



**Summer
2009**

Friends of BRGS

*A newsletter produced by BRGS
for former students, parents and
the community*

Bacup & Rawtenstall
Grammar School

**ISSUE
18**

A Flying Visit

Technology lessons at BRGS recently took on a much more realistic perspective with a flying visit from Mr Frank Owen in his Meschersmitt twin engine helicopter. As part of their project work, 22 students in Year 9 have been considering the principles of flight (lift, drag and thrust) and also looking at the history of flight and modern aviation.



Mr Owen landed the aircraft on the school sports pitches and, once the engines had been closed down, the students had the opportunity to study the helicopter at close range. Mr Owen is the Managing Director of Enviro and also a qualified pilot; his 20 years' flying experience enabled him to answer the students' most technical of questions!

Our thanks go to Mr Jonathan Fitton, Head of Graphic Products and Resistant Materials, and also to Mr Owen for arranging to turn the theory of flight into such a real and exciting experience.

Welcome

The Summer Term has been as eventful as ever here at BRGS and we have a whole host of activities for you to enjoy reading about in this edition of the 'Friends of BRGS' newsletter. We are delighted to include reports of several exciting school trips, including Egypt, Ypres and Anglesey, bring you news of our latest alumni gathering and also the success of our students in the "Rossendale's Got Talent" competition.

Our website continues to flourish; here we have further photographs and news articles should you wish to discover more about the events in school.

Well, it has been a busy time in the Development Office and it is almost time to welcome back Emma, our Development Director, from her maternity leave. I have thoroughly enjoyed my time at BRGS; it has been wonderful to meet former students and parents and especially to share in their fond memories of their times at BRGS.

I do hope you enjoy browsing through our newsletter and may I take this opportunity to thank you once again for making me feel so welcome. My very best wishes for a sunny summer!

Nikki

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University of Cambridge Essay Prize

Congratulations to Hannah Ledrum in Yr12 for her outstanding success in an essay writing competition arranged by Corpus Christi College, University of Cambridge.

It's the first year that the College has organised an essay competition in Politics, Psychology and Sociology and Hannah was

one of 61 students to submit essays of an excellent standard. Many students drew on work that they had completed for their A Level studies but the most successful entrants explored the subject matter further and demonstrated that they could study and analyse independently.

We are delighted that Hannah has been awarded second place for her outstanding submission. She will be attending the University for an Open Day in July and for the formal presentation of her prize.



Alumni Events

During this school year we have hosted three alumni events: the whole School Reunion, the London Reception and the Professional Networking Event here in the school. All three have proved extremely popular and we are very keen to build on them in the future. If you have been able to join us at any of the receptions then we do hope you have thoroughly enjoyed meeting with former students from across the decades. Please spread the word amongst all of those with whom you are still in contact: we would be delighted to see them at a future event. Likewise, if you have any suggestions regarding the type of reunion you would like to see arranged in the future, then please do get in touch; we would very much welcome your ideas.

"Engineering" a Reunion

Last year we enjoyed hosting a professional alumni event for all our past students who had followed careers in the Legal and Finance professions and it was extremely well supported. This year, in celebration of the award of our Maths and Computing Specialist Status, we were delighted to welcome back alumni from related professions such as the Engineering, IT, Teaching, Surveying and the Energy Sector.



Our guests enjoyed the opportunity to meet alumni of all ages before Mr Marc Morris, Headmaster, offered an update on all the latest developments at BRGS. The guests were also joined by a small number of our 6th form students who certainly welcomed the opportunity to learn about their various professions and also to hear one or two amusing anecdotes from their time at BRGS!



The drinks and buffet reception was followed by a tour of the school; for some of the alumni it

was their first trip back since the 1950s and the feelings of nostalgia certainly shone through! The evening was rounded off perfectly with an opportunity to enjoy the musical talents of our students as they performed in a lower school concert. Our sincere thanks go to all of those alumni who travelled from far and wide to join us. It was a most enjoyable evening and we very much look forward to welcoming everyone back to BRGS soon.



Rossendale certainly has got talent!

"Rossendale's Got Talent", one of the biggest entertainment events to be staged in the Valley, took place in April and the artistic students from BRGS couldn't have featured more highly. Word must have leaked out about the talents of our students; they were invited by the Rossendale Free Press to open the show and warm up the audience prior to the main acts taking to the stage in the theatre at Haslingden High School.



Zoe Byrne and Melissa Burnham, winners of the UDO World Streetdance Championships 2008, opened the show and wowed the audience with an energetic and highly original Hip Hop routine. This was followed by a musical extravaganza arranged by our music department and sung by our students, a medley from the hit musical Hairspray.



And the winner is.....

As if opening the event wasn't enough, Year 8 student Harriet Nolan went on to steal the show with her self-penned song "Cry". Accompanying herself on the piano, Harriet delivered a stunning performance and, despite strong competition from seven other rising stars, she outshone them all to take first prize.



Photo: Courtesy of the "Rossendale Free Press"



Photo: Courtesy of "Ask Rossendale"

Since winning the show Harriet has performed on the BBC Radio Lancashire morning show and also television station Channel M's Breakfast Show. She has taken a star turn at the Bacup Leisure Hall for the launch of a Business fair and also at the Bacup Royal Court Theatre to support the legendary Houghton Weavers.

"Rossendale's Got Talent" was developed to help raise funds for the Many Hands Campaign of the New Children's Hospital appeal and this year it raised in excess of £3,000. We are delighted for Harriet and immensely proud of all our other talented students who helped to make the event such an outstanding success.

Calling International Rescue!

We were delighted to learn of the success of former student Ian Nuttall. After leaving BRGS in 1998, Ian studied Environmental Geo-Science at Birmingham University where his desire to become involved in disaster recovery took hold. He went on to join the Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service and more recently applied to become part of the county's International Search and Rescue Team. After an arduous 4 day selection and interview process, Ian's determination shone through and he was thrilled to be offered a place on the team.

Ian attributes much of his success to his time at BRGS, more specifically with his involvement in the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme, a scheme which continues to flourish in school today. Congratulations to Ian and we wish him every success in his challenging new role!

Adventurous Maths!

Jumping 60 feet out of a tree may not be everyone's idea of fun, but our Yr 8 pupils certainly enjoyed it when coming to the end of a high ropes course recently. They were in Betws-y-Coed, North Wales, at the end of a three day residential course run by members of the maths department. The aim of the trip was to develop the thinking skills, logic and problem solving abilities of the students, as well as understanding the value of being part of a team. Pupils worked in groups of 11 on a range of maths and logic based problems; there was a maths relay race, an auction to buy the equipment to build a raft – then a race to build, launch, sail and dismantle the raft.

The students all had a fantastic time and certainly found it more stimulating and exciting than maths in the classroom! Our thanks go to Mr Paul Reeves, Head of Maths, for organising such a popular trip.



Teacher Special - Blind Date!

We have a proud tradition of charity fundraising at BRGS and this term has been no exception! This time 8 of our bravest members of staff stepped forward to take part in a Teacher Special "Blind Date"!

The three brave guys trying to capture the attention of one fortunate lady were Heads of Departments Mr Colin Williamson (History), Mr Paul Wyton (Modern Languages) and Mr Jonathan Fitton (Graphic Products). Miss Jo Haslam was the lucky lady who had the unenviable task of selecting her date from this 'exceptional' line up! But after being serenaded by Jonathan on his guitar and wooed by Paul's engaging wit, she finally succumbed to the unparalleled charisma of Colin and had no hesitation in selecting him as her winning date!

Next onto the stage was our charming Head of ICT, Mr Darren Vass. He had the difficult task of selecting his date from three gorgeous ladies, Mrs Mel Heywood (RE), Mrs Emma Taylor (Law) and Miss Siobhan Carney (English). All the candidates would have been extremely eligible but having posed some entertaining questions and listened carefully to their answers, Darren opted for a date with bubbly Siobhan.

And as if winning wasn't reward enough, the prize for the lucky couples was a candlelit dinner for two in the school dining hall! The event was great fun, very well supported by really enthusiastic students and we are delighted to say that all the proceeds raised, £126.03, were donated to the National Blind Children's Society.



The “Big Gig” Music Trip

It was an early start in June for the 18 students and teachers who gathered at Piccadilly station in Manchester to travel to the London International Music Show '09. With a quick breakfast to set them up for the day, they completed the journey down to London and across the City in rush hour to the ExCel Exhibition Centre at London Docklands. They were greeted at the venue by staff from Music For Youth (who were running special events throughout the day) and were led into the main stage area where they participated in a spectacular event: the 'Big Gig'. Hundreds of young singers, drummers, percussionists, guitarists and pianists



joined together to perform, filling the entire venue with the vibrant sounds of entertaining music. This was followed by free time to wander around the exhibitions. Hundreds of big and little names from the world of music all had stalls where the students were welcome to 'test drive' the latest gear. It was a fantastic opportunity to see and try the best equipment in the business and special thanks go to our enthusiastic staff in the Music department who arranged a brilliant day out for all.



The Talents of Year 7

In April, as part of their Citizenship course work, our enthusiastic students hosted an entertaining lunchtime Talent Show. It not only gave Year 7 pupils an opportunity to showcase their creative flair, but it was also an ideal fundraising event for the Burnley Bears Sports Club.



The wide variety of acts included exuberant dance routines from 7R, 7N, The Fridays and Aboriginal and the audience was also treated to gifted solo renditions of Oasis' *Wonderwall*, a piano piece and a guitar performance. The judges were so impressed with the outstanding levels on stage that they found it impossible to choose an outright winner! Joint 1st place was therefore awarded to Hannah from 7G for her exceptional guitar and singing solo and also to Megan, Lucy, Amy, Lizzie and Sarah from 7N for their brilliant and energetic dance routine. Olivia from 7B was awarded 3rd place for her moving piano recital.

The event raised a superb £132.90 for the Burnley Bears.

Habiba, a BRGS student and volunteer coach at the Club said "the money raised will be used towards buying much needed new equipment". Our thanks go to Habiba Rahman, James Swain, Hannah Turner and Lewis Ashworth for arranging a fantastic entertainment extravaganza.



EGYPTIAN ESCAPE

At BRGS we are delighted to be able to offer our students the opportunity to travel to far flung corners of the world and this year was no exception. During the Easter holiday, 41 students and 6 staff flew to Cairo for a fascinating 8 day sight-seeing trip to Egypt. On arrival the party wasted no time and started their tour with a traditional camel ride. They then hopped on board a train for an overnight journey down to Aswan, a trip which could only be described as "an experience"!



After the long journey they arrived at the Aswan Dam built not only to stop the River Nile from flooding, but also to generate electricity and provide water for agriculture. It has been many years since rain has fallen in that region but whilst they were there the students saw the heavens open... could it be that they took some Rossendale weather with them?! Their trip to the Dam was followed by a lesson in a Nubian school, where one of the local teachers hosted a traditional lesson in Arabic.

EGYPTIAN ESCAPE

The intrepid explorers continued on their tour with a drive to Luxor and a visit to the Valley of the Kings and the Mortuary Temple of Queen Hatshepsut which is located at the head of the valley, beneath the peak of the mountain Dehent. It sits directly against the rock which forms a natural amphitheatre around it so that the temple itself seems to grow from the living rock.



As the trip drew to a close, the fervent but tired party caught their flight back to Cairo to visit the Tutankhamen exhibition. However, they flew back to unexpected luxury... on arrival at the hotel they had been given a complimentary upgrade to the Royal and Presidential Suites, complete with panoramic windows and whirlpool baths!



The students returned home exhausted but excited about their adventures and Mrs Kennedy praised them all for their exemplary behaviour on the trip saying "they were an absolute credit to the school". Our sincere thanks to Mrs Kennedy, Head of Year 7, for organising such an outstanding trip and we very much look forward to China in 2010!



Leavers' Day

In May, as is custom at BRGS, our Year 11 and 13 students enjoyed letting their hair down on Leavers' Day.

Both the Year 13 students and staff wore fancy dress for their party and celebrated in the main school hall with music and dance hosted by Head of Year 8, Tony Edwards. The day was rounded off with the traditional leavers' assembly in the Sixth Form Centre before the students headed outside to pose for photographs and enjoy the Rossendale sunshine.

The Year 11 students took part in the shirt signing ceremony, a long standing tradition here at BRGS, before attending their leavers' assembly in the school hall.



On behalf of everyone here at BRGS, we would like to send all the students our very best wishes as they venture out on a new journey. Please do remember us though - we would be delighted to welcome you back here as alumni in the not too distant future!



Poignant Trip to Ypres and the Somme



At Easter our Yr9 students gathered together for the start of the annual visit to the World War 1 Battlefields at Ypres in Flanders, Belgium, site of three notorious battles in the Great War.

After a long journey they arrived at Tyne Cot, the largest British military cemetery in the world, containing over 12,000 graves and a memorial with the names of nearly 35,000 of the missing. The white stone graves, as far as the eye could see, was a sight that many of the pupils as well as the staff will never forget. A short service of memorial was held by the school, where two students read the 'Percy Horsfield from Booth' poem which is often read at the school's annual remembrance service. A wreath was laid to remember all the old boys of BRGS who died in the Great War and Luke Dempsey then played The Last Post which was an extremely fitting conclusion to the Tyne Cot visit.

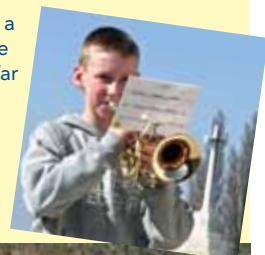
The rest of the day was spent on the Ypres Salient battlefield, including a visit to Sanctuary Wood Museum, which housed a network of preserved trenches and tunnels from the Great War. The students also visited Essex Farm Cemetery, home to the grave of William McCrea, the poet who penned one of the most hauntingly famous war poems 'In Flanders Field'.

After a much needed hot meal, the group converged on the Menin Gate, site of a memorial to over 55,000 of the missing as a result of the fighting in Ypres, for the Last Post ceremony, held every night at 8pm since 1927 (except during World War 2). Again, a wreath was laid by our pupils to the BRGS dead of the Great War.

The following day began with a visit to the Somme in Northern France. The British offensive against a 20 mile stretch of the German lines on 1st July 1916 turned out to be the bloodiest in British military history as 60,000 casualties fell on that one day, 20,000 of whom were killed. A series of visits brought home the desperate sacrifice of the young men, including the Accrington Pals' Battalion, whose simple but evocative memorial, made of Accrington brick, was visited by the students. Other visits included the awe-inspiring Lochnagar Crater, Thiepval Memorial and Newfoundland Park which is now Canadian Sovereign territory.

The final day of the trip was spent walking along the fortified walls of Ypres as well as visiting St. George's Church in Ypres and the famous chocolate shop! The students arrived home exhausted but with a treasure trove of memories and perhaps a greater understanding of what sacrifice really means. Thank you very much to Mr Kevin Grehan, Head of Yr10 and History

teacher, for arranging such a meaningful and memorable visit.



Worst Hits

To help promote Road Safety Awareness our year 9 students thoroughly enjoyed a lively drama production "Worst Hits". It was a humorous but thought provoking performance from the entertaining theatre group Cragrats, coordinated by Lancashire County Council as part of the Theatre in Education part.

The aim of the production was to highlight the inherent dangers faced by young drivers and their passengers. The show very much focused on creating awareness in young people about how they can shape their own positive attitudes to personal safety, their behaviour and their responsibility to other road users and pedestrians.



The production was followed up with an opportunity to discuss the content with the 3 talented actors. Additional time was spent in class considering the implications of being safety conscious, road markings, responsibilities, stopping distances and consequences of actions.

Head of Year 9, Karin Kolbuck, commented "It was an excellent show which clearly highlighted the issues that affect our young drivers on the roads today. The Year 9 students listened very carefully and I hope they remember the purpose of the production for many years to come".



Lancashire Library Book of the Year

This year some of our Year 9 students were involved in an engaging project to select the Lancashire Library Book of the Year. After much debate, they devised their final top 10 choices and submitted them alongside 16 other schools from the North West. We were delighted when Jack Westerman and Joanne Earnshaw were invited to County Hall in Preston to join the lively debate to decide the final winner. They returned to Preston in June to see the awards being presented and both took to the stage to speak, with Jack proudly offering a vote of thanks.

Povertee Action Aid

In June staff and students paid £1 to swap their shirts, ties and blouses for a much more casual look, t-shirts. For one day only, untucked was allowed too! The t-shirts could be of any choice or those feeling brave could pay an extra pound and bring in a blank one to 8G ready for it to be decorated! We would like to say a huge thank you to class 8G for conjuring up such a fun and original fund raising idea. Well done everyone for raising an amazing £350.91



Cup Winners!

Congratulations to the Yr9 football team for their latest success! Over the past few months they have been travelling down to Liverpool to play in a 9-a-side tournament which attracted over 100 schools from the North West of England. The indoor competition, organised by Liverpool FC, was by invitation only and the matches were played at their prestigious training academy. The team put in a great performance and achieved a convincing 3-1 win in the final against Maghull High School, Liverpool.

The team was thrilled to lift a substantial trophy which now sits proudly in the Sports Hall cabinet and will be the schools to retain. Many congratulations to all the team members and also thank you to Mr Brendan Baird, Physical Education, for arranging the team's participation. He in particular was delighted to travel deep into Merseyside and bring a trophy back to the Manchester end of the East Lancs Road!



The Duke of Edinburgh's Gold Award Presentations



In June we were delighted to host a special Duke of Edinburgh Award ceremony at the Young People's Service Centre in Rawtenstall. We welcomed a large group of ex students, together with students who could not be present at last year's Speech Night, to receive their Gold and Silver Awards from the Mayor of Rossendale, Councillor Janice Thorne. A display of the students' expeditions, ranging from Dartmoor and the Cairngorms to as far a field as Bavaria, was available for the Mayor, parents and students to enjoy.

Present at the awards ceremony were the Headmaster Mr Marc Morris and Lili Rushton, the Operations Manager for the Young People's Service. The achievement of our students is truly remarkable and this is largely due to the efforts of Mr Tom Gray. Our sincere thanks to Tom for his continued commitment to the award scheme which has benefited so many of our young people.

Sporting Successes

Climbing

Talented Yr7 climber Randy Roby has achieved outstanding success in the British Mountaineering Council (BMC) Youth Climbing Series. Randy achieved first place in the boys aged 11–13 category, making him the national champion for his age group. In addition he was an integral member of the North West Team which also clinched first place. We are immensely proud of Randy's achievements and wish him every success in his future climbing career.



Sailing

Congratulations to Joseph Jackson 11R who has been selected to crew in the Tall Ships Race 2009. Joseph will be crewing for the Dutch ship 'The Europa' on the leg from Halifax in Canada to Belfast, Northern Ireland. His progress can be followed from 20th July – 15th August and we all wish him a safe, exciting and successful voyage.

Netball

In May the Yr8 netball team put in an outstanding performance in the Lancashire County competition. They beat off extremely tough opposition in an extended series of short matches to reach the later stages. They eventually met St Cecilia's in the final of the competition and achieved a convincing win. Congratulations to all the team members for their excellent efforts and becoming very worthy County Champions.



Hockey



Many congratulations to the Yr8 girls' hockey team. They fought extremely hard and were thrilled to clinch first place in the Rossendale U13 hockey tournament in May. Well done also to the Yr7 team who put in an excellent performance to gain a very creditable 4th place.

Basketball

Well done to the Yr9 basketball team for their latest outstanding success. Following their victory in the Lancashire Schools' Basketball final last year, they continued their run of excellent form and retained their trophy with an extremely convincing win of 73-39 over Longridge.

BRGS "CheckMates"

One of the more unusual activities here at BRGS, although still extremely popular, is Chess. We have a flourishing team of talented younger players who have recently demonstrated that they have the ability to compete at the highest level. In the British Land Chess competition, three of our students (Ben Atueyi Yr9, Tim Goddard Yr9 and Matthew Hoyle Yr8) have successfully fought through the North West rounds and will now go forward to play in the All Northern National Finals. Should they achieve 1st or 2nd place then they will move through to the National competition at an Elite level. This is an exciting time for our young Chess players and we wish all of them the very best of luck as we look forward to following their progress.



Who? What? Where? When?

Thank you very much to our former students who helped to try to identify the PE students in the Spring Term newsletter. Unfortunately, despite our best efforts, we were unable to recognise any of the bemused students, or indeed the talented athlete on the rings. The picture was definitely taken here at BRGS but unfortunately the students remain a mystery, at least for now!

In this edition we would like you to help identify our talented sportsmen from a bygone era! Not only would we welcome names of those you recognise, but also the year, the sport and maybe even the cup they are proudly displaying. Please do get in touch; we would be delighted to hear from you.



Dates for your diary

3rd week in September

(date TBC)

Parents' Meeting "Your Children's Digital Technical Safety"

26th September

Entrance Exam

16th October

Grandparents' Day

22nd October

GCSE Speech Night

19th November

6th Form Open Evening

9th December

Senior Citizens' Christmas Party

17th December

Yr13 Speech Night

OBITUARIES

We are sorry to learn of the following:

Former student and hospitality caterer, Miss Susan Lesley Brooks of Burnley Road Bacup, sadly died at Rochdale Royal Infirmary in February. Miss Brooks was aged 62 and had had multiple sclerosis for 20 years; she leaves her brother John and nephews Paul and Simon to whom we offer our sympathy.

Mr Thomas Lamb of Market Street, Edenfield.
Mr John Barcroft of Oulder Hill Drive, Rochdale.
Ms Alice Taylor of Brookland Street, Cloughfold.

Printed on paper sourced from sustainable forestry programmes using vegetable based inks.

Message Board

This term we are delighted to welcome back Kate Spencer and Liz Donnelly and Sarah Hartley will also be rejoining us before the end of term. We are very pleased to see them all return to BRGS after enjoying their maternity leave.

Our best wishes go to Diane Bamford, Head of Art and Design, as she enjoys time at home with baby James. We would like to welcome Julie Southworth who has joined the Art Department while Diane is away.

We extend a warm welcome to Miss Pamela Walsh who will be taking up a new post to teach Accountancy, to Miss Kristy Todd who will teach Dance and PE and also to Mr Joe Jones teaching Information Technology. Pamela and Kristy and Joe will be joining us in September and we wish them all a very happy time at BRGS!

Mrs Gill Spokes, Assistant Headteacher, will be leaving at the end of term to enjoy her maternity leave and we wish both Gill and Mark well as they prepare for a new

arrival! We welcome Miss Jennifer Magill who will be teaching modern foreign languages whilst Gill is away.

We bid a fond farewell to Dr Andrew Ellis, Head of Biology, who leaves us to take up a post as Head of Science at Clitheroe Royal Grammar School. We are sure that you would like to join us in wishing Dr Ellis all the very best in his new role.

Former student Elizabeth Barclay (nee Lloyd Holt) has retired from her post as General Manager and Company Secretary of the Institute of London Underwriters after 24 years. On behalf of everyone at BRGS, we would like to wish Elizabeth a very happy and peaceful retirement in France.

On September 12th we are very much looking forward to some of our students getting involved with "Waterfoot Forward". During this celebration of music and activities, we hope you will be able to come along and enjoy listening to our jazz band and also our talented musicians playing the steel pans.

Annual Fund

We would like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank all those who have responded so generously to our Annual Fund appeal 2008/2009. It has enabled us to fund essential projects, such as the music for all scheme, and to provide the best possible teaching and learning environment for our students. If you would like to find out more about how you may be able to invest in the future of the school, please contact Emma Gauntlett, Development Director, on 01706 234500 or at ecg@brgs.org.uk



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