

# SIR THOMAS RICH'S NEWSLETTER

APRIL 2003



Last week saw the publication of more League Tables when the Government published the A-Level "Performance Tables". Our A-level results last summer were our best ever so we were not surprised to find Sir Thomas Rich's ranked as 14<sup>th</sup> in the country. This was an excellent achievement by last year's Upper Sixth. We have never tried to be an examination factory, our students achieve excellent results because of our ethos in which everyone is encouraged to develop confidence and to achieve their best across a wide range of curricular and extra-curricular activity. Outstanding A-level results are but one measure of our success.

*J. Kell.*

## FOUNDER'S WEEK EVENTS

As part of our celebration of the school's foundation in 1666, we have undertaken to raise funds to pay for the education of 20 children at our partner school in Jinja, Uganda. I have been delighted and impressed by the ingenuity and energy of pupils in devising schemes for raising money and the enthusiasm with which they have organised events.

At the time of writing the following have been completed: a Year 7/8 disco (which raised £500), a Sixth Form Fashion Show (£600), 8B held a cake sale (£55), James White (7B) was sponsored to stand all day (£64), the Junior Drama Club performed *A Pardoner's Tale* (£70). Further events will include: a penalty shoot-out, Bring & Buy Sale, Music Fair, indoor cricket, Junior Quiz, No Homework Day, Free Dress Day, Rock Concert, Uganda Quiz, sponsorship of the choir singing Psalm 119, Shave a Teacher, 7-a-side rugby. Our aim is to raise £3,500 which would enable 20 children to gain an education who would otherwise not do so, emulating Sir Thomas Rich's philosophy when he founded our school.

Mr. Seales and Mr. Crewe are presently in Jinja, visiting Parvatiben Muljibhai Madhvani Girls' School and the environs to establish ways in which our two schools can work together.

On 14<sup>th</sup> May our Year 7 will be shown the sites in Gloucester of historic significance to the school's early years. These will include St. John's Northgate, the Cathedral, the Guildhall (where the school started) and The Old School House. My thanks to Mr. Pilbeam for organising this.

## HOUSE EVENTS

This has been a busy half-term for House activity. The **Senior Soccer** was won by Eastgate, who won both Y11-13 and Y10 competitions, from S,W,N. In the **Junior Soccer**, Northgate won each of the Y7, Y8 (tied with Eastgate) and Y9 events thereby winning overall, from S,E,W.

The **Public Speaking** competition saw teams of three arguing for and against a series of motions. All teams were of high quality and had obviously worked hard in preparation. Eastgate won the junior event, Northgate the senior, overall Eastgate won from Westgate with S and N tied in third.

The House **Cross Country** is underway at the time of printing. 12 House events have now been completed, with 7 to come. Westgate are ahead of Eastgate by just one point, with Northgate and Southgate chasing.

## COLLECTING PUPILS

There have been occasions recently when parties of pupils have arrived back at school after an educational visit, parents have collected their children – except for one child. This has meant that a teacher has had to remain behind until the child is collected. It is unreasonable to expect teachers, after a long day, to hang around waiting for a parent to arrive late. I would ask parents to ensure that they are ready to collect their children at the scheduled time. I am grateful to the majority of our parents who do so.

## SIXTH FORM

Four members of the Lower Sixth, Luke Materacki (chemistry), Phillip Pymm (biochemistry), Mark Donaldson (biology) and Imran Moolla (engineering) have secured places on a residential course at Brasenose College, Oxford at the end of June. They will receive lectures and tutorials, thus gaining an idea of what teaching is like at Oxford.

Three members of the Lower Sixth have been invited to the prestigious Eton College Summer School. Katrina Woolcock (Biology and Chemistry), Hannah Foxwell (Mathematics and Physics) and Tim Dodwell (Mathematics) will attend lectures in their chosen subjects and also be able to enjoy the wide range of facilities Eton has to offer.

The Sixth Form has been entertained and educated by visiting speakers Mike Hurst, talking and singing about *The Musikmakers*; Rick Pearson, who explained and demonstrated *The History & Development of Firearms, 1500-2000* and Barrie Clark who gave an insight into *The Transition to University Life*. On Wednesday of this week a Higher Education Conference was organised in school for the Lower Sixth, with a range of activities and seminars which culminated in Hector Krome describing the advantages of taking a Gap Year with *Around the World on a Pound a Day*.

## TABLE TENNIS

The school again fielded three teams in the Gloucester Table Tennis Association league. As the only school teams in what is effectively an adult league the teams are inevitably up against strong opposition. However they fared well, particularly the "B" team, led by Joe Latimer (11R) with strong support from Chris Pigott (9R) and the rest of his team. The "C" team also achieved good results, particularly as they gained experience as the season progressed. My thanks to Toby Dalton (U6R) for organising and encouraging this team.

## YEAR 9 ICE SKATING TRIP

On Friday 21<sup>st</sup> March forty five pupils, accompanied by Messrs. Gladwell, Peffers and Carter, visited the Link Centre Ice Rink in Swindon. Having spent hours navigating the perimeters of other rinks in the past, I was most impressed by the 'Torvil and Dean' – like skills of most of our party. CDAC.

## INDIVIDUAL ACHIEVEMENTS

Congratulations to:

**Ashley Burgum** (U6H) who has gained a place at the Oxford Air Training College. He will train at Oxford and in the United States to qualify as a commercial pilot;

**Richard Farrow** (7B) who ran the fastest time ever by a U.K. Under 13 for the 800 metres indoors - 2 minutes 20.9 seconds - in Birmingham. Richard already held the best U.K. time for 1,500 metres indoors but managed to lower that by a further 6 seconds to 4 minutes 53 seconds;

**Philip Hanson** (11R) who represented Gloucestershire in the English Schools Cross Country Championships in Brighton, where he finished 99<sup>th</sup> in the Intermediate Boys race;

**Matthew Hopton** (7B) who was awarded first place for poetry recital at the Kingswood Drama Festival in Bristol. Matthew also gained second place for acting and bible reading;

**Samantha Lyons** (L6T) who represented Gloucestershire in the Alex Barlass Netball Tournament in Middlesborough, helping the County to finish an excellent 9<sup>th</sup> out of over 40 counties;

**Nicholas Walkley** (U6C) who played in a brass ensemble representing The National Youth Brass Band of Great Britain at The Warehouse in London, with Government Ministers amongst the audience.

## ESPERANTO CLUB

We received e-mails and postcards from all over the world on the occasion of International Mother Language Day. Our correspondents wrote in their mother tongue and then translated the messages into Esperanto so that we could understand them. We had messages in French, German, Italian, Dutch, Japanese, Flemish, Danish, Swahili, Swedish, Polish, Farsi and English (from groups in Canada and America). We would have had messages in Russian, too, but sadly my e-mail account failed to cope with the Cyrillic alphabet.

As well as playing cards and watching videos we have engaged in correspondence with various groups abroad and we hope to organise a trip to an international camp in the near future.

I now have a few adult pupils who are nearing the end of their Esperanto correspondence course: if any more parents would like to learn, just send a note to my pigeonhole with your son's name and form and I will send you lesson one by pupil post. ERS

### **YEAR 7 CLIMBING TRIP**

On the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> April two groups from Year 7 went to the Warehouse climbing centre in Gloucester. During the two hour session the pupils practised on the climbing walls and a rope ladder, abseiling from great heights and bouldering on small "rock faces" above crash mats. A good time was had by pupils and several overcame their fears to climb to great heights! Thank you to Mr Kellie, Mr Pack and Mr James for helping supervise this event. DAG

### **YEAR 10 ART TRIP TO THE PITT RIVERS MUSEUM**

On Tuesday, 4<sup>th</sup> March both Year 10 GCSE Art groups visited the Pitt Rivers Museum in Oxford. They were there to gather visual information on a culture of their choice at the start of their second coursework unit. The museum is an ideal location for this activity as it contains literally thousands of artefacts from around the world, standing as a testimony to the collecting skills of the Victoria explorer, William Pitt Rivers. His legacy comprises an immense variety of objects, including masks, weapons, armour, clothing, jewellery, ceramic ware, totem poles and even shrunken heads.

The pupils spent the day doing first-hand sketches of a selection of these objects in a range of materials, as a precursor to further research and then developing their own ideas, leading to making an object of their own design.

This annual trip was the fifth of its kind to the museum and once again the pupils acquitted themselves extremely well indeed. The staff at the museum were very complimentary about their attitude. It is always a pleasure to return from a day trip knowing that the good reputation of the school has once again been reinforced by the excellent behaviour and efforts of the pupils involved. RJL

### **LINK WITH POLAND**

We received some beautiful posters, photographs and letters from Poland to display during our celebration of International Mother Language Day. We are also grateful to Luiza Patorski of last year's Upper Sixth for returning from Cardiff University for the day to help with the display and with the singing. ERS

### **SOCCER**

#### **Under 13 – P7, W4, L2, D1**

The Under 13 team has displayed lots of promise this season. They have reached the semi-final stage of the City Cup. Their attitude, commitment and style of play has been excellent. Only brief lapses of concentration have cost the team goals. Overall, the team has been a credit to the school. PDL

#### **Under 14 – P7, W5, L2**

It was a pleasing and generally successful season for the Under 14s with the only disappointment coming at the end of term where the defeats against Churchdown and Oxstalls meant a failure to qualify for the semi-finals of the District Cup. Prior to these setbacks the team had been undefeated showing excellent commitment and displaying a high level of skill especially in their attacking play. In these matches only Brockworth failed to provide stern opposition so the victories against Pates, Marling and RGS Worcester were particularly satisfying for being hard-fought. The team should be congratulated on their effort and approach as well as for their ability to produce attractive football. RJL

#### **Under 15 – P7, W1, D2, L4**

Although the boys had hoped to fare much better, all games were closely contested and many were played with key players missing. The boys should be proud of the way they played this year showing class, maturity and sportsmanship both on and off the field. They have been a credit to the school. JRN

### **ENGLISH DEPARTMENT THEATRE TRIPS**

In order to allow our students to prepare for their GCSE and Key Stage 3 exams the English Department has undertaken a number of theatre trips this term. Years 10 and 11 attended an evening performance of Steinbeck's 'Of Mice and Men' at Malvern, whilst Year 9 visited the Everyman to see a performance of 'Twelfth Night'. In addition the Everyman Reachout group visited school to perform the SATs workshop scenes. To balance the academic and cultural theatre visits Years 10, 11 and Sixth Form took a trip in the school minibuses to Bristol Hippodrome to see the award winning musical, Miss Saigon. Many thanks to all staff who have so graciously given their time and support. JLS

## RUGBY

### Year 7 'A' Team - P7, W4, D1, L2, F70, A35

In a season which has been disrupted by the weather in which continuity in performance has been difficult the Year 7's have emerged with great credit. They have worked hard in practice and have developed into a competitive and entertaining team. They can be pleased with their progress as individuals and as a team as they have shown great spirit in defence and speed and skill in attack. They have much to work on but they have a great deal of promise. IJG

## JUNIOR BADMINTON CLUB

Well done to the Under 14 Badminton Team who competed in the Junior Section of the Carlton Top Schools Badminton Tournament, held in Stroud on 8<sup>th</sup> March. All played with impressive individual competitiveness and team spirit, despite facing older and more experienced opponents.

In particular, their determination was rewarded with a victory in their final game of the tournament beating Marling 3-2 to finish in the top ten of the teams entered. DS

## YEAR 11 & SIXTH FORM ART TRIP TO LONDON

As all the Key Stage 4 and 5 groups taking Art will appreciate, the examination season is well and truly upon us. The GCSE, AS and A2 papers have been handed out and each pupil is required to begin the preparation towards their scheduled exam sessions in May.

A vital aspect of this procedure is gathering first-hand critical studies information about artists' work that is relevant to the pupils' chosen question. With this in mind, over fifty pupils travelled to London on 2<sup>nd</sup> April to visit the Tate Modern and Tate Britain galleries. They were armed with sketchbooks and drawing materials in readiness for the task of gathering visual information that could prove crucial in helping them refine their own ideas in the run-up to the exams. Needless to say, the pupils took the exercise very seriously and subsequent inspection of their books has illustrated the wealth of data collected during the day. One or two even managed to find time to each lunch as well. I am grateful to Mrs. Roberts and Ms. Hubert for giving up their time to accompany us on the day and I would particularly like to thank Mrs. Cormack-Hicks for organising the trip, at a time of the year when she was already incredibly busy with overseeing arrangements for the Charity Fashion Show. RJL

## CHARITY

We welcomed Mr. Hale and Ms. Talwar into assembly on Monday to receive a £500 cheque for this term's nominated charity, St. Rose's School, which is a residential and day school in Stroud for boys and girls with physical disabilities.

On "Red Nose Day" Luke Leighfield and other Y11 boys organised a Teacher Rapping contest. Amazingly they induced staff to take part and raised £186 for Comic Relief by charging pupils to watch. 8T arranged a Soak the Teacher extravaganza in the Dutch Barn which extracted £83 from pupils who paid to throw sponges at their favourite teachers.

## JUNIOR DRAMA CLUB

On 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> March the Junior Drama Club presented 'The Pardoner's Tale' and we were privileged to share the evening with members of the Sixth Form who performed 'The Nunn's Priest's Tale'.

I never cease to be amazed by the talent of the boys and girls at Tommy's, their performances were polished and confident and it is hard to believe that our Year 7 pupils performed some of the main parts after such a short time in the school. The junior cast also performed the play on Thursday lunchtime for our Founder's Day charity and managed to raise £70.

It is a real privilege to work with such talented young people and I can't wait for the summer production which will be written entirely by members of the cast. Please support us and treat yourself to a really good night out. AB

## SCIENCE EQUIPMENT

The Science Faculty would like to thank CRE at Stoke Orchard and Mr. N. Ford for allowing us to have some redundant laboratory glassware and equipment. This has been extremely useful to the Faculty and saved the school some money. We are very grateful. SC

## **AACHEN WORK EXPERIENCE EXCHANGE 2003**

For the first time four of our 'A' level students went for a week on a workplacement exchange to Aachen, Germany. This is their comment:

'On Saturday, 28<sup>th</sup> March we travelled to Aachen in Germany with Mr. Slinger for a week of work experience and discovering German culture. We stayed with German students from the Pius Gymnasium in Aachen. Our work placements were at a school for the physically handicapped, the district court, a kindergarten, a bank and at a radio station. These placements allowed us to use our knowledge of German in the workplace. We all found this week a challenge – both trying to communicate in a foreign language as well as working abroad. In the evening our exchange partners had arranged an exciting programme for us including ice skating, theatre trips and nights out in Aachen. Everyone gained a lot from the week and have brought home many unforgettable memories.' Alan Bills (L6B), Josh Jones (U6B), Vicky Selby (L6S), Carolyn Sheppard (L6S)

## **DUKE OF EDINBURGH AWARD**

There has been plenty going on during the last month or so. The sponsored orienteering day has been very successful. Thank you to all of those who supported this event either by participating, sponsoring or giving lifts to and from the orienteering course. Many participants are getting under way their skill, service and physical recreation activities. Training for the expedition section has continued with sessions on weather, cooking, first aid (including a talk from a St. John's Ambulance trainer) and campcraft.

Congratulations to Alexander Curtis and James Enderby, both of 10T, who had their Bronze Awards presented in assembly. DD

## **SILVER LEVEL CYCLING AWARD**

Between the 17<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> of March fourteen Year 7 and 8 pupils took part in the Silver level on-road cycle training course run by Gloucestershire County Council's Road Safety Unit. Having completed the training and final assessments, eleven pupils were awarded Advanced Cycling Awards. CDAC

## **44th GLOUCESTER (STRS) EXPLORER SCOUT UNIT**

A major milestone for the Venture Scout Unit this term has been its conversion into an Explorer Scout Unit, to fit in with the Scout movement's revised group and district structures for the new millennium. Effectively just a name change, we hope to see closer ties with other district Explorer units. The change at long last recognises the more appropriate membership age range of 14-18yrs (Venture Scouts were 15½-20yrs) which has effectively always been in place here due to our being a school based unit.

As for activities, the 44th has been taking a bit of a "rest" this half term following the strenuous events at the start of the year - Survival Challenge, Cotswold Marathon, Swimming Gala. We have just completed the first half of an eight week St John's Ambulance First Aid course, in which all the unit are involved.

At the end of term Chris Gallant and Matthew Bick organised yet another successful Quiz Evening. Special thanks to Quiz Master Mr A. Peffers!

Sponsorship of our Cotswold Marathon runners has so far raised £553 for the "Crack Cancer Campaign" while the National Meningitis Trust received from us a £400 cheque for their research. Around £120 from the Quiz Night proceeds will go to our Ugandan link school at Jinja. PB

## **CAREERS**

### **Skills Festival**

In March all Year 10 visited the Gloucestershire Learning and Skills Council's Festival held at Prestbury Race Course, Cheltenham.

The Interactive Festival provided an opportunity for our students to discover the diverse and wide ranging skills now needed in many occupations and professions. Numerous organisations were represented ranging from the armed services to the health industry.

On the day many of our students entered the various challenges and competitions. Jonathan Martindale (10R) scored the highest in a computer simulation activity organised by Smith's Industries and has won a day visit as a special guest to the company's H.Q. Overall the day was fun, interesting and thought provoking! PDL

## GEOGRAPHY FIELDWORK

The Upper Sixth geographers recently spent three days studying the impact of glaciation on the beautiful and sun-drenched landscapes of the Snowdonia National Park.

Next in line for fieldwork are Year 8 who will be visiting Bridgnorth on Wednesday, 7<sup>th</sup> May. Parents have recently received letters about this.

Year 7 parents will receive letters about fieldwork for their sons in the Forest of Dean soon after the Easter holidays. SWP

## ENGLISH

On 6<sup>th</sup> March a group of 17 students accompanied by Mrs. Briscoe and Mrs. Roberts attended the Sixth Form study day in Birmingham. After a pleasant journey by train and a short walk to the Carrs Centre, we enjoyed lectures on 'A Streetcar Named Desire' from some of the country's leading experts. The day was a delight! Challenging lectures, a brilliant venue and superb company. Both Mrs. Roberts and myself were impressed by the behaviour of our students and their engagement with the lectures which provoked interesting discussions on the long journey home.

Many thanks to the members of the Lower Sixth for making the day so pleasant and rewarding. AB

## CAREERS

### Malvern Higher Education Fair

The Lower Sixth visited the Malvern Higher Education Fair held at the Three Counties Showground. The students had the opportunity to seek advice, help and obtain information from numerous universities and colleges. Also seminars were delivered, ranging from UCAS application to selecting a university.

### Higher Education Day

As part of the Lower Sixth preparation for UCAS application in September the students have received a number of seminars on topics relating to University applications. These have included: What Admissions Tutors look for in applications, Making the right choices, Gap Year Options. Subsequently the Lower Sixth should be fully prepared for their September applications. PDL

## CHESS

The team plays in Division 4 of the North Glos League (an adult league) and with two games to go have a record of P13, W2, D3, L8. It has been pleasing to see several new players make creditable debuts this season. MRS

## VISIT TO SPAIN

On 27<sup>th</sup> March four members of staff accompanied 39 pupils in Years 9, 10 and 11 to Guardamar del Segura, a small coastal town just south of Alicante, to spend six days experiencing, first hand, something of the culture and language of Spain.

Activities included a visit to a Turrón factory in Jijona, a football match, a town trail in Elche and a visit to Alicante, as well as games on the beach and a day at the Terra Mítica theme park to make the most of the favourable Mediterranean climate!

All pupils benefited from this taste of life in Spain and enjoyed the opportunity of trying out their Spanish and we returned home on 2<sup>nd</sup> April tired, suntanned and enlightened. DB

## LETTERS SENT HOME

05/03 Year 7 Climbing Event  
13/03 Year 7 Climbing Event  
21/03 Lower Sixth Parents' Consultation Evening  
24/03 Year 10 Careers Visit  
25/03 New School Uniform  
01/04 Year 7 Parents' Consultation Evening  
11/04 Year 8 Parents' Consultation Evening

## CLASSICS

On 17<sup>th</sup> March Upper and Lower Sixth Classics students saw the Dionysius company's production of Aeschylus's "Agamemnon" at the Roses Theatre, Tewkesbury. Dionysius usually produce exciting versions of the plays without sacrificing the spirit of the originals. However this time we all agreed that their elimination of the chorus limited the scope of the play and the development of the characters and to have a repentant Clytemnestra at the end instead of a triumphant, blood-stained murderess, sanitized the play to a pale shadow of Aeschylus's powerful, savage drama. CLR

### HOUSE DRAMA

All participants are to be congratulated on the high standard of this year's entries. All four houses produced excellent performances. One or two houses had left details such as costume and lighting to the last minute but all the actors knew their lines and performed confidently. The winning entry was Eastgate with 'The Tiger's Bones' by Ted Hughes, produced by Peter Hards and Amar Shah. Best individual performance was won by Alastair Stanley for his last-minute understudying of a major role. ERS

### SCHOOL UNIFORM

Replacement uniform can only be ordered through school. Any pupils requiring new items of uniform for September should order **now** to ensure sizes required are available.

Members of the Parents' Association will be available on **Wednesday, 30th April** between 3.30 and 4.00 p.m. If this day/time are not convenient please ask pupils to see the School Secretary to arrange an alternative time. Payment for any items of uniform ordered will be required on collection.

Senior ties have to be worn in Year 11 and these will be available for Year 10 pupils to purchase during the lunch break on Friday, 11th July (price £3.00 each).

If you have any query regarding the above, please telephone Mrs. P. Lancaster on Gloucester 530838 or the School Secretary Mrs. J. Brown on 338400.

### THEATRE TRIP TO LONDON

The day war broke out the Year 11 GCSE Drama set were in London to see a performance of Willy Russell's 'Blood Brothers' at the Phoenix Theatre. We had made extensive contingency plans to deal with the possibility of bomb scares and tube station closures but in fact the travel arrangements went very smoothly. We recommend this production as an excellent day out. ERS

### PARENTS' ASSOCIATION 100 CLUB

A fun and easy way to raise funds for your child's school. Costs just £3 per number and you can buy as many numbers as you like. You can pay monthly or annually by standing order – a simple form to complete.

Draws are made at Parents' Association Committee Meetings and each monthly winner is notified and the cheque posted to them. The more club members the bigger the prize.

Don't delay, join today. Please complete the slip below. We look forward to welcoming you as a 100 Club member.

Name: .....

Address: .....

Telephone Number: .....

Please return slip to school marked for the attention of **Julie Power, STRS 100 Club.**

## DATES FOR THE SUMMER TERM

Monday 28th April	Term begins, 8.40 a.m.
Tuesday 29 <sup>th</sup> April	Year 8 Parents' Consultation Evening 6.00 p.m.
Monday 5 <sup>th</sup> May	<b>BANK HOLIDAY</b>
6 <sup>th</sup> - 9 <sup>th</sup> May	Year 9 National Curriculum tests (SATs)
6 <sup>th</sup> May – 13 <sup>th</sup> June (Incl)	L6 Exam Study Leave
Monday 12 <sup>th</sup> May	Nearly New Uniform, 6.00-7.30 p.m.
12 <sup>th</sup> May – 6 <sup>th</sup> June	AS examinations (Lower Sixth)
Wednesday 14 <sup>th</sup> May	Year 11 Exam Study Leave from Period 5 (11.55 a.m.)
Monday, 19 <sup>th</sup> May onwards	GCSE examinations
26 <sup>th</sup> – 30 <sup>th</sup> May	<b>HALF TERM</b>
Monday 2 <sup>nd</sup> June	U6 Exam Study Leave commences
Monday, 9 <sup>th</sup> June	Nearly New Uniform 6.00 – 7.30 p.m.
9 <sup>th</sup> - 27 <sup>th</sup> June	A2 examinations (Upper Sixth)
Wednesday 11 <sup>th</sup> June	Sports Evening, 6.30 p.m.
19 <sup>th</sup> – 25 <sup>th</sup> June	School examinations
Thursday 26 <sup>th</sup> June	<b>STAFF TRAINING DAY</b> (non-attendance for pupils)
30 <sup>th</sup> June – 4 <sup>th</sup> July	Sixth Form Induction Week
Friday 4 <sup>th</sup> July	New Year 7 Induction Day
7 <sup>th</sup> - 11 <sup>th</sup> July	Year 11 Work Experience Week
Friday 18 <sup>th</sup> July	<b>END OF TERM</b> , 12.45 p.m.

3<sup>rd</sup> September 2003 will be a Staff Training Day

The Autumn Term will commence for pupils on Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> September at 8.40 a.m.