



Spring
2013

Friends of **BRGS**

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

Bacup & Rawtenstall
Grammar School

ISSUE
29

Ski trip to the Aosta Valley

A group of novice and expert skiers spent February half term in the beautiful Aosta Valley in Italy with teachers Claire McClellan, Peter Flynn and Russell Clarke.

The Aosta Valley is surrounded by some of Europe's highest peaks including Mont Blanc, Courmayeur and La Thuile. Pila rests of the shoulders of the Gran Paradiso and the soaring peaks of Mount Rosa and the nearby Matterhorn provide an amazing backdrop.

Students had an action-packed week and also enjoyed plenty of après-ski with karaoke, table football and games.



Welcome!

Welcome to our Spring edition of 2013 although as I write we are still having flurries of snow and spring seems to be slow in arriving this year. Do take a look at our website for a photo gallery and sledging videos showing students making the most of the snow!

Of particular importance in this edition is a pull out and keep guide in the centre of the newsletter with some of the key centenary dates for your diary for 2013-2014. Please do make a note of forthcoming events and keep an eye on the alumni section of the website for all the latest information. We have a number of exciting initiatives to mark our special year in the pipeline. You can also contact your alumni year group representatives who are listed on the school website as well as Development Assistant Suzanne Tanner. I am delighted to welcome Suzanne to BRGS. Suzanne can be contacted at slt@brgs.org.uk and would be pleased to hear from you.

With best wishes,

Emma

Emma Gauntlett
Development Director
ecg@brgs.org.uk
Tel: 01706 234500

www.brgs.org.uk

Forensic Psychiatrist Presents Prizes

On Tuesday 18th December we welcomed back the vast majority of the 'class of 2012' from across the country

and even overseas who are currently pursuing studies at university, taking gap years or in employment. Our guest speaker was former student and forensic psychiatrist Professor Tony Maden.



Emeritus Professor at Imperial College, London, Tony's key message was to encourage all those present not to follow their dreams but to follow their talents instead. Tony's talent has taken him into psychiatry and he is the author of a number of publications including: *Mental health law and proposals for reform* (2004); *Forensic psychiatry: Influences of evil* (2007) and *Dangerous and severe personality disorder: antecedents and origins* (2007).

Senior speech night is a highlight in our school calendar as we enjoy celebrating A' level results as well as taking great pleasure in seeing how our former students continue to flourish post-BRGS.

Students in our current Years 8-11 who won prizes relating to the academic year 2011-2012 were awarded their prizes in a lower and upper school assembly to recognise their achievements. Congratulations to all prize-winners!



Holocaust Memorial Day 2013

The theme for Holocaust Memorial Day (27th January 2013) was *Communities Together: Build a Bridge*.

The 'BRGS Community' joined together under the guidance of history teacher Margaret Stanley to build our bridge of handprints to honour and remember communities destroyed in the Holocaust and in subsequent genocides. Continuing the theme, students are currently 'Food raising' to collect non-perishable food items to support local food banks and strengthen our bridge to the local community.



Duke of Edinburgh Award Achievements

The first group of the Year 11 pupils to complete the Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Level programme received their certificates and distinctive lapel badges from Deputy Headteacher and Director of Sixth Form Trevor Elkington in a presentation ceremony.

Bronze Awards were presented to Alex Wardlow, Lewis Astin, Elliot Fosong, Kashev Joshi, Bethany Jones, Georgina Mawdsley, Eilidh Thompson, Katy Wright, Ciara Holt, Alex Holland, Cerys Gregory, Elizabeth Gallagher, Daniel Taylor, Matthew Jackson, Jack Kearney and Hassaan Ahmed.

Silver Awards were also presented to Anna Ainsworth, Asanish Kalyanasundaram, Connor Armstrong and Tulsita Baskar and at Gold Level, participants Georgia Davies, Emilia Hartwell and Sara Davison will be presented with their certificates by HRH The Duke of Edinburgh at a ceremony at St. James's Palace in March.



BRGS in the SNOW 2013

We are hoping that when you receive this newsletter that snow will have been and gone for 2013.

Our own unique micro-climate in Rossendale meant that we had our fair share of snow and students made the most of the weather by participating in sledging races in PE lessons - video clips are available on the school website (<http://www.brgs.org.uk/january-snow-at-brgs/3137.html>).

We were particularly impressed by the school squirrel snow sculpture on the all-weather pitch!





BRGS Superstars

The search is underway to find our BRGS Superstar 2013!

A sequence of sporting challenges is planned to test the strength, fitness and agility of our students and staff in the quest to find BRGS Superstars. Leading the event after the press-up challenge to raise funds for Help the Hospices were Year 12 students Curtis Gallagher and Fraser Phillips with an impressive 112 press-ups each. The rowing challenge is currently underway and the sit-up challenge has taken place with the challenging 'King of the Slope' still to come.

'BRGS Superstars' has been organised by Russell Clarke and Amanda Hughes in aid of Help the Hospices; a charity they will be supporting when running the London Marathon later this year.

To support their endeavour please go to www.justgiving.com/HughesandClarke

Year 8 Marathon Runners!

A group of Year 8 students came up with a novel fundraising idea for the NSPC with the aim to raise £200.

Between them, they ran a marathon and a little bit more (30 miles), in relay over the course of a bitterly cold and blustery morning. Students ran laps of the all-weather pitch on the 31st January. One of the Year 8 students, Keir, reflected on the experience: "I've had fun doing the charity run, it was very tiring but it was worth it and I am proud of myself and the others." Robyn said: "It was hard to run when it was really windy, but it was good to run for a charity." In between laps of the pitch the students busily carried on with their studies in the school hall.



Big Bang finalist

Year 12 student Asanish Kalyanasundaram was a finalist in the National Science and Engineering Competition held at the Big Bang Fair in London on the 14th - 15th March.

Asanish's project title was 'An evaluation of the potential of genetic engineering to create 'Super Cells' in conjunction with stem cells.' This high profile competition was judged by experts from industry, academia and education including celebrity judges Professor Brian Cox OBE, Kate Bellingham, Dr Maggie Aderin-Pocock MBE, Sir Tim Hunt and Professor Ada Yonath.



Lancaster Alumni Reception

On Wednesday 6th February we held an alumni reception at Grizedale College Bar at Lancaster University.



The reception was intended for former students based at Lancaster University, for alumni living in the Lancaster area and for our current students who are thinking of studying at Lancaster. It was good to see a range of ages at the event with our recent leavers reaping the benefits of speaking to some of our retired former students who could provide a wealth of career experience and advice.



Former colleagues Dorothy and Eddie Skeels joined us for the Lancaster University reception bringing a significant amount of treasured memorabilia to be added to the school archive including all of Miss Macleroy's mark books!



London Alumni Reception

Former students based in London and the south-east attended a reception at 10-11 Carlton House Terrace off The Mall on the 14th March 2013.

The reception was well-attended by alumni who are currently studying at Imperial College, London and Queen Mary, University of London as well as those representing every decade group from the 1940s onwards. The focus of the evening was sharing our plans to celebrate our Centenary Year alongside how we intend to make the school fit for purpose for the next 100 years of learners through a range of developments.



Celebrate our

Make a note of the dates in your diaries!



Friday 20th September 2013

*100 years to the day the school was opened on the present site.
Celebratory fireworks event (to be confirmed).*



Saturday 5th October 2013

The highlight in the school's calendar is the Centenary Reunion weekend.

1 p.m. Doors open

2 p.m. Formal start with opening speeches

3 p.m. Afternoon tea

5 p.m. Entertainment to be confirmed

7 p.m. Close

*For accommodation over the reunion weekend then please refer to
www.visitrossendale.com*

*For former students unable to be present we are investigating how we
could use online video calls.*

*Wherever possible we intend to recreate class photos five, ten, or fifty
years down the line so do join us!*



Sunday 6th October 2013

Thanksgiving Service in school

In addition, we intend to hold a Golf Day, a murder mystery event and a number of other events alongside our annual calendar of grandparents' day, speech nights, London alumni receptions, business networking events, celebration lunches and so on!

Centenary



Saturday 1st March 2014

A celebration of music at BRGS. Former student and professional opera singer Alwyn Mellor to perform. Further details to follow.



Saturday 10th May 2014

Centenary Ball. A black tie event to celebrate our Centenary in style with fine dining, entertainment, an auction and much more.



June 2014

Sports Festival to celebrate sport over the years at BRGS. (date to be confirmed).



Saturday 21st June 2014

Centenary Family Weekend for alumni and their families and families of current students.



July 2014

Centenary Week for students to mark and recognise the school's centenary through lessons (to be confirmed).

Year 11 Drama Production of The Glass Menagerie



At the end of last term, Year 11 GCSE Drama students gave an inspired performance of vignettes from Tennessee Williams's *The Glass Menagerie*. Pupils had to select scenes from the play for performance that had a thematic link and then create some original drama emanating from their chosen theme.



Highly conscientious and enthusiastic students underwent weeks of rehearsals with Head of Drama Martin Neve to create performances that were outstanding and more akin to A' level than GCSE. Martin Neve spoke of their achievement: "I am so proud of our drama students. The performances are some of the best I have ever seen in Year 11 and were testament to real talent bolstered by an unswerving work ethic. I have enjoyed teaching and working with these pupils immensely. It was a real privilege!"

The pupils themselves feel they have gained much confidence and rapidly improved their communication skills. Ronan Pilkington in Year 11 explained: "Drama is my favourite subject.

I want to do it professionally. As well as performing and creating our own theatre pieces, I also learnt how to use lights, sound and projected image in our new drama studio." Another student, Eliza Campbell had this to say: "I have watched so many members of my drama group grow in both confidence and ability. By studying other characters, in different situations, I have definitely learnt more about myself!"

Parents were invited to see the performances and were stunned at the level of talent and professionalism demonstrated by the pupils. We look forward to many more!

BRGS Multi-Faith Group

As part of our multi-faith group activities at BRGS, Mel Heywood, Religious Studies teacher, has been working with students on a series of assemblies sharing different beliefs and religions.



Last term our Muslim students celebrated Eid-ul-Adha, the festival of sacrifice to remember the prophet Ibrahim's trust in God. The festival marks the end of the Hajj pilgrimage to Mecca, which some of our students have been fortunate to have participated in. Ten students from Years 7-12 created henna patterns and painted these onto 150 girls over the course of three lunchtimes. Students also celebrated Diwali, the Hindu festival of light and this term the multi-faith group led a Christian focused assembly on Ash Wednesday to explain the start of Lent.



Are you a BRGS record holder?

As part of our Centenary celebrations during 2013-2014 we intend to hold a Sports Festival during the summer of 2014 and prior to this we would like to see who still holds BRGS records for sporting activities!



If you were ever a record holder then do get in touch.

Bad Homburg Exchange

In the summer of 2012, 25 English pupils from BRGS, were matched with 25 German students from Kaiserin Friedrich Gymnasium (KFG). It was the first German exchange that has been carried out at BRGS for over 10 years, and in my opinion it was a huge success!



The first time that we met our exchange partners was on Thursday 27th September 2012. It was a highly anticipated and long awaited meeting as we had all been in close contact with our partners and were both excited and nervous about meeting them for the first time. All of the German students were collected from the airport by their exchange families and the adventure began. We spent the first evening at home and got to know our new friends; this was good as it meant that they felt more comfortable around us and our families but still had the Friday to see their friends before the weekend.

The next day at school was a very interesting day for the German exchange students I think as it was unusual for them to have to do such long hours at school and a treat to be able to lie in and school begin at 8:45 rather than the usual 7:55 in Germany. Throughout 1st period the German students were

given a tour of school and they also spent periods 4 and 5 together on a tour around Waterfoot and the local area – fortunately it didn't rain!

On Monday 1st October both the English students and the German students went on a day out in York; it was a great day where everybody got to be with their friends and we all bonded as a group. We went on a tour around the York Castle Museum and then saw the York cathedral before spending the afternoon having free time in York. The following evening we all went out to the year 12 music concert after a day of school and spent the evening in each other's company (I think this was a nice break for the German students as it mean that they could speak their own language!). On the final evening we had a goodbye party at Sandbrook Park where we all went bowling and some people played laser quest. Thursday was an emotional day as we all had to say goodbye as we dropped our exchange partners off at the Littleborough train station ready for a day in Manchester and the journey home.

Everybody stayed in close contact with their exchange partners for the rest of 2012 and over the Christmas holidays, building on friendships and preparing for our return visit.

On Wednesday 13th February all of the English exchange students met at Manchester airport at 7:45 in the morning ready for our departure. Upon arrival in Germany some of us were collected from the airport by our exchange parents (school hadn't finished by that time so we had to wait until we got back to their houses before we could reunite with our exchange friends) and others took the train to Bad Homburg

where they were collected by their exchange families and their exchange partners. Like when the Germans came to England, we spent the first afternoon and evening at home getting to know our exchange families. On the second day we were woken up incredibly early ready for school which began at 7:55.



KFG is an enormous school, which accommodated students aged 10 to 18. It was very modern- looking compared to BRGS and strangely, the students stayed in one classroom all day (changing only for sport, music or art) whilst the teachers moved about the classes. We were given a tour of the school, began our projects (writing a quiz about Bad Homburg for a group of future exchange students) and were given a tour of Bad Homburg. That evening we returned to the school and watched the school performance of Brundibár – it was great! On Friday we all returned to school and then spent the evening and the weekend with our exchange families.

As when the German students came to England, we took the Monday off school and went on a group visit to Mainz. First of all we visited the Gutenberg museum and had the chance to participate in some printing using an old fashioned printing press as well as seeing the smallest book in the world. Next we were taken to the Rhine before being given some free time to explore the city. That was my favourite day in Germany and again we bonded as a group. On Tuesday we went to school and then had a goodbye party at the swimming centre that was very close to the school, it was complete with slides and a current pool! On the final day we said goodbye to our exchange families first thing in the morning before school and thanked them profusely for our stay. We then had a day of school and a trip to the local castle before heading off to the airport and returning home.

All in all a great time was had by all and I would definitely recommend it to anybody considering going on a German exchange next year as it really is a great experience!

Report by Georgina Chick Year 10

Eclectic EPQ Projects

The Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) at BRGS is a stand-alone largely self-directed project which provides an opportunity for students to exercise their abilities beyond the A level syllabus and prepare for university or their future career.

The end project is generally an essay on their subject of choice. Students present their findings and have a question and answer session with a group of governors, teachers and fellow students.

This year presentations have ranged from examining whether there is a link between manic depression and creativity to the extent to which prion diseases pose a risk to humans. From over twenty topics, subjects included:

- *'To what extent have the polar conditions of the Arctic Circle affected the evolution of the polar bear?' by Daniel Devine.*
- *'The history of the electric guitar' by Adam Nixon*
- *'How have stars been interpreted throughout early history by society?' by Madeleine Lewis*
- *'Did Peter Tchaikovsky create a greater impact on music and society in the 19th century than Frederic Chopin?' by Michael Francis*
- *'What are Carbon Nanotubes and how will they change the world?' by Daniel Payne*
- *'The psychology of serial killers' by Zoe Stebbings*
- *'What does Homer present as his view of war through the medium of imagery within the Homeric simile?' by Jed Lee*

and many more...

Congratulations to this cohort of EPQ students on completing their projects.

Who? What? Where? When?

Thank you to Neville and Anne Crane, Elisabeth Sykes née Taylor, Derrick Riley and Christine and Mike Gastall who kindly got in touch to detail the members of staff in the photo of the last edition of Friends. Those featured on the front row from left to right were: Mrs Lonsdale, Mrs Freda Ebden, Miss Moore (Little), Miss Moore (Big), Miss Phyllis Irene Greenwood (Deputy Head), Mr W. Copley (Headteacher), Mr Dan Duthie, Mr Charlie Ebden, Mr Walter Fielding and Mr Milton Ormerod. On the second row from left to right were Miss Firth (later Mrs Collinson), Miss Hamer/Miss Barnes, Miss Reece, Miss Jean E. Macleroy, Mrs Culley, Miss Dodd, Mr McClean, Mr Trevor Parks, Mr Ralph Humpston, Mr Eric Ward and Mr Frank Harding. The third row from left to right consisted of Mr Jack Cawthorne, Mrs Doreen Chedzoy, followed by two mystery faces then Mr Alan Pell, Miss Doreen Newall (later Mrs Humpston) and Mr Jack Bridge. Finally on the back row from left to right were Mr Proctor and Mr Ralph Collinson.



Obituaries

Former student **Alec Burton** (1951-1956) sadly died aged 73 on the 15th January 2013 at Fairfield Hospital. He had suffered a stroke six years ago and then his health had deteriorated after a fall a year ago. Alec was the co-founder of Rossendale Rugby Club and was a popular community man who initially went into the family business as a bakery salesman in Stacksteads but then went on to own Nobbut Lads clothes shop in Rawtenstall.

Alec was known for his fundraising challenges and to mark his 50th birthday he completed 50 holes of golf, ran around the Marl Pits athletics track 50 times and swam 50 lengths of the pool. He raised thousands of pounds undertaking similar events for his 40th and his 60th birthdays. He was a member of both Bacup and Rossendale Golf Clubs.

Alec's other interest was amateur dramatics and he was the lead actor in more than 60 Valley-based productions playing Bill Sykes in Oliver and Herod in Jesus Christ Superstar.

Alec's wife Vivienne who runs Butterworth Jones clothing shop in Rawtenstall described him as "absolutely larger than life. He was very kind and had a lot of time for people." Our sincere condolences go to all his family.

Former student **Jane Haworth née Cawthorne** who was a BRGS pupil from 1967-1974 sadly died aged 56 on February 23rd at St Gemma's Hospice Leeds after a short illness. Married to Geoff and daughter of Jack and Betty Cawthorne her funeral was in Sherburne-in-Elmet near Leeds on the 8th March. Our thoughts are with Jane's family.

Leslie Clegg a Rossendale businessman and former pupil who was honoured by the Queen for his services to industry and charity died on holiday aged 78 after suffering a heart attack in the Canary Islands in March 2013. Leslie had worked at E Sutton and Son for 50 years and was awarded an OBE in 2001, seven months after retiring. Initially starting his career as a junior office clerk in 1950 he eventually became group chairman from 1989 over a period of eleven years. Former student Brian Terry, Joint Chairman

of the Sutton Group said: "It was with great shock and sadness that we learnt of the sudden death of Les as he was an active part of the community supporting many local causes. All of the current board of directors started their service with the company under Les's guidance and have much to thank him for."

Former Head Girl, **Barbara Walsley née Hudson** (1944 – 1951) died on the 22nd February 2013 aged 80 years. She was 'a popular lady who will be greatly missed by all' and our deepest condolences go to her husband Keith and all her family.

Audrey Ebblewhite née Millward died on the 11th March in Newcastle-on-Tyne a month after suffering a severe stroke. Her contemporaries at BRGS will remember her athletic abilities, especially in the high jump, as well as her participation in drama productions and her good-natured, generous nature which stood her in good stead through her teaching career. She leaves a daughter Joanne, a son Nigel and their respective families.

Rotary Photograph Competition

Our congratulations go to the following students who triumphed in the annual Rotary Photography Competition in late 2012:

- First Prize in the Senior Section went to Hannah McDonough for her view of Reflections in Water.
- First Prize in the Intermediate Section was awarded to Declan Kenny-Whitehead for his view of scattered settlement on a hillside in Rossendale.
- Second Prize in the Senior Section went to Charlotte Burke for her view of a small lake with trees in the background.



Expedition to Northern Norway

Former student Gemma Wardle, who featured on the front cover of our last edition *Friends of BRGS* as she and her twin sister Heidi are studying at Cambridge and Oxford respectively, is currently studying Earth Sciences at St. Edmund Hall and is planning to go on a British Exploration Society expedition to northern Norway, within the Arctic Circle over the summer.

Gemma writes that the expedition is of a "challenging and scientific nature in a demanding natural wilderness environment and will develop my self-reliance, teamwork and leadership skills, as well as spirit of adventure. There is also a field work/research part to the expedition, which will relate to climate change research. From this adventure, I intend to gain expedition experience and learn how to work in a challenging environment which will provide me with essential skills for my future career as I hope to be a field/research geologist."

During the expedition, Gemma will rely on mountaineering skills with a number of days spent on glacial ice caps during which time they will be travelling in roped teams, spending nights camping on the ice and pulling kits behind them in pulks. The intrepid explorers will have to navigate through crevassed areas and will have the opportunity to climb peaks and ridges in the area.

However, in order to participate in the trip Gemma will need to fundraise which she hopes will develop financial management skills as well as building and developing relationship skills. She has designed a web page detailing her fundraising for the expedition which can be found at: <http://www.gofundme.com/1y4kew>.

Gemma intends to keep a diary detailing her expedition which we hope to share with readers in a future edition.

Message Board

- How many links to BRGS can you claim to have? We are on the hunt for the family with the most connections to BRGS. Did your brothers, sisters, grandparents, aunts and uncles attend BRGS? If so, please do get in touch with Suzanne Tanner Development Assistant at slt@brgs.org.uk as for our Centenary we would like to be able to trace the family with the highest number of family members who have attended the school!
- Congratulations to former student Mark Forrer who left BRGS in 2005 and had his first television programme broadcast on Kerrang TV in January of this year. The programme was a thirty minute documentary called Young Guns: On the Road. Watch this space for forthcoming programmes and follow us on Twitter to keep up-to-date on all BRGS news at http://twitter.com/brgs_1701.
- Another former student in the media spotlight is Phil Lester who is currently broadcasting a top weekly slot every Sunday evening at 7 p.m. on Radio 1. Listen out for the 'Dan and Phil' show.
- In our last edition we congratulated Philip Hargreaves (left BRGS in 2002) on his doctorate and graduating from Newcastle University for the second time but we omitted that along the way he published a couple of conference papers, a journal article, won four School Prizes and a couple of International Conference Prizes. His doctoral thesis was called "Advanced Performance Prediction Tools for the Analysis of Rotating Electrical Machines" and he is now a Design Engineer with GE Power Conversion designing large offshore wind turbines.
- Former student Professor William Roy Jackson (left 1952) of Monash University Melbourne has led an extremely distinguished career in chemistry and has been recognised for his work featuring in the Australia Day Honours List for 2013 for being awarded a 'Member (AM) in the General Division of the Order of Australia 86' for significant service to science in the field of organic chemistry as an educator and researcher.
- Our congratulations go to Oliver Connolly and Luci Eccleston (left 2006) on their engagement. We wish them every happiness.



He was the President of the Royal Australian Institute of Chemistry from 1999-2000 and Chair of the Chemistry in Australia Committee from 2002-2006. Recent research projects have included developing more environmentally acceptable methods of extracting oil from oil shale and algae; finding new methods of making paints from renewable materials and the development of new dual acting drugs for pain control.



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**Glen Road, Waterfoot, Rossendale,
Lancashire BB4 7BJ**
Tel: 01706 234500
E-mail: ecg@brgs.org.uk
Web site: <http://www.brgs.org.uk>