

THE GATTON ASSOCIATION



Incorporating
 The Maitland Association,
 The Royal Albert Old Boy's Association &
 The Royal Alexandra and Albert School

Chairman: Phil Wade

President: Ray Davies

Membership Secretary: Michelle Ellis

Contact E-Mail: gatton.association@gmail.com



Chairman's Welcome

Dear Members,

Welcome to the Autumn Newsletter, and may I be the first to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New year for 2010 from all of the Committee!

We have just held our AGM which was very interesting and informative. All current Committee Members have been re-elected for another term and I thank them all for their commitment and diligent services to the Association. We still have vacancies on the Committee for anyone who feels that they could contribute to the running of the Association, your age is immaterial, but your enthusiasm is essential!!!!!!

I would also like to thank the School and staff for their on-going support and assistance. The co-operation of Helen Polard and Alison Nott has been invaluable in forging stronger links between the School and the old scholars' Association. Alison's report follows later in this Newsletter.

The School reported that they had raised £1.8 million pounds for a project to build a new tennis court facility, with full-time coaches. The facility will include indoor, outdoor and junior courts which will be used by the School and local residents of the area. Another £200,000 will need to be raised to complete the funding. This is a joint venture with the LTA (Lawn Tennis Association) and other groups, including the School, which is planned to be up and running by 2011. Hopefully, this facility will enable grassroots tennis players to come through the ranks and go on to greater things.

The new Science Labs have been completed and have been operational from the beginning of this term. Two new Sixth Form annexes are being built, enabling Sixth Form education to be undertaken on site. Outdoor floodlit sports pitches have been built behind the Sanatorium which will offer greater opportunity to play during the winter months.



NEWSLETTER MENU

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The boarding houses, as many of us knew them, have been expanded to give extra space for the additional day boarders to carry out their extra curricular activities while on site. Some houses are being refurbished under a major scheme to bring all houses up to a high specification. New electric feed-ins have been provided to all houses on site to comply with current regulations.

We are still building our archive – if you have any old photos or video clips, we would love to have copies of them to give a broader and more in-depth picture of life at the School over the years, from the Alexandra Orphanage through to the Royal Albert Boys' School to the present day. All contributions will be returned to you after they have been copied. Please contact us via email, post or the School.

"Going Back" - the DVD about life in boarding school over the years, produced and directed by our own Alicia Edwards - is selling well. The film has been accepted into the International Falstaff Film Festival in Stratford Upon Avon in November (see details from Alicia below). If you would like a copy, please contact us via email or the School to order one.

The dates for the next Re-union have been confirmed as the weekend of 27-29 August 2010. Prices and booking form will be in the next Newsletter.

Finally, it is with great sadness that I have to announce the passing of two members: John Waters (Bishopswood 1942-49) and Humphrey King (Maitland Park 1932-38 and Maitland Association Secretary in the mid-'40s). I am sure I speak for all members of the Association when I send our sympathy and condolences to their families at this time.



Committee Members

Positions	Name
President:	Ray Davies
Chairman:	Phil Wade
Secretary:	Peter Page
Treasurer:	Ray Davies
Membership Secretary:	Michelle Ellis
Publicity Officers:	Phil Wade Alicia Edwards
Board of Governors & Ex-Scholar:	John Billingham
Archivist:	Ian Baines
Merchandising:	Michelle Ellis
Events Co-ordinator:	Chris Manns Ian Baines
News Editor:	Chas Bailey
	E-Mail: chasbailey@hotmail.co.uk Phone: 020 8648 7274

Non-Committee Members

Assistant News Editor:	Andrew Bailey
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Dates for your Diary

2009 - Remembrance Day Service
Wednesday, November 11th

Details from Head's Secretary
01737 649000

PTA Christmas Fair

Saturday, November 28th

Carol Service

Friday, December 18

Details from Head's Secretary
01737 649000

2010 - Gatton Association Re-union

Friday 27 – Sunday 29 August

Details to follow in next Newsletter



From the headmaster



The School has now settled into a new academic year. The new term brings with it new challenges - can we continue to improve on our impressive GCSE results and will the new Juniors ever grow into their school blazers?

Summer saw us celebrating exam success with over 80% of our pupils gaining 5 or more A*-C GCSE grades and many achieving grades beyond their expectations. We are also celebrating a first with many pupils completing their BTEC studies in Countryside & Environment and Horse Care with the majority of these students gaining an A* or an A grade. These more practical courses suit pupils who don't necessarily want to pursue the traditional GCSE subjects, challenging them in the areas where their strengths lie. All these successes are due to our pupils' own hard work and the support they receive from teachers and support staff at the School.

Adding to our Sports College status we are pleased to have been awarded a new Specialism in Maths and Computing and we have also been designated as a Lead School for Gifted and Talented pupils. This will benefit not only our own pupils but also children from surrounding schools, building strong relationships between fellow teachers and pupils from neighbouring schools. We have just received approval from Surrey County Council for our application to open its own Sixth Form. This will open in September 2010 and, to accommodate our extra students, we are building 42 study bedrooms with en-suite shower rooms which will be ready by September 2010. Boarding School life in the 21st Century is certainly changing!

The final preparations are being made for our Remembrance Day Service on 11th November when we shall be joined by the Right Reverend Monsignor Kieran Conry, Bishop of Arundel & Brighton. We hope to see as many Old Scholars there as possible so please do take up the invitation which appears below in this Newsletter. You would be most welcome to join us.

*The Headmaster, Mr Paul Spencer Ellis warmly invites all
Gatton Association Old Scholars to our*

***Remembrance Day Service
Wednesday 11th November 2009
10.30am in the School Chapel***

*Our Preacher will be
The Right Reverend Monsignor Kieran Conry
Bishop of Arundel & Brighton*

Refreshments in Gatton Hall following the Service

***RSVP Mrs Herrtage, Headmaster's PA
01737 649041 by Wednesday 21st October***



Dates for your Diary 2009/10



Sunday 4th October

Gatton Park Gardens & Grounds Open Day. 1pm-5pm £3.50

(Gardens & Grounds Open Days are held on the 1st Sunday of each month from February until October)

Sunday 25th October

"Make a Difference Day"

10am-1pm; 2pm-4pm Find out about volunteering in the grounds at Gatton Park.

Bring gloves, suitable footwear and lunch if staying all day. To book Tel: 01737 649066

Friday 6th November

Enjoy an evening of West Hits performed by the Royal Academy of Music as part of our continuing fundraising for The Royal Alexandra & Albert Charitable Foundation and The Children's Trust Tadworth.

Tickets £28 to include your evening's entertainment, welcome cocktail and two-course finger buffet.

Box Office: 01737 365019

Wednesday 11th November

Remembrance Day Service. Please see your invitation in this Newsletter.

Saturday 5th December

"Carols by Candlelight" with The Redbury Singers – A Gatton Trust event.

Tickets £12 including mulled wine and mince pie. Tel: 01737 649066

Friday 18th December

School Carol Service – If you would like to attend please contact the school.

Sunday 9th May 2010

Founders' Day

GATTON ASSOCIATION UPDATE FOR AGM

Thank you to all the Old Scholars who have to date sent in a donation in response to the "Foundationer" fundraising. Just over 1,000 leaflets were sent out which resulted in 23 donations totalling £1,495 including 8 regular donations. We now have over 70 Foundationers at the School (55 Boarders and 18 Day Boarders) making up approximately 10% of the school population so these donations will be a great help.

Many Old Scholars (28 in all) made a donation to the DVD fund via the School. Others sent their donation direct to Alicia. Not all are signed up as members of the Gatton Association - Alicia will pass on their details so we can add them to our database and make sure they are kept up to date. Over 25 Gatton Association members attended Founders' Day when the DVD was premiered.

Old Scholars continue to renew their acquaintance with the school. John Garber attended Founders' Day; the first time he had returned to the School since he left. Mike Swan returned for September Open Day and had such a good time that he returned the following week! Lee Nolan has been back in touch, donated football kit for school teams and is in the process of becoming involved in helping with after school activities. Tony Smith has donated a Sports Trophy and equipment to Kent House and returned to the House for a presentation evening. Old Scholars and people tracing their family tree continue to contact the school asking for details of Register Entries or any information the School may have of their time here.

A total of 57 pupils signed up to join the Gatton Association as they left the School in the summer and their parents were automatically signed up unless they opted out. We wrote to all parents of the children reaching the end of their time here asking if they would like to donate any of their deposit to give other children the benefits their own had enjoyed and a total of £300 was donated.

The Fund Razor database is being used and all communications with Old Scholars are now recorded in one place. There are some teething problems with running reports which are currently being sorted out.

Bringing the School Registers up to date with details of the Foundationers joining the school since 2003 is ongoing. This will be a long job as "Foundationers" were not previously listed separately on any registers to protect their anonymity. We have started with 2009 and 2008 and are working backwards.

The next big project is to update the Gatton Association website and make it more informative, welcoming and user friendly. We would also like to make it easier for Old Scholars to update their email and address details as we are still getting post and emails returned.

Coming up in November we have the "Cabaret" Founditioner fundraiser joint event with The Children's Trust which we hope will generate interest in the school and make people aware of our Charitable Foundation and "Founditioner" places. We are also hosting a one day conference to promote state boarding schools and boarding placements for vulnerable children. This will be attended by social workers, primary school headteachers and other professionals with an interest in children's welfare.

An invitation to the School's Remembrance Day service and refreshments in Gatton Hall has been put into the Gatton Association Newsletter and we hope to continue to increase the numbers attending events at the School year on year.



Going Back



Going Back, a film made about life growing up at the AO / RAAS, is now available on DVD!

Some film reviews are at the bottom of this message.

What you get - an hour documentary, plus over an hours worth of extra features for just £10! This price includes p&p - unless shipping abroad. Yes, we can ship abroad!

50% of the money raised from DVD sales goes to the Gatton Association to raise funds for children at the school.

Please message us to put in your order at either of the following: reunion_2008@hotmail.co.uk or post to

The Gatton Association

Royal Alexandra and Albert School,
Gatton Park,
Reigate,
Surrey,
RH2 OTD

Thank you!

Alicia Edwards - Gattoner - 1990 - 2000

Film Reviews:

"'Going Back' what can I say?? It really took me back. Fantastic film, even though I look slightly tipsy!!!! It's funny and it's sad. Anyone who went to Gatton should order a copy; it really does cover everything school life was. Well done Alicia and everyone else who made it possible."

Sophie Jackson

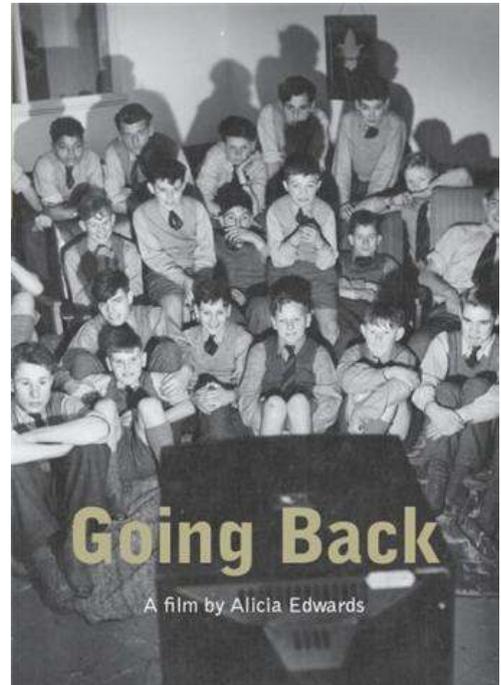
'Brilliant.. it says it all. well done''

John Hounsom

"The DVD was great, for a minute i actually recalled how it felt to be at Gatton. It was put together brilliantly; I loved it well done Alicia. It's made me want to re kindle friendships that I have let slip over the years. Well done to the crew as well, they did a fantastic job!"

Edward Pennells

*"Watched my copy of the DVD and it was brilliant, brought back so many memories of Gatton. You did a fab job and I will recommend it to anyone that went to Gatton. My son will be watching it with me soon :-)
Thanks Again"*





The film *Going Back* has also been accepted into the Falstaff International Film Festival.

The festival takes place in Stratford Upon Avon in November.

All are welcome to attend!

The website is being updated with the exact day that the film will be screened.

I will also do a mail out to all the old scholar contacts via

Facebook and the Gatton Association mailing list once I have the details.

Watch this space!!

Feel free to take a look at the website and check for updates: www.fiff.org.uk

Hope to see you there!

Alicia Edwards

Producer

'Going Back'

A Letter from Joy Maskell to Old Scholars of the RAS

I am still in touch with several "old scholars", namely Katy Houston, Stella Houston, Val Dowsett, Ann Sheppard, Lorna Martin, Laura Cotton, Eric Clarke, John, Judith and Sally Reeve; we all exchange correspondence and/or phone calls. I share days out and lunches every couple of weeks with John Reeve as he lives down the road in Fleet, and we both share a love of gardening. I also meet up with John's sister Judith from time to time when she comes to Fleet to meet up with John - we all met up in Wells some time ago along with Judith's husband Guy and daughter Jane. I also spent a couple of weeks on holiday with John and his sister Sally in Portugal when she lived out there.

When I retired I spent 5 months travelling Australia and New Zealand, friends and family from those countries now come to visit me from those countries here in the UK. I have visited France, Belgium, Spain (I visited Lorna Martin about 4 years ago - she lives in Altea), Holland (I used to go to the Jazz Festivals held there - I love Traditional Jazz), America - Sacramento, Las Vegas, Grand Canyon etc. Four years ago I had a lovely Mediterranean cruise on the now de-commissioned QE11; I'm very pleased I took the trip when I did.

After leaving school in 1952, I attended the Langham Secretarial College with Sheelagh Dagleish. At the end of the course I worked as a Junior Secretary in London (I lived in my family home in Croydon at the time). I then joined the Army and after postings at The War Office Amphibious Warfare Department in Whitehall, then at Beaver Lane Camp in Hounslow where I was secretary to the Camp Commandant, I was posted to Cyprus for a year which I spent as PA to the AAG Cyprus District.

Susie the cat and I are nicely settled into our semi detached bungalow in Lightwater where I get great pleasure from my garden, and occasional coach trips out, usually to Cathedral Cities. I took art classes for 10 years, but gave up it up last year so that I could do my coach trips, and also in the knowledge that I am not a "natural" when it comes to applying paint to paper (not even in the decorating sense - I'll leave that to Katy Putt, she is very good at it - she once decorated my kitchen and a bedroom for me - thanks Katy!)

My final job prior to retirement was with BOC where I was the Administrator in the Global Audit Office - BOC has a presence in almost every country in the world. I also did the admin for a group of Graduates. BOC is now owned by The Lindie Group - a German company.

Well that's caught up with me to a certain extent - how about news of some more of you out there from our days at Kidmore End. It would be interested to see you in print.

I look forward to the next "Gatton Association Newsletter" in the hope that there has been a good response to Katy's request.

Joy Maskell.

P.S If I'm still in touch with you and I forgot to give you a mention - my apologies - put it down to a senior moment!



BISHOPSWOOD CAMP



Hi! everyone from Bishopswood.....My name is Lorna Holder (neé Martin) and my school number was 80. In 1940 I went to Goring-on-Thames then transferred to the BIG school at Bishopswood Camp Reading until 1952. I left, with the traditional school bible and mostly very happy memories.

I have many stories to tell but this one I remember very well. The last night before we went off on our holiday we had our end of term midnight feast. We would put our saved up food in our cases which we weren't allowed to pack until morning and these were stored in the shoe cupboard. We would get broken biscuits and a tin of condensed milk from the local village shop plus our saved up buns from supper and the odd piece of bread from the dining hall meals. As soon as Miss Lay (dorm.mistress) went for her supper in the staff room the fun began. One girl would "keep cavey" on a top bunk to let us know when "Miss" returned.

As soon as we were warned we would all scoot back to our bunks but not the girl who had said "trick bung" which meant she was lying. When the time came that it was true, all the evidence was hidden away in or under our beds. Of course "Miss" knew what we had been up to so to all the girls pretending to be asleep the lights would come on and from this voice like a fog horn - "right, all out of bed". Off would come the blanket on my bunk with her shouting - you will all lose 10 house points. Of course, being end of term we didn't care.

We would then pay for our misdemeanour by lining up and having the cane. It was worth it eh girls!!!! What about the night we were throwing our dollies and teddies at each other and we broke the light shade. Before Miss came back from her supper we pieced it together with black chilblain ointment. In came Miss Lay noticing the light swinging. So you don't want to sleep - right, all out of bed and get dressed, strip your beds, make your beds (to perfection of course with hospital corners.) It ended up with us all - in number order - and one by one over the stool for punishment. I was so glad to be number 80 because by the time she got to me - phew! That night there were a lot of tears but in the morning I said "the laughing lasted longer than the crying, so I think we can call that 1 - nil.

The above is as I remember it from my school days at Bishopswood Camp, Reading.

Senior Dormitory in 1951.

Let's keep our memories alive so if there is anyone else out there with a tale or two to tell please write it down and send it in for the next edition of the Gatton Association newsletter. It would be great to hear from you.

Lorna Holder (neé Martin) Elmcroft, Goring-on-Thames and Bishopswood Camp
1940 - 1952.



This is me in my modelling years - I now live in Spain

BISHOPSWOOD CAMP continued.....



SENIOR GIRL'S DORMITORY – 1952

From-

Back Row: LORNA MARTIN, SYLVIA CURTIS, SHEELAGH DALGLIESH.

**2nd Row: IRIS RYDER, VALERIE HOWELLS, ROSEMARY CLARK,
BERYL GIRDLER, ANN HASTINGS, MARGARET PRITCHARD,
BRENDA SMITH, MURIEL WILKINSON, JUDITH REEVE,
SUZANNE REYNOLDS.**

**3rd Row: MARY TAYLOR, NANCY GRIFFITHS, VALERIE BOWDERY,
PAULA PICKERING, DOREEN SEAMAN, ELIZABETH WELSH,
FREDA WRIGHT, MARJORIE MORRISON, JOAN NAPIER,
NORA BREWSTER, CHRISTINA NAU, DOREEN CROUCHER,
PEARL BRADES, PAMELA GRANT, VALERIE DOWSETT,
ANN FOWLER, MRS MURRAY, KATIE HOUSTON,**

**4th Row: ANN TWINER, PAMELA BLAKE, MAUREEN LEWIS,
STELLA HOUSTON, JOYCE MASKELL,**

**Front Row: SYLVIA BRYANT, LAURA CATTON, PATRICIA HEAPHY
MARGARET MOGER, EILEEN MARRIOTT.**



Gatton Park - the early days 1949 - 1951



“ Robert Hill ”

At just a few weeks before my 5th birthday in early September 1949, my inception into the Royal Alexandra & Albert School, then newly formed and located at the imposing 250 acre country estate of Gatton Park, Reigate, Surrey, was a predictably tearful event, as I was parted from my mother for the very first time. That it was so too for every single one of my other young contemporaries that day, all of us mostly unknowing victims of similarly less than fortunate family circumstances, was a fact entirely lost on me.

So too was the beauty and grandeur of the place; it's remote location in the leafy Surrey countryside was worlds away from the cosy urban bustle of the outer North London suburb of Winchmore Hill, where my family came from. One aspect that troubled me strongly was the absence of trains. With my home being just next to a railway line that was busy by day and even more so by night, the all-pervading silence at Gatton Park was eerie and disquieting, and I felt quite cut off from humanity. I recall having trouble sleeping without the comforting thunderous racket I was so used to, of the heavy steam-hauled freight trains which ran continuously past my home throughout the night, shaking the house and rattling the windows. It was only occasionally when the wind was in a certain direction at Gatton, that the very faintest sounds could be heard from the railway between Merstham and Redhill, just visible from Gatton Hall across the landscape behind the big lake; I recall following the tell-tale plumes of smoke as the engines criss-crossed North and South, reassuring me that there was still a world out there, even though it was far too distant to wave to the engine-drivers and passengers as I did from my bedroom window at home.

Gatton Hall at that time, used initially for the very youngest children who would previously have gone to Duxhurst (as my brother, by then at Bishopswood did) or Goring, was the only building on the estate save for the ancient St Andrews church, the farm, and the estate-keepers cottages. Rocky Lane (the main drive) followed it's lengthy, twisting course from the main A23 road. Alternative access was via Gatton Bottom, running between Reigate Hill and Merstham village. Of course the M25 motorway, uncomfortably close nowadays, would have been utterly impossible to imagine back in 1949. Although we infants were far too young to appreciate it, the 250 acre grounds and surroundings of Gatton Park really were idyllic, particularly then.

I recall preparations for a Sunday afternoon's walk; we'd be gathered in pairs, holding hands proceeding crocodile-fashion from Gatton Hall across where all the houses are now, forking right past the field where "Flicker" the donkey was kept (near where Gloucester House is), towards the gate-lodge at the junction of Gatton Bottom (occupied then by farmer Piercey and his family), where I recall the sound of a machine (it was probably a generator) going "phut-phut-phut" continuously, emitting smelly clouds of acrid gas oil exhaust fumes. Here we'd turn right into Gatton Bottom heading towards where Rocky Lane comes out. Every so often there'd be halts to enable the stragglers (of which I was always one!) to catch up, when sweets were handed out, after which we'd proceed, all of us chattering away happily, never having to think at all about vehicular traffic - it simply didn't exist! Turning right into Rocky Lane, we'd tackle the steep climb up to the thatched gate-lodge at the junction adjacent to Whitehall Farm, back to the school grounds, in time for tea. An alternative walk might be taking the fork left from where Gloucester House is now, along the unclassified track that heads away towards Reigate and Buckland, which we seldom proceeded much more than part of the way along. Occasionally too, we'd go up to Reigate Hill, where there was a green caravan selling sweets & pop (which were still on ration). Another walk I remember was near Gatton Hall, to an almost-hidden ornamental rock garden, where there was a pond with stepping-stones. My particular recollection here is of one bright, early spring morning (1950 or '51). Again we were in pairs holding hands, the staff pointing out trees and wildflowers. I recall negotiating the stepping-stones with much trepidation - even though the

Classes were in the two rooms flanking the 'ballroom', which was then the dining-room; I have often doubted that many schoolchildren anywhere ever had a better view from their school - our dormitories in the upper floors had even more spectacular views. My earliest recollections were of being wakened by the early morning sunlight streaming through gaps in the curtains, and peering out at the wonderful vista that lay outside. At bedtimes we would be given a drink of milk and a biscuit or two, or a sticky bun. I think the biscuits were for many years very kindly supplied *gratis* by Westons Biscuits Ltd., who have probably now long been absorbed by some rather less-charitable organization. Our winter bedtime drink would be steaming hot cocoa, dispensed from large enamelled jugs. In our dressing-gowns, we'd all say our prayers, followed by (the best bit!) of having a story read, by which time drowsiness would inevitably set in, and one by one we'd fall blissfully asleep.....

Mornings would see us recharged with energy, and it was like a madhouse, especially in that labyrinth of brown lino-covered corridors, so well-polished that we used to skate along them in our stockinged feet at breakneck speed. Many collisions occurred, I being involved in at least one! In the summertime we often had 'open-air classes' on the lawns outside Gatton Hall. They were great, although with all the outside distractions like buzzing insects and so on, concentration was difficult. I doubt if any serious attempts at teaching (or learning) were ever really envisaged. One very prominent distraction at that time came from nearby RAF Biggin Hill, a former wartime fighter station, where they had operational Spitfires, Hurricanes, and Tempests for training exercises - about 20,000 feet above Gatton Hall! It was simply of no use whatsoever at such times, to even consider carrying on with 'lessons' with what amounted to an airshow going on overhead; as all faces craned upwards you'd hear one boy exclaim "It's a Spit!" followed by "Nah it ain't, it's an 'urri!" from someone else, as the aircraft pursued each other in realistic mock aerial combat above us. Then you'd get the inevitable 'dubbed-in' sounds (by us) of machine guns, and other simulated effects of battle. Even at 5 or 6 we knew quite a lot about war.

As well as having 'open-air lessons' on the lawns in summer months, we often had our tea (evening meal) thus, of sandwiches, salad, and pork pies etc, picnic-fashion. I recall the butter (margarine actually) melting on the bread, and flies and bits of grass adhering to it, and ants floating in my tea. Also in the summertime there was a wooden climbing frame situated on the front lawn overlooking the big lake. There was a tree nearby with a long low protruding bough upon which us nippers used to sit astride and someone (of the staff?) used to spring it up and down, much to our delight. I think that same tree is still there, but the bough, sadly, is not. Also I recall a sort of 'switchback' or roller-coaster ride set up on the same front lawn. Made out of timber, it undulated gently, carrying us little 'uns along with a sound on it's wooden track that I can still fondly recall today. Was it from Duxhurst?

The seasonal changes were as ever, really something to behold. Summer was of course best, but winter too had it's virtues - snow, and lots of it! What excitement as with darkening skies it fell, leading to eventual abandonment of lessons as our attention was completely diverted! The scenery was transformed into a veritable winter wonderland of pristine whiteness, the snow having a peculiarly damping effect on sound as it was falling.

In those early days the Big Lake had log booms chained together across it. Why? Well, because exactly as we'd figured out, they were to deter German seaplanes from landing. During the war Gatton Park, like many similar country estates, was commandeered by the MOD - in Gatton's case, it was for the covert planning of 'Operation Overlord' which as everyone now knows (or should do) led to the 'D-Day' invasion of the French beaches on June 6th 1944. The Germans knew we were 'up to something' and we knew that they knew too. With the crucially strategic importance of Gatton's involvement, it was realised that just one German seaplane dropping just one German Nazi spy could compromise the whole operation. Hence the log booms. And hence luckily (for me and you) no German seaplanes.



The View from Kent House



" Ian Rowe "

I started teaching maths at RAAS in February 2000 and took over the Head of House for Kent House in September 2000. Previous to that I had been in New Zealand teaching while also second in charge of the boarding establishment at Palmerston North Boy's High School where I had also been a pupil.

At RAAS each year I am responsible for running the school ski/snowboard trip to Austria and we end up taking 88 pupils and 10 staff (2 coaches). I continue to teach maths and a bit of mountain biking for PE.

My interests are skiing and running. Having ski instructed for four seasons back in the mid 90's in Europe I can only manage about two weeks a year now. In between times I am often found pounding out the miles and run two marathons a year; a spring and autumn one.

I have a lovely wife Jacqui and three children who all attend RAAS and really enjoy it.

If you would ever like a tour through the boarding house; please drop in at anytime.

Leading up to Christmas will be yet another mad rush in Kent House but our '12 days of Christmas' will leave many fond memories.

To start off with, Matron has some Christmas card making craft session where boys will be equipped to have cards ready for family members to take home. The excuse that I couldn't purchase a card is no good. Some cards seriously lack creative imagination but as we know, *it's the thought that counts.*

Our Christmas quiz organised by two senior boys in the common room is for academics and non-academics alike. Staff are divided onto other groups with the boys to find the official Kent House 'boffins' for the year. The formal capping graduation ceremony follows but without mortar boards, heads are touched with bars of chocolate.

The house bingo evening has more tension than Cesar's Palace in Las Vegas. Forget prizes of millions; high stakes for chocolate bars is all that's needed (again)! You can feel the tension in the air as the cards near completion and BINGO is shouted out with mega decibels. It's all worth it for the sweet toothed pupil but don't let Jamie Oliver know about this one.

A huge hit is the Kent Factor night (far more popular than X factor). Singing, acts, jokes, sketches etc all up against an audience far less supportive and a panel far more critical than Simon Cowell

(Continued on page 14)

(Continued from page 13)

in the television production. A big night with the ultimate prize of Kent Factor fame for the next year. When will EMI sit up and spot the talent or is it now itunes?

Our own carol service is run in the centre of the Millennium Stones. A BBQ in the centre blazing and Matron having placed tea nights in front of all the stones is a sight to see. Dressed up very warmly, boys take turns in reading the birth of Jesus Christ from the Bible. The evening finishes off with toasting marshmallows over the dying embers and looking from any warmth from the BBQ. Back inside Kent House to thaw out and a cup of Matrons hot chocolate caps of the evening. Staff have been known to have additional ingredients to make the hot chocolate go further. Umm...can't remember what they were...positive it wasn't extra milk and sugar.

There is also the ice skating night and no Christmas period would be complete without a few bruises from falling over and blisters from the ever uncomfortable hire skates. No Jayne Torvills and Christopher Deans have been found as girls houses are not invited. The next Olympic gold medal in ice skating will have to wait a while yet. Sorry that Kent House can't help out.

The annual pillow bash night is more than a hit! Boys are all weighed and put into three groups. Knock-out rounds take place until we have our three winners who are crowned the champions for the year. These are the most treasured titles in Kent House! To be the winner is to be all and brings fame far and wide. Having a WBA title means nothing compared to this. It can only be a title that world champion boxers would be jealous of. Defending the title the following year is harder than gaining it. There is a strictly enforced law that no pre pillow bash night practice in the dorms can take place! This is punishable by being thrown out of the competition and is considered worse than being caught with performance enhancing substances! Not tolerated!

The unlimited ice cream desert supper always has some left over. Twenty litres of ice cream, sweets, flakes, whipped cream and chocolate sauce is a night to remember. Correction, it is limited but it has never all been polished off yet. Every year the boys say it will all disappear but they always fall short unable to meet the challenge. They all go to bed feeling a bit sorry for themselves but no accidents to date.

Secret Santa always pays us a visit. Boys and staff draw out of a hat names and then go out and purchase a present with a maximum value of £3 and wrap it up. Usually more Lynx deodorant and coffee mugs with London on it. The 'Pound Stretcher' shop in Redhill must have an increase in turnover in December just from Kent House pupils.

Last is the formal Christmas meal. Boys deck out in suits and ties to out-do each other. A small bottle of cheap French lager is provided for the senior boys only. Can't have school boys even *slightly tiddly* or the BBC will be around knocking. It doesn't taste too good but they drink anyway while the staff have Becks; something a bit more palatable. The idea is to teach the boys that beer tastes horrible and don't bother doing it later in life. Hopefully this will leave a bit more in the local for you and I!



Ian Rowe - Head of Kent House



Kent House Christmas Activities



Danny Wong & Callum Spink, Year 11's 2009. (Age 15-16)

Ice skating always ups the Christmas feel with a face full of ice, bruises and many blisters for all. It has been especially good with putting all of us excited boys straight into bed from all of the hard work including the thrill of Mr Maynard's driving in the dark.

At Christmas dinner we all must either wear our own or one of Mr. Rowe's various funky ties with a shirt as we tuck into our meals. The first things to always do are to check the crackers for the cheap jokes until the food arrives. Then we locate the cheap beers to cut out the taste of those Christmas veggies.

After the dinner when we all get back to the house we have the secret Santa visiting us. This is always a good laugh every year. The aim is to draw a name out of a hat and buy that person a gift worth around £3. However, the aim for us is to try to buy the most embarrassing thing at the cheapest price possible. To make it a bonus the receiver does not know who got them that nice pink pair of panties. The best present so far was when Mr Maynard got his new hair to make him a different person and a joke book to make his jokes better.

Kent factor is always filled with tension as we all prepare to perform the act of a lifetime. This year we were even lucky enough to have special guest Sharron Osborne (Matron with lots of make up). We also finally got our revenge on the Kent House staff as we threw cream pie at them blindfolded.

The bingo night was a chance to get rich, well with chocolate. And as you would have guessed there were many people shouting bingo convinced they had won but when they were checked half of them were made up. We all know Mr Rowe cheated but he still says he was innocent.

The pillow bash is one of the most wanted Christmas activities. It is the one time of the year where we are actually allowed to hit each other. So Kent house professionally hires a hall and lets the battle commence. The highlight of the night is always the forever ongoing match against The Maynard Vs The Rowe.

After the beating we all resort to stuffing ourselves with the all you can eat ice cream with sprinkles, sweets and sauce for toppings. As always we test each other and to see who can consume the most bowls of on-going, ever-lasting, never-ending ice cream. For facts the best score is only 2 bowls before people give in.

The carol service at the Millennium stones was on a cold winter night so Matron warmed us up with a fire surrounded by lanterns. We read prayers from the Bible and huddled together patiently waiting for long awaited video. But after three years we still have not seen the video. Does it really exist? Was Mr Rowe pulling our leg? We will just have to wait until next Christmas to find out. The lucky few of us that remained throughout the whole of it stayed behind to have toasted marshmallows over the fire.

Christmas quiz night is real fun and puts us all to the test. However every year there is a massive rush to be in the group of Mr Wikipedia (aka Mr Rawson) but we still are fighting to beat him while having a fun time trying to earn the prize at the end.

Then of course matron made some lovely cakes. While most people like them, you always have the one person who complains. This time it was Mr Rowe as he thought the cakes were flat. That was a brave move by Mr Rowe to say that to Matron as we all know that the wrath of Matron is not a force to be messed with.



An evening of
CABARET

**Friday 6 November
7.30pm**

- ★ **Enjoy an evening of West End hits performed by the Royal Academy of Music**
- ★ **Tickets £28 to include welcome cocktail and two-course finger buffet**
- ★ **Call the Box Office on 01737 365019**

We were very pleased to welcome over 60 'Foundationers' back to School after the summer holidays. It is heartening to see the progress these pupils make and it reinforces our determination to increase the number of Foundationer places and continue to offer these opportunities to other children in similar circumstances. Our campaign to raise funds to pay for Foundationer places continues and this year we have joined forces with The Children's Trust in Tadworth to host a wonderful evening's entertainment of Cabaret on Friday 6th November at 7.30pm.

Students from the Royal Academy of Music Musical Theatre post-graduate course will take to our stage to entertain you with a sparkling cabaret of songs from your favourite classic musicals such as Guys and Dolls, My Fair Lady, Cabaret and West Side Story. You will be seeing performances from the 'stars of tomorrow' as many of the students from this Royal Academy of Music course will be on the West End stage next year. And whilst you enjoy the music you will be treated to a two-course finger buffet in a fabulous cabaret setting.

To book your tickets you can either call the ticket hotline on 01737 365019 or follow the links via our website at

<http://www.raa-school.co.uk/cabaret09.asp>

Thank you for your support. We look forward to seeing you there.

I do hope you can join us for this evening but fully appreciate that distance and the many other demands on your time may prevent you. However, do not feel that this also prevents you from helping with the fundraising! If you would like to make a donation to our Foundationer fund please send it to The Gatton Association, Royal Alexandra & Albert School, Gatton Park, Reigate, Surrey RH2 0TD.

Headmaster

Gatton Association Shop



Printed Logo - Ballpoint & Fountain Pen Set



Dark red with laser engraved school logo



Gatton Sports Bag in various colours



Maroon pocket diary with gold coloured logo & gold metal corners



Gold coloured Maroon Key ring with gold coloured logo and on the Flip-side - Gatton Association



Enamelled gold coloured Badge On Brass.

[Size of a 1p coin]

The Gatton Association :: Order Form ::

Product Types	Price	Order Amount	UK Price Postage	Europe Price Postage	World Price Postage	Total
Gatton Logo Badge Description: Enamelled gold coloured Badge On Brass. (Up to 5 in one Envelope)	£3.50	<input type="text" value="x"/>	£ 1.50	£ 1.50	£ 1.50	£ <input type="text"/>
Pen Set Description: Printed Logo - Ballpoint & Fountain Pen Set	£6.00	<input type="text" value="x"/>	£ 2.75	£ 3.95	£ 4.95	£ <input type="text"/>
Gatton Bag Colours: <input type="checkbox"/> Maroon - <input type="checkbox"/> Purple - <input type="checkbox"/> Navy Blue - <input type="checkbox"/> Grey - <input type="checkbox"/> Black - <input type="checkbox"/> Green	£4.50	<input type="text" value="x"/>	£ 2.75	£ 3.95	£ 4.95	£ <input type="text"/>
Trolley Keyring Description: Gold coloured Maroon Key ring with gold coloured logo and on the Flip-side - Gatton Association. (Up to 4 in one Envelope)	£3.00	<input type="text" value="x"/>	£2.75	£ 3.95	£ 4.95	£ <input type="text"/>
Maglite Torch Description: Dark red with laser engraved school logo	£9.99	<input type="text" value="x"/>	£ 2.75	£ 3.95	£ 4.95	£ <input type="text"/>
2010 Diary Description: Maroon pocket diary with gold coloured logo & gold metal corners	£3.75	<input type="text" value="x"/>	£ 2.75	£ 3.95	£ 4.95	£ <input type="text"/>
Bundle Types						
Pen & Diary Set	£9.50	<input type="text" value="x"/>	£ 3.80	£ 4.80	£ 6.00	£ <input type="text"/>
Key ring & Gatton Badge	£6.00	<input type="text" value="x"/>	£ 3.80	£ 4.80	£ 6.00	£ <input type="text"/>
Diary, Pen Set & Torch	£18.90	<input type="text" value="x"/>	£ 3.80	£ 4.80	£ 6.00	£ <input type="text"/>
Torch & Keyring	£12.50	<input type="text" value="x"/>	£ 3.80	£ 4.80	£ 6.00	£ <input type="text"/>

Total Amount: £

Note: P & P Charges will be adjusted for large or multiple orders.

You can also make up your own customised orders.

Please contact – Phil Wade either by Phone: 07903192989 or by E-Mail:

gatton.association@gmail.com for further information for P & P Charges

:: Delivery / Contact Details ::

Title:	<input type="text"/>	First Name:	<input type="text"/>	Surname:	<input type="text"/>
Address:	<input type="text"/>				
Post Code:	<input type="text"/>				
Country:	<input type="text"/>				
Phone:	<input type="text"/>	E-Mail:	<input type="text"/>		

Registration Form

Please **only** complete this form if you are a new registrant or have any change in your contact details



Gatton Association Registration Form

First Names:..... Surname:..... Former Name:.....

Address:

Town:..... County..... Postcode:.....

Country:.....

Home Phone:..... Work Phone:..... Mobile:.....

Email Address:.....

Please remember to keep us informed of Postal or Email Address changes or our correspondence will not reach you.

School Location attended (*tick as appropriate*):

- Gatton Park Maitland Bishopswood Elmcroft Duxhurst Bedford
- Camberley Other (please state).....

Last House(s) attended:.....

Years attended: from..... To.....

If you would prefer to receive Newsletters etc. by Email please tick the here:

Please return completed Registration Form to the Membership Co-ordinator:

MICHELLE ELLIS

Via

Helen Pollard

Royal Alexandra & Albert School, Gatton Park, Reigate, Surrey, United Kingdom,RH2 0TD

Main Switchboard (044) 01737 649 000

Or

EMAIL: GATTON.ASSOCIATION@GMAIL.COM

If you have any comments or suggestions you would like to pass back to us, please do so via Michelle Ellis at the address above.

2010

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HAPPY
NEW
YEAR

2010

From the Committee

2010

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