

Old Rendcombian Society

NEWSLETTER



MAY 2009

35th Issue

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Society Officers

At the Annual General Meeting on 29th June 2008 the following officers were elected:-

President:	Bill White (staff 1961-97) 3 Jessop Drive, Northleach, Cheltenham, Glos. GL54 3JG Tel: (01451 860943)
Chairman:	Neil Lumby (1968-73)
Vice-Chairman:	Fiona Burge (1988-90)
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: chriswood99@btinternet.com
Committee Members:	Richard Tudor (1973-80) Julian Comrie (1946-54) Alex Brealby (1980-87; staff 1994-) Patrick Boydell (1988-95) Tommy Lait (1996-2003) Jessica Weston (1998-2005)
Hon Auditor:	David Williams (1966-71)
Newsletter Editor:	Richard Tudor The Millstone, Kempsford, Cirencester, GL7 4EY e-mail: rictudor706@yahoo.co.uk

Minutes of the 75th Annual General Meeting 2008

Held on 29th June 2008 at Rendcomb College

Present: Phil Griffiths (1940-43), Alice Hughes (1998-2003), Graham Jordan (1966-73), Julian Comrie (1946-54), Gerry Holden (headmaster 1999-) Chris Wood (1965-71, staff 1976-), Colin Burden (staff 1963-97), Bill White (staff 1961-97), Roland Wood (1939-46), Jane Gunner (née Watson) (1975-77), Bridget Jordan and Miranda Jordan (guests)

1. Apologies: Michael Miles (1943-50), Richard Tudor (1973-80), David Williams (1966-71), David Semple (1949-56), Fiona Burge (née Reichwald, 1988-90), Pat Boydell (1988-95), Alex Brealby (1980-87, staff 1994-)

2. To receive the minutes of the 74th annual general meeting held on 1st July 2007 as published in the 2008 newsletter. It was proposed by Colin Burden and seconded by Bill White and was passed unanimously that the minutes should be signed as a correct record.

3. Matters arising from the minutes

The headmaster reported that of the two pupils who had received the travel bursary this year, one had already been to Lords Mead School in Uganda and the other was currently there teaching music and hockey. Both had expressed their appreciation to the Society for the award and would be making presentations to the sixth form and sending in a report to the OR Society.

Colin reported that as a result of the Friends of Rendcomb appeal in last year's newsletter there had been a reasonable response, but this year's appeal had only resulted in one donation and no offers of help beyond those already committed. However, organisation of the Ultimate Gift and Food Fair was going fairly well. He went on to explain that last year the FOR committee had played the minor role and had raised £5978 while this year the FOR were in the lead role and would benefit from 50% of the proceeds. It was hoped that the event would raise in excess of £20,000 and this would be match funded.

The FOR currently had balances of £67,000 and an annual income of about £7,000 so even with the fair this would not be enough to support a scholar through their time at the college. There were only 4 trustees at the moment, so Colin appealed for anyone who might be interested in becoming involved.

4. To receive the Hon Treasurer's Report

Chris Wood presented the annual accounts and reported that David Williams the hon. auditor had audited them. Chris explained that historically pupils had paid a one off subscription when they left the college but latterly there had been a £5 per term levy. This new system had now worked its way through the college so that

everyone had now been paying £5 since the start of their time at the college.

The committee had recommended that this £5 per term should be increased to £5.20. However, because of the requirement for notice to parents this could not be put in place until September 2009. It was therefore proposed by Graham Jordan, seconded by Alice Hughes and passed unanimously that it should be raised to £5.50 per term.

With regard to income, Chris Wood highlighted the increase in shop takings and thanked Jane for administering it. He also drew the meeting's attention to the fact that the premium bonds had not won anything this year. It had been agreed by the committee that the premium bonds would be sold and re-bought.

Costs of the shop include printing of the Saul pamphlets, which were done on demand.

There had been a stock take this year and David Williams had recommended that some of the items such as ties, polo shirts, sweatshirts and rugby shirts should be written off because of their age.

Chris also explained that costs of socials were up because of the excellent work done by Pat Boydell, ably assisted by Tommy Lait in organising the sports side of the society. The meeting expressed its thanks to Pat and Tommy.

The increases in the newsletter costs were two fold. It had been decided to use colour photos throughout the newsletter at an additional cost of £250. However this resulted in the printers using heavier type of paper, which upped the cost of the postage from 24p to 56p/booklet. Despite this there was an increased surplus of £700.

The committee had expressed the wish that the Kathleen James fund should now be wound up and that suitable books should be purchased with it. While this had not happened, Chris Woods had talked to the new assistant in the library and she had agreed to look into using the last of the money.

The meeting requested contact details for book donations and Chris undertook to approach the librarian to see if he was happy for his contact details to be given out. It was proposed by Graham Jordan and seconded by Jane Gunner and passed unanimously that the accounts should be adopted.

The chairman thanked Chris Wood and David Williams on behalf of the meeting.

5. Election of Officers

The secretary reported that there had been no nominations received for the posts of chairman and hon.

secretary so the present incumbents would continue in their posts, although Fiona Burge had expressed a wish to step down as vice-chairman if there was someone willing to take on the role.

Bill White expressed the meetings thanks to Neil and Jane for their long years of commitment to the Society.

6. Nominations for 1 committee member

There were no nominations received by the committee but it was noted that the committee could co-opt during the year if someone came forward.

7. Travel Bursary

Chris had explained that money originally allocated to a media bursary had been diverted to the travel bursary because there had been no take-up on the media bursary. The committee now recommended that £1,000 should be allocated to the travel bursary and a further £500 should be allocated to one day trips such as theatre trips etc. as had been advocated by the late Douglas Payne. It was agreed that a poster would be put up throughout the college to promote it.

Proposed by Jane Gunner seconded by Colin Burden, agreed unanimously.

8. Any other business

Chris Wood was pleased to report that Mike Slark had agreed to act as the college's co-ordinator for the OR cricket match and to put together a team to play the ORs when there were two weekends between exeat and the end of term. Other arrangements would have to be made if there was only one weekend because of the college's other commitments. Chris thanked Mike in his absence.

The headmaster had also kindly agreed that the sports hall could be made available when the OR day was wet. Julian Comrie raised the matter of photographs for the book, which was to be a photographic record of the life of the college. He had already contacted Frank Herman, a contemporary of his, who had provided a dozen photos and he appealed for more. It was also suggested that an appeal could be put on Facebook. The headmaster said that they looked to have the book published in 2010. It was agreed that at the next committee meeting, a sub committee would be set up to facilitate this.

9. Vote of thanks to the College

The chairman thanked Bill White for the excellent newsletter and Colin Hitchcock for all the work he did on the website. He also thanked the headmaster for welcoming the Society and for allowing such comprehensive access to the College.

The meeting ended at 13.02 p.m.

Annual General Meeting

You are invited to attend the 76th annual general meeting of the Old Rendcombian Society on Sunday 28th June 2009 at Rendcomb College at 12.15p.m.

AGENDA

1. To receive apologies for absence
2. To receive the minutes of the 75th A.G.M. held on 29th June 2008
3. To deal with matters arising from the minutes
4. To receive Hon. Treasurer's report
5. Election of Officers
6. Nominations for 1 committee member
All proposed and seconded nominations to reach the secretary by 14th June 2009
7. Travel Bursary
8. Any other business
9. Vote of thanks to the College

Dates of Future Reunions and Sports Fixtures

Sunday 28th June timetable:

- 10.30 a.m. Coffee in Clock Hall
- 11.15 a.m. Cricket match
- 12 noon Bar
- 12.00 p.m. AGM in Room El
- 1.00 p.m. Hot Lunch with vegetarian option for cricketers and visitors.
Main course to be collected from Servery for lunch in Reading Room.
There will be presentations to leaving staff.
No charge: donations to O.R. Society
- 2.30 p.m. Cricket Match resumes on top
- 4.30 p.m. Tea in Pavilion

All are welcome, not just those playing or having a year group reunion.

- Rugby: Saturday 5th December 2009
- Hockey: Saturday 20th March 2010 (provisional)
- Cricket: Sunday 27th June 2010 (provisional)

All provisional dates and those not listed here will be shown on www.rendcombian.org.uk as soon as they are agreed.

Sports Contacts

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

Alex Brealby 01285 832314 (W) and 01285 832363 (H)
alex_brealby@hotmail.com

or

Patrick Boydell 07968 824414
patrickb@tindirect.com

Jess Weston 07969 177437
jess_weston@hotmail.com

The Newsletter

This edition of the newsletter has been a team effort for which most of the hard work has been done by Jane and Bill. We hope readers enjoy the variety of contributions made. We mark the sad passing of several ORs, including two former OR Society presidents. However, we also note various brighter items of news. There have been some impressive academic and professional achievements and a number of weddings. As ever, we welcome suggestions and contributions for the next edition, especially by e-mail.

Richard Tudor (rictudor706@yahoo.co.uk)

30 years on, 29th June 2008

Colin Hitchcock, Graham Moore and Hamish Wilson organised a gathering of those who left the VIth form in 1978 or Vth form in 1976.

Hamish Wilson writes:

A special reunion was held at Rendcomb on Sunday 28 June 2008 for all those who were at the school between 1971 and 1978. Colin Hitchcock set it up and proved himself to be something of a sleuth in being able to track down those lost to the OR register. He tells me he did this with the aid of Google, Friends Reunited and 192.com and an old address book, managing to track down the entire cohort with the exception of Ian Cummings and Ian Hawkins. (Any ideas anyone?) An impressive 29 people made it to the event which no doubt reflects the great affection in which Rendcomb is held. Many made long journeys both within the UK and from abroad. Spain, Portugal and Dubai were amongst the more exotic home bases represented.

Although the reunion started unofficially on Saturday evening at the Bathurst Arms, the main event began with coffee in Saul's Hall the following day. Many of us had not seen each other since leaving school and admitted to feeling quite a lot of trepidation beforehand. However, it quickly seemed as though little time had passed since we left, evidence surely of the strength of relationships made at Rendcomb.

After a group photo and lunch at which Bill White gave the vote of thanks, we were shown around the school by Bill, Chris Wood and Jane Gunner before having tea on top at 4.00pm. Although the buildings are fundamentally the same, there were inevitably a few surprises: the trunk cellar housed a snooker table, the fifth form block was now part of the Junior School, the lower sixth study bedrooms had been converted into classrooms and, for some reason, Park House seemed curiously small. The tour proceeded at quite a slow pace as particular places sparked off long-forgotten memories and there was a lot of joking and laughter, which characterised the day as a whole.

Many thanks are due to our hosts: Bill, Chris and Jane for their organisation and making us feel so welcome; and indeed, to Colin Hitchcock who did such sterling work in getting us together. It was a great day.



Pictured above are, left to right, Gerald Hedderwick, Charlotte Bonardi, John Sinclair, Ian Pengelly, Patrick O'Donohoe, Tony Flambard, Andy Mackonochie, Debbie Purton (née Harrison), Simon Buist, Tim Parfit, Steve Hewitt, Shane Galtress, Colin Hitchcock, Sarah Robins (née Morris), Richard Jones (Caney), Peter Haynes, Stuart Smith, Graham Moore, Graeme Connelly, Penny Jones, Hamish Wilson, Bridget Cross, Nigel Taylor, Jonathan McGill, David Pitt. At front: Treve Evans, Sheila Lee (née Greenfield), Harriet Porter and Chris Troughton.

30 years on 28th June 2009 - Calling the leavers of 1979!!

Keith Winmill and Dave Marshall are rallying the troops to try and organise a reunion of the 1979 leavers, following the great success evidenced last year – with a picture of 29, yes 29, at the 30th anniversary reunion of the class of 1978. A challenge indeed!

The class of 1979 met in 2004 for the 25th anniversary and had a solid turnout of the “magnificent 6”, and we are hoping to eclipse and surpass this year. So, if you have not been back to Rendcomb since those heady days of 1979, the 30th anniversary must be the time to renew acquaintances with the buildings (and the changes that have taken place there) as well as a few (or hopefully a LOT!) of your contemporaries.

The summer old Rendcombians' day has been confirmed as Sunday 28th June 2009 so make a date in your diary to be there! Hopefully, the vast majority of the class of 1979 will read this in the OR's magazine – but

for those who have missed it, or lost contact, why not try the “inverse pyramids” by trying to contact at least two of your contemporaries to tell them of the event – if we all do this, within a short space of time the message will be out there!

For more information, please contact either Keith (aka Windy) on windy@winmil1186.freemove.co.uk or Dave Marshall on davidrj.marshall@gmail.com or indeed visit Colin Hitchcock’s excellent OR website (at www.rendombian.org.uk) and peruse the details there.

Come on Class of 1979, we have a challenge to beat the 29 attendees last year!

Photographs 1970-2009

We would be very grateful for copies of any photographs you may have of the above years. We have been asked to consider putting together a history of the college in photographs and the archives are very short of illustrations from this period. Please send any to Jane Gunner.

Thank you

Thank You

The Society would like to thank **Colin Hitchcock** (1971-78) for continuing to keep the website updated and **Nigel Powell** (1967-74) and his family for adding the 1970s magazines to it. Thanks also go to **Paul Heppleston** (1956-62) for his contribution and to **Liese Holden** (staff: 1999-) and **Amanda Brealy** (staff 1994-) for all their wonderful photos.

Congratulations To

Tim Bates (1996-2003) 1st class hon. in engineering from Durham University.

Richard Burden (1997-2004) 1st class hon. in chemistry from Bristol University

Jade Finn (1997-2004) 1st class hon. in art history and English, from St.Andrews

Sam Gunner (1996-2003) 1st class hon.in electrical and electronic engineering from Nottingham University.

David Roper (1996-2003) Gold at Rimini in the 2008 ITU World Duathlon Championships, 20-24 age category.

Caroline Wells (2001-2005) 1st class hon. in history and political science from the University of Birmingham

Births

To **Nick Webb** (1981 – 1986) and **Kriss Ewing** (1984 – 1986) a son, Sam, brother to Jake, born 15th June 2007.

To **Fiona** (née Reichwald) (1988-90) and Steve **Burge**, a daughter Georgina Jane, born 23rd April 2008.

To **Jonathan** (1979-86) and Laura **Quick**, a son, Thomas Anthony, born June 2008.

To **Leighton** (1989-96) and Tina **Freeman** a son Benjamin Robert, born 20th April 2008.

Marriages

Following a wet stag night on the Isle of Wight, **Nick Price** (1973-80) married Sandy on 20 Sept 08 in Couiza, near Perpignan. Nick’s parents, **Denis** and **Mary Price** (staff 1969 -90) attended and were in fine form, as were the rest of the Price family. Also at the wedding were **Mike Twinning** (1973-80) who performed the duties of best man with laudable aplomb, despite the inevitable barracking from **Nick Miles** (1974-80) and **Richard Tudor** (1973-80).



Nick and Sandy



Richard Tudor, Mike Twinning, Nick Price,
Nick Miles



Charles Yardley (1988-93) married
Alice Depauw (1993-95)



Fred Ingham (1990-95) was married to Helen Prole
and they now currently live in Hong Kong

Civil Partnership

David Mabblerley (1959-1966) and Andrew Drummond had their civil union at the Consulate-General in Sydney, Australia, with a reception afterwards in the tropical greenhouses at the Royal Botanic Gardens Sydney (where David is an Honorary Research Associate), on 02 January 2007. David's daughter, Laura, and his son, Marcus, were the witnesses.

15th Anniversary Reunion – 12th July 2008

Pete Croft (1986-93) writes: We are the class of '93, most of us started life at Rendcomb in 1986 excited and apprehensive of what lay before us. Here we are 15 years later and before we met up many of us were once again excited and apprehensive.

We met at The Dulverton Hall on the 12th July 2008, some had come from as far as Kuwait and Italy to be there and thanks to Mr. White having a few quiet words, Apollo was on our side as the sunshine broke through the clouds. As we trickled in, the bar seemed to be for most the first port of call, but it didn't take long before we were all reminiscing. As there was no fixed agenda for the day, we whiled away the time catching up and commenting on how things have changed at Rendcomb, but ours were the certainly the best times.

I, for one, thought about how people might have changed and maybe how some of us would not recognise one another. Sure we had more wrinkles and a little less hair and now were starting families, but our personalities were still intact and it was this that bonded us then and has reunited us once more. The day would have not been complete without the presence of some of the teachers that had been there on our very first day, think they too were curious to see how some of us had turned out. I received letters from some that couldn't make it due to geography or timing, however it was delightful to see Mr and Mrs Tolputt, Mr White, Mr Wood and Mr Burden.

Equally, to break up our somewhat monotone conversations of the old days many brought their better halves and some had in tow the new generation. Meanwhile the Jazz Badgers provided the perfect mix of music for a

sunny afternoon in July. Complementing the day was the fantastic summer's feast Mark Naylor and his catering team had orchestrated, a far cry from what we remember and I thank him dearly for arranging it all from start to finish. As the sun started to fade, we wound down the day with a casual drinks evening at the Green Dragon pub, playing killer skittles and chatting some more.

On reflection, it was not an easy feat locating us all when we have had 15 years to escape to various parts of the globe. But after much searching and countless emails, on the day 25 of us managed to make it. I would like to thank Jane Gunner for informing all those she still has contact with through the OR's society. My biggest thank you goes to you all for making the day what it was, without your presence it would not have taken place. I do hope us meeting may have rekindled lost friendships and started a trend for the future. Also, to all those who could not make it for whatever reasons, at least you have 5 years to think about attending the 20 year reunion.

Class of '93, 15 Year Reunion



Left to right and top to bottom:
 Colin Burden, William Hunter-Smart, Bill White, Yanir Yakutiel, Paul Allen, Tim Haine, Nick Rose, Juliette Ward, Chris Wood, Patta Tolputt, James East, Theo Ramsden-Hare, Rowen Elmes, Clare Chappell née Newman, Hugh Costelloe, Roger Gorman, Jeremy Sawtell.
 Claire Germaine, John Talbot, Tom Hughes, Simon Faulkner-Barrett née Barrett, Marian Brown née Preen, James Mackinnon, Andrew Platt, John Tolputt, Peter Croft, Alice Sinton née Lethbridge, Danielle Battelley née Meyers, Patrick Morgan



Chris Wood

Chris Wood is retiring in July. He came to Rendcomb in 1965 to join form I and left in December 1971 to go up to Exeter College, Oxford. He returned to Rendcomb in 1976 to teach chemistry (and also some physics and maths). During this long period of 39 years, he has made an immense contribution to Rendcomb, which will be difficult to equal. The following tributes give some idea of the respect in which he is held.



The headmaster, Gerry Holden writes:

Chris and Penny Wood

A couple of days ago, I overheard two fifth formers speaking in the dining room at breakfast.

“It’s true you know, he is leaving. He’s retiring”

“Really – he looks so young”

“Yes and he’s such a ‘ledge’”.

‘Ledge’. Fifth-form parlance for legendary and a word which hardly does justice to the outstanding career which Chris Wood, man and boy, has enjoyed at Rendcomb. I well remember my first encounter with the great man in what is now the Bursar’s secretary’s office in January 1999 when, with Paul Sykes, he was part of the team which interviewed me for the post which I was lucky enough to secure and am still lucky enough to enjoy. My first impressions of Chris: intelligent, kind and gentle with a lovely sense of humour and a mischievous smile. For some unknown reason the sash window, which was slightly ajar behind me, suddenly crashed down which seemed to symbolise the end of the interview; a metaphoric guillotine accompanied by much merriment from the then Director of Studies Paul Sykes and the then Senior Master, Chris. Needless to say I realised immediately that I could work with both these gentlemen and I was delighted that it was the Sykes-Wood dynamic duo which has led us into, through and out of two ISI inspections. Chris Wood’s eye for detail, meticulous timetabling skills and sheer appetite for hard work were absolutely pivotal in Rendcomb securing an impressive inspection report last September. Moreover it was a real privilege to observe his ‘iron fist in a velvet glove’ performance before and during the inspection week with Chris confronting the Reporting Inspector on issues ranging from Turner Tables to value added. No, I don’t understand these terms either and that is why I have been so pleased to have enjoyed the benefit of having Chris as my academic guru next door to me over the past three years. His understanding of curricular issues is second to none as he demonstrated in an outstanding presentation to our governors at a seminar last year.

We must also give proper recognition to Penny during this ‘twilight’ period as well. Penny’s systematic re-organisation of all staff files sandwiched between our CSCI and an Ofsted inspection enabled us to pass with flying colours all the necessary regulations which are now *de rigueur* for staff recruitment. I used to love popping out into my outer office as Penny was hard at work compiling the central register of staff appointments, as she chuckled to herself at the tedious nature of the tasks involved. In all of this Penny, of course, exercised total professionalism, but we are all looking forward to her forthcoming publication co-written with a well-known Cotswold novelist entitled ‘Well Wicked – Confessions of a Staff File Compiler’. And so back to Chris. Not only has he been an outstanding DOS in the last three years, weaving his magic wand to make the timetable work, he has also combined this hugely important role with teaching chemistry,

his third love we assume, to the highest standard. Joy Gibson, his current head of department paid him a great compliment last week when she said that in replacing Chris we are attempting to replace a colossus. In addition, he has also continued to coach and umpire hockey superbly to the very end of his career. 'Ledge' – certainly. Supportive and intensely loyal colleague – undoubtedly. Quintessential Rendcomb schoolmaster – beyond question. Rendcomb will miss this great man (he is the only colleague whose dental records are on his personnel file incidentally) but we hope that this is not goodbye to Penny and Chris Wood but rather *au revoir*.

Roger Medill (headmaster 1971 - 1987) writes:

Chris entered Rendcomb in those far off days when there was still a strong financial link with the county, and a yearly intake of intelligent boys from Gloucestershire primary schools ensured the high academic standard which had always been such a feature of the school.

My early acquaintance with Chris was a brief 'hail and farewell' as he departed after my first term with a scholarship to Exeter College, Oxford. My memory has faded a bit over the last twenty years, but I do remember vividly my delight when, five years later, Chris applied for the post of chemistry master which fell vacant in 1976. No contest! In a comparatively small school each appointment is of crucial importance and I recognised how lucky we had been to secure a scholar of distinction.

Chris had a clear advantage in knowing the school so intimately, but it became apparent at once that he was also a born teacher, with a deep knowledge and love of his subject and a gift for engaging the interest and enthusiasm of the young. As time went on, academic records bore witness to the strength of the chemistry teaching, and in due course Chris took over from Ron Kelsey as head of department and head of science, posts which he held for eleven years finishing with three years as director of studies.

When the post of housemaster of the junior house fell vacant on the appointment of Kaye Knapp as second master, it was clear to me that Chris would be the best possible successor. Having himself embarked on boarding from primary school at eleven, he would have a close knowledge of the challenges facing newcomers and his calm, friendly approach would inspire confidence. And so it proved, supported by his devoted family throughout his ten years as housemaster.

Out of school, Chris played a major part in organising and coaching his favourite game - hockey. Anyone with a knowledge of the searching wind on the top field in the dead of winter will recognise the dedication of twenty years as the master in charge. Photography, the Rendcombian magazine and school holiday trips were other interests; and then, of course, membership of various committees connected with academic policy and school management, not to mention his central role as link and treasurer of the Old Rendcombian Society. Finally, what matters about a teacher, especially in a boarding school, is the quality of the man himself. His principles, his integrity and capacity for hard work; his tolerance, sense of humour and his warm response to the vitality of youth. A personality commanding respect, admiration and affection.

I valued deeply all these qualities in Chris, and I would like to thank him most warmly for his loyalty to me and, much more important, to the school which he has served so wholeheartedly for thirty three years.

John Tolputt (headmaster 1987 - 1999) writes:

Chris and Penny Wood. I am finding it difficult to get my mind round the fact that Chris will no longer be working at Rendcomb after next summer. When I arrived in 1987, he was already a settled part of the landscape. Old Rendcombian, housemaster of the junior house, hockey coach and highly respected and effective chemistry teacher, he was one of the small group of people who made the place what it was. I soon learnt that if I wanted a difficult job doing involving organisation as well as helping and motivating people then the answer was 'give it to Chris'.

As a result, I'm afraid he got given more work and responsibility than was really fair. He has the rare gift of absorbing pressure without ever letting it show. In the junior house he was calm, friendly, efficient and caring, always willing to go the extra mile. He and Penny created just the home away from home needed for boys only just 11, and they were blessedly free of the box ticking mentality that has bedevilled boarding in the wider world since their days in the house. Warmth and laughter were the keynotes, with a careful eye for anyone who was lonely or unhappy. They were a brilliant team.

When Chris moved out of the house and became head of science, Penny sadly became less involved in Rendcomb life for a while, so I was delighted to hear later that she is now to be found working cheerfully in the administrative department. Her upbeat common sense and love of Rendcomb are a precious resource. Chris meanwhile has continued to spread himself as widely as possible, recently filling a gap as director of studies. When I think of Chris and his remarkable work at Rendcomb, I think of course of his bright intelligence, his capacity for work and organisation and his loyalty. But this Mr. Chippsish picture is not quite complete. There is also his slow dazzling smile, his humour and his not taking himself too seriously, his charm which he used to such good effect in chairing the common room for so long, and the sheer deep down quality of the man. He and Penny have enriched all the lives they have touched – including Patta's and mine.

Ron Kelsey (staff 1969 - 85) writes:

Forty years ago I arrived at Rendcomb when Chris was about to start his A-level studies. I was instantly impressed by his ability and diligence. He was a typical Rendcomb student of that time making full use of the opportunities available to him. Two activities he was enthusiastic about were the Science Society and the Business Game. The former had many visits to outside establishments such as Harwell and Oxford University and visits to Rendcomb from eminent scientists such as Professors Fells, Millen, Wilcox and Hitchcock. Chris was student secretary of the society and as such was able to extend his contact with science beyond the confines of the college.

By contrast the Business Game gave all the sixth-formers a taste of business studies, before it was part of the syllabus and Chris as managing director was able to apply his analytical ability to business. Such was his interest that he seriously considered a career as an accountant.

In 1971 he won an open scholarship to Exeter College, Oxford but before going up spent nine months doing pharmaceutical research for Astra Zeneca in Cheshire. He was one of the many Rendcombians who benefited from this contact and Oxford University welcomed students with this additional maturity gained from working on a real-life research project in a high-powered team.

Chris and Penny were frequent visitors to the Old School House. It was on one of these visits in 1976 that I asked Chris if he had any contemporaries at Oxford who were considering teaching, since there was soon to be an opportunity in the chemistry department. I still remember the flicker of interest shown that evening and was not really surprised to have a telephone call early the following morning. The rest is history.....

For nineteen years we worked together as friends and colleagues with everyone studying chemistry in forms 3,4 and 5 and large numbers continuing to A-level. The pinnacle of our team effort was having, at one stage, more than half the sixth form reading chemistry. Whatever their ability Chris gave his students full support and was enormously patient. It is this which encouraged his students to enjoy and pursue the subject. He was a natural teacher, enthusiastic and gifted with a real concern for his pupils. The observations made at the beginning of this reflection served him throughout his career and will continue to do so in his well earned retirement. He is able and diligent.

May Chris and Penny in their retirement have as much happiness, enjoyment and fulfilment as Joyce and I are having.

Tim Hill (1991 - 1998) writes:

When I received a letter from Bill White asking me to write some words in tribute to Chris Wood, I have to admit there was a twinge of panic mixed with the privileged feelings. My skills have always been towards the scientific end of the educational spectrum, so a piece like this will always represent a challenge, but I was honoured to have been asked. So where do I start?

Mr Wood played such an important role in my development during my time at Rendcomb. At first, I experienced his excellent pastoral care as a welcoming housemaster, kind and reassuring on finding me lost and confused in my first days in the Old Rectory. He offered me the comfort of knowing I wasn't the first and swiftly directed me to the Tuesday morning Latin class I had been unable to find. Soon enough I had settled in and was experiencing a firm but fair response to a dorm full of unruly first-years keeping each other awake with rowdy eleven-year-old gossip.

I enjoyed my first couple of years under Mr Wood's guidance immensely. He was strict enough to make the boundaries clear to boisterous youngsters, yet offered sufficient lenience to allow a seed of independence to develop in each of us. As was tradition, my time at the Rec. culminated in a set of sketches written and performed by the aforementioned boisterous youngsters. My abiding memory is of wearing a jacket and tie borrowed from Mr Wood (and a cheeky cardboard nose), accompanied by an Abbott and a Maylott wearing strategically placed balloons, and our take on the school's coeducational intake, which was the talking point of the year. Needless to say Mr Wood's reaction was appreciative, even if he didn't entirely agree with our version of events.

After an enjoyable start to Rendcomb life, Mr Wood's influence continued to have a significant effect on my path through education. As he had taught me both maths and physics in my first few years, I was now familiar with his patient style and impeccable



planning. It was obvious from an early stage that Mr Wood's teaching style, honed over many years, had reached me with the perfect balance to catch my imagination, and his GCSE chemistry lessons were a good example. I don't think it is any coincidence then that I chose to study chemistry at A-Level. Under Mr Wood's tutelage, the modular course was successfully negotiated and I was quickly thinking of UCAS forms and university – again, step forward Mr Wood. As an alumnus of Exeter College, Oxford, it was only natural that Mr Wood should advise me on my Oxbridge application, and we promptly looked through the chemistry courses on offer and plotted to visit St. Edmund Hall. As it turned out, a perfect choice.

More than ten years later, and with a master's degree in chemistry and six years' experience in catalytic emissions control with Johnson Matthey, I still fondly recall the litmus paper and phenolphthalein of my A-level years: testament to the pleasure of learning with Mr Wood. I wish him a happy and peaceful retirement.

Richard Collins (2001 - 2008) writes:

It was a great privilege to be asked to write about Mr. Wood for his retirement. Having known Mr Wood as a chemistry teacher, tutor, hockey coach and director of studies, I saw him as a major part of Rendcomb life. His enthusiasm in the classroom was always evident and much appreciated, and from a personal perspective encouraged me to carry the subject onto higher education. His aid as a tutor, particularly during my final year, was invaluable and always entertaining; including a Christmas party, a chemistry lab Easter egg hunt, and a summer chemistry show. In my final year, we invited Mr and Mrs Wood over for a meal in the 6th form house and he told us of what life was like firstly as a long haired hippy and secondly a housemaster when he first taught at Rendcomb and it was obvious for how long and how much he had been a part of Rendcomb, particularly as we then joined him down at the college bar that Mr Wood was running that night. All my family and I wish both Penny and him a happy retirement.

Richard Collins (2001-2008) is studying chemical engineering at St Edmund Hall, Oxford.

Pat Morgan (1986 - 93) writes:

Mr. and Mrs. Wood ran the Old Rectory for the 1st and 2nd years with a suitably paternalistic and relaxed approach. They provided us with a wide choice of extracurricular activities to keep us out of trouble, including air-rifle shooting and setting up the computer room. They took us on several memorable trips from the confines of 'Colditz', as it was known then, to local leisure facilities and more distant attractions. They also went beyond the call of duty to organise the much loved canal barge holiday. In the classroom Chris was an inspirational teacher who managed to present sometimes dry subjects in an engaging and interesting way. He clearly enjoyed teaching and this was evident in the way his classes were run and by recommending that certain individuals should never wire a plug probably saved lives or at least limbs.

Chris was an excellent hockey coach and motivated our year to achieve more as individuals and as a team on the pitch. He has been a staunch supporter of the Old Rendcombian society and will be missed at forthcoming reunions. I wish him and Penny the very best for his retirement.

Stephen Jones (1988 - 95) writes:

When I received a letter from Mr White asking me to write a small piece for the Old Rendcombian newsletter about Mr Wood, I knew it would be an easy task. I was soon discussing it with some of my fellow ORs at the rugby reunion this December and a number also offered to write a small piece. The length of all these demonstrate the fond memories we have of Mr Wood as a housemaster and teacher.

The first day at a new school is always a challenging experience, but the welcome received from Mr and Mrs Wood put all the children and more importantly, the parents, immediately at ease. His quiet and clear approach made us feel comfortable and was enough to strike fear into when we stepped over the mark and punishments always seemed reasonable, sometimes amusing, even to the 'victim' !

The level of extra-curricular activities in the junior house were simply outstanding enabling us all to try our hand at a number of new experiences. From air rifle shooting in his garden, running the computer games room, films on Saturday night, too many school trips to mention and ensuring the early seeds of the finance system were sewn through the junior house bank. I am hoping that the reckless spending at the tuck shop that followed the 90p weekly withdrawal was not an early sign of the current financial crisis.

As a teacher he also inspired a number of us to continue in chemistry, but the many years of studying after Rendcomb were never matched by the genuine enjoyment of the first few years in the labs of the Stable Block. Mr Wood is also a strong supporter of the ORs and we can all thank him for his support to the annual reunions. I would like to wish Mr Wood and his family all the best for the future and hope to see him at future OR reunions.

John Morgan (1988 - 1995) writes:

A 'welcome ever smiles' as Shakespeare (Rendcomb 1575 - 1581) wrote. The daunting prospect of starting a new school was certainly made easier by the welcome offered by Mr Wood to the startled bunch of miscreants arriving at the Old Rectory in 1988.

I am uncertain as to its use now, but back then 'The Rec' was the 1st and 2nd form boarding house (*Still is*,

now run by Amanda and Alex Brealy, Ed). It held around 40 frenzied, constantly hungry, competitive boys seemingly intent on slowly demolishing it. In the midst of this maelstrom were Mr. and Mrs. Wood, carefully, and with great patience and humour, policing the boundary between human reason and brute animal instinct. It was Mr. Wood's quiet control and approachability that I am sure enabled the smooth running of 'The Rec' during the 2 years I spent there. The anxieties of the first night spent in a dormitory with a few other equally nervous strangers were greatly alleviated by Mr. Wood popping his head around the door, saying hello and interestedly conversing with us. I remember well these easy chats just before 'lights out' and they continued to be a feature of one's time at the Rec. Nonetheless, it wasn't always kindly chat that came from Mr. Wood poking his head around the door; on occasion it was a well-aimed water balloon which could escalate into a 40 boy vs. one housemaster evening water fight (until Steven Croft took it too far) or a 40 boy vs. one housemaster pillow-fight overflowing from other dormitories (until Steven Croft took it too far). Of course, it could also be due to the misdemeanour of talking after 'silence', which would often mean banishment to the Siberia that was the corridor leading to Mr Wood's study. I recall many a night standing in whispered silence with other reprobates in that corridor wondering whether we would be forgotten, to be found withered and frozen the next morning.

Many other memories stand out: Mrs. Wood's mysterious laundry-room domain, where an elite coterie of thinkers and power-brokers discussed the machinations of The Rec and, some whispered, decided the fate of its inhabitants; Mr. Wood's raised eyebrows as another extravagant excuse was given for a broken window; his well-humoured acceptance of the often slanderous portrayals of himself in The Rec Christmas sketches; his demonstration of the conduction of electricity in his science class, which involved class members holding hands and the one at the front grabbing an electric fence (some would say progressive teaching, most just getting his own back).

It is on this topic that I wonder whether his greatest achievement, that for which he should be most revered, and to which not many teachers can hold a claim, is in preventing the loss of countless innocent lives. One physical science class in the 1st year involved a lesson in 'How to Wire a Plug'. I cannot fault the teaching; maybe it was the last lesson on a Saturday and I was thinking of how to spend my weekly pay cheque (Rector Bank Plc: Bank Manager, one Mr. C. Wood) but I didn't quite grasp it. The extent to which I didn't quite grasp it was manifested in a rather puzzled Mr. Wood marking my 'wired' plug 2 out of 10. This, I thought, was bad enough but Mr. Wood must have thought that a woeful grade didn't sufficiently express the pitiful and dangerous standard of my plug wiring. In my end of year report, Mr. Wood had simply, but portentously, added the following comment for my parents: "Please ensure that you never let John wire a plug".

To this day, every time the possibility arises that I may be called upon to do so, I am transported back to the science block in 1989 and those wise words in my report. It is said that a teacher can affect eternity and can never tell where his influence stops. Well, Mr. Wood, you'll be happy to know that that frayed-wired death trap I cobbled together in your lesson almost 20 years ago remains my one and only effort.



Chris Wood, Ean Branston, Christian Milliard, Robert Sage, Andrew Martin, James Bainbridge and Penny Wood with Andrew Branston (1987-92) at his 21st birthday party

Steven Croft (1988 – 1995) writes:

Some of my fondest memories whilst at Rendcomb would be those whilst under the careful guidance of Mr. Wood in the Old Rec (junior house as it was then). I am not sure whether it was the precise fashion that he

managed to organize the house into 'working groups' to carry out the specific duties within the house, or Saturday film nights, or simply trying to avoid being detected at night whilst breaking the 'lights out' curfew hoping that the creaking floorboards would come to our aid, whichever all of these and more led to a pleasant family atmosphere being created within the house; the ideal environment for those just starting off on their boarding careers.

Chris has a great many talents from creating all star hockey teams, photography, organizing activities, to possessing the neatest handwriting ever seen, making you understand you had over stepped the mark without even the hint of a raised voice; his talents and his contributions to Rendcomb made him an extremely active and well loved member of staff, whose retirement will leave a great hole in the patchwork that is Rendcomb. I wish Chris and his family all the very best for the future and thank them for the contribution they made to mine and countless more Rendcombians.

Craig Marcham (1989-1996) writes:

It is nearing 20 years since I first stepped over the threshold of the Old Rectory as a fresh-faced 11 year old which is frightening on two counts. Firstly it's a reminder that 'fresh-faced' is no longer an adjective I can use to describe myself and secondly of just how innocent, naïve and mischievous one can be at the age of 11. There are parents out there who find the effective management of one boisterous 11 year old a challenge, imagine for a moment then the huge responsibility Mr & Mrs Wood faced each September during their old Rec tenure when 20 of these 'little runts' were ceremoniously dropped off on their doorstep.

Couple to this a returning troupe of 20 odd 2nd years, older and wiser and keen to exploit any naivety on the part of the new 1st years and you have some idea of the challenges Mr Wood must have faced on a daily basis. Of course he'd seen it all before and cared for this group of youngsters with an effective combination of sensitivity, strictness where needed, encouragement and a sense of humour.

In an attempt to supplement my own hazy memories of life in the Old Rectory I made contact with various members of my year group and many of the stories I received confirmed the above.

Regarding strictness as one would expect most of the material received back from my peers focused on their various indiscretions and subsequent punishment. As you can imagine with 40 odd 11-13 year olds under his care Mr Wood needed a varied armoury of punishments to keep the peace. These ranged from 10 laps running around the tennis courts (at what felt like midnight at the time but was probably much nearer 9pm) for repeatedly talking after lights out to having to handwrite significant parts of the Book of Genesis.

Years of practice had no doubt taught Mr Wood all the hiding places used by the boys to hide things. One Old Rendcombian (who shall remain nameless) recounted a tale of how Mr Wood appeared one morning in his attic dorm, strolled silently across the room, opened the window and calmly removed one of the external roof tiles to reveal what is probably best described here as a page of 'inappropriate reading material' (please draw your own conclusions!) which the perpetrator had wrongly assumed was sufficiently hidden!!

Mr Wood was only strict where necessary, punishment was always deserved, quickly forgotten and where the offence wasn't too serious often dealt out with a sense of humour.

One example of this was given to me by another Old Rendcombian (who again shall remain nameless). He recounts that while being given a severe talking to for ownership of yet more 'inappropriate reading material' Mr Wood conceded while deliberating on his punishment, "at least it's a picture of a woman"!!

The discipline in the Old Rectory was never onerous and indeed was necessary and important in setting standards of behaviour that would be expected of us as we rose through the college years and in that respect Mr Wood did an excellent job. As promised earlier the above memories were provided on a no names basis but for their contribution, on a completely separate and in no way related article, I thank the following; Nick Carmichael, Will Heaven, Leighton Freeman and Keith Bendall!!! (Mr Wood – please expect 4 hand written versions of the Book of Genesis in the post shortly)

Upon arriving at Rendcomb most pupils were away from home, and the security of our parents, for the first time. Homesickness was certainly felt by many at some point or another during those early months. Mr Wood was quick to spot this and offer support where needed.

From my own perspective shortly after arriving at Rendcomb my parents divorced. I remember Mr Wood taking me into a study, handing me a cup of hot chocolate and spending the next 30 minutes of his time talking things through, making sure I wasn't too upset by the news and ensuring that I knew he was there to talk to if ever I needed it. At the time this kindness barely registered and my focus was probably on that unexpected extra cup of hot chocolate!! Now I'm older and my priorities have changed from the quantity of hot chocolate I can guzzle in one night to more important things I'd like to thank him for that moment of thoughtfulness, just one example of the close care he offered to all pupils when needed.

Sadly I was never much of a chemist, photographer or hockey player (with the exception of the odd appearance in Charles Yardley's OR's All Star XI which hardly counts!!) so it's harder for me to comment on some of the other key aspects of college life Mr Wood was so involved in.

In an effort to correct this I glanced through the 1990 Old Rendcombian and the initials C.J.W to article ratio gave some measure of just how deeply involved he was and no doubt still is in so many aspects of college life. C.J.W appeared after the following articles; Hockey Overview, U15B cricket season review, an article on

Rendcomb airfield, the Photographic Society overview, The Junior House Annual Review and of course countless photographs throughout the magazine. He has influenced so many other areas of Rendcomb life also and will be greatly missed. Myself and many others who have benefited from Mr Wood's teaching, coaching and leadership as a housemaster owe a huge debt of thanks for his commitment to Rendcomb and its pupils over so many years.

I know I am not alone when I say I have very happy memories of my time in the Old Rectory and much of that is due to the safe, well disciplined, caring and fun environment Mr and Mrs Wood created. I wish them both all the best for the future.

Ash Taylor (1990 - 1997) writes:

When being told that Chris was to leave Rendcomb and would I write a little piece about my memories of Chris the answer was an immediate and a resounding YES. Why would I answer so positively? The reason is simple, Chris Wood over the time that he has lived and worked at Rendcomb has given so much time, energy and advice to so many students that spending some of my time to write about it is the least that I could do. In addition to his sports coaching and teaching of chemistry and photography, Chris will undoubtedly be remembered by those who attended Rendcomb between 1985 and 1995 as being the housemaster of the Old Rectory.

Both Chris and his wife, Penny, took over the Rectory in 1985 and it was in their 6th year of duty that I entered the 'Old Wreck' (which by the way it certainly wasn't, a tight ship would be more appropriate). The duty bestowed on any housemaster is tough enough but to be in charge of two dozen boys (as it was then) who are boarding and away from their parents for the first time must be a near impossible job. Balancing compassion with the need to be stern and an authoritarian cannot be easy but for Chris it is.

The memories that I have of my two years within the 'Wreck'/junior house are still clear as day which I guess is proof that the time spent there was incredibly fun and incredibly important. Chris and Penny had this remarkable way of being at the right place at the right time in order to maintain an atmosphere of assurance, respect and most importantly an atmosphere of enjoyment, where every morning and night was organized chaos at 'fun camp'. Christmas sketches, the Ridgeway cycle rides, the canal boat holidays and various trips to the water parks and ice rinks nearby were all ways in which Chris and Penny kept 50 children happy throughout the year. A truly remarkable feat that only now I can appreciate.

The two years that I spent within the junior house prepared me for the remaining 5 years at Rendcomb which in turn prepared me for an adult life where virtues of respect, courtesy and hard work are paramount. Both Chris and Penny's ability to instill those virtues at a time where young minds need the freedom to experience new ideas and shape their future was astonishing and incredibly special.

Without any doubt in my mind all the children that passed through the junior house only now realize later in life how important it was to have had two selfless, caring people like Chris and Penny to look after us at 11 and 12 years of age.

I'm sure that this echoes around the whole of the Old Rendcombian community when I say that Chris will be sorely missed and it will be a sad day in Rendcomb's history when he leaves. Chris, thank you so much for those memories.

Suzanne Denley (1988-90) writes:

Having been asked to write something about my memories of the time that Anja and I shared our lives with you is something of an honour. Yet I can't believe that you could be that old yet! Now I look back at the last Rendcombian magazine and have seen that you have been a member of staff (*school-Ed.*) since 1965, this would have made you in your forties when we met, or it could be maths skills - they have never improved. My recollections would be two-fold; first as a chemistry master and that wonderful year spent in the Old Rectory.

We first met in the chemistry lab in my first week at Rendcomb with a collection of my peers - an odd collection of souls. You were so patient with my limited ability to take up the key messages of chemistry. I still remember getting to a point of throwing my calculator at the wall trying to work out how much space an atom of sodium chloride would take up - please note this is something which I have never needed to know since, but for the future who knows! There have been many aspects that have been of use - your patience never faltered even when trying to explain for the 100th time. My one last comment would make reference to water fights in the stable block - another female would have been a great help.

In retrospect the year I spent with you and Penny in the Old Rectory was one of the happiest and saddest years of my life. Both of you brought Anja and me into your family and shared the ups and downs and taught us so many things which seemed to span the widest of topics: what men/boys were all about, how to remove bees from a bedroom without squealing the house down, how to put a duvet cover on without getting into a mess, and numerous others skills that I would never confess to in a magazine.

Attached is a photo, which is still part of my current collection, and very much sums up my happy memories of my time spent with you.

May I wish you the best of retirements, and wish you a happy and healthy life wherever life may take you.

Anja Walker - née **Beaver** (1989 - 1991)

writes:

I remember my time at Rendcomb, especially as junior house prefect with my friend Suzanne, with enormous affection and as one of the greatest growing-up experiences of my life. Chris and Penny created an enormously warm and secure atmosphere. My photo album jogs my memories of hot chocolate and biscuits for everyone before bedtime, Chris 'lamp-posting' one of the boys (tipping his occupied bed on end, probably highly frowned upon but never known to cause anything other than hilarity), the football world cup on a television imported into the common room for the occasion and Penny patrolling the corridors, trying to restore law and order. You could always talk to Chris and Penny, they made you feel included and instilled self belief, without being afraid to tell you to work a bit harder if you wanted results! Chris was a font of local knowledge and regularly led walks around Rendcomb's derelict airfield and the Fosse Way, giving great history lessons in-situ. Both Chris and Penny added enormously to my time at the school, as I'm sure they did for many, many others. I hope they enjoy having some time to themselves for a change.



Suzanne, Chris, Penny and Anja

Anja Walker, having qualified as a Vet in 1999, is now a partner in an Equine-only practice in Devon.

Nick Price (1973-80) writes:

Ron Kelsey (staff 1969 - 95) would always take the serious chemists, those who would go on to great things in the science world (and many did) while Chris took those who wanted an A level (sometimes a quite unreasonable expectation). I was in the latter group. Chris was superb. He never assumed that we knew what he was talking about without first checking that we really did. He prepared everything down to the last detail - I know as I saw his notes - in his neat, meticulous way, and yet made everything enjoyable. The lab was fun: Chris was fun, but never went over the line to too much familiarity, and this was not just because he was a great teacher, but also because he was such a nice, straightforward chap. That he loved Rendcomb goes without saying; and Rendcomb loves him.

Bill White (staff 1961 - 1997) writes:

I suppose Chris must have come across me first in those dreadful junior rugby games – at least they were dreadful for me (how I loathed trying to coach rugby). It says much for his fortitude that he not only overcame the trauma inflicted but also has subsequently become a very kind and caring friend and neighbour. Junior hockey games were, of course, quite a different matter – for me, at any rate; though 'a hard time we had of it', as a decree went out in the days of **David Sells** (staff 1955-1982), master-in-charge, that no player should wear gloves! Frozen hands and tears were common in the early days of learning to hit and stop the ball! The headmaster, **Anthony Quick** (1961 - 1971), took forms 1 and 2 for Latin; so Chris did not meet me in Room L until his second year (together with some others he 'jumped' Form 2). He does not remember my French classes for the third form (much to my distress!) but he rapidly became highly proficient at Latin. In the main building, our paths frequently crossed when his year was in the sixth form and he became one of a group of highly efficient and congenial prefects, who used to come up to my sitting-room on Saturday nights for beer and banter. As senior resident master, in charge of the main building, I recall that Saturday evenings were always an anxious time. Of course there was no bar then; instead sixth formers could be granted a 'Saturday Night' exeat which allowed them to spend the evening in Cheltenham or Cirencester. The last bus from Cheltenham reached Rendcomb at about 10.35 p.m. and for the next 45 minutes sixth formers would climb up to my room on the top floor to report back – in various forms of fragility. (I cannot recall Chris ever being the worse for wear). I was always greatly relieved when the last one checked in! Chris left Rendcomb in December 1971, having won a scholarship to Exeter College, Oxford to read chemistry. It seemed no time at all before he was back at Rendcomb to teach chemistry when **Steve Jackson** (staff: 1972 - 76) became head of Bowbrook School. Penny and Chris had just been married and so began their



Derek Wiggall, Chansil Yuvaboon, Andrew Pearce, Niven Boyd, Nick Hance, Tony Rose, Edward Parsons, Andrew Thompson, Chris Wood, Julian Gray, Ian Niel

long involvement in so many aspects of Rendcomb life.

I have been trying to find a word to summarise Chris, the schoolmaster, and I have decided that his versatility was what enabled him to make such a great contribution to Rendcomb, from planting trees along the playing fields in 1977 to director of studies and re-starting the Snooker Club (2008). Apart from his teaching of chemistry (and physics) about which other contributors with first-hand experience comment, the range of his commitments is remarkable. Firstly, must be his dedication to hockey; as a founder member of Cirencester hockey club, he took over the administration of the game at the college in 1981, subsequently coached the 1st XI and then, when he handed this to **Alex Brealy**, enjoyed coaching the girls' teams and juniors. There he showed one of his special qualities – impeccable and calm administrative ability; he never seemed to be thrown into a panic if difficulties arose. One should mention too his commitment to the Photographic Club, started by **David Sells**; so many of his photographs have appeared in the Rendcombian and OR newsletter that his skill is well-known and he has passed on his enthusiasm to members of the club.

In 1985 Penny and Chris took over the junior house from **Kaye** (staff 1960 - 90) and **Margaret Knapp**. They were just the right people to run the house and to adapt gradually to the changing requirements of the times. Apart from the day-to-day running of the house, they organised many outings and activities at weekends (RAF Museum; Iron Bridge Museum; Ridgeway Cycle Ride etc) and the much-enjoyed holiday Canal trips on the Grand Union and Black Country Canals. In 1989 Chris began to organise the Historic Churches Sponsored Cycle Rides each September, largely for the junior house, thereby raising money for St Peter's Church. After **John Willson**'s retirement, Chris and I (mainly Chris!) organised some sponsored walks for various local causes. Running the junior house really suited Chris and Penny; they developed just the right mixture of discipline, friendliness and guidance. I think they will look back on this period as a happy one, despite personal tragedies – the death of their infant son and Penny's serious sledging accident. The fact that they were



Park House party 1977

able to keep going in these difficult times, says much for their resilience and for the loyal help of their various assistant staff and prefects, and **Peter** (chaplain 1986 - 96) and **Christine Sudbury**.

Throughout his time on the staff at Rendcomb, Chris has been a devoted supporter of the OR Society. He was chairman from 1981 to 1986 and has been treasurer since 1996. As 'school representative' on the committee, it has fallen to him to make all the administrative arrangements for OR reunions, negotiating with masters in charge of sports for dates for matches, with the kitchens for dinners and luncheons, with clothing suppliers for rugby shirts, sweatshirts etc. He has also spent many hours with **Jane Gunner** putting photographs into the printed

text of the OR newsletter. The society owes him a considerable debt of gratitude. In 1995 Chris and Penny moved to Northleach. Chris had taken over as head of chemistry and science from **Ron Kelsey** (staff 1969 - 95) and had joined the senior management team as senior master. At about this time he expanded his external examination marking, which he will continue in retirement. His final appointment as director of studies was a tribute to all the qualities he had shown in other posts, his professionalism in the classroom, his empathy with pupils and parents, his administrative flair, his level-headedness, and although a quiet, modest person, an ability to express forthright views when needed, with a keen sense of humour always lurking not far from the surface. I do not think Chris would have achieved so much without Penny's constant and loyal support; from the early days on trips to Greece and Iceland, to all kinds of school and village activities and the junior house, Penny has been there with her well known determination, jollity, energetic participation and strongly-expressed opinions. And it would be wrong to omit their pride in their daughter Pippa's achievements, from Chedworth Primary School, the Cotswold School, a first class degree at Southampton University in zoology, her PHD and now enjoying a rewarding post with ARUP. Many have appreciated their deep and caring friendship (not least myself) and this will ensure that they will be greatly missed at Rendcomb. We all wish them many happy years of retirement in Northleach.



Sophie Blackwell

Sarah Rudderham (1997 - 2004) writes:

Mrs B was a wonderful teacher to me throughout my whole 7 years at Rendcomb College. From printing to oil paints, pottery to watercolour she was an inspiration to her students, sharing her wisdom and creativity with us in so many wonderful ways. I will always be especially grateful to her for her help during my A levels. She was always very encouraging, helping us all along practically, crafting our techniques as well as keeping us calm during the more stressful moments. It was thanks to her that I made it through and maintained a love of fine art, which I still hold dear now.

I would like to finish by quoting back to her the Mark Twain quote that she wrote for our leavers' journal in 2007. I hope she can still take the same inspiration from it that we did back then.

"Years from now you will be more disappointed by the things you didn't do than by the things you did do. So throw off the bowlines. Sail away from the safe harbour. Catch the trade winds in your sails. Explore. Dream. Discover."

Jess Weston (1998-2005) writes:

Blacky – what a wonderful teacher you were! I loved every minute of art at Rendcomb and most of that can be attributed to you! You were such a relaxed teacher and so inspiring. You made all aspects of art interesting and allowed everyone to follow whatever creative path they wished. I especially loved your passion in textiles; there aren't many teachers who can pull off leopard print tights and a 'Technicoloured Dreamcoat'!

I have no doubt that you will be sadly missed by staff and pupils alike – Thank you so much and good luck!

Ben Crane (2000-07) writes:

She is amazing! and the most talked about teacher of our generation. loved by students and staff alike.

You don't need lights when she is in the room she lights it up just fine herself. And she got me into art college and the schools' art department certainly will not be the same without her! Thank you.

Rebecca Hutchison (2001-06) writes:

I can't believe Sophie's leaving! It is a sad time indeed! She made art lessons like a break from the day's work and always had a fantastic way of looking at things, which made them so much easier to draw - even if it was only a dull piece of fruit! With her friendly smile and great taste in shoes she was a friend as well as a teacher and that's gotta count for something, right?"

Yui Pang (2002-06) writes:

One of the many wonderful images I remembered from the time when I was studying at Rendcomb college, was walking towards the art department on a sunny day and see this lady wearing a maroon red cardigan, a dusty tea green long dress, holding a handcrafted handbag, who always has a lovely smile on her face – this is

Mrs. Sophie Blackwell, my favourite art teacher of all time. She wears converse sneakers, she eats during a class, she laughs with us, and she is an amazing artist. She was the person who taught me to “Draw what you see, not what you think you see”, which reminds me to always observe carefully and not to judge anything with our own perceptions. On my very first art class at Rendcomb, Mrs. Blackwell told us to “Learn the rules before you break them”, I bore that in mind and I have not really broken any rules yet, but I surely will. She has helped and inspired me to pursue my dream to be a designer. I can’t explain how grateful I am to have had her as my art teacher. She is friendly, caring and extremely optimistic (it was never a problem to do your artwork last minute!). Many of the things she has taught me are definitely things that I will remember for life. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Mrs. Blackwell for her hard work over the years at Rendcomb. I will miss her and I am sure every one of her students would feel the same way as I do. We wish you all the best and we hope you enjoy a relaxing lifestyle, with lots of arts, laughs and maybe a little bit of champagne and chocolate.



Tom Denny, Sophie Blackwell, Martin Griffiths in Rome

Tom Denny (staff) writes:

An eighteen-year journey is coming to an end. Sophie Blackwell first arrived at Rendcomb in 1990 to join the art department as one of Martin Griffiths’ team of part-timers. Later, in 2003, she succeeded Martin as head of department. For two years she also cared for Park House during its time as a girls’ house. So Sophie’s involvement with Rendcomb developed into something serious and wide ranging, and everything that she has done there has reflected her character and her approach to life.

It is impossible for anyone who has worked with Sophie, student or staff, to recall a single instance of unkindness from her. She is always kind, optimistic, happy and zestful. She enjoys young people and understands their struggles. The art department has become a serene place under her delicate and sensitive guidance, full of individuality and of students feeling valued and inspired. And have her colleagues ever heard any complaints from her about any aspect of life and work at Rendcomb? Certainly not (although the mysterious process of filling in GCSE and A level mark sheets and transferring ‘Raw’ into ‘UMS’ figures has always been an anguished one).

Sophie relishes cultural explorations and has been responsible for a number of rewarding student art trips abroad, as well as frequent visits to galleries in London and elsewhere. She herself also visited Rendcomb’s sister school, Lord’s Meade in Uganda, and enjoyed developing projects and relationships there.

Her beneficent presence will be greatly missed at Rendcomb, as she embarks on all kinds of new expeditions from her home over the hill in Chedworth (just near enough for plaintive cries to be faintly heard: “Oh Mrs. B. please could you.....”).

Laurie Wilcox (2001 - 08), **John Newton** (2003 - 08) and **Mark Gunner** (2001 - 08) write:

We were lucky enough to go on both the Paris 2006 and Barcelona 2008 trips organised by Mrs Blackwell. As 5th formers doing GCSE, we were the youngest members of the group in Paris so Mrs Blackwell named us the three musketeers. She was a great leader, taking in her stride such things as the fact that there were no pictures at the Picasso Museum because they were all on loan to Germany. She even arranged on the last night for us to experience a proper French restaurant with snails and frog legs and things instead of the Flunch buffet – ah, ah!!



Paris 2006



Barcelona 2008

On the strength of the success of the Paris trip and the fact that we had not disgraced her on that, (Mrs Blackwell didn't know about the paper aeroplanes off the Eiffel Tower until afterwards), she allowed Mark (who was not doing A level art) to come along with us on the Barcelona trip. On this trip, we visited the Salvador Dali museum, which appeared to have large eggs on top of it and bread down the sides and mostly pictures of body parts on show inside. At the Sagrada Familia however, Mrs Blackwell's calm was shaken but not stirred by our paper aeroplanes landing on the roof as this time she found out about it at the time!! When out and about in Barcelona, we (not John) were so mesmerized by a busker that we didn't notice that everyone else in the group had left the meeting point. Relocating the group was very good practice for the travels on our gap year. Mrs Blackwell gave us a great time, putting a lot of effort into making sure we had an inspirational time in different cultures. We wish her all the best for the future.

Old Rendcombian News

Ben Knapp (1977 - 84) continues to work for IBM. He is still actively involved in tennis, captaining a Wimbledon team to the Fitzwilliam Club in Dublin and being responsible for the Gloucestershire Men's county team. His daughters are at Rendcomb.

Mark Webb (1972 - 79) has his own business as a chartered surveyor. His brother, **Robin**, (1974 - 81) is the director of innovations in the Department of Innovations, Universities and Skills and **David** (1977-84) is senior manager in the youth offending team at Dorchester, with a staff of 40, dealing with those who have been to court.

Ben Almond (1978 - 85) has been offered one of the few senior management positions in Commerzbank, following a merger. Amongst other things he will be responsible for all the offices outside Germany and all the projects to consolidate buildings around the world. His wife is a city lawyer and their sons are doing well at Haberdasher Aske's, Elstree.

Ian Pengelly (1972 - 78) has a number of jobs in the social work area, work part-time as a social worker for older and disabled adults as well as part-time at the University of the West of England as a tutor on the degree programme. He says that the mix of 'hands-on' practice alongside more academic opportunities suits him very well. In 2006 he and his wife took a 'year out'. They travelled quite a lot, notably in Southern Africa, and combined this with a project in Zambia, a partnership with local and UK churches for children orphaned primarily through the impact of AIDS. Needless to say, he adds, they took away far more from the experience than they put in to it!

Robin Dale (1958 - 63) wrote to say that he sold his dairy herds in 2007, after being a milking farmer all his life but losing money over the past 5 years, which was no fun. He is chairman of the National Hedge Laying Society – with 500 members. They have a competition every autumn at sites all over the country where they can find 1500 metres of hedge for 130 competitors to lay in 5 hours. Last year they were at Sandringham, a great honour. One thing he does is lead Cotswold Farm Walks from his farm at Bourton on the Hill; they are very popular.

Rachel Medill (1979 - 81) is busy launching her new charity – horse therapy for young offenders. Her brother, **Oliver**, (1976 - 83) is in corporate training, hosting conferences for 600 doctors in Berlin and 3,000 Microsoft managers in Georgia, U.S.A. among others!

Seb Goffe (2000 - 06) met up with Rendcomb students at his recent book signing of his new publication written for 8-12 year olds.



Stephen Jones (1988-95) I have just returned from two and a half years working for Pricewaterhouse Coopers in New York. My office overlooked Grand Central Station by Bryant Park and my wife worked for a design agency in the Lower East Side so we were able to see the contrasts in the city every day. We were lucky enough to live in a lovely flat in Chelsea on Manhattan Island and tried pretty much everything that the city has to offer! I also played for a rugby team while in New York and was pleased to find myself much better at rugby in the US than I was at home! We were joined on a few occasions by some ORs: **John Morgan** (1988 - 95), **Charles Yardley** (1988 - 93), **Armen Topalian** (1988 - 93) and **Annabel Iles** (1993 - 95) all visited us a couple of times. In my last year I auditioned for an air band. Anyone familiar with my lack of musical ability would undoubtedly be surprised by this. William Ocean, who at the time was the reigning US air guitar champion, was looking to find 5 instrumentalists (bass guitar, vocals, horn section, keyboard and drums) to create the world's greatest air band. No instruments, all rock. Late one night in a dive bar, I auditioned for the horn section and out of 10 rounds in different cities across the US, I was voted the best. To celebrate the coming together of all this talent, we played a sell out once-in-a-lifetime concert at the iconic Knitting Factory venue in front of 400 paying fans! If you want to see some of this in action, just head to YouTube and search for either "Airmonger" or "Category Sixx". This was a great way to end my time in New York and I am now back in London and wondering just what happened.....

Sheila Lee (née Greenfield 1976 - 78) and her husband have a small lodge near Milfontes in Portugal, on the west coast, which they are renting out to extended families. It's a 25 acre site about 6 minutes from the beach and can accommodate up to 24 - 30 people. It's the ideal location for an extended family reunion. Details can be seen at: www.ownersdirect.co.uk/portugal/p5644.htm.

David Marshall (1972 - 79) appeared in Cotswold Essence magazine as he has a part time job as a flight information service officer at Kemble Airport, one of the busiest small airports in the country. David and his colleagues at Kemble have to watch the skies for air traffic within a two-mile radius around the aerodrome and guide them in to land. With up to two hundred movements of aircraft on a busy day this is quite a responsibility.

Phil Lyons (1970 - 76) was invited to contribute a poem for the centenary of Bristol University and this has now been published. You can read it online by following this link: <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/centenary/read/poem.html>. You can also look at his presenter's page for BCfm! http://www.bcfm.org.uk/?page_id=438 He says if you read his biography you'll notice he's invented an alternative life for himself!!

Nick Miles (1975 - 80) wrote back in May 2008: A few *bons mots* from the old boys Swiss outpost to say many thanks for putting the newsletter together. It was great to get it via old-fashioned airmail when so many things now are done electronically. Went through it at one sitting last evening so it must be good! It appears there is a seamless changing of the guard from Bill to Rich, although I suspect Jane and Chris tidied up a few loose ends. Rich and I spent a few days together last April on a cycling holiday north of Barcelona (David

Sells; Catalan territory)..... actually it was more like a gastronomic tour with a few turns of the wheels thrown in to get us from table – to bar – to table. Of course we are all looking forward to **Nick Price**'s upcoming wedding in Toulouse in September. **Mike Twinning** is best man and the stag weekend plans are afoot..... **Frank Peplow** (1975 - 80) joined me at Lords last Sunday for a lovely day's Eng v NZ cricket. He, as normal, had just returned from a month's boat trip between Oz and Japan on one of his regular bird watching tours. He took over the family jewellery business in Worcester some years ago and seems to be doing well. We are hatching a plan to visit Trinidad next March for the England tour. Meanwhile, the Miles cricket tradition continues with my son Kieran (13) being coached and playing here in Geneva with a thriving local youth club. We are off for a weekend tournament in June to St. Moritz to play a collection of Swiss and Austrian terms!

Luke Gunner's (1998 - 2005) 21st birthday party :



Nicola King, Geoffrey Hulbert, Heather Roper, Graham Hulbert, Luke Gunner, Charlotte Cumberpatch, Caroline Wells, Claire Taylor,, Jessie Weston

Taryn Nixon (1975 - 77) recently appeared on the BBC website when her team from the Museum of London found the remains of a theatre in Shoreditch last summer. Built in 1576, it is thought the Bard acted there and that it also hosted the premiere of Romeo and Juliet. Taryn was reported as saying that they had found part of the original curved wall of the playhouse, which was believed to be polygonal in shape.

Michael Barnes (1961 - 1969) writes:
The photograph shows myself, Mayor of Swindon (May 2007 - May 2008) entertaining **Robert Raynes** (at Rendcomb 1963 - 69) in the Mayor's Parlour at the Civic Offices in Swindon.



Obituaries

The society has learnt of the deaths of the following and sends its sincere condolences to their families.

Professor Trevor Raymond Morris (1941 - 48) died in February 2009.

Frank Dutton (1936 - 44) died in September 2008.

Frank was born in Staunton in 1926, the elder brother of Maisie, Pat and Bill. From Corse Elementary School he won one of five foundation scholarships to Rendcomb. After obtaining his HSC in maths and physics, he was called up for national service in the Gloucestershire and Wiltshire Regiments in 1945, during which he was an NCO instructor and clerk. He joined Ordnance Survey in 1948, being trained in basic field survey and large-scale town plans and photographic records. He then moved to Fairey Aviation Co., involved in aerial survey. Similar posts with other firms followed, with his experience widening to site planning, road design, civil engineering drawing including planning the route of the M62 etc., until 1972 when he began his work in the Borough Surveyor's department of Malvern Hills Urban District Council as a surveyor. Map-making was one of Frank's early interests.

He also had a life-long interest in jazz, which started during his years at Rendcomb and developed into a passion. He wrote advice columns for various music magazines and was an authority on the music of Duke Ellington. Frank ran the Malvern Society for recorded jazz for 10 years, which met twice a month. He was also a member, along with his cousins, of the John Peel hand-bell ringers and even re-arranged some music for hand-bells. When Frank was at Rendcomb, he particularly liked working in the woodwork department – then sited in fairly primitive surroundings in what is now the Otters' classroom in the junior school. He made some small items such as a breadboard, a nut bowl and a small bookcase. His special item, however, was a gate-legged coffee table, with two flaps and a small drawer – his favourite piece.

Frank was a great supporter of Rendcomb and the O. R. Society. I remember that, after his retirement, he visited the school for the first time for many years. He asked me if a pupil could show him round. Chris Jarrett (1988-1995) happened to be available. Frank was most impressed with what he saw and also with his guide! He subsequently wrote a number of carefully researched articles for the O. R. newsletter on a variety of subjects from Rendcomb during the war to the history of Rendcomb village. He also did some research on the exact siting of the 18th century Guise mansion, which was demolished to allow for the building of the present house in 1865.



Frank generously decided that he would like to leave a legacy for a music scholarship, preferably for jazz and negotiations are underway for this.

His funeral in September last was held at Forthampton and was attended by many members of the family and his friends. Chris and Penny Wood, Jane Gunner and Bill White represented the O. R. Society. He had spent the last two years of his life in a nursing home in Malvern.

The following tribute appeared in the Jazz Journal in February this year:

Older members of JJ1 will recall Frank (Francis H) Dutton as the compiler of this magazine's jazz information column from 1960 to 1967. In addition to contributions to Jazz Journal, his articles appeared in Matrix, of which he was assistant editor, The Discophile, and Storyville. His four part article, Birth of a Band, detailing the creation of the Duke Ellington orchestra, appeared in Storyville (1979 - 1983), and gave rise to Mark Tucker's standard work, Ellington: The Early Years. At the Duke Ellington International Conference at Oldham in 1988 he presented a paper on The Cotton Club, detailing Ellington's association with that venue. With Eric Townley he compiled the Jazz Discography 1958 which appeared in Just Jazz 3.

An enthusiastic and meticulous discographer, Dutton also had a special interest in orchestras of Bob Crosby and Jimmy Lunceford. His discography of Lunceford, which appeared in Matrix, was the first comprehensive coverage of the orchestra. Other notable discographies were of Humphrey Lyttleton (with Norman McSwann) and the Jelly Roll Morton Victor recordings, with the first authoritative identifications of the takes used (with Dave Carey and George Hulme); this appeared in Jazz Journal. A special skill was his ability to identify the individual instruments within a reed section.

Dutton was in the army during World War II; thereafter his day job was as a surveyor. He founded the

Malvern Jazz Record Society and was secretary for many years.
With due acknowledgment to Derek Ansell and the Jazz Journal.

We are grateful to his family for sending notes about Frank's life.



Left to right: **Ted Jones** (1940-48), **Julian Comrie** (1946-54), **Roger Kendal** (1942-50),
Michael Miles (1943-50), **Philip Quick** (1945-50), **Frank Dutton** (1936-44)

Ted Jones (1940-48) died on 1st February 2009. He had been in a nursing home suffering from dementia for 2 years. We hope to include tributes to him in the next addition. Jane Gunner and Bill White attended his funeral in Bedford.

Arnold Brain (1929 - 37) died on new year's eve 2007. From Rendcomb he went to Loughborough and was awarded a 1st class engineering diploma in 1940. He was a regular supporter of O.R reunions and was president of the O.R Society 1991 - 96. His sons Martin and Peter have sent the following tribute: Arnold began his education at Rendcomb in September 1929. His parents farmed at Wick, near Bristol. He had four brothers and two sisters. It was a difficult time for the family, particularly when Arnold and his sister, Margaret, contracted scarlet fever, requiring a six week stay in an isolation unit and two of his brothers suffered from diphtheria, the eldest sadly dying aged 16 years.

Despite these early setbacks, Arnold won a scholarship to Rendcomb and soon excelled both academically and at sport. He was captain of cricket, hockey and athletics and also senior prefect. In 1937 he went on to Loughborough College, obtaining a 1st class diploma in engineering in 1941. He was also captain of the combined universities hockey team and played hockey for Leicestershire.

He then began his military service with 14th Field Squadron of the Royal Engineers. His unit disembarked at Arromanches, Bayeux and Caen. The following months they made their way through Belgium, Holland and Germany clearing mines, building temporary bridges and protecting river crossings, including the bridge at Nijmegen.

In 1947 he married Pat – the start of a 61 year long, happy family life. In 1948 he began a 30-year career with the Ministry of Transport, which took him to Surrey, Cardiff, Worcestershire and Nottingham. He continued to play hockey regularly during this period – often taking some of the family to watch. In 1972 he was appointed chairman of the East Midlands Economic Planning Council and regional director of D. of E., the first civil engineer to hold the posts.

In 1978, on his retirement, he moved to Cheltenham where he enjoyed an active life of gardening, golf, Probus Club etc. He also went to Australia to visit brothers and sisters whom he had not seen since their emigration in the 1960's.

Arnold was a regular supporter of Old Rendcombian reunions after he moved to Cheltenham, and he was often seen at the college when his daughter, Jo, was in the sixth form (1979 - 1981) before going on to St. Peter's College, Oxford. Arnold was president of the Old Rendcombian Society from 1986 to 1991 during which time the committee meetings benefited from his deep interest in Rendcomb and wise advice. He kindly presented the society with the president's medallion – worn at the summer reunion.

Arnold was a quiet, unassuming person who never boasted of his achievements. He was always keen to

support and encourage his family and took a great pride in their achievements. His wife, Pat, was a steadfast support throughout their long marriage and looked after him devotedly as his health began to fail. Chris Wood, Jane Gunner and Bill White attended the funeral.



Left to right: **John Tolputt** (headmaster), **Pat Brain**, **Arnold Brain** (1929-37), **Vera Fell** (Staff: 1934-73), **Stella Butler**

Arthur Douglas Thomas (1929 - 34). His son, Richard, writes:

Douglas Thomas was born in 1917 after his father had already died in service in World War I. An only child, he was raised by his widowed mother in the beautiful village of Painswick. Although he lacked a father, he was surrounded by a close extended family from whom he received much love and kindness, and whom he always remembered fondly. From the village school he was able, on the strength of a scholarship, to progress to Rendcomb.

He valued the advantages that life at Rendcomb brought him, and prized especially becoming a fluent speaker of French. (In later life, he owned one of those old prints of Rendcomb, which I see illustrated on page 11 of the 2008 newsletter. I wonder how many more of the surviving prints found their way into Rendcombian hands!) Leaving at sixteen when his scholarship expired, he took up a library services appointment in Birmingham, the city that was to be his home for the rest of his life.

It was during World War II service in the RAF as a radio engineer that he married his first wife, Betty Smith. The couple were to have two children. Richard was born in 1944 while Douglas was serving near Ghent. Helen was born three years later, and always had an especially close and loving relationship with her dad. In 1955, tragedy struck with Betty's untimely early death, leaving Douglas heartbroken. Richard and Helen remember with gratitude how their grandma Thomas stepped into the breach to look after them.

Douglas had been an avid reader and user of libraries from an early age. He had the enormous good fortune to spend his working life in a career that suited him perfectly. After working at the Northfield branch library, he moved on to the Central Lending Library before becoming, in 1961, the branch librarian at the newly opened Tower Hill Library in the north of the city. His professional approach, coupled with his personality, always created a pleasant workplace for everyone.

1961 was also the year in which he married his second wife, Eileen Pollard – a marriage that was to prove long and happy. In 1966 came the birth of their much-loved only child, David. Father and son shared a love of railways, a bond that was to give them many happy hours together during David's childhood. Later, Douglas would have the satisfaction of following David's successful career in rolling stock manufacturing. Perhaps the only job that would have suited Douglas as much as librarian would have been that of stationmaster!

After Tower Hill, Douglas was able to become librarian at his own local library in Kings Heath until his retirement. It was to be a long retirement, lived for the most part in good health. His family was always the most precious thing to him. He felt he had been very fortunate as a husband, father and grandfather, and lucky to have lived long enough to become, in the end, a great-grandfather as well, to two girls born in Spokane, WA, USA. He will be remembered with much affection.

Neil McGregor-Wood (21st December 1926 – 5th January 2008)

His daughter Caroline has sent the following tribute:

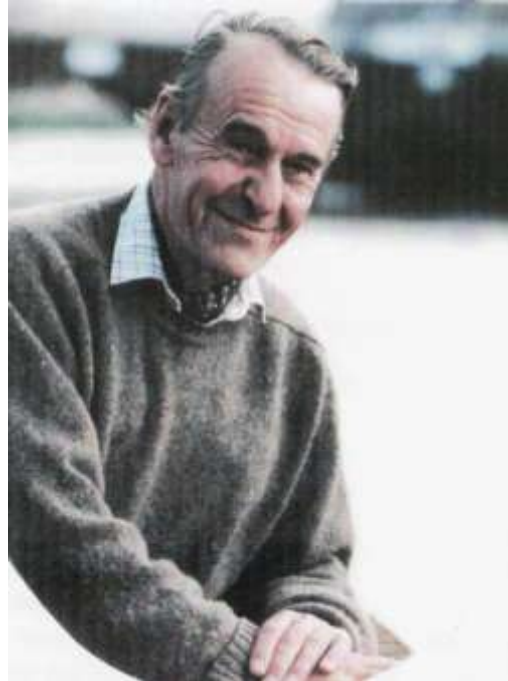
Neil was brought up in North London with his two sisters. He attended Rendcomb and after national service went up to Trinity College, Cambridge, where he graduated in law in 1950. He qualified as a barrister in 1953 and pursued a career in insurance in the City. He rose to the post of managing director of Minet Life & Pensions and was also a general commissioner of income tax. Neil remained a trustee of the Minet Charitable Trust until his death.

Neil had been an active local politician, first in New Malden and Ockham, where he was chairman of the parish council for six years and co-chaired the campaign group which effectively blocked plans to develop the airfield at Wisley. He had been chairman of the board of governors of Rokeby Preparatory School in Kingston and later on the board of Ripley Court School, Surrey. After retirement he joined the board of St. Anthony's School, Chichester. He had also been vice chairman of the New Park Centre in Chichester and a member of the Chichester Cathedral Council and Deanery Synod.

Following retirement in 1986 Neil moved with his wife Rosemary to Chichester and then to Arundel in 1997. He was a trustee of the Weald and Downland Open Air Museum in Singleton for 20 years, where he was also vice chairman from 1992 - 2006. He was an immensely

energetic man in retirement and followed his passion for the stage (having acted in the footlights as a student in Cambridge). He was involved in four dramatic groups and had appeared in over 30 productions, roles ranging from Sir Toby Belch to Widow Twankie. He was also a Chichester Festive Theatre describer for the visually impaired.

He died at the age of 81 on 5th January 2008 following a severe stroke. Neil is survived by his four children and eight grandchildren. Very sadly his wife of 55 years, Rosemary died in the same year on 14th March. We all miss them both most dreadfully.



Memories

From **David Godfrey** (1948 - 56)

Re. **Alastair Wallace** (1949 - 55)

I have just received the newsletter and was greatly saddened to read that Alastair Wallace had died. We were close friends at Rendcomb and shared several 'adventures', including borrowing the shotgun which one of the gardeners kept above a door in an outbuilding at the rectory. We were crossing the playing fields up Top at about 5.30 am looking for rabbits when we met Mr Graty, the PE and woodwork master. I was carrying the shotgun at the time and we exchanged brief morning greetings before going our separate ways. We returned the shotgun quickly and waited to be summoned to explain to DWL-B. what we were doing. No summons, no explanations, nothing. Gilbert Graty made no mention of it ever and I have often wondered why. He cannot have failed to see the gun. I had intended to try and see Alastair since I had heard he had moved to Canada to try and resolve the mystery but sadly it is too late. His family lived on Leckhampton Hill and we would frequently cycle over to have a huge tea on Sundays with his parents and inevitably try for rabbits in the field across the road using Alastair's 410 which he kept at home. I think we built several tree houses together in the Wilderness which must have given him a taste for log cabin building and which is now probably prohibited by Health and Safety Regulations.

The photo on page 12, which **Peter Hayes** (1949 - 57) says is 'Ambrose Apple John's Adventure', I am pretty sure is in fact the cast of 'The Rivals'. I am 6th from the left and was one of the Rivals. On the extreme left is 'Frappier' (to rhyme with trapper) Horn who was Squire something (can't remember the name) and sadly I cannot put a name to anyone else. Frappier incidentally was a very good runner and won the lodges race in a little over ten minutes in 1954. He was called 'Frappier' because when asked by Antony Austin for the verb 'to give' said it with a very strong Gloucestershire accent. Peter was a year behind me and I think he came from Kenya, which to us was very exotic.

Geoff Bye (1940 - 48) writes from the US:

The notes by **Peter Binks** and **George Davis** struck a chord with me. Their memories seem to be very good.

Peter was right – wood workshop was called ‘Manual’. He did not mention the canvas canoes that were built there for use on the lake (now pretty overgrown I think). George is correct in his memory of Steed. I don’t recall if he was one of the boys entering Rendcomb with me in 1940, but if not he arrived soon after. And yes, his father was Wickham Steed of The Times (or so the story went at the time!). Another boy with a literary parent was John Murry, whose father was the author J. Middleton Murry. Murry may have been a contemporary of Peter Binks. Like many others, Rendcomb was for me life-changing. For the better of course! Looking back, it seems almost too good to be true that I was supported for 8 years by a scholarship. What good fortune that was. I have just stepped down as the head of a chapter of an organization here in the US, which strives to give better higher-educational opportunities to young men and women of colour. Here in Guilford, Connecticut, we provide a residence for 6 young women who attend the local high (Grammar) school (as an alternative to an inner-city school) with an emphasis on academics and gaining entry to the more prestigious universities. We have existed for 34 years and have had tremendous success with our students. It is an all-volunteer and locally financed operation. I served for 9 years, and in large part I was motivated by the good fortune that came my way with my Rendcomb scholarship. The reward is seeing the success of the students. Those interested may visit www.guilfordabc.org to read more. Don’t complain about the web site – I set it up and maintain it!

Even though just past my 78th birthday I am still competitive, a character trait that was noticed at Rendcomb in everything except academics! On the day after my recent birthday I race-walked a local 4-mile road race. I was the only man in the over-70 age group, and so I got the medal. Even though race-walking rather than running, I was not last overall! At Rendcomb I loved gym classes, couldn’t wait to be on Top, whether with a football, hockey ball, or cricket ball. I think I can claim to have organized the first rugby game at Rendcomb. I was a fan of Gloucester (still am to some extent). We played on a Sunday afternoon in the winter term of 1947; strictly for fun, with most of us not even particularly familiar with the rules. No one got hurt! In those days Rendcomb was a football school, but I took up rugby on leaving and had some fun playing with 20th Squadron RAF, Beckenham, and Thurrock.

With regard to Douglas Payne’s Rendcomb WWII memoirs, having seen a partial draft a few years ago it was good to be able to read the final product. His memory puts mine to shame, although a little jogging from his text does wonders.

Earlier I had disagreed with him on some trivial details, particularly concerning routine times. For instance I believe breakfast began well before 8 am, not least because it would have been impossible to have the dining room cleaned up by 8:35, Doug’s noted time for assembly. I also think assembly began earlier, since the first lesson of the morning started I think at 8:35. Similarly, high tea at weekends was at 5:30pm. This I remember well since I was often ‘out’ on Sunday afternoon and knew exactly when I had to be back. These outings were often on my bicycle, the urban areas of Cirencester, Cheltenham, and Gloucester being within my reach. I have absolutely no recollection of signing out before riding off, as mentioned by Doug! I have a few other tiny quibbles not worthy of mention, and perhaps only illustrating the limits of human memory! Doug’s very sympathetic memories of Bottle Wilson and Molly sat well with me. There were a number of stories about them. One, which Doug missed, concerned Wilson, who loved, among other things, pig latin. On being absent from his room due to a visit to Cirencester he left a note pinned to his door that read “Gon ad Corinium”. Sort of humour well appreciated by young boys. I have a letter still from A.G.G.Richards (Dickers) in which he also notes that he was given 5 days notice in 1940 to switch from teaching maths to physics. In the same letter he was quite critical of heads Simpson and Lee-Browne, and John James, in not understanding what kind of maths was required for Oxbridge scholarships. He was also a little bitter about being more or less forced out when Jack Fell came back from the RAF. To quote him “I should not have had to hand over to a ‘true’ mathematician (Hull) and become a middle school odd-job man”. In a wonderful meeting I had with him in May 1994 when he was in his mid 80’s, he assured me that my selection as a foundation scholar was due to his vote! By the way, Doug misquotes one of Dicker’s sayings – “Nothing for nothing and not much for ninepence” I think it should be sixpence. There was then a sixpenny coin, but not a ninepenny one. Something that struck me on reading the memoirs is the almost complete lack of reference to his peers (classmates). The only one mentioned I believe is Michael Morgan. There were 12 boys entering Rendcomb in September 1940, with four of us being foundation scholars. Not all were still there in 1948, but even so there apparently was little noteworthy intercourse between Doug and his compatriates. Perhaps he was more of a loner than I even remember.

He and I had a good many commonalities. We both came from fairly humble backgrounds, although mine was probably more comfortable and I did not have to labour during holidays. We were both foundation scholars. We both accepted places at Rendcomb because of substantial boosts from our primary school heads. When September 1947 arrived, Lee-Browne advised Doug and I that he had been unable to choose between us for the position of senior prefect. Accordingly he appointed us as joint senior prefects! This was probably a unique occurrence. We both failed to matriculate for Oxbridge due to issues with Latin, and in my case French also. Since this was almost a crime in those days neither of us was given any help with higher education possibilities when we left in 1948, something that we shared as perhaps our only criticism of Rendcomb. Nonetheless we both independently realized that there were decent alternatives to Oxbridge, and we both succeeded in

graduating from London University as external students. (I found out from Mr. Richards that he took the same external science degree as I at London. Small world). Doug and I found this out many years later. In later life we did live rather different lives. Doug to my knowledge never left the UK, even for a holiday. I on the other hand leapt at the chance to work abroad, and in a quite unforeseen way ended up living permanently in the United States. The US by the way, allows dual citizenship and I have not given up my UK passport! We had a lively correspondence for a few years before his death. He was obsessed, if that is not too strong a word, with WWII history. Hardly a letter arrived without some reference to some issue he was trying to research, and I think a lot of that interest comes across in his Rendcomb memoirs. The last time we were together was in 1995, after the 75th anniversary celebration. Among other things he, I, Ted Jones and wives visited Thorne Walters in Bristol, where we had a pub lunch. This was the last time that the four foundation scholars of 1940 were together. Regrettably Doug is dead, Ted is in care suffering from a miserable form of dementia, (*died Feb 09, Ed*) and Thorne, who was having some physical problems in 1995 and has not been heard from again. I am just happy to be writing this note!

(By the way, there is clear reference in the James/Osborne book to four, 45 minute morning periods, starting at 8:30. This is in line with my recollection. With two 5-minute breaks, and a 15 or 20 min. break at about 11, classes would have ended at 12. On gym days the gym class was at 12:10. Lunch was at 1:10. I'm beginning to sound obsessed with trivial data here!)

Julian Comrie (1946 - 54) adds:

During 1946-54, breakfast was at 7.40am, assembly at 8.25 and lessons started at 8.35am!!

John Gosden (1947 - 54) writes from Thailand:

Looking back over some 60 years, some of my memories are hazy, but I thought younger ORs might like to know how it felt at Rendcomb in those post-war years. The first impression that always comes is the immense amount of freedom we all had, especially in comparison with today's children. Although we had classes on six mornings a week, the majority of the school only had two afternoons of lessons, on Wednesday and Friday, and even those were either early or late in the afternoon, depending on the season. Of the remaining days, Monday afternoon was free for everyone for 'activities', except for the fifth and sixth form scientists, who had lab work. Thursday and Saturday were games days – rugby, hockey or cricket, changing with the term, and Tuesday was public work (PW). For many of us this involved staggering up the back stairs with arms full of logs for the staff fireplaces. As to the source of those logs, more later. PW was also used as a punishment for a variety of sins, and meant a loss of freedom for a set period, during which similar tasks were performed. In retrospect I feel sorry for those boys who were given the unwelcome task of supervising the 'criminals'. On Sundays we had church in the mornings, with everyone dressed in 'Sunday suits' complete with neckties, but the afternoons were also free, used for such things as walks to Chedworth to explore the Roman villa. Everybody was encouraged to bring a bicycle back to school (in those days one could take such machines on a train, as well as using the PLA (Passenger Luggage in Advance) service to send a trunk on ahead). However, one was restricted to the school grounds until one had passed the cycle test. This was supervised by DWLB, and consisted of riding a bike round an obstacle course of logs on the forecourt ('ASHphalt' as everyone insisted on calling it, to DWLB's disgust), changing hands the while as instructed, followed by a no-hands ride down the back drive. It bore no relation to road safety (perhaps not a great concern, with so little traffic on the roads) and was purely concerned with ability to handle the bike safely. Having passed, one was free of the countryside as long as one returned to school at the appropriate times. This freedom reached its peak on 'Commem Day' (I don't think I ever knew what it commemorated) on which one had to lodge a statement of one's intended destination and then, after breakfast, launched out with a packed lunch either alone or with a group of friends, to explore as far as one could provided one returned by supper time. Around the school itself, we were free to go into the park, which was full of large trees and were excellent sites for tree houses, and when fallen, were cut up and hauled to the courtyard outside the woodwork 'manual' to provide the source of the logs for the staff fireplaces. Then there was the Wilderness – full of lilies, scented with Philadelphus (mock orange), and the site of summer evening games of 'French and English'. Curious how, just after a war against the Germans and Japanese, we were still fighting wars from 150 years ago!

Also in the park was the lake, fed by the Churn and beginning to get overgrown with reeds at the upper end, but still with enough water to float the scout kayaks built in the manual classes, and with a waterfall at the outlet, with a dipper's nest beside it. Above the lake was the ruin of a summerhouse in the form of a classical temple.

Below the stable block (being converted into laboratories and staff flats) was Kennel Bottom, site of a hairy sledge run, and also famed in science as the place where I performed the research for my S-level fieldwork paper – informally titled 'What Rabbits Have For Breakfast'. There was another sledge run on the other side of the main road, beside the Woodmanote road, known as Big Jump, for a sort of ski jump effect, only attempted by the most foolhardy boys. Beyond Kennel Bottom was Conigre wood. This beech wood in spring was carpeted with bluebells, and in early summer full of orchids, Early Purple, Spotted, White Helleborine, Twayblade, plus Herb Paris, but its main attraction was the badgers and on summer evenings we would lie out

near the setts we had marked as occupied, and wait for them to emerge. At the north end of the park, beyond the lake, was Clifferdene wood, a much wetter and lushier place than Conigre, and less often visited, but full of exciting and intriguing places, with different birds and plants. Below the school buildings and formal terraces to the west, was an area called, for unknown historical reasons, The Flying Field. This was, in summer, full of butterflies.

Altogether it is easy to see why the Rendcomb years have left me with a delight in the natural world, and a continuing need for freedom and space in which to enjoy it.



Before the Arts Block

Travel Bursary

The 2008 travel bursaries were awarded to Tessa Couch, (2001 - 08), Charlotte Cox (2000 - 2007) and Alex Holden (2000 - 2007)

Tessa Couch writes:

Duck, duck, duck, chicken! As I waded from the boat to the shore of the village with my bag held above my



head, I wondered what I had got myself into. Apprehension was soon overcome by joy as I was greeted by inquisitive children shouting “Hello, how are you?” and was introduced to Louise, the village cook, who looked after me while I was there. I was with another girl in the village of Antisakala, who was already a primary school teacher, so I had someone to show me the ropes before I got thrown in teaching on my own. After a delicious meal of black beans, Zebu and tomatoes in Louise’s hut, we thought it would be best to get an early night in preparation for the big teaching day in the morning. Getting up bright and early for a wash in the sea, we were soon ready for the day ahead. As we made the one-minute trip from our hut to

the school, we were surrounded by excited children shouting “Ecole, Ecole!” and following us, eager to get into school.

Normally there were between seven and ten children ranging from



three to sixteen years old. We were really impressed by their level of English and their enthusiasm to learn. We covered a huge variety of vocabulary as well as teaching them songs and games. The game ‘duck, duck, duck, chicken’ became a firm favourite, especially with the competitive boys! As the time flew by and the weeks rolled into one, I soon realised I was heading back to England very soon. I had met so many lovely people and made so many friends, I did not want to leave. The village I had been staying in was so small and miles from anywhere else that you do become very attached to everyone in it. It was hard adjusting to this new life of simplicity, no electricity, running water or even the comfort of a proper bed but I loved



every minute of it and admire these people, for what they can do with so little. I had an amazing time and feel very lucky and privileged to be made so welcome by the village and to have had this opportunity.

Alex Holden writes:

While he was in Africa at Lords Meade he taught music to students. Music was not a timetabled subject prior his arrival and he taught class lessons as well as individual piano and guitar lessons. While he was there he purchased 5 guitars for use by students. He also formed a hockey team, which played against nearby schools and in a national tournament. He worked towards a concert in the newly built Rendcomb African Hall at the end of his visit, which was opened by the Minister for Education. This project was financed from funds raised by students at Rendcomb College. The concert was attended by all the students and staff at the college and was great success. During his time in Uganda he also visited Aids Clinics and other orphanages. He made a great many friendships and is in fact returning again this year, funded by himself, to continue the work he did last year. Alex is working with other students from Rendcomb who are hoping to go out to Lords Meade.



In front of the new dormitory



Music lessons



The rugby team



The concert

Lords Meade Vocational College is located near Jinja, on the shores of Lake Victoria, a one hour drive from Kampala. It has been open since 2000 and the driving force behind LMVC is to help pupils who have seen or experienced sights or events that no human should have to cope with. 80% of the pupils are orphans, either through AIDS or from cultural wars in Northern Uganda.

College News

Derek Coombes (staff 1982 - 2009)

David Hawksell (staff: 1973 - 93) writes:

26 years ago, when it was decided that physics and computing should have a full time laboratory technician, I was rather worried when the bursar, Edward Thring, announced that a naval colleague had recommended a petty officer, who was just about to retire, for the job. I had expected that we would be advertising the post, reading applications, checking references etc. Derek arrived a few weeks later. Right from the start it was clear that Derek had the qualities that would make him successful. Though he had virtually no experience of either

physics or computing, he was soon an integral part of the two very busy departments. I knew that as long as he had been given clear details of what was to be done, Derek would complete the task in hand. As he grew more familiar with the many and varied jobs, the teaching staff became used to relying on Derek's efficient and reliable support. Derek was very popular with the pupils. He was often called upon to repair items as diverse as spectacles and bicycles. He played a major role in both the electronics store and the college bookshop and thus had contact with virtually all the pupils. Not only would he give help where it was needed, but he would also expect good behaviour and his approach was respected by those he came into contact with. Personally I valued Derek for his approach in all aspects of his work.



His reliability – I can't remember him being away in ten years – and his confident and friendly approach to all he came in contact with. He was a pleasure to work with.

Chris Wood writes:

In the years following David Hawkswell's retirement, Derek took on many more responsibilities including school stationery, photocopiers and Duke of Edinburgh's Award expedition equipment, all done with his usual military precision. Few staff and pupils will not have been helped by Derek in some way. If he did not set up apparatus or unjam a photocopier for you, he probably delivered stationery, issued your DoE equipment or completed a presentation job such as a geography project or a leavers' yearbook. A school cannot run smoothly without the service provided by such support staff as Derek and this type of work often goes unnoticed or unthanked. However there is no doubt that Derek's contribution to the life of the school has been most significant and, with a big thank you, we hope that he enjoys a long and well-earned retirement.

Charles Jefferson (chaplain 2001-2009)

Jane Gunner writes:

Charles Jefferson had the unenviable task of taking over from Kim Taplin (staff 1997 - 2001) as chaplain to the college in 2001. With him came wife Cath and sons Edward (2001 - 05) and William (2002 - 07) all of whom quickly became part of the college and village, Cath helping at music exam times and singing with the Rendcomb Singers organised by the director of music at the college. Charles's deeply held faith made a significant impact on the pupils and his thoughtful and provocative PSME classes reached those most in need of guidance.

One of my lasting memories of Charles will be of him sitting in my father's garden soon after my mother had died, managing to take down the details necessary at such difficult times surrounded by the comings and goings of five dogs, umpteen teenagers, a collection of relations and a tea tray. He shepherded us through the cremation, interment and memorial services with real skill and sensitivity. Remembrance services too, were handled with great tact, something of great importance to me as three of my half uncles are commemorated in St. Peter's Church.

But something which cannot go unmentioned was Charles's tolerance of rock music, manifest by his transporting of Ed and his drum kit to band practice sessions with my nephew Joe Watson and permitting my son, **Mark** (2001 - 08) to accompany **Emily Apps** (2004 - 08) singing 'Fields of Gold' and then blast out 'Freebird' on his electric guitar at the leavers' service last summer.

ORs will want to wish Charles and his family all the best for their new life in Thrapston, Nr Peterborough.

Chris Wood writes:

The academic year began with 275 in the senior school and 130 in the junior school. Exam statistics for the summer 2008 were:

A level: 100% pass; 25% A; 57% A/B, GCSE: 92% pass; 33% A*/A

There was an inspection in which the college did very well. The report can be found at <http://www.isi.net/report/0903.htm>

The school timetable changed to 35-minute lessons, which finish at 3.30 and are followed by activities. There are still lessons on a Saturday morning. Lindsey North moved from Stable to College House, whilst Paul Bevans took over the reins of Stable and Paul Jennings became head of sixth form with particular responsibility for cultural enrichment. Karen Hughes married Mark Coups and became houseparents of Park House. On moving out of Park, Hugh Marsden became Duke of Edinburgh Award coordinator and the bronze award has been reinstated at Rendcomb. Paul Cairns handed over the important job of works manager to his brother, Peter. Emma Hayward has replaced Ann Slark in admissions.

Our head of geography, Caroline Franklin, became Mrs Kirby and moved to Leighton Park in January 2009; she has been replaced by David Illingworth from Abbotsholme. Derek Coombes, the science technician, retired in February; Chris Wood and Sophie Blackwell retire at the end of the summer term.

The junior school has received a green flag award for its ecological work and after a successful senior school eco week it is hoped that there may some development of the lake as a nature reserve which can be enjoyed by the pupils. Snow brought the school to a standstill in February and a four-day closure allowed the boarders to make the most of a white Rendcomb. Construction of an igloo and sledging (on dining room trays!) replaced lessons.

Following the snow a new spring appeared below the outdoor stage, but this turned out to be an old spring which had once been piped away and the pipe had broken. The water has now been routed to flow onto the main drive as a small waterfall.



The Friends Of Rendcomb College

Registered charity No: 290373

Update from: Colin Burden

Chairman: Richard Wills

Middle End Farm, Eastington, Northleach, Cheltenham, Glos. GL54 3PL. Telephone: 01451 860421

Executive Trustee: Colin Burden

21 The Whiteway, Cirencester, Glos. GL7 2ER Telephone: 01285 655240

Aim: The Friends of Rendcomb provides scholarships or bursaries for boys and girls from Gloucestershire primary schools who would benefit from a Rendcomb education. The need may arise from parental illness or family breakdown.

We would like to thank the college and all those Rendcombians who supported 'The Ultimate Gift and Food Fair' held at the college on the 31st October and 1st November 2008. This was a joint charity event held in conjunction with the Cheltenham based Cobalt Appeal Fund Crack Cancer Campaign. This year The Friends were responsible for the administration. The event raised £7,500 for The Friends and £8,500 for the Cobalt Appeal – despite the credit crunch. We were particularly grateful for the support given by **David Vaisey** CBE (1945 - 54), **Professor David Mabblerley** (1959 - 66) and **Richard Deacon** (1976 - 83) for providing auction and raffle prizes, **Russell Ogden** (1984-89) and **Grant Hughes** (1982-89), for taking a stall once again, to **Fiona Burge** (1988 - 90) for selling so many tickets, to **Bill White** (staff 1961 - 97), **Chris** (1965 - 1971, staff 1976 -) and **Penny Wood**, **Richard Burden** (1997 - 2004), **Luke Gunner** (1998 - 2005), **Mark Gunner** (2001 - 08) for helping at the event and to **Graham Hulbert** (2000 - 05) and **Mark Gunner** for providing the musical entertainment.

Many Old Rendcombians have made generous contributions to the The Friends, in the form of donations, covenants or bequests over the years. So far you have given 8 scholars an excellent start to their education. The last two scholars left in 2007. At the moment we have £78,000 invested with an annual income from covenants of about £2,500.

The trustees are keen to make their funds available for new scholars – before they become too devalued. The

headmaster, Gerry Holden, has been asked to present possible candidates to the trustees. If you would like to make a contribution to The Friends of Rendcomb the necessary paperwork is at the end of the newsletter. All sums, however small, will be put to very good use.

Present Trustees	Appointed
Richard Wills - Chairman, Governor Rendcomb College	2004
Cohn Burden - Executive Trustee, staff 1963 - 1997	2005
Jane Gunner - OR, former parent, hon. sec. OR Society	1994
Dr. Madge Lyman - Governor Rendcomb College, former parent	2006
Gerry Holden Headmaster - Ex. officio	1999
Keith Winmill - OR (1972 - 79)	2009
Mark Naylor - Commercial Operations Manager	2009

Cricket - 29th June 2008



The scores are irrelevant as we didn't have two sides playing - we just had two rolling batsman at a time.

Players were from left to right: Chris Jarrett (1988-95), Charlie Barton (1990-97), Rich Witchell (1992-97), Fran Barton (1988-95), Laurie Barton (1993-2000), Al Christie (1988-95), Ian Thompson (1988-95), Pat Boydell (1988-95), Ad Beales (1989-93), Greg Jones (1996-2003), Ben Bagdadi (1998-2001), Roland Lewis (1939-46), Charles Hutton-Potts (1976-83), Phil Webb (1992-99). David Chapman (1986-91) – missing from photo but present!

Rugby reunion - Saturday 6th December 2008



Philip Ellis (2001-08), James Groombridge (2002-04), Richard Collins (2001-08), Toby Harris (2003-07), Laurie Wilcox (2001-08), Alex Holden (2000-07), Steve Jones (1988-95), Ali Harris (1989-96), Patrick Boydell (1985-90), Ralph Alexander Aspin (1997-2004), Adam Padmore (1996-2001), Dom Sharman (1993-99), John Morgan (1988-95), Charlie Hutton-Potts (1976-83), Tim Bates (1996-2003), Chris Barefoot (2002-2004).



Many thanks to all those who came to play and watch. I think the excellent photos taken by Liese Holden capture the essence of the day.

Pat Boydell (*If you have any questions about any aspect of OR's reunions you can e-mail me at patrickb@tindirect.com or call on 07968 824414*)



Lacrosse - 21st March 2009



Saturday the 21st of March marked a momentous day in OR history – the first OR's lacrosse match! With lacrosse only having been recently taught at the school a selection of recent leavers comprised most of the team, with the rest made up of a few older girls and even an OR's mother (well done Sara Arkle) who stepped in at the last minute (oh, and the 2 lacrosse coaches). The game was hard fought and much enjoyed by all. The college team showed a very high standard and started the game (literally) running rings round the ORs taking an early lead. The ORs however showed determination and battled on. Sophie Arkle made some great runs and attacks on goal, albeit with some questionable 'new' rules she had learnt at university. Hannah Bishop scored an excellent goal but her fearless attacking did get her into trouble for some very illegal tackles!! Tessa Couch also scored some great goals..... unfortunately for the ORs Tessa was playing goalie so they were in fact 'own-goals' but at least the effort was there! After a 40-minute match the final score stood at 7-4 to the college side (technically 5-4 if Tessa's contributions were excluded!!), which I think reflects a very valiant game against a very good side. The game was tiring, but really good fun on such a lovely sunny day up top. Well done to Tessa for organising the game and for all those who got involved – it bodes well for future ORs lacrosse games where the standard will undoubtedly improve!!

Jess Weston



Team: Sarah Arkle (parent), Rebecca Hutchison (2001-06), Georgie Sefton (2006-08), Amie Schofield (2001-08), Tessa Couch (2001-08), Amanda Graham (2000-07), Sophie Arkle (2001-08), Jess Weston (1998-05), Hannah Bishop (2001-05), Hannah Richards (2003-08)

Hockey - 21st March 2009

Well I'm happy to report amazing weather and a good, solid turn out this year after the lack of players for the rugby in December.

Coming in to the proceedings the players' list seemed light but with a few extra people turning up on the day



we managed to field two strong teams from a pool of 26 players.

The 2nd's match saw a selection of the OR's more 'experienced' players take the field, using all of their wisdom and cunning to battle out a 2-2 draw against a much fitter school side. It was predicted that the school would face a heavy loss in this fixture but after an unexpected injury to the one player deemed to be the heartbeat of the side, the playing field was level once more and fate blew a cruel blow to the OR's hopes for a decisive win. All players showed grit and determination but special mention should go to Craig Marcham who worked tirelessly as the engine of the side and Ash Taylor who shone after his time in the wilderness.

Adam Phelps and Alex Paton also bewildered with their stick skills and set the benchmark for the level of fitness expected from every OR over the years. I would mention Sam Maylott at this point as he may have scored one of the goals but technically he was a ringer and as such should take absolutely no credit for anything that happened. I think it was clear to everyone that his brother Nat was far more influential throughout the day's play.

The game stepped the whole spectator experience up a level. With the likes of Ralph Alexander Aspin (dog with a bone), Jonny Barks (ex-county), Charlie Paine (ex-league two), Phil Moore (ex-army) and a host of other skilled players, the school team really had a hard game on their hands.

In a closely balanced game that only shifted in favour of the OR's half way through the second half, the tension was palpable and the entertainment second to none.

The school showed great individual skills and fitness and this was pitched against the slower more considered approach of the OR's, with their ability to play as more of a unit. This is most likely due to the innate ability of any OR to know their fellow brethren with something that can only be compared to a sixth sense. Don't worry current pupils; you too will experience this enlightenment shortly after you leave Rendcomb for the last time. 5-3 was the final score and is something for next year's team to aim for.

After the hockey twenty or so of the OR's went to the Seven Tuns pub in Chedworth and had food courtesy of the committee (thank you very much) and watched the climax of the six nations rugby. We then headed to Cheltenham for more revelry and I am told that everyone had a great time.

I would like to thank all the school and committee members who came to watch and Alex Brealy for helping to organise the day as usual (it's a thankless task). Special mention also goes to Chris Wood who, with his retirement coming up this year, gave us the honour of umpiring his last game at the school as a member of staff. I am sure the school and committee join me in thanking Chris for all of his work over the years and his dedication to hockey at Rendcomb. It isn't all bad news however as he should now be free to play for the OR's next year!

I look forward to seeing you all again soon, please, if you have ever thought about returning to the school then do, everybody is welcome!

Pat Boydell

HOCKEY - 21st March 2009



Above: 1st XI , Below 2nd XI

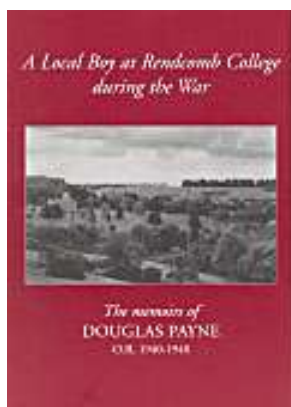
Tommy Lait (1996-03), Joseph Scott (2001-08), Adam Padmore (1996-01), Ralph Alexander Aspin (1997-04), Tristan Sharman (1993-97), Phil Moore (1980-87), Charles Hutton Potts (1976-83), Craig Marcham (1989-96), Simon Faulkner Barrett (1986-93), Richard Collins (2001-08), Ben Crane (2000-09), Jonny Newton (2003-08), Nat Maylott (1995-2002), Sam Maylott (1991-98), Ash Taylor (1991-98), Pete Croft (1986-93), Pat Boydell (1988-95), Max Webb Dickin (2000-07), Mat Harbottle (1998-2003), Jonny Barks (2001-07), Charlie Paine (1987-90), Adam Phelps (1980-82), Alex Paton (1977-84), Alex Brealy (1982-87), Richard Pass (2002-08)



Destination of 6A Leavers 2008

APPS, Emily	-	Trinity, Musical theatre
ARKLE, Sophie	-	Manchester, Textile Design & Management
BROWN Laura	-	Liverpool, French with German
CHEN, Helen	-	UCL, Finance and Accounting
CHEUNG, Carroll	-	Manchester, Design and Management for Retail Fashion
COLLINS, Richard	-	Oxford, Chemistry
COUCH, Tessa	-	Gap Year
ELLIS, Philip	-	University College for the Creative Arts at Farnham, Advertising and Brand communication
FISH, Jonathan	-	Gap Year
GUNNER, Mark	-	Leeds, Electronic & Electrical engineering
HILL, James	-	Coventry, International Relations and Politics
HUANG, Samson	-	York, Maths and Finance
JORDAN, Alexander	-	Plymouth, Computer Science
LAW, Astrid	-	Camberwell, London, Fine Art
LESTER-POWELL, Luke	-	Stroud College, Foundation Art course
LOCKETT, Harriet	-	Kingston, English Literature
NEWTON, Jonathan	-	Army
ODINTSOVA, Maria	-	Oxford Brookes, Business Management
PASS Richard	-	Nottingham, International Economics
RICHARDS, Oliver	-	Southampton, Law
ROACH, Jack	-	Gloucester, Geography
RUDDY, Katherine	-	Southampton, English
SCHOFIELD, Aimee	-	Manchester, Law
SEFTON, Sophie	-	Gap Year
SINCLAIR, Amy	-	Bournemouth, Art
SLARK, Emily	-	Gap Year
STUTCHBURY, Charles	-	Southampton, Marine Biology and Oceanography
WILCOX, Laurence	-	Canterbury, Architecture
WILLIAMS, Kirsty	-	Portsmouth
XU, Ken	-	Gap Year

O. R. Shop



The Society has published this fascinating account of Douglas Payne's time at Rendcomb, in memory of his long service to the O.R. Society. Copies cost £5 + p&p and can be obtained from Jane Gunner.

Polo shirt	£5 *
Sweat Shirt	£5*
Rugby Shirt	£10*
Tie	£5
Blazer badge	£5
Print of the school	£40* (packed in very strong tube)
Framed print	£65 (not by post)
Framed and mounted	£70 (not by post)

*plus £1.50 p&p in UK

Any of the items may be purchased at the school or by post (not the framed print) from:
 C J Wood, 9 Hammond Drive, Northleach, Cheltenham GL54 3JF woodc@rendcomb.gloucs.sch.uk
 Cheques should be made payable to the Old Rendcombian Society
 Please do not forget to add p&p where appropriate.
 Details and photos of the above items may be viewed at: www.rendcombian.org.uk

COLLEGE HISTORY BOOKS

History I £6 minimum*

History II £10*

*plus p&p

Cheques should be made payable to: The Friends of Rendcomb

The late Mr M H C Martin's pamphlet on Saul is also available at £3.50 per copy.

(Proceeds to go to The Friends of Rendcomb)

All of the above can be obtained from: Mrs Jane Gunner, Whiteway Farmhouse, The Whiteway, Cirencester, Glos GL7 7BA jane@r2g2.co.uk

TABLE MATS AND COASTERS

Sets of table mats and coasters featuring sketches of Rendcomb by Richard Sudbury are available again.

A set of 4 mats (9.5" x 7.5") and 4 coasters costs £25 + postage & packing (£5.00 in the U.K.)

These can be ordered from:

Mrs Jane Gunner, Whiteway Farmhouse, The Whiteway, Cirencester, Glos GL7 7BA

