

RYE OLD SCHOLARS ASSOCIATION

BULLETIN 174 DECEMBER 2025



A WARM WELCOME FROM THE CHAIRMAN

I have named myself an ERIP (Elderly, Retired, Infant Pensioner) and this wonderful chapter in my life continues. Not a journey or a “roller coaster of emotion” just enjoying every single day accompanied by good health.

The 26-mile Thames walk from Hampton Court to Charing Cross completed (with surprising diversions). Ramsgate to Whitstable, 27 miles on a warm day with the tide out showing a diverse range of rocks. Other 10–12-mile walks also completed and the start of some Kent countryside walks with the White Cliff Ramblers and to conclude the long walks for the year a 33-mile walk along the River Medway from Tonbridge to Rochester. Jam total reached 2,514 5/8ths last year so have challenged myself to 3,000 this year for something to do. So far 3,280 have been created and with a new dimension of making Chutney on the Gas BBQ to save stinking out the house. The Wurlitzer 100 Centenary concert was attended by 220 people including the Lord Lieutenant of East Sussex, and was so successful in happiness and fund raising we are arranging Wurlitzer 101 on April 19th.

There was a highlight and that’s recorded on Page 4

The Committee have done what the label states – organised a successful lunch, a wonderful 1960s reunion, and a bulletin along with year-round news from our extensive website and Facebook page thanks to Kevin Moore’s supervision and direction.

Delighted to report that with Jamyma Hanson being our focal student she is prepared to gather her peers and contemporaries for the year Group 2005 - 2015 which is at the end of the Ann Cockerham era. More details of this are within the bulletin, we are pleased that Jamyma has agreed to join the Committee.

Heads up for my decade the 1970s - we shall be gathering in 2027, but something smaller happened by default in October and a report of this with photos is in the bulletin.

Thank you to all those attending the 1960s reunion in October. In January we thought that it wasn’t going to happen as only 15 showed interest. Eventually 105 applied to attend but for various reasons we settled for 94 participants on the day who all agreed they had a wonderful time.

Our Generation X Fund is still alive and in funds, ready to support applicants when they make themselves known. We even have a fund raiser to add to the funds in April thanks to Rebekah Gilbert with a Scratch Messiah for singers and audience on Saturday 18th April at St. Marys Church.

It was mentioned in Bulletin 173 that we were looking down the Registered Charity avenue, but having been presented with a report, the committee felt that it was not in the Association’s best interest at this moment in time.

I remind you once again that ROSA Celebrates its own centenary in 2029, and it would be wonderful to do something significant, and the Committee welcomes any ideas and suggestions from members.

Wishing you all the compliments of the festive season along with a happy, prosperous and more importantly healthy year ahead.

Richard Moore – Chairperson

We are delighted to be using this wonderful header for this year’s bulletin with permission from local artist Mark Fisher. For more details of his work and art classes in the area, please contact him.

Mark Fisher Sussex Artist

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Sign up for latest news at markfisherart.co.uk
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NEWS FROM HAZELL RICKETTS NEE GAINSBURY (1987-92)

I was at TPS between 1987 and 1992. I often think back to those times with fondness, especially the music-making in school, led by Lois Benton. Her encouragement and the opportunities and experiences from school built firm musical foundations.

After school I went onto the specialist music 6th form in Lewes and then onto the University of Surrey to study music. Unfortunately, during my 3rd year there I became unwell with CFS/ME (which still affects me, albeit to a considerably lesser extent). I took an extra year to finish my degree and then went onto Southampton University to study (part-time) for MA in Musicology. I was living in Fareham when doing the MA and found a church choir, which suddenly I discovered I was conducting. Still not certain how that came about! However, it seems that choirs are my thing. And church music. It also seems this doesn't surprise many people who knew me through school and university, although it did me!

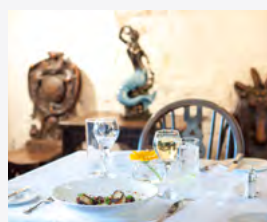
Having learned the organ while at school, and played for assembly on the Wurlitzer, I had to take a break from organ playing when at uni, through a wrist injury, but I started back on it during my time in Fareham including getting my grade 8 exam. A husband and two children also came along during that time and after nearly 15 years being Mum and piano teacher, along with Director of Music of the big town-centre church, we moved to Salisbury area following my husband's job. Unsurprisingly there was a big break from most

of musical work when raising young children! Unfortunately, we divorced about 6 years ago but as we are amicable, and he is only 5 miles away. The children have split their time between us. My son, Sam (18) is now about to start at Oxford to study mechanical engineering, and my daughter, Katie (16) follows her Mum's footsteps and is a pianist and organist among other musical pursuits. She has just started at 6th form boarding at Truro's cathedral School with the hopes of furthering her organ playing whilst studying A levels which leaves me with an empty nest.

Now I'm typical musician with fingers in lots of pies. Co DoM of St Mary's Church Fordingbridge (we decide on a week-by-week basis who is playing and who is conducting the choir - it's great!), MD of Wareham Choral Society, teaching piano in 2 secondary schools - which I love. Odd bits of accompanying, weddings and funerals played for at any church that books me, etc. Finally, in my late 30s I admitted at heart I'm an organist. I love the piano still but there is something about the organ. I was fortunate to have organ lessons with the cathedral organist from Salisbury, and through him I've also ended up singing with their chamber choir, and I think the cathedral is my spiritual home. When I look back though, although I've ended up in mainly classical music I think of TPS and "Little Shop of Horrors", and fun with the Wurlitzer organ, as well as the more 'classical' musical training of orchestra and choir, and realise how fortunate I was to have all of this, and how it has helped to make me the musician, and person, that I am today.

Save
the
Date

18 APRIL
2026 ANNUAL LUNCH



The Rye Old Scholars Annual General Meeting is scheduled for April 18th at 12:00 noon in the Tudor Room at The Mermaid Inn. Following the meeting, please join us for an exceptional three-course lunch, including coffee, priced at £25.00 per person. To reserve your place, kindly contact Mrs. Judith Blincow via email at judith@mermaidinn.com. Upon confirmation, she will share the menu options for your selection.

I can foresee a busy weekend in April and for those living away there seems to be plenty going on to make a weekend of three completely different activities. The AGM and delightful lunch to enjoy, then a wonderful evening of fine Choral Music with Handel's Messiah (see separate flyer in the bulletin), then on Sunday after a nice morning walk a Variety Show featuring the Rye Wurlitzer and afternoon tea for good measure.

AN HISTORICAL PIECE - FINAL PART

Of course, Ray Fooks wasn't the first headteacher of the new Thomas Peacock School. Mr Buttery, who took over as Head of RGS in 1959, continued in the role until Ray Fooks was appointed in 1976. As far as Ray Fooks' Headship is concerned, I couldn't put it any better than Paul Bishop, a former teacher of Rural Studies, appointed by him in 1979. I quote:

"During the 1980s, when Thomas Peacock School enjoyed considerable success, the number on the roll touched 1300, with a large, thriving Sixth Form, thanks in no small part to Ray's excellent leadership. I can remember that he was in his element taking school assemblies, complete with flowing gown as he addressed the youth of Rye with an oratorical eloquence that befitted his status as head of what was then a good-sized comprehensive. It was no coincidence that school lost its way somewhat in the subsequent years following Ray's retirement, with a string of less successful heads appointed as the role shrunk and school descended towards special measures early in the new millennium."



It is reported that, soon after being appointed to the post, one of the "less successful heads" threw all the history of the School into a skip. This included trophies and honours boards! Some of this was rescued by an astute caretaker and others, but much was lost.

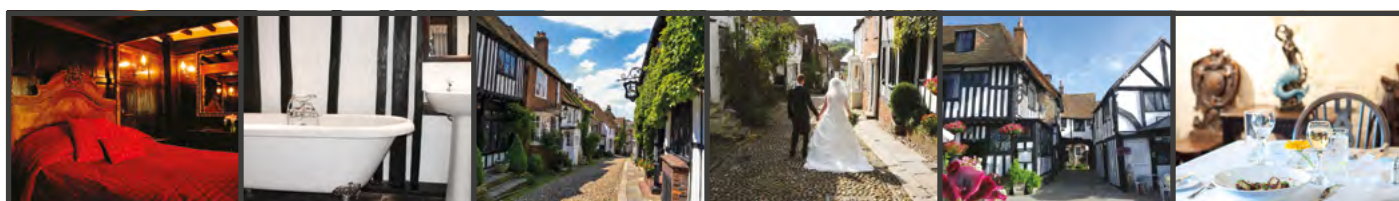
Due to the complete loss of the Leasam and Saltcote boarding facilities by 1992 and bearing in mind that Rye is only a stone's throw from Kent which still has grammar schools, the School at Rye was fast losing its attraction as a destination for educational excellence. However, in a strange paradox, its profile was raised massively when Paul McCartney decided to send his children there. I'm sure this attracted a number of new students, but the decline in numbers continued as parents voted with their children's feet. My son, Richard (with fair hair and glasses in the photograph of Paul McCartney donating some musical instruments in 1994) was in the same class (and born on the same day) as Paul McCartney's son, James. By the time they were studying for A-level they were becoming singularly unimpressed with the standard of teaching. Parents were phoning each other, sixth formers were leaving and travelling to Bexhill, Hastings and/or Tenterden. Numbers eventually halved from Ray Fooks' heyday and the School lost its sixth form. I have been a teacher for over 50 years. I taught there in 2000 and certainly didn't find it easy!

I'm not sure that it is true to say that East Sussex County Council "washed their hands of it" but, thankfully, Rye Academy Trust was formed and the 'College', as it was now called, was ably led by the wonderful Anne Cockerham. Anne did her very best to pull it back up out of the doldrums and most certainly improved the situation, achieving several successive 'good' Ofsted reports. The Academy Trust even started a Studio School in order to get post-16 education back to the Town again. It was a brave effort but, sadly, didn't quite work.

Aquinas Church of England Education Trust took over the running of Rye College in 2016 and, although a little bit of a roller-coaster ride in the ensuing years, was inspected by Ofsted in 2023 and judged to be good. I have attended several events at the College recently and can confirm that students are as well-behaved, studious, creative and enthusiastic as we ever were – and we didn't have the added distraction of mobile phones and constant social media!

All is not lost. Be kind to each other.

John Breeds, RGS 1957-1965.



The Mermaid Inn

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DIDN'T SEE THAT COMING, A REFLECTION OF A SPECIAL EVENT, RICHARD MOORE BEM

With my success in getting national recognition for individuals, the late Ray Fooks and Jo Kirkham to name but two, when an envelope landed on our door mat at the end of November 2025, I was immediately suspicious of something going on. Sure, enough inside was a letter from the ceremonial Secretariat department asking me whether I would accept a British Empire Medal in the Kings New Years Honours for "Music Education and Preservation in East Sussex. Rest assured that the response email was sent within an hour of opening the letter.

There then came a period of secrecy and suppression as I was sworn to secrecy until January 1st. I did tell my wife and sons the news and was prepared and ready to make an announcement on January on my Social Media, however the Mayor of Rye Cllr Andy Stewart and the Town Crier Paul Gorring had other ideas. When I awoke on the 31st Dec there were already messages of congratulations which started a period of very nice things said about me ... "about time" was the most popular closely followed "it couldn't have happened to a nicer person".

I planned a gathering to celebrate this milestone on February 1st, where else but Rye College where my "proposers" Rebekah Gilbert and Principal Tutor of the Rye Wurlitzer Academy Michael Wooldridge also said some very nice things about me as well as reading out messages from the testimonials that were written in 2019 when the application was forwarded. I must confess that reading these before this event was very special, as hearing them on the day I admit I would have been an emotional wreck. After responding to the kind words, I rose out the floor on the Wurlitzer, the first time since it's been on the stage and only the third time I have played on it. A wonderful buffet followed and - as is tradition when I am associated with an event - everyone went home with a full jar of something as there was confusion that BEM stood for "Best Ever Marmalade".

In March I was taken back once again when a copy of Keyboard Cavalcade, of which Michael Wooldridge is Editor, landed on the door mat and inside was a four-page article about me.

Part of the award was an invitation to Buckingham Palace to a Royal Garden Party. Protocol usually states that you can only attend once. Having been twice already in 1994 and 2019 for other reasons I thought I would be pushing my luck for a third, but, sure enough as this was my award my wife and I could attend.

May 20th was a perfect day the weather was wonderful, my wife's mobility scooter now had a heavy-duty battery so I was confident it would make the circular trip of Victoria Station, the Palace and then the return home via Charing Cross through St James' Park. We toured the gardens, which are quite magnificent, when we arrived and once the Royal Party stepped out on the rear terrace, the National Anthem was played and most of the 7,000 people attending headed for one of the longest marquees I have ever seen for dainty yet delicious refreshment. Ice cream tubs were seen in circulation, so whilst I set off to hunt for the source I left Viv on her scooter, people watching. On returning with said tubs, she had a beaming smile as she had just been idly chatting to the Duchess of Gloucester.

Having a wheelchair or mobility device at such gatherings has its advantages as at the end of the event we lined up - as we had at our previous visit - alongside the wall where the swimming pool is. The Royal Party walks past and you get up close and personal. During the gathering on this occasion it was a bit of a bun fight with large crowds of people surrounding them all, kept at bay with

a line of armed Beefeaters with their large pikes. Compared to the populace of the party there was only around 150 people in a line on our side with several hundred on the other side. We had the honour of meeting and shaking hands with Catherine Princess of Wales, Prince Edward and Princess Eugenie. And there it was, three of the quickest hours I've ever experienced gone but I was left with wonderful memories.

Investiture Day was Monday 9th June at Eastbourne Town Hall, a rather grand building with a very elegant Main Hall. The Lord Lieutenant was unexpectedly indisposed at the last minute on the day and one of his Deputies presented me with my medal, while the citation was read out by another one of the deputies. My wife and three sons attended and we finished off this special day with a not so dainty Toby Carvery.

To conclude this piece, as I would hate it if the ROSA Bulletin was just about me, I will let my oldest son Joe have the last word (or two).

A few words about the gentleman in the picture. This gentleman, if you weren't aware, is my Dad. He is also my friend, confidante, number one supporter in everything I do in life and probably the humblest, most giving, and caring person I know. As well as an amazing grandad to my two children. Today I and my two brothers had the honour of accompanying him to receive his BEM for "Services to Music Education and Preservation in East Sussex" in Eastbourne. I could not be prouder to be his son than I was today. However, just because you have a few letters after your name it doesn't mean I will go easier on you when we get to play crazy golf. I love you Dad.



BRAYDON ROBUS STILL COMPETING

As a Rye Old Scholar, and only 17, we are very proud of Braydon's continuing achievements this year representing his country and his progress is noteworthy for an update in this year's bulletin.

Braydon competed at the European Judo Union Kata Championships (Riga, Latvia) for the second year running, thanks to the support of the ROSA. This event in 2024 saw Braydon with his kata partner compete in the first ever adaptive kata category. They became European Champions and achieved the first ever medal for Great Britain at this competition. So, returning this year as reigning champions, there was more pressure. They both rose to the challenge and competed again, achieving their second gold. So, they are now double European champions, a great achievement for 2 judokas with disabilities.. Braydon has also competed at the European Judo Union Get Together competitions this year, for fighting. In May, he went to Velika Gorica, in Croatia, and came away with a gold medal after winning 4 fights. He also achieved 10 points towards his black belt, so he is now off the mark! In August, he competed in the competition in Gyor, Hungary, and again he came away with a Gold for fighting, then entered the first ever teams' event (with his little sister in the team) and won his fight. His team came away with Gold. In September the competition was in Gdansk, Poland, where he was pushed up to level 1 in adaptive fighting against opponents over 7kgs heavier than him. This was a challenge, and he came away with a Bronze. Braydon has been selected to go with the GB Adaptive squad and compete in the European Adapted judo competition in Congelino, Italy in November. A huge achievement for Braydon to be selected, and proves all his hard work is paying off, He is excited and ready for the challenge. He is also competing in the Dutch Open (Venray, Holland) in November and the EJU Get together competition in Houlgate, France in December. There is also an international training camp, in Belgium in January that he will be attending. Braydon is also a Level 1 coach for Judo, as he loves

supporting others to grow in the sport. He has kept up to date and attended courses throughout the year. He has also done his nage-nokata course level 1, alongside his Dan Grading theory (July). He is also booked in to do another course in 2 other katas, and next year would like to do his level 2 coaching course to develop his coaching skills further, so he can support other GB adaptive judokas at competitions. He also attends Adaptive Training at the National Training Centre, in Walsall, every 6-8 weeks to improve his judo at a higher level. Braydon is a young man, who was born with bilateral iris colobomas (too much light into the eyes) and associated comorbidities that come with the condition; he is also an autistic man, with dyslexia, and hypermobility. He is showing the world what you can achieve. He has completed his Level 2 Art and Design at East Sussex College, with a Merit; now studying Level 3 Creative Practice for the next 2 years. In March 2025, Braydon was also awarded with Adaptive Player of the year, for the British Judo Association Schools Championships, a testament to his hard work in a sport he loves. 2026, is looking exciting for Braydon's Judo journey, especially with being selected for the GB adaptive squad for fighting and kata (the only judoka to ever be in both). There will be plenty of competitions for him, but due to being an adaptive judoka, the competitions are abroad. He will need support for more funding in the future for his judo journey, there is a Go fund me page <https://gofund.me/8d4579d61> . The amount that has been raised already has helped towards Braydon's travel costs and entries to Hungary, Poland and Venray. Thank you again for your support for Braydon. Photos below 1st photo, Braydon on the podium at Gyor, Hungary 2nd Photo, with paralympian Dan Powell, both holding their recent medals, Dan had just become world IBSA champion (he is a visually impaired judoka) and Braydon holding his European Judo Union Kata Gold Medal 3rd Photo, on the podium in Riga, Latvia, with his kata partner, being crowned European Champion.



Braydon on the podium at Gyor, Hungary



Braydon with Paralympian Dan Powell, both holding their recent medals, Dan had just become world IBSA champion (he is a visually impaired judoka) and Braydon holding his European Judo Union Kata Gold Medal



Braydon on the podium in Riga, Latvia, with his kata partner, being crowned Europe

NAMES ON BOARDS

The College provided us with information in July who this years head students would be so over the summer holiday Lucie Broome & Mimi Cruttenden were added to the list . Those attending the 60's reunion met them and commented what outstanding young women they were. We also solved the mystery surrounding the head students of 1961 namely M Winter & Gillian Sewell these too have now been added to the Trollope Award Board that is on the half landing in the former 6th Form block.



RYE OLD SCHOLARS ASSOCIATION



Saturday 10th October 2026
12 noon till 4.30pm

Two Course Buffet with Tea/Coffee
 Tours of the School • Licensed Bar
£15.00 Per Head

Mrs Ann Cockerham and other staff from that era will be joining us for the afternoon

Please note that for this event to go ahead we need at least 50 people to attend so please register your interest as soon as possible and no later than by 31st January 2026

Reservations also needed for catering purposes
Please email Jamyma via r.fm@btopenworld.com
 We look forward to seeing you there!

Wurlitzer 101

Celebrating the 101st Anniversary of the historic Rye Wurlitzer's opening performance at the Palace Cinema, Tottenham, on 6th April 1925 with a bumper show and cream tea

All profits in aid of the Rye Wurlitzer Academy - Registered Charity 1161821



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THE PAINE REUNION

Trevor Paine with his wife Jan (now in Canada) try and visit every two years friends and family in the UK. October was their chosen time, and a gathering was arranged with mutual school friends on the 20th October at the Ship Inn, Rye, a very pleasant venue with lots of charm. Brother Nick now living in Wales with wife Alice, and brothers Andrew still working at the Mermaid Inn and Phil who now lives in Brighton, gathered with friends and family. The room was full of Rye Old Scholars in one form or another whether it was TPS, TPCC, RGS or RSM. Wherever we went to senior school we all came together that night and had a very pleasant evening. It is hoped that subject to dates that we can coincide the 1970s reunion in 2027 when Trevor is over next.

Group Photo attached in the bar of the Ship Inn



REMEMBERING

News of ROSA members passing are received throughout the year. Memories and Obituaries are published on our website and we remember the family and loved one of Rosemary Weslake, Reverend Richard Dengate, Sue Dale (nee Peters) and Irene Powell who sadly left this world this year. May they be at peace, free from pain and still in our hearts..

KEVINS CORNER SCHOOL SPORTING MEMORIES

Until I became involved with the Rye Old Scholars Association (ROSA) a few years ago, I hadn't been back to the old school since I left following my A Levels in 1975. Inevitably returning now is somewhat nostalgic.

This was no less the case than when I attended the college in October in my capacity as a ROSA committee member to do my bit to get things ready for the 1960s Reunion. In my case, my fondest memories of the school relate to sport. My academic achievements at school were fairly modest. I think I was what was known as a late developer and it was in 1993 before I obtained my degree at Portsmouth University. However, whilst at school, I did excel at football, cricket and basketball. I captained the first eleven football and cricket teams for a couple of years and I firmly believe that many of my leadership skills that were to assist me in my role as a senior police officer originated on the sports field.

It is perhaps not surprising that former teachers associate former pupils later in life with what they achieved at school. A few years ago, at a ROSA Reunion I saw John Fletcher for the first time since I had left school and he immediately said to me, "Kevin Moore – footballer". Therefore, his main memory of me was about my prowess on the football field.

Inevitably, I have fond memories of the P.E. staff during my time at the school. Initially, these teachers were Mr. Holness and the inimitable Terry Spencer. Later on it was Keith Gamble and John Cooper. These latter two were heroes of mine at the time because they were both excellent footballers in their own right and taught me a lot about the game. John Cooper was responsible for getting me to play for Rye United after I had played for Iden for a few years. On the girls side there was Miss Scoggins, later Mrs. Steed and Miss Hobby, later Mrs Wisemen.

Sport at the Thomas Peacocke was encouraged and myself and a few others represented the school at county level at football and cricket. This was the same with the girls at hockey and netball. Indeed, I believe Mandy Jones, the daughter of teacher Stan, played hockey at South of England level.

I recall my piece de resistance happened in 1974 at the annual school sports day. Aside from the sports I excelled in which I have already referred to, I was no athlete when it came to running, jumping and throwing. However, Mr. Gaunt had made me the Head of Rother House and therefore it fell to me to pull together competitors for the sports day events. Rother had never won the school sports day. Traditionally, Sanders and School Houses excelled. However, as it transpired, I had worked out a very simple but nonetheless highly effective tactical formula. Whilst the other houses had the best athletes in certain events, I came to realise that they were not entering competitors in every event. Now the key to this was that points were awarded for even those who finished in last place. Rother had some decent athletes but not in the same numbers as the other houses. However, through cajoling and arm twisting I managed to get competitors for every single event. Some of these individuals hadn't donned a P.E. kit in earnest for many years and even then it was only under the pressurisation of the P.E. staff. I myself entered the triple jump and the shot put, events that I had never undertaken previously. This was ultimately the determining factor and Rother House won the sports day! Mr. Gaunt was over the moon with the outcome and had a tear in his eye when he congratulated me on my efforts and astuteness!

I suppose, this was additional evidence of my competitiveness. I have always wanted to win and be the best I can in everything I did. It was to hold me in good stead in the years that followed when it

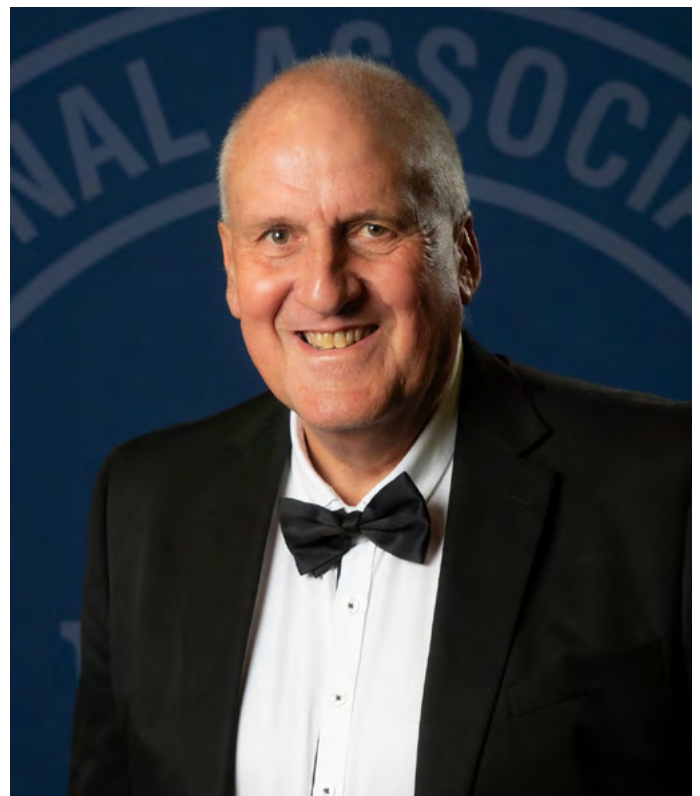
came to my chosen profession. We are all different of course and the important thing about education is, I believe, that all students should be encouraged to positively develop in any way that they can. This can of course be academically, performing on stage or musically as well as on the sports field.

To me, sport is a great leveller. People who take part can come from all sorts of different backgrounds. Once they enter the field of play, they all have one thing in common. That is to perform to the best of their ability and to win. There is nothing wrong with this and it is sad that competitive sport in more recent times seems to have taken a back seat in many schools. Learning to win with good grace and to lose in a similar fashion reflects life in general. We all have to be prepared in life to take the hard knocks and understanding this on the sports field is a good way of developing that ability in individuals.

Around a year ago, together with a former work colleague and friend, we decided to jointly write a book about local football in the East Sussex area. Readers of this bulletin will be aware that I have previously authored three books linked to my police career and so this is something completely different. In the course of researching this latest book, we became aware of a local football reunion group who meet monthly. This is formed of members of our local footballing contemporaries.

Going to these gatherings has been an eye opener for all of the right reasons. The camaraderie displayed amongst individuals who years ago were often bitter rivals, is something that is amazing. These get togethers have served to remind me of just what a huge part sport, in this case football, has influenced people's lives.

To me, and I am sure that it is the same for many others, team sports have had a significant role to play in my life. They have helped to create the person that I have become. The foundations for this lie with my school years and to the teachers involved. It demonstrates that schooling is about much more than just academic life. It is about developing young people in a holistic way and in my case I will be forever grateful.



REPORT AND PHOTO OF THE LUNCH 2025

It was the same successful recipe as it is every year when ROSA members come together. We met, we chatted pre-meal, during the meal and after the meal, picking up with friends where we left off from last year. Sincere thanks to Judith and her team for such a splendid meal. If you haven't attended, it really is something you need to add to your bucket list of things to do before you reach 100. The tradition of jars with different flavours was once again a post-dinner highlight, and there were some left over – maybe some people forgot to take one. However, Judith ensured these were placed with people that were not having a good time at that moment, to make them smile. Those attending are as follows, and the supporting photo with everyone looking happy just proves what a very pleasant annual event it was. Here's to the next one in 2026. Lunch attendees were: Judith Bincow, Martin Bincow, Claire Spacey, Andrew Spacey, Richard Moore, Kevin Moore, Ann Moore, John Breeds, Geraldine Breeds, Sue Moore, Tony Moore, Lois Benton, Michael Hickman, Jim Holmes, Janet Holmes, Mike Slater, Jenni Slater, Wendy Dumbleton, John Dumbleton, Chris Melchers, Rob Kemsley, Gaye Hardiman, Peter Hardiman, Mr Bill Wickens, Mrs Benita Wickens, Rosemary Craggs, Geoffrey Craggs, Anthony Breeds, Marie Breeds, Christopher Breeds, Kay Breeds, Fennis Blundell, Ted Blundell.



GENERATION X OPPORTUNITY FUND NEWS UPDATE

ROSA was formed sometime in the late 1920s or early 1930s to enable pupils of Rye Grammar School to keep in touch after they had left. In 1938, Will Dunlop became Secretary and remained involved for the rest of his life.

ROSA has since evolved with time and has seen many changes. In 1968 Rye Grammar School and Rye Secondary Modern School merged to become Thomas Peacocke School. In more recent years it became known as a Community College and was then renamed Rye College in 2008.

With the wonderful support and sheer determination to raise funds through a wide array of events by our previous Mayor Cllr Rebekah Gilbert in her second year of office, we are pleased to announce the new arrival of the **GENERATION X OPPORTUNITY FUND**.

This consists of a forward thinking fund giving opportunities to Rye Old Scholars who have attended Rye Community College, Rye Studio School and Rye College and are aged between 18 and 30 years. This fund is intended to provide assistance for further study and courses or help towards the purchase of equipment and tools. All applications will be considered where funding is required to support a new opportunity, or a new venture. Grants for support of up to £300 are available. The fund is open all year round and the ROSA Committee welcome all applications from those individuals who meet the criteria.

An application form can be obtained by emailing Richard Moore: r.fm@btopenworld.com



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JO KIRKHAM J.P. M.B.E.

As the bulletin was being compiled, we heard the very sad news of the passing of Jo Kirkham MBE, not only a long standing and highly regarded teacher at Rye but also a wonderful ambassador of the town whether it was a long-standing town councillor or her charity work particularly for the museum.

I have had the pleasure of knowing Jo for many years, and playing at functions when she was Mayor of Rye. It was a great honour to put her application forward in 2013 which led to her award of an MBE for services to the town of Rye, so justly deserved.

In recent years we have worked together as Foundation Governors at Rye College Aquinas Trust, Jo being a long standing Chairman until this year when she stepped aside and for me an honour to take her place as Chairman.

May Jo be free of pain, at peace and in a special place arranging things and keeping people in order in such a way that only Jo could do. God bless her.

I've known Jo as a dear friend and colleague ever since she came to T.P.S. to teach History and Geography in 1980. Her knowledge and love of history was amazing. For the 6th Form she ran a Local History group on Wednesday afternoons, who together researched and produced a fine collection of booklets called 'Rye Memories.' Based on every possible aspect of life in Rye and the local area, they are available in Rye Museum, where they're a valuable source of information for researchers and the like (I understand copies are sold weekly to interested visitors to the Museum.).

Memories of Jo by Lois Benton.

Jo was a fine swimmer; swimming both for her school and University. Under the chairmanship of Mr. R. Fooks (Headmaster T.P.S.) she was on the Committee that instigated the building of Rye Swimming Pool, for which the town owe a huge debt of thanks.

In Civic matters she was on the Town Council for 44 years and was Mayor of Rye on three occasions. For all her contribution to the life of Rye she was awarded the M.B.E.

She was a founder member of the choir Ryesingers, joining a small group of 6 women who met to sing at the home of Lesley Brownbill the conductor; (until it became a mixed choir of 40+ voices!). She was still singing with the choir until a few months ago. (And in typical style had offered to pay her subs. for this term!) As well as Ryesingers she was a loyal and faithful member of the St. Mary's choir for 40 years, faithfully keeping in touch with them, and Ryesingers, on their Whats App to the end.

One of her greatest contributions to Rye was her involvement in the building up of the Rye Museum, both in the Castle and East Street in 1990? She was Chairman of the Rye Museum until last year, and attended a Trustees' meeting only a fortnight ago. She visited the Museum at least once a week up to the end.

One of the most memorable things she did, which few will remember, was to set up a house in New Winchelsea Road as a refuge for students when she found out that one of the girls she taught was sleeping on the floor of a friend's house because of problems at home. I think several students stayed there. (When it finished it was on the market for rent and a couple of staff lived there, including Nigel Spooner when he first came to Rye!).



Handel's MESSIAH FROM SCRATCH!

Saturday 18th April 2026
St. Mary's Church, RYE

REHEARSAL 2.30PM - 5.30PM
PERFORMANCE 7.00PM - 9.30PM

WANTED

- Singers to perform this wonderful piece of music
 - An audience to enjoy the experience of hearing it!
- £10 per person, participant or audience member**

Proceeds in aid of two local charities



SINGERS - WE NEED YOU!

**Find out more and register your interest by
contacting Rebekah Gilbert by email to
info@vivawellbeing.com**

Interval and pre-concert bar available.

Soloists

Soprano – Grace Constable
Alto – Rebekah Gilbert
Tenor – Gary Marriot
Bass – Jonathan Breeds

**Come and enjoy an afternoon and evening of
great music in a beautiful setting, and help the
town's young people in the process!**



LIST OF ATTENDEES: Beverley Gill, Linda Bailey, Margaret Theakston, Keith Matthews, Carolyn Williamson, Beryl Colyer, Kevin Williams, Mr Blackford, Carol Bourne, Roy Bourne, Mr D Stanton, Mrs A Stanton, Sam Lambourne, Roy Forward, Des Lambert, Robert Carter, Godfrey Tolputt, Clare Whyatt, Roger Whyatt, Roy Igglesden, Shirley Noakes, Marion Fuchs, Clive Wilson, Terry Tozer, Joyce Gustard, Peter Ewart, Eric Bourne, Sylvia Capps, Judi Gornall, Judith Howley, Mike Slater, Tony Hall, Ted Blundell, Jane McInnes, Barry Fuller, Alan Webber, Rob Kemsley, Peter Eade, Brian Eade, Hilary White, David Cleverley, Richard Ball, Patricia Agar, Marjorie Pankhurst, Karen Southern, Anthony Breeds, Marie Breeds, R Lavender, RHG Davies, John Wilson, John Breeds, Mike Sinclair, Nick Marshall, Christine Tree, Mark Bianchi, Sandra Delamare, Nigel Foy, Margaret O'Neill, Jane Hand, Robert Strange, Jill Black, Christopher Breeds,

1960'S REUNION AND PHOTOS

Sausage Rolls were not part of the buffet menu this year, as we did not want to bother the local Fire and Rescue Service. However, Judith and Claire arranged a wonderful spread and a great bar, despite the lack of signal for the card machine as always, which was part of the ingredients of a highly successful reunion on October 11th.

Kevin and wife Ann do not want to see another raffle ticket until the next event as I kept them busy with ticket sales from the generous attendees. Andrew also assisted with a variety of activities and managed to visit all the tables for up close and personal photos of the occasion, which are on our wonderful website. Sue & Tony were on the door and made sure that everyone had a name badge. John and Margaret spearheaded the memorabilia section and enjoyed a very nice lunch with all our guests.

I think the Committee all did their 10,000 steps that day and slept well that night.

The 60s background music was out of action, but it was not needed as the entertainment was conversation and reminiscing. Around 100 people attended the event and people literally travelled miles to be there as far away as Western Australia, in Steve Lamb's case.

The ever-popular school tours were well received. Minni and Molly did a great job, and they were commended for it by those they showed around.

For only the fifth time in 35 years of being involved, I rose out of the floor playing the Wurlitzer which seemed to be well received as when the 60s students were at college it lived on the balcony with only the side panel showing and just played for school assemblies.

No more words are needed, as those attended made memories and caught up with school friends from many years ago. Those that could not make it missed a wonderful day, and we look forward to doing it all again in three years' time. Thank you to all those attending in helping make it a special day for everyone.

HERE'S WHAT SOME SAID AFTERWARDS

Just a note to say CONGRATULATIONS on such a great Reunion last

night. Certainly, one of the best. It was such a lovely atmosphere with everyone animatedly chatting away to each other. They were obviously delighted to catch up with old friends and seemed to have such happy memories of their school days.

The whole afternoon was lovely with the excellent buffet lunch and trips round the school. Jenny P. was very disappointed that she couldn't find her old Biology Lab. anywhere!! How the building has changed since she came to teach in 1964!

Well done for playing the organ. Kevin Williams and friends didn't recognise the sound from their school days and came to ask why it sounded so different!

Jenny and Jill, my ex-colleagues and friends were quite overwhelmed by it all, and today we spent another couple of hours reminiscing over the 'old days'!

Thanks for putting on such a great time for everyone. I guess they're all still chatting away about it! With very best wishes to you, Lois Benton.

Thank you and all the people who made the RGS reunion yesterday so enjoyable. A lot of organisations by everyone and I'm sure, though no one stood to formally give a vote of thanks, that all who came appreciated your hard work. A great day meeting with old friends and reminiscing. Do pass on my thanks and I look forward to the next one! Judi Gornall (Holmes).

As a first timer to RGS reunions I would like to express a big thank you to yourself especially but also the other Committee members for organising the Reunion on Saturday which was so enjoyable and well done. Please also thank Mollie for a very enlightening tour of now her school; she was good and very patient with the very chatty people she was showing round!!! I look forward to the next one!! Kind regards Shirley Noakes (nee Fleming).

Just a quick note to thank you for organising Saturday's event at the school, I was at Leasam House from 59 - 63, it was great to meet up with many old students from those years. The day was well organised, the girls did a brilliant tour of the school, full of enthusiasm about the College. The lunch you laid on was great, your small recital on the organ was brilliant. After all these years, it is the first time at this sort of event, so we had a brilliant day, thank you also for your pot of jam, such a lovely idea. Please pass on our thanks anybody else that was involved



Peter Goodsell, Susan Etherden, Celia Rietkerk, Pamela Cox, Mary East, Brenda Moore, Bill Waters, Peter Barnett, Mark Little, P Dickerson, Steve Lamb, Mr Luck, Mrs Luck, Heather Barnett, Jenny Pankhurst, Jill Holliday, Louis Benton, Anne Jeffrey, Robin Osburne, Mike Hollingdale, Daniel Mankowitz, Steve Howley, Kay Breeds, Geraldine Breeds, Susan Tompkins, Irene Penne, Jenni Slater, Tim Grant, Fennis Blundell, Alan McInnes, Marie-Christine Wilson, Claire Spacey, Andrew Spacey, Judith Blincow, Martin Blincow, Kevin Moore, Ann Moore, Richard Moore, Sue Moore, Tony Moore.

in running the event. Kind regards Robin Blackford

I would like to thank you and all the other volunteers who worked so hard to make Saturday's school reunion such a success. Thank you for the beautifully presented jam, Richard (I haven't tasted it yet, but I am certain it is delicious). If anyone is liaising with the school and can pass on my thanks to the delightful Molly who gave us a detailed tour of the school, please do so. She was bright, charming and endlessly patient when listening to the reminiscences of us "oldies". For someone who has not visited for sixty years, most of the school was unrecognisable but it was so interesting to see the opportunities now available to the fortunate students attending Rye College. We enjoyed a most pleasant stay at The Mermaid and managed to fit in a visit to my cousin who still lives in Rye.

Best wishes and many thanks Meg Theakston (Nee Margaret - Maggie-Humphries) p.s. I am the niece of Vera Larkin who was the school secretary to Mr. Buttery and Miss Dann for many years. She is long gone, of course, but was immediately recognisable in the displayed large group photograph.

Just a very quick email to thank you for organising the 60s reunion at Rye on Saturday. The amount of time and effort that you expended must have been considerable especially as we all came away with pots of homemade preserves. Lucky us! Sam and I had a great time reminiscing. Sorry we were the last to leave. Thank you again for coordinating this much anticipated event. A wonderful success. Kind regards Catherine Ford nee Boyce Sam Ford.

Many thanks to you and the committee for organising Saturday's reunion which was a great success. It was good to meet up with so many ex-school friends and hear the organ after so many years. Looking forward to the next reunion. Kind regards Peter Eade (Leasam 1959-1965).

Thank you so much to all of you who planned and put on such a fabulous 1960s reunion on Saturday! I reckon I've been to every 1960s "do" since the '60s - and I can't recall a better one than this. These things don't just happen, far from it, and the work which had gone into the planning of the event over many months was obvious for all to see. The displays, the bar, the lunch, the tours and - wow, the Wurlitzer performance! - they were all fantastic.

Best of all was the atmosphere. Everyone seemed to agree it was a wonderful occasion and even after four or five hours of chatting and laughing the time seemed to flash by. It was extremely well attended,

which is a great testament to your organising work and I know quite a few had come a very long way.

I hope you enjoyed it all as much as everyone else. Thank you all for your efforts - they were well worth it. Dare I say... looking forward to the next! Very best wishes, Peter Ewart P.S. The jam on this morning's porridge was the icing on the cake!

Just a quick email to say what a splendid ROSA 60s reunion that was on Saturday. Well done. You all do such a wonderful job to keep the organisation thriving in the way it does. Jams duly delivered to a very receptive Dale Skinner - I had a most enjoyable stay and a very comfortable night's sleep at The White Dog. And the Unripe Fig and Apple jam is a big hit with my wife, too! ATB and catch you soon, Rob Kemsley

Thanks for all your efforts with the 60s reunion sorry we were a bit late arriving but as you know us Leasam lads had a luncheon in town and we probably should have moved ourselves on quicker.

Nevertheless I had an awesome day as did my sister who had not seen my old school before.

I had asked for a mention on the radio to Tony Blackburn and to radio Caroline, however Chris Williams at Radio Caroline/Manx Radio gave us a mention Also a pic of us Leasam lot outside the restaurant. Best Regards Steve Lamb, Goomalling, Western Australia.



LIFE MEMBERSHIP AND ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION INFORMATION

Annual Subscription £5 or Life Membership £25.

Please send a cheque to R.O.S.A. to:-

Mrs Judith Blincow
R.O.S.A. Secretary
The Mermaid Inn, Mermaid Street
Rye, East Sussex TN31 7EY

Standing order information. Make it easy for yourself and ROSA by setting up a standing order to pay your annual subs.

Account Name: Rye Old Scholars

Bank details: Sort code: 60-18-09

Account No: 59114479.

Please quote your name for reference.

For items for the Annual Bulletin please email them to Richard Moore r.fm@btopenworld.com

NEWS FROM RYE COLLEGE A REPORT BY MR DOM DOWNES



Rye College experienced a steady set of results for GCSEs 2025. While they do not reflect our ambitious expectations and remain below national averages, they nonetheless show increases in all the key measures. We remain incredibly focused on our improvement journey. Consequently, considerable emphasis is being placed on the development of a universal reading strategy, continuing improvement in pedagogical practice through use of walkthrus focusing on starts to lessons, routines and 'I do, We do, You do' teaching strands, and checking for understanding. Similarly, we continue to focus on curriculum construction, supported by the Aquinas Trust, developing progression mapping, reading and use of formative assessment. These approaches will lead into increased focus on in-class adaptive strategies to meet the needs of students and secure improved progress.

Attendance remains the biggest barrier to success as the college experienced well above national average absences. We are being supported by Chiltern Learning Trust (attendance hub lead) to challenge the historic and post-Covid culture of absence. We are already seeing the benefit of this as attendance rates have improved from September.

Meanwhile the school is experiencing growth – especially in KS3. We welcomed 151 students to join Y7 in September 2025. Secondary place applications for September 2026 closed at the end of October and, owing to our strong reputation within the community, numbers are strong. Alongside this growth in pupil numbers, we have secured increased focus on improving and refurbishing our teaching spaces: we now have a newly located and expanded food technology room and a refurbished engineering workshop. These innovations gives the school considerable scope to enhance its curriculum offer at KS4.

Finally, our students continue to thrive both in school and out participating in a wide range of activities: including the much-anticipated school production of Wizard of Oz that will be performed over two nights in November – tickets available from the school office.

ROSA OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE 2025

President: *The Director of Education for Rye School* **Chairperson:** *Mr Richard Moore* **Treasurer & Secretary:** *Mrs Judith Blincow*
Webmaster & Social Media officer: *Kevin Moore* **Bulletin Compiler:** *Mr. Richard Moore* **Press Officer:** *Mrs. Margaret O'Neil*
Overseas Correspondent: *Mr. Gordon Boxall* **Committee:** *Mr. John Breeds, Mrs. Claire Spacey, Mr. Andrew Spacey.*

For year round news, photos, memories and more, please visit our wonderful website Send your news and photos to saintkev1957@outlook.com www.ryeoldscholars.org.uk

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