

# SIR THOMAS RICH'S NEWSLETTER

October 2001



We have come to the end of an extremely busy half term, with our Open Days and Open Evening, Speech Day and Ofsted Inspection. Schools always find Ofsted inspections stressful but the initial feedback from our inspectors was most encouraging. The Lead Inspector, who will be writing the Report, commented that he was particularly impressed by the quality of teaching and the behaviour and attitude of our pupils. So the anxiety leading up to and through the inspection week should be rewarded by a Report which confirms the high standards we attain and praises the work of our staff, pupils and Governors.

*J. Kellie*

## PARENTS' ASSOCIATION

As your PA reps we would like to highlight the activities we do and how you can help us do a better job.

Each school year has a representative whom you can contact via the school to raise any relevant (non-educational) questions at our half termly meetings or pass on any fundraising ideas you may have. We always need new ideas and really do value your thoughts.

A lot of work by the committee goes on behind the scenes to enrich our children's school life. Every child benefits, whether from using the school minibuses (the PA buys and pays the running costs for these), extra items for the classroom that don't fall in the usual school budget, affiliation fees and so on. Time is also given to doing refreshments for sports events, concerts, parents' evenings, sports day BBQ, Christmas by Candlelight, etc. A team also organises and operates ordering and distribution of school uniform and the Nearly New uniform.

Please consider how you can help support us further. Take out a covenant, join the 100 club, we need new members and welcome the support (contact Shirley Penter on 01242 863612), give time to man a stall at the Christmas Fayre (8th December, 1-4 pm). May we take this opportunity to thank those parents who already support the school by covenant, 100 club membership and their time. The Social Secretary is Nick Stokes and he can be reached on 01242 696959 and would welcome a call from you.

If you can help with any of the above or wish to join the Committee or the refreshment rota, please contact us via the school, marked for the attention of the Parents' Association.

Linda Dalton, Chairperson (01452 523275)

100 Club winner for October—Mrs. J. Noakes.

## TABLE TENNIS

Congratulations to Tom Burdett (11R) who represented England at Under 16 level at an international tournament in Belgium in July.

The School is again represented by three teams playing in the Gloucester Table Tennis Association league, matches running from September to March. I am grateful to Mr. Mohamed and to Adam Gardner for managing and organising the junior teams.

## CROSS COUNTRY

In the first round of the West Mercia League Peter Kellie won the race easily, with the team coming fourth overall out of the six teams. In the District Trials Rich's secured a good number of qualifiers, with Kevin Ellis winning the Junior race and Phillip Hanson coming home first in the Inter race. Lastly, our Inter team qualified for the next round of the English Schools' National Cross Country Competition, finishing second overall in the preliminary round.

PDL

## 44TH GLOUCESTER (STRS) VENTURE SCOUTS

The unit enjoyed a very successful and enjoyable visit to Eire during the Summer break. Several of the party planned and executed four day expeditions on foot along the Beara Way, thus completing their Queen's Scout/Gold Award Duke of Edinburgh ventures. We have just published edition 89 of the unit's own magazine "Venture 44" which recounts our adventures in Eire.

Matthew Key was awarded his Duke of Edinburgh Silver Award and he, together with Rachael Brown and Adam Griffiths (now at university), will attend their final interviews for Queen's Scout in December.

We continue to attract new members with eight Year 10 students joining the unit at the start of term. Several of these took part in fundraising for the Meningitis Trust by walking the 22 miles of the Stroud Five Valleys Walk in rather wet and windy conditions at the end of September. Following pool training, we put our new canoeing skills to the test on the Gloucester Canal, Rich Ellison and Rob Hayes ably demonstrating how to exit safely from a capsized canoe! A different sort of paddling brought success as twelve of us joined with the 38th Longlevens unit to propel the District entry to victory in the annual Dragon Boat Races at South Cerney last week.

The involvement of Mr. P. Lloyd as AVSL has proved a major boon to the unit and we look forward to an exciting and adventure-filled future ..... if the Scout Movement's imminent restructuring plans allow us to continue to exist.

PB

## OFSTED INSPECTION

We welcomed a team of eleven Ofsted inspectors into school for the week beginning 8th October. They carried out a 'short inspection' of the whole school but we were also one of the first schools to be treated to the new, more detailed, Sixth Form inspection. My thanks to parents who supported this process by attending the Ofsted parents' meeting on 24th September.

The initial feedback from the inspectors was very positive so we look forward with confidence to the publication of their report in mid-November. A copy of the summary will be sent to all parents.

## OLD RICHIANs

News of two ex-pupils: Christopher Hockings (1991-8) graduated from Leicester University with a 2:1 BA in Sociology; Phillip Clegg (1990-7) gained a 2:1 Masters degree in Earth Sciences from Jesus College, Oxford University.

## OKLAHOMA!

By the time you read this we will have had two Sunday rehearsals; at the time of writing we've had a complete run-through of Act I (on Open Evening) and one of Act II. The show is coming together well and tickets will be on sale in November, price £4 & £3, for the production on 5th, 6th and 7th December at 7.30 pm in the School Hall.

In the meantime perhaps you can help? I am still looking for cowboy boots (any line dancers out there?), hats and guns (toy ones!). Also needed are old sheets for the girls' petticoats, denim jeans and plaid shirts for the boys and I'm also looking for a Victorian-style wedding dress (size 12). All contributions to me as soon after half term as possible please.

ERS

## ST. IVES SIXTH FORM ART RESIDENTIAL TRIP

Another successful residential trip was taken to St Ives with the Sixth Form Art students at the end of September. With 29 students and their luggage squashed into the two minibuses it promised to be an interesting journey and it was!!

Each day was crammed with a range of activities including visits to the Tate Gallery, Barbara Hepworth gardens and museum, as well as sketching and painting en plein air along the Tinnars Way and in St. Ives itself. In the evenings back at the Hostel activities included a slide show, figure drawing classes and mixed media experiments. Each and every task was undertaken with great enthusiasm. The weather was kind to us for the majority of the trip and the occasional stormy sky made for some dramatic paintings. All in all a very enjoyable trip on which both pupils and staff had a wonderful time.

MCH/RJL

## FRANKENSTEIN

On 20th September we hosted *Firewalk Theatre Company* from Zaragoza, Spain. Their production of *Frankenstein* was attended by our Spanish pupils along with many from other local schools. Firewalk aim to support language learning through drama, performing in English when in Spain and in Spanish when in Britain.

Obviously it was easier for Sixth Form pupils to understand and appreciate the language that was used but there were places where even our Year 9 beginners, in their third week of studying Spanish, were able to follow the dialogue and learn new expressions. The acting was of an extremely high standard and everyone's attention was held throughout by the fast-moving action supported by some superb special effects. ¡*Qué horror!*

APH

## OPEN DAYS

This year we held two Open Days for families considering application to Sir Thomas Rich's for Year 7 entry in September 2002. We have traditionally held just one Open Day but it has been extremely busy in recent years so we decided to spread the numbers over two days. As usual, tremendous interest was shown. I am particularly grateful to the many students who acted as Guides during the two days and in our Open Evening and to all the students who helped in Departmental displays and demonstrations in the Evening.

The method of application has become even more convoluted for interested parents, with the Local Authority requiring them to rank schools in strict order of priority. This is most unfair on parents considering an LEA Grammar School, it leaves parents with unnecessarily difficult decisions to make.

## WEB DESIGN TEAM

We have been busy this term working on a new school web site. Twenty pupils from Years 7-10 are investigating every aspect of school life from sport and activities to academia and marketing. It is early days but progress is being made and we look forward to establishing our web presence shortly.

GEC

## LANGUAGE CENTRE

Building work on our new Language Centre has commenced. The work is being undertaken by Snape Construction Limited who arrived on site on Monday, they plan to complete construction by the end of May. The Language Centre will comprise four classrooms, a tutorial room, a computer suite and an office. The total cost, including equipment and furnishings, will be almost £600,000. Funding has come from the Government (following our award of Language College status), the Local Education Authority, the Gloucester United Schools charity, our Parents' Association and several local businesses.

We are delighted that our pupils will soon benefit from superb Modern Language teaching facilities.

## SPEECH DAY

One of the highlights of the School year is our Annual Speech Day and Prize Giving which was held in the hall on 28th September. Over a hundred pupils received awards for achievement across a wide range of academic and extra-curricular activities. My thanks to the parents and Year 7 pupils who attended, the Hall was full to capacity for this important event. We also welcomed Parmjit Dhandra MP and the Sheriff's consort, Mr. Francis. Our Guests of Honour were Mr. and Mrs. Beer: Ian Beer CBE spoke of the necessity to work hard to achieve one's goals and of the importance of personal qualities which are not assessed by exams or awarded certificates. The evening was a great success, it is always a pleasure to see so many pupils' efforts publicly rewarded.

## GLOBAL ACTION PLAN

The School has agreed to work with the Action at School initiative to encourage the whole school community to manage resources more effectively, especially our rubbish. We need an Action Team to run the project and would like volunteers from each year in school, parents, teachers and support staff.

If you are interested in finding out more or in volunteering to be part of the team please let Mrs. Arnold know. We already have some contact with Global Action Plan as two of our Year 8 boys have won prizes in the 'Design a Web page' for the Action at School campaign.

## APPEAL PANEL MEMBERS

We have been asked by the County Council if we could bring the following to the attention of parents. It is a copy of an advertisement recently placed in the local press, appealing for Lay Members to serve on Education Appeal Panels.

*Education Appeal Panels hear appeals against the decisions of the admission body to either refuse admission to a child or to permanently exclude a pupil. The admission body is the Local Education Authority in the case of County or voluntary controlled schools.*

*Under the School Standards & Framework Act 1998 Appeal Panels must include a lay member. Appeal Panels are normally held during the working day and on occasions have to sit for up to six days over a four-week period.*

*Lay members of Appeal Panels are persons without personal experience in the management of any school or the provision of education in any school (otherwise than as a Governor or in any voluntary capacity). School Governors and parents are particularly encouraged to apply.*

*Appeals are held in respect of all Community and voluntary controlled infant, junior and primary schools and all Community secondary schools.*

*Applications for appointment as lay members of Appeal Panels are invited from all eligible persons irrespective of ethnic origin, religious belief, gender, sexual orientation, disability or any other irrelevant factor.*

*Application forms and further information can be obtained from Jane Cleaver, Democratic Services Unit, Shire Hall, Gloucester, telephone number 01452 425096. Closing date for receipt of applications is 2nd November, 2001*

## LETTERS SENT HOME

05/09 Home-School Agreement - new students  
05/09 Year 11 - GCSE Business Studies Visit  
06/09 Year 7 - Visit to Stratford  
10/09 Sixth Form - extra language lessons  
11/09 Ofsted Inspection Meeting for Parents  
21/09 Lessons in Gujarati  
08/10 Year 7 - Informal Parents' Evening  
09/10 New Physical Education policies  
15/10 Lower Sixth - Examination Study Leave

## RAILWAY SOCIETY

The Railway Society made two very different trips during the second half of September. The first trip of the new school year was a Saturday visit to East Anglia. We travelled to the North Norfolk Railway via Central London. Perfect weather and a trip to the beach at Sheringham made for an enjoyable day.

The following week saw the (temporary) return of steam-hauled trains running on the Newport-Gloucester-Bristol mainline. We took advantage of this unusual event on the Thursday evening and travelled to Bristol and back in true Great Western style.

SWP

## NESTLÉ TOKENS

We are again collecting "Box Tops for Education" tokens from Nestlé cereal boxes. A collection box is in the entrance foyer. The scheme runs until March next year.

## SAFETY IN P.E.

All parents should have received a letter on 9th October giving details of safety requirements in team sports. For example, it is now essential that shinpads and appropriate footwear are worn for football and hockey. Mouthguards must be worn in all hockey sessions and rugby matches. If you did not receive the letter which gives the full details, please ask.

## LANGUAGE LESSONS

We are pleased to have been able to introduce lunchtime lessons in additional languages this term: Italian (taught by Mr. Vaughan-Smith), Latin (Mrs. Grocott) and Gujarati (separate beginners and advanced classes). We are hoping to start Mandarin Chinese later this term.

## NEARLY NEW

Sales of Nearly New uniform are held on the second Monday of every half term between 6.00 and 7.30 p.m.

## RUGBY

Congratulations to James Martin (11R) and Timothy Dodwell (11S) on their selection for the Gloucestershire Under 16 rugby squad.

### 1st XV - P6, W3, L3, F104, A108.

The 1st XV have struggled to find any consistency so far this season. They have shown a tenacity when the chips are down but this has often been too little, too late. Greater team work and a consistent application of a pattern of play are needed if they are to do themselves justice. With many difficult fixtures ahead they must develop greater cohesion in both attack and defence. IJG

### 2nd XV - P7, W2, L5, F84, A153.

The 2nd XV opened their season with a scrappy defeat by Chosen Hill, the team looking rusty and unfit. Two hard games against 1st team opposition followed against Beaufort and Churchdown before the team notched up wins against Kings and Cheltenham College. The team looked likely to beat Bournside but two quick tries following interceptions and kick and chase cost them the match. Finishing against Dean Close the forwards gained the upper hand but Dean Close had too much pace in the backs and ran out winners. An enjoyable start to the season and it is pleasing to see competition for all places, the team is improving rapidly. MRS

### U15 XV - P9, W4, L5, F186, A289.

The U15 team started the season with significant victories over Beaufort, Newent and Chosen Hill. Recent defeats have been as a result of lack of consistency and confidence. However, if we continue to work together as a team, we expect some good results after half term. Thank you for your support.

Oliver Howley, Captain

### U14 XV - P8, W4, L4, F161, A105.

The U14 team possesses an excellent team spirit and this was displayed with significant wins against Dean Close and Chosen Hill. Good progress is evident. PDL

### U13 XV - 'A' Team: P6, W2, L4, F78, A139; 'B' Team: P4, L4, F32, A113.

The season so far has proved rather disappointing. Both 'A' and 'B' teams have suffered unnecessarily heavy defeats at the hands of stronger opponents (Bournside and Monmouth). Against more evenly matched sides they have provided some very entertaining, close and exciting encounters, winning more than they have lost; these were however all games they should have won quite comfortably.

The whole squad thus far has not really knuckled down and grafted when it counts, failing in matches to perform consistently the essential basics, while not showing the dedication to training and practice that is necessary to establish a positive team spirit. PB

## DATES FOR SECOND HALF OF TERM

5th-8th November	Lower Sixth Examinations
Monday, 12th November	Nearly New Uniform 6.00-7.30 p.m.
Wednesday, 14th November	Year 10 Parents' Consultation Evening 6.00 p.m.
5th-7th December	School Drama Production - Oklahoma! - 7.30 p.m.
Saturday, 8th December	Parents' Association Christmas Fayre 1.00-4.00 p.m.
Monday, 10th December	Upper Sixth Parents' Consultation Evening 6.00 p.m.
Thursday, 13th December	Christmas by Candlelight 7.30 p.m.
Tuesday, 18th December	Carol Service, St. John's, Northgate, 7.30 p.m.
Wednesday, 19th December	Carol Service, Holy Trinity, 7.30 p.m.
Friday, 21st December	END OF TERM 12.45 p.m.
24th December-4th January	Christmas Holidays
Monday, 7th January	Term begins 8.40 a.m.

**SIR THOMAS RICH'S SCHOOL  
PARENTS' ASSOCIATION  
CHRISTMAS FAYRE**

**GRAND CHRISTMAS DRAW**

**3.00 pm SATURDAY 8th DECEMBER 2001**

We are holding our Christmas Fayre on  
Saturday 8th December between  
**1.00 pm and 4.00 pm** in the **School Hall**.

The raffle is one of our major fund-raising events of the year and we need your support.

We will be sending each family three books of raffle tickets. The **first prize** is a **DVD PLAYER** which we hope will appeal to all ages.

Please do try to sell as many tickets as possible. All of the money raised goes to provide extras for the pupils. However, if for any moral, religious or other reason you do not wish to sell the tickets please return them to school.

There will be a prize for the person who sells the most tickets from both the Lower and Upper School. If you can sell more than three books extra tickets may be obtained from the School Secretary.

The completed Raffle Stubs and the money should be returned (in a sealed envelope marked *Christmas Draw*) to the School Secretary any morning, prior to school. **Please return all money by:**

**Wednesday, 5th December**

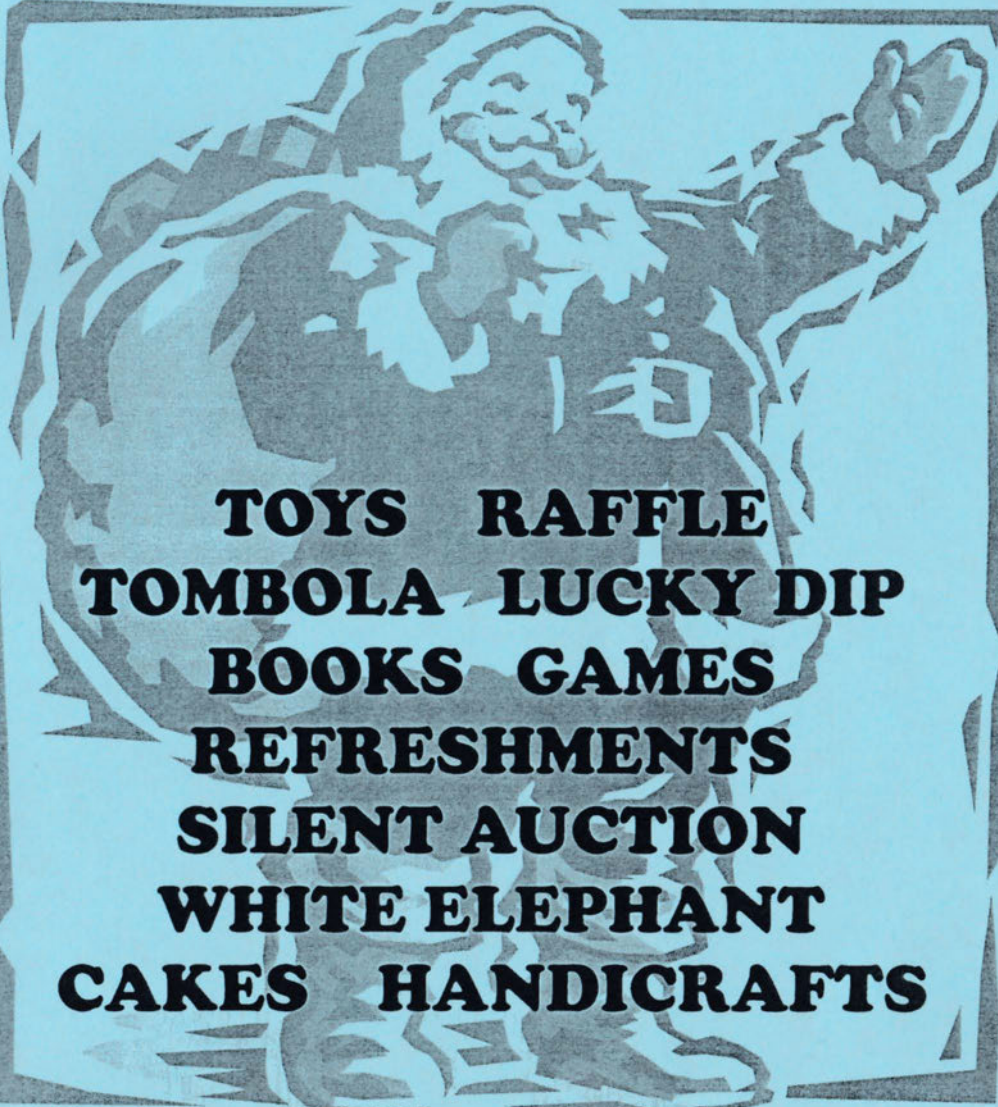
Thank you for reading this letter.

**Please do come along on the day.**

Nick Stokes (Social Secretary)

PARENTS' ASSOCIATION

# *Christmas Fayre*



**TOYS RAFFLE  
TOMBOLA LUCKY DIP  
BOOKS GAMES  
REFRESHMENTS  
SILENT AUCTION  
WHITE ELEPHANT  
CAKES HANDICRAFTS**

**at Sir Thomas Rich's School  
Saturday, 8th December 2001  
1:00pm - 4:00pm**

