



OLD RENDCOMBIAN SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER

2016

42nd Edition

Contents

SOCIETY OFFICERS.....	1
THE MINUTES OF THE 82 ND ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING	2
83 RD ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING.....	5
DATES OF FUTURE REUNIONS AND SPORTS FIXTURES.....	5
40 YEARS ON – SUNDAY 3 RD JULY 2016	6
SPORTS CONTACTS.....	6
RUGBY REUNION – SUNDAY 6 TH DECEMBER 2015	6
OR REUNION – 28 TH JUNE 2015	7
20 YEAR REUNION	10
THE OLD RENDCOMBIAN WEBSITE	12
THE SUBSCRIPTIONS THOUGHOUT THE YEARS.....	13
CONGRATULATIONS	14
BIRTHS.....	18
MARRIAGES	18
80 TH BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS.....	27
OBITUARIES	33
FRIENDS OF RENDCOMB COLLEGE REG. CHAR NO. 290373	45
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	45
ST PETER’S CHURCH UPDATE.....	46
OLD RENDCOMBIAN NEWS	48
IN MEMORIAM	52
RENDCOMBIANA	56
COLLEGE NEWS.....	57
SAUL	61
OR TRAVEL BURSARY 2015	63
PERFORMING ARTS CENTRE.....	69
HOCKEY – SATURDAY 19 TH MARCH 2016	70
DESTINATION OF 6A LEAVERS 2015	71
CHANGE OF ADDRESS.....	72

OLD RENDCOMBIAN NEWSLETTER

Society Officers

At the Annual General Meeting on 28th June 2015 the following officers were elected:-

President:	Bill White (Staff 1961-97) 3 Jessop Drive, Northleach, (Cheltenham), Glos. GL54 3JG Tel: 01451 860943
Chairman:	Richard Tudor (1973-80)
Vice-Chairman:	Jessica Weston (1998-2005)
Secretary:	Jane Gunner (1975-77) Whiteway Farmhouse, The Whiteway Cirencester, Gloucestershire, GL7 7BA Tel: 01285 658627 e-mail: jane@r2g2.co.uk
Treasurer:	Chris Wood (1965-71; Staff: 1976-2009) 5 Hynam Road, Pershore, WR10 3EB Tel: 01386 554409 e-mail: chriswood99@btinternet.com
School representative:	Alex Brealy (1980-87; Staff 1994-)
Committee Members:	Tommy Lait (1996-2003) Neil Lumby (1968-73) Dominic Sharman (1993-99) Claire Germaine (1990-93) Harley Phelps (2002-2009) Iain Whittaker (1980-87)
Hon Auditor:	David Williams (1966-71)
Newsletter Editor:	Richard Tudor (1973-80) 29 Thornton Crescent, Wendover, Bucks HP22 6DG Tel: 01296 582741 e-mail: rictudor706@yahoo.co.uk

**The Minutes of the 82nd Annual General Meeting
of the Old Rendcombian Society**

held at Rendcomb College in Room E1 on Sunday 28th June 2015

Present: Jane Gunner (1975-1977), Bill White (Staff: 1961-1997), Richard Tudor (1973-1980), Roland Martin ((1982-1989), Headmaster (2011-2015)), Jess Weston (1998-2005), David Williams (1966-1971), Claire Germaine (1990-1993),
Hamish Wilson (1971-1978), Mike Miles (1943-1950), Phil Smith (1968-1974),
Mike James 1968-1974), Stuart Honeyball (1968-1975), Sally Blyth (1973-1975),
Chris Wood (1965-1971, Staff: 1976-09), Nigel Powell (1967-1974), Jonathan Lane (1967-1974), Tessa Hicks (1974-1976), Colin Burden (Staff: 1966-97)

1. Apologies: Harley Phelps (2002-2009), Julian Comrie (1946-1959), Pat Boydell (1988-1995), Iain Whittaker (1980-1987), Bob Edy (1959-1967), Alex Breal (1982-1987)
2. The minutes of the 81st AGM held on Sunday 29th June 2014 were signed as a correct record.
3. Matters arising out of the Minutes held on Sunday 29th June 2014
There were no matters arising.
4. Honorary Treasurer's report
The Treasurer, Chris Wood, thanked David Williams for once again auditing the accounts.
He reported that subscriptions were up, reflecting the increased numbers in the school.
So far £1,000.00 had been paid out from the 2014 Travel Bursary leaving £500.00 in reserve. £500.00 had so far been unclaimed.
The Society had essentially broken even and still had the £10,000.00 in the restricted fund, which was the donation from the Hitchcock family.

The cost of the newsletter was significantly up this year because the College had wished to send out the publicity literature about the Performing Arts Centre with the newsletter. This meant that the weight would cross into the large letter category. With the College paying half the postage, the newsletter was able to be large without incurring further postage cost. However printing 60 pages rather than the usual 48 was more expensive. 1750 newsletters were ordered, 1350 were sent out and about 250 were distributed amongst all staff at the College and leavers.

Following a question, Chris Wood explained that AROPS is the association of old school pupils of which the OR Society is a member, they hold seminars and conferences advising old pupil associations on everything from fundraising to social media.

It was proposed by Jess Weston and seconded by Claire Germaine that the accounts should be adopted and it was agreed unanimously.

5. Nominations for Committee Members

Both Pat Boydell and Roland Martin would be stepping down from the OR committee this summer.

The committee nomination was Iain Whittaker (1980-87), proposed by Claire Germaine, seconded by Tessa Hicks and agreed unanimously.

As outlined in the newsletter, Neil Lumby had stepped down as Chairman. In his absence Richard Tudor had been acting Chairman.

It was proposed by Bill White, seconded by Jane Gunner and agreed unanimously that Richard Tudor would continue as Chairman.

Michael Miles proposed a vote of thanks to Neil Lumby, which was seconded by Chris Wood and agreed unanimously.

All other committee members and posts held to remain the same.

Bill White thanked the committee, those present and those retiring, for all their hard work and thanked Jane Gunner and her team for all the work which went into producing and distributing the newsletter.

6. Travel Bursary

The committee recommended that the annual amount for the Travel Bursary should once again be £1,500.00.

This was proposed by Claire Germaine, seconded by Jess Weston and agreed unanimously.

7. Any other business

The Headmaster gave his report on the activities of the College and its pupils through the year and this was very well received.

He reported that the Junior School had had a successful year with a record number of scholarships being awarded to J6. The nursery now has 31 pupils attending and is at capacity.

In the Senior School, drama productions included *Singin' in the Rain* and *The Comedy of Errors*.

He thanked the ORs for their support of the play, *Faith*, which was taken to the Edinburgh Fringe; an experience appreciated by all.

Roland went on to report that the FOR, through the Frank Dutton Legacy, had agreed to fund two new grand pianos, one of which would eventually be installed in the Performing Arts Centre.

He went on to report on pupils' sporting successes and explained that the Director of Sport has given students opportunities in athletics.

The building of the new tennis courts provided the opportunities to host a parent/child tennis competition, which was attended by about 250 people.

Roland reported on the College's sadness at the sudden death of the Chaplain, Godfrey Simpson, at the start of the academic year. The Headmaster himself has acted as Chaplain for the remainder of the year until Bob Edy (1959-67) was appointed in June.

There had been a lightning strike two weeks before which had badly damaged the main building but there is also much other refurbishment on going at the moment.

The Chairman thanked the Headmaster for his comprehensive report and wished him well in his new post.

Phil Smith (1968-1974) suggested that there had been a lost opportunity in fundraising, thinking that ORs could have been appealed to in order to fund the retention of Saul. The current proposal is that Saul would be removed from the reception area to somewhere else in the building. Phil also felt that ORs would like to see pupils in the college on OR days. The committee undertook to review the situation and see what could be done.

Colin Burden gave an update on the success of the Friends of Rendcomb whose trustees continue to work hard in conjunction with the development office to raise funds for the college.

The meeting ended with a vote of thanks to the college at 1.08pm.

83rd Annual General Meeting

You are invited to attend the 83rd Annual General Meeting of the Old Rendcombian Society on Sunday 3rd July 2016 at Rendcomb College at 12.15p.m.

A G E N D A

1. To receive apologies for absence
2. To receive the minutes of the 82nd A.G.M. held on 28th June 2015
3. To deal with matters arising from the minutes
4. To receive Hon. Treasurer's report
 - (i) Proposal to increase the subscription to £7.50/term from Sept 2017.
5. Nominations for committee members
 - (i) Treasurer, volunteers welcome
 - (ii) PresidentAll proposed and seconded nominations to reach Secretary by 20th June 2016
6. Travel Bursary
7. Any other business
8. Vote of thanks to the College

Dates of Future Reunions and Sports Fixtures

Sunday 3rd July 2016 timetable:

- | | |
|------------|---|
| 10.30 a.m. | Coffee in Clock Hall |
| 11.15 a.m. | Cricket match |
| 12 noon | Pay Bar |
| 12.15 p.m. | AGM in Room E1 |
| 1.00 p.m. | Hot Lunch including vegetarian option for cricketers and all visitors. Main course to be collected from Servery.
No charge: any donations to O.R. Society gratefully received.
Staff retirement presentations. |
| 2.30 pm | Tours of the buildings
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.**

40 YEARS ON – Sunday 3rd July 2016
Calling the class of 1976!!

Charlie Hussey and Tessa Hicks are co-coordinating a class reunion on OR Day this summer, (Sunday 3rd July 2016) to celebrate the 40th anniversary of leaving school.

People from that general era, especially the 1975 and 1977 leavers please come along as well.

Please contact Charlie and Tessa for more details on their Facebook page

Tag Rugby Tournament: Sunday 11th December 2016

Hockey: Saturday 25th March 2017 (provisional)

Cricket: Sunday 2nd July 2017 (provisional)

All provisional dates and those not listed here will be shown on **oldrendcombian.org.uk/reunions** 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. Also on Facebook.

College: Alex Brealy 01285 832314 (W) and 01285 832363 (H)

BrealyA@rendcomb.gloucs.sch.uk

Rugby: Harley Phelps, harley.phelps@googlemail.com, Tommy Lait, tommy_lait@yahoo.co.uk,

Hockey: Harley Phelps, harley.phelps@googlemail.com

Girls' sports: Jess Weston, 07969 177437, jess_weston@hotmail.com,

Holly Phelps, hollyfp Phelps@gmail.com

Cricket: harley.phelps@googlemail.com, Pat Boydell

RUGBY REUNION – Sunday 6th December 2015

Due to a misunderstanding the event did not take place on 6th December 2015. Please support it this year so that we can make it a real feature for the College.

OR REUNION – 28th June 2015



From back left: **Nick Hance** (1966-73), **Dave Williams** (1966-71) , **Nigel Powell** (1967-74), **Jonathan Lane** (1967-74), **Mike James** (1968-75), **Stuart Honeyball** (1968-75), **Simon Wormleighton** (1968-75), **Nigel Bradbury** (1969-75), **Ian Taylor** (1968-75), **Pete Lace** (1970-75), **Phil Smith** (1968-74), **Sally Patterson** (née Blyth)(1973-75), **Jacqui Sayers** (née Crowhurst)(1974-76).

Next Row: **Bella Burke** (née Bartlett) (1973-75) and **Henrietta Bud** (née Hooper) 1973-75).
 Squatting: **Dave Shield** (1966-73), **Martyn Pitt** (1969-72), **Hamish Wilson** (1971-78), **Norm Crowe** (1970-75)
Des Knox (1970-75), **Tessa Hicks** (née Wolferstan) (197476), **Charlie Hussey** (1974-76).

40 YEAR REUNION – 28th June 2015

Des Knox (1968-1975) writes:

For past events we have had trouble locating everyone. This time we were able to track down almost the whole class with help from the OR Society, clues from old issues of the Rendcomb College Magazine and some advanced ‘cyberstalking’ techniques.

Those who attended where: **Nigel Bradbury**, **Norm** and **Teta** (née Hennesey) **Crowe**, **Mike Denley**, **Stuart Honeyball**, **Mike James**, **Des Knox**, **Pete Lace**, **Paul Rose**, **Ian Taylor**, **Rob** and **Kari Weston**, **Simon Wormleighton**, **Sally Patterson** (née Blyth), **Henrietta Bud** (née Hooper), **Bella Burke** (née Bartlett) from our class, plus near contemporaries **Jonathan Lane**, **Phil** and **Ann Smith**, **Nigel Powell**, **Mike Findlay**, **Nick Hance**, **Martyn Pitt**, **Tessa Hicks** (née Wolferston), **Charlie Hussey**, **Dave** and **Jenny Shield**, **Jacqui Sayers** (née Crowhurst), **Hamish Wilson**.

Most of us turned up in time for a prelunch drink. By and large we had no trouble recognising each other as we had been preparing for the event by playing Guess The Old Rendcombian, a pointless and irritating game, which involves trying to recognise recent photos of our classmates.

Lunch was followed by presentations to retiring staff, including the headmaster who was given a cake, which he generously shared. (If I'd known there was going to be cake I would have brought a doggy bag.) After that there was a tour, guided by **Jane Gunner** aided and abetted by **Bill White** and **Colin Burden**, which took in the Old Rectory, science block and ended at Park House where we lingered as it has special memories for many of us. The rain meant that the cricket was cancelled: we probably ought to have organised some other activity to take its place, but in the end there was no need as the setting and the company were attractions enough.

It is a truth universally acknowledged that all Rendcomb reunions end at the Bathurst, and so most of us headed down there after tea. A good few stories were related. Some I already knew, some rang vague bells but others were entirely new to me. For instance, **Norm** was telling one about **Dave Shield** playing piano in Assembly at a gradually increasing speed, so that by the end no-one could keep up with the hymn.

Mike Denley was in raconteural mood. He was saying that for his first three years at Rendcomb he always got that horrible "beginning of term" feeling when coming back to school which most of us will remember, and missing his family and surroundings, but after that began to enjoy it. He also reminded us of the standard vegetable accompaniment to Spaghetti Bolognese which was a bizarre parody of coleslaw: stale cabbage with orange squash poured over it.

I asked **Teta** why she came to Rendcomb. She and presumably most of the girls would have been at good schools already, so why would they move? She said she was tired of being in a single sex environment, (as were we, only I don't suppose that any of the girls' schools were going to let us in.) I wouldn't have guessed that, but their loss was Rendcomb's gain.

It would have been nice to have seen more old photos - only **Bella** brought her collection. Actually quite a few of the girls were photographers, but they seem more sensitive about sharing their pictures. (Pourquoi?)

Everyone appeared to enjoy the day, and although some reported a weird feeling being back at school they didn't seem particularly troubled by it. One of the things people noticed is that once you get talking to a classmate it's as though you're continuing a conversation you were having a few minutes ago, and the last 40 years just disappear.

We had discussed the possibility of some kind of video conferencing, so as to involve people who were unable to join us but that would have been difficult to set up and besides, we couldn't be bothered. Video messages would have been practical, but we didn't get round to working out how to display them, and nobody sent one anyway.

I'm sure we all appreciate the OR Society and the College for hosting the event, allowing us access to the building and grounds and giving us lunch. Without their support we would have had to go to some trouble to find another venue, which wouldn't have been as good or as appropriate as Rendcomb. Thank you very much.

20 YEAR REUNION



John Morgan (1988-95), Roland Martin (1982-89; Headmaster 2011-2015), Steve Jones (1988-95), Chris Jarrett (1988-95), Pat Boydell (1988-85), Fred Ingham (1990-95), Mark Wilks (1990-95)
Front row: **Ian Thompson (1988-95), Steve Croft (1987-95), Rupert Wertheimer (1988-95)**

As pupils went about their day, on that hot Saturday in June, it was commendable how well they managed to hide their amazement and awe that walking among them were actual, real-life representatives of that much-fabled Rendcomb Golden Generation: the 1995 leavers. It is how we wanted it; after a while, the plaudits can become tiresome. Among these Titans of Rendcomb lore, these happy few, were **Pat Boydell, Steven Croft, Mark Wilks, Rupert Wertheimer, Chris Jarrett, Ian Thompson** and me. Rendcomb's Development Manager, Hannah Boydell (fully ensconced in the Rendcomb fold via work and a very opportune marriage) had arranged a tour of the school hosted by deputy Head Boy Louis Cruzat. It quickly became apparent that, reassuringly, the school and its ethos are essentially unchanged: it retains that friendly, relaxed but purposeful air; its environment still seems to encourage independent thought and offers great

extra-curricular variety. However, much like us ORs, it now has some very interesting additions. In the school's case: the exciting plans for the new performing arts centre, the extra tennis courts and the ever-modernising teaching facilities. In our case: bulky jowls, added creakiness (of both limbs and chat), and all-round heft. In the same vein, it has also lost some features since we left. In the school's case: the snooker table in Saul's Hall, replaced by an open reception area. In Ian Thompson's case: hair, replaced by nothing.

We were all very grateful to the school for allowing us to snoop around during the "working" day, and for putting up with the noise when we forgot that it was a "working" day and started showing off. We retired to the Bathurst Arms (a very pleasant nearby pub, it turns out; if only we had known of its existence during our school days) for an intense and serious-minded debrief. Soon the numbers swelled to an astonishing nine, with the heavyweight late additions of Stephen Jones and Fred Ingham (the lux was clearly duciting to the Bathy that day). And, as the Saturday night turned into Sunday morning and the debrief became ever more intense, it became apparent that, although Rendcomb had taught us much, we appear to have learnt very little since.

John Morgan (1988-95)

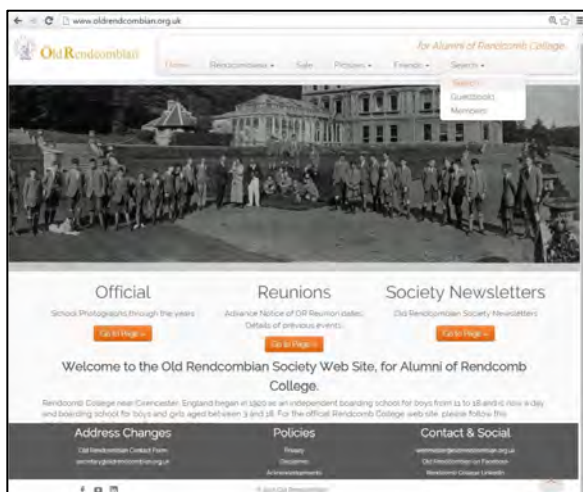
On a sunny and blustery late June Saturday morning we welcomed ORs from the leaving class of 1995 back to the College. The beauty of holding reunions on the Saturday is that the College was buzzing with activity because it was a normal school day. It also means that we are able to provide a pupil tour guide and so the chaps were given a tour of the buildings and grounds by Sixth Former Louis Cruzat. They investigated The Tower which was always out of bounds when they were at Rendcomb (I understand that it was the trunk store in those days), looked wistfully out of the windows of what is now Miss Hughes' classroom on the top floor of Main College as a few of them they recalled that it was their dormitory during their fourth year, hunted out their haunts as sixth formers and enjoyed wandering down memory lane. Amanda Brealy was delighted to welcome the boys into Old Rec to reminisce and they also enjoyed checking out the Sports Hall too. The boys enjoyed a meal and a few sherbets at the Colesbourne and then came back to College to see **Ben Knapp** (1977-84) open the new tennis courts. The 1995 Leavers were joined at the Bathurst Arms by **Roland Martin** (1982-89) for a drink in the evening.

Hannah Boydell – Development Manager

The Old Rendcombian Website

The **Old Rendcombian Society** has a new website at **oldrendcombian.org.uk**. This replaces the original website created by the late **Colin Hitchcock** (OR 1971-78) in 2002 and managed by him until 2013. Colin developed an internet presence for the OR Society which predated Facebook and social media systems by several years. (See the acknowledgements link on the Home page).

The new OR website has been rebuilt completely using more recent software applications for content management. The new design provides easier access to view on mobile devices like tablets, as well as Windows and Mac systems. New content is now easier to add and arrangement of pictures, media and layout is more flexible. The website has a new Search facility to help find names, events and other misty recollections.



Our new website contains important legacy information and an enormous quantity of Rendcomb College memorabilia, photographs and articles have now been migrated. We have better control over this vast store of

valuable information whilst avoiding the creeping advertising from social media.

The website is not just for accessing information about the past; it is designed so that we can keep you informed of events. We will publish dates of OR Reunions and events as well as other important information as available. Links to the College's social media groups are given to help you maintain your contacts.

Old Rendcombian Society Newsletters will be stored on the OR website some time after the annual distribution of the printed newsletter. The website is complementary to the published newsletter.

The Friends of Rendcomb College charity now has a dedicated section on the website where details of its activities and information about making a donation, Gift Aid and Mandate forms are available. Information requests made to The Friends of Rendcomb College go from the website directly to the executive trustee, Colin Burden or by email:

for@oldrendcombian.org.uk

There is a moderated “Guest Book” that anyone can use for general requests and comments. Online contact forms for address or name changes are easy to find and all requests for updates to personal information go to the OR Society secretary, Jane Gunner or by email:

secretary@oldrendcombian.org.uk

No personal information is stored on the website. We welcome your feedback.

Nigel Powell (1967-74) webmaster@oldrendcombian.org.uk

THE SUBSCRIPTIONS THOUGHOUT THE YEARS

The minutes of meetings prior to the 70s make fascinating reading with there being three sorts of subscription, however that is a story for a future newsletter but the life subscription started out as little as two shillings and was as little as £2 up to the 60s. In 1974 the life subscription was raised to £10 and the following year the first newsletter rolled off the printing device of the time.

One off payments continued until the year 2000 when the subscription had risen to £55. Income was not covering expenditure, partly because of the cost of producing the popular newsletter.

The Bursar and Headmaster of the time kindly agreed to collecting subscriptions from parents on the termly bill and in 2001 this was set at £4 per term. The same system is still in operation and the current £7 per term collects £147 from those who spend the whole of their secondary education at Rendcomb.

If you paid your life subscription a long time ago or if you were not at Rendcomb for 7 years under the new system and you have enjoyed reading the annual newsletter, perhaps you would consider making a donation to the Society.

Any donations should be made payable to ‘The Old Rendcombian Society’ and sent to The Treasurer, 5 Hynam Road, Pershore, WR10 3EB (or email chriswood99@btinternet.com for bank details).

CONGRATULATIONS

Ellie Whittles (2002-07) 1st Class Hons. in Human Geography, Durham University.

Tom Benson (2005-12) 1st Class Hons. in English, Oxford University

Jake McKeown (2005-12) 1st Class Hons. in Drama, Bristol University

Luke Lester-Powell (2001-08) 'Passed for Duty' as a Royal Marines Commando at the Commando Training Centre Royal Marines, Lympstone, Devon in April 2015. He is now serving at 40 Commando Royal Marines based near Taunton in Somerset.



Tim Nicholas (1969-76) was awarded a pilot recognition trophy in the form of a Master Air Pilot award from the Honourable Company of Air Pilots presented in October 2015 at the Guildhall in London.



Josh Thomas (2001-13) has become a Commercial Pilot. He started training at Oxford Aviation Academy September 2014 and qualified as First Officer with easyJet April 20th 2016 and will be based in Gatwick.



David Mabberley (1959-66) was awarded the MEMBER (AM) IN THE GENERAL DIVISION OF THE ORDER OF AUSTRALIA

His listing on the Australian government website reads:

Professor David John MABBERLEY

For significant service to horticultural science, particularly to plant taxonomy and tropical botany, as an academic, researcher and author.

Service includes:

Royal Botanic Gardens and Domain Trust, Sydney.

Executive Director, 2011-2013.

Honorary Research Associate, 1996-2005 and since 2013.

Adjunct Professor, Macquarie University, Sydney, since 2015.

Adjunct Professor, University of Western Sydney, 2004-2010.

Extraordinary Professor, Leiden University, The Netherlands, since 1995.

Orin and Althea Soest Chair in Horticultural Science, University of Washington, Seattle USA and Director, University of Washington Botanic Gardens, 2004-2008.

Oxford University:

Visiting Professor, 2088-2011.

Emeritus Fellow, Wadham College, since 2013.

Tutorial Fellow and Dean, Wadham College, 1976-1996.

Senior Proctor, 1976-1996.

Curator, Herbaria.

Keeper of the Herbarium, Library, Art and Archives, Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, United Kingdom, 2008-2011

Trustee, National Botanic Garden of Wales, 2008-2011.

Professor Invite, University of Paris, France, 1997-1999 and 2002.

President, International Association for Plant Taxonomy, 2005-2011 and Past President, current.

President, Society for the History of Natural History, 1993-1996.

Author or co-author of over 17 books, specifically, *'The plant-book, A portable dictionary of the higher plants'*, 1987, and second edition, 1997, and third edition, 2008.

Awards and recognition include:

Recipient, Robert Allerton Award for Excellence, National Tropical Botanical Garden, Hawaii and Florida, 2011.

Recipient, Engler Medal, International Association for Plant Taxonomy, 2009.

Recipient, Linnean Medal, Linnean Society of London, 2006.

Recipient, Peter Raven Award, American Society of Plant Taxonomists, 2004.

Recipient, Jos Cuatrecasas Medal for Excellence in Tropical Botany, National Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian Institution, 2004.

Recipient, Burbidge Medal, Australian Systematic Botany Society, 2003.

BIRTHS

To **Charlotte** (née Webb) (1993-2000) and Graham **Ritchie** a son Frederick Murray Scarth born May 2015

Harry and Ruth **Aldrich-Blake**, (1994-99) a daughter Lydia , August 2015

MARRIAGES

April Edwards (2001-09) married **Henry Brittain** (2004-2009) at St Peter's Church Rendcomb in May 2015 continuing a long tradition of OR marriages. The reception was held at the College. April's brother, **Sean Edwards** (2001-08) was one of their witnesses, and **Sophie Humphries** (2004-09) was April's maid of honour.





Above: Charlotte Brady, **Mimi Brady** (2003-15), **Charlotte Jones** (2003-10), **Charlie Clements** (2005-11), **Femi Gibson** (2006-09), **Rory Gilling** (2005-10), **Oli Brady** (2004-09). Below: **Femi Gibson**, **Tom Geerah** (2005-10), **Steve Brown** (2004-09), Karen Coups (staff). Tables were College buildings.



Tommy Lait (1996-2003) married Samantha Ellingford at St Stephen's church in Cheltenham in July 2015.



The reception was held at Hilles House near Painswick. To get between the venues, they travelled on an old Routemaster bus. Amongst those who attended were **Freddie Lait** (best man) (1994-2001), **Greg Jones** (usher)(1996-2003), **Sam Hicks** (1996-2003), **Matt Hutchins** (1996-2003), **Tom Lockyer** (1998-2003), **Dave Roper** (1996-2003), **Ben Baghdadi** (1998-2001), **Sam Maylott** (1991-1998), **Pat Boydell** (1988-95), **Giles** (1994-2000) and **Tom Drew** (1994-2001).

Laura Evans (1999-2004) married Russell Byrne in September 2015 at Stone Barn, Aldsworth.



Laura's (1999-2004) bridesmaids were all ORs: her sister **Leanne Woodman** (nee Evans) (1996-2001), **Maya Chester Master** (1999-2004), **Louise Bowen** (1999-2004) and **Jessica Cowper** (1999-2004).



Sam Gunner (1996-2003) married Jessica Francis at Marlborough Town Hall in August 2015. They held their reception at Wick Bottom Barn, Rockley deep in the Wiltshire countryside.





All ten members of **Sam**'s family who went to Rendcomb attended the wedding. From left to right: **Jennifer Phelps** (née Watson) (1978-80), **Adam Phelps** (1980-82), **Joe Watson** (1971-78), **Holly Phelps** (2000-12), **Mark Gunner** (2001-08), Jess Francis, **Sam Gunner** (1996-2003), **Luke Gunner** (1998-2005), **Jennifer Lane-Birkenstock** (née Lane)(1980-81), **Harley Phelps** (2002-09), **Jane Gunner** (née Watson)(1975-77)
Fiona Trumper (2000-09) was also at the wedding.

Caroline Wells (2000-05) married Liam Fay-Fright in August 2015



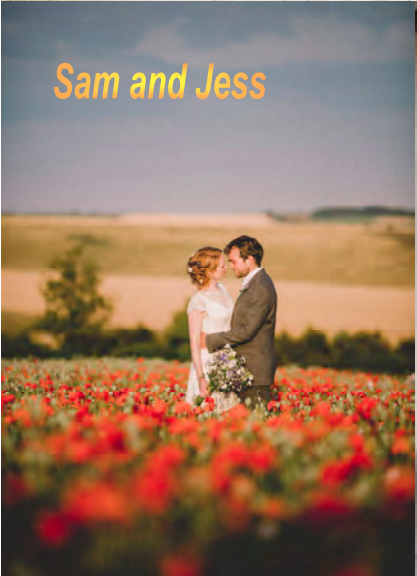


ORs pictured above are **Jess Weston** (1998-2005), **Claire Taylor** (2000-2005), **Sophie Barltrop** (2000-2003), **Caroline Wells** (2000-2005), **Heather Davies** (née Roper) (1998-2005), **Edwina Wickham** (1998-2004), **Lina Wüller** (2003-2004).



Joe Molloy (2003-06) married Rebecca Neville in New Zealand on the 10th December 2015. **Joe's** brother, **Tom** (2003-10), was best man.

James Smith (1990-1997) married Yuan Yuam in September 2015



80TH BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS



Martin Richards (1946-54), Julian Comrie (1946-54), Howard Hayter (1947-54), Richard Sumsion (1947-54)

A Reunion: Young and Old

In September 1946, as in all Septembers between 1920 and today, a group of smallish, nervous boys assembled in states varying between anxiety and excitement at the prospect of a joining a new BIG school. This was the new Form One, bringing the total of boys at Rendcomb College to 86. There were only boys in the school; it was shortly after the end of ‘the war’, and conditions were pretty Spartan.

The School List for September 1946 ended Bird, Comrie, Harrison, Powell, Radford and Richards, M. D., (to distinguish him from Richards, F. S. G. in the form above). I expect we were all unsure of what the future held – and homesick – without daring to say so. Radford, poor soul, found it too much and left after a few weeks, so we were down to five. This small size had its advantages – teaching was effectively one to one – but the disadvantage of the overall small size of the school was that several subjects – geography and chemistry among them – were simply not taught, due to lack of staff and

funds. Friendships were forged, the relevant one in this case being Julian Comrie and Martin Richards.

The following year our form was enlarged by the influx of more boys. I can't remember all their names, but two are firmly fixed in my mind, namely Howard Hayter and Richard Sumsion, who also became good friends.

So now the relationships are established and we come to the point of this note. Life has moved on, it is now 2015 (at the time of writing) and the four young boys just mentioned have all safely passed their 80th birthdays during the previous 12 months. Cause for celebration!



On 15th July 2015, a quartet of octogenarians and their wives (original and only wives I should say!), met for a celebratory lunch at Julian and Helen Comrie's house in Somerset. Suffice to say, a good time was had by all and many

happy memories recalled. We all had a fair idea what each of us had done during the intervening years, but just to complete the record, we have all prepared a brief note for the magazine. (It's worth looking in the 2007 Newsletter for the report of their previous reunion. Ed.)

In alphabetical order:

Julian Comrie writes:

Rendcomb did many good things for me – I learnt about science, developed interests in the open countryside, music, art and photography and met a lovely young girl who later became my wife. National Service had its good points when as a young officer with The Gloucestershire Regiment I spent most of my time patrolling the Aberdare mountains in Kenya and on leave, climbing in the Rwenzori. After reading Natural Sciences at Cambridge, serious work (i.e. paid!) entailed 30 years in the commercial world – software systems development using mainframe computers. After 'early retirement' came the pleasure of self employment as a photographer. In

those years I illustrated several books, travelled the world, taught many others the joy of photography and worked extensively with The Royal Photography Society. Helen and I have two daughters (both ORs) and five grandchildren and we are still enjoying life in Somerset.

Howard Hayter writes:

I left Rendcomb at the end of the summer term 1952 and joined the Royal Marines on my 18th birthday in November. I completed Basic Training, the Commando course and the Assault Engineers course by the spring of 1953, when I joined 42 Commando in Egypt and went on assignments to Cyprus, Greece and Malta. My National Service finished in 1954.

Following this I became a herdsman with a pedigree Jersey herd in Sussex and married Elizabeth in 1958; we have three children.

Later I joined the Agricultural division of Quaker Oats in Devon, where we bought a small farm and built up a small Jersey herd while still working for Quaker Oats.

In 1968 we bought a larger farm and expanded it to 60 cows plus young stock.

I am now retired and home is a converted corn mill; we have seven grandchildren at various universities, including one at Oxford.

Rendcomb gave me many happy years and lasting friendships. DWLB's sound advice shaped most of my life – not distinguished, but I enjoyed it!

Martin Richards writes:

Rendcomb was followed by two years National Service as a gunner in an artillery regiment stationed on Salisbury Plain, firing 25 pounder field guns. I then took up five years articles with my father to study law in his practice. I eventually passed the Law Society's final examination and joined the practice in Llanelli. I married my wife Sue in 1962 and our marriage has been blessed with three sons, all of whom are married with families. On retirement I took up painting, using most media, an activity which Rendcomb had encouraged, but for which there never seemed time to develop during my working life. I am a member of three art societies in Herefordshire, a county in which we settled 14 years ago.

Richard Sumsion writes:

Still having three super school friends, plus spice* to help celebrate turning 80 can't be bad. After Rendcomb, I was lucky to enjoy a career full of variety as a surveyor, valuer, estate agent, auctioneer and latterly a government estate surveyor for Bath and Gloucestershire. Self reliance is

all very well but Rendcomb also taught me to recognise and foster other people's contributions and achievements to complement our own; so I have been spreading the Rendcomb philosophy for over 60 years now. In retirement with my wife Penny at Frampton on Severn, my life-long love affair with wood continues unabated, in the enjoyment of trees, furniture and carpentry. Am just off to trim a neighbour's trees; that way I get some logs.....Remember P. W?

*plural of spouse, i.e. wives!

Many, many people have been affected by Rendcomb and all the ones I have met in my many visits speak deeply of their love for all that it represents, be it the school, the ethos, the friendships made, or the delightful geographical setting. Here we have a story of four lucky people who have had long and largely happy lives, in n small part due to the education, experience and advice received in their formative years. Let us now praise famous men and thank them for their part in this: Dennis Lee-Browne, Jack Fell and John and Kathleen James; I'm sure she would not mind being included as an honorary 'famous man'.

Julian Comrie (1946-54)

Bill White's 80th Birthday

After long years of it being a closely guarded secret, the OR Society was finally able to reveal this winter that Bill White was about to be 80 years old. In celebration of this, the OR Society threw a party in his honour for as many of the staff and alumni who had kept in touch with him over the years as would fit in the Reading Room.

The theme was Roman (obviously), the meal absolutely delicious and the company warm and entertaining. Once again Bill's iconic grace heralded the start of the eating and we were all transported back to our school days for one more time. It was fascinating to hear the story of Bill's reasons for remaining at the College for almost all his working life; other institutions loss was Rendcomb's gain. The afternoon was rounded off by Hamish Wilson's sonnet which so eloquently summed up what we all think and after the cutting of the cake (a replica of the flower urns so conscientiously planted up by Bill over the years), three cheers rang out for the man who has given so much to the school and helped so many people through out the years.



Sonnet for Bill

On the Occasion of his Eightieth Birthday



And so, dear Bill, we know your age at last,
 We always thought you ancient, sage and wise,
 But as we lost our hair, and were re-cast
 By Time, you stayed the same. To my surprise,
 You were thirty-five when I arrived at school;
 I thought, like most, you'd be retiring soon,
 Shocked you still took Games, even then, Time's fool.
 You'd come to Latin singing hymn-like tunes,
 And we'd savour your aromatic pipe, still aglow.
 You were firm but made us laugh and we felt safe:
 Yes, Latin was lovely all those years ago;
 Your youth dressed in the borrowed robes of age,
 Of wisdom. You were one of Rendcomb's joys,
 Kind father to us all, to so many boys.

Table list

I

WJDW (Staff: 1961-97)
Rob Jones (Headmaster: 2015-)
Richard Tudor (1973-80)
Greg Dorey (1967-73)
John Tolputt (Headmaster: 1986-99)
Patta Tolputt (Staff: 1986-99)
Anne Holt (Staff: (1968-97)

II

Chris Wood (1965-71, Staff: 1976-2005)
Penny Wood (Staff: 1976-2005)
David Williams (1966-71)
Carol Endersby (Staff : 2000-)
Christine Johnson (Staff: 2003-)
Julie Rogers (Staff: 1987-2015)
Margaret Knapp (Staff: 1960-90)

III

Colin Burden (Staff: 1966-97)
Dorothy Burden
Lawrence Wragg (1956-63)
Bob Edy (1959-67, Staff: 2015-)
Ruth Edy
Mark Webb (1972-79)
Hamish Wilson (1971-78)

IV

Bobby Morgan (Staff: 1990-2007)
Esther Morgan
Charlotte Holdaway (Staff: 1970-94)
John Holdaway (Staff: 1970-94)
John Willson (Staff: 1967-88)
Aileen Graham
Martin Graham (Staff: 1990-)

V

Alex Brealy (1980-87, Staff: 1994-)
Amanda Brealy (Staff: 1994-)
Pat Boydell (1988-95)
Chris Jarrett (1988-95)
Frances Burden (1995-2002)
Richard Burden (1997-2004)

VI

Julian Comrie (1946-54)
Helen Comrie
Jane Gunner (1975-77)
Richard Gunner
Mary FitzGerald
Nigel Powell (1967-74)
Neil Lumby (1968-73)

VII

Richard Law (1964-70)
Chris Hart (1970-77)
Tim Lausch (1970-77)
Pete Sayers (1968-75)
Jacqui Sayers (1974-76)
Ben Knapp (1977-84)
Rachel Knapp



OBITUARIES

The Society has learnt with sadness of the deaths of the following and sends its sincere condolences to the families.

Eric Collett (1935-37) died in November 2015. His wife Helen wrote to Jane: We celebrated his 95th Birthday early October going to the Aquarium at Napier then we sat on the beachfront by the carpark and looked at the sea. He was always so very pleased to get the Rendcomb news and spoke fondly of his school days there and his brilliant Headmaster.

On one of our trips we drove in the lovely grounds and went into the school and spoke to people. Such a beautiful Italianate building.

I wish you luck with your new Performing Arts Centre, a school here in Havelock, Iona Girls, has just built one with a legacy and it won the annual Architectural Award for the entire country. Maybe yours will also.

Gerard Benson (1931-2014) from Hamish Wilson (1971-1978).

I first encountered Gerard Benson at a Barrow Poets recital at the Colston Hall, Bristol in the late sixties/early seventies. A founding member of the group, Gerard had a striking stage presence. A straight-laced primary schoolboy, I was fascinated by his eccentric appearance and, not least, by his long wild and frizzy hair. This, coupled with his subversive humour, made him immediately appealing but it was his voice, which was astounding. It is very difficult to describe but, I think it would be true to say that, when Gerard spoke, you were compelled to listen.

The Barrow Poets enjoyed great popularity in the 60s and 70s, performing not only at the Festival Hall and touring the United States but also playing in schools, pubs, prisons and hospitals. They brought poetry to new audiences and inspired an interest in what had been considered by many to be a lost and inaccessible art form. Their live performances, BBC broadcasts and LPs influenced and brought pleasure to many.

I was then delighted to meet Gerard in person at an ORs reunion in the early 1980s. I bounded up to him and enthusiastically introduced myself. He seemed impressed that I recognized him. We were talking about The Barrows when Mrs Medill (the Head's wife) came up to us, 'I don't think I know who you are,' she said. Gerard replied in his own inimitable way, 'I'm Gerard Benson and this is Hamish, my fan.'

A few years later, when I was teaching English and Drama at Hitchin Boys', I got in touch with Gerard through the ORs association and asked if he'd

like to do some workshops at the school. These subsequently led onto residential writing courses held in North Wales. Two resident poets, two teachers, sixteen boys (aged 11-18), and a week's intensive writing. This became an established event in the school calendar and it was then I began to know Gerard and his wife, Cathy as a friend.

However, the Ty Newydd courses were the best INSET ever. Besides his evident skills as a writer and performer, Gerard was an inspirational teacher. He set imaginative exercises, which allowed pupils to develop their creativity, the effects of which often lasted way beyond the week in Wales. He delighted in words and encouraged us to experiment and play with them. He helped us find new possibilities. He opened our eyes to the world. (Believe me, living with a poet for a week transforms the world entirely.) Always encouraging, he gave praise where praise was due but also found merit in what seemed the slightest piece.

There was a wonderful sense of democracy about the courses. He gave equal attention to the youngest first year as to the most able sixth former. Gerard, alongside fellow resident poet, Rose Flint, would tackle all the assignments set. There would be no escape either for shy or retiring teachers either who were expected to participate in equal measure. At the end of the course, an anthology would be produced and each writer, whether poet, pupil or teacher would be allowed only one side of A4 on which to publish their poems.

Gerard clearly loved his time at Rendcomb and it was curious being able to share anecdotes and memories of traditions still going strong in the 70s as the 40s. My wife found it funny to hear someone else coming out with, 'When I was at Rendcomb.....' For an individual, such as Gerard, Rendcomb was probably the perfect school. In 'Memoirs of a Jobbing Poet,' Gerard writes of himself at the time, '(I was) an atheist, a leftie, a footballer, a runner, a poet and a very poor violinist. Also, an entertainer.' Rendcomb played an important part in Gerard's life, reflected by his frequent returns to summer OR reunions, 'I just like the place,' he told me once. But the greatest influence came from Kathleen James, a sixth form teacher, extolled and respected by fellow staff and pupils alike. Gerard writes: 'I was also blessed in the sixth form with an English teacher who didn't let me get away with anything and I was good at 'that'll do.' She directed me to the text always to the text, and when she thought I'd been studying too hard gave me a copy of Leslie Hotson's 'Shakespeare Sonnets

Redated' for a little light relief. Kathleen James, I salute you; and Denis Lee Browne (the Head), I salute you too. Oh, and the rest of you.' (Memoirs of a Jobbing Poet).

Besides the Barrow Poets, Gerard will probably be best known for launching 'Poems on the Underground,' a scheme that has spread far and wide, taking in: New York, Paris, Dublin, Stuttgart, Scandinavia and Australia. Like all great ideas, its genesis was simple: 'The programme began as an idea shared among a few friends: how pleasant it would be, we thought, to read a few lines by one's favourite poet on the Tube, instead of advertisements for temps or toothpaste.' I think Gerard was surprised by the enormous success of the scheme. Poems on the Underground is now the best selling UK poetry anthology of all time.

Gerard spent the last third of his life in Bradford with Cathy, his wife and soul-mate. It was a happy and sustaining relationship which had also a professional dimension to it as Cathy, an artist as well as a fellow poet, illustrated many of Gerard's books. No doubt helped by Cathy's support, the Bradford years were extremely productive in terms of writing and publication. One of his most interesting collections from this time, I think, is 'Bradford and Beyond', a journal charting a year in his life as a poet, and written entirely in sonnets. Another recommendation would be 'In Wordsworth's Chair', based on his time as poet in residence at Dove Cottage – the first since Wordsworth! Then there is 'Evidence of Elephants', his children's book or his edited anthologies 'Does W Trouble You', (Rhyming poems) or 'This Poem Doesn't Rhyme', the latter, excellent for the English teachers or non-teachers alike. The list goes on.....suffice it to say, Gerard's appeal was broad. This is perhaps best reflected by the fact that his obituary appeared in papers, politically diverse as The Daily Telegraph, The Independent and The Guardian, something, I think, that would have greatly amused him.

Both Gerard and Cathy were committed Quakers and took part in activities both at a local and national level. This spiritual dimension was an important part of his life and Gerard applied his beliefs practically and worked to ensure his particular part of the world was a better place. Although I miss Gerard, I feel incredibly fortunate to have known him. He said once to me, 'As a teacher, you never know what seeds you sow'. I'm sure there are many who have been touched and inspired by this remarkable man. Gerard, I salute you!

Peter Field (1931-37) was born in 1920 and grew up in Winson, a village near Bibury. His daughter wrote: he went on to Rendcomb, even though the Headmaster of the local secondary school informed his parents that if Peter didn't go to his school, he'd make sure he didn't go to Rendcomb either.

He was at one time the secretary of the O R Society. We have a letter from Mr Lee-Browne thanking him for his work when he had to give up the secretaryship when he moved from London in 1949. In 1958, he also had a very nice letter from Mr Lee-Browne in which he tells my father what had become of his contemporaries. The mention of Douglas Haig ('Douglas Haig is a Group Captain and I should think will probably go higher') reminds me of part of my father's memoirs:

I recall working on Douglas Haig to make his legs longer – he wanted to join the RAF as a regular to train as a pilot and his legs, we understood, were not long enough to reach the controls, rudder bar, etc. So we sat him on the floor, held his body upright against the wall, bottom into the angle, and pulled his legs one by one 'for all our might'. We must have succeeded in something for he was accepted and later had a distinguished career in the RAF in the Second World War.

Peter went from Rendcomb to Cheltenham Art School in 1938 and then, in 1939, he joined the RAF. After the war, he spent several months in Germany and was demobbed early in 1946. He then studied Art at Goldsmiths, where he met Cynthia and married her in 1948. In 1949, he became a Lecturer at Paignton Art School, then in 1953 a Senior Lecturer at Swindon Art School. In 1958 he moved to Birmingham College of Art, where he started the Foundation Course and was also head of the Experimental Workshops and of Art History. In 1982 he retired as Dean of the Faculty of Art, Birmingham Polytechnic (now B'ham City University). As children, we used to tease him that he'd use his 'College of Art' voice and say 'Field here' when he answered the phone. Much later, he told us that on one occasion, the voice at the other end of the phone replied 'Field here' and it was his brother Dick (1924-31), who was head of Art Education at Birmingham when we moved there.

In retirement, he read a lot, wrote his memoirs, visited art and cultural exhibitions both in the UK and abroad, went to concerts and enjoyed spending time with family. He was an exceptional person, highly intelligent, cultured and with a very well-developed moral sense. He and Cynthia used to talk endlessly about all sorts of things – art, music, theatre, current affairs, the family. They both got on very well with much younger people and their

grandsons enjoyed seeing them and joining in the sometimes rather erudite conversations. They were relaxed and non-judgmental with people, though they could be quite scathing about ineptly done art or writing. One of his colleagues said that he was the nicest person he'd ever worked with, and I can well believe it.

Peter died on 16 March 2010, aged 90.

Tony Rose (1965-71) died in November. **Chris Wood** writes: I first got to know Tony, D. J. A. Rose (65-71), on 14th September 1965. It was the first day of our first term at Rendcomb in Form 1 and we were learning to cope with being away from home as eleven year olds.

It was clear immediately that Tony was easy to get on with; he was never short of something to say and this was invariably accompanied by his infectious laugh.

The following year we both 'jumped' into Form 3 and had to deal with the challenges of perhaps being somewhat immature for our new year group. However we made many new friends. Tony was up to the level of academic work and he contributed in many ways to Rendcomb Sport. Being a relatively small year (16 by the time we reached 6A), we often found ourselves in the same teams and I remember Tony as a formidable defender in the hockey team (see below 1971 XI: **Tony** 2nd from the right, back row)



Back: D. Wiggall, C. Yuvaboon, A. Pearce, N. Boyd, N. Hance, A Rose, E. Parsons. Front: A. Thompson, C. Wood, J. Gray, I. Niel

However, post Rendcomb, cricket became Tony's preferred sport and the East Lancashire Cricket Club in Blackburn will miss his presence in so many ways: as a player, junior coach and fixer of the roller. At our class reunion in 2011 he had to be digitally added to the group photo after lunch because he was playing in the OR cricket match. The photo of him making a run in the 2012 OR match was selected for the order of service at the



Requiem Mass to celebrate his life.

Like me, Tony studied Sciences at A level and he was always very practical and interested in mechanisms. So it was no surprise when he turned up to OR reunions on old

motorbikes, usually with oily hands from some minor breakdown. **Hartley Moore** (1964-71) remembers being taken for a spin in the sidecar of his motorcycle combination and most of us remember the exhaust note of his departure! This love of motorbikes continued throughout his life and his skills extended to making significant modifications. Happily this enthusiasm has been passed on to his sons, Derek, Graham and Brian.

Tony studied medicine at Liverpool and fell in love with the North of England as well as lovely Irish nurse called Therese whom he married. He specialised in anaesthesia and became a well-respected consultant anaesthetist in Blackburn. A colleague, Sarah Clarke, made it clear at his memorial service, which was attended by myself, **Penny Wood** (Staff: 1985-95) and **David Williams** (1966-71), that he was more than just a simple gas man as Tony would have you believe. She said "He was a proper old school anaesthetist. He hated working to protocols, preferring just to work out a way. They always worked because Tony could make things work. He passed on all this incredible knowledge and he was involved in the transformation of the Blackburn department into the beacon of training it is today. He was instrumental in the formative development of most of the consultants in the department today; he was the major reason we came back.

His anaesthetic home was in obstetrics and he dealt with mums in the same kind and reassuring way as he ever did. He was a lovely man.”

Tony’s brother, **Paul** (1968-75), spoke well at the same service. He said “I especially admired Tony’s power and skill as 1st XI hockey right back. Nobody ever hit the ball harder than he did. Sadly we never played hockey in the same team, but we did once play for the College 2nd XV at rugby in Tony’s final term, which made him quite proud. Tony loved motorbikes, especially “The Blot”, the BSA Thunderbolt he bought when he was 21, in 1975, and bikes helped him to make lifelong friends. One way we will honour Tony is to keep his bikes running and ridden, where they



can be seen and definitely heard! Tony was my big brother, and no one could have had a better one. We had some great adventures together, such as a camping trip on the bikes to Scotland, and doing the English National Rally a few times. We were Best Man at each other’s wedding. I don’t believe that Tony had many regrets, other than wanting more of the same. He never wanted to paddle a canoe up the Zambezi River, dodging hippos and crocodiles, or to do a naked bungee jump off the Sydney Harbour Bridge. Instead, he was happiest at home with the family that he loved so much.”

Tony and Therese stayed with us last summer after the OR reunion. He was in the process of fighting cancer but in spite of this he was the same old Tony. He died on 12th November 2015, aged 61.

We miss him.

Chris Wood (1965-71, Staff: 76-09)

Robert David Comley (1951-59) died on May 7th, leaving wife Susan of 42 years marriage, children: Samuel 40 years, Rachel 38 years and grandchildren Alice 3 years and Tom 18 months old.

Susan wrote to Jane: Robert treasured his time at Rendcomb and would 'wax lyrical' about his time there. As a consequence of his time at the College he developed a life-long love of sport, particularly rugby and cricket, becoming involved at the age of 50 years, with Wistasten Village Cricket Club, close to our home.

He was also very proud to have helped make an altar table in English Oak for Rendcomb's local village church.

His great passions being, sport and politics, how fitting that he should die on Election Day!

Rowland Read (1965-72) died in December 2015. Amongst those who attended the funeral were **Colin Burden**, **Chris Wood** (1965-71, Staff:1976-2009), **Rory Clark** (2003-10) and **Jane Gunner** (1975-77). Rowland's brother, **Jeremy** (1970-77) and his son, **Alistair** (2005-10) also went to Rendcomb.

Rowland's sister Anna writes: Growing up in the country, we played as children did then, games of adventure and imagination. A favourite was playing in the hay, swinging from ropes tied to the top of the barn, making tunnels and houses and often enough getting stuck between the bales. Maybe Rowland was the most adventurous of us, as he was the one who got struck more dramatically. All his exploits seemed to have more impact than for his more cautious brother and sister. When Rowland was about six and I was four, I am told I approached our father in the yard one day and conversationally said: 'poor Rowland has fallen in the pond.' Luckily, Dad ran and managed to fish Rowland out before he swallowed too much water. Not long after that, that pond was filled in but that didn't prevent Rowland falling into another when we were testing the ice to see if it was strong enough to slide on. It wasn't. But the worst incident – for everyone else – was when we were playing 'Chasing Harry Roberts' and he fell in the sewerage ditch. No-one really wanted to help him out then. We seemed to be preoccupied with criminals, such as the Great Train Robbers and Harry Roberts who is now long forgotten but they featured heavily in our games.

It was very much an outdoor life, helping around the farm, collecting mushrooms, picking apples and plums, but Rowland was a great reader too. We always borrowed the maximum number of books from the library and had read them all, and one another's; by the time we took them back. Wet Sunday afternoons were spent watching old black and white films on the

television, everything from Western's to drama and comedy, but Rowland was particularly taken by slapstick humour. We were once taken to the cinema to see an ancient Harold Lloyd comedy and Rowland laughed so hard he almost made himself sick.

Mechanical things, engines and cars always fascinated him. He and Jeremy used to build elaborate constructions from Meccano, with motors that worked, and he was always inventive with his creations. He once made a lawn mower out of an old Hoover – endless hours of fun driving it on the old aerodrome next door, not to mention the constant modifications that were made to the chassis. Then there were cars, first the Hillman Imp, which Rowland rebuilt and tuned, taking it to many races and muddy hill climbs, then many others. He always had a project on the go, old cars that he alone could see the potential of. An old friend reminded me of the old bangers that they took out to the aerodrome, driving them till they couldn't go any more and were abandoned. Eventually, my father received a letter from the Ministry of Defence, who he rented the land from, reminding him that the terms of the lease didn't include a scrap yard, so could he please remove all the old cars.

Young Farmers was an important part of Rowland's social life, meetings, dances, rallies, with a big group of friends, and of course, that was how he met Claire.

From his earliest exploits falling in ponds, Rowland went on to more serious and dramatic accidents, from being left with a broken femur when he was attacked by a bull, to falling through the barn roof, then there was the straw fire. He had collected a load of straw from Ampney when he was flagged down by a passing motorist. He looked around to see that sparks from the tractor had set the load alight. He just had time to unhitch the wagon and move the tractor to safety before it all went up, leaving nothing but the axles of the trailer and a big hole in the Gloucester Road.

I will finish with a bit from Jonathan, who has been a friend all our lives, who now lives in New Zealand so can't be here today. 'We had so much fun and good times together over the years on the farms, mucking about with pushbikes, then go-karts then cars, and all the great times we had with Young Farmers. I fondly remember us working together too, bailing and straw carting every summer. It always seemed to go pretty well despite breakdowns, bad weather and the odd fire! We must have shifted thousands of bales over the years. All wonderful memories of a great friend.'

Rowland's younger brother **Jeremy** (1970-77) writes:

In September 1965 Rowland left the Querns primary school in Cirencester and started at Rendcomb with a Cook's Trust Scholarship (for farmers' sons) where he perfected the art of achieving moderate success with the minimum of effort and compliance. Coming from a non-sporting family it was a shock to us to find that he did enjoy hockey; I don't know if his enthusiasm was ever rewarded with a starring role in the school team but I like to think so.

I joined Rowland at Rendcomb in 1970 to find he was now Rolls or Rolly and generally well liked without being some super bright/sporty hero that I could never live up to. Thirty odd years later Rowland's son, Alistair, also went to Rendcomb and found where Rowland and I had scratched our names in a secret passageway in the attics. He may not have shown me all the midnight walks and secret routes though attics, cellars and the wilderness, but it's something we shared.

Rowland had always loved farms and farm machinery. I've an old Christmas photo in which my sister and I are holding our new toys and Rowland is brandishing *Power Farming* magazine, grinning like the Cheshire cat.

Cars were a constant for Rowland, starting with the Hillman Minx in which he taught himself to drive round the farm (later, his driving instructor had a certain amount of unlearning to do), through various Hillman Imps (one was shockingly fast) to Alfa Romeos that he raced in sprints and hill climbs.

After Rendcomb Rowland did an HND at the Royal Agricultural College (RAC). Had it been a university then I wonder if he would have ended up as an academic as he had a lifelong thirst for knowledge and experimentation.

After the RAC and some work experience on larger farms, Rowland went back to the family farm to work with our father. Cirencester Young Farmers provided an active social life and a crash course in home-brewing. It's the only time I've heard of barley wine, but I don't think he made that. This was also when he met Claire who was doing her nursing training in East London and they enjoyed the diverse delights of Wiltshire and Whitechapel. They married in 1980 and when our father retired Rowland took over the farm and he and Claire moved into the farmhouse.

Running a small farm isn't easy and Rowland's childhood dreams of monster machines evolved into a challenge to resurrect and modify his latest bargain, be it an antique combine or a smashed-up van, into whatever his

latest scheme was. And his inventiveness wasn't just mechanical; when he started his meat business he found old family recipes for curing bacon and authentic Lebanese recipes for merguez sausages.

But what I think I miss most is his encyclopaedic knowledge. Wikipedia just doesn't have his touch.

Derek Coombes (Staff: 1983-2012) died in August 2015 aged 73 after a long illness. Derek worked at the College primarily as a technician in the science department but latterly as a driver. **Jane Gunner** and **Bill White** were amongst those who attended the funeral. A detailed write-up of his time at the College is available in the 2002 newsletter on the OR website.



Curtis Whittal (1944-52) (known at Rendcomb as CD) died in June 2015.

Donald Gallop (1933-40) died in January 2016.

Paul Kampe died in January 2016. He had taken over as clerk of works from Tony Partridge in 1988 and it was the mention of this in the 1988 OR newsletter which reunited him with his family whom he had not seen since 1952. An account of his life was printed in the 2002 edition entitled 'A Man from Latvia.' He ended his days in the same nursing home as Joan Cairns.

Joan Cairns died in January 2016. She started cleaning at Rendcomb in 1966, moved into the kitchens in 1973 and left in 1998. **Patta** and **John Tolputt** (Headmaster: 1986-99) write:

Joan was one of a small group of people who taught us what Rendcomb was all about. Over many years she had done a number of jobs in the school, but when we arrived in 1987, she was housekeeper for the Headmaster's House.

She welcomed us, looked after our children, told us stories of Rendcomb past and present, and made us laugh. She never spoke ill of anyone, but her gift of loyalty was completely lacking in false piety. She was always naturally herself: kind, gentle and understanding.

The sound of Joan's lovely voice spoke of the Churn Valley, and of her local roots. Yet she was never parochial or limited in her horizons: she knew the world as well as anyone. Her love for her family and for the countryside she knew so well ruled her life and gave her all the guidance she needed. The packed church at Joan's funeral gave witness to the love and admiration so many people felt for her; we certainly felt lucky to have known her and shared her friendship for so long.

Hermione Thornton, the daughter of Headmaster Denis Lee-Browne, died last May. A service for her was held at Gloucester Crematorium, amongst those who attended were **Julian** and Helen **Comrie** (1946-54), **Claire Foster** (née Comrie) (1978-80), **Richard** and Penny **Sumsion** (1947-54), Martin and Diana Lee Browne, **Bill White**, representing the OR Society and **Jane Gunner** (1975-77), representing **Roland Martin** (1982-89, headmaster 2011-2015), and **Colin Burden** (Staff: 1963-97). **Richard Sumsion** (1947-54) writes: Many ORs will be sad to hear of the death of **Hermione Thornton**, née Lee-Browne, in May 2015 at the age of 80. Brought up in the Headmaster's flat at Rendcomb, in about 1945 she spent one term being taught with Form 1, before moving on to Westonbirt, so perhaps she was actually the First Girl at Rendcomb, some 30 years before they were "admitted". Through her job as secretary to the Bishop of Gloucester she met her husband, The Reverend John Thornton; he became Rector of Great Witcombe, where they raised their family, and also Chaplain to H.M.Prison at Gloucester. In retirement, they lived at Hucclecote. **Helen Comrie** (daughter of John and Kathleen James) writes: Hermione, my sister Katharine, and I all grew up in Rendcomb at the same time. Our free time was spent roaming the countryside looking for flowers and birds, and keeping records of them. We also had the exciting experience of badger watching with Ernest Neal in Conigre Wood. Hermione later went to Art College, and spent much of her life producing beautiful watercolours. We all retained our interest in the countryside, and Julian and I always enjoyed having Hermione to stay. Sadly for Penny and Christopher, their father John died shortly after Hermione.

Hermione had written a fascinating account of her life in Rendcomb village as a child, extracts from which we hope to include in the future.

FRIENDS OF RENDCOMB COLLEGE Reg. Char No. 290373

Chairman: Richard Wills, appointed 2004

Executive Trustee: Colin Burden, 21 The Whiteway, Cirencester, Glos. GL7 2ER
Tel: 01285 655240, appointed 2005

Jane Gunner – (née Watson) OR (1975-77), Hon. Sec. OR Society, former parent.

Rob Jones - Headmaster (2015 -), Ex Officio

Keith Winmill – OR (1972-79), Richard Law – OR (1964-70)

Mark Naylor – Comm. Ops Manager, Rendcomb College

Dr. Tessa Hicks (née Wolferstan) – OR (1974-76), former parent

Jessica Weston – OR (1998-2005), OR Vice-Chairman

Patrick Boydell – OR (1988-95), OR Committee Member

Colin Burden writes: I am pleased to report that during the last three years over £89,000 has been raised – 2013/2014, £16,476; 2014/15, £37,604; 2015/16, £33,000 approx. This year we have supported three pupils with bursaries to the value of £16,850. As interest rates have been so low we have taken the long view and since July 2013 invested with Rathbones Greenbank in ethical unit trusts.

In last year's newsletter, Penny Jones (1976-78) asked for your support through easyfundraising.org.uk to raise money for Rendcomb. £458 has been raised this year. Please visit the site and see.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

James & Jane Stutchbury wrote to Jane:

We would like to thank you all so much for the very kind cheque you sent us at the end of term. I've so appreciated all your wonderful support over the years and we feel blessed to have been part of Rendcomb for these years. With love and heartfelt thanks.

From Bill White: I want to express my most sincere and heartfelt thanks to all of you who came to my 80th birthday luncheon in February. Most especially I must mention my deep gratitude to the Old Rendcombian Committee and to all who contributed to the amazing event, and particularly my special thanks to **Jane Gunner** for masterminding all the arrangements and to **Mark Naylor** and his staff for the superb lunch. It was a truly 'Rendcombian' occasion which seemed to be enjoyed by everyone.

I found the day quite wonderful, but also moving, quite undeserved and humbling. The masses of cards will be splendid memento; thank you so much.

St Peter's Church update



It seems only yesterday, but it is indeed a year ago, that I was telling you that our cherished Church had been in danger of being closed due to lack of interest and a great shortage of funds. However, under the leadership of our new church wardens, Carol Bailey and Alex Brealy, and a dedicated committee it was re-born and has continued from strength to strength.

We are pleased to report that our numbers continue to rise and we are becoming popular for weddings with the wedding party often moving to the College for

their reception. We held a successful Wassailing service at Christmas arranged by our organist, Nick Hopton, attended by lots of children, a couple of sheep and two rather reluctant donkeys! The congregation then moved on to the Village Hall for our annual Christmas party.

Sadly our Priest, Revd Warwick Heathcote, had to retire early due to ill health. He elected that his final service should be held at St Peter's and the Church was full to the gunnels with people from the Benefice coming to give thanks for his leadership and ministry. The College Chaplain, Revd **Bob Edy** (1959-68) has stepped into the breach and we are very grateful to him. His services are extremely popular with over 80 people in Church on Christmas Day.

The search for a new Benefice Priest has begun being led by our Secretary, Sue Fawcett. She has compiled a comprehensive document with profiles of the nine churches in the Benefice in the hope of tempting a new person to lead the churches in this beautiful Cotswold valley. The post is not expected to be filled until October 2016 at the earliest.

We have been working hard to ensure that the fabric of the Church is sound. The trees around the boundary and also the large Wellingtonia behind the Church have been denuded of ivy and the dead wood removed, the bell ropes are in the process of being renewed and we are exploring with Historic England the best way to repair the stone cross in the churchyard, which is a scheduled ancient monument. There is a list of items in the quinquennial report, which we have to attend to and soon the next 5 years will be up and we will begin again!

In June 2015 a monumental storm occurred and lightning hit the Church as well as

the College. We were more fortunate than the College, being saved by our conductors but there were still repairs to be undertaken.

If you feel able to help us in our work to keep the Church dry, warm and in a good state of repair we would be extremely grateful. Cheques should be made out to Rendcomb PCC and sent to me at The Old House, Rendcomb, Cirencester GL7 7EY. Alternatively you can contact me at annabelpurcell@hotmail.co.uk

Do come and see us if you are nearby.

Annabel Purcell, Treasurer



OLD RENDCOMBIAN NEWS

Carol Lamble (nee Franklin) (1977-79) and **Sarah Tarleton** (2001-2011) appeared on the game show *Pointless* in May 2015. On their first appearance they made it through to the Head to Head having been the lowest scorers in the first two rounds on Tennis nations in the 2014 Davis or FED cups and famous Alexanders or Richards. They were knocked out in the Head to Head when their opponents gave the lowest possible answers on the name of films with cats in (*You only Live Twice* beating *Breakfast in Tiffany's*) and then names in Shakespeare plays (*Timon of Athens* beating *Troilus and Cressida*).



Carol wrote: Two OR's from different generations have appeared on *Pointless*! Carol Lamble (née Franklin) and Sarah Tarleton took part in two episodes, aired in May/June 2015, getting to the head-to-head in one. They thoroughly enjoyed the experience but in the end were foxed by a testing question on the films of Cameron Diaz and Angelina Jolie!

Ralph Barnes (1991-98) was mentioned in December on Radio Gloucestershire as he is the Conductor of Churchdown Male Voice Choir and of Innsworth Ladies Choir.

Ben Almond (1978-85) left Commerzbank a year ago and has set up his own Consultancy business which provides real estate strategic advisory services to financial services clients. He is working for the Co-operative bank in Manchester. His eldest son is in his final year at Cambridge reading

History. His next son plays for West Herts 1st XI in the national hockey league, also captaining his school hockey team.

Eric Blencowe (1976-1983) writes to say that he has taken advantage of a Voluntary Exit scheme from the Civil Service. Having done 28 years and some very rewarding posts, it is now time for a change. He will be studying for a Diploma in Professional Counselling for two years and should be practising by September 2018.

Barbara Tyler who taught middle school French from 1974 to 1982 and organised Rendcomb's participation in the Cheltenham-Anneecy exchange, was 94 in December. She is in St. Faith's Home in Cheltenham.

Sam Gunner (1995-2003) and Jess Francis's wedding photo in the poppy field won the photographer Eve Dunlop a Wedisson photography prize and as a result the wedding was featured on rockmywedding.co.uk/Jess-Sam/.

Keith Winmill (1972-77) appeared on ITV's game show, Tipping Point in February.

Adam Phelps (1980-82) was appointed head of land and homes at Humberts in autumn 2015.

Tom Denny (Staff 1984-94) has recently brought out a book called Glory, Azure and Gold which illustrates his work throughout his career and lists all the stain glass windows he has designed and produced, examples of his work can be found in Gloucester Cathedral, Tewkesbury Abbey and most recently he has been working on the memorial windows for Richard III at Leicester Cathedral. The site for which is:

<http://leicestercathedral.org/stained-glass-window-design-unveiled/>

He also appeared on the BBC program, Flog it, talking about the windows in Gloucester Cathedral. Maquettes of the chapel windows are displayed on the first floor landing at the College.

Francis Newcombe (1989-96) is Director of food and beverage Hotel Rotana, Al Ain, Abu Dhabi.

Jess Weston (1998-2005) started as Assistant Project Manager of the Residential Let Estate for the National Trust in March this year.



The Archdeacon of Cheltenham, the Venerable Robert Springett presented **Rev. Bob Edy** (1959-67) with his licence in June 2015. For the first time in the history of the Church of England a licence has been authorised by a female Bishop, The Right Rev Bishop of Gloucester Rachel Treweek.



In 2015, **Luke Gunner** (1998-2005) was commissioned by the Hare Festival committee of the Cirencester Community Development Trust to paint one of the seven hares which are to be a permanent trail through the green spaces of Cirencester. The theme of his hare was bats and it is sited at the Thomas Street end of the path leading to the Open Air swimming pool.

Luke is in his second year at the Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew studying for a diploma in Horticulture.

Alistair Read (2005-10) is a medic in Poland.

Joe Watson's (1971-78) firm Cotswold Estates and Gardens Ltd. reached its half-century in 2015. To celebrate this, they entered a show garden in the RHS Malvern show. The theme was the Cotswold Way and it won a silver gilt, it went on to be voted the people's choice and the business and the garden were featured in Cotswold Life where Joe was interviewed.



Simon Wormleighton (1968-1975) retired from his position as Headmaster at Plymouth College in March 2015. He is now enjoying a different pace of life in the beautiful Devon countryside.

Caroline Brett (1972-74) is a natural history film maker, author and photographer. She worked for 25 years for the Anglia TV's Survival series and now has her own film-making company. She has written seven books on wildlife and numerous articles. She lives in North Norfolk with her partner of 20 years. They have one son who is on a gap year and off to UWE to read wildlife conservation in September.

David Bell (1967-74) is Managing Director of Assyst Bullmer Ltd, Wakefield, which does automated textile cutting. "After Durham Uni I lived in Scotland for 8 years before coming down to Yorkshire where I have been

for the last 30 years. I am married with 2 children, also both married and 2 grandchildren so far. I started climbing at Rendcomb and am slightly surprised I am still actively doing it in my 60th year."

Will Hall (1967-74): "I went to Bangor University where I met my wife Gwen. We have now been married 32 years, have 3 children and are expecting a grandson any day now. I have been working in IT since 1983, and for last 19 years in IT Consulting with Admiral, Logica and now CGI. We live in St. Hilary nr Cardiff in an old farmhouse, which with garden keeps me busy when not at work."

Diane Martin (née Crew) (1975-77) is now working as an Associate Director with Savills in their London office, as part of the rural valuation team.

Carlo Vuolo (Staff: 1996-2013) has been writing a series of articles for the award winning local magazine the Cirencester Scene.

IN MEMORIAM

In March 2016, Jane was contacted by the family of **Percy Harding** (1926-31) known as little Jim. Percy had died tragically from pneumonia at the age of 23. As this year would have been his hundredth birthday his younger sister was delighted to know that his reports and certificates could be kept safe in the Society's archives and we feel it is fitting to remember him here.



Tony Perkins (1924-31) by Peter Barnes. With the seventieth anniversary of the ending of World War II we are pleased to include this tribute: For the past 15 years or so I have been researching the history of the village of Simpson, now part of Milton Keynes, where I live. Simpson is about three miles from Bletchley Park, the base of the World War 2 codebreaking operation. Like other villages and towns in the area, Simpson was home to Bletchley Park workers between 1940 and 1945. I know of fifteen; one of them was Nicholas Anthony Perkins (1924-31), known as Tony. Tony Perkins was born on 7 December 1912 in Easthampstead, Berkshire. His father was an architect. At some point in his early childhood the family moved to East Dulwich and Tony attended Dulwich College Preparatory School. He became a pupil at Rendcomb College in 1924, at the age of eleven. In his later years at the College his maths teacher was Ralph Bolton-King (Staff 1927-32). Tony was his first mathematical scholar, together with Bill (W.F.) Jones, and they enjoyed several terms in the sixth form with virtually individual tuition. In an appreciation of Bolton-King, Tony wrote 'I visualise his neat but microscopic handwriting whereby he could get a proof or an exploration into a small space. Following his example, I was able to obtain glowing reports from my tutor at Oxford.'

Entries in his Tony's Letts Schoolboy Diary in December 1929 (an example printed in the 1992 newsletter. Ed.), when he was just 17, highlight two interests which were sustained throughout this life - chess and cycling. He learned to play chess at the age of 7 from watching his father and went on to play at international level. On Sunday 15 December 1929 he noted in his diary: 'Played chess in the library before church'.

That same day Tony and a friend cycled to Tewkesbury and back (about 45 miles) on 'a fine and warm afternoon' to view the floods. The following Friday afternoon, with another friend, he cycled into Cirencester to visit the Christmas market. In the summer of 1931 he and his friend **Christopher Sidgwick** (1929-33) went on a cycle camping tour of Southern Ireland.

1931 was the year Tony left Rendcomb for St. John's College, Oxford to read mathematics, with a scholarship worth £100. He played in four inter-Varsity chess matches against Cambridge between 1932 and 1935.

After graduation he joined the Post Office and, in 1937, moved to Edinburgh where he joined the Civil Service Chess Club. He played in the Scottish Championships in 1938 and 1939. He was invited to join the Scottish chess team for the 1939 Buenos Aires Olympiad but was unable to accept. In the event, Scotland did not participate because of difficulties in putting together a team and a change of dates by the organisers. His

contemporaries who played in the British chess team – Stuart Milner-Barry (the then chess correspondent of *The Times*), Hugh Alexander and Harry Golombek (chess correspondent of *The Times*, 1945-89) - did travel to



Argentina but had to return home when war broke out in September. Before long, all three were recruited to Bletchley Park. On 4 September 1941 Tony Perkins married Gertrude Davis at Melrose in Scotland. At that time she was known as Trudie, though in later years she used Gertrude.

Tony arrived at Bletchley Park in December 1941 and worked in Hut 8, which was responsible for decrypting German navy Enigma signals. The hut had an inner room where cryptanalysts like Tony worked, and a 'Big Room' where the supporting staff kept traffic records and tested the results from the bombses. In the late summer of 1942 a solution had been found to the cipher

known as Porpoise and the purely cryptanalytic work eased off. Tony, Harry Golombek and Leslie Yoxall were transferred to other sections in October/November. That may have been to a department, which decrypted German Intelligence Service signals.

Trudie joined him at Bletchley Park in February 1942 and worked in Mansion Room 51, Hut 9 and the Central Administration Office. In later years she told friends in the village of Sherington, where she and Tony then lived, that she was a mere 'filing clerk' and declined invitations to talk about her work because she said she only had a boring job. She also said that she didn't know what Tony actually did during the war as they never discussed their jobs, even when the nature of the work was beginning to be generally known

Tony and Trudie lived at *The Mount*, a sizeable property in the village of Simpson, about three miles from Bletchley Park. The owner was living in Australia and it was being rented by a local man and his wife. A life-long Simpson resident, now in his late 80s, recalls that the Perkins family lived in the downstairs room to the left of the present day entrance.

Trudie left BP in April 1943, around the time of the birth of their first child, Stephen.

The Mount had a number of benefits for a couple with a young child: there was a bath with hot running water and a telephone. These facilities were also attractive to other Bletchley Park workers billeted in the village, such as Bentley Bridgewater (subsequently Secretary of the British Museum) who lived opposite, and Angus Wilson (subsequently a well-known novelist), who is said to have entertained Stephen with animal noises.

While at Bletchley Park, Tony maintained his high standard of chess playing. In December 1944 he was Board 5 in a match between Bletchley and Oxford University. The Bletchley team included Hugh Alexander, Harry Golombek and 'Max' Aitken (10 times Scottish chess champion). Bletchley won 8:4.

Tony left Bletchley Park in March 1945. He and Trudie had two more children, a son and a daughter, Clare.

He continued to play competitive chess, participating in the Scottish Championships (1948, 1952 and 1954), the British Championship (1955) and as a member of the Scottish team at the 1958 Munich Olympiad. He was active over many years as a player and was President of the Middlesex County Chess Association.

He retired from the Post Office Headquarters in 1974. In the early 1980s he and Trudie moved to live in a bungalow in Sherrington, a village to the east of Newport Pagnell in north Buckinghamshire, where they became active members of the local community. Tony, described as 'much more reserved' than his wife and 'very much an academic', continued to play chess. He also rode a drop-handlebar racing bike.

In retirement he was a part-time tutor for The Open University. He worked on the Social Science course *Statistical Sources* (D291) from 1976 to 1983 with student groups in the London Region. His help, along with that of others, in the preparation of the unit on Population Statistics, was acknowledged in an author's note.

He died on 26 May 1991 and is commemorated at St Laud's Church, Sherrington, where there is a bench named in his memory. Gertrude died in 1998.

peterwbarnes@hotmail.co.uk



RENDCOMBIANA

The Guise Gates

Tony Partridge (staff: Clerk of works 1973-88 and subsequently gardener) provided this photograph of the gates at Elmore Court in 2015. Elmore Court is the Gloucestershire seat of the Guise family who owned the Rendcomb Estate from 1635 until it was sold to Sir Francis Goldsmid in 1864. The Guise family built a plain late 17th Century house, enlarged in 1770, sited roughly where the present house is situated. I believe that the debris from the Guise house was used to construct the terraces in front of the present house.



The gates in the photograph were designed in 1716 for the Guise family and were taken to Elmore Court when the Rendcomb estate was sold. The

gates were restored with the aid of English Heritage in 2000.

Two interesting questions arise from this information. Firstly, where were the gates situated in 18th Century Rendcomb and, secondly, what was the main access road to Rendcomb at this time? There is a splendid image of the Guise mansion, dated 1779, by Rudder. From this, the stables can be seen on the present village road slightly below the church. This might mean that the main drive to the house was roughly where the “back” drive is today with the gates somewhere near the present site of the Old Rectory.

This leads to the second question. The Cirencester-Cheltenham road was not constructed until 1825; so was access to Rendcomb via lanes connecting to The Whiteway? (The lane to Woodmancote would have been quite unusable for coaches). Rendcomb village would have been fairly isolated.

Nigel Powell (1967-74) has kindly done some detailed research into the question of access to Rendcomb village. A road in 1773 was built from The Whiteway near Rendcomb Buildings down to Rendcomb. This track is still a public footpath, but would have necessitated a steep gradient in Kennel Bottom Lane for the last 300 yards. There still exists a track from North Cerney to Conigree Wood, coming down between Smith's Cottage, but this too would have required a steep rise at the end.

I have walked the footpaths round Rendcomb both on my own and leading groups a great deal over the years, and in my opinion the most likely route out of Rendcomb before 1825 would have been through the village, past the present sports field, and on to Shawswell Farm. There is then a track, admittedly with descent and ascent, up the The Whiteway. This track also continues north to Woodlands Farm and on to the high level track above Colesbourne to Seven Springs.

Old Rendcombians who took part in the sponsored walks in the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s may recall some of the routes mentioned!! **Bill White**

COLLEGE NEWS

Following on from excellent GCSE and A Level results at the end of 2014/15, my first year as Headmaster at this magnificent College has been a constant delight. My family and I have been struck by how we have been warmly welcomed into the Rendcomb community by staff, pupils and parents alike.

Highlights from across the College include the visit from world-renowned poet Simon Armitage, a bumper crop of Oxbridge candidates, our Junior School gaining IAPS membership (representing excellence in education) and gaining positive national news coverage of our decision to slash Sixth Form day fees.

Out of 600 national team entries, our team of three Year 10 and Year 11 girls won the annual National Longitude Explorer prize for their mobile app Displaced, which uses live data on homeless people and refugees collected from postings on social media accounts. With location data and notes provided by users, the app will allow charities to better coordinate the logistics of supporting vulnerable people around the world.

The College enjoyed sporting representation at both national and international levels in lacrosse, cross country, swimming and dragon-boat racing.

Music and drama were celebrated in equal measure with the rip-roaring success of the Senior School production of *One Man, Two Guvnors* and a whole school choir performance of *Ahoy!*, and not forgetting cherished memories of a packed St John's Church in Cirencester for our Christmas service led by Rev **Bob Edy** (1959-67, Staff: 2015-).

With the roof in place, the new Performing Arts Centre is taking shape in the heart of our campus. The mountain of spoil from the site has been getting smaller and smaller as it is transported to the other side of Park House for a new football pitch for the Junior School.

I am sure that our alumni count themselves as having benefited from an holistic and diverse education at Rendcomb and we continue to strive to develop thoughtful, adventurous and academically ambitious young people who are life-long learners.

Rob Jones (Headmaster: 2015-)

Staff news

Diana Dodd retires this summer. She arrived at Rendcomb in 1997 when she stepped in to cover the Christmas term teaching English when another member of staff was unable to take up their post.

She brought a wide range of experience to the College teaching Drama and helping with Sport. By the Lent term she was producing the play *'Marriage of Figaro'*. Soon after that she took up the house parenting of Godman House with her husband Paul.



Diana brought Drama to a whole new level both in and beyond the College grounds with many triumphs at the Cheltenham Festivals and in house performances which have given Rendcomb the reputation of 'punching above its weight' where theatre is concerned. Including overseeing Rendcomb's first entry at the Edinburgh Festival in 2014. Plays produced ranged from *'One*

flew over the cuckoo's nest' through *'Bugsy Malone'* to *'Dangerous Liaisons'*.

After two years as a house parent, in 2002 Diana became Assistant Head to **Gerry Holden** (Headmaster: 1999-2011), a post she has held now for fourteen years. During this time she has held the fort in College during exuberant firework displays with calm determination.

Throughout this time, Drama metamorphosed into Performing Arts and plays became more and more ambitious. '*Oliver*', for instance needed 350 costumes from Sister Pritchard (Rogers) and buckets of mud from the make-up mums, while '*Jesus Christ Superstar*' had a cast of over 50 students. We wish Diana well in her retirement knowing that she will be a hard act to follow.

Emily Apps (2004-08) writes: Mrs Dodd - where can I begin?

Mrs Dodd is the best, most supportive and inspiring teacher I have ever had. As a now professional actress, I can honestly say that it was Mrs Dodd who drove me to try and finally succeed at getting into Drama school. The level of passion for her subject paired with her sensitivity towards the individual insecurities of growing adults was invaluable to my time at Rendcomb.

I wouldn't be the person I am today without her unwavering support and advice, not only as a student but as a person and individual - she taught me to trust my own ability, deal with negativity and also helped me to realise that I shouldn't be ashamed to completely and totally love a subject. I must have rushed to her office so many times to tell her about a show I had seen or an idea I had for a school production - it just felt natural to share these things with her first. In her words: "You should only go into acting if you can't think of anything else you love more".... incredibly wise words!

I can't imagine Rendcomb without Mrs Dodd but I'm so pleased her dream of a fully functioning theatre and arts building is finally becoming a reality - the years of Dulverton Hall productions will stay with me as some of my best memories of school and all because of this incredible woman and her fabulous attitude to the arts. I also hope the annual Drama Tour will live on without her as I believe it is so important for young adults to watch and interact with live theatre, a process that Mrs Dodd has championed for many years.

Mrs Dodd, thank you so much for giving me and so many others such a wonderful start in life and making school something wonderful to look forward to each day by inspiring us to see the world differently and express ourselves in ways we didn't know how until you showed us!

Holly Phelps (2000-12) writes: **Diana Dodd's** passion for drama shone through in her teaching. Working with all her students to make them be the best performers they could be. Her quick wit and love for chocolate always made for an interesting lesson, never knowing what might be in store as you entered the class room. She always pushed me to challenge myself and work hard and to never settle for anything less than excellent and for that I am grateful. The shows Diana put on were always ambitious and beautiful - from 'Amadeus' to 'Hairspray'. The pre-show motivation talk is something I will never forget and carry with me in my performances today- 'Shine'. Thank you Diana throughout your time at Rendcomb you really have shone. **Holly** is in her third year at Birmingham University studying Drama and Theatre Arts.

Jake Mckeown (2000-12) writes: Whether in lessons, plays, drama tours, or any of the many other things she did for Rendcomb, what made Mrs Dodd such a great teacher was the fun and energy she always brought. No doubt her passion for Drama was why so many in Rendcomb enjoyed the class so much, and I know myself that what I'm doing now is very much down to the enjoyment and enthusiasm for the subject that Mrs Dodd passed on to me.

Jake studied Drama at Bristol University and graduated in 2015. He now works for Bughouse Films who make films for business and charities.



August 2015 Rendcomb sadly said goodbye to **Mark Robbins** as Head Chef. Mark joined Rendcomb in August 2000 from Cheltenham College where he had been an instructor. Mark brought with him skills from his time at the renowned Gleneagles Hotel and had represented his country in international Parade of Chefs competitions.

Mark drove the Catering Team forward winning both the customer and his team's admiration and supported the College and

commercial events with equal zeal and enthusiasm winning praise for the food that his team produced.

Mark always took a keen interest in the students and got to know them well and could often be heard on the servery asking as to how the football team they support had done at their last match and as a keen Manchester City supporter and general sports enthusiast had a wide breath of knowledge of sport that he was always keen to share.

Mark has started in pastures new, closer to his home for him, at Cheltenham College Prep School and again in the role as Head Chef and we all wish him and his family well after fifteen years dedicated service to the College.

Mark Naylor, Commercial Manager

SAUL

ORs may want to know what has happened to Saul.

After the sale fell through, Saul was moved to the Outer Hall to make way for a new reception desk. There is now a painting of him in Saul's Hall.

Just before his removal, the College was struck by lightning. Was this coincidence or divine retribution?



The Society has printed a pamphlet about Saul written by the late **Michael Martin** (1926-1933) which can be purchased from Jane Gunner for £3 + p&p.

When it was believed that Saul would be leaving Rendcomb, Graham Jordan sent in this piece:

GOODBYE TO SAUL

I grew up at Rendcomb, I grew up with Saul.
On arriving home through those tall glass doors,
Saul was waiting in all his grandeur, so magnificent.
Rock solid, bigger than life, yet still agile enough to turn about.

I came away from Rendcomb with my own sculptures,
An alabaster bust from the art department,
Elm, ash and ebony carvings chiselled out in woodwork,
And an appreciation of all forms of living.

Last year I heard Saul had succumbed to pecuniary interests.
I was travelling in Italy at the time,
Amid the total glory of sculpture.
I came home with my own little bronze statue of David.

It's taken me a year to let go of my sense of propriety of Saul,
He was a father figure to me,
As a lad, he was eternally encouraging.
I thank those who foresight brought him to life.

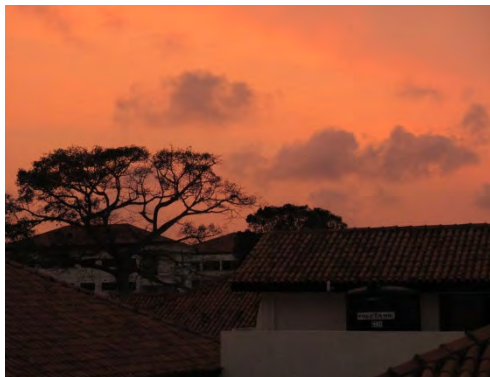
I still cry, goodbye to Saul
I know he was part of cherished memories,
Of youth, of Rendcomb, of special guidance.
The beginning of a quest to find my place in this world.

Graham Jordan, (1966-73)

OR TRAVEL BURSARY 2015

Abigail Whittles – 6 weeks in Ghana

As a part of my 4th year Medical Degree at the University of Southampton we do a research project, for mine I decided to go to Ghana. I spent 6 weeks at the beginning of this year in the capital, Accra. I went on my own and stayed at the University of Ghana. For my research I was looking into Family Planning provided by pharmacies and Chemist shops, this is something that has not been researched before.



The view from my room at the University of Ghana.

When I first arrived at Ghana I could not be in more culture shock. Firstly, I went from freezing England to 30 degree African Sun. Secondly, Accra has about 4 hours of electricity a day due to their energy crisis. And then just about everything else was different. In Ghana they speak English however I wouldn't say I could always understand what was being said. I was doing my project

with the help of the Research Institute of Population Studies. They were very welcoming and thankfully so generous, they helped me find my way in the very busy city and became good friends of mine. Although they had to use a generator the office I worked in had internet and air conditioning, thank goodness.

So before I go into what I did for fun in Ghana I will tell you about my work. I administered questionnaires to providers of Family Planning; I would go out to my study areas by public transport with my research assistants. I also interviewed 10 individuals that have expert knowledge on my topic. These people were working with NGOs, like Marie Stopes International, and midwives in the public hospitals. Later when I returned to Southampton I also used pre-existing data from Ghana about Family Planning. I enjoyed collecting my data; I met some interesting people and got an insight to communities that you don't get to see when you usually visit a country. One of my study areas was Ga Mashie, an urban slum. I have

travelled to many developing countries before but I have never experienced poverty like this so close up. It wasn't sad like they show on TV, the people were so friendly and happy. Everyone I spoke to was so keen to help with my project. Many of the children were not use to seeing white people so as I collected my data, I was followed by around a dozen children calling 'Oburoni' – white person in their local language Ga. It definitely made collecting my data interesting.

Now for what I did for fun while I was in Ghana. One of the best things I did was to go to Cape Coast, it was about 2 hours away from Accra. It is one of the oldest slave trade castles in Ghana, it was occupied by the British from 1664 to 1877. I went down to the dungeons where they kept the slaves before they would leave through the 'door of no return' and be loaded onto ships to come to America and the UK. The castle was saddening and beautiful. I also did a four day trip into the Volta region which is a less urban area. I stayed in traditional communities either in a lodge or a home stay. I did some walking in the mountains where I narrowly avoided stepping on a snake.



This is Ga Mashie, one of my study areas for data collection.

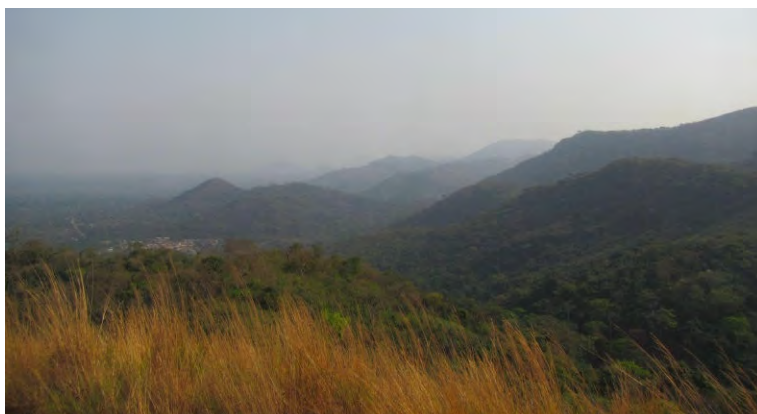


Cape Coast Castel

I also went to a Monkey sanctuary where the monkeys are so friendly, they jump all over you and eat bananas out of your hands. The whole trip was incredible; I learnt so much and got

some very valuable data. The people I met were amazing and I really fell in love with West Africa. I am interested in doing medicine overseas in countries like Ghana, this was a great opportunity for me experience what that could be like. I would like to thank the Old Rendcombian Society for their generosity that meant I could do this research. I have now completed my final report and I am planning to send it to the contacts I made in Ghana in the hope it could help improve Family Planning services by pharmacies and chemical sellers. Thanks again to the OR Society.

Abigail Whittles (2004-09)



Hannah Richards in Ghana September 2015

The World's Worst Place to Be Disabled?

ICS (International Citizen Service) is a UK government-funded programme that offers the opportunity for 18-25 year olds to volunteer and help fight poverty at home and overseas. After a difficult recruitment process, I was offered a place as a team leader in Burkina Faso working on a women's project. With the help of friends, family and the Old Rendcombian Society I managed to raise over £800 for the charity that I was volunteering for; International Service. International Service is an NGO that protects and promotes the rights of marginalised people across the globe.

In early September, I set off for Burkina Faso in West Africa to begin training before my team of volunteers arrived in country. After just over a fortnight however, the President was taken hostage by his special guard and

a military coup ensued. For our safety, all team leaders were evacuated from the capital city, Ouagadougou and transported to the neighbouring country of Ghana and we were assigned new projects (one team leader was even flown over to Bolivia!); I was now to be working on a project concerned with disability. Many of you may have seen the BBC3 documentary about disability in Ghana and you may know that for many persons with disability (PWDs) it is one of the worst places in the world to be disabled. They face persecution, exclusion and abuse on a daily basis.

I spent four months working for a local organisation called “The Northern Regional Resource Centre for Persons with Disabilities”. The Resource Centre’s vision is “for PWDs to enjoy their fundamental rights and freedoms and live as active and equal members of society”. The Centre coordinates efforts across Ghana’s Northern Region to ensure persons with disabilities live in dignity, with equal access to rights and opportunities as full members of society. International Service has a strong partnership with the Resource Centre and helps to support and maintain the work that it does in the regional capital, Tamale. The ICS International Service team consisted of nine volunteers (five from the UK and four from Ghana) and two team leaders (myself and my Ghanaian counterpart) and we worked alongside the centre manager, chairman and the Resource Centre’s member organisations to provide a sustainable form of aid for the local community.

My team of volunteers carried out a massive amount of work over the twelve-week period (I am so proud) and tackled stigma head on through the organisation of numerous different activities. Disability remains somewhat of an enigma in Ghana, with many people thinking that it is contagious, a curse or a form of punishment. As a result, one of our main objectives was to conduct as many awareness-raising sessions in the local community as possible. Overall we managed to present at seven different schools, four radio stations and also organise three community events including a documentary screening. Excluding the audience targeted by the radio appearances (which was impossible to get statistics for), we presented to over 1,000 people in extremely difficult situations; for example often there was no electricity or people were simply not interested in learning about disability.



In addition to these awareness-raising sessions we also organised a Teachers' Workshop which twenty local teachers attended. Throughout the morning, we informed the teachers about disability and how they could adapt their classroom and teaching methods to suit the needs of students with disability. Furthermore, we created resource packs with information and posters for the teachers to take back and show to their students.

Aside from awareness-raising, the team worked really hard to strengthen the relationships between International Service and the member organisations of the Resource Centre. We regularly attended training sessions of the local wheelchair basketball team and even facilitated a match between them and another local team. We also paid visits to local schools for mentally disabled and deaf children: a very eye opening experience. The children were absolutely lovely and it was heart breaking to hear how many had been abandoned and/or deemed 'worthless' to society.

Research also played a big part in the work the team did; many hours were spent in the office locating grants and equipment for the Blind Union and the Society for the Physically Disabled. We successfully managed to find two laptops and install specialised software so that those with visual impairments and blindness have greater access to information and

employment opportunities. Additionally, we constructed a net out of plastic sachets for the wheelchair tennis team and also donated one of our laptops to the sports group.



I am unbelievably grateful to have had such an amazing experience and I can't put into words just how proud I am of my volunteers. In Ghana, I met some unforgettable people who are incredibly inspiring and don't stop smiling even in the face of adversity. Although I have finished my placement, the work doesn't stop here. As part of the ICS programme, myself and the other volunteers will now complete 'Action at Home' which is the chance to give something back to our local communities and not just those overseas. I am so thankful to everyone who has supported me over the past five months, it hasn't been easy but I wouldn't change any of it!

Hannah Richards (2003-08)

PERFORMING ARTS CENTRE

Work continues apace on the site of the old tennis courts (new ones having been opened in July 2015 by **Ben Knapp** (1977-84), who played an exhibition match with his daughter Grace, a current pupil. As this newsletter goes to print, the brick and block work is flying up with heavy plant as far as the eye can see. Deliveries of steels, bricks, blocks, glulam beams and insulation arrive on site on a daily basis to take their place in this fine addition to the campus.



Opportunities still exist to be a part of this unique building; perhaps the thespians amongst the OR body would like to name a seat in the 350 seat auditorium or even a stepping stone in the Rendcomb Walk of Fame.

This marks the first major addition to the campus since 1989 but

is just one part of our ongoing Development plans for the College. As other ORs have already done so, do contact **Hannah Boydell** at boydellh@rendcomb.gloucs.sch.uk to arrange your return visit to College and to see the developments for yourself. We would love to see you and to show you around!

HOCKEY – Saturday 19th March 2016

A bitterly cold day saw the ORs clash with the College team on the Astro. It was a convincing win by the College 1st XI and the first time that they have won in over four years! The OR 2nd XI came back fighting and won the game 3-1. It was such a well-attended game by ORs, the College and staff and even OR parents so there is great hope that this will continue!



Above Back Row: **Ed Thomason** (2005-10), **James Tait** (2002-15), **Sam Scott** (2005-13), **Jack Pethick** (2006-13), **Ali Sinfield** (2006-13), **Lance Baynham** (2003-13), **Alex Tatara-Mills** (2009-14), **Rory Clark** (2003-10), **Harley Phelps** (2002-09).

Front Row: **Bob Lamble** (2013-15), **Josh Thomas** (2001-13), **Will Scott** (2005-13), **Luke Witts** (2006-13), **Rich Ashton** (2005-09), **Steve Brown** (2004-09), **James Brittain** (2001-10). **1st XI: 5-0 to the College**



2nd XI: 3-1 to ORs
Additional team players: **Oli Burden** (2009-14), **Luke Nixon** (2009-14), **Tom Pethwick** (2008-15), **Yanis Dimopoulos** (2012-14), **Adam Phelps** (1982-84)

DESTINATION OF 6A LEAVERS 2015

Brodie Ash	Politics and International Relations, University of Exeter
Rozy Baynham	Sport and Exercise Science, University of Birmingham
Amy Benson	Speech and Language Therapy, University of Reading
Jacob Davidge	Sport and Exercise Nutrition, Hartpury College
Ed Davies	Performance and Theatre Arts, International University in London
Ben Elliott	Neuroscience, University of Edinburgh
Lauren Kraven	Interior Design, Falmouth University
Robert Lamble	Rural Land Management, Royal Agricultural University
Miles McKeown	Business Management, Swansea University
Henry Mills	Music, University of Nottingham
James Mudge	Geography (Science), University of Liverpool
Jerry Pan	Mechanical Engineering, University of Bristol
Thomas Pethick	Film and History, University of Southampton
Alex Phillips	Business Management, Cardiff Metropolitan University
Anna Rombelsheim	International Management and Modern Languages – French, University of Bath
James Tait	Mathematics and Computer Science, University of Bristol
Leona Tan	Chemical Engineering, University of Birmingham
Dan Thomas	Chemistry with Industrial Experience, University of Bristol
Olivia Witts	English, University of Bristol
David Zhang	Mathematics with Finance & Accounting, Queen Mary University of London
Kobe Zheng	Engineering (Electronic and Electrical), University College London
Fonting Zhang	Accounting and Finance, University of Essex
Flo Price	Business Economics, Cardiff University
Kathryn Rew	Business Management with Marketing, University of Birmingham
Celilia Wang	Business and Management (with a year in Industry), University of York
Amelia Brady	Communication and Media Studies, Brunel University London

Olivia Ellis	Law, Cardiff University
Marshall Wu	Science and Engineering Foundation Programme (Mathematical Science 4 Year), Queen Mary University of London
Sam Song	Financial Mathematics, Queen Mary University of London
Zenobia Wang	Foundation Course, University of Arts London
Edward Watkins	Business, Plymouth University
Lucy Kernon	Rural Land Management, Royal Agricultural University
Christine Khirrecu	Law, University of Southampton
Yuru Huang	Mathematics and Statistics, University of Manchester

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Jane Gunner,

Whiteway Farmhouse, The Whiteway, Cirencester, Glos, GL7 7BA

Or e-mail: secretary@oldrendcomb.org.uk

Society contacts and forms are available through the website:

oldrendcomb.org.uk

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