



RATCLIFFIAN
ASSOCIATION

THE OLD RATCLIFFIAN

2024



EDITION XXVII



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INTRODUCTION



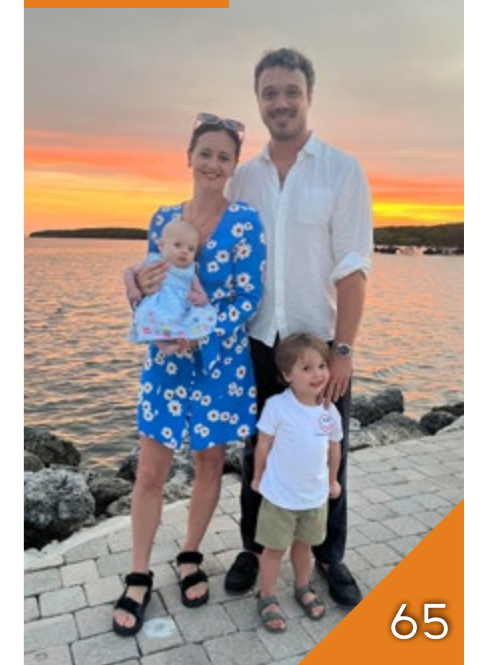
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THE EDITOR'S COLUMN

As we look back over 2024, it's hard to believe how quickly the year has flown by. It has been a pleasure to serve the Old Ratcliffian community for another year. This year saw over 340 ORs return to their roots, either by attending events or visiting the College. A highlight for many was the Annual Celebration Dinner in July, where Ratcliffe welcomed ORs back for a 'sleepover' in the boys' dorm rooms, giving them the opportunity to experience, once again, the place they once called home.

This year has been marked by change – sometimes challenging, but essential for growth. Embracing change allows us to evolve, and the Ratcliffian spirit exemplifies this beautifully. So, as **Dan Amies' (10)** presidency draws to a close, we thank him for his past two years of service to the Association. Dan's military background and unwavering enthusiasm brought new ideas and a progressive vision that have made a lasting impression. We now welcome **Louise Watkins (née Jackson) (91)**, who will take over the reins as the 99th President of the Ratcliffian Association.

This year's magazine is filled with highlights from OR events, as well as a celebration of the remarkable achievements of several notable Old Ratcliffians. We mark the Golden Anniversary of **Fr Simon Giles' (60)** ordination to the priesthood and feature an insightful article on **Fr Willie Doyle (1890)**, courtesy of Ratcliffe's historian, OR **Br Nigel Cave (72)**. Additionally, you'll hear from two inspiring young Old Ratcliffians, **Aimee Cleminson (21)** and **Arran Grant (19)**, who have returned to Ratcliffe to further their careers, share their experiences, and make valuable contributions to the next generation of students.

The Ratcliffian Association does more than just reconnect ORs with each other and with the College; it also preserves the rich history of Ratcliffe. Hardly a week goes by without an OR or family member reaching out for historical information about a loved one who attended the College. Exploring our archives, which span more than 177 years, provides a rewarding glimpse into the past – from Ratcliffe's humble beginnings, with only a few students, to the vibrant institution that we know today, now serving over 900 of them.

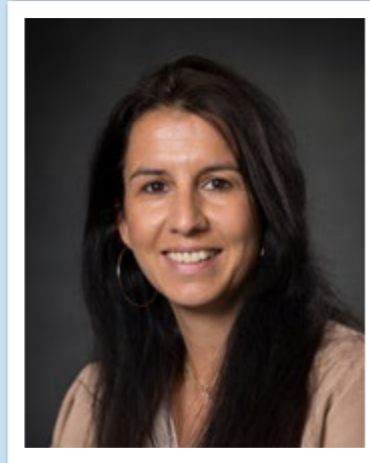
I invite you to delve into Ratcliffe's fascinating history this winter. You'll uncover stories about life during wartime, adventurous voyages by Ratcliffe's fathers on steamships, and students who

once skated on the pond in winter. Such stories offer a window into a different era – one that, in many ways, is barely recognisable today, except for the historic buildings which still stand. For some of our older readers, these memories may evoke nostalgia; for younger generations, they may spark curiosity. And if you're wondering where the pond was...well, you'll have to start reading to find out! Visit the 'Magazine' section of our website, www.ratcliffianassociation.co.uk.

As we close another successful year, I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to those who have made it all possible. Firstly, to Ratcliffe's Headmaster, Jon Reddin, whose unwavering support for the Ratcliffian community has been invaluable. His warm and welcoming presence at gatherings, both in the UK and internationally, has strengthened our bonds across generations and continents. A special thank you, also, to Louise Liston, our Development Manager, who has been my steadfast support and 'wing woman' as we have set out to connect with as many ORs as possible throughout the year. I also want to acknowledge **Gemma Thomas (née Rumbold) (01)**, our dedicated copywriter, and **Dave Ricks (07)**, our talented magazine designer – without their hard work, this publication would not come together as smoothly or as beautifully as it does. Thank you all.

Finally, my deepest appreciation goes to you, the Old Ratcliffian community. To everyone who has reached out to the Association, attended events, shared updates in this magazine, and supported the College, thank you. You are part of a remarkable, global tapestry, united by shared values instilled at Ratcliffe College. As we celebrate this year together, I invite you to read, remember, and take pride in the exceptional legacy that you all share.

Amanda Mole
Ratcliffian Association Manager



FROM YOUR PRESIDENT

Dear Old Ratcliffians,

I am both honoured and excited to be taking on the role as the President of the Ratcliffian Association. This is not only a privilege, but also a responsibility that I embrace with great enthusiasm. Our Old Ratcliffian community represents a legacy of mutual respect and support, and of worldwide and lifelong connections, and I look forward to fostering an even stronger bond among us.

First and foremost, I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to former Association President **Dan Amies (10)** and to my brother, Past President **Ben Jackson (88)**, for their dedication and remarkable contributions over the past few years. Their leadership has set a strong foundation, and I am committed to building upon its positive approach, with your support. Together with the guidance and the support of Association Manager Amanda Mole, we can look forward to strengthening our connections with networking and social events throughout the coming year, and continuing to support the next generation of students through scholarship and bursary programmes.

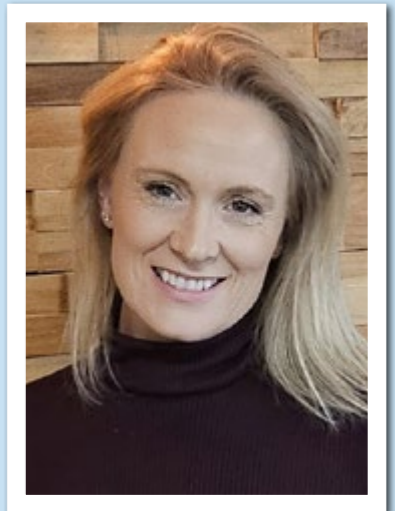
We also want to continue to applaud and celebrate the achievements, milestones, and success stories of our alumni, and this magazine is a great way of highlighting our collected and growing community. I urge you to get in touch through our social media platforms, through the website, or by emailing us. We would love to hear your stories, we would relish your ideas, and your ongoing participation is the key to our success as your alumni.

I had the pleasure of attending the AGM in the summer, and it was so positive to see such a vast range of generations of ORs, either present in person or on Zoom, being part and parcel of our community. Let us work together to create more memories, reflecting upon our mutual journey, and developing more opportunities to connect and assist future generations of Old Ratcliffians with our collected knowledge, guidance, and experiences.

Thank you for your trust and support. I look forward to connecting with many of you soon, and hearing how we can continue to make our Association stronger and more impactful.

With warm regards,

Louise Watkins (née Jackson) (91)
President of the Ratcliffian Association



THE HEADMASTER'S INTRODUCTION

Dear Friends of Ratcliffe College,

Welcome to the 2024 edition of *The Old Ratcliffian* magazine. It has been another wonderful year for the students and staff, and I am delighted that we have been able to support so many Association events here at the College. My introduction this year is based upon my Exhibition Day address to the College, and it has the title, 'Care, love, and nourishment lead to change.' As the Association celebrates another year, we give thanks to the Lord for the opportunities that he has provided us with. We thank **Dan Amies (10)** for his commitment and service to the Association over the past two years as President, and we look back with great pride on the achievements of his tenure. We now look forward to supporting our new President, **Louise Watkins (née Jackson) (91)**, as she forges ahead with plans for change and development within the Association, as we continue to work together to strengthen our ties with one another and entice new members to join us.

I hope you enjoy this year's edition of *The Old Ratcliffian*, and, as you thumb through the pages, it brings back happy memories of your time at the College.

CARE, LOVE & NOURISHMENT LEAD TO CHANGE

'Time moves slowly, but passes quickly,' I once read. Indeed, it is often said that, the older we get, the quicker time seems to pass. Here at Ratcliffe, it is common to hear Year 13 students lament upon how quickly their time at school has passed. Whether students are in Year 13 and leaving this year, or in Year 7, just about to complete their first full year in the Senior School, they have all changed and been changed by their experiences over the past school year.

Some of us can find the changing seasons of life challenging; having just got used to one thing, change occurs and life moves on again. This can be unsettling, even frightening, as we must constantly adjust. A new teacher, new subjects, new friendships, different routines, and, for some of our boarders, a new country, and a new language and culture. Others find change exciting, as life evolves and different experiences can be looked forward to. 'I can't wait for the rugby season to start', or 'I am looking forward to starting my GCSE subjects in Year 9' are common experiences for many of our students.

For our young people here at Ratcliffe, June sees an end to examinations and, for those students in Years 11 and 13, a waiting period before knowing where the next step will take them. These moments can be daunting, with a strong sense of the unknown. Leaving behind familiar surroundings, friendships, and routines, and to trust oneself, requires courage. For those in the lower years, the summer

months should be a time to enjoy the longer and warmer days before the autumn brings an end to the peace and tranquillity of the holidays with a return to the familiarity, but busyness, of school life.

For all life to continue, change is needed. Spring flowers die to allow the goodness to go back into bulbs for them to mature and flower next spring. Blossom needs to die to allow fruit and berries to grow. Young animals need to grow to survive the winter. Throughout our lives, we, too, need to change and grow, from the needs of a young child, through the turbulent teenage years, and on to adulthood, if we are to mature and thrive. Later in life, we can give back to our children and families, as a new generation emerges.

Change to allow new growth is, therefore, a necessity, if at times unwanted. However, none of this growth would happen without care, love, and proper nourishment. A bulb will simply wither and die if not planted; crops, hedges, trees, and other plants all need care to grow to maturity and then to sustain others when they finally wither. Young animals and birds need love, care, and nourishment to thrive, just as we do. As the seasons change and time passes, so do we. Nothing remains completely the same, and nor should it. We evolve, we adapt, and we grow, sustained by the love, care, and nourishment provided by our parents, our families, our friends, and our school community.

Here at Ratcliffe, we are blessed that our collective change and our growth stems from, and is nurtured by, our Catholic mission. Our mission statement, '*Learning and Growing in the Light of the Gospel*,' reflects the love, care, and nourishment I have been speaking about. The students have all grown so much this year and made great progress in their academic studies and co-curricular pursuits. Their learning is a consequence of the care and nourishment they receive, daily, from their teachers and support staff, the care they show for one another, and the love of their parents.

You have all been nurtured, physically, socially, morally, and spiritually. Your growth has been shaped by the changing seasons and God's love for each of you. His love, above all, has nourished your spirit and given you the confidence to welcome change as a necessary part of life, and something to be cherished and looked forward to, rather than feared.

For all life to continue to enjoy the changing seasons, this world needs our love, care, and nourishment, too. It must be nurtured. For each one of us to accept change in our lives and use it to help us grow, we need the same love, care, and nourishment. We must be nurtured.

Jesus said to 'love our neighbour as we love ourselves'. By caring for one another every day at school, taking nourishment from God's enduring love for us, we are doing just that. So, let us continue to devote ourselves to serving the Lord together, now and in the future, with genuine care and love, nourished by the Holy Spirit.

Thank you.

Jon Reddin
Headmaster



VALETE - CLASS OF 2024

CONGRATULATIONS TO THIS YEAR'S LEAVERS

First Name	Surname	Destination	Course
Esme	Ainsley	University of Warwick	Biomedical Science
Folasade	Akinla	Loughborough University	Psychology (with Placement Year)
Emily	Ball	University of Central Lancashire	Veterinary Medicine and Surgery (with Foundation Year)
Ned	Bellamy	University of Reading	Real Estate Development and Planning (2025)
Amy	Blythe	Durham University	Modern Languages and Cultures (with Year Abroad)
Isabella	Boothroyd	Durham University	Combined Honours in Social Sciences
Quin	Capsticks	Harper Adams University	Agriculture (with Placement)
Harry	Carroll	University of Bristol	Economics
Bosco	Chan	Loughborough University	Computer Science and Artificial Intelligence (with Placement Year)
Darren	Chan	University of Bath	Accounting and Finance (with Placement)
Hollie	Chapman	University of Reading	Real Estate
Connie	Colville	Direct employment with M&S	
Callum	Cummins	University of Birmingham	Psychology (2025)
George	Daynes	Harper and Keele Veterinary School	Veterinary Medicine and Surgery
Rosie	Dickerson	The University of Edinburgh	Veterinary Medicine
Maddy	Dunstan	University of Leeds	Biomedical Sciences
Freddie	Eaton	Nottingham Trent University	Sport Science and Management
Thomas	Ferrier	Applying to Royal Navy	
Eliza	Geraghty	Norland	Early Childhood Education and Care
Elen	Gharagozyan	University of Bath	Business (with Placement)
Emilia	Griffiths-Turner	Loughborough University	Art Foundation
Avani	Gupta	Leeds Beckett University	Dietetics
Liam	Hardy-Smith	Employment	
Lola	Hobbs-Brake	Sheffield Hallam University	Criminology and Psychology
Faith	Howard	Manchester Metropolitan University	Criminology and Sociology
Zoe	Howling	University of East Anglia	Environmental Sciences
Mia	Hurren	Manchester Metropolitan University	Fashion Marketing
David	Ipinmoye	University of Sheffield	Medicine
Felix	Jackson	Sheffield Hallam University	Business Management
Ejemen	Joel	Applying in 2025	
Lucas	Kariolis	Loughborough University	Commercial Management and Quantity Surveying (with Placement Year)
Ava	Kinch	Durham University	Ancient History and Archaeology
Kai	Kirk	Employment	
Riley	Kirk	Employment	
Regina	Lam	University of Bath	Biochemistry (with Placement)
Rocco	Lanza	Leeds Beckett University	Real Estate and Property Management
Jenny	Li	University of Brighton	Illustration
Ruby	Lord	Leeds Beckett University	Nutrition
Alex	Love	Applying to Army/USA University	
Chloe	Mabbara	University of Lincoln	Biomedical Science
Munashe	Manjengwa	Loughborough University	Chemistry (with Placement Year)
Alex	Mawby	Durham University	Philosophy and Theology
Sadie	McCabe	University of Birmingham	Business Management
Katherine	McCrindell	University of Birmingham	Dentistry
Vincent	McKeefery	Grand Canyon University, USA	
Alfie	Mead	Employment	
Ewan	Metcalfe	University of Bristol	Cancer Biology and Immunology
Millie	Mokha	UCL (University College London)	Architecture
Archie	Mullins	Leeds Beckett University	Cyber Security
Euan	Mwangi	University of the Arts London	Film and Screen Studies
Shayne	Ndlovu	University of Nottingham	Computer Science
Edward	Offer	Leeds Beckett University	International Business
Lucia	Orsini-Rottner	The University of Edinburgh	Mathematics
Sophie	Packwood	Loughborough University	International Business (with Placement Year)
Shiven	Pandya	Applying in 2025	
Andi	Peace-Gadsby	University of Leicester	Physics
William	Pearce	The University of Edinburgh	Product Design
Gizella	Perrins	University of Leeds	Sustainability and Environmental Management
Sam	Pick	University of Reading	Economics (with Placement Year)
Matt	Pietrzyk	Sheffield Hallam University	Business Management and Marketing
Oliver	Pole	Sheffield Hallam University	Mechanical Engineering
Krishil	Rajpra	University of Nottingham	Mechanical Engineering (with Industrial Year)
Daisy	Reddin	Loughborough University	Fashion Design and Technology (with Placement Year)
Fallon	Reid	University of Leeds	Geography
Fred	Repper	Applying in 2025	
Angelica	Robinson	University of Oxford	French and Spanish
Melissa	Roche	Applying in 2025	
Ella Rose	Seymour	University of Exeter	Marketing and Management
Romi	Shabtay-White	London School of Economics and Political Science, University of London	Politics and Data Science
Sofia	Shmulevych	Royal Holloway, University of London	Business and Management
Zoe	Silwamba	University of Leeds	Sociology
Jeremiah	Simon	University of Leicester	Physics (with Foundation Year)
Charlie	Smith	University of Exeter	Biological Sciences
Marisa	Smith	University of Aberdeen	Pharmacology
Fin	Spencer	University of Reading	Business Economics
Daria	Stanishevska	University of Vienna	Business and Economics
Ronnie	Stones	Sheffield Hallam University	Business Management (2025)
Aadi	Thakrar	Degree Apprenticeship with BDO	
Alfie	Thompson	University of Birmingham	International Business
Fionntan	Townsend	University of Sheffield	Economics
Fellong	Wang	University of the Arts London	Games Design
Sebastian	Welch	Manchester Metropolitan University	Business Management
Millie	Woan	Manchester Metropolitan University	Criminology and Sociology



A LEVEL RESULTS

Congratulations to the Year 13 students at Ratcliffe College who enjoyed success in their A Levels and BTECs this summer, with more than one in five students achieving grades A/A/A or equivalent, or better.

A special mention goes to Katherine McCrindell and Romi Shabtay-White, who both achieved three A*s at A Level, and to Angelica Robinson, who won her place at the University of Oxford to read French and Spanish. There was also Distinction* BTEC success for Quin Capsticks, Connie Colville, and Ella Rose Seymour.

Overall, three students won places to read Veterinary Science, three to read Medicine, and two to read Dentistry, having achieved top grades.

Ratcliffe's boarders were hugely successful. Regina Lam achieved one A* and four A grades, Bosco Chan achieved A*/A/A, and Elen Gharagozyan attained two A*s and an A. Daria Stanishevska, who joined the College following the outbreak of war in Ukraine, achieved A*/A/A/A grades and will read Business and Economics in Vienna.

Headmaster Jon Reddin commented: 'We are absolutely delighted for the Class of 2024 on their superb A Level and BTEC examination results. Their grades are testament to their hard work and the support and guidance of their dedicated teachers. We are incredibly proud of the way in which they have lived out our mission as a Catholic school to 'Learn and Grow in the Light of the Gospel'. We wish them every happiness and success as they move on to higher education courses and successful careers in the future.'





GCSE RESULTS

Staff and students joined together to mark the achievements of the 2024 cohort, who have shown great commitment to the College to secure their GCSE results.

Headmaster Jon Reddin commented: 'Congratulations to our Year 11 students on their GCSE success. We are very proud of their achievements and the hard work of their teachers in providing them with the opportunity to fulfil their potential. We look forward to seeing our students progress on to the next stage of their education.'

Achievements were celebrated across the year group, with special congratulations to Claudia Chau and Hani Cheuk, who achieved nine grade 9s. We also congratulate Lilia Chippendale and Emily David, who achieved grade 7 or above in 11 subjects, whilst Kyson Chan, Eloise Allsager, Polly Machin, Harriet Dickerson, and Megha Thakrar achieved grade 7 or above in 10 subjects – a marvellous achievement.

Collecting her results, Emma Beale said: 'I am really happy with my grades, specifically in Biology and Chemistry. I am looking forward to starting my A Levels next year.'

Minnie Yeung added: 'I am so shocked with my results, receiving grade 9s in Science and Maths. Thank you to all my teachers who have supported me along the way to achieve these results. I hope to gain a career in pharmacy in the future.'

Ben Woodley said: 'I am really proud of my achievements in my GCSEs. I cannot thank the teachers enough for all their support with the revision programme leading up to my exams – they always have an open door at Ratcliffe. I am looking forward to joining Ratcliffe Sixth Form in September to study the subjects I am passionate about: Politics, History, Economics, and Maths.'



THE SIXTH FORM

The 2023-2024 academic year was another very busy and varied one for our Sixth Form students, with a huge amount of activity and excitement, both in and out of the classroom. Congratulations to Year 13, who achieved excellent A Level and BTEC results. The overwhelming majority were successful in gaining places at their first-choice destinations for life after school. We wish them all well in their chosen university courses and careers, and we look forward to hearing about how they get on in the future.

Leavers' Day provided the Year 13 students with an opportunity to reflect on their years at Ratcliffe with their teachers, parents, and each other. The day began with an enthusiastic rendition of the Backstreet Boys' classic 'I Want it That Way' during Chaplaincy Assembly, and culminated in a moving Mass in the College Chapel, which included beautiful music from Ava Kinch and Ewan Metcalfe, and a heartfelt reflection from Avani Gupta and Charlie Smith.

The Year 13 Senior Prefects worked tirelessly in support of the school and their peers, and focused, in particular, on their initiative to develop strong relationships with younger students. The Sixth Form students led by example in House events over the course of the year, and many took opportunities to broaden their horizons by participating in the co-curricular programme and educational visits, such as the Lourdes pilgrimage, the ski trip, and the Madagascar trip.

INSPIRE talks and Sixth Form social events have been very well attended, and we look forward to developing these further with the addition of regular 'theme nights' in the Sixth Form Centre, and INSPIRE+ talks with particularly high-profile speakers. As ever, the Sixth Form Summer Ball was the highlight of the social calendar, with students particularly enjoying the club-style dance floor, as well as the food and entertainment.

This year, we introduced vertical tutoring in the Sixth Form to enhance the cohesion between the Year 12 and 13 students, and we welcomed Dr Anne Robinson to the Sixth Form team to lead and develop our provision for students applying to Oxford and Cambridge Universities, and for Medicine, Dentistry, and Veterinary Science. I would like to thank the Sixth Form team and tutors for all their hard work and support, and to congratulate all of the students on their contributions to Sixth Form life over the last year.

Ben Harrison

Assistant Head & Head of Sixth Form



THE RATCLIFFIAN ASSOCIATION WELCOMES THE CLASS OF 2024

The Leavers' Mass was an emotional farewell for the Year 13 students. They received a final speech from Headmaster Jon Reddin and were then welcomed into the Ratcliffian Association by President **Dan Amies (10)**, joining a global community of Old Ratcliffians who are eager to support and network with young alumni. The students expressed their gratitude, and a touching moment occurred when those who joined Ratcliffe in the Nursery reunited with their former teacher, Mrs Sarah Rankine, who returned to celebrate their last school day. Each graduate was given a parting gift from the Ratcliffian Association; the boys received an Association colours tie, often worn at reunion events, and the girls were given a sterling silver charm with the Ratcliffe Crest on it. The Ratcliffian Association wishes the Class of 2024 great success in the future.

Amanda Mole

Ratcliffian Association Manager





BOARDING

Since the arrival of our new Senior Housemaster, José Estevez, last year, life within Ratcliffe College's boarding community has been wonderfully busy. José has introduced several exciting initiatives, including a weekly newsletter-style website that offers a preview of the students' activities, helping parents to feel more connected to their children's experiences.

Each week, our boarding community gathers for Evening Prayer and Weekend Mass, led by our Father President, **Fr Philip Sainter (69)**, alongside Lay Chaplains Frances and Owen. These gatherings offer a reflective space for the students, fostering a sense of unity and faith as they conclude their days. Many of our boarders also take on leadership roles by leading Night Prayers and reading during Mass – a testament to their growing sense of responsibility and spiritual engagement. At the heart of our spiritual life is our school's founder, Blessed Antonio Rosmini. Every Night Prayer ends with the community uniting in the words, 'Blessed Antonio Rosmini, pray for us.'

In addition to spiritual nourishment, the boarding community has enjoyed a host of activities designed to create bonds and lasting memories. From pizza nights on the terrace, barbecues, and escape room adventures in Leicester, to badminton tournaments, thrilling trips to Alton Towers and Cambridge, and quiz nights, our students have had no shortage of opportunities for fun and camaraderie. We've even launched a new boarding Running Club to promote health and wellness.

One of our cherished traditions is the annual Blessing of the Rooms. For over two centuries, this beautiful ceremony has been central to our boarding experience, linking our students to the rich history and Catholic heritage of Ratcliffe College. Led by Fr Philip, the blessing brings a sense of peace and spiritual grounding to the Boys' and Girls' Houses. It's a meaningful ritual that reinforces our core values of compassion, respect, and faith. This tradition not only honours our past, but also strengthens the sense of community that defines life here at Ratcliffe.

As we move forward, we continue to embrace modernity, while deeply honouring our school's traditions. With new initiatives and a renewed sense of purpose, we are excited about the future of our boarding community, and the lasting memories and friendships that will be made along the way.



BOARDING APPEAL: HELPING US TO GROW

With the boarding community growing, we are moving forward with the initiative to enhance the boarding rooms further. Our Boarding Appeal gives Old Ratcliffians the opportunity to sponsor their old rooms. If you are interested in learning more, please contact Louise Liston on **01509 817091** or at liston@ratcliffcollege.com.

CAREERS

The Careers Office wrapped up December 2023 by hosting its first-ever Sixth Form Festive Networking Event, welcoming alumni from the past five years to share their experiences over mince pies and hot chocolate. It was wonderful to see so many familiar faces offering advice on gap years, university applications, course selection, accommodation, and budgeting tips.

INSPIRE TALKS: CONNECTING STUDENTS WITH INDUSTRY EXPERTS

Our INSPIRE talks continued to receive strong support from the Ratcliffe College network. This year, we welcomed back **Anya Stokes (18)** for an insightful talk on her career in radiography, and **Daniel Bailey (23)**, who shared his experience of a Flying Start degree with PwC.

During National Apprenticeship Week, **Angel Gomes (22)** discussed her journey into a degree apprenticeship, offering students an alternative route to higher education. We were also honoured to be joined by Ratcliffe parent Alex Peace-Gadsby OBE, who spoke about female leadership in business to mark International Women's Day.



CAREERS DEVELOPMENT FUND

The Year 12 Careers Development Fund, sponsored by **Mir Patel (14)** and his company, Unique Window Systems, enabled Sixth Former Agastya Garttan to undertake investment banking work experience with InvestIN Education.

Agastya said: 'Thanks to the generous donation from Mr Patel, I had the incredible opportunity to attend InvestIN's Young Investment Banker Experience for a week in London. I met not only my fellow young investment bankers, but also students from various other courses, including Medicine and Engineering, who had travelled from all over the world. Meeting such a diverse group of people made the experience even more enriching. I also enjoyed great food and company, with activities ranging from a private movie screening to a day in the park with over 200 participants, as well as watching the Olympics in a large university theatre.'

'On the first day, we were taken to a lecture hall at UCL, where multiple career experts introduced us to the fundamentals of investment banking, including an overview of private equity and its structure. On the second day, we delved deeper into the specifics of the role of an investment banker, such as how they manage client assets, the various positions they can hold, and the pros and cons of each one, along with more technical terminology, such as DCM (Debt Capital Markets) and ECM (Equity Capital Markets). Day three took us to the London School of Economics (LSE), where we participated in practice negotiations and simulated M&A deals, giving us hands-on experience in critical skills. On day four, we explored different types of investment banks and the assets they manage. Finally, on day five, we received valuable guidance on applying to the industry, including advice on enhancing our CVs, delivered by one of InvestIN's founders. Throughout the week, we also developed key soft skills – such as public speaking, presenting, teamwork, and research – that are transferable to nearly any career.'

'I am extremely grateful to Mir and the Careers Development Fund. Without this support, I would not have had the chance to discover such an invaluable experience, which will be a significant asset in any future applications I make to investment banking or related fields.'

Kate Grace
Head of Careers





CATHOLIC LIFE & MISSION

'Adore. Be silent. Rejoice' – Blessed Antonio Rosmini

Blessed Antonio Rosmini desired that students in the schools that he founded would become seekers of the truth, and it is upon this that the mission of Ratcliffe is based. The role of Chaplaincy is, therefore, to build within the school community a culture of service to all, to help inspire the students through an exploration of the Gospel values, and to celebrate the faith of our community in prayer and acts of worship.

DIGNITY

Our faith is at the centre of everything that we do at Ratcliffe. We gather regularly in our College Chapel for Mass, Celebration of the Word, Night Prayers, and Reflection. These times of prayer allow our students to plan, adapt, and lead these special moments, making Catholic Life at school relevant and enjoyable for them.

SOLIDARITY

There are lots of opportunities throughout the year to join together in faith and to take some time out on trips and residential. In October, Year 7 went to The Briars Catholic Youth Retreat Centre, and in July, Year 8 enjoyed a retreat at Alton Castle in Staffordshire. During the summer, we hold our annual pilgrimage to Lourdes with HCPT. A retreat experience allows time for those attending to think and build their relationships with God, themselves, and with others.



COMMON GOOD

At Harvest time, the students and staff are encouraged to bring in food, which is then donated to a local food bank. This year, we donated the equivalent of £4,900 of food to local families in need, through the Leicester South Food Bank.

CHARITY

As a school, we support numerous charities each year, including Missio, the Matt Hampson Foundation, Care4Calais, Faith in

Families, and CAFOD. Money is raised throughout the year for these charities through cake sales, collections, Casuals Days, and Enterprise Days. The students love to get involved and help those in need throughout our world. We follow in Blessed Antonio Rosmini's footsteps and remember his words: 'Perfect charity, in which consists the perfection of all, brings the whole person in union with the Creator.'

PEACE

'[We] should feel perfectly at peace and full of joy, resting entirely upon [our] Lord'
- Blessed Antonio Rosmini

It is important, during a busy school day, to find moments of peace. Our students have the opportunity to do this in our College Chapel and Blessed Sacrament Chapel. Throughout the year, there are regular opportunities to go to Confession, to prepare and attend class Masses through Religious Studies lessons, and to participate in class Celebrations of the Word and Reflections, led by Fr Philip and Frances, our College Lay Chaplain. The boarding community also gathers twice a week for Night Prayer and Mass at the weekend.

CARE FOR CREATION

Alongside the various charity events, like cake sales and Casuals Days, there are a number of different community service-based clubs which run throughout the academic year. These include the St Vincent de Paul Society, the Mother Teresa Group, and the Faith in Action Award, where numerous students contribute their time to helping others.

The members of our Sustainable Action Society work hard throughout the year to make our school a greener and more sustainable place, and they have led numerous Celebrations of the Word to share all that they have done and to encourage us to take care of our common home.

Frances Daw
 Lay Chaplain





COMBINED CADET FORCE

There have been several changes to the CCF this year. At the end of the Summer Term, we bade farewell to the outgoing Contingent Commander, Major Paul Walters, and to School Staff Instructor (SSI) Lieutenant Mark Edwards. Both have moved on to take up the same appointments that they had at Ratcliffe, but at Stamford Endowed Schools and Uppingham School respectively. We welcomed their replacements to the CCF: Major Miles Blackford (from Ampleforth College) and Colour Sergeant Mark Stevens (from Alleyn's School).

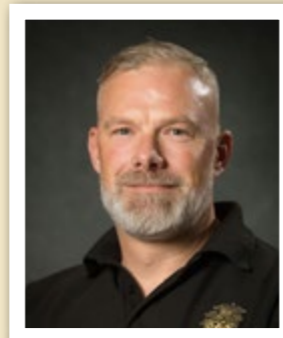
NEW CONTINGENT COMMANDER - MAJOR MILES BLACKFORD

Miles Blackford joined the 7th Duke of Edinburgh's Own Gurkha Rifles in Hong Kong in 1989, after commissioning from the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst. After the Gurkhas re-cabbed in 1994, he served in all three Gurkha Infantry Battalions at various stages, as well as completing tours of duty alongside the Parachute Regiment and the Highlanders. He specialised in jungle reconnaissance and held various other appointments in the battalions that he served in. Additional jobs within the Army included staff appointments at Grade 3 and Grade 2 levels, Platoon Commander at Sandhurst, and completion of the Italian Staff College. He has served on operations all around the world, including Northern Ireland and Afghanistan. His last job in the Regular Army was as the Battalion Second-in-Command of 1st Battalion The Royal Gurkha Rifles and the Chief of Staff of British Forces in Brunei between 2008-2009. He then joined the CCF at Ampleforth College, where he stayed until July this year.



NEW SCHOOL STAFF INSTRUCTOR & HEAD OF OUTDOOR EXPERIENCES - COLOUR SERGEANT MARK STEVENS

CSgt Mark Stevens took up the role as the SSI for Alleyn's School CCF in May 2021 and served there until August 2024. Mark joined the British Army with his local regiment 1 KORBR in 1996, then re-cabbed to 1 LANCs in 2006. He completed a 22-year infantry career. During his service, he completed six operational tours of duty: two in Bosnia, two in Iraq, and two in Afghanistan. Mark was awarded a Mention in Dispatches whilst conducting his last tour in Afghanistan. After retiring from the Army, Mark continued to develop his passion for adventurous pursuits, and he became a freelance outdoor instructor and expedition leader for trips within the UK and overseas. In addition to his role as the CCF's SSI, Mark has taken on the position of Head of Outdoor Experiences at Ratcliffe, and he is looking forward to developing an exciting and progressive programme for the students here.



CCF - ARMY

Under the direction of Capt Michelle Reeves, the Army Section has continued to flourish. This year, Central Camp was held in the first week of the summer holidays at Beckingham Training Camp, alongside about eight other schools. Capt Reeves led the camp, with help from the outgoing SSI (Lt Edwards) and Lt Simon Dunstan. The camp was broken up into various training packages, including Military Skills, Weapons Training, and Ranges, with cadets firing both blank and live ammunition.

CCF - RAF

The RAF Section has been equally busy this year. Air Experience Flying and Gliding Days have been the highlights, with the most recent being in the first few days of the Autumn Term. In May, a group of RAF and Army cadets attended a Skill at Arms training camp at Inskip Cadet Centre with Flt Lt Grant and Lt Edwards. The RAF Section then attended their annual Summer Camp during the first week of the summer holidays. This was based out of RAF Little Rissington Cadet Centre. The camp included a varied programme of activities that the cadets will remember for a long time.

CADET RSM ELLIE MOSS

Ratcliffe College CCF Head Cadet Ellie Moss (Year 13) completed the Master Cadet Course at the Cadet Training Centre on August 9th. This course is the pinnacle of achievement for a cadet in the CCF and the highest-level course that a cadet can attend. Its primary aim is to broaden and develop leadership, instructional, and administrative responsibilities for the topflight of cadets within the CCF and ACF, and it is only attended by a select few throughout the country. Ellie performed really well on the course and had the privilege of leading those that completed it in the pass-off parade on the final day.



CCF - OTHER NEWS

The CCF continued to support other areas of co-curricular life at Ratcliffe, too. These included:

- Support to the Senior Games programme on Thursdays
- Continuation of the Year 6 Adventure Activity
- Support to DofE
- Establishment of the Shooting Club and full refurbishment of the four-lane indoor range at the Hangar. We are currently seeking Home Office approval to have the club recognised as a National Small-Bore Rifle Club
- A full and varied provision of archery

DATE FOR YOUR DIARY: CCF REGIMENTAL DINNER - SATURDAY 29TH MARCH 2025

All former OR cadets who have served in the CCF and/or the Armed Forces are warmly invited to attend this event. The dinner will be an opportunity to honour and bid farewell to the senior cadets, recognising their hard work and dedication.



NEWS FROM THE PREPARATORY SCHOOL

SPORT

Ratcliffe Prep School Sport continued to thrive in 2024, both from a participation and a high-level performance perspective. Yet again, there was 100% participation from all the children in Years 4 to 6, with the opportunity to represent the school in rugby, hockey, and cricket for the boys, and netball, hockey, and cricket for the girls. The level of enthusiasm, energy, and excitement shown by the Prep School children in all of the sporting fixtures throughout the year clearly demonstrates the passion and pride that they have in representing Ratcliffe on the sports field.

Our reputation as a strong hockey school was further enhanced by impressive performances in both the Under 11 Boys and Under 11 Girls IAPS Regional Tournaments, and once again, our Under 11A Boys and Girls were crowned County Hockey Champions. They



then went on to perform brilliantly at the Midlands Tournament, with the boys and girls both reaching the semi-final stage. Once again, the Prep School were trailblazers on the independent school sports field, with our Under 11 Boys travelling to Rosslyn Park to participate in the prestigious Rosslyn Park Sevens Tournament. The other competitors certainly knew who Ratcliffe College were by the end – mission accomplished! The Under 11 Boys also played superbly at the IAPS Regional Rugby Tournament held at Ratcliffe, where they were narrowly edged out of being crowned overall winners – another outstanding achievement. Our Under 11 Girls were also not to be outdone, as they made their best ever finish at an IAPS Regional Tournament, playing some fast-flowing and incisive netball under the expert guidance of Miss Griffin.

The Summer Term saw three truly memorable Sports Days, where our Nursery, Key Stage 1, and Key Stage 2 children were able to enjoy taking part and showing off their sporting talents. All the children ran, jumped, threw, and (in the case of Nursery) wiggled their way through several exciting events that kept all of the parents and spectators enthralled and amazed at the level of sporting feats that our children are capable of.

The Prep School's sporting year has been one full of memories and far more highs than lows. Sport is an integral part of the DNA of the Prep School and, as such, it provides pupils, staff, and parents alike with something to be immensely proud of.

Wayne Faulconbridge
Head of Preparatory School Sport

CHAPLANCY

Throughout the academic year, the strong Caritas team of 10 pupils gave freely of their time to attend weekly planning meetings. These meetings were spent preparing for whole-school Celebrations of the Word, as well as collaboration events with St Francis Catholic Primary School, and fundraising.

This year, one of the big focuses was the promotion of Catholic Social Teaching across the Prep School. The team used the CAFOD material to raise awareness of the main themes, and they worked in line with the whole College to promote the Gospel values allocated to the different terms. As well as Catholic Social Teaching, they supported the delivery of Celebrations of the Word, where Rosminian charisms were introduced and promoted to all year groups. The team were also invaluable in supporting readings at all Masses throughout the liturgical year, and in the promotion of the Prep School.

Time spent with the Chaplaincy Team from St Francis School in Melton Mowbray provided an opportunity to reignite friendships and connections. With the support of Frances, our Lay Chaplain, we planned and shared a Celebration of the Word, as well as introducing the team to Blessed Antonio Rosmini and the special Rosminian ethos of our school. Our time together was also spent creating Easter gardens and enjoying the open spaces of the Rosmini Centre.



It was a busy year, where the team worked collaboratively and productively and, as a result, gained a deeper understanding of the power of prayer when we all work together.

Siobhan Minford
Head of Preparatory School

MUSIC

It has been an exciting time, as Music in the Prep School has continued to flourish. One of the musical highlights of the Autumn Term was seeing the Chapel Choir and the Newman Orchestra's sparkling performances at the Music Department Christmas Concert, where they took the stage by storm. Our celebration of Carols by Candlelight was also truly magical, and it brought the Chapel alive with fabulous music. Meanwhile, Informal Concerts for pupils in Years 1 to 6 enabled parents to reconnect with the musical development of their children.

The Spring Term continued to be a musical bouquet, with many opportunities to perform. In January, children from Years 5 and 6 performed with Young Voices – the largest school choir in the world. The experience was truly electrical, and the children, staff, and parents all fed back what an amazing experience it was. Later that term, back at Ratcliffe, our Year 4 students performed a top-class Easter Passion Play, with soloists, dancing, and wonderful singing.

This year, a number of children took ABRSM music exams, and they were rewarded with certificates in assembly. Congratulations to them all. Everyone in the Prep School was also very excited about the House Music Competition, and many students performed solos to an exceptionally high standard. The school then took to their Houses for the ever-competitive House Song Competition, where the performances were fantastic.

On Friday 3rd July, we had the pleasure of welcoming the Leicestershire Music Service to the Prep School, where we were



scrutinised for our Music Quality Mark. Mrs Cook was put through a rigorous assessment of how the Prep School's music teaching, learning, and performing reflects our wonderful achievements. We were thrilled to be awarded the **GOLD** music standard for the Prep School, which is a true reflection of everything musical.

Music-making has certainly been at the core of the Prep School this year. Thank you to all of our young musicians for making this possible.

Rebecca Cook
Head of Preparatory School Music

A FEW WORDS FROM OUR STUDENTS...

'In Year 2, our class assembly was all about courage and how to tackle problems we face at school and at home, and it had a gladiator theme. Our class gladiators represented fear, loneliness, worry, sadness, overwhelm, frustration, and anger. Each gladiator was conquered by a contestant in a different event (my event was the duel). After anger was disqualified in the duel, a new mystery contender was revealed – Steel the gladiator! My favourite part of the assembly was going against Steel. I was shocked when I saw how big he was, but I am still the only contestant to have ever beaten him!' – **Annie Austin (Year 2)**



'For our Victorians topic, we went to Beaumanor Hall. We dressed up in Victorian clothes and went to Victorian school. We wrote with ink and chalk, and the teacher was very strict. She took Eliza out and pretended to give her the cane for being naughty. After lunch, we played with Victorian toys and washed clothes with a dolly and mangle. It was an exciting trip.' – **Saiyan Khoda (Year 1)**





RATCLIFFE COLLEGE & LEICESTERSHIRE COUNTY CRICKET PARTNERSHIP

Our official partnership with Leicestershire County Cricket Club (LCCC) continues to support the development of boys' and girls' cricket, and we are proud of the opportunities that the partnership offers our students, parents, staff, and the Ratcliffe community.

In conjunction with Mr Woodcock (Ratcliffe's Head of Cricket), we have, again, benefited from expert coaching support from LCCC professional coaching staff, including Jigar Naik (Head of Talent Pathway), Paul Johnson (ex-Nottinghamshire professional cricketer), and Dieter Klein (ex-Leicestershire and German international cricketer). This team is overseen by Claude Henderson (Director of Cricket), who previously coached at Ratcliffe College.

As part of our partnership with LCCC, we have awarded tickets for Ratcliffe College students to attend Vitality Blast T20 matches at the Uptonsteel County Ground for the qualifying matches. The following students were recognised by Mr Woodcock (Head of Cricket) and our Sports Department, for either playing particularly well in school fixtures or for being great ambassadors of cricket: Monty Bailey (Year 7), Tilly ETTY (Year 7), Thomas Gowdrige (Year 7), Rhys Snutch (Year 7), and Annie Sudhir (Year 7).

Rising star Flora Davies (Year 11) received a golden opportunity to join the Blaze First Team Squad for their cricket pre-season tour in Abu Dhabi from February 2024. This incredible chance not only marks a milestone in Flora's cricket journey, but also places her side-by-side with seasoned professionals, showcasing her prowess in the sport she has passionately pursued for over a decade. Her journey has been nothing short of extraordinary. Flora has demonstrated exceptional skills on the field, playing for Sileby Cricket Club and Leicestershire County Cricket Club. Her dedication and hard work have not gone unnoticed, as she continues to climb the ranks in the cricketing world, being awarded the Blaze Academy Player of the Year and Leicestershire Women's and Girls' Player of the Year in 2023. We are so proud of Flora, and to see that her hard work and dedication to cricket has



led her to this amazing opportunity is brilliant. Good luck, Flora, in your future cricket career.

On Saturday 8th June, we welcomed over 100 cricketers, parents, and supporters to the school for the first Ratcliffe College Girls' Cricket Festival. Players from local clubs and schools joined Ratcliffe students to take part in colourful competitive matches, batting and fielding clinics, and one-to-one technique sessions with LCCC players and coaches. The sun even appeared midway through the festival, just in time for the BBQ! Thank you to all the girls, coaches, staff, and parents for supporting this fantastic day of cricket. Following this year's success, we are already planning our 2025 Girls' Cricket Festival!

We have had a great summer of cricket at Ratcliffe, and we have hosted 23 LCCC Pathway fixtures and training events. The Grounds staff, led by Chris Moody, have provided excellent wickets for our visiting counties, including teams from Derbyshire, Norfolk, Northamptonshire, Nottinghamshire, Shropshire, Warwickshire, and Yorkshire.

Congratulations to the following students, who represented LCCC this summer:

Girls'/Women's Pathway - Tilly ETTY, Kassi Jobanputra, Poppy Standing, Millie Warburton, Bella Harris, Olivia Pearce, Flora Davies, and Zara ETTY

Boys' Pathway - Zach Hilton, Rahul Khoda, Rhys Snutch, Sam Macleod-Smith, and Ben Macleod-Smith.

We have nominated an additional 24 boys and 15 girls for trials for the 2024-2025 LCCC winter Pathway Programme, and we wish them good luck!

The College continues to receive professional development advice for its staff, as well as training workshops provided by the Leicestershire coaches for our school teams, access to LCCC fixtures throughout the summer, and opportunities for our talented players to be scouted and entered into the age-group Pathway.

As the 2024 cricket season has now finished and we look ahead to next year, we thank all students, parents, and staff who have supported our partnership this year, and we give our very best wishes to LCCC.

Tracey Nightingale
Cricket Partnership Manager

LOURDES PILGRIMAGE

I have been going to Lourdes with Group 512 since 2006, and each year is always different. This is despite the fact that our timetable for the week generally includes most of what we have done in years gone by, but it works!

This year, our travelling arrangements changed, and we found ourselves on an EasyJet flight from Luton, instead of a chartered flight from Stansted. What we gained this side of the channel, we lost on the other side, with a three-hour trip from Bordeaux to Lourdes instead of the usual half-an-hour transfer. Having said that, our wonderful group took it in their stride, and, armed with packed lunches on the coach, we finally arrived in Lourdes at 9pm, having left Ratcliffe College at 9am!

On this trip, we had a fantastic group of seven Year 12 Ratcliffe students with us, who were so helpful, and, along with the Old Ratcliffians who returned for another year to help, we were extremely fortunate. We were joined this year by our Group Leader, Teresa Gamble's, two grandchildren and Ratcliffe's Lay Chaplain, Frances Daw's, two children. Along with young Zara, it was lovely to have the fun and giggles that they brought to the group.

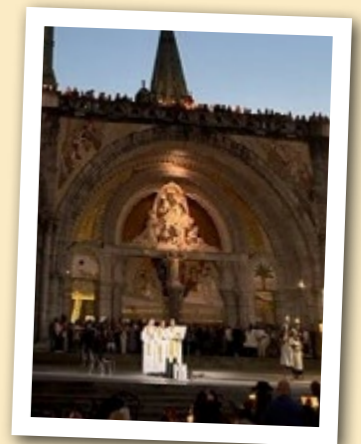
Our week was filled with prayers, laughter, camaraderie, outings, and the odd gin and tonic! We enjoyed everything that Lourdes had to offer - the Domain, the Grotto, the churches, the Torchlight Procession, the Underground Mass, and, of course, the cafés and shops. Our pilgrimage would not be complete without our annual trip to Gavarnie, where the Duck Race seems to get more and more popular, not to mention more competitive! Afterwards, those in the group who had the stamina made their way up to the waterfall. This is a long, winding, uphill walk which is definitely not for the fainthearted, although **Fr Philip Sainter (69)** (who, sadly, could not join us this year) has been known to run up there!

Fr Anthony Meredith (57), assisted by Fr Jim Cahill from Lutterworth, provided us with some wonderful Masses. These mostly took place at the Hosanna House Chapel, although, as ever, we received a warm welcome at the Ukrainian church, which is always a pleasure to visit.

This was my last visit to Lourdes as Deputy Group Leader, and I have to say, it was made extremely enjoyable by Group 512 - a wonderful and special group of pilgrims.

Gilly Clear

The OR supporters this year were: **Teresa Gamble (former teacher 1988-2004)**, **Richard Gamble (64)**, **James Clark-Pratt (Year 11 leaver 2021)**, **Patrick Cross (Year 11 leaver 2023)**, **Rebecca Hings (née Goldstraw) (94)**, **Peter Tetlow (78)**, and **Fr Anthony Meredith (57)**.



STAFF FAREWELL: MRS PENELOPE SMITH



The Religious Studies Department and Ratcliffe College said goodbye to Mrs Penelope Smith after almost 20 years of service as Second in Department in Religious Studies. During this time, Mrs Smith was an excellent teacher, helping many students to enjoy the subject and achieve great success.

Mrs Smith arrived at Ratcliffe College in January 2005 as Second in Department in Religious Studies, and also as Head of Year 8. She spent several years as an assistant in Girls' Boarding, and she will be fondly remembered by the girls, many of whom she kept in touch with after they left Ratcliffe. She served as Head of Year for a number of years, helping to support the pastoral needs of the students in her year group.

Penny was a loyal servant to Ratcliffe in many areas, and I had the pleasure of working with her in the Religious Studies Department. She always offered great support and guidance in her role as Second in Department and helped oversee many curriculum changes at A Level, GCSE, and Key Stage 3. As a teacher of A Level Philosophy, Penny inspired many students and helped to develop their passion for the subject, utilising many teaching methods, including using Play-Doh to build the cave in Plato's allegory. Penny was also responsible for many students achieving excellent grades in GCSE Religious Studies, and for organising the trip to the Beth Shalom Holocaust Centre for many years. Her creative skills were also well utilised when helping the students to make rosaries as part of their studies on Mary and the rosary. Penny also organised the St Vincent de Paul Society, through which many students helped in the Prep School and other areas.

Thank you, Penny, for your great service to the Religious Studies Department, and to Ratcliffe.

Nick Walsh
Head of Religious Studies

RATCLIFFE COLLEGE PROUDLY BECOMES AN ALL-STEINWAY SCHOOL



In September, Ratcliffe College was thrilled to receive a remarkable delivery of 14 brand-new Steinway pianos. It was hard to contain the enthusiasm as each piano was carefully unloaded and assembled by a team of experts in the Chapel. After some strategic arrangement, we managed to fit all 14 pianos into the centre of the space, setting the stage for a memorable experience.

The highlight of the day was a magical and poignant 14-piano lunchtime recital - a true once-in-a-lifetime experience for the participants and the appreciative audience. To have so many fine

instruments in one place, playing together, was a sound that many will never forget, and a wonderful representation of the very best that Ratcliffe Music has to offer. My sincerest thanks and appreciation go to our student participants, who are not only exceptional musicians, but also the finest ambassadors of Music at the College. Thank you, also, to my colleagues, whose support and participation on this day made it such a success: Mr Finn, Mrs Lee, Ms Woodey, Mrs Thompson, Mrs Cole, and Mrs Markham. Whilst our journey of becoming an all-Steinway school has now come to an end, this is truly only the beginning of something extremely exciting, and I cannot wait to see what the future holds.

Max Harris
Director of Music



THERE IS NO GREATER GIFT...



...THAN THE GIFT OF EDUCATION

SUPPORTING STUDENTS THROUGH BURSARIES

Ratcliffe College has been helping to shape the lives of its students since 1847, and it has always provided a great sense of community. We believe that, where possible, we should help and support those who are less fortunate than ourselves. Bursaries can be transformational, and that is why we are asking for your support. By giving a little each month, together with other Old Ratcliffians, you can support students who demonstrate immense potential, but whose financial circumstances mean that they would not otherwise be able to attend Ratcliffe.

LEAVING A LEGACY

We appreciate that not everyone has the ability to give now, and some may prefer to demonstrate their support by giving a gift to the College in their will. Leaving a legacy is a great way to support school bursaries, and it can genuinely change young people's lives, both whilst they are at Ratcliffe, and beyond.

If you have already made a provision for Ratcliffe in your will, then please do let us know, as we would very much like the opportunity to express our gratitude now for your future gift.

For more information, please contact the Development Team
on +44(0)1509 817091, by email at development@ratcliffcollege.com,
or visit www.ratcliffcollege.com/giving.

THE GIFT OF
EDUCATION

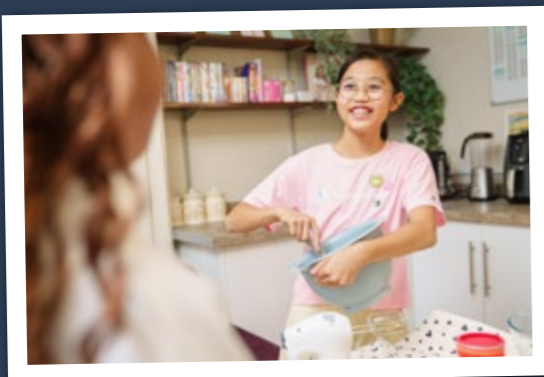
DEVELOPMENT & FUNDRAISING

BOARDING APPEAL

In response to student feedback, we are enhancing our boarding facilities to remain competitive, welcoming, and warm, attracting both local part-time boarders and full-time international students.

Whether you boarded at Ratcliffe full-time or just occasionally, you will understand how much the College feels like home. Current boarders have shared their suggestions for improvements, and coming out top are new flooring, redecorated rooms, and more comfortable furnishings. To make these changes, we have set a goal to raise £50,000. Additionally, there is an opportunity for ORs to sponsor a room for life for £10,000, naming it in honour of themselves or a loved one. This lasting legacy ensures that future students know that their space was made special by a former student, and 'your room' would be named for life.

If you would like to support this appeal, you can make a one-off gift or contribute from as little as £10 a month. Watch out for our new video appeal, which we will be launching soon, too.

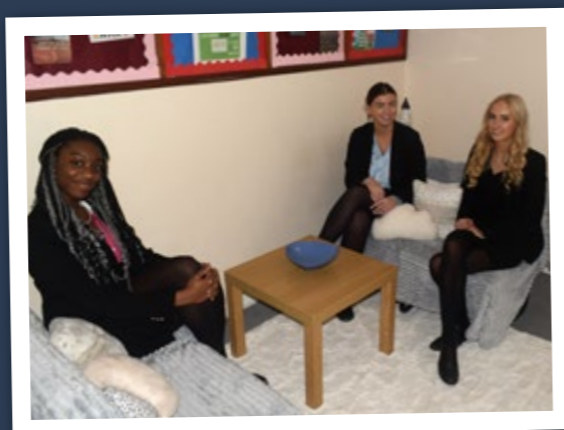


ENHANCING THE RATCLIFFE EXPERIENCE

Throughout this academic year, the collective efforts of parents, alumni, and the Parents' Association have had a transformational impact on various aspects of Ratcliffe College.

The generous donations, totalling over £71,000, have directly supported projects and initiatives within the school, enriching the overall learning experience for students. Notable contributions include:

- Provision of stringed musical instruments for the Prep School Music Department
- Acquisition of microphones and stands for the Newman Hall
- Purchase of replica gas masks and bank notes for the History Department
- Supply of sports vests for the Prep School Sports Department
- Brand-new outdoor wet play dungarees for the Nursery and Prep School
- Digital media interfaces for Music students
- Installation of a trail camera for the Prep School children
- Furnishing of the 'Lighthouse', a designated space for students to speak with dedicated student listeners during breaktimes



THANK YOU

We are truly thankful to all donors, parents, and ORs who have contributed to the school's development and fundraising initiatives. Your support has significantly enriched the educational journey of our students. For enquiries regarding fundraising opportunities or to arrange a tour, please contact Louise Liston, Development Manager, via email at liston@ratcliffecollege.com, or by phone at 01509 817091.

Louise Liston
Development Manager

EMERY LIBRARY OPENING

The official opening and blessing of the newly refurbished Emery Library took place on Monday 9th September, and it was a wonderful celebration of the hard work and generosity that made its transformation possible. Thanks to Ratcliffe's supportive community, over £50,000 was raised in donations, enabling the project to go ahead.

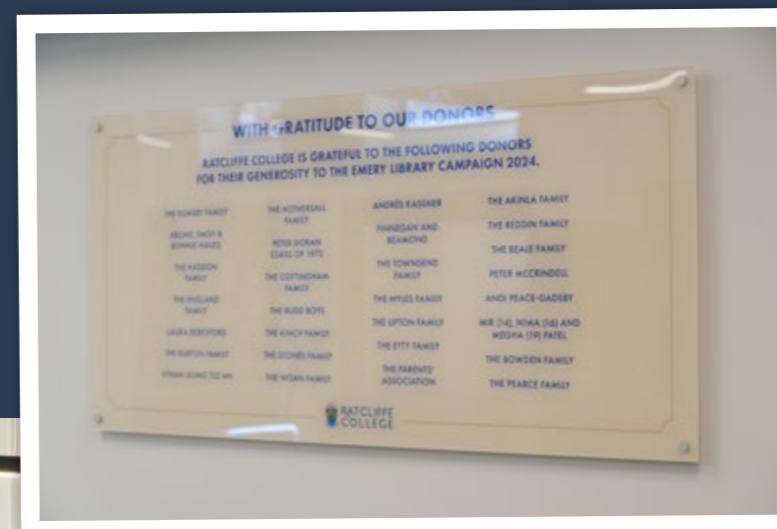
Headmaster Jon Reddin welcomed the guests, including alumni and parent donors, along with members of the College governing body. He shared a few words about the history and significance of the Emery Library before offering his heartfelt thanks to all who supported the appeal. As a gesture of enduring appreciation, Mr Reddin unveiled a recognition board listing the names of the donors, ensuring that their generosity will be remembered for years to come.

Special recognition was also given to the College Librarian, Eliza Richardson, whose vision, dedication, and relentless effort truly brought this project to completion. **Fr Philip Sainter (69)** then blessed the new space, which was followed by a few words of thanks from Eliza herself. Shortly afterwards, she and Mr Reddin cut the ribbon together, marking the Library's official opening.

Guests then had the opportunity to explore the new space, engaging with staff from the English Department and others who will benefit from, and utilise, the Library daily.

Thank you, once again, to all who donated to the Emery Library Appeal, and a special mention of thanks to Old Ratcliffian **Noel Sloan (79)**, who sponsored the Reading Room at the rear of the Library in memory of his parents, John and Irene Sloan.

Louise Liston
Development Manager



THE GIFT OF EDUCATION

Launched in 2023, the Gift of Education is a five-year bursary campaign with the goal of raising £1 million to support 21 students by providing them with the transformative opportunity to study for two years in Ratcliffe's Sixth Form. This initiative seeks to open doors for individuals who may otherwise be unable to afford a private education.

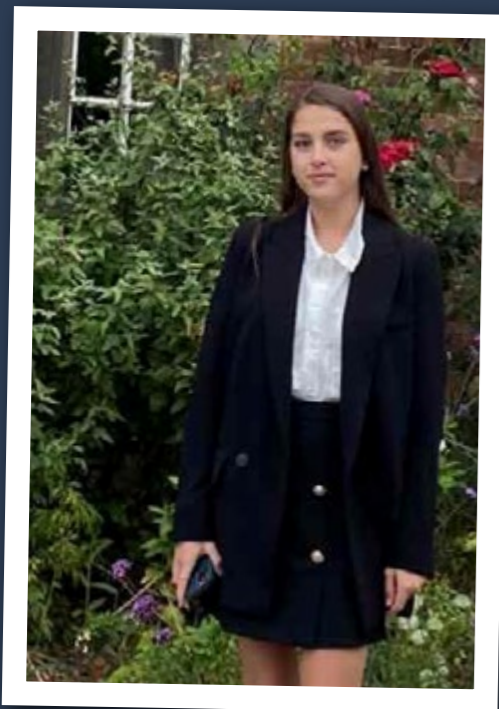
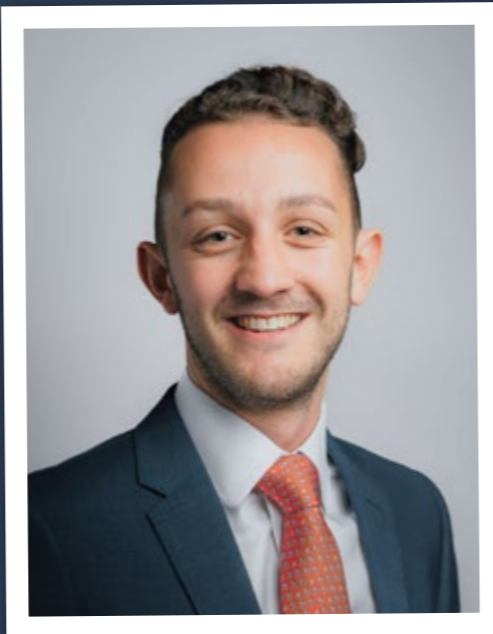
We are delighted to announce that we successfully reached our first-year target of £40,000, thanks to the generosity of our OR community. In addition to donations through the Gift of Education brochure, we were grateful to receive two legacies from ORs. Furthermore, some parents of our Year 13 leavers kindly chose to waive the return of their entrance deposits, donating them to the Bursary Fund. These contributions will enable a student to begin their two-year journey with us from September 2024.

Our thanks extend to the individual OR donors who have committed their ongoing support, by sponsoring a student or by giving annually or monthly, culminating in a total bursary income of £81,200 for 2023-2024.

This year's target is £125,000, and we are setting our sights high. Achieving this goal will only be possible with the generous support of our Old Ratcliffian community. Your contribution could help a young boy or girl experience the life-changing education that Ratcliffe can provide.

BURSARY FUND: STUDENT STORIES

Joey Higham (16) shared with us how the bursary support he received transformed his educational journey. Despite struggling with severe dyslexia as a child, Joey thrived at Ratcliffe, excelling academically, and participating in a wide range of activities, from sports and drama to public speaking and the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme. After graduating with top A Level grades, he went on to study Politics at Exeter University, and he now works in real estate. Joey credits the opportunities and encouragement that he received at Ratcliffe for shaping his success, and he is deeply grateful to the donor who made his education possible. His message to others is simple: 'For anyone who is in a position to do so, or who is considering giving to the Bursary Fund, I cannot encourage you enough. It is a piece of generosity that I will remember for the rest of my life.'



Sofia Shmulevych (24) left Ratcliffe this summer as a fully-fledged OR. In receipt of a 100% bursary, Sofia's story is a little different, as she was one of our Ukrainian students who fled her hometown when war broke out in 2022. Thanks to our emergency Ukraine Bursary Appeal, which raised over £80,000, we were able to accept her and three other young Ukrainian girls into Ratcliffe boarding that September. It was not long before Sofia made a new life and friends during a very difficult personal experience, watching and listening to the news, and hearing only now and then from home. She stayed at Ratcliffe for two years and earned her A Levels by working hard. Thanks to the generosity of Bursary Fund donors, Sofia had a safe home in which to spend two important years of her life.

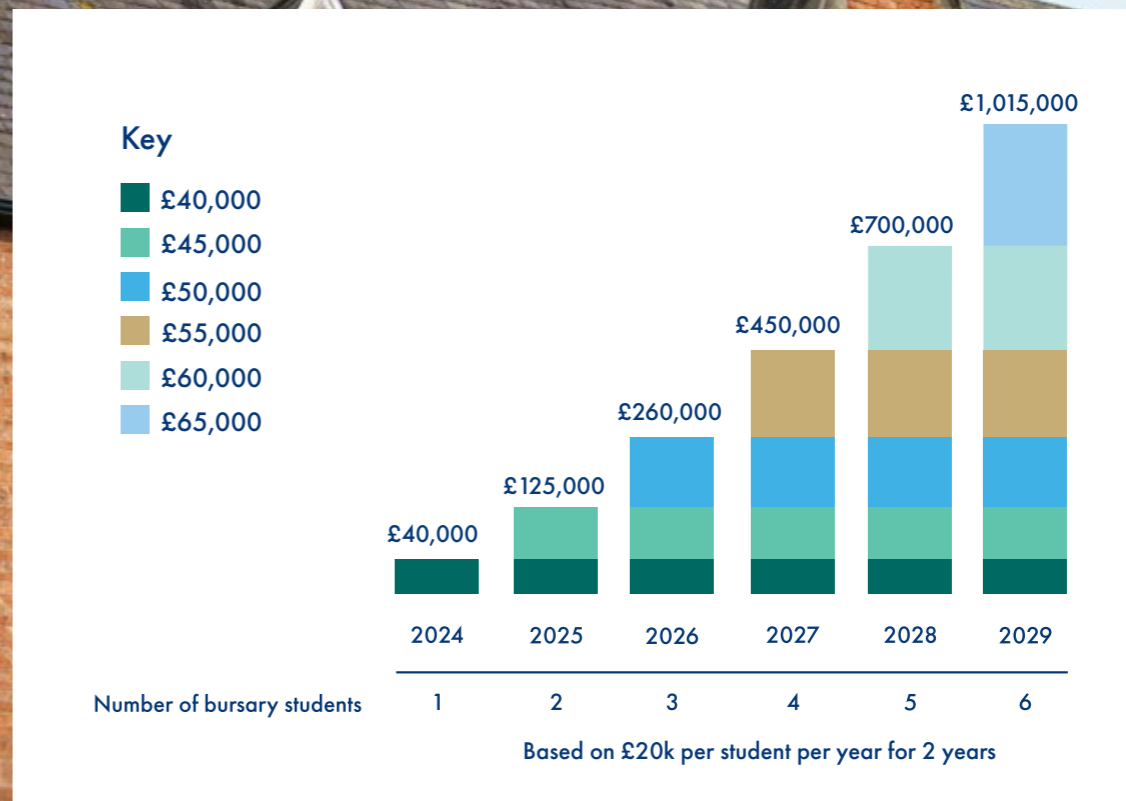
Sofia said: 'Having a bursary was of great importance to me, as it gave me the opportunity to study at such a wonderful school. All the teachers were so responsive and ready to help me during this important period, helping me adapt to a new place. Thanks to the experience of the teachers and their delivery of knowledge, it was easier to understand and digest the information. I am truly grateful for this support. I would like to express my deep gratitude to the donors who gave me the opportunity to continue my studies during such a difficult period, and throughout my time at Ratcliffe.'

Our Bursary Fund continues to provide crucial support to the two Ukrainian students who remain with us, offering them a safe environment to grow and learn. If you are moved by the stories of Joey or Sofia, we encourage you to consider giving back today.

You can donate through the form enclosed in this magazine or online at www.ratcliffecollege.com/giving. With your help, we can raise the necessary funds to offer more disadvantaged students the opportunity to thrive at Ratcliffe.

Louise Liston
Development Manager

OUR ULTIMATE GOAL IS TO RAISE £1M BY 2029



RATCLIFFIAN ASSOCIATION COUNCIL



WELCOME TO OUR NEW ASSOCIATION PRESIDENT

This year's Annual General Meeting took place on June 23rd, coinciding with the Grand Match and Mass for the Deceased. The event saw a notable increase in attendance, both online and in person, as members gathered to receive updates from the College and learn about the Association's activities over the past year.

It was also a moment of transition, as we expressed our heartfelt thanks to outgoing Association President **Dan Amies (10)** for his dedicated leadership over the past two years. With his military background and boundless enthusiasm, Dan introduced fresh ideas and a forward-thinking strategy that has left a lasting impact on the Association. In his closing remarks, he reflected on his time in office:

'One of my many favourite quotes, which I understand to be attributed to Pablo Picasso, is 'Learn the rules like a pro, so you can break them like an artist.' Having first sat on the RA Council nearly 10 years ago, I tuned into the deep knowledge of the Association's history, customs, and traditions, held in the brains of those pros on the Council. I learnt from the pros, and I hope, as President, I have been found to be artistic in my breaking of the norms. That deep knowledge of the Association's history, customs, and traditions, which lay in addition to the rules, needed to be recorded somewhere for the benefit of future generations. This, our Memoranda, is an ongoing piece of art which has been, and will go, through countless iterations, as its nature is that of an ever-evolving piece of work to be handed down from President to President. I have also attempted to set a strategic direction for the Association, in the form of a prioritised five-year plan. We must evolve with the times, seeing through to fruition agreed-upon new initiatives, and take risks, otherwise the Association may fade into irrelevancy. The Association will always be related to Ratcliffe,



of course, but it must work to remain relevant. This leads me onto my final point, and that is to 'work hard and play hard'. Modernising our social 'play hard' calendar is critical, but so, too, is how the Association 'works hard' to remain relevant. I have thoroughly enjoyed being artistic, and I won't be a stranger, as there is artwork still to be done.'

We thank Dan for his time and commitment, and we wish him every success in the future, as he hands the reigns over to the new Association President, **Louise Watkins (née Jackson) (91)**.

Louise said: 'It is with great pleasure and heartfelt sincerity that I accept my new post as President. Having left Ratcliffe in 1991, the College was, and still is, an integral part of my life, weaving a tapestry of cherished memories and deep-rooted connections. Ratcliffe has not only shaped my own journey, but has also been a cornerstone for my family. My brother, **Ben Jackson (88)**, walked these halls, and now, my children do as well, continuing a tradition through our family.

'The warmth and spirit of Ratcliffe resonates deeply within me. It is a place that embodies kindness, community, and a sense of belonging that is truly unparalleled. Like many of my fellow Old Ratcliffians, I hold a profound passion for our alma mater. The bonds we share, forged in the classrooms and on the playing fields, are enduring and invaluable.

'As I take on the responsibility of leading the Ratcliffian Association, I am committed to fostering its growth and vitality. I will strive to welcome new members into our fold, ensuring that they continue to feel the same warmth and camaraderie that being a student at Ratcliffe has provided. Together, we will nurture and support our community, cherishing our shared heritage and working towards a future that honours our past.'

THE RATCLIFFIAN ASSOCIATION COUNCIL: BECOME A MEMBER

The Ratcliffian Association Council is looking for new Year Group Representatives to make a meaningful contribution to their community's legacy. In this voluntary position, we strongly welcome your recommendations, ideas, and guidance.



WHAT WE DO

Originally founded in 1865, a group of students, on leaving the College at age 18, decided to create a society of former pupils, to help them stay in touch. Back then, the aims of the Ratcliffian Association, written below, were decided, and they are still just as relevant today:

- To foster in ORs a spirit of loyalty to Ratcliffe.
- To provide a link of union and sympathy between all generations of ORs.
- To unite ORs.
- To encourage the development of the Roman Catholic faith.
- To assist in the preservation of archive material of Ratcliffe College.
- To manage the Ratcliffian Association and the Cunningham Fund.
- To uphold the College motto, 'Legis Plenitudo Caritas' ('Charity is the fulfilment of the law'), by encouraging ORs to support other ORs.

WHAT WE NEED FROM YOU

- Initially, to be an ambassador and point of contact for your year group, and the years above and below.
- To encourage your peers to engage with the Association and attend OR events.
- To find out from your peers what is, or is not, working within the Association, and to identify what they would like to see.
- To bring these ideas, feelings, and thoughts, along with any guidance and advice, to the Association Council meetings.
- To sit on the Council, of which there are three sessions a year lasting 60 minutes. These are hosted both online and in person, at Ratcliffe.
- To attend events, where able, especially if they are ones that you have suggested.

WHAT'S IN IT FOR YOU?

In taking on this role, you will:

- Meet different generations of ORs who have walked the same corridors as you.
- Visit Ratcliffe and hear updates from the Headmaster about recent developments.
- Share ideas about how to enrich the OR community and increase engagement with current Ratcliffe students.
- Enjoy the informal nature of the Council meetings. There are three meetings a year, which follow a brief format, and there is always time to socialise and chat with fellow Council members before and after them, over a coffee and treats.
- Continue to be part of the Ratcliffe College culture.
- Once you have gained more understanding on how things work, it is hoped that you will take on the role of Vice President, then President, to steer the ship, especially if it lines up with a particular leaving year anniversary.

If you'd like more details about becoming a member of the Association Council, contact Amanda Mole at alumni@ratcliffecollege.com.

COUNCIL MEMBERS 2024-2025

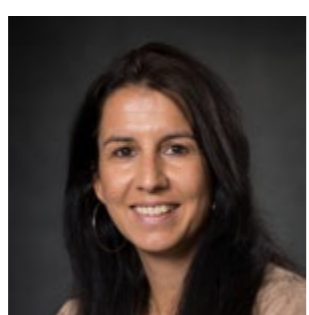
YEAR GROUP REPRESENTATIVES



PRESIDENT:
LOUISE WATKINS
(NÉE JACKSON) (91)



VICE PRESIDENT:
JON REDDIN (HEADMASTER)



ASSOCIATION MANAGER:
AMANDA MOLE



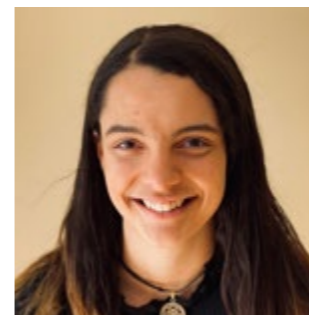
**RATCLIFFIAN ASSOCIATION
CHAPLAIN:**
FR PHILIP SAINTER (69)



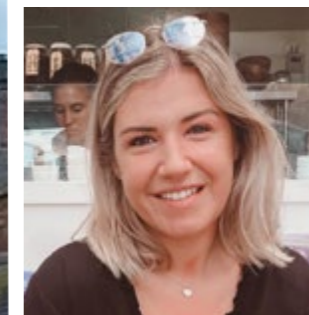
HONORARY TREASURER:
SIMON BURNS (83)



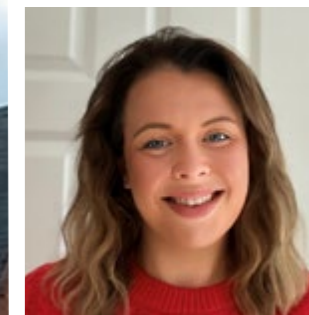
**DIRECTOR OF FINANCE
& OPERATIONS:**
CHRIS BELLAMY



10 YEARS OR LESS:
SOPHIE RILEY (15)



10 YEARS OR LESS:
ANNABEL WRIGHT (16)



10 - 20 YEARS:
AMY SHAW (NÉE LANG) (10)



WE NEED YOU

**10 - 20 YEARS:
TO BE APPOINTED**



WE NEED YOU

**20 - 30 YEARS:
TO BE APPOINTED**

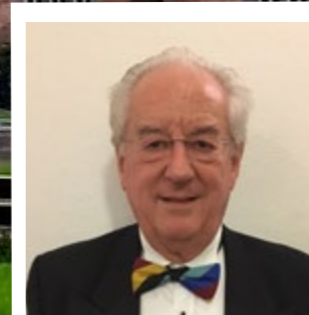


WE NEED YOU

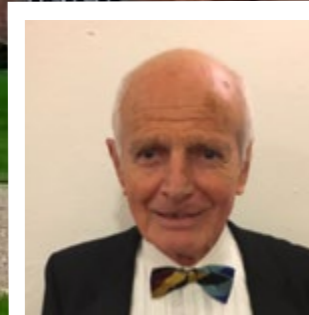
**30 - 40 YEARS:
TO BE APPOINTED**



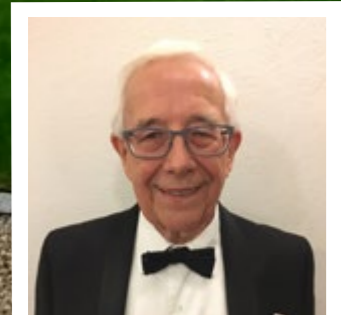
40 - 50 YEARS:
STEVE CLARK (79)



50 - 60 YEARS:
RICHARD GAMBLE (64)



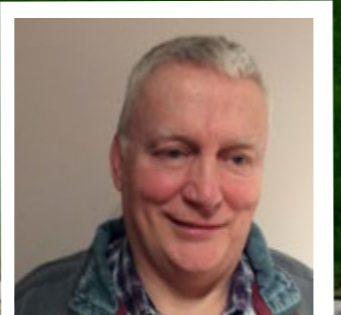
60 - 70 YEARS:
DICK CUNNINGHAM (59)



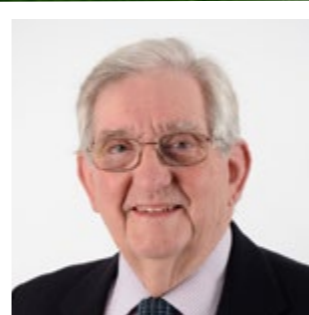
**PAST PRESIDENTS'
DINNER COORDINATOR:**
MICHAEL HEATH (56)



SCHOOL LIAISON OFFICER:
BEN HARRISON



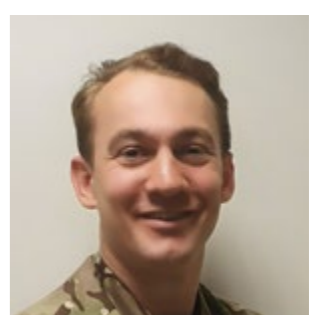
**RATCLIFFIAN ASSOCIATION &
CUNNINGHAM FUND TRUSTEE:**
RICHARD ARMITAGE (71)



70+ YEARS:
MICHAEL COKER (52)



PAST PRESIDENT:
BEN JACKSON (88)



PAST PRESIDENT:
DAN AMIES (10)

RATCLIFFIAN ASSOCIATION ACCOUNTS

YEAR ENDING 31ST DECEMBER 2023

PROFIT & LOSS	2023 £	2022 £
Revenue		
Subscriptions		
School	55,839	49,929
Direct	4,095	4,425
	59,934	54,354
Other Income		
Old Ratcliffian - School Contribution	2,000	2,905
Old Ratcliffian - Advertising & Donations	250	0
Other Income	645	4,121
Merchandise Profit	99	69
Events Profit/(Loss)	1,475	244
Donations	1,200	0
Bank Interest	0	0
	5,669	7,339
Total Revenue	65,603	61,693
Expenses		
Salaries	(33,484)	(34,173)
Occasional Salary	(606)	(1,369)
Old Ratcliffian - Printing	(9,536)	(9,838)
Maintenance & Bar	(217)	(235)
Old Ratcliffian - Post & Packing	(3,337)	(3,307)
Website & Computer	(4,027)	(3,203)
Leavers' Presentation Gifts	(1,183)	(1,792)
Postage, Stationery & Phone	(264)	(319)
Professional Fees	(2,565)	(960)
Donations	(200)	0
Subscriptions	(461)	(451)
Depreciation	(200)	0
Bank & Miscellaneous Charges	(258)	(259)
Miscellaneous Expenses	0	(129)
Travel & Subsistence	(194)	(359)
Gifts & Trophies	(53)	(22)
Advertising	0	0
	(56,585)	(56,416)
Profit for Year	9,018	5,277
BALANCE SHEET	2023 £	2022 £
Non-Current Assets		
Computer Equipment (Undepreciated)	404	0
Current Assets		
Bank Balance	47,217	69,383
Merchandise Stock	1,643	3,215
Debtors & Prepayments	23,141	2,000
Bar Stock	532	231
Cash	151	215
	72,684	75,044
Total Assets	73,088	75,044
Current Liabilities		
Accruals	(11,093)	(22,067)
Creditors & Prepaid Income	0	0
	(11,093)	(22,067)
Net Assets/Worth	61,995	52,977
Accumulated Fund of the Ratcliffian Association		
Balance Brought Forward	52,977	47,700
Profit For Year	9,018	5,277
(Reduced) Balance Carried Forward	61,995	52,977

WORKING WITH THE COLLEGE

MOCK INTERVIEWS

In January each year, Old Ratcliffians, the Ratcliffian Association, and the Development team volunteer their time to support College students by conducting Year 11 mock interviews. If you are able to assist with the upcoming session on **Wednesday 8th January 2025**, please get in touch via the Association. We ask for just a few hours of your time, providing students with a valuable opportunity to practise their interview skills and receive feedback.



SIXTH FORM NETWORKING EVENT

Following the success of Ratcliffe's first Networking Event for Sixth Form students in 2023 (made possible by the generous support of ORs, parents, and alumni), we are excited to host it again on **Thursday 27th March 2025**. The event offers students invaluable experience in networking, allowing them to connect with alumni and parents in their fields of interest. If you would like to share your insights and career skills, and to network with Year 12 and 13 students, do get in touch.



For more details or to register your support of either of the above events, please contact us at alumni@ratcliffcollege.com, or register on the Association website, www.ratcliffianassociation.com.

RATCLIFFE COLLEGE OPEN MORNING

Each March and September, Ratcliffe College warmly welcomes prospective students and their families to tour the College and its beautiful grounds. The Ratcliffian Association supports this event by hosting a stand, featuring archival photos that showcase Ratcliffe's rich history, sharing information about OR events, and discussing how the Association enhances the lives of its former students. The next Open Morning will take place on **Saturday 1st March 2025** - visit www.ratcliffcollege.com for more details.

ALEX'S WISH SUPERCARS EVENT

In June, Ratcliffe College hosted the Supercars event in support of the charity Alex's Wish. An externally arranged event, the grounds came to life with luxury vehicles, live music, family entertainment, and food stalls, along with a parachute display. Ratcliffe and the Association held a joint stand, and they were delighted to see familiar faces from the Old Ratcliffian community.



RATCLIFFE COLLEGE'S INTERNATIONAL VISITS TO MEET OLD RATCLIFFIANS

During the year, Headmaster Jon Reddin and Boarding Recruitment Manager Amie Newell travel internationally to connect with agents and prospective families, and to reconnect with Old Ratcliffians. This is where the Ratcliffian Association provides support. No matter what country the Ratcliffe staff visit, the Association arranges drinks events for the ORs there, so that they can catch up with the Headmaster, find out about developments at their old school, and reunite with fellow alumni. For the College staff, meeting ORs is always a highlight to their trip, as it adds something special, being greeted by friendly faces after a long flight.

This year, Jon and Amie enjoyed meeting Hong Kong-based ORs in both March and October. In March, they were delighted to see **Henry Cheong (66)** and **Stanley Mak (67)**. Both Henry and Stanley remembered their Ratcliffe days fondly, especially the camaraderie of boarding, although not the long runs to the school boathouse on the Soar (three miles there and three miles back)! Henry and Stanley were pleased to hear

about the College's continued success and exciting new developments, and they are planning a return to Ratcliffe in the future, as Stanley has not been back since 1979!

On another night, Jon and Amie were delighted to catch up with some young ORs, and they enjoyed a drink with **Javin Choi (13)**, **Edison Wong (13)**, **Damon Chan (16)**, **Ernie Tung (14)**, and **Kiki Ng (21)**.

In October, they also met **Joshua Wong (21)**, **Jordan Fok (21)**, **Jeff Chan (21)**, **Chloe Kwok (21)**, **Ronnie Wong (88)**, **Eric Lee (88)**, **Edison Wong (13)**, **Ernie Tung (14)**, and **Javin Choi (13)**, along with **Henry Cheong (66)** and his wife.

Following the trip, Amie said: 'It was great to meet some of our ORs in Hong Kong and hear about the changes that have taken place since their Ratcliffe days. We shared a lot of laughs, and they reminisced about the fond memories that they have of being at Ratcliffe. It was lovely to see how close the ORs have remained.'



In September, a visit to Chile was arranged, where they caught up with **Raimundo Correa (24)**, who proudly received his Old Ratcliffian tie.

In 2025, the Hong Kong trips will take place again. On January 24th 2025, a visit to Madrid is planned for Amie. This time, she will be joined by Assistant Head of Boarding José Estevez. They would be delighted to connect with any ORs located in the area, so keep an eye on the Association website and social media for more information.



SUPPORT YOUR MUCH-LOVED OLD RATCLIFFIAN MAGAZINE

A donation of just £5 or more per person will help to support the printing, postage, and design of this magazine.



The Old Ratcliffian magazine is, by far, the Ratcliffian Association's biggest annual expense, but it is also a much-loved read for many.

To make a donation, scan this QR code and tap the banner that appears at the bottom to take you to the webpage. Alternatively, visit www.ratcliffianassociation.com and select 'Old Rats' followed by 'Magazine Donation'.



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Tom Redfern

Founder and Senior Partner
Ratcliffe, 1968 to 1973

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www.redfernlegal.com

RATCLIFFIAN ASSOCIATION EVENTS



THE LONDON DINNER FRIDAY 15TH MARCH 2024

This esteemed annual black-tie event, held in the enchanting setting of the Crypt at St Etheldreda's, provided a fitting backdrop for an evening dedicated to celebrating shared experiences and cherished memories of Ratcliffe College.

The event commenced with Mass, celebrated by honourable guest **Fr Anthony Meredith (57)**, whose presence, having flown in from Rome for the occasion, added a special significance to the evening's proceedings.

The formal, yet lively, atmosphere of the event was accentuated by traditional speeches, delivered by distinguished alumni. A big thank you to **Steve Clark (79)** and Past President **Ben Jackson (88)**, stepping in admirably to deliver President **Dan Amies' (10)** speech at the last minute in his absence. The speech recounted the number of Old Ratcliffians who have supported the community and Ratcliffe College, echoing the spirit of 'giving back', and demonstrating a commitment to upholding the rich legacy of Ratcliffe College.

Headmaster Jon Reddin's address reminded everyone that each individual in attendance brought with them a unique tapestry of experiences and stories from their time at Ratcliffe. However, amidst the diversity of recollections, a common thread emerged – the enduring values instilled by Ratcliffe's founder, Blessed Antonio Rosmini. These values, which centre on fostering independence of thought and nurturing creativity, continue to resonate deeply within the Ratcliffian community today.

The event saw both familiar faces and newcomers in attendance, all of whom contributed to the evening's success. The Bleeding Heart Restaurant's exemplary service and delicious cuisine added to the overall ambiance, and a special mention of thanks must go to the London Club for their continued support in subsidising ticket prices, keeping the costs to a very reasonable level.

As the evening drew to a close, attendees departed with a renewed sense of community spirit, updated on the continued success of Ratcliffe and its mission, and assured that its leadership is committed to ensure that the College thrives well into the future. If you haven't attended this magical annual dinner yet, please do join us on **Friday 21st March 2025** (see the Association website for more details), as we strive to retain the value and affordability of such a fabulous Ratcliffe tradition.



THE PAST PRESIDENTS' DINNER FRIDAY 1ST NOVEMBER 2024

Ratcliffe welcomed back former Presidents of the Ratcliffian Association and College on All Saints' Day this year for their annual dinner. Development Manager Louise Liston and Association Manager Amanda Mole were present, ensuring a warm welcome for each arrival.

Fr Philip Sainter (69) celebrated Mass in the Chapel for departed Ratcliffians, and for those who have contributed to the College in many ways from the wider community.

An excellent reception and dinner followed in the Old Library. This concluded with a loyal toast, made by **David Jolliffe (64)**, a toast to Ratcliffe and its Headmaster from Association President **Louise Watkins (née Jackson) (91)**, and a reply and toast to the Association from Headmaster Jon Reddin.

The College's catering team produced and served a meal of exceptional quality, which was much enjoyed and appreciated. This was the 25th Past Presidents' Dinner, and all those who attended agreed that this minor landmark had been celebrated appropriately.

Also present were: **Michael Heath (56)**, **Fr David Tobin (59)**, **Fr Ted Mullen (60)**, **Paul Rudd (60)**, **Richard Gamble (64)**, **Cathy Ross (79)**, **Ben Jackson (88)**, **Abe Mee (92)**, and **Dan Amies (10)**.

Michael Heath (56)

MUSIC BY CANDLELIGHT SATURDAY 23RD MARCH 2024

Now in its 27th year, **Music by Candlelight** (formerly known as Opera by Candlelight) has become a cherished tradition at Ratcliffe, first organised by friends Mary Goldstraw and Marlene Yell in memory of Mary's son, Henry, and Marleen's late husband, Gerald. This annual event has raised thousands of pounds over the years for the provision of a Music Scholarship at the College, and also for the Lourdes Pilgrimage Fund.

A staple event for many Old Ratcliffians, friends of Ratcliffe, and current Ratcliffe parents, it was a delight to welcome familiar faces, alongside new ones. Guests enjoyed champagne and canapés, a two-part concert in the Old Library, and an elegant meal in the Refectory. Next year's event will be held on **Saturday 5th April**. For tickets, please email alumni@ratcliffecollege.com.





THE COMBINED CADET FORCE REGIMENTAL DINNER SATURDAY 16TH MARCH 2024

In March, we saw the return of the Ratcliffe College CCF Regimental Dinner. Formal mess dinners originated with the Vikings, who used them to celebrate victories in battles or to commemorate the deaths of great chieftains. The tradition was adopted by the early monasteries and developed by universities and military regiments. They have been an important part of the Armed Forces for centuries, and our dinner reflects the military links and organisation of our CCF at Ratcliffe. Our event served to dine out our senior cadets and thank them for their hard work and dedication.

The event was attended by Ratcliffe's current Sixth Form senior cadets and staff, as well as past cadets and staff. It was fantastic to see such a wide range of past cadets, with Old Ratcliffians from 1960 all the way through to 2023 being represented at the event. Special thanks to our guest of honour, Capt **Dan Amies (10)**, whose speech was inspiring and focused on the motto of the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst - 'Serve to Lead' - and what can be learnt from it. We were also humbled to be joined by the family of one of our 'great chieftains', the late Lt Col Mark Balmbra. A wonderful evening was had by all.

Capt Michelle Reeves

President of the Mess Committee

After the event, **Clem Maginniss (74)** wrote to say: 'What a splendid dinner! It is 50 years since I left the CCF, and 52 years since my first dinner in the Old Library, when I received my school colours for swimming. We had a most convivial evening, tripping down memory lane whilst meeting new contacts. There was such a spread of age groups that encompassed the best part of 70 years of Ratcliffe CCF, which, in itself, is an impressive achievement. It was a delight to meet the senior cadets and hear of their plans for the future - they had plenty of positives to take from the CCF, which was most heartening. The meal and the service were absolutely outstanding, with the event clearly demonstrating that Ratcliffe is not only about academic achievements.'

To read more about this dinner, visit the Events section of the Association website, www.ratcliffianassociation.co.uk.



THE REUNION DINNER SATURDAY 6TH JULY 2024

As the England football team kicked off their UEFA Euro quarter-final match, the annual Reunion Dinner also got underway. Early-arriving ORs gathered in the Old Library to watch the game on the big screen with old friends and drinks, while others took a nostalgic tour of the College grounds, before enjoying reception drinks in the Lockhart Garden.

The evening continued with a delicious three-course meal in the Refectory, where over 65 ORs reminisced about their school days. The celebrations went on late into the night in the Old Ratcliffian Bar, and some guests even stayed overnight in their old dorm rooms, reliving their teenage years.

Three prominent year groups celebrated milestone anniversaries. The Class of 1984 celebrated their 40th anniversary with a bike ride around the local area, before arriving for an evening filled with nostalgia. The Class of 1979, many of whom are regulars at the annual London Dinner, reunited at Ratcliffe to celebrate 45 years of friendship. After the dinner, some stayed overnight in the dormitories, in what was once their childhood home. In the summer of 1979, as they were finishing school, a fire destroyed a wing of the College, taking with it many of their possessions, making this return especially poignant. Additionally, we were thrilled to welcome three old friends from the Class of 1974, celebrating 50 years since they last set foot on campus. It wasn't long before they were sipping wine and eating together like old times!

The weekend was full of fond memories, reconnections, and new friendships - a perfect tribute to the enduring bond between Ratcliffe College and its alumni. After the event, **Peter Feeny (79)** wrote to say: 'Thank you so much for the opportunity to attend the Reunion Dinner. It is always a pleasure to see the old guys, and the evening was superbly managed, even if controlling a group of ORs is like herding cats!'

James Deville (79) added: 'It was an amazing weekend. It was also quite surreal in some respects, sleeping back at the College, just above my old room, and meeting up in the Common Room, with facilities that we could only dream of. We didn't make it past 1am after we left the Old Ratcliffian Bar, unlike the old days. Breakfast was a bit of a blast from the past, chatting over coffee and toast with a bit of a sore head! The tour of the College just showed how much things have changed in some respects, but the old rooms and haunts still remain, and they brought back many memories. All in all, it was great to see everyone again, and it will remain as one of life's special memories.'

Steve Clark (79) said: 'Looking back at our weekend reunion, there were several special highlights. Firstly, the opportunity to dine in the Refectory and soak up the atmosphere of the moment, 45 years later, surrounded by our contemporaries, sitting at those same, crafted wooden tables and chairs. Secondly, wandering around the school, up the corridors, through classrooms and dorms, with the memories that they revived. Thirdly, most pleasantly, seeing our group sitting around the breakfast table in the Common Room above Fr Waters' old office the following morning, just relaxing, drinking coffee and putting the world to rights - how some things have not changed!'



RATCLIFFIAN ASSOCIATION SPORTS EVENTS

WELCOME TO SEAN KELLY (81), OUR NEW OLD RATCLIFFIAN GOLF CAPTAIN

What an exciting time to be asked to lead OR golf! We had a near-record turnout for the recent Reynard tournament, and we have an exciting diary ahead, promising a lot of fun, some late nights, and plenty of competitive golf. The vision ahead is simple: to get more ORs involved, to have a lot of fun getting together with our old and new friends playing golf, and to beat Loughborough and Oakham in the spring matches!

We also have new competitions, organised on fantastic courses, with some fabulous (and not so fabulous!) prizes. We already have the Reynard Trophy for most Stableford points. We will also have a new trophy, the Immac Scratch Cup, for the best golfer (most Stableford points off scratch), and the Peter Banks Tankard for Fine Golf, for a champagne moment, or exceptional golf, that I get to present as captain!

I am lucky to have the talented and enthusiastic support of our vice-captain, **Alison Court (née Mason) (98)**, our outgoing captain, **Keith Edgar (03)**, OR golf Svengali **Abe Mee (92)**, and Association Manager Amanda Mole, ensuring that our golf days are enjoyable and memorable for everyone. All OR golfers, regardless of ability, are most welcome to come along and join the excitement. Our 2025 diary is available to view on the Association website, www.ratcliffianassociation.co.uk. Please get in touch if you want to be more involved, or are keen to play in a particular match. We'd love to have you on board.

Sean Kelly (81)
Golf Captain



THE CENTENARY SALVER FRIDAY 3RD MAY 2024

The OR golf team clinched a remarkable victory at the annual Centenary Salver golf event, hosted at Luffenham Heath Golf Club. We amassed an impressive total of 90 points with two scores, with **Sean Kelly (81)** and **Keith Edgar (03)** scoring a very impressive 46 points.

Among the participants were teams representing the Old Oakhamians, Loughburians, Oundelians, and Uppinghamians. Congratulations to our team for such a stellar performance. The OR team players included **Keith Edgar (03)** (captain), **Abe Mee (92)**, **Lee Buckby (97)**, **Justin Hunt (08)**, **Mir Patel (14)**, and **Sean Kelly (81)**.

Abe Mee (92)



THE REYNARD TROPHY FRIDAY 6TH SEPTEMBER 2024

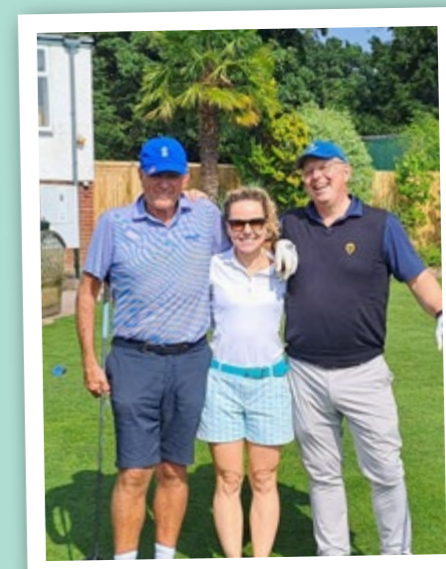
Held at Rothley Park Golf Club, the annual Reynard tournament brought together 18 Old Ratcliffians from across the generations for a day of friendly competition and shared tradition. The event, known for its spirit of camaraderie and rivalry, was a fantastic success, with an impressive turnout of participants, all eager to have their name immortalised on the prestigious Reynard Trophy.

Special congratulations go to this year's champion, **David Moss (81)**, who made an incredible journey from Aberdeen to compete and claim the top spot. **Thomas Binnie (20)** took a well-earned second place, while **Alison Court (née Mason) (98)** secured third, rounding off a thrilling contest.

A heartfelt thank you goes to **Keith Edgar (03)**, who, after five successful years as the Old Ratcliffian Golf Captain, has now handed the reins over to **Sean Kelly (81)**. A big thanks to Keith for his commitment, and for keeping the OR golf team together through, and after, COVID. We are excited to see what Sean will bring to the team in the coming year. Finally, thank you to Danny Spillane and his team at Rothley Park Golf Club for looking after the OR team so well.

This year's players - pictured above, front row (left to right): **Alison Court (née Mason) (98)**, **Keith Edgar (03)**, **Guy Gamble (23)**, **Charles Barre (10)**, and **Hugh Spillane (10)**. Middle row (left to right): **Fin Kelly (07)**, **Sean Kelly (81)**, **George Binnie (23)**, and **Patric Coupland (10)**. Top row (left to right): **Gus Kelly (10)**, **Thomas Binnie (20)**, **Varinder Gill (99)**, **Anith Khoda (96)**, **David Moss (81)**, and **Dominic Russell (78)**. Players not pictured: **Abe Mee (92)**, **Myles Halley (75)**, and **Charles Mather (79)**.

Amanda Mole
Ratcliffian Association Manager





OLD RATCLIFFIANS VS OLD LOUGHBURIANS WEDNESDAY 17TH APRIL 2024

It's a very long time since Ratcliffe has taken on the Old Loughburians, and following this golf match, both schools agreed to try to make it an annual fixture. The match was hard fought and ended with a draw. Rothley Park Golf Club was in great condition, and it was a lovely day overall, despite the weather coming in for the last couple of holes. This event was a nice way to start off the Ratcliffe golfing calendar, and it was good to see some old faces and to bring in some newer ones. Thank you, again, to Rothley Park Golf Club for hosting us. We are looking forward to seeing if we can take down Loughborough next year, which will be away at Longcliffe Golf Club.

George Santaney (16)

Players pictured (left to right): **Justin Hunt (08)**, **Myles Halley (75)**, **Alison Court (née Mason) (98)**, **George Santaney (16)**, **Keith Edgar (03)**, **Andrew Simpson (81)**, and **Sean Kelly (81)**. Not pictured: **Mir Patel (14)**.

MIDLANDS PUBLIC SCHOOLS GOLF WEDNESDAY 19TH JUNE 2024

This year, following an invitation from **Lindsay Buckenham (00)**, we enjoyed our maiden entry into this prestigious foursomes competition, along with King Edwards School, Harrow, Oundle, Rugby, Repton, Malvern, Uppingham, Bromsgrove, Wrekin, Rossall, and Shrewsbury. Little Aston is a beautiful parkland setting, and their club is renowned for its luncheon. We were not disappointed! The event consisted of 18 holes, a good lunch, followed by 15 holes. Then, for the Ratcliffians, coffee and cake, taking in the presentation, and quite strenuous efforts at the bar by other more local alumni. Our team consisted of the following pairs: **Keith Edgar (03)** and **Abe Mee (92)**, **Ed Gamble (95)** and **Gus Kelly (10)**, **Sean Kelly (81)** and **Charles Mather (79)**. We played well, but you can't win 'em all. We made some fun new friends, and we will definitely be returning in 2025.

Abe Mee (92)

GOLF DIARY DATES FOR 2025

Spring Meeting – Sunday 11th May, Rothley Park Golf Club

Centenary Salver – Friday 2nd May, Luffenham Heath Golf Club

Midlands Public Schools Meeting – Wednesday 18th June, Little Aston Golf Club

Grafton Morrish Qualifier – Sunday 18th May, Gog Magog Golf Club

Reynard Trophy – Friday 5th September, Rothley Park Golf Club

Additional events are planned (dates to be confirmed), including matches against Old Oakhamians, Loughborough Grammar School, Rothley Ratcliffians, Ratcliffe (Golf Shield), and a trip to Spalding to celebrate **Jim West's (77)** captaincy.

Please note that OR golf polo shirts and belts are now available to purchase through the Association website, www.ratcliffianassociation.co.uk.

THE GRAND MATCH SUNDAY 23RD JUNE 2024

This year's Grand Match took place in lovely weather, with the usual familiar faces returning to play for the Old Ratcliffian side. The match began with a poignant minute's silence for Richard Hughes, who ran Ratcliffe cricket for many years and, sadly, passed away in the previous summer. His colleague and great friend, Nigel Taylor, spoke of his memories of Richard, who had a significant impact on many of the Old Ratcliffian team when they were at the school.

The match itself followed a similar theme to recent years. A tight bowling and fielding display from the school kept the run rate low, before **Jamie Gilbertson (20)** found his form and pressed the accelerator to reach a commanding total. In reply, the school struggled to score at the required rate, and the game meandered to a draw, with the trophy remaining in the school's hands for another year.

This year's OR players were: **Matt Hilton (90)**, **Rupert Adcock (90)**, **Ed Gamble (95)**, **Luke Welch (09)**, **Seb Welch (24)**, **Warren Birchall (97)**, **Karl Smith (97)**, **Lee Buckby (97)**, **Jamie Gilbertson (20)**, and **Toby Snell (19)**.

It was great to see this annual tradition being passed down through the generations, as OR Matt Hilton played alongside his son, Albert Hilton (Year 9), bringing a touch of friendly family rivalry to the match. Also, amongst the spectators were Jackie Bennett and her daughter, **Alex Slack (née Gamble) (03)**, both former Ratcliffian Association Managers. Everyone was delighted to witness the spectacular Red Arrows flyover as a great end to the day.

Ed Woodcock

Head of Cricket





Sophie Riley (15): 'In the summer, several members of the Class of 2015 met up in London for **Alex Butler's (15)** birthday. Alex is working in virtual production, while **Charlotte Perfect (15)** is continuing her career as a pitch and proposals professional, specialising in antitrust and competition law. **Sarah Daniel (15)** is currently a pupil barrister practising at

criminal chambers in London. **Emily Hollis (15)** had a gorgeous daughter, Daisy, in 2023, and she has been in full mummy mode until recently, when she returned to her role at Huel. **Savannah Fishel (15)** is a service designer, working with non-profit and public-sector organisations across the UK. **Alex Beason (15)** is still pursuing a career as an opera singer, and

she will be moving to Leipzig in Germany to continue this. She also recently sang the opening National Anthem for the Women's Rugby at Twickenham. As for me, I have settled into life as a doctor and have recently started a major trauma fellow post at Queen's Medical Centre in Nottingham.'



Adrian McDermott (79) (pictured, above, left), who lives in Switzerland, recently met up with **Noel Sloan (79)**. Noel visited from his home in New York, where he has lived for many years. Adrian was shortly to depart for the UK to attend the Annual Dinner at Ratcliffe on July 6th.

Harry Cregeen (24) made a special trip to Sarasota in Florida to visit **Peter Daley (56)**. Remarkably, this photo, captured in the beautiful sunshine at New Pass in Sarasota, was taken just two days before a devastating hurricane struck parts of Florida, Georgia, and then Tennessee, causing significant disruption, damage, and death. Thankfully, Peter's home was spared, and he remains safe and well. Harry said: 'I started at Ratcliffe aged three, and I was there until I completed my GCSEs, continuing my studies in Level 2 Sports Coaching and Development at Loughborough College. We were introduced to Peter Daley at Ratcliffe during the pandemic, and his support was instrumental in me continuing my GCSE studies. I maintained contact with him throughout my studies, even after I left the College. In September, I went to Florida to visit friends and to travel around the

USA for three months. During that time, I asked Peter if he'd like to meet up. He kindly showed me around Sarasota, where he lives, including lunch at his boat club, where we sat outside and enjoyed the view of the sea. It was also a great opportunity to thank Peter for all of his help during the pandemic.'



Lolade Mosaku (16): 'Hello from Paris! I'm currently here in the capital on secondment at my firm's French office. It's been a dream of mine to work in France, ever since I did a study abroad year as part of my degree in Montreal and got a taste of the francophone culture! I've been here for a month already, and I'm enjoying (for the most part) the French culture of long lunch breaks and coffee breaks, which I'm not so used to back in the UK! It's exciting to see how language learning can open doors, not just culturally, but also from a career perspective. I'm grateful to my French teachers at Ratcliffe, who always pushed me to continue learning. Despite not necessarily pursuing it as a degree choice, it's led me here, developing my French in one of my favourite cities in the world!'

Adam Greenwood (00): 'I've spent the last 20 years working in the entertainment industry, in production lighting. I've worked with Kings of Leon, The Stone Roses, and The Chemical Brothers, as well as various theatre and dance companies, such as Northern Ballet, where I was Deputy Head of Lighting for several years. I have generated lighting designs at the National Theatre in London, and I was part of the production team for *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*, which won seven Olivier Awards. In 2019, I turned my skills in lighting into an agricultural idea, starting a lighting business based around the advancing LED technology aimed at plant growth, called Modular Growth Ltd. During lockdown, I designed and created the world's first three-dimensional growing environment, as well as several other innovative agricultural lighting products. Wanting to advance this career

path, I have just completed my MSc in Innovation and Technology for Agriculture at the Royal Agricultural University in Cirencester. This was a full-time course, for which I managed to achieve a Merit-level pass whilst working full-time on three international music tours. Also, this summer, acting as Lighting Crew Chief for the band Massive Attack, we produced the world's first large-scale festival show powered entirely by renewable solar energy. I would like to thank Mrs Caven-Henrys, my old Drama teacher, for inspiring me to enter the world of entertainment and never look back.'

After their wedding, **Aaron Playle (79)** and his wife, Jasmine, flew to San Francisco for their honeymoon. They then hired a car, which they drove in a zigzag manner across the United States, from the West to the East Coast, where they met up with **Eric Ciambra (79)** and his wife for dinner in New York.



Paul Morris (74): 'I retired from Allied Irish Bank in 2022 and have been assisting the Mothers' Union as Chairman of Finance for the central charity. I have been involved in supplying the homeless in Coventry with food three times a week and providing clothing to help refugees. It's rewarding work, and it keeps me occupied. My brother, **Michael (68)**, is still working as a doctor in Vancouver, while my other brother, **Sean (70)**, is based near Leeds and has retired from HSBC. I enjoyed the recent Reunion at Ratcliffe - it was fantastic to catch up with former pupils.'

Mark Grieveson (74): 'After leaving Ratcliffe, I went to Birmingham University and completed a degree in Commerce. In 1979, for want of a better idea, I applied for a Short Service Commission in the Army. During my time there, I served in Great Britain, Northern Ireland, Germany, Belize, the Falklands, Cyprus, Afghanistan,

and Australia. So, after a short 31 years' service, I went to Civvy Street. I'm now fully retired and living in North Oxfordshire, near Banbury. Of possible interest to some ORs, I currently act as one of the moderators on the St Michael's Prep School, Soni alumni website. Any ORs with a Soni connection are welcome to get in touch with me via the Association website if they wish to establish contact with that particular 'kabila'. I still see **Mark Lindley (74)** with depressing regularity (for him). He is currently living in Cambridgeshire, but he's moving to the Hampshire area very soon. **Philip McEvoy (74)** is living in Cornwall and claiming to still engage in activities such as parachuting, walking the Camino, and cycling trips to the South of France. Depressing news indeed to those, like me, with knee replacements.'

Lucie Prusinski (18): 'After watching the London Marathon in 2023, I knew that I wanted to set myself a challenge and enter it the following year, even though I had never run further than 5 kilometres! I signed up to run the London Marathon in April 2024. I was offered a place, fundraising for the charity Children with Cancer UK, and I raised over £3,000. It was the most incredible experience, and one that I would recommend to anybody, if they have the opportunity. It was so inspiring to run alongside other entrants, who all had their own reasons to be there that day - whether that be in memory of a loved one, for a charity close to them, or for a personal goal. It most definitely was a day that I will never forget.'





Amy Shaw (née Lang) (10): 'The past year has been extra busy, but aren't they all these days?! My business, Take Five Beauty, Aesthetics and Laser, is thriving, and I was delighted to win the Midlands Aesthetic and Beauty Award in December 2023. On April 23rd 2024, my husband and I welcomed our second daughter, Frankie Kathleen Shaw, into the world. Our older daughter, Olivia, is now three years old and at Ratcliffe - having officially completed Cygnets, she will head into Swans in September. Coming up the Ratcliffe driveway to drop her off brings back so many fantastic memories of my own childhood, and she always comes home beaming about how good her day has been. It's also wonderful being back in Mountsorrel and reconnecting with so many old friends from school, after all these years.'



Lauren White (15) got engaged to Adam Johnston on Valentine's Day in the beautiful Maldives. Congratulations to the happy couple!

John Plumb (53), aged 90 and still playing his piano accordion (albeit a smaller and lighter version), accompanied the bonfire singing at the conclusion of the Swiss National Day celebrations at Stockport, excellently organised by the Manchester Swiss Club on July 27th 2024. With his wife, Jean, Swiss-born John has been a member of the club for many decades. His attendance was delightfully enhanced by the presence of another club member, Mrs Sainter, the mother of **Fr Philip Sainter (69)**.



James Belderbos (89) continues to practise family law in Oakham under the name of Belderbos Solicitors. The family justice system is evolving and, thankfully, encouraging families to deal with their disputes outside the formal court process. James acts as a mediator and collaborative lawyer, providing a much better way for families to achieve resolution on separation. Embracing these changes has enabled James to expand his specialist family law practice, with the appointment of another solicitor and paralegal this autumn. James' own family is also progressing, with his eldest daughter starting at Nottingham University this autumn. He has enjoyed getting back in touch with **Matt Tams (89)** after nearly 30 years, having been inspired to make contact after reading *The Old Ratcliffian*.

Clem Maginniss (74): 'Having crashed and burned in my Science A Levels, thus failing to reach medical school, I undertook a History A Level in six months at Coventry Technical College. I then read Modern European History and International Politics at Warwick University, before being commissioned into the Royal Corps of Transport in 1979. I retired from the Army in 2022, after 44 years of service across the world, undertaking many different roles, from railways to pack transport, and from disaster relief operations to medical equipment development. Bizarrely,

although **Mark Grieveson (74)** and I were both in the Royal Logistic Corps, we never served together. I have now turned to authorship, with two books published and more to follow, whilst also acting as a logistic historian on battlefield studies.'

James Taylor (04): 'In April 2023, I completed the 100-mile Ride London event, which completed the set for me, having done the London Marathon in 2018 and the Swim Serpentine in 2021. Whilst I've always been sporty, long-distance events (five hours of running and seven hours of cycling) aren't really for me, but I did this one to raise money for the Matt Hampson Foundation. It has strong connections to Ratcliffe, being a local charity, but also having another two ORs (**James Sutliff (03)** and **Louis Deacon (99)**) on their team.'

Keelan Kukuk (10): 'After almost nine years, I've swapped working in IT in transportation for digital in FM (Facilities Management, not radio!). Coming up to one year in, it's been a great experience of an almost secret industry that most people would never realise affects the majority of other businesses. If you have a business, who do you contact to provide hospitality, procurement, catering, cleaning, and security? That's where FM comes in - just picture all the systems, technology, processes, and colleagues who form part of that service! Outside work, I recently saw one of my close university friends get married. It was a privilege for me, supporting the day as a groomsman. My role included last-minute sourcing of shoe polish, ushering all the guests to the right places, and helping to organise the post-ceremony group photos - after that, I could finally enjoy the pressure being off! It was an honour to support such a special day.'



Andrew Black (84) did an outstanding job of rallying his year group for a reunion in celebration of their 40th anniversary of leaving Ratcliffe. The day began with a group bike ride. Andy said: 'We spent the day cycling around old haunts in the vicinity of Ratcliffe,

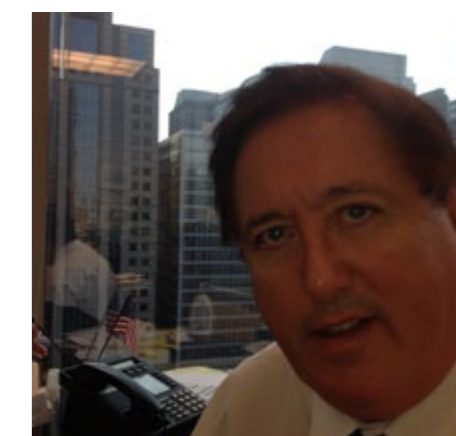
including a pub lunch at the Royal Oak in Cossington with several other members of the Class of 1984. We just had time to turn around and get back to Ratcliffe in time for the Annual Dinner, where we enjoyed drinks and an excellent meal. A great time was had by all.'

Pictured, above, (left to right) are: **Joe Langfield (84)**, **Richard Hartley (84)**, **Richard Rigby (84)**, **Paul Harlow (84)**, **Andrew Black (84)**, **Rob Skelly (84)**, **James Poskitt (84)**, **Eamon O'Donovan (84)**, and **James Thompson (84)**.



Andrew Fleming (73): 'I attended Ratcliffe between 1971 and 1973 (through Fifth Form), before attending a Catholic school (Catherine McAuley) in my hometown of Doncaster, South Yorkshire. After completing Sixth Form, I read Law at Leeds University and was then admitted to the Bar in London in 1980 as a member of The Honourable Society of the Inner Temple. I emigrated to the United States in 1981, settling in Chicago, Illinois, and was admitted to the Illinois Bar in 1982. For the past 42 years, I have practised as a trial lawyer, handling cases throughout the country. I have tried major cases in diverse jurisdictions, including New York, Louisiana, Texas, California, and, of course, Illinois. These cases have involved not only complex commercial issues, but also more sensational and widely reported subjects, including a major plant explosion case in Louisiana, a case involving alleged political corruption in Chicago, and major financial fraud matters as a result of the 2008 market crash. As I often tell people, my career has been an unbelievable experience, and I have enjoyed every minute of my life as an 'attorney' in the United States. While practising in Illinois, I have always sought to remain close to my UK roots, and, in that regard, I have maintained very close ties to the British Consulate General in Chicago. For over 25 years, I have been honoured to be named as an Illinois Super Lawyer - an accolade awarded only to a small segment of the

active lawyers in Illinois through the vote of all licensed attorneys in the state. As I look back at the time I spent at Ratcliffe and the education I received, I am constantly reminded of how Ratcliffe gave me the necessary foundation I needed to pursue (and be successful) in such an interesting and rewarding career. I also recognise that my religious faith, so deeply instilled in me while I was at Ratcliffe, has helped to further my development as a productive and contributing member of my community. In fact, for the last 20 years, I have been an active member of the Knights of Malta, regularly serving the needy and the poor at a soup kitchen at St Thomas of Canterbury Church in Chicago. I look back on my years at Ratcliffe with great fondness, and also with tremendous appreciation for how the school prepared me for life.'



Jonjo Ayres-Henry (05) now runs a project management company, building large projects (worth over £300 million) for universities, hospitals, shopping village investors, and private residential developers. His husband, Robbie, is a project manager in the banking sector. With Oscar, Orla, and their two dogs, their family is now complete! Jonjo looks back on his time at Ratcliffe very fondly, and he remembers Mrs Caven-Henrys, **Fr Sainter (69)**, and Mr Sharpe, who were a few of his favourites, and who still inspire him today.



A picture that brings back memories, The All-Stars team. Back row (left to right): J. Learmonth, Pat Crerand, Richie Norman, Ted Jelly, Malcolm Musgrove, Danny Williams, Bill Foulkes, Frank O'Farrell. In front: Jimmy Sirrell, Howard Riley, Jimmy Bloomfield, Charlie Adam, Derek Hogg.



Ratcliffe College F.C. Back row (left to right): Tom Redfern, Desmond Greaves, Simon Fox, Simon Law, Jim Kavanagh, Charles Weidner, Mark O'Shaughnessy. Front: Pierre Bouvet, Tim Sara, Maurice O'Connell, John Sloan, Bill Hurrell.

Christopher Murphy (83): 'A bit of a get-together was held at the Crown and Cushion by St Thomas' Hospital in Central London on the evening of Wednesday 7th August, turning into a bit of an informal

ORs meeting.' Pictured below (left to right) are **Christopher Murphy (83), Paul Davenport (82), Jit Ng (82), Bill Taylor (82), and Stephen Murphy (82).**



Tom Redfern (73): 'I met up with **Simon Fox (72)** in a Richmond pub recently. He reminded me of the charity football match that he and I both played in for Ratcliffe against a Leicester City All-Stars XI in about 1972. I think it was quite a unique match, in that there has never been another time when professional footballers graced the school with their skills. There are three great things to appreciate from this. Firstly, the school tradition was to play rugby in the Autumn Term and hockey in the Spring Term. There was no room for football. Because of the great enthusiasm for the round ball, we started to play matches against other schools on Sundays, after playing rugby matches on Saturdays. Secondly, Frank O'Farrell was Leicester's Manager, with Malcolm Musgrove as Assistant Manager (before they went on to become the Manager and Manager's Assistant at Manchester United). Frank was a Catholic. He kindly came in to talk to us one evening about his football experiences, and he then agreed to get an All-Stars XI, under the banner of Leicester City, to play against Ratcliffe in a charity match. The school pitch was roped off for the many hundreds of spectators to stand behind. We had a wonderful time, despite losing heavily (you were only allowed one sub in those days). Finally, what great hairstyles there were back then!'



Naveen Cunha (82): 'I left Ratcliffe in 1982 after the Sixth Form. I recently retired, in January, from teaching middle school in Texas, after 32 years in the classroom. Just prior to that, I was selected as the 2024 Texas Secondary Teacher of the Year. Ratcliffe played a big part in this, as what I learnt helped me to decide my path and led to my success.'

After a career in international development spanning almost 30 years, **Eugene McCarthy (61)** transitioned to advising the Holy See's mission in the Americas. On December 7th 2023, 15 years later, he was honoured with the 'Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice' at the Apostolic Nunciature in Washington. The award, established in 1888, recognises distinguished service to the church and the papal office. McCarthy was celebrated for his lifelong dedication to the church, through his missions to the poor and his diplomatic work. His family, including his wife, Mandy, attended the ceremony, where Papal Nuncio Cardinal Christophe Pierre and other dignitaries were present. Eugene is pictured here (below, right) receiving his award from Monsignor Juan Antonio Cruz Serrano.



On his way to an event at Ratcliffe, **Adrian McDermott (79)** stopped off in Godalming to see **Anthony (79)** and **Yetta Hobkinson (née Van Heesewijk) (79)**, who met at Ratcliffe, when Yetta was part of the first cohort of girls to join the College, back in September 1977. Yetta and Anthony are not the only married ORs from that first intake of girls, as **John Papadakis (78)** and **Francesca Della-Porta (79)** also married after their time together at Ratcliffe.



Marcus Mills (89): 'After 30 years in law enforcement, I retired in September 2023. I marked the occasion by cycling from St Malo to Nice in two weeks, and, at the same time, raised some funds for my local hospice. I enjoyed a brief sabbatical

of six months, and I'm currently on a temporary contract, working in Guernsey. I get regular visits from friends and family here. If anyone gets an opportunity to live or work in Guernsey, I would highly recommend it.'

Michael Ainsworth (75): 'Departing from Ratcliffe in 1975, the path towards a career in medicine seemed clear. Yet, the journey took unexpected turns, as revealed in a retrospective narrative spanning nearly five decades. In 1976, enrolment at Liverpool University with aspirations of becoming a medical professional seemed promising. However, the rigors of medical school proved daunting, prompting a reassessment of career goals. Consequently, a decision was made to leave university and enlist in the Royal Army Medical Corps (TA), embarking on a three-year engagement to acquire valuable first-aid skills. 1985 marked another transition, with the exploration of a new avenue in healthcare through student nurse training. Despite initial hopes of reduced stress, the reality proved otherwise, leading to a shift towards childcare studies at Rockingham College in 1986. Simultaneously, a spiritual calling was embraced, being professed as a Carmelite Tertiary. Guided by counsel from Fr W Fearon, a degree in Biblical Studies was pursued at Sheffield University from 1989 to 1992. Continuing the quest for knowledge and service, a Diploma in Social and Community Care was obtained from Rotherham College of Arts and Technology in 1995. This credential led to a decade-long placement at an elderly care home, spanning from 1995 to 2005. In 2006, responding to a request from Rotherham Borough Council, involvement in childcare provision as a childminder





Philip Jones (59): 'I was honoured to be one of four Roman Catholic recipients from within the Archdiocese of Birmingham to receive the Royal Maundy from HM The Queen, acting on behalf of HM The King, at Worcester Cathedral on Maundy Thursday. The citation read: 'Philip has engaged in active ecumenical involvement on behalf of the RC Church in Worcestershire.' It was a marvellous occasion, with great ceremonial and fabulous music, and, for me, a completely unexpected honour. I was delighted to be joined by great friends, including Patricia Deeley, wife of **Peter Deeley (59)**. She was also a recipient for services of care to the retired and infirm clergy of the archdiocese. There were 75 men and 75 women chosen throughout the UK, to correspond with the sovereign's age.'



a deeper understanding of the practical aspects of sports medicine. Shadowing doctors at local sporting events and attending concussion talks further broadened my perspective on the diverse roles of sports medicine professionals. Learning practical techniques and interdisciplinary teamwork, especially in high-pressure, on-field situations, was invaluable. Overall, this elective confirmed my passion for sports medicine. The knowledge, skills, and experiences that I gained have solidified my commitment to pursuing a career in this field.'

Daniel Bastock (19): 'Since discovering sports medicine in my third year of medical school through the SEM Society, I've eagerly sought opportunities to experience the field, particularly on the pitch. My interest led me to choose an elective in sports medicine in Australia, to gain first-hand experience of living and working there. I selected the Wakefield Sports and Exercise Medicine Clinic in Adelaide for its reputation and multidisciplinary team. Working closely with Dr Mark Ralfe, a GP with 20 years of sports medicine experience, provided invaluable learning opportunities. Dr Ralfe's expertise, particularly in ultrasound-guided procedures like platelet-rich plasma (PRP) injections, was a highlight. Assisting with these procedures and performing knee PRP injections under supervision enhanced my skills and motivated me to pursue further ultrasound training. Additionally, I assisted in weekend clinics for acute sports injuries, gaining experience with conditions that are unique to Australian sports, like AFL. Observing and participating in the management of these injuries, including reducing shoulder dislocations, provided

Peter O'Donnell (81): 'Nine Old Ratcliffians gathered in Nantes in June 2024 as part of an annual military history tour (with a World War II focus), which was started decades ago by **Gustav De Kment (81)**, **Jeremy Barrett (81)**, and **David Moran (81)**. **David Tarimo (81)** flew in from Tanzania especially for the event. Also in attendance were **Andrew Crossley (81)**, **Andrew D'Arcy (81)**, **Mark Jackson (81)**, **Peter O'Donnell (81)**, and **James Sutherland (77)**. We visited the submarine pens in St Nazaire and dined sumptuously in the town of Clisson and at the famous La Cigale.'



Gerald Della-Porta (49): 'The Della-Portas were a big tribe at Ratcliffe when my children (**Francesca (79)**, **Rupert (79)**, and **James (82)**) and their cousins were there. Francesca was the very first girl registered there, and also one half of (presumably) the very first marriage of two pupils (to **John Papadakis (78)**). During the past two decades, every year (until COVID), I met up

with a lovely group of ORs, most of whom were medical doctors, as were several of their wives. Sadly, age has pounced, and the group no longer meet. I am half-retired, and in my 27th year of running a homestay in Edinburgh. My children visit, as do my grandchildren, along with their significant others, both human and animal. I spent two years at Grace Dieu (from 1941

to 1943) and six years at Ratcliffe (from 1943 to 1949). I loved the sports, especially boxing, coached super-enthusiastically by Br Tedesco, every night of every term of every year. It was bliss! Pictured here are four generations of Della-Portas, including (on the back row, right-hand side) Rupert, Francesca, Gerald, and James, at Rupert's home in Cambridge.



Ben Curran (76): 'I left a long career with the US Federal Emergency Management Agency back in October 2021, and I'm enjoying every minute of it. For fun, I'm spending a lot of time with my two kids, Jacob (aged 19) and Matiws (aged 15), as they barrel along in life. I'm also very involved with emergency management at a local level in Washington DC. Right now, we are reviewing lessons learnt from the January 6th catastrophe and focusing on getting our act together for the next presidential inauguration.' Ben is photographed above at the recent lunar eclipse.

Patrick Casey (59): 'I'm now long retired, living in Switzerland, and no longer winning awards, conducting groundbreaking research, or embarking on unusual adventures, but I'm always curious about the doings and whereabouts of my fellow Ratcliffians of the 1950s.'

Ian Massa-Harris-McFeely (née Massa-Harris) (97): 'I am delighted to announce that I have recently been appointed as the new Programme Leader for the MA in Musical Theatre at the University of Chichester Conservatory. This innovative programme, designed to cultivate the next generation of musical theatre professionals, begins in January 2025. I am honoured to lead such a dynamic and creative initiative, and I'm eager to bring my vision and expertise to guide our students in their artistic and professional growth. The programme combines rigorous academic coursework with practical training, through seven performance projects. Graduates will leave with a robust performance portfolio and valuable industry connections, ready to excel in their careers. I am also proud to share my transition from BAFTA Crew to BAFTA Connect. BAFTA Crew is an esteemed professional network supporting career development for emerging talent in the film, television, and games industries,

providing members with access to masterclasses, networking opportunities, and industry insights. My involvement with BAFTA Crew has been instrumental in honing my skills and building a robust professional network. BAFTA Connect, an evolution of BAFTA Crew, continues to support emerging talents while offering expanded benefits, including more extensive networking opportunities and greater access to industry events and mentorship programmes. Becoming a BAFTA Connect Make-Up Artist is a testament to my expertise and dedication to the craft. These two accomplishments mark significant milestones in my career, and I am excited about the opportunities that they present for personal growth, and the impact that I can make within the realms of musical theatre and make-up artistry. Thank you for your support and encouragement as I embark on these new and exciting chapters.'





On May 29th 2024, the funeral of **Peter Astill (71)** took place in the Chapel of the Immaculate Conception at Ratcliffe College. Friends and family gathered

to celebrate his life together. Old Ratcliffians in attendance included **Chris Calnan (71), Mark Gamble (71), Barry Tomlinson (71), David Williams (74),**

Mr Kennedy, Peter Fraser (71), Martin Foulds (71), Michael Winter (71), and Richard Armitage (71).

Danai Masiyakurima (23): 'I will be starting at Leicester Medical School in 2025, after receiving an offer on August 15th 2024, during my gap year.'



Mickyle Bhojani (22): 'I'm currently in my second year studying Aerospace Engineering at Sheffield University. In October, I had the amazing experience of running the Bournemouth Half Marathon. Thanks to the incredible support of my friends and family, I raised over £500 to help the fight against Alzheimer's disease. I finished with a time of 2 hours and 45 seconds, just shy of my sub-2-hour goal. While I didn't quite hit it this time, I'm even more determined to come back stronger, and to break that 2-hour barrier next time!'



Annie Rose Reddin (22): 'My dream job at school was to work in a Premier League football club. This year, I am proud to be working in the Performance Department at Crystal Palace FC for my sandwich placement, as part of my Sports and Exercise Science undergraduate degree at Loughborough University. Delivering warmups and gym sessions in the first two months has been so rewarding, developing relationships with the players. Also, monitoring GPS metrics during sessions and matches, then analysing the data, has proven challenging, yet valuable. This year, I am excited for the opportunity to deepen my knowledge of Applied Sports Science within a professional football club, and to contribute to the success of CPFC this season.'

Nigel Jewell (58): 'Here is a picture commemorating a very happy event - the Confirmation of our grandchildren, Lila (aged 11) and Alfie (aged 9) in Sydney, New South Wales, on July 20th 2024. Strangely, Confirmation is celebrated before First Holy Communion and Reconciliation in their diocese.'



Ian Potts (62): 'When I was at Lourdes, as part of the annual pilgrimage, I received a message that one of the leaders of the Brentwood pilgrimage was looking for me. After some searching, we found each other - it turned out to be **Peter Tetlow (78)**, who is the Chief Brancardier of Brentwood. We enjoyed a coffee together before being called back to work.'

Simon Gamble (97): 'Last year, after running my own creative design business for 10 years, I joined my sister, **Francesca Donnellan (née Gamble) (04)**, at her marketing agency, 29 London, following a number of new client wins. Our youngest sister, **Philippa Gee (née Gamble) (06)** also joined the business earlier this year to help support its continued growth. 29 London works in PR, brand endorsements, partnerships, and talent management across drink, sport, and hospitality sectors. This year has seen us work at Wimbledon, the F1 Grand Prix in Dubai, and the International Jewellery and Watches Exhibition in Doha.'



Victoria Wheatley (23): 'I loved my time at Ratcliffe, and I recognise how the overall experience has helped me to become the person I am today. I am currently in my second year reading Materials Science and Engineering at Manchester University and, although the course is challenging, I'm thoroughly enjoying it. At Ratcliffe, I joined the Combined Cadet Force (CCF) as soon as I could, inspired by my father's stories of his own CCF experience decades earlier! I spent five years as a member of the RAF Section and was very proud to be appointed Head of the Section for my final two years. When my time came to leave the CCF, I was recommended by Flt Lt Helen Grant to apply for the University Air Squadron upon joining university. I can say, without a doubt, that this was the best decision

I made as a 'fresher'! I am now a member of Manchester and Salford Universities Air Squadron (MASUAS), and the variety of activities I have taken part in over the past year is extraordinary, including flying, caving, skiing, and a wide range of sporting and social events. As a card-holding reservist, all of these activities are funded by the RAF or, even better, I was getting paid to do them! In addition, I was delighted to be presented with the Most Promising First Year Award, recognising my contributions to the Squadron. This reinforced my aspirations to join the Royal Air Force as a career, so I decided it was time to officially apply. After a long selection process by the Officer and Aircrew Selection Centre (OASC) at RAF Cranwell, I'm proud to report that I have passed, and

I will become an Engineering Aerosystems Officer once I graduate in 2026. Due to my performance at OASC, the Royal Air Force have also awarded me the Defence STEM Undergraduate Scheme Bursary, which is a particular honour, as there are only a handful of such awards given out each year, nationwide. I hope my experience inspires others to consider joining their University Air Squadron. Whilst a career in the Armed Forces may not be for everyone, the breadth of activities, the quality of the training, and the opportunity to be part of a team of great people have all been life-affirming for me. It's been a very busy first year, but I'm sure that it was only the appetiser for many incredible experiences in the future. Watch this space!'



The Slopes of Kilimanjaro

From the lofty snowcapped peaks of Kilimanjaro
The morning mist envelops its verdant foothills in a tight embrace,
No need to hurry, this is not a race,
Beads of sunlight dancing across the glistening dew.

As the plains of Amboseli reveal their golden hue,
There's movement spied where none existed moments prior,
A herd of zebra lounging in their elegant attire,
The lush grasslands beckoning them for yet another day.

The few wildebeest amongst them, if only they could talk, they'd say,
We're happy to be safe in this weird and motley crowd,
Despite the fact these zebras are so boisterous and loud,
What's a little banter when the promise is of grazing in contented peace.

Double is their luck, as the pert Egyptian geese
Act as wary sentinels, their honks resounding loud,
Alerted by the pride of crouching lions, their countenance so proud,
Scouting for that meal for their young to feed.

A wildebeest or two would fill those hunger pangs indeed,
Were it not for those hyenas prowling on their scent,
To steal their hard-fought prize definitely hell bent,
Neither party cowered, neither will give ground.

But what's a little tiff when prey does so abound,
A fragile land of bounty, God's country, that's for sure,
Where every single creature finds ways to gainfully endure,
Africa in all its glory, nature's living work of art.



Robert Ippaso (73): 'Following the now customary form of the past few years, here is a poem that I wrote while in East Africa for a month with my wife, doing what, in the old days, was called 'The Grand Safari'. As we were both newly retired (for the first time in forever!), we had the whole month to ourselves, away from emails, texts, phones, and work responsibilities - what novel joy. We travelled extensively in Kenya and Tanzania to magical, stunning places, with the most amazing panoply of animals and the sweetest of people. Incredibly, we stumbled upon a once-in-every-10-years Masai 'coming of age' ceremony, with 3,000 young warriors, where I had the absolute honour of being invited to join the elders to view it. With all of this in mind, should any ORs be thinking of doing something similar, they are most welcome to reach out to me for any advice, as this might help them to avoid some pitfalls, and to maximize their once-in-a-lifetime journey.'

Some Musings From Long Ago (My Time at Ratcliffe College)

The Old Rats magazine brings both delight and some sorrow,
Many pals whilst at school, not on earth their tomorrow,
Other friends soldier on through their 80s (and the rest),
With thoughts of the past, of school life at its best.

Whilst no grand academic, I coped when required,
At sport, no great hero; of skills, some acquired,
Was trouble avoided? Not always, and though
When punishment was given, it was deservedly so!

The Rosminians at Ratcliffe when I boarded there,
Were the quintessence of charity, love and great care,
To name names would be wrong and misguided right now,
For they have all long passed on, to heaven I vow.

I am somewhat ashamed to let you all know,
My last visit to Ratcliffe was more than 50 years ago,
But nevertheless, my thoughts often go back,
To those who gave time to teach what I lacked.

The ethos of Ratcliffe was ever-present and true,
Giving care and great guidance to all, not a few.
The chance to get ready for life as a man,
Was quite properly given by those with a plan.

Michael Powell (59): 'Here is a photo of me with my wife, Maureen, in Ireland two years ago. I hope you also enjoy this poem (above) about my memories of Ratcliffe.'



FR SIMON GILES (60) CELEBRATES THE GOLDEN ANNIVERSARY OF HIS ORDINATION



Old Ratcliffian **Paul Rudd (60)** conveyed to the Ratcliffian Association that, on May 4th 2024, **Fr Simon Giles (60)** celebrated the 50th anniversary of his ordination to the priesthood, which took place in Porta Latina, Rome, in 1974.

Paul said: 'When I was at Ratcliffe, from 1955 until 1960, Simon Giles was one of my best friends. He told me that he wanted to join the Rosminians immediately when he left, and I made a promise that I would attend his ordination, wherever that might be.

'Following the birth of my third child, Jacob, on March 8th 1974, a letter arrived from Simon to tell us that he was to be ordained in Rome on May 4th that year.

We wanted to go, of course, but my wife, Valda, preferred not to fly, so we got a nurse in to look after Jacob, and then took the London-Paris Express, followed by the Paris-Rome Express.

'Simon was ordained by an American cardinal. All of his family were there, and his first Mass was in a shanty town on the outskirts of Rome, in a church founded by Mother Teresa. A very good time was had by all.'

Fr Simon Giles' remarkable half-century of service is a testament to his unwavering dedication to his faith. The Ratcliffian Association extends its heartfelt felicitations to Fr Giles on this momentous occasion.

REFLECTIONS OF A LIFETIME: MY JOURNEY FROM RATCLIFFE TO ROSMINI

In September 1953, I embarked on a journey that would shape the course of my life. My father, stationed with the RAF in Amman, Jordan, made the decision, along with my family, that I should remain in the UK for my education. This choice led me to Ratcliffe College, a connection made through an RAF chaplain who had met **Fr Claude Leatham (1915)**. Prior to that, my education had been under the Jesuits at Donhead Prep School. Much to my surprise, I later crossed paths with others from Donhead at Ratcliffe, including **John Bernard (59)**.

My time at Ratcliffe, which spanned until the summer of 1960, was filled with learning and friendship. Though I couldn't join my family for all the summer holidays, I was fortunate to spend those times at my uncle's farm in Wicklow, Ireland. The experience at Ratcliffe was enriching, providing me with lifelong friends and treasured memories.

My decision to join the Rosminians was deeply influenced by the community at Ratcliffe, particularly figures like **Fr Philip Catchside (37)** and others, whose dedication left a lasting impression on me. After two years at The Mount in Wadhurst, I spent a year preparing for university, though my initial attempt to enter Cambridge was unsuccessful. Undeterred, I went on to study for three years at Queen Elizabeth College, London University, where I was based at St Etheldreda's in Ely

Place, and on most weekends, I returned to Derryswood.

Although I didn't pass my final exams, I was, nonetheless, sent to teach at Ratcliffe. From September 1966 to July 1970, I enjoyed four rewarding years as a brother, teaching Chemistry and Physics. I was truly learning on the job! My time there was filled with a variety of activities, from judo, rugby, dormitory duties, and athletics, to Scouts with Bert Orton. Despite my efforts, I was unable to retake and pass my finals, but the experience was invaluable.

The next chapter of my life took me to Rome, where I spent four years at the Beda College, studying for the priesthood, while staying at the Rosmini House in Porta Latina. During this period, I became involved in pastoral work with Mother Teresa's sisters, which was a deeply rewarding experience. Summers allowed me to reconnect with Ratcliffe, as I joined **Fr Michael Waters' (53)** group - an experience that I treasured. My ordination by Cardinal John Wright on May 4th 1974 at San Giovanni a Porta Latina was a milestone, marking the beginning of my priestly vocation. This year, I celebrated my Golden Jubilee, which was a moment of deep reflection and gratitude.

My first appointment, post-ordination, was to Grace Dieu Manor, where I worked closely with **Fr Frank Fox (40)** for the first year, followed by **Fr David Tobin (59)**, who



took over the headship in 1975. At Grace Dieu, I had the responsibility of teaching Science, alongside a myriad of other tasks. It was a joyful and busy time. I recall vividly when Mr Tony Borrington joined us, and, under Fr Fox's encouragement, organised our first ski trip!

In 1990, my time at Grace Dieu concluded with a sabbatical year in Christchurch, New Zealand, where I joined Fr David Tobin and **Fr Michael Hill (49)**. Although I anticipated returning to Grace Dieu, life had other plans. I was appointed novice master at St Mary's, Derryswood, marking the beginning of yet another chapter in my vocation.

Reflecting on these years, I am filled with gratitude for the journey, from my days as a student at Ratcliffe, through my time as a teacher, and into my life as a Rosminian. The experiences, challenges, and friendships along the way have shaped me in ways I could never have imagined.

Fr Simon Giles (60)

RATCLIFFE REVISTED

We were delighted to welcome back **Anthony Cutler (73)** and his friend, Neil Thomas, who popped in on their way past Ratcliffe College. Anthony last visited in 2023, when he celebrated his 50th reunion with the Class of 1973. That event reignited fond recollections of his boarding days, so his current visit gave him an opportunity to take in more of the memories and the feel for what was once his home.



In August, **Benny Wong (85)** and **Tommy Chung (88)** made a special trip to Ratcliffe. Their visit began by joining **Fr Anthony Meredith (57)** for lunch in the Refectory, followed by a tour of the Rosmini Centre. Soon afterwards, they met with Ratcliffe's Development Manager, Louise Liston, who guided them around the College. It was unusually quiet at the time, as it was the end of the summer break. The peaceful atmosphere allowed Benny and Tommy to explore the grounds thoroughly, including revisiting the Boarding House and their old classrooms. They were particularly thrilled to locate their former bedrooms in Boys' Boarding, where they fondly reminisced about their school days in the 1980s. Although their paths did not cross during their time at Ratcliffe, Benny and Tommy became acquainted shortly afterwards, thanks to their family links. Both have since settled in the UK with their families, maintaining regular contact with fellow ORs. Benny said: 'My fondest memories of Ratcliffe must be the people - classmates

and staff. The most striking discovery from our visit was the quality of the food in the Refectory. It's so much better than it was when I was there. Nowadays, more facilities are built, and the school is looking more modern and well equipped. The indoor swimming pool is also impressive.'

During the MCC cricket fixture against Ratcliffe College on May 2nd, three Old Ratcliffian classmates - **Warren Birchall (97)**, **Mark Snutch (97)**, and **Elliot Vern Hill (97)** - reunited and took a brief tour of their former school, reminiscing about their time at Ratcliffe.



Chris Zachary (68): 'I retired at the age of 74 as Professor and Chair Emeritus of the University of California, Irvine. Immediately, I flew to the UK for a trip down memory lane with my youngest son, Tague. Of the many places we visited, the tour around Ratcliffe College was a real treat. So much has changed, and for the better! I had not visited for 55 years, since I was Head Prefect in 1968. Some places had not changed, like the Music Room - it has the same curtains! I also met up with **Alistair MacDonald (68)**, **Matthew Sheppard (68)** and **Andrew Duffield (68)**. We shared happy reflections on our time and our great education. Thank you, Ratcliffe College!'



Celebrating 50 years since leaving Ratcliffe, **Paul Morris (74)**, **Clem Maginniss (74)**, and **Mark Grieveson (74)** all came together at the July Annual Dinner to reminisce and share stories of their naughty escapades whilst at school. Meeting up in the Lockhart Garden for a photo (with their old boarding rooms in the background), it was a special and memorable occasion.



Fr Chris O'Connor (81) came to Ratcliffe in July with his visiting guest, Don Jose Calabuig, chaplain of the Basilica of Our Lady of the Forsaken in Valencia, Italy. They enjoyed a tour of the Pugin buildings, taking particular interest in the old dormitory areas where Fr Chris used to reside (currently the converted Drama studio within the old Chapel). Now parish priest of Our Lady of Victories in Market Harborough, Fr Chris (pictured above, on the right) recalled very many happy memories of his time at Ratcliffe, exclaiming at how much had changed since 1981!

Humberto Faraco (91), a former boarder, recently visited the school during a trip to Leicester to meet some friends. Coming all the way from his current residence in Paris, where he has been living for the past 24 years, Humberto was eager to see the campus once again, with a particular interest in revisiting his old boarding room. During the tour, Humberto had the pleasure of meeting José Estevez, the resident Boarding Housemaster, who took time out of his busy schedule to show him some of the current boarding rooms. Being a native of Mexico, Humberto enjoyed a fluid conversation in Spanish with him, and even offered to extend his support by

facilitating introductions during José's planned recruitment trips to Mexico, Chile, and Peru this year. Humberto was also introduced to the Matron of Boys' Boarding, Liz Riley, who was, coincidentally, working in the kitchens at the tender age of 16, at the same time that Humberto would have been at Ratcliffe. They reminisced about the best food, which was, of course, on Pizza Night! Humberto also expertly exchanged conversations in French with some of the school's Modern Foreign Languages teachers, extending an offer of support with any future trips to Paris. Knowing how much of a positive influence Ratcliffe had on him at such a young age, Humberto has a keen interest in reconnecting with the Ratcliffe community, and he also generously offered his support at future alumni events in Madrid or Paris. Afterwards, he said: 'I have visited Ratcliffe before, but this was the best visit I've had. The people I met made me remember all the good times I had in this wonderful school.'



Sebastian Stones (82) seized the chance to revisit Ratcliffe when he learnt that the school he worked for was participating in a cricket event at the College. On June 12th, Seb stepped onto the campus for the first time since he graduated in 1982. As he walked through the familiar grounds, memories of his time at Ratcliffe flooded back. He recalled arriving as a Year 10 student in the winter of 1978, and the tumultuous summer of 1979, when a fire destroyed the dorm that he lived in. The affected students were temporarily housed in a classroom until the wing was rebuilt. After leaving Ratcliffe, Seb pursued a degree in Geography at university and is now Deputy Headmaster (Pastoral) at Arnold House School.





On June 22nd, after 18 years of planning, **Hui Ho (90)** and her sister, **Hoi Ho (88)**, who live in the USA, finally brought their families to see where they grew up. Their ambitious two-week itinerary included sightseeing in London, visiting family across the UK, then a journey to Paris, followed by a drive around Normandy and Belgium. Finally, a trip from Lille to Amsterdam by train,

visiting **Michael Payne (90)** and his family, completed their trip. Despite their busy schedule, they made time for a tour of Ratcliffe, giving their families a glimpse into their childhood. The visit also included a special moment for the teenagers, when they saw their mothers' names engraved on the paving stones of the Prep School. The family are pictured here with Headmaster Jon Reddin.



On July 20th, we were delighted to welcome back **Ronnie Wong (88)** and his family for a quick tour of the College. While boarding at Ratcliffe, Ronnie and **Ben Jackson (88)** quickly bonded, becoming lifelong friends. So, while on a visit to the UK to see his old friend and family, it was only fitting that they took a trip down memory lane together.

Nightingale, who recognised them instantly. The tour brought back plenty of memories, helping Luke to gather inspiration for his Best Man's speech. Although Alex's time at Ratcliffe was short (just three months in 2008 as part of an exchange programme from Australia), he continues to cherish the lifelong friendships that he formed during his stay.



On January 24th, **Zack George (08)** was warmly welcomed by the Ratcliffe community when he revisited his old school. Since leaving the College, Zack has gone on to carve out a successful career in the competitive fitness industry, notably in the highly popular CrossFit. By 2015, he'd established CrossFit BFG in Leicester, and, by 2020, he was known as the UK's Fittest Man and one of Europe's leading athletes. Today, he's one of the top influencers in the fitness industry and has, more recently, risen to fame in a popular TV show. Having not returned to Ratcliffe since his departure at the age of 18, Zack was delighted to revisit the familiar surroundings and witness the transformations that have taken place over the years. One notable change was the conversion of the

Lockhart Garden into a lush green space, from its former concrete playground state. A highlight for Zack, as it is for many ORs, was the opportunity to spot himself in the old school photographs that line the corridor walls. However, what truly impressed him was the first-class Fitness Suite for the students – a significant change from the facilities available during Zack's time at Ratcliffe. Towards the end of his visit, by luck, it was lunchtime, and students and teachers were on the move. This gave Zack the opportunity to say hello to past teachers, including Mr Walsh and Mr Spencer (pictured, below, with Zack), Mrs Grant, and Mr McCrindell. They all recognised him immediately and reminisced about his student days, as memories came flooding back. Zack continues to ascend in his career, and his return to Ratcliffe not only provided him with a chance to relive cherished memories, but it also opened the door to potential collaborations that could benefit current and future students. We look forward to involving Zack in helping to shape the sports education offerings at Ratcliffe.



On June 2nd, **Nigel Guiver (83)** returned to Ratcliffe with his brother, **Paul (80)**, and their families. While Nigel had last visited the College for the previous year's Annual Dinner, Paul had not been back since the 1990s. During a tour around the College, they were fortunate to run into Boarding Housemaster José Estevez, who eagerly showed them one of their old boarding dormitories. Following the visit, Paul said: 'It was a lovely trip down memory lane

On June 4th, brothers **Paul (84)** and **Richard Kearns (89)** came to the College for a tour, accompanied by Richard's wife, Mandi, and their three children, who currently live in Kansas, USA. They enjoyed seeing their dad and uncle reminisce about their childhood memories within the College. They toured around

for me. My daughter and sister-in-law also thoroughly enjoyed seeing Ratcliffe for the first time. It's great to see that the school is still thriving, and, no doubt, will continue to do so for many years to come.'



On May 23rd, we warmly welcomed **Vance Hall (68)**, his partner, Eric, and student, Jamel, for a tour of the College. Having left in 1968, this was Mr Hall's second visit, the last being in 2015. Enjoying a stroll around the grounds and the College's most memorable interior on a very quiet half-term week, the visit was a first for student Jamel, as he is due to begin university education in the UK soon.



many places inside, and around the grounds. Before heading off to Nottingham Trent University for their next stop, they made a diversion to the Rosmini Centre, in the hope of bumping into **Fr Philip Sainter (69)**, who was thrilled to see them.





FROM STUDENT TO HOCKEY COACH: AIMEE CLEMINSON (21) RECONNECTS WITH RATCLIFFE



Returning to a place that holds so many memories can often be a surreal experience, and for **Aimee Cleminson (21)**, it's been exactly that. A former student at Ratcliffe, and now a part-time hockey coach, she's seeing the College through a completely different lens. Here, Aimee describes her journey from student to coach, and the lessons that she hopes to pass on to the young minds at Ratcliffe College.

sport has to offer, beyond just physical fitness. It helps to build discipline, teaches time management, and can even be a way to unwind. Plus, it's a huge part of making friends and building a community. If I can inspire a few students to embrace that, then I'll feel like I've made a difference.

Q: How did your time at Ratcliffe shape your character and personal growth?

A: I was a Sports Scholar in the Sixth Form, so my whole school experience was centred around sport in one way or another. It definitely shaped who I am, especially when it came to balancing my studies with sports. It taught me to be organised and disciplined, and these are skills that helped me at university and in life generally. Sport also gave me an outlet to switch off from the academic side and relax, which is really important.

Q: What are your career plans for the future?

A: I'm really keen to get into politics, having completed a BSc Politics degree at the University of Southampton, specifically in policy research, lobbying, and campaigning. It's a completely different field from coaching, but the organisational and leadership skills I've developed through sport will definitely help me in that arena.

Q: Can you share a memorable moment from your time at Ratcliffe?

A: I can't forget Mrs Clarke, my Maths teacher. I was never a fan of Maths, and I didn't expect to do well, but thanks to her support, I ended up with a great GCSE grade in it. She was incredible - she really helped me, even though there were only three girls in our tutor class. She had her hands full, but she handled it amazingly.

Q: What do you wish you'd known in the Sixth Form?

A: I wish I'd known how important study periods were! At university, that's where most of your studying actually happens, and I wish I had made the most of it. Also, I wish I'd cherished the time with my friends more before we all went our separate ways. My best friends from Ratcliffe went to Edinburgh, and I went to Southampton, so we only saw each other in the summer. We'd been inseparable for 15 years, but life takes you in different directions.

Q: How would you describe Ratcliffe College in three words?

A: Inspiring. Empowering. Community.

Q: Finally, what life advice or wisdom would you like to share with our readers?

A: Take every opportunity that comes your way. You never know where it might lead you.

Q: How does it feel to come back to Ratcliffe, this time in a different role?

A: It's really nice to be back, but it is a bit surreal. I never imagined I'd return, so it feels more like visiting than actually working here! Mr Clarke and I were chatting about organising Old Ratcliffian matches, and he suggested that I apply as the hockey coach. So, here I am! My weekends are filled with sports again, which I love. Right now, I'm working on getting my Level 2 Coaching qualification, which is great. The feedback I've received from other coaches, some of whom have been doing this for years, has been really positive. Hearing that I'm delivering good sessions feels really rewarding.

Q: How has your perspective on the hockey programme changed now that you're here in a professional capacity?

A: There's so much more planning involved than I ever realised! Just the other day, I thought I was going to help with a session for Year 10, but it turned out I had to lead the whole thing. That meant putting together a session on the spot - it was a lot of pressure! I had some experience from being 1st Team Hockey Captain and Sports Captain at school, so I had an idea of what leadership entailed. But leading a group of 40 girls all on your own? That's a whole different challenge!

Q: Why do you think it's important for past pupils to give back to their schools, and what impact do you hope to have on current students?

A: I think it's important for ORs to give back, because we understand the value of the experience. We can help current students to see the bigger picture, not just in sports, but in life as well. I hope that, by being here, I can show them how much

VOLUNTEERING WITH RATCLIFFE'S CCF & D OF E: ARRAN GRANT'S (19) OLD RATCLIFFIAN JOURNEY



It's been five years since **Arran Grant (19)** left Ratcliffe. Now, with a full-time job, a home, and a girlfriend (but no dog just yet!), he still finds time to give back. Volunteering weekly, Arran helps to train new cadets in the CCF and Duke of Edinburgh (DofE) programmes at the College. The Association caught up with him to discover why he remains so dedicated to supporting his old school.

Q: What inspired you to stay involved with Ratcliffe's CCF and DofE programmes after leaving?

A: I still lived on campus after finishing at Ratcliffe, when Lt Col Mark Balmbra, the old Commanding Officer of the CCF, asked if I'd like to help out. For me, the CCF was the best part of school life, so I couldn't say no. It gave me the opportunity to relive those experiences and, more importantly, to help to give the new cadets the same memorable experiences that I had. It was an easy decision to get involved. The same went for the DofE programme - Catherine Cole reached out to me, and I was more than happy to assist.

Q: Why do you think it's important for past pupils to give back to their schools, and what impact do you hope to have on current students?

A: The experiences I had in the CCF and DofE are ones you can't really get anywhere else. It's about adventure, growth, and pushing yourself outside your comfort zone. I find it very rewarding supporting staff and helping to provide new cadets with those same incredible opportunities.

Q: How did your time in the CCF and DofE at Ratcliffe shape your character and personal growth?

A: CCF made me who I am today. Without it, I don't think I would've developed the confidence and outgoing nature I have now. The programme didn't just help me mentally; it also provided real-world benefits. As part of the CCF, I completed a BTEC in leadership and teamwork, which really helped me during job interviews. That qualification stood out to interviewers, and it opened doors for me professionally. Overall, the skills I gained through CCF and DofE have been invaluable, both in my personal life and career.

Q: What are your career plans for the future?

A: I'm hoping to build on the skills I've gained from the CCF and eventually obtain an outdoor activities qualification, specifically in leadership roles. Right now, I'm working towards becoming a rock-climbing leader.

Q: Can you share a memorable moment from your involvement with the CCF or DofE?

A: During an activity in Yorkshire, where cadets were canoeing and cliff-jumping, I was supporting a group of young girls who were absolutely terrified. They kept asking me, 'Do I have to do this?'. They were, understandably, nervous and lacked confidence. But, with my support and words of encouragement, slowly, one by one, they took the leap. By the end of the day, their confidence had grown so much that they were all jumping off the highest point, which was about 15 to 20 metres high. Watching their progression was incredibly rewarding.

Q: What do you wish you'd known in the Sixth Form?

A: I wish I had socialised more and taken the time to enjoy school life. I joined Ratcliffe in Year 6, and by the time I hit Sixth Form, it felt like everything flew by. Before I knew it, school was over, and I found myself leaving behind an amazing community and all the friendships that I had made. If I could go back, I would have taken more time to appreciate those moments.

Q: How would you describe Ratcliffe College in three words?

A: Growth. Life. Community. For me, Ratcliffe is more than just a school - it's a place where I've grown as a person and stayed connected, even after leaving.

Q: Finally, what life advice or wisdom would you like to share with our readers?

A: My advice would be simple: give it a try. Don't be afraid of doing something new or stepping outside your comfort zone. You never know what you might discover about yourself.

Arran is also a member of the Seaforth Highlanders Pipes, and he recently participated in a poignant local event commemorating the Parachute Regiment's role in Operation Market Garden in 1944, during World War II. The weekend's events began on Saturday 7th September, with a ceremony at Burrough-on-the-Hill to honour the 10th Battalion of the Parachute Regiment, known as 10 Para.



MARRIAGES



Aaron Playle (79) married Jasmine Sunshine at Hertford Castle on April 25th 2024. It was a wonderful day, and several ORs from the Class of 1979 joined them. Pictured, on the left, are **Chris Della Porta (79)** and his wife, Astrid, **Charlie Easmon (79)** and his partner, Miriam, (either side of Aaron), **Jim Deville (79)** at the back, **Steve Clark (79)** and his wife, Beq, and **Anne de Graeve (79)** and **Peter Feeny (79)** on the right.

Peter Parr (06): 'I'm thrilled to announce that, on August 19th, I married my amazing partner, Gemma Bartholomew. It was a day full of joy, love, and unforgettable moments, and we're excited to start this new chapter together. There were a couple of Old Ratcliffians in attendance, and it was fantastic to catch up!'



On July 27th 2024, **Lisl Tudor (16)** tied the knot with Mark Lawrence in an intimate ceremony with their family and closest friends at Normanton Church, Rutland Water.



Madison Westwater-Jones (née Westwater) (09): 'I married Barnaby Jones on July 18th 2023 in Edinburgh, at the picturesque Norton Hotel, in a humanist ceremony. My now husband and I have been together for 10 and a half years, and we were married on our 10th anniversary. It was a wonderful occasion spent with our loved ones, including **Laura Walker (née Smith) (09)** and **Alice Rose (née McKenna) (11)**, who were two of my beautiful bridesmaids.'



Felicity Bainbridge (06): 'On June 11th 2022, I married Scott Pattenden at Prestwold Hall in Loughborough. My brothers, **Freddie (08)** and **William (12)**, were both ushers. We had a beautiful day, with ORs **Corinne Kirby (née Northover) (08)**, **Ann-Marie Lawton (06)**, and **Georgina Porter (née Crook) (06)** joining in the celebrations.'

Nick Wright (79) married Deena Freeman at Bodmin Registry Office in Cornwall on June 28th 2024. The celebration was attended by several of Nick's Ratcliffe contemporaries - **Steve Clark (79)**, **Simon Noble (79)**, **Chris Della Porta (79)**, **Dave Brunton (79)**, and **Anne de Graeve (79)**. Nick and Deena are pictured here, flanked by Nick's son, Joe, and his fiancée, Chelsea, who are due to be married next year.





Louise Watkins (née Jackson) (91): 'Robert Watkins and I celebrated our very special wedding day on June 29th this year. It was filled with love, laughter, and the company of close friends and family. My bridesmaids were **Samantha Spillane (née Murphy) (91)**, **Yana Groves-Ford (88)**, and **Louise Marsden (née Bullen) (91)**. Together with Rob's daughter, **Jessica Watkins (22)**, and my daughters, **Daisy Shore (23)** and **Jemima Shore** (who has just started her A Level journey at Ratcliffe), they were the support team that we needed on this wonderful day. My brother, **Ben Jackson (88)**, acted as Father of the Bride on the day, in place of our father, who, very sadly, passed away in the summer of 2021. It was a wonderful, but emotional, day for us both.'

Dan Amies (10) married Hannah Rosina Anne Plyte on September 21st 2024 at The Old Hall in Ely. They had a wonderful day, surrounded by family and friends.



Jonjo Ayres-Henry (05) married Robbie Ayres-Henry at the Bellagio Hotel in Las Vegas in June this year. They had an incredible day.

BIRTHS



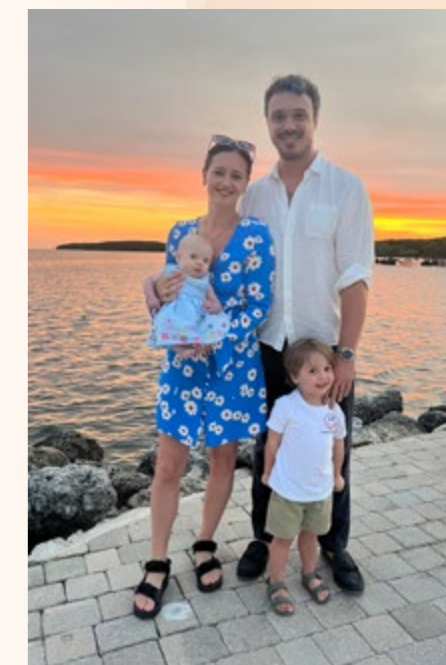
Felicity Bainbridge (06): 'On July 25th 2023, we welcomed our beautiful daughter, Florence Elizabeth Pattenden (born at 7.01pm weighing 7lbs 5oz). This photo was taken on Florence's first birthday in Lanzarote.'

Emily Hollis (15): 'In July 2023, my partner, Edd, and I welcomed Daisy into the world. I'm sharing this news a year late as a testament to her character. She's absolutely crazy and doesn't stop, which didn't give me much time to think about anything outside her at the time! She's a bundle of joy and, most importantly, very cheeky! Ratcliffe friends have been a wonderful support over the past year, and they even made it to my baby shower.'



Amy Shaw (née Lang) (10): 'The biggest change in our family is the addition of Frankie Kathleen Shaw, born on April 23rd 2024. She's our rainbow baby, and, after a short stay in NICU, she is now thriving. Olivia, now three years old, is a great big sister, and I'm back into the habit of not sleeping, so we are loving the crazy life of a family of four!'

Simon Tyas (71): 'My wife, Mhairi, and I were overjoyed when our youngest daughter, Caitlin, gave birth to our sixth grandchild, Joshua, on October 28th 2023. He is a true joy, and always bringing a smile to our faces.'



Philippa Gee (née Gamble) (06): 'My husband and I welcomed our second child, Cosette Elizabeth Gee, in October 2023. We've had the best first year as a family of four, and Cosette is enjoying being thoroughly spoiled by her big brother, Otis.'

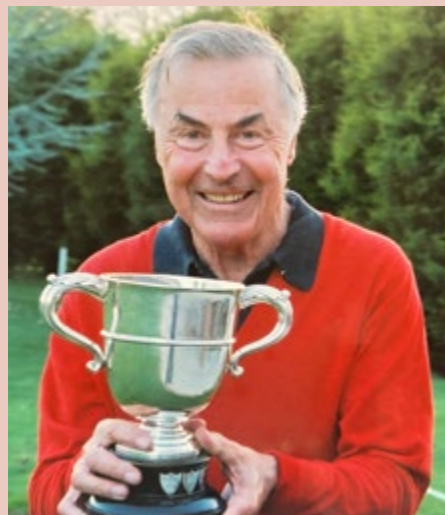


Nathan Simmonds (95): 'It's June in January...actually, it's more like August in February! Baby August Valentine 'Guybrush' Scanlan-Simmonds was born three days before my own special day in February this year. Life hasn't been the same since!'

JOHN VAN WEYENBERGH

MARCH 6TH 1932 – APRIL 5TH 2024

OLD RATCLIFFIAN 1944 – 1950



John Van Weyenbergh was born in Coventry in 1932. His mother, Nora, ran her own business as a hairdresser, and his father, Louis Van Weyenbergh, was a research chemist from Brussels.

John was educated at boarding school, initially at Grace Dieu during the war, and

then at Ratcliffe College. After finishing school, he was posted to Singapore during his National Service.

John learnt golf as a boy, and he continued to play throughout his life, until he was in his 80s. He played in many championships, and, at Cambridge, he achieved his Cambridge Blue whilst studying Law. He had a great love of all sports, and, as well as playing golf, he would follow all of the major tournaments on television, and sometimes at the venues.

Cambridge was where he met and married his first wife, Philippa Davidson. Together, they had two children, Simon and Joy.

John entered the world of fashion to support his young family. He was extremely successful at this, working his way up from the bottom. Many years later, he became a managing director, before starting his own company, where he was an agent for different fashion companies in France and Italy, as well as the UK.

After divorcing his first wife, John met Judith Bramfitt. They were married in 1976 and lived in North Rigton, near Harrogate, where they had a daughter, Laura. They lived in and around Harrogate before moving to the Nottingham area. Later, they headed north again, to Carlton Hustwaite in North Yorkshire, before moving south again to Leicestershire. Much later, John separated from Judith and moved to Portishead, to be near his daughter, Joy. Later, they both moved to Okehampton in Devon, where he passed away in April of this year.

My father used to visit Ratcliffe to go into the Chapel and also for Mass, taking part in readings, at times. This was when he lived in Leicestershire, in his later life. He even used to come and practise golf shots on the playing field – I went with him to both, once!

Joy Van Weyenbergh
Daughter

FR JOHN QUIGLEY

NOVEMBER 8TH 1941 – AUGUST 18TH 2024

OLD RATCLIFFIAN 1953 – 1959

John was born in a Doncaster nursing home on November 8th 1941, the last of eight children. His first eight years were spent in a mining village, where he attended the local village school. At the age of eight, he boarded at Grace Dieu Prep School, and he later went on to Ratcliffe College.

Following a year working in London, in 1960, John felt called to enter the Rosminian Novitiate. After this, he studied Philosophy and Theology in Womersley, and then in Rome, where he was ordained in 1968. He was then sent to New Zealand, and he began his teaching career at the Rosmini College in Auckland, where he became the principal in 1974.

John left New Zealand for a sabbatical year, where he spent time in Rome, England, and Ireland, training to be a novice master. He later returned to New Zealand, this time in Dunedin, as a newly appointed novice master. He also found time to study for a further university qualification in Education and Economics. He continued to live in New Zealand until 1985.

John then returned to the UK and began his work at St Mary's in Derryswood, where he was rector and novice master. He worked and lived there for four years,

being responsible for the Rosminian mother house, which was a place for new members of the priesthood to learn and the elderly of the order to retire. Here, Gill was employed as a nurse to care for the elderly brothers. This was the start of a friendship and bond of trust which would later develop into love.

In 1989, after much reflection, John took a year out from the order, while he considered his path in life and where he felt he was called to be. As a result, John and Gill decided that they could make a life together and began a new journey in Worthing, making a home for them and their children, David and Emma.

During 1989, John began working for Surrey County Council, where he enjoyed 14 years in various roles in education. He was heavily involved with child protection, school transport, and welfare.

In 2003, after being accepted into the Church of England as a priest, John was asked by the bishop to take up a full-time role as the vicar of Holy Cross Church in North Bersted, where he served for five happy years. In 2008, due to health problems, John was forced to retire. Thankfully, his health improved, and in



2011, he happily resumed his role as vicar, this time at St Mary Magdalene Church in Lyminster. He retired again in 2015.

John and Gill enjoyed their retirement, spending time with their family (especially their grandchildren), friends, and on frequent holidays, with John helping out in parishes when he was able to. John's delight was always to show the love of God through his prayer, preaching, and caring.

Gill Quigley
Wife

MARTIN MIDDLEBROOK

JANUARY 24TH 1932 – JANUARY 19TH 2024

OLD RATCLIFFIAN 1946 – 1949

Martin, a pioneer in military history, transformed how the First World War was understood, by focusing on the experiences of ordinary soldiers, rather than the perspectives of generals. His work brought to life the realities faced by men on the ground, capturing their voices and stories in a way that had seldom been done before. His research, gathered directly from veterans and eyewitnesses, offered a human dimension to historical events, shifting the focus of war history from strategies and maps to the personal experiences of those who lived through the conflict.

Born in Boston, Lincolnshire, in 1932, Martin was the third of five children in a family shaped by the impact of the First

World War. His mother often shared stories of the war's effects on their family, with two uncles lost – one mortally wounded in 1915, and another who died after being gassed in 1918. Her sister, who was in Belgium when the Germans invaded, also lived under strict German supervision. Martin's interest in military service began when he attended Ratcliffe College (along with his brothers, **Gregory (39)**, **David (52)**, and **Peter (54)**). There, Martin joined the Officer Training Corps, and he later served in the Royal Army Service Corps during his National Service.

After leaving the military, Martin worked in his father's potato business, before turning to farming. He married Mary Silverstone in 1954, and they raised three



daughters together. His fascination with military history continued to grow, ultimately reshaping the field and leaving an enduring legacy. Martin is survived by his three daughters.

Adapted from an article in *The Times*

ANTHONY LUCIEN READ

AUGUST 25TH 1943 – JUNE 13TH 2024

OLD RATCLIFFIAN 1957 – 1963



It is with sadness that I announce the death of Anthony Lucien Read (Tony) on June 13th 2024 in Blackpool, Lancashire, from an unexpected heart attack.

Born on August 25th 1943, Tony attended Ratcliffe College from the 1950s to the 1960s. He was known at Ratcliffe for his trumpet-playing and pole-vaulting skills, and he was remembered for attempting to get on a bus complete with his pole, much to the surprise of all the passengers.

After Ratcliffe, Tony gained a place at medical school, but decided it wasn't for him. He went on to pursue various careers in a number of fields, from running a builders' merchants to, eventually, owning a hotel on the Isle of Mull. He was a people person with a great sense of humour, and

he found his niche in hospitality.

Tony had dreams of sailing, and he built a 40-foot concrete-hulled boat. Sadly, it sank in a gale in Scotland, but, undeterred, he went on to build a 28-foot fibreglass yacht.

Sadly, he suffered ill health in his later years and developed jaw cancer, which meant lengthy surgery, leaving him unable to eat and drink normally.

Tony was married for many years to Sandra, who, sadly, passed away nearly three years ago. He leaves a son, Nicholas, and a grandchild, Sienna.

Pauline Edgson
Sister

MARK PROUDLER

SEPTEMBER 22ND 1957 - JULY 16TH 2024
 OLD RATCLIFFIAN 1970 - 1975

I first met Mark when we both arrived as new boys at Ratcliffe in September 1970, at the age of 13. In those days, most of the new intake came from Grace Dieu, which made the transition to the Senior School less foreboding. Mark, however, had been at St Martin's Ampleforth boarding school from the age of seven, so his introduction to Ratcliffe was far more daunting. He knew no one. Integrating was difficult, but it did help that he was a talented sportsman. Sport is a great way to get to know, and be accepted by, your peers. As it turned out, Mark had a very successful sporting career at Ratcliffe, playing in all the major sports teams throughout his time at school. He played for the 1st teams in rugby, hockey, and cricket, captaining the 1st XI cricket team in his final year.

In those early years, Mark was a conformist. He sat on the periphery of anything that pushed the normal boundaries of school life. He kept his short back and sides throughout his school years, even though the rest of us pushed to have shoulder-length hair and wore flared trousers with turn-ups and platform shoes. Mark did not join us on the clandestine, illicit visits to the pub, sneaking out through dormitory windows. I don't think he ever had a detention, and he took his studies very seriously. He was a very bright boy, choosing to do Latin at A Level. He joined the CCF, rather than opting for something less regimented, and became Cadet of the Year. So, you would not be surprised to know (and nor were his friends at the time) that he was appointed Head Boy. A very safe pair of hands.

Attaining success at A Level, Mark headed to Newcastle University to study Politics

and Law. I think university was instrumental in changing his attitude to life. That strait-laced conformity which he showed in spades at school completely evaporated, and, by all accounts, he enjoyed life to the full, pushing every boundary. After three years, he came away with a partying and sportsman's third-class degree!

Mark pursued a career in law and went to Guildford Law School, briefly working for a law firm in Guildford. Law didn't suit him, and, after a short period of labouring for a local builder, he suddenly announced that he was heading for the oil rigs in the North Sea as a roughneck. That exposed him to a completely different way of life, as you can imagine. Working on the oil rigs was the start of Mark's career in the oil and gas industry.

After a spell on the rigs, he used his law training to become a contracts manager specialising in the tendering and cost control of major oil and gas projects. Initially, he worked in the UK for Phillips Petroleum and Bechtel.

Mark married Penny in 1993, and they lived in London for the first five years of their marriage. His children - Alex, Ed, and Harry - were born during this time. In 1998, Mark and the family made the huge step of moving to Perth. Mark secured a job with Chevron and then Woodside in Perth. His career was project-led, which made him somewhat of a nomad. He had to travel to where the work was, and the oil industry took him all around the world.

Mark spent time working in Canada, where he also managed a rock band! He had spells in Rome, Dubai, Abu Dhabi, and, latterly, Qatar. He returned to the UK and



Cleveland in 2021, where he spent the last three years of his life. In early 2024, Mark was diagnosed with cancer, which turned out to be aggressive and virulent. He passed away three months later.

Anyone who came into contact with Mark, either at work or socially, quickly recognised a genuine, kind, thoughtful, honest, and convivial individual. He had a presence that was palpable when he entered a room. He had a very dry and quick sense of humour. He made people he met feel at ease, had the gift of the gab, and was never short of something to say. He had many very close friends, exemplified by the fact that he was best man four times. Wherever he was in the world, he always kept in touch. I am sure that all of us who had the honour and privilege to know Mark would say that he was a very loyal friend. We will all miss him.

Charles Gamble (75)
 Friend



He was a fellow of the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors and a member of the Society of Fine Art Auctioneers.

Claire Silburn
 Daughter

JAMES FLETCHER

OLD RATCLIFFIAN 1956 - 1962

James boarded at Ratcliffe College up until the early 1960s. He delighted in taking part in drama productions whilst at the school, and he went on to have a successful career as a fine art auctioneer, based in Suffolk.

MICHAEL OWEN CASTELL

AUGUST 17TH 1928 - AUGUST 4TH 2024
 OLD RATCLIFFIAN 1941 - 1946

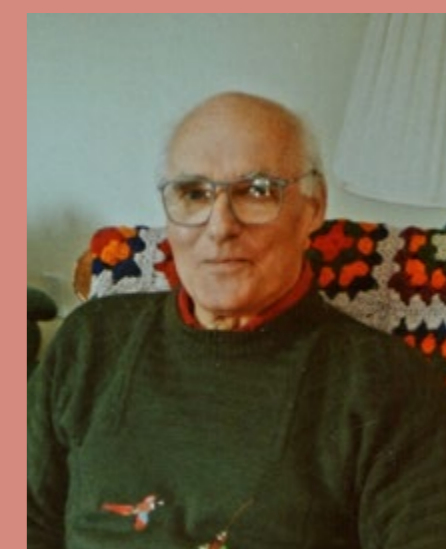
Michael was born in Market Harborough in 1928. He was educated at Grace Dieu, then at Ratcliffe College. After National Service in the RAF, he went to Downing College, Cambridge, where he studied Engineering.

After graduating in 1951, Michael joined Stewarts & Lloyds, working at Corby, and he kept in touch with the Ratcliffian network in Leicester. There, he met and married Mary Heggs, sister of **John Heggs (53)**, a Past President of the Ratcliffian Association.

Michael's working career included seven years working in Nigeria for Nigerian Railways as a civil engineer, seven years as a management consultant for PE Consulting, and 25 years in HR and IR, working for David Brown Gears in Huddersfield. During this time, Michael and Mary raised a family of five boys - **Christopher (72)**, Dominic, Richard, Simon, and Benedict - and a girl, Ghislaine. Chris, Dominic, and Richard went to Grace Dieu, with Chris also going to Ratcliffe College.

The family moved from Barkby in Leicestershire to Huddersfield in 1967, where they made contact with the Rosminians that were living there, supporting St Gregory's Grammar School, which Dominic and Chris were to attend. These included **Fr Tony Baxter (38)**, **Fr Augustine Little (39)**, **Fr Alex MacDonald (36)**, and **Fr David Myers (59)**. Also there, teaching History and running the school orchestra was **Adrian Smith (49)**, an Old Ratcliffian and former brother in the Rosminians. Together with Adrian and Fr Alex, Michael joined the Huddersfield Philharmonic Orchestra and was to continue playing violin for them for over 30 years.

Tragedy hit the family in 1982, when Dominic was killed in a car accident in Australia. Each year, Michael found much solace in going to the annual Old Ratcliffian Retreat. In later years, he was very pleased to see his grandchildren attend Ratcliffe: **Tom Castell (03)**, **Stephanie Castell (06)**, and **Kate Castell (11)**.



His last years were spent caring for our mother, who died in 2020. He then moved to Kent to live with his daughter, Ghislaine, who cared for him until his death on August 4th 2024.

Christopher Castell (72)
 Son

PETER ASTILL

OCTOBER 10TH 1951 - APRIL 23RD 2024
 OLD RATCLIFFIAN 1966 - 1971
 RATCLIFFIAN ASSOCIATION PRESIDENT 2009 - 2010

It is with great sadness that we remember Peter Astill, a cherished member of our community whose warmth and spirit left an indelible mark on those who knew him.

Peter was the youngest of six children, and he attended Ratcliffe from 1966 to 1971 - years that he recalled fondly for the friendships and experiences that shaped him. Staying connected to his roots, he served as President of the Ratcliffian Association from 2009 to 2010, giving back to the community that had always meant so much to him.

Following in his father's and brothers' footsteps, Peter joined the legal profession as a solicitor. Later in life, he pursued a new calling, becoming a deacon in the Catholic Church in August 2015 - a role that aligned with his deep sense of faith and service. He served as a deacon in the Diocese of Nottingham until his death.

Peter's life was also filled with family. Together with his wife, Helen, he was the proud father of four children - Thomas, Edward, Hannah, and Mary - as well as six grandchildren, each of whom carry forward his legacy of kindness, resilience, and humour. Although life presented its challenges, Peter met them with characteristic strength and an enduring optimism, derived from his deep faith as a Roman Catholic.

Peter will be remembered for his loyalty to his friends, his dedication to his community, and his genuine warmth. His life serves as a testament to service, friendship, and resilience, and his memory will remain cherished by all who had the privilege of knowing him.

Simon Astill (85)
 Nephew



ROBERT TIMOTHY MICHAEL WOODWARDS

MARCH 30TH 1954 - MARCH 22ND 2024
 OLD RATCLIFFIAN 1970 - 1972

Bob's initial prospects as an aspiring surgeon were not entirely promising. His love of rowing distracted him from his academic achievements, resulting in his failure to obtain A Level grades to enter medical school. He ascribed this failure to having capsized the boat during a sewage workers' strike, which, in consequence, adversely affected his learning capacity. Undeterred, he re-sat his A Levels and obtained adequate grades to admit him to dentistry in Birmingham.

Despite devoting much of his time as a dental undergraduate to partying, Bob met Claire and developed a refined taste in fine dining. He then took on a surgical house job at Wolverhampton, and this inspired him to go back and do medicine. Whilst a registrar, he wrote a paper on Lofgren syndrome and presented it at a meeting in Cardiff. This turned out to be fortuitous, as the Professor of Pathology was so impressed that he approached Bob and asked if there was anything he could do to help his career. Needless to say, Bob said, 'Yes please - get me into medical school!'

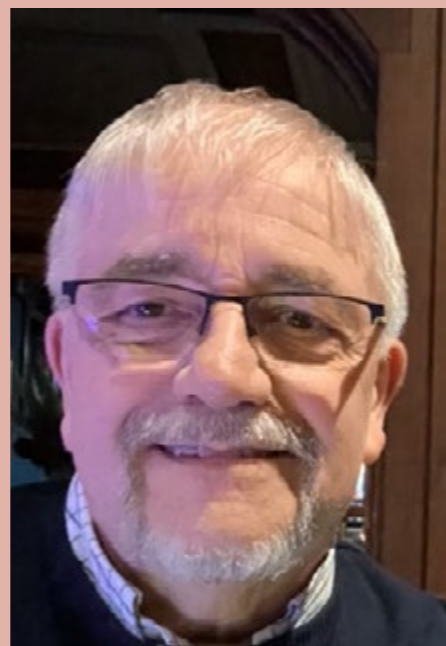
Bob paid his way through medical school by working alongside Claire in dental practice, which must have tested their relationship to the limit! After qualification and house jobs, he went off to Cheltenham and Gloucester as a registrar, where he obtained his FRCS. He was appointed Senior Registrar on the Guy's/Roehampton rotation, during which time he took on the role of Secretary General of the International Association of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons in Training, in which capacity he organised a highly successful congress in Guildford, marking the start of an illustrious international reputation. Moving, as a consultant, to North Manchester in 1994, Bob rapidly developed the unit's reputation for the management of head and neck cancer, and, in particular, microvascular reconstruction. This attracted trainees to attend from around the world. The first of his overseas trainees was Sanjiv Nair, who was later to become President of the Association of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons of India.

After 10 years in North Manchester, Bob was joined by Alex Baldwin, and as

he took on the role of Clinical Director, he expanded the unit establishment to eight consultations. Bob was a highly enthusiastic trainer, and as Training Programme Director, he reconfigured training in the region. In collaboration with Khursheed Moos, he also ran the acclaimed annual Manchester course. Bob was often invited overseas to teach and operate. On one such occasion, while on a trip to Nagpur, arriving after the lengthy journey from the UK, the group just wanted to rest, but their host had other ideas. A welcome reception had been arranged for them, but as they were in a 'dry state', they travelled for almost an hour, back past the airport, for a scrumptious reception on a piece of wasteland, where copious quantities of food and alcohol had been laid on. Bob couldn't resist trying everything, and, unfortunately, he ended up being admitted to hospital overnight with food poisoning.

Bob was a highly active researcher, obtaining an MD for his work on catecholamines microvascular free-flap surgery. He was also an examiner at all levels, including the MRCS examination, which, for a max-fac surgeon, was incredibly rare at the time.

Bob chaired our national Specialist Training Committee, and he then went on to chair the Multi-Disciplinary Interface Training Committee in head and neck oncology. In 2011, he became President of the British Association of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons, and, together with Claire and Sarah Duran, he organised one of the most memorable congresses in the Association's history on the Cote D'Azur. It came as little surprise that he had no problem attracting speakers or delegates after the congress. Bob invited a group of friends for lunch in a favourite restaurant, close to his French apartment in Roquebrune in the Alpes-Maritime. To get there, we crowded into a local two-hourly, tiny commuter bus (much to the consternation of the locals, who were unable to get home with their weekly shopping), but we enjoyed a superb lunch. Additionally, as Treasurer of the IOMFS, Bob was responsible for organising a spectacular 50th anniversary celebration congress in London, with a grand banquet at the Guildhall. The event culminated in a splendid boat trip along the Thames in the



Silver Sturgeon, where Bob's love of fine dining shone through.

Bob's devotion to surgical training and innovation led him to be appointed to the inaugural Professorial Chair of Surgical Simulation at the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh. In addition to his numerous commitments to surgery, both at home and internationally, Bob also managed to enjoy life to the full, both with his classic cars and his love of flying. Not content with just flying, Bob undertook the arduous training to become an Aviation Medical Examiner.

Although he retired in 2014, Bob continued to work in locum posts, because he loved looking after patients. Former trainees and colleagues have all commented upon his kindness, professionalism, courtesy, and caring attitude, with many describing him as a true gentleman. Bob also had some memorable, quirky catchphrases, such as 'tickity boo'. When referring to a trainee's surgical outcome, he jokingly said, 'A blind man would be happy to see that!'

It is not possible, in this brief time available, to do justice to all of Bob's many achievements. He was, above all, a much-loved colleague and friend to so many of us. Bob leaves behind his family, including his older brother, OR **Jamie O'Donnell (60)**. He will be sadly missed.

Ian Martin
 Colleague and friend

LT COL NICHOLAS TOMLINSON

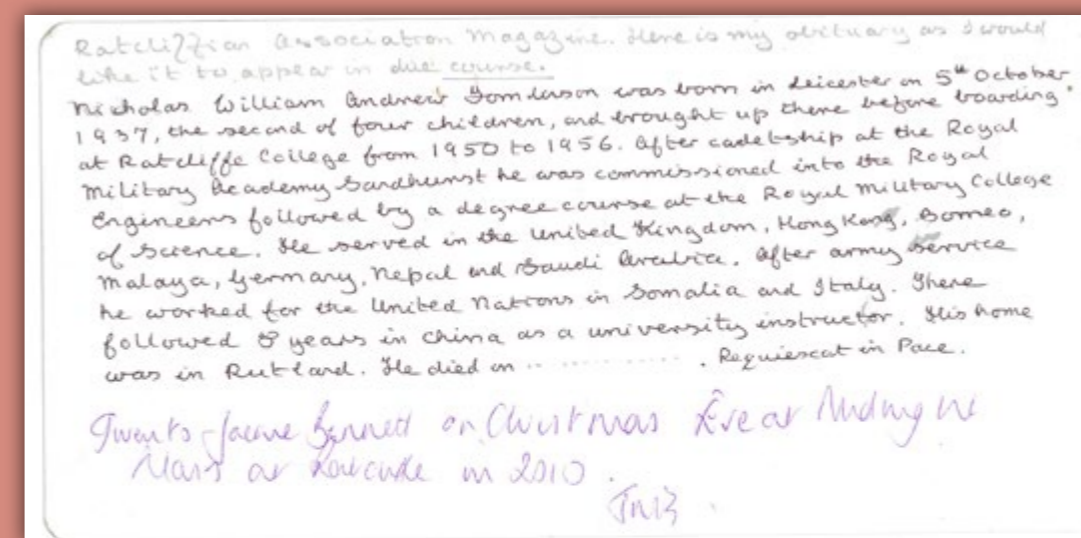
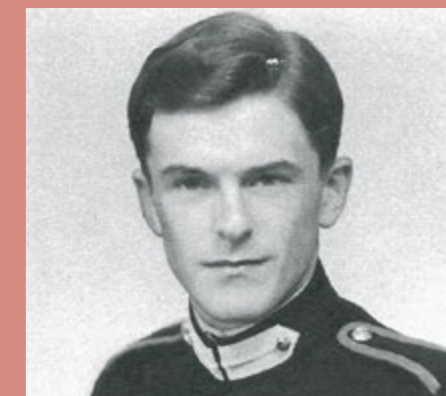
OCTOBER 5TH 1937 - JUNE 10TH 2024
 OLD RATCLIFFIAN 1950 - 1956

Nicholas William Andrew Tomlinson was born in Leicester on October 5th 1937, the second of four children, and brought up there before boarding at Ratcliffe College from 1950 to 1956. After cadetship at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst, he was commissioned into the Royal Engineers, followed by a degree course at the Royal Military College of Science. He served in the United Kingdom, Hong Kong, Borneo, Malaya, Germany, Nepal, and Saudi Arabia. After army service, he worked for the

United Nations in Somalia and Italy. There followed eight years in China as a university instructor. His home was in Rutland. He died on June 10th 2024. Requiescat in pace.

Nicholas Tomlinson

(Nicholas handwrote his own obituary, below, back in 2010 and gave it to Jackie Bennett, the Ratcliffian Association Manager at the time, to keep on file until it was needed, 'in due course'.)



IN MEMORIAM

Notifications of the deaths of the following Old Ratcliffians and associates have been received since the last edition of *The Old Ratcliffian*:

- | | | |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Charles Dutoy (70) | George Caunt (53) | Anthony Read (63) |
| Michael Boyes (63) | Stuart da Costa (39) | Michael Castell (46) |
| Mark Buxton (76) | Robert Woodward (72) | Mark Proudler (75) |
| Terence Atkinson (60) | Martin Middlebrook (49) | John Quigley (59) |
| David Phelan (62) | John Van Weyenbergh (50) | James Fletcher (62) |
| Paul Berry (57) | Peter Astill (71) | Richard Tweed (69) |
| | Nicholas Tomlinson (56) | |

REQUIESCAT IN PACE

Friends and relatives are invited to write an obituary for the next edition of this magazine if it is not included in this one.

FR WILLIAM DOYLE SJ, MC, CHAPLAIN TO THE FORCES RATCLIFFE COLLEGE 1884 - 1890



William Joseph Gabriel Doyle, born in Dalkey in Dublin on March 3rd 1873, was the youngest child of Hugh and Christina. He had three brothers (two of whom, like Willie, became priests - **Frederick (1876)**, the oldest child, and **Charlie (1889)**, also a Jesuit), and three sisters. All four boys were sent to Ratcliffe from their home in Ireland. Why this was so is something of a mystery, as there were perfectly good Catholic boarding schools in Ireland. Indeed, the oldest, Frederick, left when he was 16 to go to Clongowes, entering the Jesuit novitiate a couple of years later. However, he left and proceeded for priestly studies in the Dublin diocese in Rome, dying there in 1887 very suddenly of a pneumonia-related illness only days before his ordination. Both he and **Robert (1881)** (who died in December 1961, aged 97) were several years older than Charlie (two years the senior) and Willie.

Both Charlie and Willie seem to have very much enjoyed their days at the College, albeit Willie had some health issues that meant lengthy periods away in his latter years, when he spent time convalescing with his married sister in Sheffield. It is fortunate that *The Ratcliffian* was first produced whilst they were at the school, as both boys appear in its pages, with Willie being noted for cricket, for debating, for his skills on musical instruments, and various other activities.

Shortly after leaving Ratcliffe, he, like Charlie earlier, joined the Jesuits. A fire in the novitiate led to something of a breakdown, and he went home for some months. When he recovered, he returned and took his temporary vows, going from there to teach at Clongowes School. As early as 1893, he wrote in his personal papers that he wished to make an offering of his life to God, desiring to become a martyr and to live a martyr's life. The road to ordination in the Jesuits is famously long; he was ordained a priest in July 1907, 16 years after he entered the novitiate.

The next seven years were split between another couple of years of teaching (this time, at another Jesuit boarding school, Belvedere College) and then, from 1910, working on the mission staff. In that time, until late 1915, he preached some 140 missions and retreats all over the British Isles, worked for the foundation of the Poor Clare Monastery in Clare (which continues today), successfully supported and nurtured religious vocations, was well known as a preacher and confessor and, perhaps most significantly, worked hard to provide retreats for working men. This latter project was on the verge of a major step forward when war broke out in August 1914.

Willie was recognised, even at this stage, for his personal piety. In his own writings, he revealed his willingness to sacrifice all to fulfil the will of God and to assist others. He offered everything to God, prepared to make any sacrifice for the salvation of souls, and, in particular, as reparation for the sins of priests. In November 1914, he offered his services as a military chaplain, to serve those confronted by the horrors of war and the threat of imminent death or mutilation.

In November 1915, Willie was called up, and, in due course, he joined the 16th (Irish) Division, one of two divisions, initially, largely recruited from Southern Ireland. Unlike the rest of the UK, Ireland never had conscription, so all those living in Ireland who joined up were volunteers. In his time with the division, Willie always had duties which kept him in, or very close to, the front-line zone; he was attached to an infantry battalion (of about 1,000 men), usually with wider responsibility for another battalion and some associated troops.

The chaplain was, in many ways, the most isolated man serving in an active area. That is because their ministry was generally carried out by them alone - there were other chaplains in a division, but some dozen of them were scattered amongst its approximately 15,000 men, who were deployed across a considerable area of real estate.

Every other man belonged to some unit, regiment or the other - infantry, medical, veterinary, engineering - all with others with the same professional job. Chaplains could go several days without seeing another chaplain, sometimes longer - and, of course, they were not always of the same denomination, the significance of which needs to be understood in those pre-ecumenical days.

The situation was further complicated by the fact that chaplains came under several authorities; at the front, they were at the mercy of whoever was their commanding officer, who might or might not use his chaplain effectively, who might or might not have time for his function. It was not always clear who was responsible for feeding and supporting him (for example, did he have a horse to help him get around his flock, or did he have a bike, or did he have to walk?). Then he had his ecclesiastical authorities to worry about - which bishop had charge, and from which hierarchy? And for religious matters, what was the role of his superior, usually a provincial or an abbot? This all took time to resolve.

In his 18 months on the Western Front, from his division's arrival in the evil Loos sector in February 1916 to his death on the blasted landscape of Frezenberg Ridge during the Third Battle of Ypres, better known as Passchendaele, Willie experienced all the horrors of modern, mechanised warfare. The 16th Division served for over six months in the bleak surrounds of Loos. It was then sent to the Somme battle and took part in the capture of Guillemont, finally achieved after two months of some of the most intense fighting in that bloodiest battle of the war, and the taking of Ginchy in September 1916 - an essential prequel to the moderately successful first use of tanks on September 15th. After a few weeks, the division moved north to the southernmost part of the line in Belgium, and it was there until shortly after the last - and biggest - mine operation of the war opened the Battle of Messines Ridge in June 1917. Finally, the division was moved further north, and Willie was killed on August 16th 1917 whilst out in no man's land during an attack by several divisions, which also included the 'Protestant' 36th (Ulster) Division. He was, almost certainly, blown to smithereens whilst trying to save severely wounded soldiers (Anglicans from the Ulster Division), and no trace of his body has been found. He is commemorated on the walls of the Tyne Cot Memorial, near Passchendaele, along with 35,000 others who were killed in the Ypres Salient and have an unknown grave, or were simply 'lost' in the period between August 1917 and the Armistice.

In his time at the front, Willie's reputation had spread - his death was extensively reported by the press, with many soldier testimonies of his bravery, availability, and his holiness. Even in the early days, his sanctity was recognised, and this has continued to the present day. Two recent saints, St Josemaria Escrivá (the founder of Opus Dei) and St Teresa of Calcutta, have been inspired by him. Three biographies have been published - the most recent, a mammoth affair of about 750 pages, in 2013.

One of the contentious issues has been whether Willie should have been decorated with the Victoria Cross. He was awarded the Military Cross in the New Year Honours of 1917. He was recommended for the Victoria Cross by his divisional commander. Some say he was not granted it because he suffered the triple obstacles of being Irish, Catholic, and a Jesuit, although the evidence for such prejudice is, at best, very scanty. Cardinal Bourne (for the first part of the war, effectively, Bishop to the Forces) is reported to have felt that there would be no priestly VCs, as the decoration is for extreme bravery, beyond the call of duty, in the face of the enemy. He, it is said, considered that it was the vocation and the duty of a priest to make the sacraments available to their



charges, regardless of the circumstances, and, thus, they did not 'qualify', although for lesser decorations they could, and did.

On October 27th 2022, the Bishop of Meath issued a decree announcing the opening of the cause for the canonisation of Fr Doyle. He did this after receiving a formal petition and then consulting the Irish Catholic Bishops' Conference and the Dicastery for the Causes of Saints in Rome. The opening session took place on November 20th 2022 at the Cathedral of Christ the King in Mullingar. From here, the lengthy process has to go through a number of stages. These are, very briefly, the declaration of the person as venerable, then blessed, and, finally, canonised, with the last two stages requiring a very detailed examination of supporting miracles received through the intercession of the person. In recent years, some causes have been very rapid - for example, St Teresa of Calcutta and St John Paul II. However, it is far more common that it takes many years.

If the cause proceeds to canonisation, Fr Willie will be the first military chaplain in modern times to be so recognised; the cause of Fr Capodanno, a US Marines chaplain killed during the Vietnam War and a Medal of Honor winner, has been proceeding for some years. Fr Willie would also be the first Catholic to be canonised who was educated at a Catholic school since (at the time, private) Catholic education was permitted in England, following the Reformation, at the end of the 18th century. The cause of Andrew Bertie, a Grand Master of the Knights of Malta and educated at Ampleforth, has also started.

Fr Willie was, doubtless, a great priest and a great Catholic and Christian who had to practise his faith despite inner turmoils that he had to overcome, and he was operating in the most difficult of conditions in his last years. The evidence is clear that his example and his actions (his wartime ones being indisputably heroic) inspired many of those with whom he came into contact, either personally or through his writing.

Br Nigel Cave (72)

Further information may be obtained from *The Fr Willie Doyle Association, Irish Jesuit Provincialate, Milltown Park, Milltown Road, Dublin 6, DO6 W9Y7, Ireland, or at www.williedoyle.org.*

THE EMERY LIBRARY THROUGH THE YEARS



As we celebrate the recent renovation of the Emery Library, it's the perfect time to reflect on its rich history and significance. Thanks to **Br Nigel Cave (72)**, who generously provided the insights below, we can look back at the origins of this important space.

The Emery Library came into being in 1941, when **Fr Cuthbert Emery (1904)**, then Father President for almost 20 years, was presented with a cheque for £1,000 (the equivalent now, given what he did with it, of around £65,000). He used the money to establish a Sixth Form Library, which was instantly known as the Emery Library. At that time, the Old Library had a very considerable and nationally important library, mainly housed in shelved galleries, which was auctioned off by Sotheby's or Christie's in around 1962, and raised something like £60,000, but it was not what might be called a school library. Other 'libraries' - ad hoc affairs - existed in the various common rooms.

The Emery Library was originally housed on the first floor, front of house, above what is now the Bursar's Office. Those two, smallish rooms were carved out of the space later on, so its original floor area was roughly the same size as the Bursar's Office directly below. In due course, it was transferred to the first floor of the Science Block. A Sixth Form Common Room was established there at the swimming pool end, and the next room up was used as the Emery Library.

At the time of the conversion of the Old Chapel in around 1962, the Emery Library (by now a very substantial collection of several thousand books, reinforced by donations and the retention of some books from the Museum/Old Library), was moved to the top floor of the converted Old Chapel, taking the first room on the left at the top of the stairs. This was a very grand location for the library, with the painted vaulted ceiling and stained-glass windows. The adjacent room, with the rose window, was converted into a Fourth Form (Year 10) dormitory, St Richard's. Access to the Emery Library was confined to the Sixth Form, or on production of a written note permitting a pupil lower down in the school to use it.

When **Fr Keith Tomlinson (52)** became Father President in 1992, he soon determined to move the Emery Library downstairs, to the ground floor of the Old Chapel. So, in the summer of 1993, or possibly 1994, the Emery Library was weeded, to some degree, and the shelving was brought down. As, originally, it was double-sided and was positioned at right angles to the walls, the shelves were, in due course, split and placed along the walls of the new location. At about this time, a full-ish time librarian was appointed. Although professionally qualified, this was something of a disaster, as there was a wholesale clearance operation that was completely unsupervised, and many valuable books (for example, a complete set of first-edition Evelyn Waugh books, signed and dedicated to Fr Joe Basil, who had been his chaplain at the Commando School in Scotland during the war) just went into the skip.

With the move downstairs, the Emery Library, already open to all year groups except the Third Form in the Senior School, became a general library. Each department then had its own specialist library: for example, History had about 2,000 books, all modern or important historiographically, and its own location. These, if I recall correctly, were all scrapped by the ravages of Attila the Librarian.

Br Nigel Cave (72)



RATCLIFFIAN ASSOCIATION

