



## Chocolat author's latest creation

To help promote the National Year of Reading on Monday 8th September, BRGS pupils were given the chance to meet Joanne Harris, acclaimed author of *Blackberry Wine*, *Five Quarters of the Orange*, *Coastliners*, *Holy Fools* and *Chocolat*, later made into an Oscar nominated film starring Juliet Binoche and Johnny Depp.

Joanne Harris has recently published her first children's book, *Runemarks*, a fantasy adventure inspired by old Norse tales, weaving an exciting tale of magical creatures and sinister goblins and written originally for her daughter.

She spent much of the day at school, in the morning treating an appreciative audience of Year 8 students to key readings from her latest title, discussing main characters and the influences that helped create the book. Eager pupils then bombarded her with a wide range of questions concerning her writing style, themes and the fascinating world of publishing.

When one pupil asked the inevitable question, "Had she met Johnny Depp?", pupils were then regaled with tales from the set of *Chocolat* and a few of the quirks of the A-list cast. After the discussion, enthusiastic pupils then flocked to get their copies of *Runemarks* signed with personalised runes. Later the author held a discussion with Year



Joanne Harris meets some of her readers.  
Photo kindly supplied by  
The Rossendale Free Press.

12 English language students to advise them on creative writing for their A-Level coursework. They were given the benefit of her valuable experience, including how to avoid the many pitfalls that can hinder many a budding writer. In the evening, Joanne Harris shared more valuable insights concerning the process of writing to a packed school hall of parents, teachers and other interested members of the Rossendale community.

Head of English, Jess Dougherty, commented: "It is so important that schools provide opportunities for pupils that extend beyond the classroom, especially when inspiring a love of reading and interest in the craft of writing. It was so wonderful to see the excitement and engagement in the pupils meeting an author of the calibre of Joanne Harris. The queue for the book signing stretched right around the hall!"

Welcome to the latest edition of 'Friends of BRGS' which brings you news and photos from the biggest alumni event in the calendar: the school reunion. Thank you to all former students and staff who made special journeys to attend.

We also have our annual celebration of exam achievements and a section devoted to activities relating to our Specialist School Status as a Maths and Computing College.

On a personal note, I shall be on maternity leave from the end of the autumn term and plan to return in September 2009. In my absence, please do join me in welcoming Nikki Wilby, Development Assistant.

We are aware that some of our contact details for alumni are slightly out-of-date. Perhaps you have recently got married or moved house? If so, please let Nikki know so that our records are accurate. Nikki can be contacted at [nsw@brgs.org.uk](mailto:nsw@brgs.org.uk) or on 01706 234500.

Finally, may I wish you all a very Happy Christmas and all best wishes for the New Year.

*Emma*

Emma Gauntlett  
Development Director  
01706 234500 (general office)  
01706 234502(direct)  
[ecg@brgs.org.uk](mailto:ecg@brgs.org.uk)  
[www.brgs.org.uk](http://www.brgs.org.uk)

## Reunited at 90th Anniversary Reunion

On Saturday 11th October, over 500 students took a trip down memory lane as they returned to BRGS for an emotional reunion.

Reunions for all former students take place every five years and this time the reunion celebrated 95 years since the school was built on its site in Waterfoot. Classrooms were divided into different decades to make it easier for friends to spot each other. The official welcome from the headmaster at the start of the weekend was delayed slightly because friends were so intent on chatting to each other! As for previous reunions, former students travelled across the globe to attend and some were reunited with classmates whom they had not seen in over 40 years.

For Marc Morris, Headmaster, this was his first reunion and he commented: "Watching people walk through the doors and seeing their obvious affection for the school and for friends they have not seen for a number of years was quite touching. Most of the former students who attended were pupils during the 1940s to 1960s but we also had some recent leavers who particularly enjoyed our evening reception in the sixth form centre. Current students helped to make the day a real success and the musical entertainment they provided - ranging from the pianists accompanying afternoon tea to the jazz musicians playing throughout the evening was outstanding."

*Former BRGS headmasters Martyn Morris OBE and Philip Clark with current headmaster Marc Morris*



## BRGS former and current members of staff reunited



The weekend also saw the return of former BRGS headmasters Martyn Morris (1988 – 2004) and Philip Clark (1969 – 1988). Their headships along with that of the current headmaster span nearly 40 years.

On the Sunday, a Thanksgiving Service led by former student Reverend Daniel Burton was well-attended and nearly £150 was raised in the retiring collection for The Rossendale Hospice.



Former students catch up on news



The next reunion will be in 2013 when the school will celebrate its Centenary.

To see many more photos from the reunion weekend, please go to <http://www.brgs.org.uk/alumni/events/2008reunion/index.asp>



## A Bolivian Adventure

A group of eleven intrepid 6th form students spent the summer vacation in Bolivia. The expedition followed an eighteen month period of preparation with the World Challenge organisation and involved an acclimatisation trek, a week in the pampas on the edge of the Amazon jungle, a week working at an orphanage for street children in La Paz, a week long trek to the summit of Picos Austria (5300m) in the Cordillera Real and a period of rest and relaxation at Lake Titicaca.



*At the street orphanage*



*At the summit of Picos Austria*

The students were responsible for all aspects of day-to-day leadership and management of the group during their time in Bolivia with pairs of students taking responsibility for transport, accommodation, accounts, food and overall leadership. BRGS headmaster, Marc Morris, accompanied the students on their trip of a lifetime.

Trekking and backpacking in Bolivia certainly brings a challenge and all of the adventurers were tested by a combination of factors: learning to live at an altitude of over 4000 metres; coping with the bustle and chaos of La Paz; temperatures of

minus 12 while camping overnight at 4600 metres; fishing for piranhas and then swimming in the same river with the protection of pink dolphins; close contact with alligators, caymen, monkeys and snakes; and the challenge of building a road leading to the orphanage during their week long project phase working at an orphanage.

Tiffany Thomas, one of the students on the trip, said: "There were some lovely children at the orphanage. Some are there because they were living on the streets, some are there because their families are too poor to look after them and some have lost their parents and they have very little. There is only running water for part of the day and their facilities are really basic. Some of them are only four years old and they all do chores before and after school.



*The road built by the team*



## A Bolivian Adventure



*In the pampas and jungle*

Since returning to the UK, Tiffany has started studying for a degree in child psychology and is thinking about learning Spanish as it is widely spoken in South America and would help her if she were to revisit.

"It makes you realise how lucky you are and how much you have. There were so many things I had an opportunity to do that I never would have been able to in normal circumstances. I would definitely do something like this again, and I would love to go back again some day. It was an amazing four weeks."

There is no doubt that Bolivia left its mark on all participants, returning better prepared to face the challenges of higher education as they pursue their studies at universities across the country.

## Back to school for grandparents!

For the second year running Year 7 students invited their grandparents and other close family members to our Grandparents' Days. Over 160 guests joined Year 7 students on the 17th and the 24th October, attending their usual timetabled lessons. Grandparents experienced lessons in art, history, science, maths, English and IT. They commented in particular on the use of technology in teaching and the friendly interaction between staff and students.

The feedback received at the end of the days was exceptional. One grandparent said: "I think it is a really good idea to include grandparents in the next stage of their grandchildren's future." Another commented: "I was looking forward to this day and I thoroughly enjoyed it. I think it is an absolute credit to the staff and pupils to achieve such high results. Well done. 10/10 star!"



*Expanding IT knowledge in Year 7 lessons*

## Year 7 History Models



Year 7 students with their history models

## Year 12 London History Trip

During the summer term, Year 12 history students made their annual visit to London to visit the Imperial War Museum and Janet Anderson MP at the Houses of Parliament. They also enjoyed a trip to the London Eye and Buckingham Palace.



## Make Do and Mend



Creating and designing new clothes from old

Year 9 students had a taste of life on the Home Front during World War II by participating in a "Make do and Mend" project.

Margaret Stanley, history teacher, designed the lessons to encourage students to think about how they could alter old clothes and save resources rather than continually buying new items of clothing.

The students worked together using fabric kindly donated by Musbury Fabrics and old clothes donated by lower school students. Working in groups they used authentic patterns to create new garments from either the furnishing fabrics or a combination of old clothes. They were not allowed to buy anything for the project, so zips and buttons had to be found from discarded clothes. Students also had to be inventive in their creating of frills and trimmings.

The patterns they used were a real eye-opener with World War II sizes being much smaller than our dress sizing system nowadays!

The clothes they made as a result of the project were displayed in a special school assembly to highlight their work.

# BRGS Remembrance Service

**The school held its annual Remembrance Service on Tuesday 11th November when we remembered all those who have lost their lives through war. The service focuses on the former pupils and staff of BRGS who gave their lives in the Great War and in World War II.**

Students are provided with family history on the ex-students who lost their lives and an extract from the service reads as follows:

“Butchers Edwin and Alice Andrew of Burnley Road, Waterfoot, heard that their son Ronald had died in June 1917 at Ypres. He was 19 years old.

Sidney Ashworth lived on New Line in Bacup. He had four brothers and sisters who would have been among the crowds cheering as their youngest brother marched away with the 11th Battalion of the Lancashire Fusiliers, and then who grieved at the news of his death on the Somme. Sidney was just 17.

James Collinge lived on Newchurch Road, Stacksteads and worked at his father's grocery shop. There were ten in his household and he was the youngest – he died in Belgium aged 22.

When Edward Wright's mother received news of the death of her son, the family was already bereft of a father. Edward rose quickly to the rank of Captain, attached to the 5th Battalion East Lancashire Regiment, as he was well-educated, having read law at King's College, Cambridge. He had a fine career ahead of him, but died at the age of 25.

Percy Horsfield of Boothfold was killed at Ypres, age 23, mourned by eight family members spanning three generations. Percy died when,

having been sent to a 'Listening Post', a shell struck the trench and buried its occupants. For generations a poem written about Percy by a former pupil who served in the Second World War has been read in our Remembrance Services:

## Percy Horsfield of Booth

*Whistling, where the Whitewell wanders  
Through the dark, enfolding Pennine hills,  
Making his reluctant way to school,  
He dreamed all the high-flown dreams  
Of boyhood bound by home hearth  
And shaped by class-room adventures:  
Of Tom Brown at Montezuma;  
The lure of far-beckoning mountains,  
Unconquered yet, and challenging;  
Eastern cities and sand-blown forts;  
To soar amid the fleecy clouds  
And plumb the ocean-depths unknown.  
Yet young dreams are airy things,  
And, marching by the Somme, he dreamed  
Of the old, chuckling Whitewell  
Gurgling past the humming mills,  
Past his own cottage where Mother  
Smooths the soothing linen sheets,  
Bakes sad-cake, and brews huge pots of tea.  
Thus, trudging through the cloying mud  
Of anguished Flanders, forward to meet  
The heroes of last year's history books,  
The men of Agincourt and Crécy,  
Who had left, like him, their noble hearts  
In some beloved nook of England,  
And ached, like him, in vain, for home.  
Now, at one with ten million yesterdays,  
He is remembered who was never known;  
Whilst we, fodder for tomorrow's guns,  
Anonymities in yet unwritten history books,  
Listen, heads bowed, to the solemn voice:  
"Percy Horsfield, of Booth."*

The Remembrance Service concludes with the names of the 74 old students of BRGS who lost their lives during World Wars I and II.

# Maths and Computing Specialist Schools Update



Maths & Computing

**Over the next couple of pages, we hope to bring you all the latest news relating to our Maths and Computing Specialist Status.**

As a Maths and Computing College, we are working to raise standards of achievement and develop further interest in our specialist subjects across the whole ability range to lead to whole school improvement.

We hope to build on proven strengths to establish BRGS as a centre of excellence in maths and computing/ICT. We have a mathematically rich curriculum that embraces all aspects of school life and are sharing good practice across the curriculum, particularly through the considered use of ICT.

We aim to raise the post-16 participation rate in maths and computing related subjects as

well as providing young people with the skills and appropriate careers guidance to meet their individual abilities, aptitudes and ambitions. The school also continues to be an active partner in a learning society with our local schools and communities and the following articles illustrate just a few selected examples of our how we are putting these aims into practice.

## Community Maths and Computing Conference

*To celebrate our maths and computing specialist status and promote these subjects to both post-16 and post-18 students, BRGS funded a two-day conference which was hosted at Fearn's High School.*

Gill Spokes, Assistant Head at BRGS, organised the conference and worked in partnership with Helen Stead, Deputy Head at Fearn's. On the first day of the conference Lancashire Education Business Partnership (LEBP) presented an industrial masterclass in conjunction with Young Enterprise North-West and Manchester Airport. On the second day, students benefited from lectures from staff from Salford University and

Manchester Metropolitan University with the event culminating with a workshop session called 'Fun with Maths' where students from Alder Grange, Fearn's and BRGS enjoyed working in partnership to build a giant tetrahedron and complete other maths-related timed-tasks.

Gill said: "Next year we hope to continue to build our partnerships with other secondary schools to develop a shared conference which will celebrate each local school's specialisms."



*Students work together to build a giant tetrahedron. Photo kindly supplied by The Rossendale Free Press.*



# New challenges for a new year?

During 2008 we have offered a number of adult evening classes every Wednesday evening from 6-8 p.m. These classes have been well-received and have attracted adults of all ages from recent school leavers to students who are enjoying their retirement years.

Courses have focused on computer-based skills such as basic Microsoft Word, Excel, designing websites, editing your video camera footage into professional DVDs, using the internet and a guide to using eBay. Suggestions for future courses have included Microsoft Publisher and how

to use applications such as Photoshop. If you are interested in receiving information on our forthcoming courses then please contact Gill Spokes, Assistant Head, at [gls@brgs.org.uk](mailto:gls@brgs.org.uk) or on 01706 234500.

## Step into the Future

The Kingfisher Centre at Futures Park in Bacup recently played host to over fifty student delegates from all over Lancashire focussing on STEP maths – the maths needed for entry to universities such as Cambridge or Warwick. This was the 2nd annual STEP conference organised by BRGS for Lancashire schools with sixth forms. The conference comes as an outcome of the grammar school's status as a specialist mathematics and computing college and was hosted by Paul Reeves, Head of Maths.

Feedback from attendees at the conference was excellent and the general feeling was that the day was "both challenging and intense but in an informal environment that made us feel comfortable".

Students concentrating on mathematical challenges



Students felt that the day was pitched at the correct level to provide a real insight into what it might be like to pursue a degree in maths at university.

For readers who are mathematically-minded, the first stage of one of the problems the students studied was the following:

"The first question on an exam paper was

$$\frac{1}{x} = \frac{1}{a} + \frac{1}{b}$$

where  $a$  and  $b$  are non-zero real numbers.

One candidate writes  $x = a + b$  as the solution. Show that there are no values for  $a$  and  $b$  for which this will give the correct answer."

For those of you who rise to the challenge, a solution can be found at:

[www.brgs.org.uk/mathsandcomputing/MathsStepConferenceNov2008/solution.jpg](http://www.brgs.org.uk/mathsandcomputing/MathsStepConferenceNov2008/solution.jpg)



# Oriental Experience for Year 8

From the 3rd – 7th November, Year 8 had a range of cross-curricular activities focused around the theme of China. Building on China being in the news over the summer with the Olympic Games, Year 8 students were immersed in Chinese history and culture. One of the highlights from the week was an after-school community cinema showing of Kung Fu Panda in the school hall for over 150 students complete with Chinese spring rolls and snacks!

The week culminated with a day off-timetable when Year 8 students participated in a range of activities including: Chinese cookery, Kung Fu, Lion Dancing, origami and making model Chinese theatre sets. The school hall was transformed with students' Chinese art work and a number of departments participated in making the week memorable and a valuable learning experience.

Just one example came from the chemistry department which marked the week with a series of mini-firework experiments every lunch time. Our thanks go to Year 7 students Eloise Thomas and Rebecca Kerley who wrote the following report:

"On the 4th, 5th and 6th of November we held our chemistry fireworks days. It began with everyone holding splints dipped in different chemicals over their Bunsen burners. We found that copper turned the flame green, potassium changed the flame

colour to purple, lithium turned it to red and sodium changed the flame to orange.



Chinese art-work transformed the hall



Cooking Chinese spring rolls



Chinese lion dance



Creating model theatre sets



Origami workshop

## Enterprising Excellence

*A team of Year 10 students demonstrated their enterprise skills by spending two intensive days putting together business proposals for new products which they had to design and market as part of a nationwide enterprise scheme called the LionHeart Challenge.*



*The team celebrating their regional success as north-west champions*

The first day the team participated in the north-west regional final and was thrilled to be chosen as north-west champions, progressing to the National Final. The National Final was held in Liverpool to celebrate its role as European Capital of Culture with 13 teams from across the country competing for the top prize.

After diligently putting together their ideas during the course of the day the results were announced at a black tie dinner at St. George's Hall. A team from a school in Southampton, representing the south-east region, was victorious. However, BRGS performed exceptionally well winning one of the three category awards for the best primary research.

Our congratulations go to the following students who represented BRGS: Sam Limmack, Rachel Leyland, Simon Allen, Amy Hughes, David Parry, Stephen Partington, Anna Shahid, Marie Hartley, Jacques Dark and Josephine Ansell.



*The team on their way to a black-tie results dinner*

When we put the iron filings over the flame, lots of sparks flew from it like a firework. Then, we put a magnesium ribbon over the flame, and it started to shine a dazzling white colour. We couldn't look at it directly because doing so can burn your eyes!

Afterwards, in the fume cupboard, Mr. Hamer put ammonium dichromate into a dish and set it on fire. It started to look like a volcano and orange sparks flew from it. Then Mr. Hamer put some potassium chlorate in a test tube. He then melted it with a Bunsen burner and put in a gummy bear. The gummy bear burst into flames and made a noise that sounded like it was screaming! Afterwards, the test tube turned black.

Towards the end, Mr. Hamer sprayed the same liquids we used at the start, into a Bunsen flame and turned it different colours. Miss Bowden even poured some of the liquids onto heat proof mats. The mats were then set on fire and we saw different coloured flames.

We saw it three times and wouldn't say no to seeing it again!"

The China week was co-ordinated by Mark Spencer, Head of Geography, Margaret Stanley and Kevin Grehan, history teachers. The activities which took place helped to strengthen our international status having been recently awarded Foundation Level International School Award.

# Students' Success in GCSE and A Level Exams

*Over the summer BRGS students celebrated another excellent set of GCSE and A Level results.*

**At GCSE level** our 147 pupils passed 1,715 GCSE exams at grades A\* to C out of 1,779 entries, which represented a pass rate of 96.4%. Nearly 55% of the entry was at grades A\* and A and 85.2% was at grade B or better.

The following outstanding students scored 12 straight A\*: Catherine Allen, Sarah Stopforth and Madeleine Royle.

Exceptional results of 12 straight A\* or A were achieved by the following students: Jennifer Dentith, Emily Sawicz, Lauren Cook, Hassan Shakeel, Phillip Marsh, Arshad Ahad, Thomas Rhodes, Alison Stonebanks and Victoria Kett.

Daniella Clegg, Sarah Flook, Hannah Lendrum, Suzanne Coong, Matthew Evans, Sarah Young, Sophie Shaw, Hannah Johnson, Sarah Davison, Li Sou, Natalie McManus, Helen Marston, Adam Wells-Burrow, Ryan Bury, Thomas Grant, Wendy Maden, Victoria Rishton, Robyn Terry and Katie Shaw all achieved fantastic results of between 10.5 and 11.5 straight A\* and A grades.

Deputy Headteacher, Dr. Andrew Edwards said: "Results day is when staff allow students to bask in the limelight. My analysis of this year's results shows that they are an improvement on last year's record-breaking ones. We are delighted with the overall success of the students and it is a reflection of the dedication and hard work that is brought to the partnership by both the students and the staff."

For further details of other students achieving top grades, please refer to the news features on the school website ([www.brgs.org.uk](http://www.brgs.org.uk)).

**At A level** we continued to produce excellent results with 265 students passing 1,035 A level exams out of 1,062 at grades A to E and, in addition, passing 389 exams at AS level. The pass rate was 97.9% and has virtually remained constant for the last four years. 470 A level results were at grades A and B, a rate of 48% and 33 students achieved the excellent standard of three or more passes at grade A (12.5% of the year group.)

Outstanding results came from the following:

Francesca Brindle, Emily Lester and Michael Nielson gained six A grade passes each. Francesca and Michael scored one of the top five marks in General Studies in a national field of 23,888 candidates. Francesca and Emily both secured places at Oxbridge to continue their studies.

Eleanor Bailey, Katherine Dyson, Alexandra Hamer and Katherine Higginson celebrated five A grade passes each and students gaining four A grade passes included Philip Archer, Nicola Bracewell, Gareth Hughes, Emma Pawluk, Jennifer Thompson, Lindsay Thornton, Emma Owens, Christian Slinger and Claire Starkie.

A further accolade was received at A level with the 'Good Schools Guide' rating results for boys studying Critical Thinking at BRGS as the best in the country for an English Grammar School.

Dr. Edwards commented: "Over the last two years we have developed a partnership between students and teachers both in the teaching classroom and in our wide range of extra-curricular activities. It is very satisfying to see how both our own and students who join our sixth form from elsewhere have flourished in the school and progressed from the excellent teaching that they have received at GCSE level both at BRGS and the other secondary schools that feed students into our sixth form."

# Fairy Tales in Anglesey

Deputy Head Lynda Taylor, organised a three-day residential trip to Anglesey for English Literature, Language, Drama and Media A Level students who were fascinated by this year's theme: fairy tales! The days were packed with a variety of dramatic and critical awareness activities and in the evenings they completed an array of team-building exercises including their favourite, the night-line!



Team-building exercises test levels of trust!

# Valley of Stone

*Year 9 students recently visited Hurdles Quarry in Waterfoot and an artist in residence held a couple of sessions at BRGS as part of the Rossendale Valley of Stone project. The Valley of Stone is a topographical project supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund to raise awareness of the geography of the Rossendale Valley and to celebrate the quarrying and stone working heritage of the area.*

From the late 18th century to the time of World War I, quarrying was a major industry in Rossendale, employing thousands of men. Rossendale stone was exported in huge quantities, both in the UK and overseas. To focus on this local history, Year 9 students were encouraged by Head of Art, Diane Bamford, to produce collages based on rock strata and rock formations. Six of these collages have been selected to be exhibited in the Horse and Bamboo Theatre from the 6th – 14th December.

Sixth formers studying Media Studies have also participated in the project by creating short films to highlight the heritage of quarrying in Rossendale.



# Year 10 Alton Towers

# SPORTS REPORT

- Our congratulations to the U14 netball team on reaching the regional netball finals.
- Congratulations also to the students and staff involved in the Rossendale Athletics competition in which BRGS emerged as the overall winners.
- Cross-country runner, Rebecca Flanagan in Year 7, took part in the Rossendale Harriers U-13 team at a race at Blackburn's Witton Park in October. The U-13 team could only manage fourth from six teams but Rebecca had an exceptional run for fifth place, conquering the renowned Witton Saucer, a challenging hill halfway around the course.
- In September, a number of Year 10 students were awarded their Bronze Duke of Edinburgh Awards.



*Pictured receiving their awards are:*

*Back row from left to right: Simon Allan, Amy Hughes, Elspeth Petrycki-Aitchison, Marie Hartley, Anna Shahid, Bethan Gregory, Libby Ainsworth and Joseph Jackson.*

*Front row from left to right: Rebecca Hardman, Rachel Leyland, Chantelle Porter and Victoria Donohoe.*

## Welcoming new members of staff

In September we welcomed the following people to our teaching team: Karen Reynard as Head of Law assisted by Emma Taylor, law teacher; David Berry and Collette Walsh to the Psychology Department; Claire Frost and Michael Armstrong to the Biology Department; Siobhan Carney joins the English Department and Richard Halliwell joins the Maths Department. Sarah Freeth is teaching Business Studies and in the Art Department we welcome Helen Flint and, as Art Technician, Suzanne Worrall. Christine McGuinness and Anne Elkington join us as Teaching Assistants. We also welcome Anna and Gauthier, our two foreign language assistants. We wish everyone a successful and happy time at BRGS!

After a re-structuring the sixth form team now consists of Gemma Walker and Caroline Newton as Assistant Heads of Years 12 and 13 with Judith Wilkes as Head of Year 13 and David Morriss as Deputy Director of Sixth Form. Trevor Elkington remains as Director of Sixth Form and Deputy Head.

# Who? What? Where?

Our thanks to the following ex-students: Warren Holt (left 1989), David Marlow (left 1989), Phil Johnson (left 1989), Richard Willacy (left 1989), Claire Skinner née Horsfall (left 1989), Ray Pilling (left 1993) who helped us to identify students in the summer newsletter. The back row from left to right featured: Paul Hindle, Dale Norman, Darren Norman, Ben Lane (Captain), Jonathan Laycock and Andrew Cowking. On the front row from left to right: Philip Johnson, Karl Wadsworth, Charles Howarth, David Raby and Matthew Pope. The photograph was taken in the 1988/89 football season and features most of the first team players of the 'BRGS 22' who played in the Rossendale Sunday morning football league.



In this edition, we would like your help to identify former students on the photo below. This photo was kindly sent to us by Joan Deveney née Jackson and features her class from 1944. As there were no school photos at the time the girls decided to arrange their own and caught the bus to Bacup to have a professional photograph taken at the end of their five years together.



Finally, the school is about to present our most recent drama production: *The Wizard of Oz*.

We understand that there was a BRGS production of *The Wizard of Oz* in the 1970s and if anyone has any photographs recording this then these would be gratefully received.

## Obituaries

We were sorry to learn of the following:

Former student, Sheila Ashworth née Berry (1947 – 1951) sadly died on the 4th August. She spent her working career as a junior school teacher. Sheila leaves her husband, Dr. Philip Ashworth, who is also an ex-student.

Good friend of BRGS, ex-student Geoffrey Wood, died suddenly on the 10th August after suffering a fall in his garden. Geoff was Head Boy at BRGS from 1949/1950 and it was at BRGS where he met his wife of 51 years, Anne Wood née Nuttall. He was much loved within the Rossendale valley and practised dentistry for over 40 years in Waterfoot becoming President of the East Lancashire and East Cheshire Branches of the British Dental Association.

Outside of his professional life Geoff was involved with a number of organisations, playing a full part in the Round Table, 41 Club and in his role as President of Rossendale Rotary Club in 1986. He was a former Captain and President of Rossendale Golf Club where he was a member for over 50 years.

The funeral service was held at the church in Read. Family, friends and colleagues attended in great numbers to pay their respects and celebrate Geoff's life.

## Dates for your diary

### 15th January

Year 9 Parents' Evening

### 27th January

Year 7 Parents' Evening

### 4th February

Lower School Music Concert  
7.30p.m.

### 9th February

Year 11 Parents' Evening

### 11th February

Year 12 Recital Evening 7.30 p.m.

### 3rd March

Year 13 Recital Evening 7.30 p.m.

### 11th and 12th March

Sixth Form Charities Committee  
Fashion Show – contact school for  
tickets

### 24th March

Year 13 Parents' Evening

### 26th March

Spring Music Concert 7.30 p.m. –  
all are welcome

### 31st March

Year 10 Parents' Evening

Building on the success of previous alumni receptions in London, the last of which was at the House of Commons, we hope to arrange a similar event early in 2009. If you are interested in receiving further details about this event, please contact Nikki Wilby at [nsw@brgs.org.uk](mailto:nsw@brgs.org.uk) or on 01706 234500

If you would like to find out more about how you could invest in the future of pupils at BRGS and enable us to continue to provide high quality education, please contact Emma Gauntlett, Development Director, on 01706 234500 or on [ecg@brgs.org.uk](mailto:ecg@brgs.org.uk)

**Thank you in advance for your support.**

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## Message Board

- Congratulations to Adam Taylor (left 2005) for facing up to Jeremy Paxman's questioning on University Challenge in August. Adam was representing Pembroke College, Oxford in a first round match but his team lost after a close battle with the University of Exeter. Adam graduated with a 2:1 in Engineering Science and is currently studying for an MSc in Engineering Science.
- Thank you to former students who have responded to previous pleas to fund a prize at Speech Night. We are still lacking a prize to award high achievers in A level law and are very much lacking of prizes in many subjects at GCSE. If you are interested in funding school prizes then please contact Lynda Taylor, Deputy Head at [lt@brgs.org.uk](mailto:lt@brgs.org.uk) or on 01706 234500.
- Congratulations to former student, Professor Mike Pilling (left 1961) who has received a CBE in the Queen's Honours List.
- Kelly Bridge (1992 – 1999) and Mark Roscoe (1992 – 1999) who were in the same year but in 'G' and 'S' forms respectively, were married earlier this year. We wish them all the best for a happy future together.
- Congratulations to Liz Donnelly (physics teacher) on the birth of a baby girl, Erin, and also to Kate and Mark Spencer (biology and geography teachers) on the birth of Benjamin Ian Spencer.

## ANNUAL FUND 2008-9

This year we delayed the launch of our Annual Fund because of the economic climate and not wishing to place any additional financial pressure on people who are finding times difficult. We did, however, send our Annual Fund 2008-9 leaflet to former students who have requested information on how to support BRGS and to all parents in early December.

Since the launch of our first Annual Fund in 2006-7 we have been greatly encouraged by the generosity of supporters who have raised over £60,000. The Fund has an immediate impact on students with new facilities including a grand piano, ICT plasma screens, information monitors and computer keyboards being just a few of the items that we have been able to fund. We have also been able to fund a selection of steel pans to bring Caribbean music to Rossendale.

We very much believe that our Annual Fund is about participation and not the level of gift as the school works towards creating a community of giving. If you would like to join our 'giving community' then please do contact Nikki Wilby at [nsw@brgs.org.uk](mailto:nsw@brgs.org.uk) or on 01706 234500 and she will be able to send you a leaflet with further details. Thank you in advance for your support.



**Bacup & Rawtenstall**

*Grammar School*

**Glen Road, Waterfoot, Rossendale, Lancashire BB4 7BJ**

**Telephone: 01706 234500**

**E-mail: [ecg@brgs.org.uk](mailto:ecg@brgs.org.uk)**

**Web site: <http://www.brgs.org.uk>**