



OLD BLUES NEWS

Annual newsletter of the Reading Old Blues Association · No. 63 · 2014



Old Blue helps take vital supplies to 4,000 families hit by Typhoon Haiyan

Typhoon Haiyan may have dropped from the headlines since it hit the Philippines last November, but the crisis caused by the most devastating storm of the year continues with 14 million people displaced and over 6,000 dead – and an Old Blue has been at the forefront of the government's relief efforts. James Callender (2005) writes from on board HMS Illustrious:

We have just completed delivering the last of our Humanitarian Aid Relief to the people of the Philippine islands most severely affected by Typhoon Haiyan.

I joined the Royal Navy in April 2010, and was assigned to HMS Illustrious as the Chemical Biological Radiological Nuclear Damage Control Officer. My job on-board is twofold; the first part consists of driving the ship as an Officer of the Watch on the Bridge and the other part involves conducting exercises such as sustaining simulated battle damage, fires, floods and chemical threats, as well as future planning.

A couple of weeks ago whilst HMS Illustrious was conducting counter-piracy operations off the coast of Somalia, Prime Minister David Cameron redirected us to the Philippines. We were tasked with assisting the international aid effort of providing humanitarian relief, such as food, water and shelter to the people of the Philippines in the wake of Typhoon Haiyan.

Typhoon Haiyan was the largest typhoon on record ever to make landfall and we have seen widespread damage across the Philippines region as a result of the wind speed reaching up to 195mph and 30ft storm surges. As well as the larger



Old Blue James Callender (2005) on board HMS Illustrious

towns and cities, the typhoon affected many smaller remote villages, leaving a large number homeless, without food, water and having lost their livelihoods such as fishing boats or crops.

Since taking on supplies in Singapore, including over half of all the rice stocks available (100 tons), HMS Illustrious has been able to deliver these crucial supplies using Merlin, Sea



A remote Philippines community welcomes naval personnel



King and Army Lynx helicopters. The helicopters, as well as carrying medics and engineers ashore, can also carry up to two tonnes of food and materials in a large bag underneath. With other nations already concentrating on the main city of Tacloban, HMS Illustrious has been able to make a more individual contribution by delivering food and supplies to numerous remote islands. The Ship's Company have also been ashore to help rebuild schools, roads, engines and boats. Since our arrival on 25 November 2013, the Ship has directly helped over 3,000 local Filipino families in this way.

One of the major priorities has been to help rebuild the communities; many villages have had roofs destroyed and buildings flooded. Members of the Ship's Company were sent ashore in small groups to rebuild roofs and clear pathways to ensure that the schools, such as Bito-on Elementary School, can continue educating the children. Once the children were back in school, the parents could then begin work on rebuilding their homes and livelihoods.

HMS Illustrious has landed approximately 40 tonnes of aid per day to families and villages on local islands, with food bags to feed a family for two weeks. Tools and equipment ranging from tarpaulins to chainsaws have also been landed to help the local people mend and rebuild their homes.

Although there was the obvious and unavoidable disappointment that HMS Illustrious would not return home in time for Christmas after being re-tasked, we all realised the valuable contribution we have made during our time here. We have also been extremely well supported by family, friends and the British public back home, which really makes a difference.

Although not everyone has managed to get ashore to assist directly in delivering aid, it has taken a concerted and carefully coordinated team effort to provide continuous assistance. Everyone has had a part to play; from the stores teams working round the clock to prepare the relief crates, to the aircraft engineers who would work tirelessly throughout



Biton elementary School where the roof was re-built

the night to ensure all aircraft were ready for the next day and, of course, the Ship's watch-keepers including engineers, chefs and navigation personnel, who not only got us to the Philippines in the first place but have also kept her running and safe whilst here.

If you want to know more, you can visit us on www.RoyalNavy.mod.uk, follow us on Twitter @HMSIllustrious or join the RN Facebook page for all of our up-to-date news and any information on the Royal Navy.

Energy renewal in the Philippines

By Robin Scanlon (2008)

I left RBCS in 2008, and have just graduated from Durham with a Masters in Engineering. Currently, I am on a year long Engineers Without Borders (EWB) placement in the Philippines working to design and install renewable energy systems in rural areas.

Chiefly thanks to the wonderful 'Sixth Form Special' programme, I left Blue Coat with a wish to travel the world and help people less fortunate than myself. One session made a particularly big impact on me. It was delivered by a former Blue Coat student who had gone on to work for the international aid charity, Medecins Sans Frontières. Over the course of that hour, the direction of my life was decided: I wanted to work in international relief and development. That inspiration led me to study engineering at Durham University and eventually led me to where I am now – on a year-long placement in the Philippines on renewable



Robin demonstrates his engineering skills in the Philippines

energy projects for a local NGO called Sibol ng Agham at Teknolohiya (SIBAT).

After receiving the offer in April, there was training in June, and less than two weeks after I was on a plane to the other side of the world! Writing this now, I don't really know what I was expecting but I'm not sure it's possible to prepare yourself for Manila. It is truly an assault on the senses. It is hot, it is humid, it is noisy, it is polluted, it is crowded and it is dazzling. There are so many quirks to the place it's impossible to list them all. You sweat all morning and then it pours with rain at 3pm. Bus horns and muffler-less motorbikes will deafen you at any hour. You will eat foods that you can't



even imagine – semi-developed duck egg anyone? How about deep-fried chicken intestine? It all adds up to the sense that you don't visit Manila, you experience it. It is all very enjoyable. The people are fantastically friendly, and given the place's history as an American colony, mostly speak English – probably the most disturbing thing is that everyone wants to talk about the royal baby! I had no idea that people so far away paid such close attention to things like that!

SIBAT is a small but fantastic organisation concentrating on improving life for those who live in impoverished rural communities. A large part of SIBAT's work is on sustainable agriculture – working to remove farmers' reliance on expensive pesticides/fertilisers that reduce yields in the long run. The other side of SIBAT is all about renewable energy, which is where I come in. SIBAT has around 30 renewable energy projects currently operating, most of which are hydro-electric projects that provide electric lighting and crop milling to remote mountain villages beyond the reach of public services. I recently visited three of these sites, after a ten-hour jungle trek! It was amazing to see the impact that the projects had had on the people in these villages. One of the most interesting things I have ever heard was that since the lights arrived, the class sizes at the school had dropped somewhat dramatically. Why was this? Were people no longer sending their children to school? No, since the lights came, the villagers had more to do in the evening and now have other ways to 'entertain themselves'!

The project I am currently working

on is quite a big one. We will be working to provide clean water to over 3,000 people in a place called Looc. A combination of solar and wind power will be used to pump water out of a well, up a hill and into a large storage tank. From the storage tank, the water will enter a distribution system, which will take water to people's doorsteps (all 700 of them) so they don't have to walk to the well to fetch water. We will also be constructing a series of 'Bio Sand Water Filters' so people can have access to clean potable water too. I have to design the filters and tanks, and will also be project manager when it comes to actually digging and laying the concrete and pipes. The aim is to finish Phase One before July, when I have to return to Blighty. Then, another EWB volunteer will come out to assist with Phase Two. To ensure the long term success of the project, part of the process is creating and training a 'People's Organisation', which will oversee the maintenance and upkeep into the future. It is all very daunting, but certainly very exciting too.

EWB-UK rely on donations to fund sending young engineers to developing countries. The aim is to create a generation of inspired and capable engineers who can go on to have careers in international development and make a difference to the world. If you would like to donate to EWB you can do so via: <https://mydonate.bt.com/fundraisers/robininthephilippines>

If you would like to keep up to date follow me on my blog robininthephilippines.wordpress.com

News of Old Blues

Ronald Badcock (1942) wrote that he was delighted to see our article on the late Keith Durbidge, pupil-teacher during his time as a scholarship boy at the school in Bath Road. He remembered Mr WFW King (Headmaster), Chris Way who taught French, Les Hunter (History and Geography) and 'Dabber' Minns who taught Arithmetic, Algebra and Geometry. He had a habit of crossing his hands in front of himself when chastising a pupil for an error, with the words "Oh! you booby!" In 1982 Ronald completed 40 years' service with Barclays Bank. He is proud of the fact that he scored the first 100 for the Old Blues Cricket Club in the 1950s. Both his father and brother were also pupils. He wondered about the blue coats worn by two pupils in a photograph in our last issue. They are, in fact, nowadays worn only for symbolic reasons by senior prefects at major School functions.

Paul Bennett (1975) is still a regular correspondent, working with P&O based in Dover. He recently bumped into an RBGS party as it was crossing the Channel en route from a ski trip.

James Brown (2008) completed a four-year business degree at Portsmouth University with placement year (2:1) and now works in Paris for Nissan.

Jeremy (Jey) Burrows (1979) enjoyed his visit to Reunion Day 2012 and is Head of Aircraft Operations at Virgin Atlantic.

Matthew Cowley (1990) contacted us after celebrating his 40th birthday in Sao Paulo, Brazil, where he is working as a financial journalist and is married with two children.

Helena Davies (2009) graduated with first class honours in Biology from the University of Manchester in July and began a PhD in the School of Earth, Atmospheric and Environmental Sciences there in September, specialising in plant-based research. She has already had several pieces of research published. During her year of industrial experience she worked in the Conservation and Research department at the National Botanic Garden of Wales (NBGW) working on field and laboratory based projects. She wrote 'I am so excited to get started with my PhD and wholeheartedly thank RBGS for the

fantastic Biology department and staff I was taught by who definitely paved the way for me!

Katy Emerson (2010) achieved a first in her Sports Science degree at Portsmouth and now has a job on a super yacht owned by a wealthy Russian and is off to the Maldives over the winter.

Rob Emerson (2013) unfortunately broke his leg a month into his ski season but is now enjoying his first year at Bath University.

Tony Field (1957) travelled all the way from Ottawa in Canada with his wife Celia for the reunion day. It was his first visit since the 1970s. He has now retired from a busy career, which began with work for IBM. He presented some photos of School plays to the archives and reminisced about playing Graciano in Mrs Way's production of *The Merchant of Venice* in 1956 in Sonning's Pearson Hall.



School production of *The Merchant of Venice* in 1956. Tony Field was Graciano



Bill, Andrew & Richard Fletcher c.1976

Richard Fletcher (1977) continues to work in IT security and, with his wife Mary, is a member of community samba drumming band Beatroots, which performed at Eton Domey during the Olympics.

William 'Bill' Fletcher (1979) is living on a smallholding at Slapton Sands in Devon with his artist partner, Fran.

Christopher Gilbert (1982) attended the Open Morning in April, and is now self-employed having left the RAF after many years' service.

Nick Harris (1978) responding to an earlier newsletter, joined a company a few years after leaving school which is now part of the big French multi-national, Veolia. Nick joined as marketing director and subsequently became general manager of its laboratory products division. Married with three sons, he is currently living near High Wycombe.

Edward Fry (1983) is teaching English at Epsom College in Surrey.

Rob Harris (2010) has just finished his final year at the University of Birmingham where he gained a first class degree in Computer Science. He is currently working for H2O Farm, a hydroponic farming company utilising his university final year project: a control system.

Edward Hicks (2009) is working on his DPhil in History at St. Anne's College, Oxford and was working for the History

of Parliament project in London over the summer vacation.

Richard Higgs (2009) graduated at Southampton before beginning an MSc in Physiotherapy at King's College, London (KCL). As well as pursuing his academic career he is also part of the KCL elite athlete squad and a highly successful competitor in Long Distance Triathlons, in which he swims a gruelling 1.2 mi, followed by cycling 56 mi



A new centre for Geology and Psychology has opened in the former Cottage in the Back Yard. It was opened as the Walsh Building by TV broadcaster Professor Iain Stewart MBE

and a 13.1 mi run. He trains 25 or more hours a week. In May he raced at the Ironman 70.3 Mallorca and was 14th (M-18-24) and first for Britain. In June he was third at the UK championships in Exmoor, qualifying for the Ironman 70.3 World Championships in Las Vegas in September at which he was ranked 10th in the M18-24 category. He is keen to promote the benefits of exercise to all! He now aims to achieve a time below 2h50 at the Brighton Marathon in preparation for his first full distance Ironman in 2015 and will be competing in the London Triathlon and the Challenge UK half, Weymouth (where he is aiming for gold in his age group).

Anaïs King (2013) is to be congratulated on winning the 2013 David Pearson Memorial Travel Award, which enabled her to spend several months undertaking voluntary veterinary work in Zambia and Zimbabwe.

John Kingston (1953) was at the reunion day and remembered being the youngest boarder at the School's first day at Holme Park on January 21, 1947. Headmaster Bernard Inge's 44th birthday.

Nick Malaperiman (1984) has been in Vancouver for 16 years now. He spent seven years at EA Sports designing and marketing the FIFA Football game, then seven years at Nokia running games marketing. He then launched a game development studio in China before starting his own company, Chunky Pig Marketing, which has just been sold. He'd love to meet more Old Blues and can be found on LinkedIn.



Brian Martin (1950) is a distinguished New Zealand businessman and author who wrote in about his School days. His memories were inspired by an article in which he said the School's motto, 'Truth conquers all,' had been his lifelong inspiration. He remembered his form master Maurice Edelston (who was a former England football captain) saying that he and another pupil would never

be outstanding academically, but would always do well, as they always did their best. That year I won the continuous effort prize, and that was the only prize I really ever wanted after that. I have strived all of my life to improve myself to be the best I can be, to create outstanding results, through my commitment and effort.

That inspiration enabled Brian to rise to chief executive in the Asia-Pacific region of Levi-Strauss and of German company Triumph International. After taking early retirement aged 49 he has taught leadership and communication to over 70,000 business executives all over the Asia-Pacific region.

In 2001 he received the 21st Century award for achievement in recognition of outstanding achievements in the field of business. His books include *Who's In Charge of Your Life?*, *Ordinary People Doing Extraordinary Things* and *Ignite Success*. In 2012 Brian received two awards for exemplary services to Japan-New Zealand relations.

Jeremy Monk (2008) was awarded first class honours at Loughborough University last summer and is now working with an expanding engineering firm in Germany.

Robert ('Bob') Pink (1964) chose a freezing Empire Day in May to call in after 50 years – all the way from Australia. He took his HND in catering at Reading Tech. (as it then was), took the Eio 'passage' and emigrated to Australia, spending four and a half years working in the idyllic surroundings of the Cocos (Keeling) Islands in the Indian Ocean. Here the Clunies-Ross family were virtually granted feudal overlordship by Queen Victoria until they were 'bought out' by the Australian Government two decades ago. He was then employed by a large gold mining enterprise in Papua New Guinea, also as a senior catering manager. He is now married and living in Brisbane.

Edward Reeve (2013) is now well into his gap year as Organ Scholar of Salisbury Cathedral. Weekly duties include

playing the organ for Cathedral services, conducting the choir and training the choristers, as well as teaching singing technique and music theory. December sees the Cathedral's busiest time of the year, with services marking Advent and Christmas bringing thousands of visitors to the Cathedral. Future plans include a choir tour to France, as well as solo piano and organ recitals in the Cathedral. In October 2014, Edward will be going to Queens' College, Cambridge, to read music as Organ Scholar. Future engagements include: Sunday 26 January, 2014 at 4.45pm: *Organ Recital at St. Paul's Cathedral, London*; Saturday 15 March 2014 at 7.30pm: *Beethoven's Second Piano Concerto* with the Aldworth Philharmonic Orchestra at the School; Sunday 18 May, 2014 at 3pm: *Piano Recital* at Salisbury Cathedral and Wednesday 18 June, 2014 at 7.30pm: *Organ Recital* at Salisbury Cathedral.

Keith Roostan (1974) last visited School in June 2013 with his wife Sonja for the Old Blues Reunion Day Tea: 'Fabulous afternoon, the highlight meeting Peter Firebrace (3A Form Master 69-70)!'.

Jennifer Rosam (2010) graduated from the University of Bath with a BA (Hons) Modern Languages and European Studies (French and *ab initio* Italian) with a 2:1.

Tom Rosenthal (2006) is flourishing as an actor/comedian. He has been



filming for a third series of Channel 4's *Friday Night Dinner* and appeared at the Edinburgh Festival last summer. ITV2 series *Plebs*, in which he plays Marcus, was named Best New Comedy Programme at the 2013 British Comedy Awards.

Ben Ruddle (2009) Since graduating from Jesus College, Oxford in Economics and Management, Ben has been living in Dubai working as a strategy consultant with Oliver Wyman. Although based in Dubai, he has been fortunate enough to also work with clients in Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Ghana. Oliver Wyman are a global management consulting firm. He is working as a consultant in their financial services practice, helping solve strategic problems for their clients, who are all manner of financial service providers as well as financial regulators and central banks.

Simon Scott (1960) called in with his wife from Vancouver right at the end of the summer term and was keen to visit the CDT Department, as the old Woodwork teaching area had initially inspired his interest in and decision to take up architecture professionally.

Edward Sinclair (1992), is a former actor and now writer, married to twice BAFTA-winning actress, Olivia Colman (*Rev* and *Peep Show*) who he met at Cambridge. They live in London with their two sons.

Mark Stradling (1972), now running his own company in Singapore, recounted his memories of boarding during the early 1970s and enclosed some interesting photographs of contemporaries.



Rob Tarry (2013) scored the top mark nationally of all candidates who studied A Level Religious Studies (aka Philosophy and Ethics) with WJEC (the Welsh exam board) in 2013. Robert received 397 UMS marks out of 400. He is currently studying Philosophy and Theology at Durham.



Josh Thorn (2009) is to be congratulated after he returned in September after three months working with disabled athletes in Burkina Faso. The main effort of the long-running project, which is organized by the development charity International Service, is to work with HIV+ people, using sport as a tool to educate and integrate them, as well as eradicating stigmas associated with the disease within communities. Josh's fund-raising efforts for the trip included an exhausting 24-hours of non-stop exercise.

Ian White (1978) is self-employed following many years with McAlpines, married with three children and still playing rugby for his local club.

Roger (1996) and **Liz Wiggett** (1998) had a baby boy named George at 4.55am on November 1. He weighed in at 8lb 6oz and is doing well.

RIP

With our sympathies to their families and friends, we record with sadness the passing of the following Old Blues.

Ben Danks (2006) tragically died in a car accident in Durban, South Africa on 21 April. He was making his way home after attending a friend's wedding. A lorry jumped traffic lights and struck the vehicle in which Ben was travelling. After RBCS, Ben went on to study Architecture at Manchester University. He achieved a first class degree and then joined his father, Roger, at Danks Badnell, his firm of architects in Windsor. Ben was a keen cyclist and enthusiastic traveller who had visited Mongolia, parts of Africa and Vietnam. He is survived by his parents, Ann and Roger, and his sister, Becky.

George W Dunster (1948), died in 2013 at Beacher Hall, the School's former home in Bath Road, Reading. His father and uncle (Harry) were legends in their time

because their timely intervention saved the School from closure in 1946-7.

Roger Hunt (1946). His widow now lives in Reading with **Jonathan Hunt** (1996).

John Frederick (Freddie) Davey Miller MBE (1935) died on 31 January 2013, aged 92. On leaving School, Freddie joined the Reading Trustee Savings Bank and remained with the Trustee Savings Bank movement all his working life. When he retired he was Deputy Chief Executive of the Trustee Savings Bank Group before it was absorbed into Lloyds. He was appointed MBE for his services to banking. Freddie was a member of the Aldworth Lodge of Freemasons and for many years he was Treasurer.

Paul N Stone (1995) died in April after suffering from a long-term illness. The funeral service was held at Reading Crematorium.

Arthur Warrell (1930) died aged 98 on 9 February, 2013. A wise and long-standing member of the Old Blues Committee, he was the President of the Association in 1972. He was Head Boy in 1929 and was extremely proud of the School and his associations with it and was at the Open Day in 2012. The funeral was in Wokingham in February.

Denis Woodley (1940) died at the end of 2012. He had been living in Abingdon and was a regular attendee at events and always spoke very proudly about being an Old Blue.

Denis Youles (1952) died in April 2013. Although he was a pupil for only a short time he made a name for himself on the cricket field. RBCS Classics teacher, cricket coach and renowned footballer and subsequent BBC broadcaster, Maurice Edelston, wrote in the 1952 *Aldworthian*: 'YOULES: A "find" this season. Bowls left arm round and makes the ball move in the air and off the ground. He has bowled exceptionally well. Likes to make runs quickly and can strike the ball hard.'

News of former staff

Brigadier Maurice Sheen (1978-91) has been working as Senior Mentor to the Afghan Army in Kabul. He has been based at the new 'Sandhurst in the Sand' - a military academy, which opened in October for 270 recruits who will be on the front line against the Taliban. Built and run for the next decade with £75m

of British money, the school is Britain's only military commitment beyond next year when Nato combat operations end. The 1880 Battle of Mahwand, which is commemorated by the huge lion in Reading's Forbury Park, is included in the curriculum. In the battle, an army of Afghans defeated two brigades of British and Indian troops, including men from the 66th (Berkshire) Regiment of Foot.

Ten years after leaving Holme Park as biology technician, Mrs Susan Morris (1984 – 2003) sends a progress report from her home in Woodley: 'After being taken on by John Allen I stayed for 19 happy years at RBCS and worked with three of her heads of the Biology department. I'm still enjoying retirement with my husband. This year we celebrated the arrival of our first great-granddaughter, Ellie, a few weeks before our 50th wedding anniversary. A huge family party was a happy compensation when my husband's health upset our planned anniversary cruise.'

Holme Park at the movies

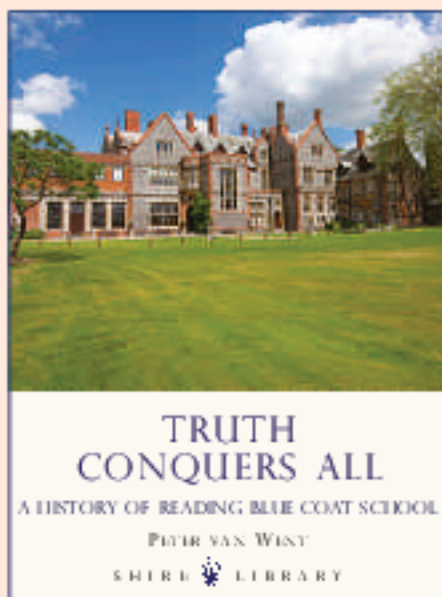
Currently appearing at The Mill at Sonning is actor Michael Howe who played Unman in the film *Unman, Wittering and Zigo* which was filmed at Holme Park in 1971.

The thriller takes its name from the three last called surnames on a school register. It starred David Hemmings as a new school teacher who fears for his life when he learns that the previous teacher was killed by his pupils.

The film opens with this particular teacher's point of view as he is hurled off the cliff. Michael recalled that the camera was wrapped in a protective foam jacket resembling a huge ball and of course pushed off the cliff to give his point of view. Michael wrote that as Unman he 'had a very embarrassing scene involving my Latin verbs...'. After filming at RBCS the cast relocated to Llandudno and Anglesey. Michael's latest film *Full Circle* is shortly due for release in Europe.

Other productions filmed at the School include an episode of *Inspector Morse* in 1987, in which Morse is assigned a case of a runaway teenager

School history published



School archivist Peter van Went's history of Blue Coat, *Truth Conquers All*, has now been published and is available for £6.99 from Amazon or at School Reception.

Headmaster Michael Windsor said at Prize Giving on 12 September that 'there is no-one better qualified than Peter, a long-term resident of Sonning, an Old Blue and a teacher whose long career was dedicated to the nurture of pupils at Blue Coat, to write the School's history.' The fully illustrated 64-page book provides a fascinating and very pictorial overview of the history of the School, from Richard Aldworth's bequest in 1646 for the building of a school 'to teach 20 Children of honest poore men,' to the day Blue Coat opened its doors to boys in 1660, through various wars and various moves, to the thriving Sonning-based school that it is today. A copy of the book has been given to all current pupils. *Truth Conquers All* is also available in digital form.

from school, and suspects that the girl's been murdered; *Goal!* (2005), in which Santiago Muñoz is a footballer who gets scouted and transferred to Newcastle United, and *The Hole* (2001), in which four teenagers at a British private school secretly uncover and explore the depths of a sealed underground hole created decades before as a bomb shelter.

Premier tree felled

The School's celebrated *Wellingtonia* in the old stable yard was felled immediately after the St Jude's Day Storm at the end of October 2013.

Experts told the School that the continuing pattern of falling branches meant that it could no longer be allowed to survive.

The tree was probably planted around 1863 by Robert Palmer, Tory MP for

Berkshire and the then owner of Holme Park, in honour of his 'old boss' and former Prime Minister, the 'Iron Duke', hero of Waterloo. As with Margaret Thatcher, his politics were highly controversial!

The School gave some thought to selling the timber for furniture making but because it is softwood it is most likely to be burnt as fuel. Three pieces of the tree were kept for use by the School.

The giant redwood *Sequoiadendron giganteum* was introduced to England in 1853 and named 'Wellingtonia' after the recently deceased Duke of Wellington. Country estate owners were keen to own a specimen of the largest tree by volume in the world with such an iconic name and jumped at the chance to grow it. Several others were planted in Sonning at around the same time. Specimens can reach up to 95m in height and are known to live for up to 3,200 years.



Matthew Palmer's MR2 in competition

MR2 race success for Matthew



Matthew Palmer (2009) is enjoying a highly successful career in sports car racing after graduating in Aeronautical Engineering at Brunel University in 2013.

He now has a Graduate Engineering position at Lockheed Martin. At Blue Coat he raced go-karts and in 2011 started racing a car in the Millers Oils Toyota MR2 Championship, which is organised by the 750 Motor Club.

The 2013 season consisted of 15 races held at circuits including Silverstone, Donnington Park, Brands Hatch and Snetterton. He qualified at Brands Hatch on pole by over 1.5 seconds,

however mechanical problems caused him to retire whilst leading, even though he had set a new lap record for the MR2 Championship. He went on to win both races at Pembrey in Wales by over 10 seconds whilst setting the fastest lap in both, carrying on with this winning form at Donnington Park where he set another fastest lap. After seven months of racing, the championship came down to the final two races at Cadwell Park in Lincolnshire. To win the Overall and Class Championship he needed only an eighth place in one of the races. However he wanted to win the championship in style! Both races were won and the season ended with eight wins out of 15 races and 12 podiums.

Attention is now on 2014, when Matthew needs sponsors to progress into a new, higher profile championship. For all his latest news see www.matthew-palmer.com.

Lewis Ward

Lewis, (2013) left the School in July when he had the great good fortune to be signed for three years as a junior player at Reading FC. He will complete his A Levels at the Reading Academy.

EARLY CAREER

Lewis started playing football at Pinewood FC when he was just five. His father was amongst the coaches of what



became a highly successful team. In his last season at Pinewood the team won both the league and the East Berkshire cup twice and went 110 games unbeaten. He also started to play for the East Berks County side, joining all the top players from the league. At a tournament in 2005 a Southampton FC scout invited Lewis to a trial session for the U9 Academy team. That year Lewis met head goalkeeping coach at Reading FC, Sal Bibbo, and was able to spend the summer training with Reading, moving from Southampton to play with Reading the following season. Training for under 16s was tough: three nights a week from 7pm to 9pm plus Saturday mornings and matches on Sundays all over the country. Lewis even had a chance to play in goal for Arsenal, as their keepers were injured, and saved a penalty for them against Reading!

PROGRESS IN 2013

Since his early days, Lewis's playing has gone from strength to strength, with more and more playing opportunities, not only for Reading but also internationally. In February he was called up for the England under 16s and played against Germany. Later in the year, Lewis had the great honour to receive the Steve Death Award for top academy goalkeeper of the season in April. This was presented to him at the Reading vs QPR first team home game in front of 20,000 people. In August 2013 Lewis managed to secure a place in the U18 academy side and was on standby for the England U17 team in Armenia. In December 2013 he was called up to an England U17 training camp.

Lewis also enjoys swimming and windsurfing.



James Rees, Tom Gibbs, George Andrews and James Berger (all 2013)



Bewigged Old Blues' big row

On 15 September, 2013 James Berger, Tom Gibbs, George Andrews and James Rees (all 2013) took part, along with some 50 current pupils, in a sponsored row from Radley College Boat Club to RBCS in aid of the Boat Club and the Get Kids Going charity – the aim of which is to help children with disabilities get into sports.

Tom Gibbs (2013) writes:

We felt that a gruelling 35-mile, nine-hour long row for this worthwhile cause would be the best way for us to celebrate our seven years of rowing together at School.

After about 15 miles of hard rowing we began to doubt that decision. Things worsened when a seat refused to work properly until Goring Lock, some 23 miles in, and because of our remarkably unique decision to do almost the whole distance in fancy dress.

Fortunately we had pleasant conditions in which to row, even if we suffered some of the worst blisters any of us had experienced. Despite these and James Rees' almost constant requests for a break, we pressed on. Our spirits were kept up at all the locks by support from parents, staff and pupils current and former, who passed water and food to all the crews. Eight hours, 45 minutes after leaving Radley College the four of us finally pulled up at the Blue Coat Boat House, where we were only the second boat home, losing out to the first boat back by just five minutes.

After the final boats returned, everyone was treated to a hog roast dinner kindly organised by Old Blue (and recently departed Year 8 coach) James Boyce. All in all, the School raised over £11,000 with the money being split 50–50 between the boat club and the charity. The School has put its share of the money towards refurbishment of existing boats and the purchase of new ones.

A big thank you to all the parents who helped with this event and to staff Rob Edmondson, Jenny Coates and Matt Crouchman (2007) for sitting on the safety launches, and a big thank you to Boatman Tim Liversage for organising the whole event.

Photos with thanks to Simon Milford.



Reunion Day success: if not on the pitch!

The Daniels Cup cricket match between the School's 1st XI and the Old Blues XI in June was a draw – but overall the Reunion Day was a winner.



On Saturday, 29 June, the annual Daniels Cup cricket match was combined with a reunion tea for a large group of Old Blues. Alumni from before 1955 and throughout the 1970s were invited to this year's reunion, where they were taken on a tour of the School by Blue Coat's prefects – and were able to see the changes on the School site, pore over photographs in the Old Blues Room, and enjoy a reunion with old friends over a special afternoon tea in the Buttery. Tony Field (1957), is to be congratulated for travelling from Ottawa, Canada with his wife, Celia, just for the occasion.



Alumni Administrator Marjie Thorne with Old Blues President Adam Hill (2004) and Tony Field (1957)





Adam Hill (2004)

Your President writes...

This year it is a decade since I left RBCS, but somehow it still feels as if it were only yesterday that I was a student. I live and work in south eastern Spain now, a far cry from the south east of the UK.

I still remember my first Spanish class whilst in Year 2 in 1998 in the now demolished Dunster building, but I certainly never thought then that it would lead me to a career abroad in the fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) world!

I feel it is a great privilege to remain part of the School community through the Old Blues Association – something I would encourage you to do also. There are so many events in sports, the arts and general socializing that there is definitely something for everyone.

Our website www.readingoldblues.org.uk will keep you up to date, so it is worth signing up if you have not done so. It only takes a moment, and through registering you will receive the annual newsletter. New people are always welcome on the Old Blues team, so please do contact me or our alumni administrator Marjie Thorne at the School.

Looking ahead to 2014, you are warmly invited to our AGM on February 9, 2014 as well as to the Old Blues Dinner on Saturday 12 April. Both events are at RBCS.

Annual review

2012–13 was another busy year in the Old Blues calendar with plenty of events including our annual dinner on Saturday, 23 March in the Buttery. It was great to see so many people from different years in attendance. Special guests for the evening were the Mayor of Reading, the Headmaster, the three Heads of School – Oli Dandridge, Mim Hicklin and Shamus Butt, and Marjie Thorne, the School's alumni administrator. The dinner was a great opportunity to catch up with friends and my thanks go to the Old Blues who, year after year, give their time to plan and run the evening.

This year the Old Blues lost their friendly match to Blue Coat's 1st XI football team on Sunday, 21 April. Given that the School team was unbeaten all season and won both the Gibbs Cup and the Berkshire County Cup, it is however probably not that surprising!

New to the events calendar this year was a Hog Roast held on Sunday 15 October at Blue Coat. Some 11 crews from Blue Coat completed a 35-mile sponsored row on the day in aid of the Boat House and the charity Get Kids Going.

Diary

AGM

Sunday, 9 February, 11 am

Annual Dinner

Saturday, April 12, the Buttery
www.readingoldblues.org.uk

Sports Day

Wednesday, 7 May, from midday

Old Blues Reunion Day

Saturday, 28 June

Swing into Summertime

Tuesday, 1 July

Malthus Service

Friday, 4 July, 2 pm

Contacts

Reading Blue Coat School

Marjie Thorne - Alumni Office
mlt@rbc.org.uk

www.rbc.org.uk

Reading Old Blues Association

James Boyce - Secretary
jaboyle20@gmail.com
Including enquiries about playing
in Daniels Cup Football & Cricket

Adam Hill - President
adamhill@gmail.com

David Woodward - OBN Editor
d.woodward@reading.ac.uk
or write to Long Gardens,
Sonning Eye, Reading RG4 6TR

www.readingoldblues.org.uk

Why not get involved?

Events like the Association's highly successful annual dinner take a lot of work but are incredibly worthwhile, so why not do your bit by getting involved with the Old Blues Committee? Meetings are short and informal and are often followed by a drink at the Bull in Sonning! For more information, email James Boyce, ROBA Secretary.

The School's new Head of Careers, John Slack, is actively seeking experienced professionals from all fields who might be willing to attend the School's annual careers event. Please email him at jrs@rbc.org.uk

Thanks

Many thanks to all those who have provided copy for this issue. Please keep sending your news to d.woodward@reading.ac.uk. Do we have your up-to-date email address? Please update it on the Old Blues website: www.readingoldblues.org.uk. The address is kept private and you can be sure that we won't bombard you with junk mail (just the occasional update). You may also wish to 'Like' us at www.facebook.com/ReadingOldBlues.