



NEWSLETTER

Roundwood Park Alumni Association

[*Old Roundwoodians*]



April 2012 :

Issue 02

Dear Alumni

Welcome to a shortened second issue of the *Old Roundwoodians Newsletter*.

Please comment and respond to anything in this newsletter. We rely on you to keep us informed of what you are doing and also to help us remember many of the faces that appear in the many photographs. We also welcome comments and contributions from all our readers/alumni.

Please e-mail alumnioffice@roundwoodpark.co.uk

The SCHOOL WEBSITE is being revamped over the summer of 2012 so look out for the new look!

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1. THE 'OLD' SCHOOL BADGE/ LOGO



For many Alumni the original badge will forever remain associated with Roundwood Park School despite several revisions and corporate logo facelifts.

The badge carries the Latin phrase '*Quid Retribuam*' which means " what we shall give back or similar. The phrase is as relevant today if not more so in this, possibly, increasingly self absorbed society.

It also represents the traditional style of a shield that contains a wheat sheaf, indicative of the rural location and perhaps links with the world famous agricultural research station, Rothamsted, and also a stylised RP representing Round wood Park – the area location within Harpenden.

When the badge was replaced by the incoming Head teacher Andy Cunningham, the Y13 leavers, 'branded' the new Y17 intake that year as the 'claw children'!

2. MODESTY FORBIDS but TOP BRASS INSISTS!

Dr Smith retires from teaching and the school reacts with something between shock and relief!

I have been asked to write a few lines for the e-zine; to give an insight, perhaps, of some favourite memories and of what I might miss as a result of 'retiring' from 'teaching' at Roundwood Park. In a few lines this is not possible and this could turn out to be a long running serialisation in the Alumni newsletter! However in short I will miss my involvement with the Sixth Formers who make up a major part of my teaching and contact time.

Twice a day the regular tussle and endless amusement with successive forms [12/13BSm] and the regular 'walkabouts' in the Sixth form area to chastise those that waste time in the 'naughty corner', take food/drink into the computer room or pile unwashed crockery to the ceiling in the kitchen or simply to pass the time of day when I am, allegedly, bored and in playful mode and giving them idiosyncratic nicknames. It is the relationships formed over years that will endure and with these memories of happy times. I am flattered to have been 'captured' in oils, as a papier mache bust and as a collage as well as in so many year group photos over the years.

I joined Roundwood in January 1981 whilst I was looking for a job but failed to find a suitable permanent position back in industry. Managing to escape the horrors of doing a PGCE or similar, I was allowed to have 'on the job training under the auspices of the revered JD Passmore. My passion was to promote chemistry and in 1984, when I entered a team of 4 students into the very first Chemolympiad [later to go global] and we won through to the quarter finals held at Hatfield Polytechnic [now the U of Herts]. We were then invited to enter a practical team of 4 into a parallel competition and we won both the knockout quiz competition and the practical competition. Roundwood was acclaimed in the local press to have the best chemists in the county. I remain particularly proud of this.

I have been privileged to have been a regular member on many Geography department trips [with Lewis, Moxham and Porter et al] to Wales [Y10], Portugal [Y12] and Liverpool [Y12] and I have many fond memories of restaurants, bars and troublesome lampposts and, apparently, 'the boys on tour'! Latterly I have thoroughly enjoyed my involvement in helping students into higher education and I would wish to say how much I have enjoyed working in the Sixth Form especially with Bryan Saunders whose influence, guidance, wit and humour have proved to be, on occasions, like an oasis in a desert.

Other memories range from what seem like an increasing number of vitriolic and complaining letters, one of which was copied to our MP, and also comments from a parent who said their child was never returning to a science lab because their teacher was a lunatic who blew things up and set things on fire!

As time elapses I continue to meet both parents and ex-students and to learn of their life choices and opportunities and this contact remains a truly gratifying experience. I have always said to the leaving Y13 students 'you can check out but you can never leave' and so it will be with me as I will be in and out to complete the setting up of a fully functional Alumni Association.

Now the students' opinion/view! SHOCKING NEWS: the legend is leaving

For those who haven't been made aware, After 30 years, that's three decades, over a quarter of a century, our Dr Smith is retiring.

The man who kicked children out of classrooms for being too cheerful, who didn't agree with ANY textbook EVER written and had a knick name for nearly every student he's taught in the school, will no longer be there to try to kill the magpies above the fume cupboard.

We wish him a great retirement with his wife, whom I'm sure the whole school will miss hearing stories about!

His anagrams and famous board rubbing skills will be deeply missed but most of all his positive, never sarcastic and not at all perverse attitude will never be forgotten.

Doctor Smith has gone through many generations of teaching at Roundwood Park, even teaching the parents of many students throughout the school. He has always been an approachable teacher who would try his best to help; his pool of knowledge being incredibly endless has inspired and taught many of us. I'm sure everyone will agree that this is a huge loss to the school but especially the sixth form team, we will truly miss his fascinating bow ties and his encouraging support as we embark on our own journeys. So make sure you say a final farewell this Friday to a sixth form legend :)

DO IT NOW, YOU KNOW IT MAKES SENSE!

From Jess and Ella

[Sent by two Y 12 students on 08/05/2011

3. ALUMNI NEWS - HELPING OUT

Y12 Rebranding Liverpool Geography Study

Assistant bursar, Karen McHale [nee Perryment] is a recent addition to the school staff and Karen joined the Geography staff on a 3 day visit to Liverpool with 36 Y12 students. The students were led by Kate Lewis and Andy Porter to investigate the rebranding of the city and to enjoy and appreciate this fine city's architectural splendours. The Albert dock redevelopment and Liverpool 1 were chief amongst the areas studied although Karen was able to also visit both the Catholic cathedral and the Anglican cathedral both on Hope street and strategically sited just behind the YHA accommodation. A trip across the Mersey on the Mersey ferry gave splendid views of the Liver building and other famous landmarks.



Roundwood Park economists get to quiz some special visitors

'Is economics about human behaviour or data analysis'

That was one of the questions put forward by 6th form economists at Roundwood Park when they welcomed the Chief Cashier of the Bank of England to their school this week. Chris Salmon is the man ultimately responsible for the £55 billion bank notes in circulation in the UK and the provision of banking services to the UK government and other countries' central banks.

Current Roundwood students also welcomed back former Roundwood economics student Chris Benson, an Oxbridge economics graduate and Harvard Business School Fulbright Scholar. Chris now works as an investment expert in the city specialising in European and emerging markets.

The depth of knowledge and the wealth of experience of the two guests inspired students to ask a vast array of questions to keep the guests on their toes. They ranged from an analysis of the unexpected rise in the last set of inflation figures to the state of the US economy to the experience of studying economics at a top university and working as an economist to 'will we be spending drachma on our Greek holidays next year?'



Kara Veerkroost, a year 13 student looking forward to taking up her place to study economics at Oxford in September said 'it was good to

hear how theory is applied in reality and to hear first hand what it is like to work as an economist'.

James Morehen said, 'I'm studying economics at the LSE next year but I'm interested in doing a masters at Harvard after that. It was a great opportunity to hear about the experience and challenges of the course first hand'.

Economics teacher Tony Smith commented 'Economics is very popular at Roundwood and our A level success tends to attract very motivated students with high aspirations. It was great for them to meet and question such high calibre economics professionals'

Oxbridge Evening

To an audience of Oxbridge hopefuls and their parents two Oxbridge graduates [Jamie Pollock, Cambridge], and Katharine Hubrecht, [Oxford, along with current Oxford undergraduate, Sarah Hyams gave their experiences of applying to and studying at Cambridge and Oxford respectively.

This event takes place in March and we are always pleased to hear from Oxbridge graduates who would like to offer advice and share their experiences. Please contact J.Gupta@roundwoodpark.co.uk if you would like to help.

4. MEMORY LANE in the Science department



For many years the academic powerhouse of the chemistry department was led by Tom Curran and ably assisted by Glenys Metherell [who also became Head of Sixth Form for a period]. Tom retired through ill health and was last heard of somewhere in the Balearics but recent rumours of his well being are not good [unconfirmed].

The three lab coated ladies on the right are Mrs Dymoke, Mrs Kemp and Mrs Wilson. They were the backroom 'girls' that made all the scientific equipment appear and work for every lesson. Often unseen and unheralded by the students they were and remain invaluable to the running of the Science Dept.

Unfortunately we do not currently have a picture of Mrs Burr who preceded those pictured. Mrs Burr was a sweetie in every sense of the word as she always kept a tin of sweets especially for Tom Curran.

This shows [L-R] the Science Dept [not sure when!] : Val Williams [Phys], Christine Hood [Bio], Tom Curran [Chem], Robin Grant[Phys], Kathryn Bailey [Chem/Bio], Chris Wilson [Tec], Man with red tie [Chem], Penny Kemp [Tec] and Howard Boycott[Phys].



All of whom no longer teach at RPS although Bailey & Boycott are still in teaching posts.



Both Mrs Kemp and Mrs Wilson had children that attended the school Michael and Catherine Wilson and also Roland and Danielle Kemp. Mr Alex Wilson was also Site manager during Andy Cunningham;s 'reign'.]

5. FEATURED SNAPSHOT OF THE MONTH

This was taken possibly in 1997/8 and probably in lab 5.

The records show that this motley crew are likely to be [from L-R] : **Josie Adams, Katharine Evans, Martha Turner, Simon Durrant, Peter Ellis, Andrew MacDougall, Richard Dillon, Laura Hay, Chris Cairns, Daniel Borthwick, Niel Callaghan , Kirsty Cullen and Rob Harle.**



The mystery 1984/85 picture – identified?

Claire Buchanan
Jordan Giddings... I believe moved back to Harpenden
James Aegerter... Last I heard lives in York and was working for the Forestry Commission
Gavin ???... Went to Luton for 6th Form
Lisa Shufflebotham... Last I heard went on a round the world trip and never got past Australia
Alison Pobjoy
?
Amanda Toomey
?
Michael Batley... Studied medicine, last I heard was a consultant Gynaecologists at Ashford Hospital
Neil Favager... his mother was also a Maths teacher at RPS
Thanks to Andrew Scholan for this

The Alumni office is in contact with both Richard Dillon and Rob Harle but contact with the others has so far failed!

6. ALUMNI NEWS – Where are they now? Some recent contacts from those post university.

Jon Gingell is Chief Technical Officer at Open Symmetry.

Andrew Minter left in 1984 and following a BA from Goldsmiths in English & History he now lives in Herts and works for RBS in London

Dean Smith has a successful Window Cleaning business

Steve Harris left in ca.1983 and works in construction with Taylor King in Harpenden.

Saad Mohammed left in 2005 and after studying Sports science/management at Leeds[BSc] and Coventry [MA] is now working for Sport4life in Birmingham.

Andrew scholan left in 1985 and after graduating from Southampton University in Electronics Engineering is now a senior consultant in Sagentia in Cambridgeshire. Prior to this Andrew enjoyed a variety of related jobs from working on oil rigs on gas detection and ocean bottom seismometers!

Andrew Gardner left in 2002 and after taking a gap year studied Engineering at Cambridge before embarking on a career in Engineering which took him to Brisbane in Australia where he is now settled and continues to work as a Structural engineer for Arup.

STAFF NEWS

Sue Lucas. Another favourite from the maths dept left years ago to set up a flourishing nursery with her partner in Codicote.

Zoe Woodcock from ICT is leaving this summer 2012 and is going to live and work in Madrid.

Mr Matt Pope from the PE dept and Head of Expressive Arts is after many years at RPS moving on to take a well earned promotion to SLT in a school in St Albans.

Mr JT Cole, former Geography teacher, rumour has it is now a photographer somewhere!

Susan Ward from reprographics retired this year.

Mrs Julie Fox is still at RPS but has assumed the new position of Human resources Manager.

Janet Skakle after many years enduring/providing for the needs of an ever increasingly demanding Science dept has relinquished her role as a member of the technicians to take a well earned retirement.

Rachelle Livingstone , formerly on reception and in the science technician team is leaving this year to spend more time on setting up her own business and helping family.

Gulchin Juleff and **Helen Allam**, both in the science dept are now on maternity leave.

Kirsty Briggs has given up her English teaching post to spend time with her young family.

Tim Jordan, formerly an Assistant Head and teacher of Government & politics is now the Head Teacher at the Hemel Hempstead school.

Claire Robbins, former Assistant Head and English teacher moved to Sir John Lawes a few years ago to become the deputy Head and then took over from Shawn Fenton to become the Head Teacher there.

Mrs Hazel Wale, formerly the School Manager, also moved to Sir John Lawes to work with Claire Robbins and is now an Assistant Head there.

One member of staff will be getting married to an alumnus ! Watch this space!

7. SCHOOL NEWSLETTERS

The weekly school 'Roundup' list current news for parents

http://www.roundwoodpark.herts.sch.uk/parents/roundup_newsletters/

The latest edition of Park Life is available at

<http://www.roundwoodpark.herts.sch.uk/students/parklife/>

8. **EVENTS** – I hope to organise some 'get togethers' in the near future. I appreciate that some small groups of leavers have kept in contact as seen on Friends Reunited and apart from my own 'reunions' with my tutor groups [Sm/BSm] and A level chemistry classes I hope to extend this to everyone.

9. Get in touch

As more Alumni contact this office the membership is growing quickly. Through e-mailing, word of mouth, Facebook, Friends Reunited and other directories I am keen to reach out to as many of our former pupils/students as possible. I am particularly keen to hear from alumni that left before 1980 but contact with everyone that attended Roundwood is our goal

I hope that this edition will give you a snapshot of some more memories and hopefully encourage you to write in with your thoughts, recollections and maybe some images of you/your school friends.staff /trips etc that we can share.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

BMLSmith

Every Wednesday at the Alumni Office alumnioffice@roundwoodpark.co.uk