

# Floreat Redingensis

The Magazine of Reading School

July 2013



## Reading School goes global:

Our students have competed and travelled all over the world this year:

see page 36

## A Year of Change:

### Mr Robson reflects on his first year as Headmaster

A review of the academic year 2012-2013 enables us as a whole community to reflect on the myriad achievements of Reading School boys and staff. On a personal level it also provides an opportunity to consider the experience of my first year as Headmaster of Reading School – it has been very busy and enjoyable! I have particularly welcomed the opportunity to meet parents and pupils at different events celebrating success.

We also celebrate participation. We celebrate excellence. We develop personalities not only in sport but in a range of activities that enrich lives. The Triathlon Club led by Mr Teixeira and Mr Bywater goes from strength to strength as does Public Speaking as illustrated by our participation in the World Championships in Durban, South Africa. Learning takes place in the classroom but is not confined to it, as demonstrated by the CCF, exchanges, Geography fieldwork and international visits.

Without the professionalism of our staff the boys would not be able to achieve so much. We are committed to sharing best practice and encouraging collaboration locally, nationally and internationally through partnerships with other schools and universities. We also seek to maintain an attitude which celebrates integrity, fairness and personal responsibility, including the development of leadership at all levels. Pupil leadership is especially important. The School Captain and Vice-Captain 2012-2013, Matthew Greaves and Dan Brock, have been excellent ambassadors and I fully expect the incoming prefect team led by Domenico Cullura and Christopher Mountain to be outstanding role models.

The flourishing House system, involving friendly competition between boys, shows the Reading School ethos at its best. In addition, boarding is an integral part of Reading School and boarders have excelled throughout the academic year. The superb boarders' barbecue in June symbolised for me the importance of the 'boarding family' which is at the heart of Reading School.

Looking to the future, we will respect tradition but also remain open to innovation and improvement so that we are able to face the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. We want to sustain excellence and enhance provision, with Science and Sport as an initial priority, so that our boys have the facilities that their unique talents deserve. We will strive to promote successful and varied approaches to teaching and learning, but with this a practical philosophy which recognises the spiritual, moral, social and cultural dimensions of education as well as the academic.

This Annual Review provides clear evidence of the high quality of education, in its broadest sense, at Reading School. Reading School boys participate, compete, create and innovate. The range and depth of the entries illustrate the fact that our drive is for Excellence, Integrity and Leadership. I take heart from the changes already wrought and the path we have together embarked upon. I look forward to a bright future and feel I can claim with some justification that the best is yet to come.

A. Robson



## Reading School Pass Notes: Number 1, 1125.

1125

### Is 1125 definitely the date the school was founded?

Well, actually the School may have been in existence from the date of the founding of the second Abbey in Reading. This second Abbey was founded in 1121 by Henry I. However, 1125 is generally accepted to be the date of the School's foundation.

### Surely, there is something written down to record the founding of the school?

'De Scolis de Redyng' is the oldest surviving School Charter. It was written by Roger, Bishop of Salisbury.

The exact date this document was written is unclear.

The aforesaid Bishop died on 4th December 1139, so it must have been written some time before that.

### So the Bishop of Salisbury was in charge?

Certainly in its early history the School's purse strings were held by the church. Henry VIII transferred the right to appoint the Master of Reading School to the burgesses of Reading in 1546. His daughter Elizabeth I granted the School a Royal Charter in 1560 and it was from this point that the School began to take the shape that we recognise today.



## Features

### 4 The seasons of UCAS

Fran Smith, Senior Tutor of Year 13 walks us through a typical 'UCAS year'.

### 5 A-levels—How will the reforms affect our students?

Mr T Harris, Head of Sixth Form Comments on latest proposals.

### 6 Profile

Matt Greaves and Domenico Cullura on Captaincy.

### 7 Year 7

Comments on the first year at Reading School.

### 31 The Living Rainforest

### 36 Cover Feature

International Visits, Exchanges and a little Geography.

### 44 The Long View

An interview with Mr Ian Judd.

### 45 A Day in the Life

Mr Teixeira in a very busy day.

## Regulars

8 RSPA

9 ORA

10 Sport

14 Clubs

15 Music

18 Art

20 Drama

21 Elocution

22 English

28 LRC

29 Economics

30 History

32 Maths

33 Biology

34 Technology

38 MFL

41 Valette & Salvete

42 CCF

46 Alumni

47 Observatory

## Editorial



It's a mad process, this editing lark. You start off with 48 blank pages to cover, devise a plan then start gently cajoling hard-pressed colleagues for contributions. Some arrive almost instantly (get them out of the way, right?); most

trickle through in dribs and drabs. Eventually you take stock of what you have and suddenly realise that, far from not having sufficient content, there is enough to fill about two magazines, so painful but necessary surgery begins: trimming, condensing, shifting about - all the while attempting to remain true to the content and spirit of the original.

I believe the end result is a fair reflection (if not a comprehensive record) of the nature and range of activities which have occupied some of our time this year. I have deliberately included contributions from students as well as staff and other adults who contribute to School life; feature-type articles as well as news and reviews; pieces which look to the future (see Technology) and which look back further than the space of a year (see the interview with Mr Judd).

We went with a global theme this issue to reflect our mission and the growing perspective of our boys and teachers. Future issues, I think, will operate according to a different publication cycle: there is so much happening at this time of year that could not be included, and waiting until summer 2014 is too long an interim. There is also talk of a broader editorial board being constituted where a range of interested parties will have a say in the design and content: so there will definitely be more 'Floreats' in the future - but watch this space for developments!

I cannot praise Frances Greaney and Caroline Hoyle highly enough for their professional and patient work in putting together what you are now looking at. I would also like to thank George Prové for his journalistic flair, Robbie Cottle for a collection of striking photographs, Rebecca Cooper for her eagle-eyed assistance with proof-reading and my Classics colleagues for making sure the title was spelt correctly.

Mr G Beahan

As our Sixth Form numbers grow, so do the numbers of university applications. This year has been one of our biggest and most frantic years ever. Let me take you through a typical 'UCAS Year':

**Early Autumn:** the smell of burning midnight oil is everywhere as the October deadline for Oxbridge and Medical applicants comes hurtling towards us and we offer advice on personal statements and review the references produced by our Sixth Form tutors.

**Mid-November:** by now, the remaining applicants have been offered advice on courses and institutions and the offers have started to arrive. Students surgically attach themselves to their phones as they await emails from UCAS confirming offers (or sadly) rejections. This is a nail-biting time, especially as the more prestigious the institution or course, the later they tend to offer. Cries of 'I've only got one offer and I REALLY DO NOT want to go there' fill the air of the Sixth Form Common Room.

**January:** with the snows come the Oxbridge places. For our medics, however, it can be the cruellest time, with offers coming through as late as April. The resilience and fortitude they show in the 'waiting game' never cease to impress me.

**April:** the focus now is on picking firm and insurance choices (often a tricky one, especially if you are sitting on five identical offers). For some it is a foregone conclusion, but for others it can be agonising, weighing up the pros and cons doing some intensive reflection on what their grades are likely to be.

**Summertime:** and the living is easy, at least for the Year 13s. Our Year 12s begin to receive university preparation and guidance from July, after their study leave and exams.

**August 15<sup>th</sup>:** the glorious 15<sup>th</sup> ... D-Day, when we know what (who!) has worked and what (who) has not. Generally it is a joyous day; for many of our boys the culmination of seven years' study and the first time they have fashioned their own fate. For those students who need to get in touch with universities and

consider their options, there is lots of advice and support. Difficult decisions have to be made quickly and it can be an emotional and stressful time.

The introduction of higher fees has skewed all university applications in favour of higher-ranking institutions. Our boys are competing for places against some of the best students in the world.

On average, we send around 90% to the most highly selective universities in the UK. Many of the remainder go onto very competitive courses elsewhere or apprentice schemes with top financial institutions.

As they leave, some students ask me 'Are you proud of us, Miss?' I am. I am proud because they are perceptive, insightful and courteous young men. If they get to the university of their choice, that is the icing on the cake and they don't need *me* to be proud of *them*, they can be very proud of themselves!

*"...we send around 90% [of our students] to the most highly selective universities in the UK."*



17 students have received offers from Oxford and Cambridge this year. The successful students, except for Arthur Romano, are pictured left.

Reading School wishes all of our Year 13 students the very best with their results on 15th August.

## A Level Reform

Mr Harris, Head of Sixth Form, comments on how it will affect our students



Curriculum 2000 was the previous government's deal on post-16 education. It provided the breadth that the Tomlinson Report had urged with the new AS level, while maintaining the 'gold' standard of A-Level. The system that we know today - a separately-assessed AS being half the A-level; bite-size modules; the second-chance option of re-sits - became the norm for teenagers throughout the land.

13 years later, we are about to see another significant post-16 change. The Secretary of State for Education, Mr Gove, is to oversee a return to linear examinations and the de-coupling of AS from the A-level examination. There will no longer be the chance to re-sit examinations and, with the

emasculatation of the AS, a return to a more specialised curriculum is on its way.

Mr Gove, speaking at the Sunday Times Festival of Education held at Wellington College, stated that "In essence we will spend less time on exam preparation and technique and more time on deep learning." He defended the change, arguing that "it will bring more engagement from universities and better prepare students for university." At a time when we will see fundamental changes at Key Stage Three and GCSE, A-Level reform comes as part of a package designed to put subject knowledge and academic rigour at the heart of schooling.

*"If you want to make enemies, try to change something."*

Many details of the new post-16 qualification regime are still to be released. Initial dissent from the Russell Group of Universities has modulated to a more pragmatic approach. A new RG body known as the A-level Content Advisory Body (ALCAB) will co-ordinate input from academic experts and

specialists to agree the content of the new exams, due to be taught from September 2015. The pace of change is challenging: remember Estelle Morris, who pushed through Curriculum 2000 and had to resign due to confusion about standards?

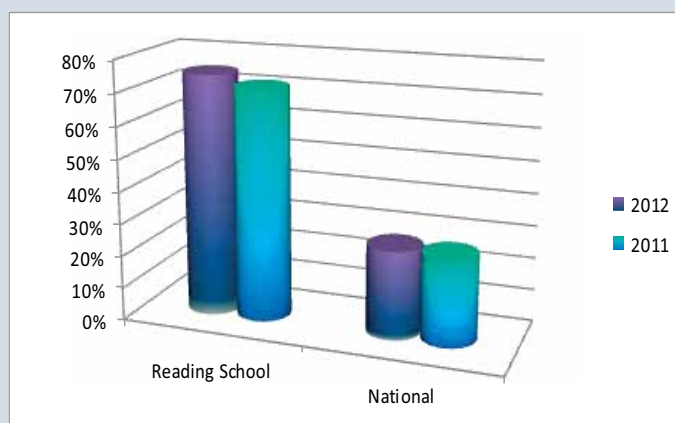
The new A-levels will be targeted at the sector of the population seeking entry to university. The reform is therefore unlikely to create any insuperable hurdles to students at Reading School. The cohort who will enter Sixth Form in 2015 (current Year 9s) will, however, have to adapt to the new regime. No modules; no resits: the results you get at the end of two years will determine your university fate.

In some respects, the changes highlight the debate between the 20<sup>th</sup> century curriculum model, which sorts out those who can from those who can't, against a 21<sup>st</sup> century model which demands that everyone achieves high standards. Mr Gove is clearly passionate about developing opportunities for academic excellence for every student in England. Perhaps he should note the words of Woodrow Wilson, the American President in 1918, who once claimed, "If you want to make enemies, try to change something."

## Recent A Level Results

The table opposite shows the percentage of individual A-level results awarded an A\* or A grade. As you can see, not only are our results improving year on year, but they remain significantly above the national average for these grade levels.

Targets for the future are ambitious, but we believe obtainable, especially in the light of the 2015 changes described in the article above.







*"I've gained a deeper appreciation of just how much the staff do for the school every day"*

They say time flies when you're having a good time. How true. It seems like only last week that the school was alive with gossip about who was standing to be a prefect, and who was likely to be successful. I can recall with absolute clarity the moment subsequently when we all found out who our chosen prefects were to be, and when I found out that I would be leading them.

All that happened a year ago, and since then I've been thrown into the fantastic world of a School Captain. The role involves coordinating a team of 25 prefects, organising school leavers' events and products (such as the end of year prom and the yearbook) and acting as a representative of the student body.

There have been some amazing highlights: encounters with people like F1 manager Ross Brawn and poet Simon Armitage; the immense rush that comes from speaking in public and the pleasure of seeing a long term project being

completed ... Perhaps more than these, however, I've loved getting to know the other members of the school community. Students in my year have astounded me with their ingenuity and enthusiasm and I've gained a deeper appreciation of just how much the staff do for the school every day. Being School Captain really does make you look at people in a whole new light.

One of those people is Dan Brock. An amazing Vice-Captain who has done an unbelievable amount of work this year and has been a real role model for me. My time in office would not have been so enjoyable without all the help I've had along the way from him and my teachers and classmates.

Being elected School Captain has made an ideal end to my Reading School career. I'm starting to feel quite envious of my successors, who will have it all to look forward to. Enjoy it while it lasts, guys; it'll go quickly.

### On Becoming School Captain

Domenico Cullura, the incoming School Captain, looks forward to the next academic year.

For us soon-to-be Year 13s, that moment that Matt referenced about the school being alive with gossip about prefects was in fact only last week! I was really excited when I learnt who had been successful, and it is with great pride that my team of prefects and I set about trying to emulate the fantastic example set by last year's group of boys.

*"...my first week has already been one full of administrative responsibility and I have to say that, four days in, I'm loving it."*

When I first laid eyes on the school as a ten-year-old it seemed a big, intimidating place, with a

distinguished history and a reputation to match - the dreaded entrance test possibly the most daunting thing I had ever faced! From then to now does seem a long way to have come!

When the possibility of being Head Boy first emerged, what really stood out for me were the opportunities to keep a goat on the field, smoke a pipe in school, grow a beard and, perhaps most interestingly, receive a sword from the school - but only if I were to marry within the following year...

I have to say that, so far, there has been less goat-grazing and more organising of prefect rotas than you might otherwise imagine.

Indeed, my first week has already been one full of administrative responsibility and I have to say that, four days in, I'm loving it. I very much look forward to learning more about how the school functions as a whole and dealing with the people



*Domenico Cullura, Captain of School and Chris Mountain, Vice Captain of School 2013 -2014.*

who make up this unique community. The prefect team has already proved more than willing to do their jobs well, and I hope to get to know each of them even better. Of course, no-one has been more helpful than the Vice Captain of School, Chris Mountain, without whom I am sure I will barely be able to survive my allocated term!

We intend to enjoy our time at the top of the school as much as we can and will endeavour, to the best of our ability, to represent Reading School in the light it deserves.

*Before I started, I asked myself many questions. Will I make friends? Will I like the teachers? Now I have found out that the answer to these questions is 'Yes'. I cannot describe how magnificent this first year at a fantastic grammar school has been.*

Year 7 has flown by! The School gives you many exciting opportunities and experiences. Remember you should try everything – don't be nervous. The teachers might seem a bit strict but when you get to know them, they're brilliant.

*This school has really made me grow as a person. I started off as a shy boy in a new school but became a boy who has many new friends and plays a lot of sport, which people tell me I'm good at. I am now happy and ready for next year.*

My first year, well, how has it been? Interesting, hard work, excessive amounts of homework (for me, anyway), rushing around, early mornings, worthwhile and mainly – FUN!

I have made many friends, some old some new. I have also learnt to work together with others and remember the world doesn't rotate around me. If I was a school inspector, I wouldn't only say this school is great academically but also it helps your child cope with his peers throughout life.

*Overall I have enjoyed my first year at Reading School because it has been fun and exciting. I have learnt lots of things this year although I need to revise History more because I didn't get a very good mark in that. I found it very interesting learning Latin since I hadn't done it before.*

I have really enjoyed this year. It has been a great start to secondary school, and I think I am really going to enjoy it here. There have been some good points, like winning House Eisteddfod and some bad points, like losing House Softball, but I enjoyed it all the same.

*For me, this past year in Year 7 has been amazing. I have learnt a lot more than I expected to learn because all of the teachers have pushed me hard to learn, and the other students also helped me.*

Even though school is for learning, I think it is a lot more than just education. Like the fact that this School has given me a lot of great friends. And these friends have made this Year 7 experience, for me, amazing.

*When I first started at this School it was, believe me, a very scary and somewhat intimidating place. But as I got to know people, through House events or even trips to the wonderfully useful LRC, I felt our tutor group was becoming another family to me. I hope that in the future it can stay that way!*

Year 7 has meant a lot to me. It was a whole new level in my life, going from primary to secondary school, but it has provided me with loads to do. I've had countless opportunities to display my skills and strengths. I have joined clubs and made friends, helping me to settle into this amazing, new world.





This project has really raised the profile of reading across the School this year. We launched the project with the 'Extreme Reading' competition over the summer holidays 2012, with amazing photographs taken by our students and

staff, showing them reading in all sorts of unusual locations. Money from the project allowed us to get these photographs published professionally and displayed around the school, as well as a banner for the LRC.



## Reading School Family Book Club

Reading School's Librarian, Mrs Kesteven, has worked very hard to set up a Family Book Club where students are encouraged to borrow multiple copies of a book and read with parents or siblings, discussing them together. Titles already chosen include *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*, *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy* and *Treasure Island*. Discussing books together has been shown to really help engage students with reading and the higher order thinking skills that are required for academic excellence at all stages of education. **The Reading Generation** funding helped us buy the books that parents and students requested and pay for special 'Book Club Bags' and stationery, so members can keep the books safely and write reviews or recommendations to other students.



*Grigory Aleksin  
8W with his  
Club Bag*

## Themed Book Collections

We have also been able to buy themed collections of books for Key Stage 3 English topics like Detective Fiction, Gothic Literature and Travel Writing. These will enable teachers to borrow a whole box of texts and encourage students to read more widely around the topics than we can in class. We already have a real Sir Arthur Conan Doyle following, after studying some of the Sherlock Holmes stories in Year 8, but hope to introduce the students to an even greater range of authors next year.

## The Biography Blitz

We recently launched the Biography Blitz, encouraging students and staff to read over 100 biographies before the end of the Summer Term. Every student who goes to look at the display should find something that grabs his eye. As this magazine goes to print, we have beaten our target and already taken out 125 books as a School! We have had lots of positive feedback about the books people have been reading and hope that boys have been inspired to branch out and read new material, and learnt something in the process. Winners and prizes will be announced before the end of term.

## LRC Seating Improvements

We have also spent some money updating the seating area in the LRC, as requested by 9C Library Class Representatives. The project funded the purchase of four 'cube' seats, which were chosen from a range of seating solutions and are already proving very popular in the LRC.



*Reading  
cubed!*

You can find more information about Reading School Parents' Association at:

[www.readingschoolpa.org.uk/](http://www.readingschoolpa.org.uk/)



# The Old Redingensians Association

Ken Brown, President of the ORA



The Old Redingensians Association has over 1200 members, indicating the high percentage of those old boys of Reading School who want to keep in touch with one another and help their old school.

The Association is a registered charity with the aims of supporting the School through its activities and maintaining a strong network of past pupils. As a limited company, it and its Directors (who make up the Officers and other members of its Council) are registered at Companies House.

Members pay a modest annual subscription and income is also derived from the Redingensians RFC sports ground in Old Bath Road, Sonning, which is owned by the Association. Twice a year members receive the journal of the Association *The Old Redingensian*.

Financial assistance is given to the School in many different forms as the following recent examples demonstrate:

<b>Equipment</b>	3D printer for Art Department Grand Piano for Big School Sightscreens for Cricket
<b>Refurbishment</b>	Boat House Chapel Big School
<b>Scholarships</b>	Bi-annual Scholarship to China
<b>Trips</b>	World Challenge Expedition to Tanzania 2012 Sports Tour to St Lucia 2011

In addition, over £50,000 has now been expended on the Association's flagship **Enterprise Awards Scheme** which encourages individual pupils to undertake projects which widen their outlook, challenge their initiative and broaden their education.

Many prizes at Senior Prize Giving are funded through the ORs, as are a number of cups and medals for sporting and other achievements.

The Association is strong on providing scholarships and grants, encouraging personal development and maintaining a sense of tradition. It maintains the School Archive, and has fitted out the Kirkwood Room to exhibit some of it, with further displays in the Canning Cabinet on the top floor of the Learning Resource Centre, and in the Lindars Cabinet in the Music School.



The Commemorative Wall Plaques (known as 'The Tea Trays') in Big School are funded and maintained by the Association. Every display is intended to interest and inspire.

We run a programme of social events designed to bring ORs together and strengthen their links with one another and the School. Monies arising are used for the charitable aims outlined above and valuable funds have been raised for the benefit of the School, including substantial gifts from individual old Redingensians.

*"The Association is strong on providing scholarships and grants, encouraging personal development and maintaining a sense of tradition."*

The Reading Foundation has three Old Redingensians on its Board; the Governing Body also has three, while the Council of the OR Association includes the Headmaster and two current and two former members of staff. The Association traces its history through predecessor organisations to 1786. It is proud of its past but looks eagerly to the future: every boy should join when he leaves the School!

## The Personalities of Sport

Mr Beckey, Director of Sport

The 2012 Reading School Sports Personality of the Year awards ceremony took place on Wednesday 19th December. This was the second year of the awards, which celebrates the achievements and commitment of students to sport, both in and out of School.

Guest speaker Chris Lloyd (OR 1989-96) spoke about making positive choices, loving the process of achieving excellence in sport and identifying elements of success which students can apply to their own lives.

**Kene Obieniu** gained individual sports performance of the year for his four tries in the U13s

Rugby County Cup Final against Bluecoat, while Team of the Year were the **2nd XI Football team**, captained by **Ben Morris**, who were unbeaten and won their league.

There were eight nominations for Sports Personality of the Year: **Tom Henderson** was the overall winner (as voted by staff and students). Tom won the U15 British Trampoline Championships at Birmingham in 2012 after competing in the sport for only a few years. Jonathan Davies and Harrison Phillips took 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> place honours.

The awards and successes keep on coming. We are blessed to have some exceptionally gifted sporting individuals in our midst and we look forward to celebrating their achievements at the 2013 Reading School Sports Personality Awards.



**Tom Henderson** on his way to winning the U15 British Trampoline Championships in July 2012

## Reading School's Sporting Stars



**Jonathan Davies:** member of the GB Cross-Country squad; competed at the U21 World Championships and recently won the Berkshire Schools 3000m Championships, qualifying for the Nationals.

*“The awards and success keep on coming”*

**Harrison Phillips:** England trialist and rated one of the best young Lacrosse goalkeepers in the country. His team, the Reading Wildcats, have made the National Championship finals twice.







Rowing

**William Davies:** had a very successful season in both rowing and sculling and managed to have an unbeaten 2012 season on the water.



Chess

**Matt Wadsworth:** an England Chess player, came 5<sup>th</sup> in the 2012 U12 World Chess Championships, unbeaten in all his matches and only ½ a point from being crowned World Champion.



Golf

**Robin Sullivan:** made the U16 Berkshire Golf Squad after a very successful season, winning a number of competitions in the Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxford League.

*“We are blessed to have some exceptionally gifted sporting individuals in our midst”*



Rowing

**Edward Shorland:** an amazing year on the water; unbeaten in 12 sculling competitions and winning bronze in the British Championships, despite a broken toe.



Skating

**James Smith:** an excellent year in Figure Skating, winning many regional competitions; 2<sup>nd</sup> in the Pairs Competition and 7<sup>th</sup> in the Individual Competition at the National Championships in 2012. In June 2013, he won the Advanced Novice Men's Solo Ice Dance category at the British Championships.



## Citius, Altius, Fortius

Highlights from this year's Sports Day at Palmer Park Stadium



The annual outing to Palmer Park for Sports Day yielded nine new School records in athletics.

East House athletes, **Jonny Davies** and **Dan Brock**, set new records for the Senior 1500m and 800m respectively. They also contributed to the new record set by East House in the Senior 4x100m Relay.

Year 8 students scored three new School records for their year group. **Roy Wong** won the Hurdles race, **Joe Wilson** the High Jump and **Andrew Prowse** triumphed in the Javelin. **Kene Obieniu** set a new record for the Year 9 200m event, and School House set a record for the Year 9 Relay. **James Williams** set a new School record for the Year 7 Long Jump.

Final Standings:

**First:** School House

**Second:** County

**Third:** East

**Fourth:** West

The overall team standings by age group were:

**Year 7s:** First - County House; Second - West; Joint Third - East and School

**Year 8:** First - School House; Second - County; Third - West; Fourth - East

**Year 9:** First - School House; Second - County; Third - West; Fourth - East

**Year 10:** First - West House; Second - County; Third - East; Fourth - West

**Seniors:** First - East House; Second - School; Third - County; Fourth - West





## Senior Medal Winners

Thanks to the Old Redingensians Association, eight senior students were recipients of medals to commemorate their victories in senior athletics competitions.

The brain-child of Michael Maule, a former captain of athletics and multi-medal winner at past Sports Days, they are named after high-achieving ORs —Towner, Farmery, Gardiner, and Maule. They are an inspiration to our many excellent and dedicated athletes.

The medals were presented by OR Association President, Ken Brown and by benefactor Michael Maule.



*Rory Bird won the Maule Medal for the 200m.*



*Jonny Davies ran the 1500m in an amazing 4.02 minutes, surely a record that will stand the test of time!. OR Association President Ken Brown presents him with his second Farmery Medal.*



*Charlie Oakley was awarded the Maule Medal for the 400m.*



*Edwin Lam won the Gardiner Medal for Senior Shot Putt.*



*Dan Brock broke his own school record in the 800m to win the Farmery Medal again this year.*



*Nick Qiu won the Towner Medal for Long-Jump.*



*Sam Day was victor of the Towner Medal for Hurdles.*



*Will Lamptey won the Maule Medal for the Senior 100m.*

# Clubs

## Reading School Boat Club (RSBC)

Mr Longstaff, Rowing Coach

Despite having had one of the worst years for weather since I took over the reins of RSBC, we have managed to achieve a lot.

The boat shed is gradually filling with a very reasonable stock of more modern boats and equipment with which we hope to attract seriously interested individuals. These now comprise an Aylings 8 (pictured) and two Janousek coxed 4s, all of which have been refurbished to race standard.

The boys have been training indoors for most of the winter as the Thames was almost continually in flood.

Encouragement comes from the fact that they are still motivated enough to record some excellent times on the rowing machines and now get the benefit of the summer afloat.

The Annual RSBC vs ORs race is to be held on the 13<sup>th</sup> of July. If you read this in time, all are welcome to come and lend support to our seriously out-gunned team(s).

Here's hoping for a better autumn and some racing next year!



## Ride, Glide and Stride: The Triathlon Club

Mr Bywater and Mr Teixeira

Since we started Reading School Triathlon Club at the beginning of the summer term, three training sessions per week have been offered in the three disciplines of Swimming, Cycling and Running, with the occasional circuit-training session thrown in for fun and variety.

This new and unique club has received great interest from boys in all years. We aim to foster a collective spirit in an Olympic event which is generally viewed as an individual sport: older and more experienced boys are encouraged to coach and inspire the younger members rather than compete against them. The only person a Reading School Triathlete competes against is himself.

Some of the younger regulars have

already signed up for the Bristol Junior Triathlon, on Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> of July. The youngest triathletes (11-12 years) will swim 200m, cycle 4km and run 1.8km. The equivalent distances for Juniors (13-14 years) are 300m, 5.6km and 2.4km, and for Seniors (15-16 years) 400m, 6.4km and 3km. Wish them luck and ask them how it went once they have completed it. The sense of achievement will be one they will surely want to share and probably remember for a long time.



## Chess Piece

Mrs Readings, Chess Organiser

Reading School Chess Team are on their way to the national semi-finals and finals of the ECF Schools Championship at Uppingham School in July! Only four out of the original 130 schools remain to fight it out for the title. Two years ago the Reading School was the runner-up, so fingers crossed for one better this year!

The team: Matthew Wadsworth, Ryan Wong, Roy Zhang, Alex Vanlint, Alfred Wong and Daniel Noel

have so far beaten Wellington College, Yateley Manor School, RGS Guildford and Eton, losing only one match and drawing one other. This is a fantastic achievement by a team which contains three Year 8 boys. Despite their youth, they have shown a high level of skill and the ability to concentrate on their games, often against players five years older. Thanks must also go to Philip Archer-Lock who has made himself available as reserve for every match.

Good Luck boys in Uppingham!





## House Music

Mr Meehan, Director of Music

This is one of the largest events in the School calendar, both in terms of audience (700) and students taking part (250). This year, the rules changed a little, with each House having to present a large ensemble showcasing the greatest level of participation, and a small ensemble demonstrating the ability to work one to a part.

Each House did a tremendous job organising and motivating the students, to produce a performance which worked within the spirit of the rules but also delivered an exciting and entertaining mini-concert in itself.

We were privileged to welcome Mr Simon Williamson, Director of Music at Wellington College (also the music teacher of the current Director of Music). He praised West House for their technical prowess; School for their enthusiastic spirit; County for the commanding lead from Harry Davidson. Ultimately, the evening went, once again, to East House, with the Solo Prize going to Anthony Tat for his breathtaking performance of Chopin's *Revolutionary Study*.

In retrospect, this has been a busy and demanding but also very successful and fulfilling year in music. The talent, inventiveness and dedication of our boys never cease to amaze. If music be the food of love, play on? I think we will.



East House large ensemble at Inter-House Music

## Harry Davidson – Type II

Praise for a remarkable piece of Composition

Any curriculum with a creative dimension is always vulnerable to the same issue. On the one hand, coursework must be produced, demonstrating the appropriate level of skill, care and wider learning, and yet this is all for nothing if the pieces cannot in some way also be considered successful and special pieces of art, or at the very least, artisanship.

In early January, we were delighted to hear that Harry Davidson, so long one of the stars of the Music Department, had been offered a place to read Music at New College, Oxford. I had been talking with Harry about the possibility of making an orchestral composition the headline feature of the Spring Concert, and we were now more determined than ever to bring this about.

Harry had, for some time, been exploring the possibility of representing a supernova in a piece of music. The contraction, explosion, and general sense of power and wonder naturally evoked exciting ideas and possibilities.

For those unfamiliar with the compositional process, the gestation of any significant work is not without its tribulations, and it was humbling to see how hard Harry worked on developing his original sketches into the finished product.

The premiere at the Spring Concert was everything the composer deserved. The School Orchestra played the piece with a passion that left the audience mesmerized; an experience that stayed with them for a long time after the notes themselves had died away.

*“The premiere at the Spring Concert was everything the composer deserved.”*



Harry Davidson (centre) receives applause for his premier



## The Year in Sound

Given the outstanding quality of many of our musicians and the sheer number of demands on their time, it is perhaps foolhardy to expect that each year will bring ever more exciting achievements by an ever greater number of students. Stars of the musical scene leave to go to university, leaving an audience already

nostalgic for some imagined golden age. Nevertheless, this year we have seen more events than ever before, new ground broken in quality and innovation and the participation of an even greater number of students from the widest possible range of ages and abilities.

### The Busiest Year?

Choral singing in particular has made a leap forward this year. It began with an immensely moving rendition by the Chapel Choir of Ireland's "Greater Love Hath No Man" at the Commemoration Service. Later that term, it reached its high point in the Carol Service at St Luke's Church, a large Victorian barn of a building with its own sense of grandeur. We were also delighted to perform a new commission, "While Shepherds Careful Vigil Kept" by Year 13 student Stuart Emmerson.



*The Chapel Choir and Festival Brass at the Commemoration Service in the Minster of Saint Mary-the-Virgin, Reading*

Also new for this academic year were two Junior Concerts, which took place in the friendly surroundings of the Junior School hall and gave students, regardless of technical standard, the opportunity to perform in public. It also gave early outings for the Year 7 Choir and Junior Choir, whose energy and enthusiasm were enjoyed by all.

The annual Year 7 Concert is fast becoming a School institution. All the Year 7s take part, both singing and



*The Junior Concert in the Music School*

playing. It begins with the Year 7 Orchestra, made up of all the students who currently play an instrument, rehearsed by Judith Green and Elizabeth Tate. After a smorgasbord of solos and class ensembles, this evening was rounded off with the quasi-Victorian melodrama, 'Dracula'. All members of the year group sing in the chorus, but those with a predisposition towards showmanship can enjoy a moment in the limelight. Each student takes part at his own level, and in between the joyous racket of music for all, there are moments of real technical finesse, including Michael Li, who was undaunted in his accompaniment of the colossal Year 7 Chorus.

As a complement to these lower school concerts, in which participation is very much the aim, we also staged two senior concerts. Solos from Stephane Crayton, Toby Davies, new boy Tristan O'Leary and Robert Holmes (performing his own composition) were all outstanding. (It is worth noting that the depth of talent in the School is such that none of these boys played a solo in house music). We were also privileged to work with the girls of Queen Anne's School, Caversham, in a joint string orchestra performance of Holst's St Paul's Suite at the Spring Concert.



*7E performing at the Year 7 Concert*



Summer term is, of course, considerably busier in *other* areas for the students... Nevertheless, it brought us two significant events which I think sum up what it is to be part of Reading School music. The first was the Air Ambulance Charity Concert, with the boys led by Sam Wood and the girls from Kendrick School by Alicia Darrington. Organised entirely by the students, an ambitious programme was delivered with purpose and infectious enthusiasm. The other event during this period is the 'Year 6 Try an Instrument' Evening, in which current students give short taster lessons on their instruments to the new boys. Watching our musicians communicate their passion for music to this incoming generation - part salesman, part evangelist, part older brother - is a heartwarming sight.

Pupils continue to take the lead, and it has been excellent to see 'Bantershop' thriving under the leadership of Ehssan Shivarani, taking over from Richard Parkinson, who will be starting as organ scholar at Pembroke College, Cambridge, in the autumn of 2013.



*The Air Ambulance Concert in Big School.*

## Reading School Big Band

Our Big Band is undoubtedly the School's hardest-working ensemble, and this year has been no exception. Our commitments began at the Chipping Norton Jazz Festival, part of our duties as winners of the Chipping Norton Youth Band Challenge in 2012. A lovely afternoon in this idyllic Cotswolds town is a great way to refresh repertoire and bring new members quickly up to speed.



*The Reading School Big Band performing at Chipping Norton Jazz Festival.*

Barely two weeks later, we were at Queen Anne's School as the featured guest act at their Jazz Evening. The audience found it difficult to garner adequate words of praise for the magnificent performance the boys put in on that evening. The sound was fabulously tight and punchy, the musicianship conveyed with conviction and the sublime showmanship of Chris Poon made this an evening which would linger in the memory.

Early March is the Jazz Band's 'Busy Week'. It begins on the Monday, with 'Big Bands @ Big School', (confusingly this year held in the Refectory - a venue all agreed was actually more suitable for this informal indoor picnic).

We were again delighted to welcome Simon Ward and the Innovations Jazz Orchestra to support the boys by headlining the night. This year we also welcomed the Junior Jazz Band who delivered their numbers with an energy that was remarked on by all who heard it.

On the Friday, we once again headed to Chipping Norton for the Youth Jazz Band Challenge, eager to retain our crown. Sadly, it was not to be, as a quartet of exceptionally talented 6th Formers from Abingdon School blindsided us with a set of effortless polish that we, starting in first place, could not match. However, two days later, at Kendrick School in the Music for Youth Regional Festival, the band earned glowing praise for their performance, and we are thrilled to have been invited to the Music for Youth National Festival in Birmingham in July. (A composition by Mr Meehan, based on the re-imagining of a trio of well-known classical themes, will premiere at the Festival).



*The Junior Jazz Band performing in the Refectory for "Big Bands at Big School".*

#### Trips

Back in September, Year 10 travelled to Cornwall and negotiated the steep steps up to King Arthur's Castle in Tintagel, with its breath-taking views.



The following day it was the Eden Project, whose stunning gardens, plants and sculptures stimulated lots of ideas for the 'Natural Forms' project.



The three-day visit concluded with a stop at St Ives, where students visited the wonderful sculpture garden of Barbara Hepworth and viewed her striking, modernistic sculptures in their place of birth.

Later in the year, the same group visited the



fascinating Sculpture Park at Farnham, where a collection of over 600 sculptures is displayed in an area of ten acres.

In October, Year 11 Art students were taken on a trip to the great city of Barcelona. The itinerary included



visits to the Gaudi sites of Sagrada Familia, Park Guell and Casa Batllo, the fascinating work of Dali in Figueres and the tranquil medieval city of Girona. An unforgettable trip



on the cable car across Barcelona offered a bird's eye view of this stunning city. Football fans had the opportunity to enter Nou Camp stadium, which proved a popular option! Every day was a field of different experiences with fertile soil for the seeds of GCSE project ideas.

#### Fashion!

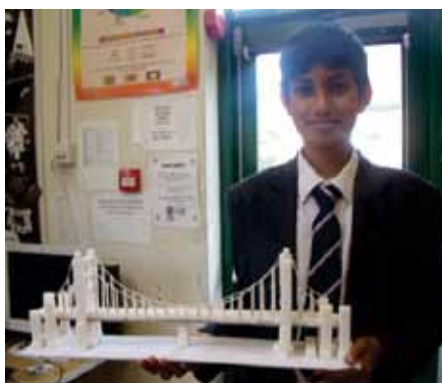
Always on the look-out for new ways to inspire our students and new methods of working, the Department devised a hat-making project combining design and origami which proved very popular with Year 8 students and showcased the talents of the many budding fashion designers in our midst!





## Architecture

There has always been a high degree of interest shown in architecture by our students and there are usually a number who go on to take this subject at degree level. We have begun to encourage such interest earlier, by offering Year 9 classes in model making and building cityscapes. This year's sweetener was to get the boys to create a structure out of sugar cubes!



*Neil Kokkaparampil, 9C with his sugar cube structure.*

*An example of a cityscape designed by Year 9 students*



## V&A turns on the lights

A-level students attended an exhibition of Thomas Heatherwick's work at the V&A, where they encountered the working methods and stunning ideas of this great designer, while The Light Show at the Hayward Gallery was awe-inspiring! It demonstrated how cleverly technology and art can be combined to explore the vibrant visual and sensory effects of light. Luckily, some of the students were able to explain some of the technical intricacies of the displays to accompanying teachers!



## The Jeremy Ramsay Prize

Every year, an A-level Art student is nominated for a travel prize donated by the well-known artist, Jeremy Ramsey. This year, the prize was awarded to Ken Sheppard who used the prize money to travel to New York, an experience which helped him compile a portfolio for his successful application to UCL, where he will be studying Architecture.

## What's New

A recent addition to the Art page on Sharepoint has been the 'For Sale' button, allowing students to display work they wish to sell. Visit the site to see if there is something you feel could grace your home, and be the proud owner of a unique piece of work!

We have recently acquired a 3D printer! Watch this 2D space!

## Competitions



Year 8 Adhav Radhakrishnan won first prize in The UK Children's Fine Art Competition for secondary schools, endorsed by The Department of Education. The theme was 'Traditions and Heritage of my Country's People', for which he produced a painting in acrylic with threads and tissue paper,

depicting people celebrating Divali.



A new 'Scary Movie' competition has just been launched, open to all movie makers. Prizes of £100, £75 and £50 will be awarded to 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> places. Work needs to be submitted by October 1<sup>st</sup> for consideration. Any type of film will be eligible, including animation or live action drama.

This academic year has once again seen a huge variety of first-rate talent showcased in the Drama Department, with some exceptional GCSE and A-Level performances from boys in years 10-13. AS-Level performances included extracts from the hard-hitting 'American Buffalo', written by David Mamet, the thought-provoking 'Dealer's Choice'



*Toby Morris in the hair-raising production 'American Buffalo'*



*Dheeraj Ahluwalia, Joshua Grinnett, Harry Gowers, Harry Borg and Jack Taylor making us laugh in their devised comedy 'Hyacinthe Diamond'*

by Patrick Marber and Harold Pinter's tension-filled 'The Dumb-Waiter': all performed as naturalistic pieces after in-depth study of the seminal practitioner of the style, Constantin Stanislavski.

The A2 students worked at the other end of the spectrum, devising the hysterical and fast-paced comic thriller, 'The Hyacinth Diamond' – a show in which the actors expertly used a combination of bodies, voices and faces to create memorable and hilarious characters. The GCSE boys also excelled, both devising their own work and putting their own spin on a number of published plays.

On top of all this, the Department has continued to offer a number of extra-curricular drama activities, including the very popular after-school drama sessions and the highly rewarding LAMDA Exam training sessions, which, along with the School exams, have ensured another enjoyable and successful year.

## Other Notable Performances



*Dan Binchy, Dan Gillett and Kieran Toms in 'Gasping'*



*David Jordan in Year 10 classic 'Trojans'*

*Jacob South-Klein, Charlie Taylor, Timi Sanusi, James Sweeney and Stephen Stanton in 'Stalag Luft'*





# Public Speaking and Debating

Patricia Williams, Public Speaking and Debating Co-ordinator

## Elocution



*Julian Sutcliffe in the Big Debate.*

Public speaking has blossomed this year in so many ways. Debating takes place in G3 Thursday lunchtimes. There are always so many boys who debate, chair, time and help in all ways – staff join us too!

Competition work this year has focused on Rotary Youth Speaks and the English Speaking Union (we hosted the first regional heat in the LRC). These competitions have led to an inter-school debating programme, which we will report on next term.

The LAMDA examinations are a highly prestigious qualification in public speaking taken by over 40 boys each term: our record of achievement is outstanding.

Our Year 7 Training Day was on Monday 24<sup>th</sup> June. It helps the younger boys see that they can all do public speaking effectively and enjoy it. It allows seniors to take a training and leadership role and culminates in a hotly-contested competition!

To round off the debating year, and following on from the success of the earlier 'Big Debate' in Big School, Mr

Robson and Mr Hurst will be taking on Nick Qiu and George Prové, with the Public Speaking Captain, Niko Ciecierski-Holmes, chairing.

And so to the Policy Team: Niko, Nick, Dom, George, Julian, Aleks, Jacob, George and Ritvij. They are invaluable to me and all of us in the department, and their support and the enthusiasm of boys throughout the year have helped us go from strength to strength!

*"Public speaking has blossomed this year in so many ways"*



*This year's LAMDA exam candidates.*

## World-class debaters ordered south!

Mr Hurst

In May, Aleksandr Stepanyan and Jacob South-Klein, chaperoned by Mr Hurst, made their way to Durban, South Africa, where the World Individual Debating and Public Speaking Championships were being held at Clifton School. We arrived at the opening ceremony to join 130 delegates from 13 countries and meet the coaches and competitors with whom we would be spending the week in spirited but always friendly competition.

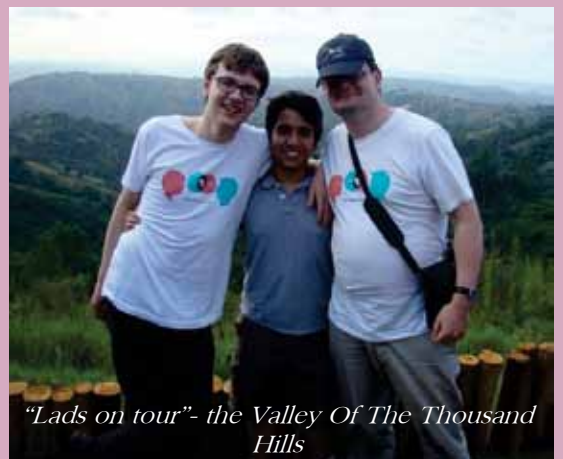
All the coaches, including Mr Hurst, judged in all four competition categories: debating, impromptu speaking, prepared speaking and interpretive reading. Overall, the standard of the competition was extremely high - the teams from the USA, Canada, Australia, South Africa

and Hong Kong were very confident, talented and well prepared and it was a real privilege to watch them at work.

Although Reading School was not represented in the finals in any of the events, there was no question in anyone's mind that we had held our own and were certainly good enough to be there – Jacob was rated 48<sup>th</sup> overall in debating and 32<sup>nd</sup> in interpretive reading, with Aleks being rated 66<sup>th</sup> and 59<sup>th</sup> in the world respectively in the same events.

The driving force behind the whole project was Patricia Williams - without her energy and determination we would not have made it to Durban. We are also very grateful to the debating and public speaking community in Reading School, both

boys and parents, for getting behind us with fund-raising events such as 'The Great Debate Till 8', cake sales, raffles and perhaps most importantly of all a lot of moral support. We were proud to represent you all and hope that our efforts have justified the faith you showed in us.



*"Lads on tour"- the Valley Of The Thousand Hills*

The shiny, sleek, low-slung performance racing car that is Reading School roars towards the finishing line of another academic year. Its turbocharged verbal combustion engine has gone into overdrive, sucking in the potent high-octane fuel of swirling thought and mixing it with sharp, glistening sparks of imagination before disgorging the result in rich, thick, billowing exhaust fumes of creative

expression. Yes, the English Department has been busier than usual this year, with a host of activities transcending the pale puce walls and mottled green tiles of the classroom and challenging our juvenile charges to expand their consciousness and vocabulary by considering a whole range of different issues and expressing new ideas in fresh ways. Let's start with the competitions ...



With spring come the Eisteddfod and bluebells at Reading School

## Exit Elocution; Enter Eisteddfod

The traditional House Elocution Competition ran for decades, but 21<sup>st</sup>-century students were finding it increasingly hard to understand what it was all *for* in this day and age: rather like a Lazy Susan, or a fondue set, or Bruce Forsythe.

We wanted this event to be much more about fun, engagement and participation, so decided to broaden its scope to make it more inclusive and at the same time more clearly defined. For those used to the more 'drama' based, or purely recitative, Elocution Competition in days of yore, this is how the Eisteddfod looked in 2013:

The competition comprised two elements: **Creative Writing** and **Oral Presentation**, split between the three age categories, Juniors, Colts and Seniors.

The creative writing section invited submissions from all students of pieces of new (i.e. not already prepared for an academic class) fiction writing in any form of no more than 1,000 words, based on a topic nominated by their House. Budding wordsmiths beavered away, producing a range of short stories, poetry, drama scripts and monologues.

The oral performance section saw teams from the three age groups from each House perform in front of the rest of their age group in the chapel during one period on one day: Monday 25<sup>th</sup> March. In each age category, Houses staged three ten-minute presentations of their choice taken from the list:

*Choral poem (compulsory in each age category), Shakespeare monologue by heart, drama dialogue by heart, individual great speech from history, individual poem / lyric, individual prose passage*

Some remarkable performances ensued. Audiences were treated to a Spike Milligan poem, Shakespeare soliloquys, an extract from an Al Pacino film and even a Rolf Harris lyric. (It's unlikely that "Two Little Boys" has ever made an appearance in the chapel before now. Or ever will again). Our senior school leaders acted as judges (thanks to Miss Capon, Mrs Hardwick and Mr Robson) along with a returning guest adjudicator – Mrs Jenkins, who retired last year.

It was tremendous to have every student in the school (apart from Year 12 who were otherwise engaged) involved in the competition, either through active participation or as part of the audience. It's always a delight to see bushel-hidden lights suddenly shine in a big public forum.

The judges made tough decisions, and distributed the laurels of victory thus:

Junior Creative Writing	Junior Oral Presentation
WEST	WEST
Colt Creative Writing	Colt Oral Presentation
EAST	WEST
Senior Creative Writing	Senior Oral Presentation
EAST	EAST

Congratulations to all participants for creating a high-calibre and novel literary experience which has set high standards and marked out the terrain for the future. We print the Colts and Senior Creative Writing winning entries on pages 24 and 25. Strangely enough, although the writers were assigned different topics ('Madness' and 'Injustice' respectively) they produced remarkably comparable results!



The cross-curricular McIlroy essay competition petered out at some indeterminate point in the 1960s. Following a suggestion from The Reading Foundation, this worthy literary exercise has been brushed down and relaunched. 20 submissions were received in total from students in every Year group, addressing questions set by a range of departments including Economics, Chemistry, Religious Studies, Physical Education, English and Biology.

All the essays were anonymous, judged first by staff in departments and then by an independent adjudication panel. Adam Weller from Year 12 was selected as the

single winner of the £250 prize. At 2,000 words, his entry is too long to be reprinted in full, but extracts are included opposite to provide a flavour of Adam's technically detailed and fluently erudite style.

Congratulations to all entrants, and thanks for taking the time to get involved in this new project. The standard of writing in this first year of the re-instated prize has certainly set a high bar for future competitors. The Reading Foundation's generosity in funding this prize is also very much appreciated by staff and students alike.

## Maths: Are the Golden Ratio and Fibonacci Sequence Relevant in our Lives?

*Adam Weller 12E*

Maths is a quiet science, a furtive busybody beneath the polished leather shoes of all physics and technology, simultaneously so fundamentally basic as to underpin everything, yet so incomprehensibly abstract to be instantly alienating. And yet I believe the relation of all parts of mathematics, particularly this one, to our everyday lives, is deeply profound.

A person need not know the algorithms a computer executes to build a Sudoku to enjoy one; they do not have to understand how prime numbers encrypt a text message to send one. Even a person totally ignorant of spherical harmonics and Bessel wave functions can sit on a chair and not fall through it, supported by quantum electrodynamics – all manifestations of purest mathematics in our world.

The intricate wonders and miraculous proofs, the ingenious theorems and paradoxes of pure logic against common sense which the subject entails are notorious yet daunting. Maths is the language of the universe, objective and



rational, indisputably intangible yet impossibly important. And I think such a potent and wondrous force can never be irrelevant. A universe without maths? It would be no universe at all.

In many ways, the Golden Ratio, for the average man an idea shrouded in myth and uncertainty, straddles this hazy

line between reality and rationality. You may associate it with a spiral shell, or sunflower, or connect it somehow with aesthetics in architecture, or an understanding of beauty. Often people see it as some sort of intermediate between the art world and science. The truth? It is all these things, and much, much more.

To a mathematician, the Golden Ratio, Phi, or is simple in

its definition: “ $\Phi = \frac{1+\sqrt{5}}{2} = 1.618 \dots$ ” (Bellos, :  $\Phi$  2010). At first, this appears to be a rather bland, indeed pointless, number; yet, in the way which perhaps epitomises the whole of maths, it is infinitely harder to understand than to describe. Nonetheless, the idea still seems patently ridiculous – what

can possibly be “relevant”, let alone “Golden”, about  $\frac{1+\sqrt{5}}{2}$ ? Firstly, why does it excite mathematicians, and secondly, why should it excite us?

Quintessentially, Phi's nature is determined by one unique property. It possesses a remarkable symmetry called self-similarity; mathematically, this is most concisely stated as

$1 + \Phi = \Phi^2$ , but more important are its dual implications for reality: first, structures based on Phi invariably show a stunning degree of symmetry at all scales; and secondly, and most remarkably, they do so into infinity *without repetition* (Olsen, 2006, p.4). And this characteristic is one highly prized equally in nature, engineering, art, and, of course, mathematics – although its propensity to sneak outside these bounds to lurk in the darkest, most unexpected corners of knowledge is guaranteed to surprise even the wisest of polymaths ...

The philosopher Plato, stumbling across this Golden number, kept it a secret from all but his most select followers, believing, according to Olsen (2006, p.55), that it embodied the divine nature of, “The moderate, the fitting, the opportune, the needful, and all the other standards that are situated in the Mean between the Extremes.” The Indefinite Dyad, or  $\Phi$  the ratio of 1:, allegedly stood for the endless symmetry of excess and defect in all things, the fundamental representation of perfect beauty. It would, perchance, be a slight understatement to suggest that the Golden ratio was relevant to his life at least ...(*pro*)

By a mere eighteen centuries later, the secret of Phi's beauty had slowly seeped out. Leonardo da Vinci's painting and architecture divided scenes with this infamous ratio, immediately into perfect harmony – a man who, like Phi itself, famously blended art with technology. Once again, the mathematical order of Phi found another new land to colonise.

But it was another Leonardo, one Leonardo Pisano Bigollo, who made the next breakthrough on Phi after Euclid. More commonly known as Fibonacci, this mathematician investigated a curious sequence, in which each term was the sum of the two previous ones:

1, 1, 2, 3, 5, 8, 13, 21, 34

... In itself, the sequence seemed nothing special – until Fibonacci noted that the division of two consecutive numbers would approximate Phi:

$$\frac{34}{21} = 1.619 \dots$$

Indeed, barely an atom of our world escapes the influence of Phi, whatever its nature. Its universality and influence, as you have seen, is undeniable. Phi is not a curiosity solely of importance to mathematicians and artists; its beauty goes far beyond either the aesthetic, scientific or the theoretical, but perfuses nature's very essence. Plato called it the fundamental divinity of the cosmos, and for



millennia since it has amazed, in fields ranging from painting and simple games to microscopic crystals and sunflower spirals; it is not "Golden" without reason.

Could a man live his life without the briefest consideration of the forces which shape his world and his perception of it on the most essential level? Perhaps. But if he is instead interested in the least in the world around him, in appreciating its most basic miracles, in the harmonies of nature and their enlightening origins, then are the Golden Ratio and Fibonacci sequence relevant in our lives? Yes, without the slightest doubt.

## Stormy Harbour

*Sam Miller, 9E.*

To begin with, it was easy to see the tumour. A small, malevolent lump. The twisted puppet master worked to separate us. First, the doctors had tried to flush it out with drugs or bursts of radiation. But they failed. It just grew.

Sudden outbursts of wild behaviour came first. He would be sitting quite calmly, and then the most imperceptible signal would be the precursor to a bestial howl or a sudden onslaught of tears.

Afterwards, he would sit for hours, withdrawn into a prison of his own making. No words or actions could pierce those cold, grey walls.

The good times – when everything seemed normal – faded. Shrank, as the tumour grew.

Sitting up at night, fuelled with coffee, trawling through web pages, I poured over mystical cures and madmen's pamphlets.

I delved into my past. There had always been some unreachable chapters beyond my grasp, taunting me. Should I have delved further? Ignored them? Questions coursed through my head, as infinite as the stars.

I fought for control, but to no avail. It was too strong, too well-embedded, like a fungus, infecting every part of me.

I no longer sought the help of those in white coats. They could do nothing for me now. I stayed alone in a dilapidated cottage deep in the country. Abandoned long ago, the cottage was some comfort to me. We were alike.



I no longer knew my family; I would not recognise a single one – the tumour had made sure of that. I was alone in the world living on flashes of memory – even these were leaving me now. Visions of my mother, my childhood home with the yard of sparkling roses and the soft glint of lush, dewy grass; of my first bike and a badly grazed knee.

Darkness came and drove its blank abyss through the recollections. This evil thing was invading every part of me, spilling through my body and mind. Leaving me with nothing but itself.

Once the madness had lodged itself within me, the past became an ocean in forbidden, darkest night. I was a ship, clinging to the breakers, unable to see the waves.



## Stay Strong

*Martin Shine 12W*

Death. It's such a massive thing, and the more you think about it, the scarier it is. Not believing in anything religious, to me, death is the end; once you die, it's all over. Done. Now, in a way I've always thought that my own death isn't really that scary a prospect, because once you're dead there's no way of looking back, no way to regret anything or feel any pain or fear - so death itself isn't scary.

However, what's scary about death is the fact you'll never see your friends or people close to you again: that's what makes death truly terrifying for me. This also makes the idea of someone close to you dying so terrible, and that's why I'm going through hell at the moment.

One and a half years ago, at just 16, my best friend Jack was diagnosed with a malignant brain tumour. No one could believe it. He'd had persistent headaches for some time and gone to see the doctor about it; he got referred to the hospital for some tests and they discovered it. The tumour was deep inside the brain; surgery wasn't an option, so he began chemotherapy very quickly. For the first few months, things didn't seem too awful; he tried to carry on with life as normal. Slowly, however, the tumour began to grow and Jack would have to take whole days off school due to dizziness or vomiting.

It's just all so wrong. I think Jack is probably the nicest person I know. Everyone loves him; he's just such a happy person, so it's so nice being around him. He's one of those people who never seem to relax his smile because he knows he's going to need it again any second. I can tell Jack anything; there is nothing about each other we don't know. We've been friends since Year 2 when we would trade football stickers with each other and our friendship has just never stopped since.

Three days ago, he was taken into hospital as he kept vomiting and his eyesight was starting to blur. Going to visit him is awful; it just cuts me up so much. He isn't the same bouncing-off-the-walls ball of energy and happiness he used to be; he's just so tired all the time and he's also struggling to use his right hand or arm at all anymore. I'm visiting him every day. I try to put on a mask of happiness every time I see him, but I really struggle. It's strange that of the two of us he seems to be coping better emotionally, despite all he's going through. He seems almost resigned to it and is just trying to enjoy what little life he has left, and I'm really worried that that isn't very much. He's showing no signs of getting better and I don't think he's going to come out of hospital again. I keep telling him to 'Stay strong'. One time he looked back at me and told me to 'Stay strong' too, like he knows the effect it's all having on me as well. I almost feel pathetic being this cut up emotionally when he's coping so well, but I can't imagine the idea of Jack dying and my never being able to see his face again - though I might have to face up to that soon ... and we both know it.

I think maybe the whole idea of this happening to someone like Jack is why I'm not at all religious. How can someone claim there is a kind and benevolent God who cares for everyone individually, if he'll let people die who don't deserve it? Especially people who are so young. If there is a God, then he has a hell of a lot of explaining to do. I also don't really see the link between there being a God and there being a heaven - heaven just seems a way of making people less scared of death. I'm not buying it ... but unfortunately that makes death a lot scarier. And this is why deep down I'm terrified because of how Jack is. Keep going Jack, for both of us. Stay strong.

## COMPETITION

Mrs Harden

We will be launching another photographic competition before the end of term, asking students to take photos under different themes this summer. These will include:

**A Sporting Read** – Take photographs showing how this summer's sporting events have inspired your reading habits.

**A Thoughtful Read** – Are you going somewhere tranquil or awe-inspiring that can showcase the wonder of reading?

**Read on the Road** – Take photographs that show the fast-paced action of a good book through modes of transport.

**An Artistic Read** – Recreate your favourite book cover through a photograph.

**A Read on the Wild Side** – For all you animal lovers out there, can you capture the joy of reading in a wild environment?

**Guess the Book** – Can you and some friends re-enact a scene from your favourite book in 60 seconds and ask your peers to 'Guess the Book'?

Entries should be sent to:

[readinggeneration@reading-school.co.uk](mailto:readinggeneration@reading-school.co.uk)

Thank you again to the RSPA for making all these projects possible!

Two of the winning photos from last year's "Extreme Reading" competition





Last academic year, we got involved in the nationwide secondary school initiative, **'Picture In Focus'**, run by the National Gallery in London.

Year 7 and Year 12 classes visited the museum, received guided

tours, and were introduced to Titian's 1569 masterpiece, *Diana and Actaeon*, which was purchased for the nation in the summer of 2011 for almost £50m. During the year, students pursued projects in a range of lessons: Art, Maths,

RS, MFL and English. The painting, its history, its moral implications, its legendary genesis, even its mathematical composition, were all up for investigation.

A number of student pieces have recently been selected to appear on the National Gallery's website. Two Reading School boys have been honoured with that privilege: Jordan Quanborough (then in Year 12) and Alessandro Giacometto (then in 7S). An abridged version of Jordan's imaginative and richly descriptive response is given below.

You can see both on the National Gallery website:

<http://www.nationalgallery.org.uk/learning/teachers-and-schools/picture-in-focus/online-exhibition/picture-in-focus-online-exhibition>

### Everything Dies in Time

*Inspired by "Diane and Actaeon", Jordan Quanborough 13S*

The sky is lapis blue, like the eyes of a beautiful goddess, and infrequent whispers of clouds pass through it: silent fishing boats on a serene horizon. You often hear the far-off shrieks of a raven from somewhere entrenched in the forest; a slender snake of a river meanders on its gentle course, presumably after drawing its first breath at the summit of a far-off hill.

Erasmus leaps from his shabby saddle and tears some distance through the exquisite embodiment of chartreuse nature which surrounds you both from all directions. After marvelling at him hurdle several shrubs and tree stumps with the athleticism of one reared in an amphitheatre, your heroic hunting acquaintance labours to wrench his handmade arrow of yew from the heart of the innocent and now scarlet-sticky deer lying before him. Everything dies in time.

In truth, you too are bursting with youth. As you brush an unspecified splash of chestnut-coloured mud from your broad and brawny right arm, you caress the ripples in the surface of your bulging bicep. Ominous eyes gleaming with a desire to slay yet more of the wondrous creatures taking refuge in the forest, Erasmus pleadingly implores you to remain where you are with your hound. You nod acceptance of his request. Before you can even wish your fervent friend a productive pursuit, he dashes away on horseback into the darkness of the dusk.

You become so jaded from waiting for Erasmus to return that you decide to go for a ride yourself, and now find yourself sitting on the river bank, mind wandering aimlessly amongst the stars to the sound of the azure water slashing off the serrated rocks. The deer! You have left the carcass where you flayed it, in some anonymous clearing back up the river. As your eyes dance deliriously over the stupendous scenery before them, you realise that each rock seems the twin of the one beside it while

each unyielding trunk bends skywards just like its companion. The towering trees seem to have transformed with time, their moulding membranes filling your nostrils with the dreadful stench of putrefied bark. It's not a surprise though; everything dies in time.

As you proceed with prudence up the river, a voice reverberates through your soul and your body starts to shiver. You detect another pitch; another *voice*! And one more! But then you stop.

In all your life, in all the dreams you've ever concocted, in all those years hunting the most curious and cumbersome creatures, you've never beheld eyes like hers. Two jagged flints set into stone, Diana's headlong gaze pierces through you like a trusty hunting arrow.

All previous beauty now means nothing to you. Everything dies in time.

It's only once you've realised how much of a sin you've just committed, by stealing a glance of a deity, that you grasp how pure she really is. Your inexperienced eyes start to explore every curve of her supreme, virgin figure, and you feel the crimson juice of life within you surging with vigour.

Close by, you notice the source of the other voices. Diana's nymphs lie draped over a slightly-slanted, gargoyle-encrusted water-fountain which seems to plummet in dismay into the pool below; their faces are aghast with astonishment at their sudden exposure. You then glimpse in the tree a deer hide, presumably Erasmus' kill from earlier today, languishing over a twisted branch in a manner peculiarly similar to that of the nymphs.

Beyond the ashen stone grotto which envelops the goddess' bathing place lies a vibrant emerald blanket of prairie. You long to evaporate from the place of peril in which you find yourself and embrace the vivacity and safety of the blanket beyond, but instead you stand inert in terror.

Everything dies in time.



## Simon Armitage and the Meaning of Life

*Aleks Stepanyan 11C*

We sit in anticipation. A crowd of Reading School and Highdown Students 150-strong eagerly await the appearance of the man they have heard so much about. In that crowd, sit I, endless questions running through my head. What will he be like? Is he all he is cracked up to be? And is he really as boring in real life as he was in the



*Simon Armitage*

video we'd all seen in class? The man was, of course, the one, the only, Simon Armitage. A British poet we had been studying for a substantial chunk of our secondary English education, Armitage is renowned for his down-to-earth, everyday poetry which anyone can relate to.

After introductions he dived straight in, warming up with an unfamiliar but very engaging piece about Christmas (why not?). Several more followed, until, quietly and almost self-consciously, he picked up the fabled, green OCR anthology. Starting off with 'About his Person', Armitage expertly delivered the poem in his flat but expressive West Yorkshire accent. Hearing words we knew straight from the creator's mouth was fascinating, and many of us began whispering along to our favourite poems. 'Kid' proved to be an audience favourite with the famous line "You baby!" causing a huge stir of warm recognition.

However, reading the poems was only a fraction of what Simon Armitage brought to us that afternoon. No pretension or reticence here. Between poems, he would explain what he had read and the hidden meanings so skilfully intertwined, offering a level of insight you could get nowhere but from the poet himself.

Afterwards he took our questions. One about the importance of gooseberries in 'Gooseberry Season' elicited a response we had never considered before: 'gooseberry' meaning a third-wheel in a relationship. Another comically asked whether the poet would get an A\* if he sat the Lit exam himself: the response was surprisingly equivocal. But perhaps the most striking comment came after he was asked about his plain, everyday style. "If you go out looking for the meaning of life," he replied, "you'll find yourself looking at a brick wall. But if you look at a brick wall, maybe, just maybe, you'll find the meaning of life."



## Westminster Abbey

*Patrick Sharman 7W*

Here I stand with the vast, sparkling water below me.  
I look up and see the gold and orange sunset washed across the sky.  
In front of me is the towering Abbey shimmering  
In the haze of the summer evening.

Down goes the sun, a shining beacon of light.  
The night consumes me.  
But wait!  
Here they come, ready to illuminate the sky.

The stars are out.  
They blink at me like hundreds of little eyes.  
I try and count the tiny lights but they multiply by the second.  
I look around at what lies before me and sigh.



## Extreme Reading

It has been a busy year in the LRC, kicked off by some excellent entries to the summer Extreme Reading photo competition in September. First prize went to Harry Firth (7C) for his Monet-inspired entry. Many of the photos we received have been used in posters and banners to inspire reading around the school, funded by the generous support of the Reading School Parents' Association.



*Harry Firth (7C) Winner of the Extreme Reading Summer Photo Competition*

## World Book Day

In March, all Key Stage 3 pupils were invited to the LRC for a special World Book Day library visit, which included a look at the new catalogue, peer-recommended reads and a look at some book video trailers. The winners of the winter Reading Generation photo competition were also given prizes during the visit, with 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> places going to Alex Fisher and George Archer, both of 7C.

## Pupil Librarians

The Pupil Librarian team has gone from strength to strength since 2009. At the start of the year we introduced a new leadership pathway to enable Pupil Librarians to champion a subject. Those choosing to take on the additional responsibility advanced to Senior Pupil Librarian. We also appointed a Head Pupil Librarian, Vijay Gida, who was responsible for co-ordinating the Library Forum meetings.



## Author Visit

Award-winning author, Tim Bowler, visited Reading School just before the Easter break and entertained Years 7 and 8 with his tales of perseverance, dedication and a good sense of humour!



*7E World Book Day Library Lesson*

## LRC Book Club

This year the LRC Book Club enjoyed reading the shortlists for the Berkshire Book Award and the Carnegie Book Award. The Book Club agreed with the Berkshire Book Award winner, which was *Gansta Granny* by David Walliams. In November, the Club organised and ran a 'Children in Need' book sale and raised £63.97 in less than an hour!

## Library Management System

In November, we were finally able to upgrade our Library Management System, Oliver, from version 3.5 to version 5. This upgrade was funded by the legacy of Peter Eric Townsend (Hon. Treasurer of the O.R. Council 1989-97) and includes enhanced catalogue features like book covers, book reviews and access to over 11000 educational web links. All pupils can access their own library records to reserve and renew books and to create book reviews.

*Oliver Lewis (8S) was the first pupil to try our new cubed LRC seating!*



*Members of the Book Club with some of the shortlisted BBA books*



*Alex Fisher and George Archer*

## Library Forum

At these termly meetings, pupils in all years are encouraged to give feedback on the LRC: it was through this Forum that pupils chose the new cubed seating, kindly funded through the RSPA Reading Generation Project. Forum members are also involved in trialling new electronic resources and an ambitious library video project!



*Class Library Representatives at the Library Forum*



# Data, Drugs and Drilling: The Real World Comes to Reading School



The Economics Forum offers detailed and valuable insight into the economic conditions of business in the real world. Founded on the simple expedient of making the most of the talent you have, Mrs Bosser persuaded a number of her Year 11 students to invite their fathers into School to talk about the organisations they work for and their role within them. We were also fortunate to have the participation of an alumnus.

### Guest Speakers this Year include:

#### Mr Cottam, Finance Director, Glaxo-Smith-Kline

GSK is the fifth largest company in the UK, with over



97,300 employees and a commercial presence in 115 countries. An accountant by qualification, Mr Cottam assured his audience that, while these numbers might be impressive, the real reason he had worked for GSK for over 18 years was their

core values of performance with integrity and a passion for achievement. Students were impressed with Mr Cottam's depth of knowledge, especially when quizzed by pupils about animal testing, and the impact of corporate fines and alleged irregularities with tax on GSK's reputation.



#### Mr Hill, Critical Accounts Director, Oracle IT Services

Oracle is one of the largest multinational IT companies with 108,000 employees, 32,000 developers and a support team that answers customers' calls in 27 different languages. Founded in 1977, Oracle specialises in developing database software and

computer systems, serving over 380,000 customers. Mr Hill explained the function of databases and how they are an integral part of computing, storing and manipulating vast amounts of information. He also explained how Oracle had grown through a strategy of acquisition to increase their market share and reduce competition.

#### Mr Bion, Managing Director of Bion & Co



Bion is one of the UK's leading companies in perforating, with a client list including Heathrow Airport, Aston Martin and Nissan cars. "My company only does the holes", said Nick Bion, a Reading School Old Boy, but it employs highly-skilled workers using

sophisticated software and machinery capable of working to precisions of 1/10th of a mm. The company made £4 million in revenue last year, punching over 25 million holes: work out how much each hole is worth! Fast delivery times, flexibility and customer satisfaction are key ingredients to Bion's success. With no shareholders to satisfy, the company is also able to re-invest its profit back into the firm.

#### Mr Azubike, Oil and Gas Inspector, Health and Safety Executive

Did you know that 25% of corporate tax revenue paid to the UK government comes from the Oil and Gas industry operating in the North Sea? Did you know that an oil rig is potentially one of the most dangerous places in the world to work? Mr Azubike (PhD in Engineering), HSE oil rig inspector based in Aberdeen, described it as "sitting on a bomb". We soon realised how important it was to be planning for risks and putting the right safety measures in

place. We also learnt that oil is traded globally in US dollars, so the weakening of the American currency can have political as well as financial ramifications. As to when the oil will run out, it depends on whether or not we have reached 'peak oil', the point at which the maximum rate of extraction is reached, after which the rate of production is expected to enter terminal decline. Mr Azubike also met with Sixth Formers interested in Engineering careers, offering them these words of wisdom: "Study hard, be flexible and the world will be your oyster".

What makes the EF so special? According to Mrs Bosser, not only does it provide opportunities for Years 11 and 13 to interact with and learn about the careers of senior professionals, but "when the students have forgotten all of my Economics lessons, I know they will treasure for the rest of their lives the day when their dad came to school." Plans are already afoot for a relaunch early next academic year, so watch this space!



With numbers for GCSE massively increasing and our retention rate from GCSE to AS doing the same, this has been a brilliant year for History. From Years 7 to 13, students have been immersing themselves in the past and thriving on it, both in and out of school. Lessons have

buzzed with the whizzing of young minds while many have gone on History taster days at top universities and entered national essay competitions. We have been genuinely proud of the effort, work and interest students have shown this year.

### Horrible Histories

Early on in the year, a group of Year 7s went to the Hexagon to see the Horrible Histories Live Show, which was a fantastic retelling of the Tudors.



*Hexagonal  
Horrible  
Histories*

### Big Debate

The Department just about saved face in a direct challenge to its status in a staff v student debate entitled: 'This house believes history has no place in the classroom.' Preposterous, surely? Fortunately the crowd (standing room only in Big School) agreed and we live to teach another day.



*Big School; Big Debate*

### Outside Speakers

There have been several world-class historians who have come to share their ideas and experience with our students. Professor Gary Sheffield spoke to our Year 9s and 11s about the First World War before lecturing to a packed refectory about the role of Winston Churchill in the later years of that conflict.



*Professor Sheffield speaks on  
Churchill*

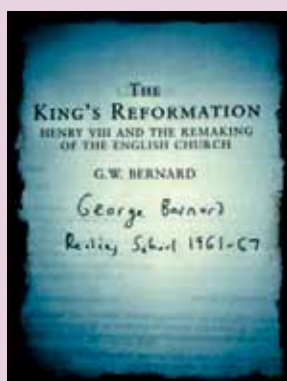
Professor Martin Parsons gave an expert course on writing to all A-Level historians, drawing upon the experience of writing his latest book, which he later launched in Big School.

Finally, Professor G.W. Bernard, one of our most controversial Tudor historians, delivered a talk to our AS students about the role

of Henry VIII during the Reformation. The fact that two of these illustrious chaps were Reading Old Boys just highlights what a hot bed of historical activity Reading School is.



*Professor Bernard considers a  
point*



### Abbey School

We have worked hard at creating links with the Abbey School, where our A2 students demonstrated they could more than hold their own at a collaborative revision session, while our Year 10s witnessed a fascinating insight into the life of a Cold War spy which did much to debunk the myth that they are all gadget-toting, champagne-sipping James Bonds.



*Cross fertilisation as our students  
study with the Abbey*

### What's Next?

Next year is already looking exciting. We are taking a group of Year 10s to Auschwitz and are currently working on a series of events to commemorate the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the outbreak of war in 1914. **The future appears to be...history.**



## The Living Rainforest: PSHE

Mrs Harden

As part of my Literacy Across the Curriculum role and as a regular visitor to 'The Living Rainforest' in Newbury, I was alerted to their International Essay Competition at the start of the Spring Term. I publicised it throughout the School, thinking it would tie in with many different subject interests and specialities, but it was the environmental champion, Mrs Romano, who jumped on board with her Year 11 Citizenship group and got them all answering the question: 'Who is responsible for the future of our planet?'

Kieran Toms, a talented writer, entered his essay and we are delighted that it was 'Highly Recommended' by the judges. As part of the competition, he was then invited to attend a day of workshops and debates at The Living Rainforest where he relished the opportunity to discuss his ideas with other ecologically-minded students from around the world.

### Are We Ready to Take Responsibility for our Planet?

*Kieran Toms, 11W*

In the face of growing environmental, social and economic problems, authorities around the globe are calling for change – yet little is being achieved due to the slow nature of negotiations at events such as the recent Rio +20 Earth Summit. The only way to speed up the process is for the average citizen in the developed world to change. If this happens, then governments and transnational corporations such as Coca Cola or Apple will be forced to change, since the general public, as consumers in a global marketplace and voters in elections, hold the real power. Overwhelming popular support on a particular issue can lead to modification and real change.

Take deforestation, for example. 12-15m hectares of forest are lost every year and the issue has become important on a global scale because of its detrimental effects: reduced biodiversity due to the removal of habitats, disrupted livelihoods of those who rely on forests, a drier climate as trees no longer evaporate groundwater, increased soil erosion of bare land and the release of greenhouse gases (tropical deforestation accounts for nearly 20% of human carbon emissions). There are many causes, but the biggest factors are commercial exploitation in agricultural expansion, cattle ranging, mining and logging. Much of this is illegal: in

Brazil and Indonesia, 80-90% of timber extraction is deemed illegal by the government.

The solution to the problem, as said, lies with the public. Since major deforestation mostly occurs in LEDCs, the government has less influence over the issue due to corruption. Products of such trade are often not sold in the country of origin, leaving citizens within the affected country powerless. The real power lies with the citizens of the country in which the product is sold: if they refuse to buy such goods then the company will lose profit, and on a large scale either stop using forests irresponsibly or go out of business.

The principle of citizens' sovereignty can be applied to many of the world's problems, particularly citizens of first world countries, as they have the most influence. The only problem is that this principle requires great numbers to show support for change, putting a premium on educational and awareness-raising campaigns, such as those conducted by the *Fairtrade Foundation*, which clearly mark those products which have used the world's resources sustainably and treated third world workers fairly. It should then be the responsibility of the media and educators to promote those products developed and sold in accordance with regulations, so consumers in the developed world can make informed and ethically-aware choices. The solution to the most serious environmental problems facing us lies in changing the heart, mind and buying habits of the consumer at the end of a long and complicated chain.



*The visit to the Living Rainforest afforded an opportunity to see endangered species, such as this Toucan, left.*

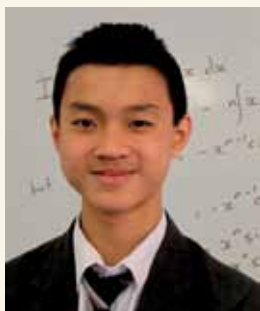
*Kieran Toms centre right with his certificate.*



Our boys continue to excel, not just at the work they do in class, but in competitions and challenges at both local and national level. The biggest are the National Team Challenges organised by the UK Mathematics Trust, designed to test thinking and problem-solving skills as well as mathematical knowledge.

*“Our boys continue to excel, not just at the work they do in class, but in competitions and challenges at both local and national level.”*

This year, our Juniors (Years 7 and 8) gained 111 Gold, 58 Silver and 36 Bronze certificates, with 18 qualifying for the Olympiads (highest-level papers). Nationally, there are about 240,000 entries in this category: the top 6% are awarded Gold, while only 0.5% (1,200) go on to take the Olympiad papers. There is also a team competition and our Junior team came second of the 25 teams who competed at regional level.



*Alfred Wong*

He was also invited to attend a week's Maths Summer School in Leeds as one of the top

In the Intermediate Challenge (Years 9,10 and 11) there were 62 Gold, 55 Silver and 23 Bronze certificates awarded with 13 Olympiad qualifiers and 39 Kangaroo qualifiers (a level just below the Olympiads). One of our Olympians, Alfred Wong of Year 10, scored 51 points out of 60,

and was awarded a distinction,

40 performers in the country and a week in August at Oxford University. Distinctions were also awarded to William Davies, Jimmy Liu, Minghua Yin and Roy Zhang. Of the boys who took the Kangaroo papers, ten boys were awarded merits with Surya Kongara (Year 10) the top performer.

The Senior Maths Challenge (Years 12 and 13) yielded 45 Gold, 51 Silver and 34 Bronze certificates with nine Olympiad and 22 Kangaroo qualifiers. Of the Olympians, two were awarded silver medals, and two achieved distinction. Across the country, only 1,370 students took part in the National BMO1, from whom 100 were invited to sit BMO2. These included two Reading boys, Alex



*Adam Weller*

Fairclough in Y13 and Adam Weller in Y12 [see his award-winning McIlroy Essay].

11 of the 22 'Kangaroos' received a Certificate of Merit; (nationally, only 25% of entries achieve this level). James Sun of 8W topped the list for Kangaroo candidates, an *exceptional* performance for a boy in Year 8.



*James Sun*

Just to give you a flavour, here's a question from this year's BMO2 paper:

*Consider the set of positive integers which, when written in binary, have exactly 2013 digits and more 0s than 1s. Let  $N$  be the number of such integers and let  $S$  be their sum. Prove that, when written in binary,  $N+S$  has more 0s than 1s.*

Huh. Easy. However, if you'd prefer something a little more down-to-earth, try the puzzle below.

### Maths Puzzle:

*4 people need to cross a rickety footbridge. They all begin on the same side. It is dark and they have one flashlight between them all. No more than 2 people can cross the bridge at any one time. Any party who crosses (1 or 2 people) must have the flashlight with them. The flashlight must be walked – it cannot be thrown or catapulted, for example. Person 1 takes 1 minute to cross the bridge; person 2 takes 2 minutes, person 3 takes 5 minutes and person 4 takes 10 minutes. A pair must walk together at the slower person's pace. For example, if persons 1 and 4 walk together, it will take them 10 minutes to cross. If person 4 returns the flashlight, a total of 20 minutes will have passed. Can they all cross the bridge in 17 minutes?*

If you think you have the solution, see Mrs Sikkell for a possible chocolate and a definite Dare Point!





*Robert Starley, with fellow 2012 UK Biology Olympians*

Open to all post-16 students in the UK, The UK Biology Olympiad – the premier interschool competition in this subject – has increased significantly in popularity in recent years. Challenging the most talented young biologists to extend their talents, it encourages students to demonstrate their knowledge and to continue their study of Biology

beyond A-level. In 2013, there were 4,200 entrants, only about 10% of whom received a Gold Award. They included five of our students: Liam Johnstone, Benjamin Jones, Joe Moneim, Tadhg Piotrowski and Jack Roe. Four others achieved Silver and three Bronze – so 12 award-winners from a group of 18: a pleasing result and much higher than the national average!



*2013 Reading School Biology Olympians*

## Tradition of Success



We have something of a tradition of success in the Biology Olympiad. In 2011, two of the four members of the UK Team who competed in the International Olympiad came from Reading School. In 2012, six Reading School students won Gold Awards, including Robert Starley (pictured) who went on to become one of just 16 finalists in the UK Biology Olympiad held at the University

of Birmingham. Subsequently selected to represent the UK at the International Biology Olympiad in Singapore, he achieved a Silver Medal and is now studying Natural

Sciences at Cambridge. In the last 15 years, only nine Golds and 31 Silvers have been won at this level (three of the Silvers from us) which puts Robert's feat and our noteworthy level of performance into some perspective.

The British Biology Olympiad is organised by a small group of volunteers supported by Dr Amanda Hardy, Competitions Co-ordinator at the Society of Biology, and the University of Birmingham's School of Biosciences. It is sponsored by the Biotechnology Sciences Research Council. Dr Andrew Treharne, who chairs the volunteers, said of Robert's success: "*The record number of participants in this Olympiad makes it all the more impressive that Robert Starley achieved a place at the finals.*"

We are sure there will be many more like him to come.

## Class Images



*Mr Singh in botanical mode (left) and Manan Narula checks the results of his latest experiment (right).*



### The Birth of Computer Science & Engineering

Mr Hussain

#### Why are we re-developing Technology?

We recognise as a School that the existing Technology offering is in need of new facilities. Furthermore, we know that we do not offer a Computer Science option at GCSE or A-level and that in a top boys' grammar school this cannot continue to be the case; that the skills developed in learning Computer Science and Engineering are relevant to all KS3 students, and that Technology should evolve to encompass this. Finally, students need to apply explicitly their theoretical understanding of Maths and Physics if they are to decompartmentalise their learning.

This vision firmly places Reading School at the forefront of innovation in the Technology/Computer Science curriculum, a status acknowledged by the British Computer Society who has designated us a Lead School for Computing. We aim to capitalise on this through delivering CPD and supporting Computer Science teaching in the local area.

Plans for major classroom refurbishments in Technology and Physics are now well advanced. We have received quotations from builders and suppliers and recently appointed a project manager to oversee implementation. Some preparatory work has already been completed in the Technology Laboratories.

Donations from parents and alumni to the 1125 Fund over the last year have been invaluable in helping recently to secure a major capital grant from the Academies Capital Maintenance Fund which will enable us to complete more improvements to the Physics Lecture Theatre and an adjacent Physics Laboratory. It will also cover additional costs to the work needed in the two new Computer Science classrooms that will replace the current Wood Workshop.

We are now starting to plan for the next phase of improvements in Science, with the aim of adding new laboratory space in Chemistry and Biology, and improving existing space. Our aim is to have detailed plans prepared to put in an application to the ACMF when the next bidding round opens in late 2013. If that is successful, we will start work on that project next year.

Thanks to all who have so generously donated towards equipment costs recently. We really appreciate their support, as it will enable us to equip the new classrooms in time for the start of the next academic year in September. There is still time for others to make a gift. It will be used towards the cost of computers and benching. All donations will have a direct and immediate benefit to students' academic work. Contact [development@reading-school.co.uk](mailto:development@reading-school.co.uk) for details.

*"This firmly places Reading School at the forefront of innovation in the Technology/Computer Science curriculum"*





## Curriculum background: Reading School, Design, Technology and the Real World

Reading School boys are very numerate and logical and have a facility for handling abstract concepts. They are also problem-solvers keen to challenge their understanding and widen their learning to application in the 'real world'. This is what any Technology Department should be offering. The world is full of digital devices which our students can manipulate skilfully, yet what these devices are and how they work, though just as essential, is often less clear.

This isn't just a dilemma for Reading School - it's a systemic problem that Industry and Business have long decried. The MacTaggart Lecture delivered by the Chairman of Google, Eric Schmidt, in August 2011, catapulted this issue into the limelight: "The UK is home to so many media-related inventions. You invented photography. You invented TV. You invented computers in both concept and practice. Yet today, none of the world's leading exponents in these fields are from the UK. Your IT curriculum focuses on teaching how to use software, but gives no insight into how it's made. That is just throwing away your great computing heritage."

The Department for Education heard the call and commissioned the NextGen report. Michael Gove, in his opening address at the BETT show in January 2012, indicated the need for a "relevant" technology curriculum. David Willets, Minister for Universities and Science, recently stated that courses were "catastrophically boring". Our Maths and Science Departments achieve some of the best results in the country, yet this has still to translate into a similar level of success in Technology!

Our Reading School Computer Science & Engineering curriculum model for next year looks like this:

This curriculum model places a major emphasis on applying theory from Maths and Physics – something no other school we know of is exploring at present. The subjects offered in the new model are by their very nature academically rigorous yet practical in nature. They require students to be creative and become skilful at problem-solving whilst providing real opportunities for them to work in teams.

### Summary of the improvements currently planned (completion by April 2014)

- Physics, Computer Science & Engineering will have 4 new laboratories in the existing space of 3.
- Computer Science and Physics A-level students will have a space to work when labs are in use.
- Computer Science and Physics staff will have a work area with air, natural daylight and appropriate provision for the preparation of demonstrations and technical resources.
- The School will have a modern Lecture Theatre that is a more suitable venue for speakers and events, with the facilities for professional demonstrations.
- Students will have an additional play area for ball games.
- A refurbished, Health and Safety-compliant workshop will have capacity for future curriculum developments and extra-curricular activities.

Year	Taught Subject		Enrichment
8	Engineering: 2D and 3D CAD	Introduction to Electronics	Clubs & Activities
9	Introduction to Computing	Applied Electronics & Robotics	
10	GCSE Computer Science	GCSE Electronics	
11			
12	A Level Computing (AQA 2510)	No offer yet	
13			

## The Geography Department Goes World Class!

We have two major themes this year: World Class Competitions and World Class Cultures. We are representing Great Britain both in the Senior International Geographical Union Olympiad in Japan and the Junior National Geographic World Championship in Russia. We have just completed a two-year cultural exchange with

Denmark as well as immersed ourselves in the land of fire in Italy and the land of fire and ice in Iceland. Finally, by the end of this year, Geography students will have visited five different countries - this is on top of the Year 10 and Year 12 trips that we run domestically.



### Local to National to World Class Competitions

Reading School annually host the Geographical Association (GA) World Wise Quiz where a number of regional schools compete for the title of most gifted and talented geographers in the local area. Last year we had over 50 competitors. We have been winners of the coveted trophy, kindly donated by the Old Redingensians, many times and once again are the 2013 holders. Well done to Joseph Grimmer, James Woolaghan and Joshua Blake.

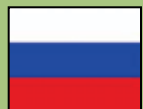
Having also won the competition last year, we competed at national level in the GA World Wise Challenge held in Blencathra near Keswick where the redoubtable John Livesey, Ed Clennet and James Woolaghan were crowned overall winners; James also received the individual prize. Congratulations to them and the runners-up group of Paddy Byfield, James Messer and Tads Ciecierski-Holmes.



Reflecting these wins, we are now representing Great Britain in the two World Geography Championships. Edward Clennet won his individual place with a competition-winning essay on the demise of the High Street and has been selected to represent Great Britain in The International Geographical Union Olympiad to be held in Kyoto, Japan this summer. Joseph Grimmer,



James Woolaghan and Joshua Blake have also been selected to represent Great Britain in the National Geographic World Championship 2013 in St. Petersburg,



Russia. This is a fantastic achievement by our young geographers to represent their country on the world stage.

### Geography Olympian



Congratulations to Edward Clennet who, as mentioned above, has won a place on the UK team for the International Geography Olympiad in Kyoto this summer.

The Olympiad in Japan will involve teams from more than 30 countries across the world who will take part in a range of geographical activities and excursions to

share their culture and friendship. It contains three elements: a written response test, a multimedia test and a fieldwork test, but there will be time to visit some of the geographical and cultural attractions of Japan too.



*One school, one world:  
carpe mundum!*





The two-year exchange programme with our Danish partners at **Frydenhojskolen** drew to an end this year with an English-food buffet party in the Refectory. Last year, 30 Year 9s visited Danish host families on an exchange experience centred on the theme of a *healthy mind for a healthy body*. This year, the same students in Year 10 hosted the Danes here with a variety of activities aimed at encouraging integration and reflection on our cultures. A big “tak” goes to the Student Organising Team of John Livesey, Charlie Harding, Richard Sharman and Matthew Le Croisette who have worked exceptionally hard in organising the programme. They skyped the Danish students, created a Facebook account, helped with the day-to-day running of the programme and delivered the

finished product: a DVD of our experiences which will be released very soon.



The annual Geography and Classics visit to Sorrento in **Italy** continues to be very popular. Last year's Year 10s not only enjoyed the sites of Pompeii, Mt Vesuvius and Capri,

but also took in St Peter's Basilica in the Vatican along with the infamous Colosseum. This year we are set to return to the cultural wonders of both Pompeii and Herculaneum, highlighted in the British Museum's 'Life and Death' exhibition. What was life like prior to the eruption of Mt. Vesuvius for those in the bustling streets? What did Emperor Tiberius do at Villa Jovis on the island of Capri when he said farewell to those visitors who had displeased him? What was it like to be a gladiator in the biggest venue of all?



The Sixth Form visited the land of fire and ice. The Icelandic scenery, including the Mid Atlantic Ridge at Thingvellor, Geysir at Strokkur and waterfall of Gullfoss (*see right*) took our breath away, but it was the

stories and experiences of the locals that captivated us most. We visited the Westmann Islands, south of Iceland, where the Eldfell fissure erupted in 1973, nearly choking Iceland's most important fishing town of Heimag. The lava fields still blacken the landscape while local accounts



of the event are displayed in the local museum. Everyone on the island is in some way connected to fishing industry. We also visited the area immediately affected by the Eyjafjallajökull volcano (remember the disruption to air flights?) gaining first-hand insight to the havoc wreaked by Nature on the lives and livelihoods of those more directly affected.

## The Loire Valley

Year 8 and 9 students enjoyed a trip to the Loire Valley in October. They visited Clos Luce, which was the home of Leonardo da Vinci, the Chateau de Chambord, had a guided tour of the old town in Tours and a visit to the Poirault Chocolate Factory as well as a full day at the theme park, Futuroscope. The students stayed in host families which gave them a great opportunity to practise their French outside the classroom.



The group in front of Chateau de Chambord



James making French sweets at La Livre Tournais

This is what Ming Yin of 9W thought of Futuroscope ...

*"Ah, c'est super, le Futuroscope. Vous allez adorer ça!"* said our host family. They were right.

*To be honest, at first, after the amazing events of Day 3 (a tour of Tours (!), a visit to a craft museum and to a chocolate factory) we couldn't imagine what else could be better. Answer: le Futuroscope, a theme park full of 4D and 3D cinemas and some of the most awesome rides we'd ever been on!*

*The first ride that we went on was the teacher-recommended 4D adventure film/ride named 'Arthur, l'Aventure 4D'. Depicting a bumpy journey through what seemed like an insect kingdom, the moving chairs and 3D effects were simply too cool! We all agreed it was one of the best 4D rides we'd ever been on, and one of the most exciting attractions in the park.*

*We then split up into groups and roamed around the site, going on anything which took our fancy. Other amazing attractions included 'L'Imax 3D', 'Le Petit Prince' and 'Monstres des Mers'. What our group really loved, however, were the self-operated rides in the Le Monde des Enfants region! I mean, an upside-down merry-go-round which you could start and run at the touch of a button – how cool is that?!*

*For roughly five hours we enjoyed ourselves to the full, while buying mouth-watering Nutella crepes and waffles from the small shops scattered around the site. The souvenir shops were pretty good as well; full of techie toys such as an upside-down egg timer which worked on density. It really was a sad occasion to have to leave this park of wonder. The next day, we were due to leave Tours and head back to England, taking with us memories which we would cherish for a lifetime.*

## Fougères

In February, Year 12 students had the fantastic opportunity to do work experience in primary schools in the lovely town of Fougères in Brittany, staying with exchange students who go to our partner school, the Lycee Jean Guehenno. We then had the pleasure of welcoming the French students to Reading for their work experience in local primary schools in March. This was a joint trip with other schools in the Reading and Wokingham area, including Piggott and Kendrick. All had a great time with their French partners while gaining invaluable work experience and French language practice!



Some of our primary teaching team (left)



Debate on school uniform (above)



Medieval castle (left)



# Berlin

Matthew Cottam 11W

On the 19<sup>th</sup> October 2012, Year 11 went to Berlin for four days to immerse ourselves in the German language for our German GCSE. On the first day we were given a sheet of things to find or see, and sent out in our groups. Trying to find the answers for the quiz, we had to go sightseeing. I found that Berlin had a large number of fantastic old and modern architectural designs, such as the two shown below:



On day two we rose early to go and see the sight I had been most looking forward to: the Reichstag. Once inside we had an excellent tour, going from the bottom all the way up to the roof where we

took a group photo. We then went into the dome and all the way to the top, some 150 feet high. The views from the top of the dome were unbelievable.



Immediately after the Reichstag, we went to the Brandenburg Gate. This was a very lively area with lots of tourists and performers, and in the background was the building where Michael Jackson held his baby out of the window!

MFL

Once we had finished looking at the Brandenburg Gate we briefly visited the very modern holocaust memorial, consisting of a large number of different sized stone blocks with undulating ground. The memorial was very interesting, allowing everyone to interpret it differently. The stone blocks contained a coating which prevented graffiti which was useful as graffiti seemed to be a large issue for Berlin. This kept them looking brand new.



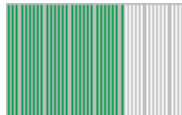
The next day we went to the site that I had been researching: the Olympiastadion, used for the Olympic Games in 1936. It was renovated for the 2006 FIFA World Cup and is now home to German football team Hertha BSC. The stadium looks and is huge. It was completely empty and a few of us may have let out a few football chants during our visit. Behind the stadium is a large bell tower which we ascended, yielding unbelievable views of the stadium and the large grassy area behind. This was my personal favourite of the sites we visited.

Berlin has been my best school trip ever, and the city now ranks as one of my favourite places. Big thanks to Frau Materlik, Frau Von Widdern and Mr Bywater, plus any others who helped to make this trip happen.



## European Day of Languages, 26<sup>th</sup> September

Reading School celebrated the **diversity of languages** with activities in and about different languages throughout the day, such as quizzes and videos and a **special lunch** in the refectory of *Beef Scotch Broth served with Oat Bread*, *Bratwurst served with Braised Cabbage, Diced Potatoes & Curry Sauce*, *Spanish Paella*, *Spinach & Feta Cannelloni* and *Kolaczki (oven baked jam doughnut)* which was enjoyed by all.



### Journée Internationale de la Francophonie , 20<sup>th</sup> March

We celebrated the French language and the Francophonie – an organisation of French-speaking countries – with a special lunch of a Moroccan vegetable *tagine*, a very French *coq au vin*, and a fabulous *tarte Tatin* with Chantilly cream while listening to some French music, organising a flag competition and collecting and comparing our favourite French words.



*Coq au not-too-much Vin*



*Mr Robson reveals his favourite French word*

## Flamenco! 26<sup>th</sup> June



'El día e' is the Spanish equivalent of la Francophonie and we chose it to celebrate Spanish language and music in Big School with a Flamenco afternoon workshop of music and dance with 'Ilusion Flamenca' Flamenco School (Lukas Award 2013 – Best Flamenco School). We were joined by girls from

Kendrick and all appreciated the powerful guitar and driving, percussive rhythms of one of the best-known and loved genres of folk music in the world.

Visit <http://www.ilusionflamenca.co.uk> for information and classes in Bracknell and London



*MFL: The Team that Gleams!*



## We Say Farewell to...

### Mr Coggan: PE and Games; East Wing House Master

A big presence around the School physically and morally, Mr Coggan joined us in 2004, after a spell



managing a private health club in Brighton and completing a Sports Science degree and PGCE at St Luke's College, Exeter. He leaves to become

Head of one of the three Houses at Yateley School, a 1500-strong mixed comprehensive, a role which will involve some PE, but will be mainly concerned with student pastoral care. "I shall miss the boys and staff here," mused Mr Coggan, "but it was a new challenge and opportunity, and I shall always be thankful to Reading School for pointing my career in the right direction." Mr Coggan's curricular and extra-curricular work ethic is legendary and his influence profound. All agree that our loss will be the Yateley students' significant gain.

### Miss Powles: Classics

In September 2006, Reading School was Miss Powles's first full-time appointment following teacher training at Cambridge University. Renowned for her positive energy and enthusiasm, she has always entered fully into School life. Three-year spells as 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant in the CCF and South House Boarding Tutor were complemented by School trips to Costa Rica in 2008 and the Himalayas

in 2010. Engaged to be married in July, Miss Powles has secured an appointment as Head of Classics at More House School in Kensington, London, an independent day school for around 200 girls, located a few minutes' walk from where she will be living (how lucky can a person be?).

She takes with her our affection and best wishes, as well as her own happy memories of a place where, as she puts it, "I have not just met good colleagues, but made good friends!"



### Mr Singh: Cover Supervisor; Biology

A dapper dresser with a warm smile and winning ways, Mr Singh is coming to the end of his third school year here. He joined us in October 2010 after graduating from the University of Reading that summer, and has operated as a Cover Supervisor and Biology teacher to cover Ms Howson's classes while she was on maternity leave. This year, he expanded his horizons and CV by running the Junior Jazz Band. Plans for the immediate



future include summer backpacking in Greece and Italy - although solo travelling will be a new experience, it is something he is eagerly looking forward to.

Thereafter, he intends to spend winter in the Alps working and skiing. "I have had many enjoyable experiences

whilst at Reading School," he comments, "worked with some amazing people and learned a lot. I wish everyone the very best for the future!" Wishes heartily reciprocated, Mr S.

### Mrs Hayes: Chinese

"With boys, everything has to be fun." Mrs Hayes's simple teaching philosophy is founded on experience and extensive academic



credentials: six years teaching English in Taiwan; two years studying for an M Phil at Birmingham University; three years lecturing at Oxford University in Chinese. It was her son (a student here at the time) who persuaded her to join us six years ago as part-time teacher of Mandarin, managing a select group of native and non-native speakers who have responded so well to Mrs Hayes's ICT and blog-based teaching strategy that exemplary GCSE results have been achieved in a two-year course - and this includes those who are starting from scratch! She also has an interest in martial arts (brown belt, so mind your manners). Mrs Hayes leaves us to concentrate on developing her online Mandarin Chinese courses, which she hopes will make the language more accessible and enjoyable to many. Catch her on [hannahhua.edublogs.org](http://hannahhua.edublogs.org) or see her diary on YouTube!

## And We Welcome Back ...Charles O'Halloran

I attended the Sixth Form at Reading School from 2007-2009, after which I read Geography at the University of Oxford. I consider moving to Reading to study my A-



levels one of the best decisions I have ever made, both academically and socially: aside from the excellent education that I

received as a student, Reading has a

very special atmosphere that allowed me to forge brilliant friendships - with both teachers and students alike - that I continue to cherish.

Before starting at the accountancy firm, KPMG, I was fortunate enough to return to Reading School. In Michaelmas Term, I operated as a Cover Supervisor, supporting staff by implementing lesson plans during their absence, whilst I was also given the fantastic opportunity to take charge of the Under-13 Rugby Team. After returning from my travels - having visited India, Thailand, Cambodia, Vietnam, China and the USA - I am now once again fulfilling the role of Cover

Supervisor until summer.

Shifting from a pupil to a member of staff has given me a unique perspective on School life.

I continue to appreciate the real talent and potential that Reading Boys hold but also I realise more than ever the dedication of the staff to their work. These elements combine to create the distinct learning environment that distinguishes Reading School. If I only take one thing away from my time spent as an employee here, it will be that I recognise how lucky I am to have attended this exceptional institution; it has fostered true pride in being an Old Redingensian.

## Overview

This year, Reading School CCF attracted a substantial number of new recruits primarily from the current Year 10, representing almost a third of that year group. Our Thursday afternoon training in School has gone ahead in a purposeful fashion and all recruits have now completed their basic proficiency syllabuses. The RAF Advanced, REME, Signals and Advanced Infantry Sections have also been active and all elements of the CCF have been able to put their training to good practical use out of school on two Army exercises, visits

to 6 Air Experience Flight and 612 Volunteer Gliding School, range days, competitions and, the highlight of the year, our Biennial Inspection. At the time of going to press, over 40 members of the current Year 9 have expressed an interest in joining the CCF next year and we are looking forward to taking part in the national Cadet Field Signals Competition and the Army Section Central Camp at Longmoor in July. Finally, Wing Commander Tom Walter will step down as Contingent Commander in July and we are pleased to confirm that Major Simon Donegan (ex-Irish Guards and Sussex ACF) will step into his large and well-kept boots.

## Biennial Inspection

This year, our Biennial Review took place on Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> October 2012, on Aldershot Training Area B6. It is the most important event in Reading School CCF's calendar; the culmination of a two-yearly inspection process of all our administration and training. The inspecting officer, Air Commodore Michael Jenkins, is a former member of Reading School CCF and an OR, as are the two high-ranking colleagues who accompanied him, Colonel Huw Lawford and Group Captain David Lester-Powell. In fact, the number of ORs present on the day, including Mr Ian Judd, and Ken Brown and Chris Widdowes of the Old Redingensians Association, came to a total of nine!



*Cadet Matthew Le Croissette on the blower*

All in all, there were nearly 100 people, cadets and adults, involved. The visitors toured the training area where senior cadets ran a series of activities - signals, command tasks, first aid, campcraft, fieldcraft and an

ambush - to instruct and test more junior colleagues. At the end of the exercise, all three visiting senior officers addressed the whole contingent, commenting on the enthusiasm of the younger cadets and the outstanding standards of leadership and instruction demonstrated by the cadet NCOs, comparing them favourably to officer cadets at Sandhurst.



*Air Commodore Michael Jenkins, OR, addresses the contingent*

## Remembrance Sunday



*Remembrance Sunday 2012. Also present: Squadron Leader E. J. Spurrier, RAF (South House 1991-98).*

A number of cadets represented the CCF at both the School Act of Remembrance on Friday 9<sup>th</sup> November and at the Old Redingensians' Service on Remembrance Sunday itself where they were complimented on their standard of turnout and bearing. In addition, our two senior cadets, Ka Lok Cheung and Owen Wesley, represented the School at the Innocent Victims Memorial Service at Westminster Abbey on November 20<sup>th</sup>, where they laid a wreath in honour of children whose lives have been traumatised as a result of war.



## Plain Tales from the CCF

Salisbury Plain was the venue for the most recent outing by the Army Section, when nine cadets, accompanied by Lt. Ferguson and Capt. Hurst, made their way to Westdown Camp on Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> March, to take part in the 145 Brigade Cadet Military Skills Competition.

Activities included weapon handling, stalking, observation, the air rifle range, anti-ambush drills and a CQB paintball lane. There was a good deal of mud to be found on the area, much of which attached itself to Capt. Hurst! However, everyone had plenty of warm kit and morale was sustained by rest spells in the warmth of the helibus. Because of the inclement weather, it was not possible to run the night navigation exercise and the Cadet Training Team organised a quiz instead. Everyone retired to bed afterwards in anticipation of another early start.

Sunday morning saw the March and Shoot and Drill elements of the competition. The March element was over 2km of the training area. Nobody was keen to remove layers of clothing at the start, but at the end of the march,

enough heat had been generated to make this seem like a good idea! Shoot and drill took place on an exposed part of the area and we all admired the grit of the Grenadier Guards Sergeant who conducted it in his No. 2 uniform in the cold! Afterwards, we returned to camp and sorted out all the kit before prizegiving. Our 6<sup>th</sup> place was perfectly respectable, given that we had not entered this competition for some years and that over half the team consisted of first year cadets. Sgt. Ka Lok Cheung was a first-class patrol commander and Lt. Ferguson's energy, expertise and good humour were also valuable assets. The other members of the team were Cpl. E. Higgin and Cdt. J. Crawford, J. Eaton, J. Taylor, S. Proctor, A. Fleming, R. Sullivan and E. Smart. Well done to all concerned!

The CCF remains a vibrant part of School life and immensely popular with the boys who participate. They are set new challenges, taught new skills and given the opportunity to develop their leadership and team working potential. I am very proud to have been, and to remain, associated with it.



*Cadet Jonathan Sinclair prepares for his first flight in a Vigilant motor glider*

## RAF Cadets – up in the air, but feet on the ground!

The RAF section has been involved in two visits to 612 Volunteer Gliding School at Abingdon, participation in the Air Squadron Trophy Competition and a Field Day visit to RAF Benson on March 28<sup>th</sup> 2013. Philip Meerman was awarded a Gliding Scholarship which he completed successfully during the Easter Holidays. At the time of writing, Conor Black, John Richardson and Matthew James have been accepted for the Air Cadet Leadership Course, and Jonathan Bryant, James Roberts and Sohum Shah have been awarded Gliding Scholarships.

## Boyz in the Wood

23 cadets got a taste of life in the field on Friday 30<sup>th</sup> November and Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> December when they took part in an overnight exercise in the grounds of Bearwood College, learning how to live under the stars. To combat very cold conditions, the cadets had plenty of warm gear as well as their Army issue sleeping bags and, fortified by plenty of hot beverages, managed to survive a night out in the open. In the morning, the more experienced cadets gave a demonstration of how to carry out a section attack for the benefit of the recruits. Although only meant as a simulation, the NCOs carried it off with plenty of élan and everybody was suitably impressed. After the joys of weapon cleaning and post-exercise administration, everyone returned to school tired but enthusiastic.



*Cold but not downhearted: the Army Section at Bearwood College*



**How long have you been at Reading School and what have been your roles?**

I started teaching Chemistry and Geography here in 1975. After a year, I was asked to join South House and fairly shortly after was appointed Housemaster when the previous incumbent became

temporary Head after the then Headmaster's death. I also became, and was for about a year, the Head of Chemistry, when the then Head of Department also died. I do seem to be fated to take over things when people die! Later, I became involved in examinations at the School and chose to concentrate on them, both as an administrator and an external examiner. I continued to teach until 2006 and then became entirely involved in examinations - where I am today.

**And you were also a student here?**

Yes! I was a boarder in East Wing, from 1962 to 1969.

**What made you want to come back after university?**

I didn't! I was doing my PGCE at Oxford and discovered that I'd been allocated to Reading School to do my teaching practice. It didn't take more than a moment to realise that I had been invited back by the School, which was quite an honour. During this year, the Head of Department retired, creating a vacancy. I came in as the apprentice of the Chemistry Department, remaining in that position for many years.

**Did you ever think you'd stay this long?**

No. It never crossed my mind. Normally teachers would work for three or four years at one school before moving on. Personally though, I had two problems. One was that in my third year I was appointed House Master of South House and didn't want to suddenly leave or resign. Secondly, most of my colleagues who had moved on said that their new schools were nowhere near as good as Reading School! Perhaps I should have had the courage to move on, but I never did, and the rest, as they say, is history!

**Even so, have you enjoyed your time?**

I wouldn't have stayed if I hadn't! As with any job you do, there were good times and not so good times. But certainly, without any shadow of a doubt, the balance lies firmly on the enjoyment side.

**What are your favourite memories from your time at Reading School?**

Probably my time in the boarding house. In those days being housemaster was a bit like being a mini headmaster. You ran everything. There were 46 or 47 boys in the house, significantly more than now. In addition to looking after the boys, you were responsible for ordering the food, sorting the cleaning and catering staff, even maintaining the property. I can remember climbing up ladders at night to check leaks! Even so, the boarding house very much stands out as a highlight.

**And what about the memorable characters you've come across?**

I've certainly come across a huge number of memorable characters. I was very fortunate in that two of my Chemistry colleagues were hugely knowledgeable Oxford chemists. Mike Hardman was one. He could have very easily taught Maths, Physics, Chemistry, Biology and even navigation - he was quite a renowned sailor! The other was Mr Clive Cousins who some of the older boys will remember. We started out in boarding together. I learnt massive amounts of Chemistry from both of them and they helped me out on many occasions when my own academic level fell short. Mr Hardman sadly died aged 60 of cancer, but Mr Cousins, as you know, is still alive and kicking!

**What are the biggest changes you've seen to the school?**

The biggest change, without any shadow of a doubt, is the introduction of women to the staff. I think the standard of teaching across the school has improved as a result - the female staff are extremely good teachers!

**What about changes such as the introduction of computers? Surely they must have had a huge impact on life at the school?**

Computers came in slowly. I mistakenly thought that various people would be made redundant because certain admin jobs could be done so much quicker with them, but the introduction of computers has actually *increased* employment in administrative areas.

**So would you say the school is a better place now or when you first joined?**

From my perspective, it's undoubtedly better now. I prefer the more relaxed approach to teaching where students are able to hold a conversation with teachers rather than seeing them as figures to hold in awe and fear. That's something that has certainly changed from when I was at school.

**What are your plans for the future?**

I've never been someone who looks very far ahead. I know some of my colleagues plan in three year stints: to be head of department, then deputy head, then head teacher and then go into educational administration where they'll earn a large amount of money and retire with a big pension at 50! But personally, I've always tended to wait for opportunities to present themselves - I push open doors when they are slightly ajar: I'm certainly not someone to go hammering on closed doors. So no, I haven't got any particular plans for the future.

**And talking about open doors ... what is *actually* under that trapdoor in Room 10?**

Well, that's a question I've heard a few times! I don't know to be honest. I don't think anybody does. I'm afraid I'll have to leave that one as a mystery...

**Thank you.**

*"I can remember climbing up ladders at night to check leaks!"*



## A Day in the Life

Mr Teixeira, House Tutor (South House)

*Who are those young, committed teachers who live onsite and look after our boarding students? How do they spend their time? Mr Teixeira, who teaches Biology, Chemistry and Games by day, gives us an insight into his busy life.*



**7.00:** The alarm goes off. I have a choice of breakfast with the boarders or an early morning swim ... breakfast usually wins. Living in School at least means a short commute: three flights of stairs and a short stroll later, I'm in the Refectory.

**7.45:** Notices and prayers at breakfast in the Refectory. If I'm on duty, this means letting the boys know about clubs, fixtures and trips going on after school. A good chance to catch up with other boarding staff. Mr Robson usually comes in for some porridge, too.

**8.20:** With my form group. They're a noisy bunch but enthusiastic and well-meaning. Notices and registration are dealt with. Depending on the day of the week, I bribe my group with Dare points to sing louder in chapel. Sometimes it works.

**8.50:** My first two lessons are always in the Science Department. I teach both Biology and Chemistry to Years 7 to 12, so there is quite a bit of variety. It keeps things interesting!

**11.30:** Time for a break. I head to the staff room for a cup of tea and a catch-up with colleagues. Current conversation is dictated by the Lions in Australia and the Ashes this summer.

**12.00:** Lesson 3 and I can be in any one of three departments. Teaching games adds to the challenge, but it is nice to get out of the classroom. I really enjoyed coaching the Year 10 Rugby Team this year and am already making plans for next year.

**13.20:** Lunchtime. I don't usually eat in the Refectory unless I'm on boarding duty, but I'd recommend the soup. Otherwise it's back to the flat for some food, and I'm ready for period 4.

**14.05:** Final lesson of the day. Quite a tricky one to plan for, because the boys are either tired from a whole day at school or bouncing off the walls having been cooped up all day. I usually give them something active to do just in case it's the latter.

**15.25:** The school day is over, but not necessarily for me. Currently, Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays involve running Triathlon Club with Mr Bywater. We have a great group of boys who attend regularly and we are looking forward to watching them race next month.

**17.45:** Time for dinner in the Refectory. Chris, our chef, usually does a good job of feeding hungry boys and staff.

**18.30-21.00:** Time to get some exercise. I am usually found running, swimming or cycling. Occasionally it's a combination of all three. Currently, I'm training to race a Half Iron Man in Marlow in July. Before that, I'm doing the Three Peaks Race with Mr Beckey and Mr Bywater to raise money for Touraid (*see below*).

**21.00:** Time to do school work. I always work well in the evenings especially after I've cleared my head with a couple of hours' fresh air. Work can include planning lessons, marking, and writing reports.

**22.30:** Time for bed usually. I try to take 30 minutes before bed to relax and read a book or watch some TV. At the moment, I'm reading 'Into Thin Air' by John Krakauer.

That's my typical day, unless it's a Tuesday and I'm on boarding duty. This includes running an afterschool club, supervised prep, an evening club, then a series of staggered bedtimes for different year groups. The house gets locked at 11pm at which point I can stroll back to my flat, ready to get some sleep and bid farewell to another busy day.

## Touraid, a £10,000 challenge!



Mr Beckey, Mr Teixeira and Mr Bywater have taken up the challenge of raising £10,000 for Touraid.

Touraid is a charity supporting disadvantaged children in Africa, Asia and the West Indies, helping to improve lives and communities through sport. Reading School is raising funds to bring a group of young Kenyans to the UK in 2014. The group will take part in sporting activities and will stay with local families.

Our gallant teachers kick-started fundraising by completing the Three

Peaks Challenge on the 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> of June (*see picture, left*) They ran 27 miles over the three highest mountains in the UK in 23 hours, 10 minutes, 8 seconds!

They need as much support as possible. You can donate securely online at :

<https://www.justgiving.com/Reading-School-Touraid>, where there is also further information about this very worthy cause.



So many of our alumni go on to achieve amazing things after they leave us, both at university and beyond. We've welcomed back many of them over the last 12 months.

We would particularly like to thank all of those alumni who gave up their time to help our current students. Their help, whether providing advice on careers or university, or simply sharing their expertise has been invaluable.

**Professor GC Bernard** (1961-68) one of the world's most prominent Tudor historians, gave a talk on Henry VIII to Sixth Form History students. Professor Bernard, whose love of history began while he was at Reading School, is now Professor of Early Modern History at the University of Southampton.



**Nick Bion** (1969-76) visited our Year 11 economists to offer them some insights into running a manufacturing business. Nick is Managing Director of Bion & Co, one of the UK's leading companies in perforating, whose recent projects include Heathrow Terminal Two and Wembley Stadium.



**Nick Brownlow** (1973 – 80) a former East Wing boarder helped some of our prospective dentistry students. Nick runs his own dental practice in Monks Risborough.

**Ant Butler** (2001-08) has organised a 5 Years reunion for 2008 leavers this summer. Ant is in his final year studying for an degree in Engineering at Oxford, and will soon start work in the City.

**Duncan Cooke** (2000-07) organised a reunion for 50 of his 2007 year group at school last year.

Duncan's brother **Cameron** (2004-11) is currently enjoying a successful debut as actor/director at the Oxford Playhouse, while studying for a degree in English Law and French at Oxford.

**Chris Lloyd** (1989-96) was special guest at the 2012 Reading School Sports Personality of the Year. Chis won a gold medal in the Coxed Fours at the Manchester Commonwealth Games 2002. He now works in management consultancy with Lane 4.



**Oliver Harris** (2004-6) recently featured in the BBC3 series *Junior Doctors: Your Life in Their Hands*. Oli is a junior hospital doctor at Royal Liverpool University Hospital. He will be presenting prizes at Senior Prizing-giving in December.



**Rhrodri Price** (1983-90) recently visited his old boarding house, South House, with his young family.

**Nick Sealey** (1968-75) recently gave a talk to our Sixth Form economists about financial regulation. After a successful career in the Royal Navy, Nick now works for the Bank of England, so he was able to give an insider's view of the major changes underway with regulating the operations of financial services and banks.

## Would you like to inspire the next generation of students?

We are always looking for new ways to inspire students, so that they can gain an understanding of the application of their learning beyond the classroom.

Are you working in business, medicine, journalism, engineering, or the arts? Are you interested in sharing the benefit of your expertise with our current students? Would you like to talk to a small or large group, take part in a debate, or help individual students with work experience or careers advice?

If you think you can help, please contact Frances Greaney at : [fgreaney@reading-school.co.uk](mailto:fgreaney@reading-school.co.uk), or phone 0118 9015600 ext 272.

## Meet up for London alumni

At the instigation of Ned Holt, we now have a regular monthly meet up in London on the first Thursday of each month. Any alumnus, whatever his era, is welcome to drop in for a drink and have a chat. Ned is attending most of the early meetings, but we hope that, once established, it will become a regular point of contact for London-based alumni.

The current venue is *Ye Olde Cheshire Cheese*, in Fleet Street. However, the venue for the event on September 5th will be *The Ship*, near Holborn station. Please drop in anytime from about 6.30pm onwards.

If you would like to find out more about these meetings, please contact Frances Greaney at [fgreaney@reading-school.co.uk](mailto:fgreaney@reading-school.co.uk).



The Ship Tavern  
12 Gate Street  
Holborn  
London  
WC2A 3HP





# Stargazing with the Astronomy Club

Mr Tucker walks us through the year's celestial highlights

An early check in the School holidays in August imaging the moon suggested that we would have a good run through the coming School year.



But little did I know that it was going to be the worst year in living memory for looking at the heavens! However, from Christmas the weather improved and we managed to get a regular meeting of our newest members from Year 7, who saw the planet Jupiter, its spot and moons.

We then went on to observe the Pleiades and managed to capture what has been suggested is the biggest structure ever seen on the surface of the sun.



With some of the Year 13s, particularly Maruthi Malladi and Thomas Huxtable, we captured a good image of the Orion and Running Man Nebulas in January, along with the new moon.



In February during the School holiday, we linked with a School in India. This went well as we not only supported the learning of their students, but also contributed towards the construction of their own observatory.



Comet Panstarrs arrived in April but was not viewable from our observatory. Out on the Hampshire Downs with a tripod on a clear cold night, I managed to get a shot of it as it passed the Galaxy Andromeda.

The observatory is currently calibrated to observe the sun which is expected to reach its maximum activity this July. We are also beginning to see more transient events, lasting only minutes, on its edge. Comet ISON is arriving late November through to Christmas 2013, and we will be ideally positioned to observe and photograph it, weather permitting. There is lots of information about Comet ISON on the web.



## Congratulations to Naglis

Naglis Ruksnaitis won the Physics Photographic Competition with an image of the sun spot activity earlier in the year. His prize was a telescope donated by the Physics Department.



The Reading School Observatory is open to links with other youth and observer groups and to students and outsiders who would like to use our facilities to research projects or simply look and learn.

# DIARY

## 2013

### Monday, October 14th

Alexander Kumar - Inspire Lecture,  
4.00pm, Big School

### Wednesday, October 23rd

Film Competition Awards Ceremony,  
7.30pm, Big School

### Thursday, October 24th

Commemoration Service, 2.00pm,  
Minster of St Mary-the-Virgin, Reading

### Tuesday, November 5th

Junior Concert, Music School, 7.00pm

### Friday, November 8th

Remembrance Service for Years 7 to 9,  
Chapel

### Sunday, November 10th

ORA Remembrance Service, 10.30am,  
Chapel

### Thursday, November 14th

Inter-house Music Competition,  
7.00pm, The Concert Hall, Reading  
Town Hall

### Tuesday, November 19th

Inspire Lecture - Race2Recovery, Tony  
Harris 3.30pm, Big School/Refectory

### Saturday, November 30th

ORA AGM and Annual Dinner,  
5.00pm, Refectory and Big School

### Tuesday, December 3rd

Michaelmas Concert, 7.30pm, Big  
School

### Monday, December 16th

School Carol Service, 7.30pm, St  
Luke's Church

### Thursday, December 19th

Senior Prize Giving, 2.00pm, The Great  
Hall, University of Reading, London  
Road Campus

## 2014

### Thursday, January 9th

Reading School Sports Personality of  
the Year, time tbc

### Friday, January 31st

Year 7 Concert, 6.30pm, Big School

### Saturday, February 8th

The Big Band Ball, 7.30pm 'til late, The  
Refectory

### Wednesday, February 26th

Junior Concert, 7.00pm, Big School

### Friday, April 25th

Reading School Golf Day, Sonning Golf  
Club

### Thursday, July 10th

Junior Prize Giving, 2.00pm, Big School

### Monday, July 14th

Summer Concert, 7.00pm, Big School



### Reading School

Erleigh Road, Reading RG1 5LW

0118 901 5600

[info@reading-school.co.uk](mailto:info@reading-school.co.uk)

[www.reading-school.co.uk](http://www.reading-school.co.uk)