lee-Browne**, the headmaster, was not at home and **Tony Austen** was acting head (where was J.C.J. - ed?), when a fire was reported in the branches of one of the trees in the park about 200 yards from the Temple. Austen assembled a team of boys who carried pails of sand and fire extinguishers from the school to the tree. It soon became obvious that these would not control the blaze. Ultimately a chain of boys with pails was strung out between the tree and the Lake. Austen himself manned the key position in the tree and pails of water were passed to him. Very soon the blaze was extinguished. The classrooms next morning were redolent with damp clothing and woodsmoke. The cause of the fire was thought to have been a perforated metal

container which had served in lieu of a more traditional fire-place.

Alasdair Wallace (1949-55)

(Alasdair suffered a severe stroke several months ago which has paralysed his left arm. He is in a nursing home in Ontario).

and from Rendcomb's oldest O.R.

An old pupil recently reminisced about his time at Rendcomb and described how he used to watch snakes on summer afternoons, the best place being a pile of old masonry on the main road side of the Churn and some 200 or so yards downstream from the Cheltenham lodge. He wondered what the pile of masonry originally was. From his description of the site I, an older generation old pupil, can supply the most probable, almost certainly correct, answer. These stones were the remains of the Victorian mansion's ice-house which, in the early years of the 1920's was a nettle surrounded circular building in a perfect state of repair, permanently locked, though by 1925 the lock had been broken, and the ice-house was open.

An ice-house was the Victorian precursor of the refrigerator and most great houses had them in order to hang and help preserve meat, especially game. They were invariably round and the essential requirement was to keep temperature low. So they were built in shady, damp places and the floor was generally about 3 feet below ground level - they were sunk into the ground. Steps outside led down to the door. Inside a low bench generally ran the whole way round. The only room above it were hooks and brackets on which the meat could be hung. Built as they were in especially cool, damp and shady places they were remarkably successful in preserving meat, until overtaken in my lifetime, by the technology of the refrigerator.

F.C. Raggatt (1920-26)

A Gardening Note

Last August Kemble Gardening Club arranged with me to come over one evening and look at the gardens and the main house. To my surprise one lady in the group said that her grandfather had been head gardener at Rendcomb early in the century, leaving when the house was put up for sale in 1913 on Mrs Taylor's death. I produced this photo of the head gardener in the Orangery, dated 1907, and it turned out to be her grandfather, Mr Saunders. He and his wife lived in Rendcomb in the 30's and used to use Mr Tarrant's taxi service. Mr Tarrant remembered the old couple well. On his wife's death, the old man went to live in Haresfield with relations. Rather a nice link with the past. I thought, from a personal point of view!



W.J.D.W.

Travel Bursary

Extracts from accounts by recent recipients:

1. **Alastair Nye (1996-98)** spent his gap year at a school in India.

The Opportunity

Whilst I was at Rendcomb I had decided that I wanted to take a 'gap year' involving both music and Christian service. Unfortunately nothing suitable presented itself and I became resigned to going straight into a degree course. Then in April 1998 the opportunity arose to go and teach music in a Christian school in the south of India. I jumped at the chance, as it was exactly what I wanted to do. Hebron School is an international Christian school situated in the Nilgiris (Blue Hills), in the south of India. They have an international guest

(IG) scheme set up for those (of any ages) who wish to take a year or six months out, and can go to the school, and assist in whatever ways are needed. As they needed someone to teach the junior school music, my application arrived just at the right time.

Getting There

On the 3rd August 1998 I flew from Heathrow to Chennai (Madras to the old school) - which was my first time flying. The departure procedure was an experience in itself - but was soon outdone by that of an Indian airport! Arriving in Chennai at 3 a.m., I was about seven hours early for the daily internal flight across the subcontinent to the large town of Coimbatore. To get from the international terminal to the domestic terminal there is a short walk of about 200 metres, only 10 metres of which you are protected from the bustle of Indian life, and there is a surprising amount of it for 3 o'clock in the morning! At the end of this short barrier I was hounded by throngs of people trying to get me a taxi, trying to carry my luggage, and even trying to sell me food and drink. I held on to my luggage as I knew if they had got it, it could have been the last time that I might have seen it. Also I had not been able to change any money up to then for the inevitable tip. Those must have been the longest 200 metres I have ever walked! I waited four hours in the terminal waiting area, and then at 7 am. I was able to check in for the flight and was given a pass for the business class waiting lounge. Here I was able to have a drink (from a sealed bottle), and relax. At last, the time came for me to board the plane. All those hours waiting in Chennai airport, for a 75 minute flight!

A three hour drive up through the hills, negotiating hairpin bends, brought us to the town of Outacamund, (Ooty in shortened form), which is the highest hill station in south India at an altitude of 2240 metres. We drove through the town until we came to the Botanical Gardens. Just inside the Gardens are the gates of Hebron School.

Hebron Life

Hebron School, like Rendcomb, has about 250 pupils but, unlike Rendcomb, their ages range from nursery to A level. It has two terms in the school year, early August to Christmas and February to June. This allows the pupils, who come from many parts of Asia, to travel home for reasonable length breaks during the holidays. For the next week all new staff and IGs had orientation sessions. Mostly these were talks by present members of staff about the country, culture, history and religion, but visits were also included in the programme. One of these was to the neighbouring town of Coonoor where we visited a tea garden (plantation), the first of many trips I had to different tea gardens and factories.

When the children finally arrived, I was ready to meet them, and had my lessons prepared for the first few weeks. My lessons had been prepared, but had I? When I came to take the classes, they were very small to say the least, but on the whole easy to manage. For the years 1-4, I did some singing and rhythm work. Most of the lessons went very well, but as with all schools - there are those who can play around. It was good experience learning how to treat them in a firm but fair way. It was also strange being on the 'other side', i.e. being the one who has to deal with it, not the one who was dealt with.

I started a project with the years 5 and 6 on basic graphic scores. This involved the recognition of children's songs, nursery rhymes, and well known hymns from their tunes being drawn in blocks representing note pitch and length. I ended the term with a project where the children had to first make a basic instrument out of scrap materials, and then in twos and threes write a simple tune for it. The second term's project for years 5 and 6 was based on listening to pieces including Mars (from Holst's Planets Suite), and Bydlo (Bullock Cart, from Mussorgsky's Pictures at an Exhibition) and recognising important themes, the instruments playing, and some of the techniques used to play the instruments. In this project I also included a brief guide to the modern symphony orchestra. The second term's project with the younger years was a musical version of Sweeney Todd the Barber. At the end of the term, this was performed for the rest of the junior school.

My other musical involvement during my time at Hebron included one-to-one teaching of violin and recorders, and also playing the piano for the two junior school musicals (at Christmas and at the end of the second term). The academic timetable was completed by giving tutorial assistance in maths and English as second language.



After teaching, my other main duty was as an assistant dorm-parent. In the first term I helped in Glenrock House, the year 9 boys dorm. This was a very active dorm and on most weekends there was a cycle ride or a walk. One weekend in each term there was a camp, and so I went on one to a place called Quiet Corner. It is down the hill from Ooty, on the plateau between the top of the hills and the plains at the bottom. The area of the site is about 5 acres, so as well as including all the basics of a dining room and dorms (or were they really necessary), there was plenty of room for games and the 'Photo Tree'. A chapel was situated in the grounds which was a nice place for the Sunday morning service.

Such camps also had their 'down' times. They always came at times when exams were looming close, which meant that, during all the activities and fun, a few hours each day were set aside for quiet study.

IG Visits

During my time in India I had several opportunities to travel. Each half-term the IG's were allowed a long weekend to visit places a little further afield. In the first half-term, we (the IG's) visited Bangalore and Mysore. Bangalore is one of the older cities in India, but is now a centre for shopping as it has many western shops there, as well as having its own traditional market. We stayed in a little self-catering bungalow just outside the centre of the city. The two nights we spent there were rather more uncomfortable than I had hoped. There was a large enough bed, but there was one great problem: the bed belonged to the colony of ants which had over-run it! So I had to spend the two nights cramped on the settee, which was no longer than 4 feet! Cockroaches also swarmed throughout the house which meant that yours sincerely had to clear them up as the girls did not want to touch them.

Mysore is also an old city and still has a lot of charm. The palace of the Maharaja still stands proudly in the middle of the town. It was a very interesting palace to see as it holds many paintings of the Maharajas. The security guards in the palace are quite happy to tell you all about these. As soon as the four of us came into the palace we had three or four guides to tell us about the pictures, but of course they wanted paying after they had finished! On the Sunday night the palace is lit up from 7 o'clock for one hour. This process of lighting up does



not mean the odd spotlight, but over 4 million bulbs lighting up all outlines of the buildings and of the surrounding walls. It is quite spectacular to see.

Another place I managed to visit was Kodaikanal. This is also a hill station town but, unlike Ooty which was founded by the British, Kodaikanal was founded by the Americans. It is the only American hill station in India. There is another international school here which I managed to visit with the rest of the group. This weekend was spent taking time to observe the geographical and historical aspects of Indian life in Kodaikanal. The best way to this was to take a taxi tour. Six of us piled into a taxi (the same style as a Bedford Rascal) and spent the day being taken from site to site. As Kodaikanal is up in the hills, several of the view points were indeed 'point at the view and stay well back'. From one view point we chose, we could see across a small valley to a church (to be visited later), placed very carefully on the edge of a cliff. When we went to the church, we were then able to see back to where we had stopped for our break - good thing that no-one looked down! Under the ledge where we sat was a 75 foot sheer drop!

In brief

Throughout my time in the school, I helped run the Sunday evening bible study for the 7 to 11 age group,

called 6-l4ers (it started at 6.14 p.m.) Just after the Easter half term, my dorm helped me celebrate my birthday with an absolutely mad party. A month later, the Botanical Gardens were a blaze of colour for the annual festival. End of term was marked by events, some more formal than others. The IGs took the final service of the term for the whole school.

Barbara Unger (1997-99) toured the continent:-

Regensburg (D) was the starting point of my trip. The historical background of this town is especially interesting. In 179 b.c. it was founded by Marc Aurel (a Roman emperor) as a defence fort against the barbarians living in the forest to the north of the Danube. Amazingly after nearly 2000 years some parts of this ancient fort are still conserved in their original place and form. For me the most impressive feature was the north gate called "Porta Praetoria", which with its tower is still about 10 metres high. However the present silhouette of the town stems from medieval times, when Regensburg was at its last significant economic and political height. Economically, the close trade relations with Italian towns like Venice brought enormous wealth into the town, which was used by Regensburg's merchants to imitate the most admired Italian style of architecture in their houses. Examples are the so-called Patrician towers, the small mediaeval alleyways and the different marketplaces, which host lots of cafes giving the town an Italian flair. The old town hall still represents the political power, which Regensburg had as seat of the Emperor's diet. Very impressive was also the Gothic cathedral, the residence of the bishop of Regensburg. The very good Bavarian food 'Bratwürstel und Kipferl' and the sweet mustard made the visit worthwhile in every aspect.

München (D) is the biggest city in the south of Germany and the capital of Bavaria. It was founded by monks on the banks of the river Isar close to a bridge. The monks decided to use the nearby communication knot-point commercially, expanded it and collected a poll and tax on the goods. This business led to growth of the monastery, which also specialised in beer, footing a well known tradition of breweries in Munich. Consequently around the monastery a town started to grow. This city seems to be very international due to lots of Japanese and American tourists and therefore can't really be seen as an authentic Bavarian city.

Lindau (D) To get there, I drove through the hilly countryside of Bavaria and Württemberg, always having a good view of the Alps. Characteristics of this landscape are not just lots of grazing cows, but also the big periglacial and glacial lakes. I took a rest at the 'Starnberger See', to sunbathe, go for a swim and relax, before reaching the biggest lake - the Lake of Konstanz.

Bregenz (A) was reached within 10 minutes from Lindau and despite crossing a country border, no passport was required (due to the Schengen treaty). One nevertheless realised some differences to Germany - firstly another currency (Schilling) and another dialect. The reason for my visit was the very famous 'Bregenzer Festspiele', an opera festival performed by the Vienna Symphony and international singers. Most impressive was not the fact that the theatre gave space to 6,800 spectators, but that the stage is floating on the lake. I watched a performance of 'Der Maskenball' by Giuseppe Verdi, which was unfortunately interrupted by rain and it therefore was hard to follow the plot, especially because it was also sung in Italian.

Lugano (CH) was reached via the San Bernardino Pass, which required a lot of driving skills to master the narrow and steep roads safely. But the occasional fear was compensated by the most impressive views of the mountains. Even though Lugano is located in Switzerland, the official language is Italian. I also firstly experienced the outgoing and very direct southern (Latin) mentality there, when I was chased by several boys.

Milano (I) was the first Italian city on the plan. My knowledge from A-level history about the past of this old city suggested a medieval city centre possibly even similar to Regensburg. However apart from the old Sforza castle 'Bastioni' at the edge of the town centre with its high, red brick walls and towers nothing reminds of the significance of Milan in the middle ages. The present silhouette is characterised by tall late-Renaissance and Baroque buildings, which are arranged around the Gothic 'Duomo' (cathedral). The cathedral is one of the biggest of its kind as more than double the amount of people, fitting into the Gothic cathedral of Cologne, can be seated here. Being a Roman Catholic church the clothing regulations are harsh - people in shorts or short sleeves are not admitted to enter. Wearing shorts, at temperatures of 30°C, I consequently had to change before being allowed in. The stained glass windows especially were worth this hassle. In Milano I tried the first authentic Italian pasta, which was exceptionally delicious.

Verona (I) was a must to visit due to Shakespeare's 'Romeo and Juliet' being set there, inspiring wide-reaching mysteries about the town. The first thing I visited therefore, was the famous balcony of Juliet, which is covered with thousands of love letters and apparently lovers meet there at night (secretly). Sadly I didn't find my

Romeo there, but I couldn't spend sufficient time on my research! A very impressive sight is also the 'Arena', which is a Colosseum-style stadium used for classical concerts and operas. I was able to visit it, however it was not possible to watch a performance as tickets were long sold out.

Vicenza (I) has one of the finest examples of Andrea Palladio's (1518-80) architecture, the 'Basilica Palladiana' (1549-1614), which was strangely enough not very crowded due to it being a Sunday afternoon and all the inhabitants had left the city for colder areas like the nearby mountains.

Padova (I) is famous in the religious world due to 'Il Santo' Antonio, who is buried in the cathedral of Padova. The university of Padova employed also one of the most important scientists ever, Gallileo, who's office still can be visited today. On the 'Piazza del Santo' in front of the cathedral is also shown a fine piece of art - 'Donatello', Knight of Gattamelata by Titian.

Venezia (I) is 4km away from the land in the 'Laguna Venetia'. It's history of being one of the first republics in Europe, starting in the middle ages, mirrors how far ideologically advanced this city-state, always was. This intellectual advance probably led to the success in trade, due to e.g. special accountants in their newly invented system of economy - capitalism. But the intellectual interest can also be seen in the arts. Following up this point, it is interesting to note that in Venice the first Jewish ghetto of Europe is mentioned (in the early middle ages), possibly one of the first explicit anti-semitic actions in Europe. Apart from visiting the Palace of the Doge and St Mark's cathedral, which is very light due to golden walls, I visited two museums. One was more of an art gallery with Venetian artists, the other one was exhibiting furniture. Most impressive for me is the fact that Venice is subject to flooding every so often and still there are only very little signs of decay. Additionally the openness with which these amount of tourists are welcomed daily in Venice.

Rendcombiana

from **Frank Dutton** 1936-44

What follows is an alternative viewpoint from 'way beyond long stop'. Mainly, but not entirely, concerning... cricket.

Undoubtedly the word will conjure up for many a glorious summer afternoon, white-flanneled players on an emerald green expanse of turf, the sharp crack of ball striking bat, and the anticipation of tea in and around the pavilion. For me it couldn't have been more different. To digress briefly, in the summer immediately preceding my entry to Rendcomb it was my considerable misfortune to have contracted appendicitis. This was further complicated by a serious misdiagnosis from a locum doctor as "colic from eating too many green apples" (which I heatedly denied). Most fortunately for me, my regular family doctor was called in for a second opinion and caught the potentially fatal error. I then spent five weeks in hospital recovering from peritonitis, following an emergency admission.

I played no team games at all during my first two terms. In those far-off days it was soccer in the winter term - thankfully no rugby! - with hockey taking over in the spring term. So it was not until my first summer term in 1937 that I was allowed on the games field, following a thorough medical checkup from Dr Gladstone. Coming as I did from the top-class cricketing county of Gloucestershire (Wally Hammond.. Charlie Barnett...) it may surprise some to learn that I'd never played the game in my small life, my family not being in the least games-oriented. It was therefore with some interest, if not outright enthusiasm, that I appeared on the games field that summer after the previous terms' limitations, hoping to learn many new things. I was very soon to be sadly disillusioned. Some of my young contemporaries had certainly played previously, but the member of staff appointed to supervise the junior game concentrated his efforts on those fortunate ones, to the almost complete exclusion of a number of raw beginners like myself. He would encourage and coach the more knowledgeable boys while the rest of us were virtually ignored, receiving little or no tuition. I suspect now that had **John James**, in charge of the senior game, been involved with the juniors from time to time, things might have differed considerably. But it just didn't happen that way.

I vividly recall on one of my first visits to the wicket, wearing pads several sizes too large and hauling a bat which seemed to weigh half-a-ton, hearing the sarcastic instructions: "Why can't you keep a straight bat, for Pete's sake" (whatever that was - he didn't bother to explain) and "Stop flailing around with those agricultural sweeps!" Fielding was worse. When 'over' was called everyone except the batsmen started walking, but in sheer ignorance I stayed where I'd been placed. "Don't you know that you move to the opposite side of the wicket for a new over?" he yelled at me. Naturally I replied "No, sir - where shall I go?" For one wonderful moment I thought he was about to tell me... but he bit back on what he'd evidently intended to say and curtly instructed me on what to do next.

When teams were being 'picked up' it soon became obvious that I was among the last to be chosen, and before

very long I found myself being banished to long stop. At least from that spot I knew where my alternative position was located.., and with a good wicket-keeper there was minimal need to concentrate or rush about, leaving plenty of time for thought over a suitable fate for an unhelpful instructor. Such was my introduction to the alleged joys of cricket. Whatever potential enthusiasm for the game had existed was rapidly eroded by this calculated disinterest. Long before the end of that summer term came I was certain that cricket and I would never make friends, and it became an activity to be endured, if not actually dreaded. Instruction and coaching in my case were still conspicuous by their complete absence.

Gradually I became aware that there existed a group of boys who had become 'non-cricketers'. It appeared that they they had put their names forward to the General Meeting, generally when in the third form but occasionally earlier, and that if there were no objections from the Games Committee the Meeting would then vote to place them on the non-cricketing list. The playing fraternity doubtless felt that by this method they were eliminating the 'duds' from the game, but non-cricketers so appointed felt nothing but great relief and satisfaction. They performed other activities on summer term games days: running, cycling, tennis, lawn-mowing and so on. I was successful in joining them and did so happily without any regrets. (Why this special exemption in relation to cricket? There was no option for football or hockey, which made the situation all the more incomprehensible, but we non-cricketers never questioned our good fortune. I also wonder if non-cricketers still flourish in today's electronic age, or perhaps have quietly been eliminated).

I had far fewer reservations about soccer and hockey, having kicked a football around before coming to Rendcomb. For the first few years I struggled through, but on reaching the fifth form and approaching my final height and weight I gradually found that I was able to do rather more than hold my own. Lest it should be thought that I was no 'games person' I should mention that I ended up in the first eleven for both games, and finally found at that stage that I actively enjoyed playing.

A small follow-up: during WW2 various fund raising activities supporting the war effort took place, and on one occasion a 'Wings for Victory' fete - or - similar - was held on the back lawn, probably in 1943. One of the competitions involved bowling at a cricket stump, and the first and second eleven experts could be seen hammering away for most of the afternoon. Fast, slow or spin bowlers - they were all there trying hard, some of them scoring a single hit out of three. More for a laugh than anything else I decided to participate. Even at Rendcomb I'd known I possessed a 'true' eye (later in the forces I maintained 'marksman' status - extra pay! - without difficulty on both rifle and Bren qualification shoots) but had never been taught to bowl overarm properly during my brief foray into the cricketing world. So I propelled the three balls in turn along the turf underarm, as though playing bowls. To my surprise - and even more to that of everyone watching and snickering - I scored two hits out of three... For the remainder of that afternoon the bowlers redoubled their efforts to equal or better my score, but without success. I was finally presented with a small prize, which I seem to recall may have been a writing pad and envelopes.

The payoff came from the captain of the first eleven, who strolled over to me and remarked quietly: "A great shame you don't play cricket, Frank." I hadn't the heart to explain to him why this was so, as like most cricketers he would probably have failed to understand the other viewpoint.

I still feel a faint trace of embarrassment, not to say guilt, at 'walking away with it' from under the noses of all those keen bowlers. But nevertheless... not bad for a non-cricketer!

A Midsummer Night's Dream Video (1995)

Annabel Howard (1994-98) would like a copy of the video of Midsummer Night's Dream performed on the terraces in 1995. Please telephone 01242 579069 if you can help.

Congratulations

To **Francis Barton** (1988-95) on obtaining a first class honours in biological sciences and philosophy at the University of Sheffield.

To **Angus Trowern** (1981-86) on obtaining a Ph.D in molecular genetics at Southampton University.

To **Julian Odell** (1982-87) on obtaining a Ph.D in computer speech recognition at Queen's College, Cambridge, following first class honours in electrical and information science at Queen's.

Births

To **Nick** (1975-80) and Chetna **Miles** a daughter, Jasmine, December 1998.

To **Christopher** (1977-82) and Felicity **Stratton** a daughter, Emily Ann. 1996 and another daughter, Rachel Megan, 1998.

To Jon and **Sally** Ede (née **Hall**, 1975-77) a daughter, Alice. December 1999
To John and **Debbie Botham** (staff 1995-) a daughter, Kira, May 1999
To Elliot and **Nichola Gill** (staff 1994-) a son, William, March 1999
To **Alex** (1982-87, staff 1994-) and Amanda **Brealy**, a daughter, Eleanor Miriam Florence, April 1999.
To **Carlo** (staff 1996-) and Debbie **Vuolo**, a daughter, Alessandra, August 1999
To Rachel and **Ben Knapp** (1977-84) a daughter, Grace Isabelle, January 2000

Marriages

Christopher Norman (1987-94) to Gail Smallchild, May 1999.
Patrick Morgan (1986-93) to Catherine Burton, July 1999.
Mark Walters (1980-87) to Sarah Barber, May 1999
Kristie Sellars (1989-91) to Lowry, October 1999
Christopher Stratton (1977-82) to Felicity Watson-Williams, 1994
Claire Ellis (1984-86) to Hugh Davies, December 1999
Alex Hayes (1981-86) to Suzanne Roberts, January 2000

Common Room

David Whitehead, a graduate of the Royal School of Music, joined the staff in September in place of Naomi Phipps who moved to King's College School, Wimbledon, and Michael Debenham, a commercial researcher in biophysics, is teaching physics.
Debbie Botham has taken over from Graham Smith as head of physics and supremo of external examinations.
Paul Dods is teaching English in place of Richard Murray who has gone to St. Edward's, Oxford.
Anne Vickery, secretary, moved on during the year and the headmaster's personal assistant is now Jemima Pratt, sister of O.R. Tim.
Hamish Auld leaves in July to do a P.G.C.E. at Nottingham.

Retirement

Mrs Judi Stocks, who has been the headmaster's secretary since January 1994 left in March to join her husband in his last tour of duty in the army. Her unflinching helpfulness and cheerfulness will be remembered by many recent OR's who send her their best wishes for the future and thanks for all she has done at Rendcomb.

College News

Rendcomb College will open its doors to younger children from this September by creating a junior school in what was until recently the bursary and prior to that the staff common room and the maids' sitting room. The junior school, which will accept pupils aged four years and above by 2001, will initially offer children aged seven to eleven the small classes, academic rigour and excellent facilities which are the hallmark of Rendcomb College. The new head of the junior school, Mr Adrian Palmer, is currently the headmaster at Warminster Preparatory School.

As from April 2000, there will be a one way traffic system in operation, providing the iron bridge is given a clean bill of health. The main drive will be the way in to the main building, Park House, Stable House and the astroturf. The Stable Block will be an exit only. It would be greatly appreciated if OR's would strictly obey the one way system and speed limits.

This year's A level artists visited Madrid, concentrating particularly on the Prado, Thyssen and Queen Sophia galleries. Meanwhile a group of scientists visited Futuroscope, near Poitiers in France. Forms 1,2 and 3 experienced the Millennium Dome in February. Does anyone remember the mass outings to the Royal Show at the end of summer terms?

C.J.W.

Changes in the Main Building

Even for a fairly regular visitor to the college, it has been difficult to keep abreast of the recent (and constant) changes in usage of the 'main building'. OR's, particularly those who have been unable to return for some years, would be completely bemused. So, I thought I would do a 'tour' to bring you up to date.

Saul's Hall no longer has Dr Gladstone's billiard table*. It was spirited away between periods 1 and 2 about five years ago. It does however retain some of L.B. White's chairs. On the left as you enter is a reception desk with the doors of the old games cupboard opened up to provide access to the secretary's office in the old 6A common room/Latin room/careers room. A settee and arm chairs also now adorn Saul's Hall. Saul's toe is still missing, surely a case for some delicate modern plastic/marble surgery?

Continuing into Clock Hall, the 6B common room/school office is now the bursar's office. The library, including its carpet and curtains, remains unchanged. Most of you know that 'big school' was upgraded first to the assembly hall and then to the reading room - now a misnomer as it is used for meetings and music. The removal of the stage made this a very attractive room, and doors lead once again into the dining room. The photo below shows the General Meeting in big school in the 1930's.

The dining room, created in the 60's by joining the old music room and the original dining room, complete with false ceiling, has been transformed as the original ceiling has been revealed throughout, now repaired and redecorated. This was occasioned by the collapse of some plaster in the old dining room area which brought down the whole of the false ceiling just before lunch. Luckily the domestic staff in the room at the time escaped with only minor injuries.

The old gym - the Dulverton Hall since 1982 - has a new wooden floor and been given new curtains.

On the first floor, the dormitories of course disappeared when the new boarding houses were created in 1989. The three dormitories (or old 4th form common room), round the cabinet, are classrooms. The cabinet is the deputy headmaster's office. The remaining accommodation to the left (variously used as dormitories, classrooms and Mr Willson's flat) is now the housemaster's flat (once again!). Miss Babbington's bed-sitting room opposite the top of the stairs (subsequently used by WJDW and JWRW and later a history room) is now the headmaster's secretary's office. The headmaster's study is still where it was in DWLBs days. The guest room next door is the h.q. of the director of studies. The bathroom, created into Denis Price's 'sanctum sanctorum' in the 70's, had the old 1920's waterproof floor removed two years ago when it was converted into the marketing office. This year it has been made into the conference room. The old linen room is a classroom. I believe the lift still works, but is not in general use.

School House, now the Day House, occupies the old study-bedroom wing. The top floor of course no longer has dormitories. The rooms nearest the back stairs are used by the TEFL department. There is then a small flat, clothing stores etc. until the beginning of the sick bay before the 'red' stairs. The sick bay (now the 'medical centre') accommodation continues round through the former maids' corridor to the back stairs, as it has for many years. **Paul Heppleston** (1956-62), on a recent visit, noted that he was pleased to see the old bell still on the back stairs.

This was written in January, but more changes are in the offing!!

End of tour.

W.J.D.W.

(*To reappear in School House at the mercy of my eldest son and his contemporaries when they are behaving themselves enough to be allowed to use it!)

J.R.G.



Sport

O.R. Hockey

All OR. hockey matches were played on astro for the first time. Thanks to the efforts of Alex Brealy and Hamish Auld, the OR's raised three teams to play the school. This provided more focus for the fixture which took place on Sunday 12th March. It was a glorious spring like day and the hockey was enjoyed by players and spectators alike.

1st XI: Start 14.45: Umpires: Club Umpires
GK: C. Cowper (pupil), Harvey Davies, Tom Burns, John Webb, Rupert Webb, Ian Forster, Dave Ashby, Ash Taylor, Manny Garcia, Charlie Paine. Rob Sage
3-3



The drawing room from the 1913 Sale Catalogue

2nd XI: Start 13.30: Umpires: DHM, MSG

GK: Mark Wilks, Bob Witchell, Chris Pope, Mike Moody, Dominic Sharman, Will B-Jones, Steve Croft, Charlie Barton, Ian Thompson, Matt Hall, Tim Hill, Chris Horton, Pete Croft.
2-5

3rd XI: Start 12.00: Umpires: JHS, DW

GK: Hamish Auld, Toby Brealy, Dan Appleton, James Emerson, Andy Payne, Neil Patterson-Fox, Phil Patterson-Fox, Adam Phelps, Alex Paton, Marcus Head, Barrie Davies, Chas Acocks, Pete Croft, Alex Brealy, Steve Croft, Dan White.
1-1

OR Ladies Hockey

For the first time this was played in the Christmas term at 12.00 on the astroturf pitch. Although the OR team had to be supplemented by school players, it was a worthwhile contest with moments of skilful and dynamic hockey. After many attacks spearheaded by Laura Donovan and Clare Newman, Bel Howard converted an excellent cross into the only goal of the match.

The team consisted of Clare Newman (93), Marian Preen (93), Lucy Payne (93), Annabel Howard (98), Sophie Worlock (99), Tara Sleggs (99), Laura Donovan (99), Barbara Unger (99), Nicola Scarth (2001), Kate Wilson (2001), Antonia Gilbert (2001).

The match was supported by many spectators and this has guaranteed the future of this fixture in December. Please get in touch with Chris Wood (woodc@rendcomb.gloucs.sch.uk) or Alex Brealy (01242 517668) if you would like to play next time.

School Hockey (Boys)

When I took over the administration of hockey from John Holt 20 years ago, there were more boys than now and 33 matches were played that year. During the lent term 2000, the school played 91 matches, winning 39, drawing 15 and losing 37. 'Goals for' equalled 'goals against' at 191. On two occasions, against Kingswood and Monkton Combe, no less than ten teams took to the field on astro and such depth, dedication and determination is reflected in the interest shown in OR hockey.

The 1st XI continues to benefit from Bobby Morgan's coaching and lost only three out of sixteen matches. Once again the XI took part in the Bath Festival, playing Exeter (L0-6), Sedbergh (D2-2), Torquay (D2-2) and Westville, South Africa (D2-2). Bobby Morgan was invited to play in the veteran's game before this year's varsity match which was played at Milton Keynes.

The most promising team was James Stutchbury's under 15 XI which lost only one match (against Dean Close 1-2) and entertained many spectators with their dynamic patterns of play. They were also the highest scoring team in the school with 49 goals in 11 matches.

Chris Wood

OR Rugby

Older ORs 36 - 21 Newer ORs

In the first half the older ORs took advantage of their weight and combined this with their greater experience. Service by Alex Paton at scrum half was very solid, coping with the 'terrier-like' attention of Nick Carmichael extremely well. Alex Brealy produced an awesome try in the right hand corner as the result of some good forward play. At halftime the score line was 17- 0 in favour of the older ORs. The vision of Chris Carmichael at fly half saw many defensive elements turned into attack. However the newer ORs rallied and at one point had cut the older ORs lead to only 3 points. This was short lived as another try came in the corner followed by a break away try by Barrie Davies producing a final score of 36-21 to the older ORs.

Mr Roger Bacon, appointments secretary for the Gloucestershire Referees Society, once again superbly refereed the match in the perfect manner for the occasion. The crowd of 60 plus spectators were entertained with some excellent rugby and the convivial atmosphere continued in the recently restored dining hall, where the new headmaster introduced himself, and in the bar completing the day.

Teams

Newer O.R.s.

Alister Harris (96), Manolito Garcia (97), Robin Witchell (97), Seun Ismail (96), Nick Carmichael (96), Ian Thompson (95), William Brittain-Jones (97), Chris Scarth (98), Thom Gilbert (99), Phil Webb (99), Ben Butler (99), Tim Hill (98), Francis Barton (95), Phil de Havilland Hall (98), Theo Berry (99), Florian Brenner (98), Ashley Taylor (98) and Ed Turvill (98).

Older O.R.s.

Hamish Auld (92), Angus Trowern (86), Miles Brown (95), Ted Roberts (83), Charlie Paine (90), Chris Oliver (94), Charles Hutton-Potts (83), Alex Paton (84), Chris Carmichael (93), Bane Davies (92), Dan White (91), Mark Wilks (93), Alex Brealy (87), Andrew Platt (93), Barney Branston (87) and Malcolm Bennett.

Hamish A G Auld

If you would like to play this year please contact:

Alex Brealy - tel: 01285 831213, email: alex_brealy@hotmail.com

Mike Slark - tel: 01285 831712

News of Recent Leavers

Harry Aldrich-Blake	Geography, Stafford University (2000)
Oliver Anthony	Art foundation, Loughborough University
David Ashby	Not yet known
Theo Berry	English & philosophy, Bristol University (2000)
Louise Bongiovanni	German & Italian, Exeter University (2000)
Frederick Boughton	Ancient history, University College London (2000)
Nina Breitfeld	Tourism studies, Bournemouth University
Florian Brenner	Civil engineering, Oxford Brookes University
Benjamin Butler	Natural sciences, Peterhouse College, Cambridge
Samantha Cheung	Architecture, University of Central England
Laura Donovan	Geography, Durham University (2000)
Elisabeth Engelstadter	Graphic design, Munich University (2000)
Ian Forster	Sociology & psychology, Leicester University (2000)
Rebecca Hogarth	Child nursing, South Bank University (2000)
Phillipa Hunt	Veterinary science, Bristol University
Gemma Leathart	Int. mktg. & bus. studies, Cheltenham & Glos. College of HE
Dominic Morris	Geography, Birmingham University (2000)
Oliver Poole	Illustration, Falmouth Art College (2000)
John Shenton	Gap year project - teaching in South Africa
Tara Sleggs	Geography, Exeter University (2000)
Nicholas Stanfield	French & German, Nottingham University
James Starkey	Employment
Rebekah Taplin	Drama & theatre studies, Royal Holloway, University of London
Franziska Von Gleichenstein	Criminology & psychology, Anglia Polytechnic University (2000)

Philip Webb	History of art & design, Loughborough University
Lena Werckmeister	Apprenticeship in Frankfurt
Sophie Warlock	Adult Nursing, Oxford Brookes University (2000)
Patricia Yip	Design, Hong Kong Polytechnic University

All details are correct at time of printing. The following students - Kate Nicholas, Barbara Unger, Thomas Gilbert, Jenny Mais and Johannes Schinzler are applying for entry in 2000, on the strength of their 'A' level results.

Fifth Form Leavers

Simon Bullock	Agricultural course, Home Lacey College
Matthew Collier	Year out before doing 'A' levels in Chicago
Ellen Drurey	St Nicholas, Northwich
Oliver Jones	Cirencester College
Rebecca Williams	Cirencester College
Robert Knight	Continuing professional development in catering in New Zealand
Matthew Neale	Cirencester College
Benjamin Starks	Cheltenham College
Rose Thrower	
Robin Uzzell	Cirencester College