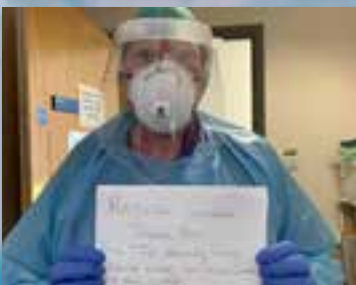




RATCLIFFIAN
ASSOCIATION

THE OLD RATCLIFFIAN

2020



EDITION XXIII

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The Ratcliffian Association's key aim is to maintain the sense of belonging that played a pivotal role in your time at the College. As an Old Ratcliffian, staying connected with Ratcliffe and your peers means not only having a community to call upon for friendship, advice and support, but it also enables you to 'give back', maintaining this legacy for future generations.

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Registering online at www.ratcliffianassociation.co.uk only takes a few minutes, giving you access to a whole host of online resources for Old Ratcliffians.

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WHAT IS THE RATCLIFFIAN ASSOCIATION?

The Ratcliffian Association is the society of former pupils of Ratcliffe College, known as 'Old Ratcliffians' (ORs). Founded in 1865, when a group of past pupils met at Ratcliffe and brought the Association to life, its objective is simple: to nurture the relationship between past pupils, the College, and current pupils, for the benefit of both the College and its Old Ratcliffians.

Upon leaving Ratcliffe, after the Sixth Form or earlier, all pupils become lifetime members of the Association, joining a 6,000-strong community across the globe. As members, ORs receive news updates via email, social media, and through this annual magazine. ORs also receive invitations to Association and College events, which offer the perfect opportunity to reunite with old friends and to reminisce about times at Ratcliffe. The Association website, www.ratcliffianassociation.co.uk, allows ORs to reconnect with their old classmates, as well as giving them the opportunity to support current pupils and young ORs through a careers and mentoring programme.

The Association is governed by the Ratcliffian Association Council, which is made up of 25 to 30 former pupils from all age groups, as well as representatives of the College and the Association Office. The Council oversees all budgets, expenditure, events, and communications, and it ensures that the Association delivers its objectives for the mutual benefit of Old Ratcliffians and the College. Council meetings are held twice a year, and a president and vice president are elected at the AGM each year, which usually forms part of the Association's Reunion Weekend in the summer.

The Association Office (based at the College) is open four days a week and is managed by Sarah Gretton, who, together with Katherine Lang as Secretary, oversees the day-to-day running of all Association activities.

So, if you have a story to tell, news to share, or time available to offer your expertise and experience to current students and young ORs, please get in touch with the Association at alumni@ratcliffecollege.com or on 01509 817054.

FROM YOUR PRESIDENT

Dear Old Ratcliffians,

First of all, I hope that you and your families and friends are well and coping with the ongoing measures surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic. It still seems extraordinary to me that, since the publication of last year's magazine, we've gone from looking forward to the many events that we'd planned to cancelling almost all of them, and all but mothballing the Association.

It's sometimes difficult to see anything positive on the horizon; even as I write this message, we face further uncertainty about the introduction of stricter lockdown measures. And yet, there are things we should be grateful for. Firstly, the Association is back up and running again, with Sarah Gretton and Katherine Lang both working in the office, and we are already planning the return of many of the events that we had to cancel this year. It's exciting to be looking forward to things once again, and as soon as we can, we'll let you know what we have planned – even if only tentatively! Perhaps more importantly, it's great to see the school operating so well under the weight of all the new guidelines. As always, the students remain examples of resilience and good humour, and they have settled into the new ways of doing things as if they've always done them. It really is Ratcliffe at its best. We should all be very proud.

Finally, if there's one thing that the last few months have shown us, it's that, when we need help, it will be offered. People have risen to the challenge, from just knocking on a neighbour's door to creating thousands of items of PPE. In this magazine, we've documented how a number of Ratcliffians, both old and new, have done this during the pandemic. It remains humbling and gives us such hope for the future. When the chips are down, people really are amazing.

So, I hope you enjoy this magazine, which has been an incredible effort on behalf of Sarah and Katherine during the most challenging of times, and for which I'm very thankful. I hope you keep well and that we'll meet up again soon. Above all, if you need anything, please don't hesitate to get in touch with us. After all, it's what we're here for.

Ben Jackson (88)

President of the Ratcliffian Association



THE EDITOR'S COLUMN

Here in the Association Office, 2020 feels as though it has passed us by in the blink of an eye. Having made a promising start to the year, with a full events calendar scheduled and plans to try out new events and initiatives, the March lockdown saw both myself and Association Secretary Katherine Lang placed on furlough leave, which, as for many, lasted a completely unexpected four-and-a-half months. As a result of lockdown and the ongoing restrictions still in place as I write, 2020 has been a very different year for the Association, as it has the College, and we have been unable to run 99% of our events, which are such a huge part of what we do.

We are extremely thankful, however, that we were able to bring together current students and Old Ratcliffians for the 2020 Sixth Form Social in January, where we were treated to fish and chips, as well as Mr Sleath's famous quiz! Our annual London Dinner also went ahead as planned; this saw over 60 ORs gather at the stunning Crypt at St Etheldreda's, Ely Place, for an evening of fine dining and good company. Just five short weeks later, however, as we were preparing for our annual OR Sports Day, those plans were cut short, as the country was forced into lockdown.

It seems almost odd now to imagine being able to gather in such large numbers, and so, as we returned on reduced hours in August, we began to ponder how we could connect our alumni community in this strange new world, whilst keeping a close eye on the government guidelines and hoping life would soon return to normal. It was hard to believe, back in January, that 2020 would end as it has, and we still clearly have a long way to go before we can safely say it's 'business as usual'. Nevertheless, we will continue to do whatever we can to support the school, its students, and our Association members, as well as helping ORs to stay connected during a time when friendship and community have never been more important.

We are extremely grateful to our ORs for their support and patience this year, and we would especially like to thank those who have worked tirelessly in the NHS and other care settings, offered help to fellow ORs and their local communities, or taken on personal challenges for charitable causes, all in the fight against COVID-19. The Ratcliffe ethos remains forever strong: *Legis Plenitudo Charitas*.

Sarah Gretton

Ratcliffian Association Manager



NEWS FROM THE COLLEGE



THE HEADMASTER'S INTRODUCTION

"Dear brothers and sisters, when troubles come your way, consider it an opportunity for great joy. For you know that, when your faith is tested, your endurance has a chance to grow. So, let it grow, for when your endurance is fully developed, you will be perfect and complete, needing nothing." – James 1:2-4

Dear Old Ratcliffians and friends of Ratcliffe College,

The past year has been a time of great uncertainty, dominated by our collective and individual responses to the global pandemic. All of our lives have been affected in some way. Our school community has shown great resilience, overcoming the challenges that have arisen from this most rude and unwelcome interruption to our daily lives.

I am immensely proud of the way in which we have all pulled together, demonstrating patience, empathy, and fortitude to successfully adapt to new expectations and routines. I would like to pay tribute to the students, teachers, support staff, governors, and the parent body for their unstinting loyalty and support, which has enabled Ratcliffe to continue to provide a first-class education for all. At the time of writing this introduction, the country is in the midst of a 'second wave' of infections, and the sense of uncertainty is palpable. Despite this, I find myself feeling optimistic about the weeks and months ahead, buoyed by the relentless enthusiasm and energy of the community around me, daily. The national lockdown was hard to bear, but we endured; the public examination season was a fiasco, but we ensured that no one was disadvantaged; our return to the College has been a challenge, but we have prevailed; and I am confident that we will continue to thrive, because our school community is one which is born of faith and an unquenchable desire to deliver its mission and vision for the students in our care. And so, as we look back on a unique academic year, we should do so with great pride at a job well done. We should celebrate the many and varied achievements of the students, both in and out of class, and remember that, "when your faith is tested, your endurance has a chance to grow". What follows are excerpts from my Exhibition Day address. Although written at the height of the pandemic, I believe that the message for the school community is just as relevant now as it was then.

A 'PENSIEVE' LEGACY CAN LEAD TO POSITIVE CHANGE

With a tenuous nod to the *Harry Potter* novels, the Potterhead reference in the title of my address is to something belonging to Albus Dumbledore, the legendary headmaster of Hogwarts School. He calls it a 'Pensieve' – a large stone bowl into which he drops thoughts and memories, swirls them around with his wand, and tries to make sense of them. My message to you is a kind of Pensieve, aiming to reflect on where we have come from over the past academic year, where we are today, and where we may be heading in the future. So, as we peer into our own Pensieve, we can see where we were. On March 20th 2020, schools across the country closed. Everyone went home, closed their doors, watched and waited. Lockdown was declared, and we quickly learnt to wash our hands multiple times a day while singing 'Happy Birthday', to shop online, or to join a long, snaking queue with face coverings and gloves. We learnt that some of us had to 'shield', while others had to 'self-isolate'. Apart from our brave NHS staff, care workers, and other key workers, including the teachers who came into schools, the majority of us worked and learnt at home. We established new routines, and we watched with horror as the numbers affected by COVID-19 rose daily.

During lockdown, we learnt to 'fail fast'. Together, we learnt to Google Meet, and to complete, submit, and receive feedback online, as we got to grips with Google Classroom. It was then, I believe, that Ratcliffe's mission and values, encapsulated in our vision statement, *Strength of Mind, Strength of Values, Strength of Purpose*, came to the fore. Students rose to the challenge, demonstrating

great independence, thinking those 'big' ideas to help others in need in our local communities. They developed resilience, using a growth mindset, and adopting a 'not yet', rather than a 'can't do', attitude to their learning. Our students faced their fears and anxieties head-on in the midst of the uncertainty of the coronavirus lockdown. They experienced, first-hand, that failure is a natural part of self-improvement and personal growth, as they struggled to get to grips with learning at home. They overcame obstacles, they prevailed, and, over the past few months, they have acquired skills and experiences that will help to shape their futures in a positive way.

Ratcliffe's Catholic mission places Christ at the centre of our learning. So many of our students have lived out the Gospel values, demonstrated through countless simple acts of kindness and love that they have shown towards others. Those who have lost loved ones or cared for the sick during the pandemic have demonstrated compassion, humility, and gentleness. I am proud that so many of them have listened to the call of those who asked for help, demonstrating genuine service and sacrifice as they answered that call. It is these sometimes small, but significant, acts of kindness that have helped to instil a deep sense of community and belonging at Ratcliffe, anchored by our school motto – *Love is the Fulfilment of the Law*. When our students looked out into their communities, they felt the love that Jesus has for us, and they saw Christ in others.

As we churn our thoughts and memories, once again, within our Pensieve, we can see where we are now. We have worked hard as we have reopened the College. I know just how much anxiety the school community has had to manage, and I pay tribute to everyone for the resilience and the unsparing support that has been shown, helping the community to move forwards during this challenging period.

And so, back to the Potterhead reference of the Pensieve. This is, of course, a clever play on the words 'pensive' and 'sieve', which gives you a pretty good idea of what it is for. The word 'pensive' means to reflect deeply; a 'sieve' is a means by which we separate particles of different sizes. Imagine if you could separate out and keep your most important memories, preserved and clear to look back on. The applications are so broad. Most importantly, Pensieves show you memories as they truly happened, untainted by bias or human forgetfulness. I suppose the idea is that your brain has a copy of the undiluted event somewhere, and that's what the Pensieve extracts. So, it makes perfect sense for Albus Dumbledore to use it, as he is, essentially, being gifted with the perfect recall of past events and their meanings. A long line of revered headmasters and headmistresses of Hogwarts have left behind memories from their tenure, and thus contributed to the creation of an invaluable library of reference for the headmasters and headmistresses yet to come. I challenge each of you to sit and quietly reflect on the past few months, and to decide which memories you would wish to store in Ratcliffe's reference library to revisit and consider. More importantly, how might these memories help to shape a more positive future, where we are able to show our *Strength of Purpose*?

The coronavirus pandemic could change the 'rules of the game', for better or worse. Moments of crisis matter in a historical context. There could be a critical moment, where actions taken now could have legacies for decades to come. To echo the wise words of John F Kennedy, "When written in Chinese, the word 'crisis' is composed of two characters. One represents danger and the other represents opportunity." The big question arising from this natural global experiment, then, is this: What is the opportunity presented by the COVID-19 crisis, and what are we going to do about what we have learnt from our memories of this time? During lockdown, global emissions fell sharply; surely, we must finally accept that there is an imperative to decarbonise our planet, if we are to prevent a permanent change to our climate that will make the havoc wrought by COVID-19 look like a walk in the park? As the pandemic has spread across the globe, wreaking destruction on the most vulnerable populations who do not have access to medical care, will we accept that our moral responsibility is to help build a more equitable future for all? That the strongest economies must do far more to support the weak, and that we should all learn to live with a little less? As the pandemic forcefully interrupted our routines and changed our habits, we are now in a stronger position than ever before to usher in some of the changes needed to tackle climate change, shifting economic activity from a globalised to a more localised pattern. We could become more accustomed to a way of life that minimises consumption; it could encourage us to commute and travel less, reduce our household waste, and rely on local supply chains, as many have been forced to do during the pandemic.

When we look back at the COVID-19 crisis in years to come, will we acknowledge that it was a time of genuine, pensive reflection which led to creative and brave decisions for the betterment of humanity and our planet? Or will we bemoan the fact that we failed to reflect deeply enough, that we stored the wrong memories, and, as a result, the opportunity was missed and was replaced by danger? As the next generation of leaders, politicians, scientists, teachers, doctors, and engineers, our students have the chance to create an opportunity for positive change in our world. I challenge everyone to do just that. Use your own metaphorical Pensieve to store the most important learning experiences of your time, and use that learning to inform a brighter, happier, more equitable and sustainable future for us all.

Yours sincerely,

Jon Reddin
Headmaster



VALETE – CLASS OF 2020

CONGRATULATIONS TO THIS YEAR'S LEAVERS

Name	Destination	Course
Apiafi, Dagogo	Manchester Metropolitan University	Software Engineering (with Foundation Year)
Atkinson, Mia	University of Birmingham	Sport, Exercise and Health Sciences
Baggott, Dominic	Harper Adams University	Agri-Business (with Placement)
Bailey, Charlotte	University of Lincoln	Law
Baker, Mia	Newcastle University	Medicine and Surgery
Baker, Ellie	University of York	Biology
Binnie, Thomas	Sheffield Hallam University	Information Technology with Business Studies
Bown, Alexander	Leeds Beckett University	Sport Development
Bradley, Sophie	University of Bristol	Economics and Management
Chan, Joanna	University of Southampton	Marketing
Chapman, Joshua	Leeds Beckett University	Creative Media Technology
Chen, Angela	Leeds Arts University	Textile Design
Colville, Flora	University of Nottingham	Engineering and Physical Sciences (with Foundation Year)
Cook, Benjamin	University of Plymouth	Medicine
Cooper, Abigail	Cardiff University	Human Geography (with Placement)
Culpin, Harry	University of Sheffield	Politics
Dawe, Jacob	University of Oxford	Physics (4-Year MPhys)
Doran, Fraser	De Montfort University	Business Management and Law
Duffin, Tess	Anglia Ruskin University	Illustration
Eggleton, Matthew	Nottingham Trent University	Real Estate
Elton, Matthew	University of Birmingham	Modern Languages
England, Jade	University of Nottingham	Veterinary Medicine
Gilbertson, James	Sheffield Hallam University	Real Estate
Grinham, Lucy	Newcastle University	Biomedical Sciences
Hammond, Thomas	University of Sheffield	Politics
Harcourt, Mia	Nottingham Trent University	Fashion Communication and Promotion
Harris, James	Gap Year	
Henderson, Bo	Newcastle University	Modern Languages, Translation and Interpreting
Henderson, Sofia	Durham University	Accounting and Finance (with Study Abroad)
Hippisley-Cox, Flora	University of Sheffield	Mechanical Engineering (with a Year in Industry)
Ho, Diamond	Applying to Hong Kong and Australian Universities	
Hollinshead, Ellie	Nottingham Trent University	Journalism
Howling, James	Loughborough University	Aeronautical Engineering (with Placement)
Jackson, Kit	Harper Adams University	Agriculture with Mechanisation (with Placement)
Jackson, Oliver	University of Sheffield	Economics
Jelley, Poppy	Oxford Brookes University	Business and Management
Kelly, Elliot	University of Sheffield	Mechatronic and Robotic Engineering
Kirkby, Jake	Nottingham Trent University	Economics with Business
Kwok, Beverly	Glon Institute of Higher Education	International Hospitality Business (BBA)
Langford, Charlotte	University of Kent	Biomedical Science
Lau, Mario	University of Bristol	Electrical and Electronic Engineering
Lawrence, Caitlin	Liverpool Institute for Performing Arts	Acting (Screen and Digital Media)
Lawrie, Harriet	University of Nottingham	Food Science and Nutrition
Linnett, George	University of Liverpool	Business Economics (with a Year in Industry)
Liu, Han	University of Bristol	Mechanical Engineering
Lu, Carol	University of Southampton	Accounting and Economics
Massarella, Lydia	Newcastle University	Psychology
Matthews, Finlay	Oxford Brookes University	Business Management and International Relations
McKaig, Dominic	Sheffield Hallam University	Digital Marketing
Millett, Luke	University of Birmingham	Human Biology
Millward, Eve	King's College London, University of London	English
Misso, Alessio	Leeds Beckett University	Business Management with Enterprise
Nnaji, Ikenna	University of Leicester	Software Engineering
Nnaji, Obiora	University of Bristol	Electrical and Electronic Engineering
Neuberg, Tom	University of Southampton	Medicine
Newberry, Charlotte	Harper Adams University	Veterinary Physiotherapy (with Placement)
Northover, Ella	Gap Year	
Offer, Samuel	Gap Year (Applying for Medicine in 2021)	
Ozigi, Sharon	University of Essex	Law
Perry, Rachel	Cardiff University	History
Pole, Sophie	University of Manchester	Biology
Poll, Betsy	University of Leeds	Fashion Marketing
Potter, Deborah	De Montfort University	English and Creative Writing
Pullan, Richard	University of Edinburgh	Mathematics and Music
Robinson, Eddy	University of Bristol	Law with German
Santaney, Abigail	University of York	International Relations
Sheth, Shailey	Lancaster University	Philosophy, Politics and Economics
Sin, Siri	University of Bristol	Pharmacology
Smellie, Edward	Leeds Conservatoire	Musical Theatre
Soni, Kapil	University of Szeged, Hungary	Medicine
Vinall, Holly	University of Leeds	Human Physiology
Walker, Carter	Leeds Beckett University	Sport and Exercise Nutrition
Warwick, Robyn	University of Exeter	Zoology
Welch, Oliver	Gap Year	
Xu, Mike	Gap Year	
Yapa, Sharmel	University of Exeter	Law



CLASS OF 2020: A LEVEL RESULTS

Ratcliffe College students were delighted to celebrate their A Level results after an anxious wait. Despite the heartache of the cancelled examinations, due to the coronavirus pandemic, and the government's U-turn on the eve of their results being published, the overwhelming majority of students successfully achieved places on coveted courses at top-ranking universities, including Oxford and Cambridge.

Headmaster Jon Reddin commented: "Given the extremely challenging circumstances created by the pandemic and the massive disappointment of not being able to sit their examinations after working so diligently, I am both pleased and relieved that so many of our wonderful Year 13 students have been able to accept places at their first-choice universities. This is testament to their resilience, hard work, and dedication prior to lockdown, and to the professionalism of their teachers in the awarding of Centre Assessment Grades. For those students who are disappointed with their grades, the school will continue to work with them, where appropriate, towards a successful appeal, so that they are not disadvantaged in the future by circumstances beyond their control.

"Many students were exclusively awarded A and A* grades, and we congratulate them for achieving such outstanding results and gaining places on the most competitive courses. After completing her gap year, **Hebe Jackson (19)** has become the first Sir Thomas White scholar to gain a place at Oxbridge, reading Modern and Medieval Languages at King's College, Cambridge. **Jacob Dawe (20)** proceeds to Queen's College, Oxford, to read Physics. **Mia Baker (20)**, **Ben Cook (20)**, **Tom Neuberg (20)**, **Kapil Soni (20)**, and **Jade England (20)** all have places to study Medicine and Veterinary Medicine. **Samuel Offer (20)** achieved 3 A*s and is taking a gap year ahead of applying to study Medicine next year. Linguist **Eduardo Robinson (20)** achieved 3 A*s and will study Law and German at the University of Bristol, whilst music scholar **Richard Pullan (20)** also achieved the very highest grades in all subjects, taking up his place at the University of Edinburgh to study Mathematics and Music. Head Girl **Eve Millward (20)** achieved the same grades and will be studying English Literature at King's College London.

"I wish to pay tribute to this cohort, who have distinguished themselves throughout their time at Ratcliffe, giving generously of themselves to support the ethos and mission of the school. They have excelled across a wide range of co-curricular activities and initiated some invaluable charitable activities. Their desire to make a positive difference to other people's lives in the local community continued during lockdown; this included volunteering to deliver food parcels, producing large quantities of PPE for hospitals and care homes, assisting in the coronavirus testing process, as well as supporting others' emotional wellbeing by keeping in touch with the elderly and housebound. It is our hope that the Class of 2020 will not be defined by the impact of coronavirus, but, instead, by the values that they have embraced at Ratcliffe College. We wish them the very best as they move forward, with confidence, to higher education and successful careers in the future. Thank you, Year 13, for being such superb role models for Ratcliffe College students, and please continue to make a difference in all that you do in the future."



RATCLIFFE'S RESPLENDENT GCSE RESULTS

Finally, in August, the wait was over, and Ratcliffe's Year 11 students were both relieved and delighted to receive their GCSE results. Having watched from the sidelines as their peers in Year 13 experienced the agony and ecstasy associated with the publishing of their A Level results, the Year 11s of 2020 were rewarded with excellent results. The College was very pleased with their overall pass rate of 99.5%, of which all grades were 4s or above, with 47% of all grades being 7s, 8s, or 9s.

Headmaster Jon Reddin said: "I am thrilled for our Year 11 students, who have achieved outstanding results at the end of such a tumultuous year. They have had to manage so much uncertainty with respect to their GCSE grades throughout lockdown. We are incredibly proud of the resilience and fortitude shown by this cohort, and I wish to thank them all for their unstinting support of the school over many years, both in the classroom and beyond.

"On behalf of the students and the school, I would also like to pay tribute to their teachers, who have worked in harness with Ratcliffe to ensure that this year's GCSE students have achieved the grades that they truly deserved. We look forward to this year group's continued success as they begin the next phase of their education in our Sixth Form. For those students moving on to pastures new, we wish them every happiness and success."

In particular, special mention must go to Elise Atkinson, Marley Totton, Annie Rose Reddin, and Rachel Astill, who achieved grade 9s and grade 8s in all of their subjects, with Elise achieving grade 9s in all eleven of her subjects. Congratulations also go to Sam Moss, who achieved six grade 9s, four grade 8s, and one grade 7.



RATCLIFFE'S BOARDING COMMUNITY

Our boarding community has, like so many communities over the last year, realised just how important all of its members are to one another. This year, we welcomed some wonderful new students, said a sad and strange farewell to our Year 13s, and survived the separation of a pandemic.

As with families all around the world, the pandemic made us stop and reflect on what we love about being together. Before we went into lockdown and schools closed, we were so proud of our boarders' achievements, from CCF and the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme to music concerts. Every evening, we were incredibly proud of the work ethic that we saw, and the peer-on-peer support that happened so naturally, where we would witness the students helping each other to be the best versions of themselves.

After lockdown, like the rest of the world, we spent our time communicating online through Zoom chats, filming ourselves reading for Cygnets, and in virtual escape rooms. Although we are still establishing the full impact of the pandemic, we have proudly realised just how much we love our quirky, determined, tenacious, and idiosyncratic boarding community.

Alison Da Costa

Assistant Head Pastoral, Senior Housemistress



CAREERS & MENTORING

Last year, I took up my role as Head of Careers, setting up a dedicated Careers Office within the College, which students are encouraged to utilise for ongoing support and guidance. This was particularly valuable to the students throughout an unprecedented results period. Autumn 2020 has, equally, proved to be a particularly busy period, with the Careers Office helping the Year 13 students to navigate their UCAS applications without the usual open days and taster events that previous cohorts have been able to access. Sourcing virtual events and information has been key.

In March, we launched the Careers Development Competition, which allowed Year 12 students to bid for a share of a £1,000 fund, donated by an Old Ratcliffian, in order to access opportunities and resources that they felt would support their career aspirations. Three students were successful in this process, and they went on to undertake online courses throughout the lockdown period – you can read more about this competition on page 27.

Unfortunately, many work experience opportunities were unable to take place during the summer, but the school is working hard with the Leicestershire Education Business Company and the Ratcliffian Association to source opportunities for the forthcoming year. We were also gratefully supported by ORs and parents in our mock interview and mentoring programme during the last academic year, and we hope that this will continue. This contact is invaluable to our students, and further support is always welcomed, so please get in touch with the Association if you think you can help!

Kate Grace

Head of Careers



CHAPLAINCY & CHARITY

"The perfection of the Gospel consists in the perfect carrying out of the two commandments of love – the love of God and the love of our neighbour." – 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.

CALLED TO SERVE OTHERS

"Perfect charity, in which consists the perfection of all, brings the whole person into union with the Creator." – Blessed Antonio Rosmini

Our school motto, *Legis Plenitudo Caritas* (Love is the Fulfilment of the Law), is a daily reminder that loving service of others is an integral part of the Christian identity. Christ has given us clear instructions that a "Christian life is for service", and Pope Francis reminds us that, while Christ's instruction is for everyone to give freely that which has been given freely, it is meant especially for us "shepherds of the church".

With this in mind, money is raised each year to support one of the charities chosen by the school community. Each year group, as well as the boarding community, sponsors a particular organisation and spends the academic year raising both money and awareness for their cause. Alongside the various charity events, such as cake sales and coffee mornings, there are a number of community service-based clubs which run throughout the year. These include the St Vincent de Paul Club (Year 9), the Mother Teresa Group, and the Voluntary Service Unit (Sixth Form), where numerous students contribute their time to helping others.



CALLED TO A LIFE OF PRAYER

"Oh, how sweet it is to speak with God, to be satisfied in him alone, remember, to long for, to gaze on God, know God, to be in love with God." – Blessed Antonio Rosmini

At the heart of Ratcliffe College is our Christian identity, and at the heart of Christian identity is the desire to be close to the will of God. Because of this, there is a clear dedication to finding moments each day for prayer. Spending time in quiet reflection, where both student and staff bodies can come to know who God is, is central to the life of the College. Each week begins and ends in the College Chapel in collective worship; feast days are celebrated with Mass; Remembrance Day and Easter are marked with special services; and Advent and Lent are signified by Reconciliation Days. Regular Boarding Community Weekend Mass and Night Prayer, and Tutor Group Prayers further contribute to the liturgical life of the College. Unfortunately, due to lockdown, we were unable to hold our annual Easter service, which was greatly missed. This service is a pinnacle moment in the school's year, as it marks the greatest moment in Salvation history. We look forward to next year's service with even more fervour than usual.



CALLED TO LIVE LIFE TO THE FULL

"[We] should feel perfectly at peace and full of joy, resting entirely upon their Lord." – Blessed Antonio Rosmini

Ratcliffe's vision is for each student to leave the College having developed *Strength of Mind, Strength of Values, and Strength of Purpose*, but what does this really mean, and how do we relay this message to the school community? Each week, the Senior Leadership and Chaplaincy Teams lead or facilitate assemblies that are designed to engage, develop, and inspire those present, and every other week, individual year group assemblies further support this. Many students, staff members, and guests have addressed us this year. Particular highlights have been presented and created by students ranging from Years 8 to 13, including Sophie Brown, Kiki Ng, and Yasmina Lock (all from Year 12), who spoke about the importance of charity and the work of CAFOD. Students are also encouraged to develop their faith outside school, and residential



retreats offer this opportunity. A retreat experience allows time for those attending to think and build their relationships with God, themselves, and with others. This academic year, Year 7 visited The Briars, where they spent time building friendships and exploring their faith. Unfortunately, the annual retreat to Alton Castle for the Year 8 students was cancelled, but we hope to run a retreat experience for them next year.

THANK YOU

Finally, I would like to give special thanks to the Chaplaincy and Charities staff and student teams – in particular, Mr Walsh, who continues to lead the VSU each week.

Emma Hall
Lay Chaplain



RATCLIFFE STUDENTS' SPORTING ACHIEVEMENTS

Of the many students at Ratcliffe who show great sporting ability, special mention must go to the following:

CROSS-COUNTRY

It's been a successful season for Ratcliffe, the teams, and the individuals involved in cross-country. In February, the Senior Schools County Cross-Country Championship was, again, hosted by Ratcliffe. The Year 7 Boys' and Girls' Teams both took second place, with some outstanding racing, and Shai King (Year 7) finished first, winning the Year 7 Girls' County Championship Individual title. Finlay Martin (Year 8) finished eighth in the Junior Boys' race; he was selected as first reserve on the Leicester and Rutland English Schools Team, being one of the only Year 8 boys to be chosen. Overall, the Ratcliffe Cross-Country Team continues to grow, both in numbers and strength, with the 2019-20 season roster boasting 36 members, and the older students becoming great role models and inspiration for the younger ones.

HOCKEY

Congratulations to the following teams and individuals on their hockey achievements:

- » Under 12 Girls: Leicestershire County Champions, regional finalists (due to regionals being cancelled).
- » Under 12 Boys: Leicestershire County runners-up, regional finalists (due to regionals being cancelled).
- » Under 13 Boys: Leicestershire County runners-up, regional finalists, and last 16 of the National ISHC Cup.
- » Under 14 Boys: Leicestershire England Hockey Tier 2 runners-up, and England Hockey Tier 2 regional finalists.

The following students all got into the Leicestershire Academy Squads for their respective age groups: Jake Woodriffe, Fred Daynes, Sophia Hull, Sophie Hurren, Oliver Clark, Sam Leake, Jude Moore, Charlotte Shield, Gracie Smith, Eloise Allsager, Lily Stevenson, Will Pearce, Thomas Ferrier, Oscar Webster, Maddie Whalley, Zoe Howling, Jaidev Nanuwa, and Tallulah Wood.

Further congratulations go to Guy Heywood (Year 11) and Maddie Whalley (Year 9), who also got through to the Performance Centre Trials.

MOTORSPORT

Congratulations to Kyan Gohill (Year 8), who has a Motorsport Association Go-Karting Licence and is an official driver for the Croc Promotion team.

FOOTBALL

Congratulations to Gracie Smith (Year 7), who has been offered a contract with Leicester City RTC in the Under 14 squad next year; this will be her sixth season with the RTC.

EQUESTRIANISM

Last year, our Equestrian Team qualified for the National Schools Equestrian Association Championship Plate. The team competed in six classes over two days, and they had a fantastic weekend, being placed in five out of six classes. Individually, Tabitha Kyle (Year 8) has had an amazing year. She represented Great Britain in the winning Nations Cup team in Austria and Holland, winning the team bronze medal at the European Championships in Belgium, and placing fifth individually. Winning and placing in the 148cm Winter Qualifiers has earned her a place on the 2020 Nations Cup squad – there are definitely exciting times ahead! Thanks must go to all parents and riders for their hard work, teamwork, and professionalism. Over the past few years, we have consistently produced fantastic team results at championships when representing Ratcliffe, and we always welcome new members.

ATHLETICS

Harry Culpin (Year 13) has represented Leicestershire for the last two years at the English Schools Combined Events. Each year, he has qualified via the regional competitions, finishing second in the 2019 regional event. In the National Schools Under 20 Decathlon in September 2019, he finished thirteenth.

NETBALL

Congratulations to the following individuals on their netball achievements:

- » Eleni Malhan (Year 10): Under 15 Loughborough Lightning Academy
- » Sophie Packwood (Year 9): Leicestershire County Under 15s
- » Sophie Walker and Katherine McCrindell (Year 9): Leicestershire County Under 15s
- » Jayde Patterson (Year 9) and Sophie Packwood: Leicestershire County Under 15 Development
- » Ruby Doran (Year 7): Leicestershire County Under 13 Development

RUGBY

Congratulations to the following teams and individuals on their rugby achievements:

- » Under 15s: Joint Leicestershire County Cup winners with Loughborough Grammar (due to the final having to be cancelled).
- » Oliver Welch (Year 13): Leicestershire County Under 18s
- » Archie Heaney (Year 12): Leicestershire County Under 17s
- » Xabier Zanolotti Baranano (Year 11): Under 16 Leicester Tigers Development Player Programme
- » Thomas Leighton and Joe Atkinson (Year 10): Under 15 Leicester Tigers Development Player Programme
- » Finlay Spencer (Year 9): Under 14 Leicester Tigers Development Player Programme

NEWS FROM THE PREPARATORY SCHOOL

As I write this review, we have just ended a year like no other, and begun another busy Autumn Term like no other! Nevertheless, the Prep School is in very good heart, with the largest number on role ever! We have recently been looking at the Gospel value of thankfulness, and as part of Pope Francis' wish for us to celebrate the Season of Creation, we have held some beautiful



class Masses, focusing on the start of the new school year, St Francis (patron saint of animals), and a very generous charity collection of foods to celebrate Harvest and support our local Leicester food bank. There was also much to celebrate last year in the Prep School. We were delighted by the large number of awards that Year 6 achieved in the 11+ entrance assessments, with nearly all students choosing to move on to our Senior School again this year. They celebrated the end of the year with a very fitting open-air assembly, with very moving speeches from the Head Boy and Head Girl, recounting all that has been special to them since joining us at three years old in Cygnets.

Before the lockdown in late March, the Prep School children spent many joyous times together, celebrating the Harvest Festival, the Nativity, Carols by Candlelight, and preparing for Easter with the Year 4 Passion Play. This year, our Chaplaincy team have worked hard on a number of new fundraising initiatives, including providing over 100 backpacks full of school stationery and other urgently needed items, supporting our chosen charity, Mary's Meals. The team have also created a new cycle of prayer and led assemblies. Sadly, we were unable to have a celebration of First Holy Communion this year, owing to the closure of churches during the summer.

We have had many extraordinary sporting years in the Prep School, but none quite as extraordinary as 2019-20. This was the sporting year that started, but then never actually finished – instead, being abandoned at half-time! Nevertheless, the first half still produced some exciting performances and wonderful achievements. We hosted our second IAPS

Under 11 Midlands Rugby Festival in November, which was a great success, and our annual Cross-Country Festival received record-breaking entries. This year also saw the opening of our Prep School Sports Hall – a fantastic facility which will greatly enhance the sporting experience that every Prep School child receives in the years to come. The addition of this purpose-built facility highlights just how far

Prep School sport has travelled over the past six years; the children now have a facility which will allow them to fully explore their sporting talents, as well as giving them an arena in which their sporting enthusiasm and energy can be unleashed.

We also saw some outstanding team and individual performances on the sports field this year, before the final whistle was blown for half-time. Violet Rudkin was crowned County Under 11 Girls' Cross-Country Champion, Jessica Tuckwell and Edward Crawley both qualified for the IAPS National Swimming Finals, our Under 10 Boys' Rugby Team remained unbeaten all season, our Under 11 Netball Team won the IAPS Regional Under 11 Netball Plate Competition, and both our Under 11 Girls' and Under 11 Boys' Hockey Teams qualified for the Midlands Finals for the third year, in succession with the boys qualifying as County Champions for the second year in a row.



Prep School Music stepped up another gear in the Autumn Term, with co-curricular groups being eager to begin their music-making. The Newman Orchestra, once again, was a Friday morning highlight, with children from both the Prep School and Senior School rehearsing from 8am in the Newman Hall. The Newman

Orchestra opened the Christmas Concert in the Chapel with two movements from Tchaikovsky's festive *Nutcracker Suite*. It was delightful to see them perform a familiar Christmas cracker to such a high standard. One of the final concerts to take place before lockdown was the Spring Concert. Again, the Newman Orchestra opened this with a poised performance of the 'Half-Minute Waltz' and a rousing version of 'We Will Rock You', which the audience clearly enjoyed!



Nursery, Year 1, and Year 2 delighted us with their Nativity performance, *Stable by Starlight*, and Year 4, who had worked so hard on their Easter production, managed a performance of *Resurrection Rock* to our Year 6 children just before lockdown. The singing at both events was uplifting, and there were some beautifully moving solo performances as well. The Year 4 performance was the final live event that we managed in the Prep School. Music in lockdown presented some frustrating challenges! An inability to actually play at the same time made us realise the huge importance of playing, singing, and performing together. And so, we adapted! Remote individual music lessons began. We slowly found our way. And then, yes, let's do Chapel Choir, String Stars, and Woodwind via Google Meet! Music was something that we could do, and that we could gain comfort from, when everything around us was so alien. We achieved a virtual concert of Prep School Music Competition entries, compositions, music theory, and multiple performances of 'Somewhere Over the Rainbow' for the NHS. Wow! We actually achieved so much in the end.

May I take this opportunity to wish all of our Old Ratcliffians a merry Christmas and a very happy New Year.

Fr Christopher Cann
Preparatory School Headmaster

RATCLIFFE COLLEGE & LEICESTERSHIRE COUNTY CRICKET PARTNERSHIP

As we looked forward to entering the second year of our partnership with Leicestershire County Cricket Club (LCCC), the country went into lockdown, and it appeared that the opportunity to support cricket matches at grassroots level would not be possible. Preceding this, Leicestershire players and coaches had trained weekly on site, either in the Senior School Sports Centre or the new Sports Centre adjacent to the Preparatory School, providing an ideal opportunity for parents to spectate and experience Ratcliffe's excellent new facility. The LCCC coaches also supported Ratcliffe's after-school cricket squad training, leading sessions in the Preparatory School.

The strength of our partnership with LCCC resulted in the sharing of training material with our PE Department, to support the development of our students' cricketing ability. Jigar Naik, Lead Spin Bowling Coach and Pathways Performance Coach, provided LCCC resources, including video masterclasses, strength and conditioning programmes to use at home, and metabolic conditioning sessions. A number of school staff members attended the Leicestershire coaching workshops, with sessions covering wicket-keeping, fitness, batting, pace bowling, and spin bowling, delivered by a variety of Leicestershire coaches, including Jigar and Head Coach Paul Nixon. These provided excellent opportunities for our PE teachers to develop their professional skills.

To give young Foxes fans the opportunity to get involved in a fun activity during the COVID-19 pandemic, the club launched a t-shirt design competition to raise money for NHS Charities Together. Ratcliffe student Evie Ashford (pictured, right) was the winner of the competition, and she saw her design made into a t-shirt (below, right). The proceeds from its sales were all donated to the NHS charity.

As the government and the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) guidelines changed, Ratcliffe was able to support LCCC by hosting training and match-play situations during July and August. The College grounds were an excellent setting for this return to cricket, and thanks must go to our Grounds Team, led by Chris Moody, for facilitating this opportunity. The new LCCC CEO, Sean Jarvis, thanked Ratcliffe for going above and beyond, in very difficult circumstances, to ensure that the Leicestershire Young Cricketers could start playing cricket again as soon as the ECB gave them the go-ahead.

THE LCCC FOUNDATION APPEAL

LCCC have launched their new Foundation Appeal, which will support Alex's Wish, Healing Little Hearts, the LCCC Academy, and local grassroots cricket clubs. The first fundraising initiative, 'A Century A Day', involves running, cycling, or walking a minimum of one mile per day during November, in order to raise much-needed funds. Mr Woodcock, Mr Willcock, Mr Gilchrist, Miss Wilden, Miss Ridley, Mrs Davison, and myself have all taken part. If you would like to support this, or any future fundraising events for the LCCC Foundation, please contact me at tnightingale@ratcliffecollege.com.

When lockdown ends in December, we are looking forward to welcoming LCCC back to Ratcliffe, as they begin their fitness and pre-season training. If you would like any further information about Ratcliffe's partnership with Leicestershire County Cricket Club, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Tracey Nightingale

Cricket Partnership Manager



THE RATCLIFFE SPITFIRE PROJECT: WE NEED YOU!

The Ratcliffe Spitfire project is very important to the College, with many hours of research, design, and labour having already gone into this unique build. Ratcliffe's former Head of Art and Design, and Spitfire project lead, Dominic Berry, left the school in July 2020, and so, at the time of this magazine going to press, a replacement was being sought to take over the running of the project.

In the meantime, the Ratcliffe CCF Contingent are housing the project in their aircraft hangar at the Rosmini Centre, until a new home for it can be found.

We know that many Old Ratcliffians are very fond of this project, and we'd love to welcome some ORs onto the team. If you'd like to get involved, please get in touch by emailing alumni@ratcliffecollege.com.



GROUP CAPTAIN MARK LEEMING OBE MA FINSTLM CHARTERED MCIPD RAFR

Old Ratcliffian **Mark Leeming (83)** was due to be the Inspecting Officer at the CCF's Biennial Inspection at Ratcliffe in February. However, because of the COVID pandemic, this was unable to take place. Mark is still very keen to attend an inspection when such an event can happen again.

Having been a member of the CCF (RAF) at Ratcliffe, after leaving the school, Mark joined the Royal Air Force as an administrative clerk in 1984. Serving as an airman for 12 years, he was commissioned into the Administrative Secretarial Branch on April 1st 1999. He has held many and varied appointments during his service, both at home and abroad, including the Falkland Islands, Gibraltar, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and Afghanistan.

On promotion to Wing Commander in 2010, he was assigned to Employment Policy and was responsible for the formulation of RAF Personnel Policy, and Equality and Diversity. Thereafter, he was appointed to Air Personnel Casework, where he was responsible for the staffing of all Casework, Honours and Awards, and the management of Service Complaints and Service Inquiries. Selected to attend the Advanced Command and Staff Course, he graduated with an MA in Defence Studies in July 2012, and he was subsequently appointed Officer Commanding Support Wing at RAF Northolt. For his leadership and contribution to the support of service families there, he was awarded an OBE in 2015.

Following an operational tour in Afghanistan with the Special Operations Advisory Group, he undertook a short tour as the Chief of Staff in the Directorate of Flying Training, before promotion to Group Captain and appointment as the Regional Commandant North for the Air Training Corps.

Mark has been married to Jeanne since 1990, and they have two children – James, who is an aircraft technician in the RAF, and Katie, who is currently studying at university.



MEMORIAL PARADE FOR MARK BALMBRA

Old Ratcliffians, staff members, and students stood shoulder to shoulder in solidarity to pay their respects to their friend and colleague Mark Balmbra at the CCF Memorial Parade, which took place on Tuesday 11th February 2020.

Mark passed away in hospital on Wednesday 5th February. He was a much-loved and respected member of the current Ratcliffe College teaching staff, having joined in 1991. This news came as a terrible shock to the whole College community.

The tributes, led by Mr Dziemianko and **Fr Philip Sainter (69)**, reminded all those present just what a well-loved and respected colleague Mark was. It was a fitting tribute to a man who had spent the past 28 years working at Ratcliffe. CCF Leader Mark Edwards said of the event afterwards: "The family were touched by how much love the College had towards Mark, and they were amazed at how many staff members and students, past and present, came to pay their respects."

When Mark passed away, the Ratcliffian Association posted the tragic news on their Facebook page, to update ORs who had been taught by Mark and who remembered him. Comments came flooding in from past students and colleagues. A book of condolence was also placed in the Staff Room by Mr Dziemianko and Mrs Grant, for all staff to leave their comments and thoughts about Mark, which was then sent to his family. The comments were also gathered from the Association's Facebook page and added to the book, hoping to offer some comfort to the family that Mark left behind. Below are some of those comments:

Alex Brooks-Ball (02): "Such sad news. A true gent. I would never have been the person I am today without the support that Mark and the CCF gave me. I was honoured to be his Head Cadet in 2001-2002. Barney, you were a wonderful man, husband, father, friend, and role model. My thoughts are with Jane and his girls, and with all those who were lucky to have been taught by him. Rest in peace, my friend."

William Phillips (94): "Terribly saddened to hear of Mark's passing. A true gentleman who encouraged a desire to not only succeed, but also to thrive in each and every task. An inspiration to so many, and an attainable role model who lived by what he taught: respect, courage, discipline, loyalty, selfless commitment, and integrity. It was an honour and a privilege to have been taught and guided by such a man. His loss will be felt far and wide. Condolences and deepest sympathy to the family and all at Ratcliffe."

Ben Surtees-Smith (97): "So, so sad! One of the best teachers ever! Rest in peace, my friend. Thank you for all that you taught me. Thoughts and prayers for all your family at this very sad time."

Jonathan Chaloner (14): "I have so much respect for this great man. The things he taught me and my times spent in CCF are fondly remembered. So sad to hear this. My thoughts go to his family, friends, and all students who were taught by him. Rest in peace."

Rob Phillips (97): "Sad news - a lovely man. Mark helped to guide me through to the military. I have incredibly fond memories of him as a teacher, rugby coach, and CCF instructor. My thoughts go out to his wife and daughters. RIP, Mr Balmbra."

Amy Lang (08): "He was an outstanding teacher. I remember CCF so well, and he gave me so much confidence, helping me to grow as a person. Such sad news. Love and thoughts to all his family."

Harry Murphy (05): "Rest in peace, Sir - your work is done. You inspired and transformed my life at an age when I needed it most. With all I can muster, thank you."



MOTHERS' PRAYERS

Mothers' Prayers has continued to grow in strength and faith, with the group seeing a significant increase in numbers during the Summer Term. The group has recently welcomed their newest member, baby Hudson Walker (fourth child of current parent Jade Walker), who continues to make guest appearances monthly.

Throughout lockdown, the group were still able to maintain their meetings via Zoom. Hosted on a weekly basis by Teresa Gamble, a current parent and governor, members would 'tune in' to their Wednesday morning meetings online. Each mother would then take a turn to read a section from their prayer book, with them all collectively praying for their children and their intentions. Music would be played, instead of sung, with a reading from Scripture being taken from the Daily Missal.

Katherine Lang said: "During lockdown, I valued the consistency of meeting regularly via Zoom, and, although it was very different, this time was still precious, and I used it to focus on the needs of

our children. We have formed very strong bonds within our group, and we rely on each other for emotional support and friendship. These bonds were made even stronger during lockdown."

Claire Clarke added: "Mothers' Prayers is always a much-looked-forward-to point of the normal week for me, but during lockdown, it became a lifeline, for which I was very grateful. The chance to see friendly, familiar faces over Zoom and to come together to share our prayers was so very welcome during these difficult times."

When lockdown restrictions were lifted slightly at the start of the Autumn Term, a new temporary location was found at the Rosmini Centre, in Hutton Hall. The mothers met in this larger space, so that social distancing could be adhered to, with members wearing face coverings whenever necessary.

Mothers' Prayers is always open to welcome new members.



RATCLIFFE COLLEGE **SIXTH FORM BURSARIES & SCHOLARSHIPS**
UP TO 50% GRANTS AVAILABLE

If, as an Old Ratcliffian, you would like to send your child to Ratcliffe College for the Sixth Form, but have previously considered that the cost may prove prohibitive, then the College's Bursary Scheme, supporting Gifted and Talented students, may be of interest to you.

The College welcomes applications from Old Ratcliffians and those in sympathy with the Catholic ethos of the School. All bursaries are subject to meeting the School's entry requirements and (parental) means-tested assessments, which may be reviewed annually.

The College would like to recognise the support of the Ratcliffian Association and Cunningham Fund, and the Peter Daley Foundation, which regularly contribute to student bursaries at Ratcliffe. In exceptional cases, the Sir Thomas White Charity may provide a 100% bursary (day fee) for one strong academic student joining Ratcliffe from the state sector and living in Leicestershire.

We also offer Academic, Sports and Creative (Music, Drama or Art and Design) Scholarships, worth up to 50% of the school fee.

For further details, please contact the Registrar on 01509 817072, email registrar@ratcliffecollege.com, or visit the Admissions section of the School's website.

www.ratcliffecollege.com



MARKETING THROUGH A PANDEMIC



During lockdown, many areas of the College had to work differently, with some departments being furloughed, and others, where possible, working from home. Whilst lessons continued virtually for the students, the Marketing Department thought up new and innovative ways to interact with current parents, students, and prospective parents. Ratcliffe's Marketing and Communications Manager, Ian Blackmore-Allen, said: "We were very excited to work with award-winning media production company Affixius, founded by ORs **Miles Latham (03)** and **Tim Cabrelli (03)**. Our video-led campaign will firmly position Ratcliffe College as a market leader in the local region and beyond. It's been great to work with people

who know and love the College deeply, and we can't wait to see the end result."

James Wyllie, the College's Marketing Executive, added: "During lockdown, remote learning was something that we looked to promote, showcasing our outstanding and willing teaching staff who are technically savvy to do this, with small class sizes being a real benefit. The new Ratcliffe App also became even more of a 'hubspot' for communication, as we saw an uptake in people signing in and enrolling, ensuring that they received all the latest information. For prospective parents, we created a walkthrough video, with highlights of all the main facilities. We also added an interactive 360° experience, where people could access and explore the rooms for themselves. These were both showcased in our virtual open morning for registered families, with accompanying videos from our Senior Leadership Team members to give it a more personal touch, and an online webinar. We have continued to work with the ethos that, although we are not together, we, as the Ratcliffe community, are still *in* this together."

OLD RATCLIFFIANS EXCEL ON & OFF THE FIELD

Old Ratcliffians **Miles Latham (03)** and **Tim Cabrelli (03)** recently tasted victory when their company, Affixius, became the latest commercial shirt sponsor for Nottingham's T20 cricket team, Nottingham Outlaws, who recently became the Vitality Blast T20 champions.

Founders of local filming company Affixius, Miles and Tim's story dates back to their senior years at Ratcliffe, where they first discussed and created their business in one of the school classrooms. During their time at Ratcliffe, they both realised their passion and entrepreneurial spark for the industry and wanted to build a viable business and career from this, networking with local companies to produce product videos on a low budget. Their hard work behind the scenes to expand Affixius and create high-quality videos was completed alongside their A Levels and university, showcasing their commitment and dedication. After Miles' graduation, their undivided attention could finally be placed on Affixius, and they began working with local companies, as well as with worldwide brands such as Sony and Leicester City Football Club.

Affixius started working with Trent Bridge and Nottingham Outlaws in 2012, much to the excitement of Miles and Tim, who have a deep passion for cricket, having represented Ratcliffe in the sport over many years. Their attitude was loved by the whole club, as they ran various award-winning campaigns, helping Nottingham to grow into one of the most successful T20 cricket

counties, with one of the largest attendances in the country. Affixius were delighted to be offered the opportunity to become a commercial partner, allowing them to collaborate with the club's rebranding and latest kit launch video with Adidas. The deal also placed Affixius' logo across the back of Nottingham's kit, which was a huge online and social media hit, especially after Nottingham became T20 champions on finals day. After winning the championship, Technical Director Michael Temple discussed his time with Affixius, saying: "Our partnership with Affixius is a great source of pride for everyone at Trent Bridge, because we've spent 10 years now watching each other grow, and we feel entirely invested in the success of each other's businesses."

Ratcliffe Headmaster Jon Reddin visited the team after their successful win at Trent Bridge, where he was presented with a Nottingham Outlaws shirt by Miles and Tim, thanking him for their time at Ratcliffe. Jon said: "We are extremely proud of Miles and Tim as they go from strength to strength in their business, which was first created in one of Ratcliffe's own classrooms. The dedication that they've shown to continue their business through A Levels and university showcases how hard work can pay off. It is also great to see them tie their business with their other passion of cricket, from representing Ratcliffe to becoming commercial partners with the T20 champions Nottingham Outlaws. Affixius' ties with Ratcliffe run deep, and these are set to become deeper, as we come full circle and look at working together to create a new school film which encapsulates everything that Ratcliffe is."



NEWS FROM THE DEVELOPMENT OFFICE

FUNDRAISING DEVELOPMENTS TO DATE

Since September 2015, the Development Office has been seeking support from the wider Ratcliffe community, as part of our five-year fundraising campaign, *Ratcliffe 2020*. Thanks to the generous support of alumni, parents, and local grant-funding bodies during the five-year period, we have raised in excess of £500,000. This has been used to support the development of our sporting facilities, including the new Fitness Suite, as well as significantly enhancing our bursary support for Ratcliffe families.

THANK YOU TO ALL OF OUR SUPPORTERS

We would like to thank everyone who has supported *Ratcliffe 2020*, acknowledging especially those who regularly support our fundraising efforts on a monthly or annual basis. As we come to the close of *Ratcliffe 2020*, we will continue to keep our Bursary Fund as a priority within the College's future fundraising strategy. Where possible, we shall also continue to look at opportunities to further enhance the College facilities, for the benefit of our current students, as well as future generations of Ratcliffians.

DONOR WALL IN THE FITNESS SUITE

The recent restrictions around COVID-19 have delayed the creation of our donor recognition wall, near the Ratcliffian Association Bar. We are now pleased to announce that, with the generous help of Old Ratcliffian **Ollie Patterson (08)**, whose family runs a brand communications and retail design agency (www.mynt.co.uk), we now have our final designs, with the installation due to be completed by Christmas 2020.

THE GRAND PIANO APPEAL

The Development Office, in conjunction with the Music Department, is now seeking donations towards a new grand piano at Ratcliffe. Whilst we are lucky to have pianos in each practice room at the school, the Music Department has identified the need for a 'concert'-grade grand piano, so that students can develop their ability to play with different tones and dynamics. This will enable the department to perform recitals, invite musicians into school to run masterclasses, and allow for a musical concert series – all things that they are unable to facilitate well with their current pianos.

Katy Donegan, Ratcliffe's Director of Music, said: "As a pianist myself, I know that having a new grand piano will improve our Music Department dramatically. I'm so passionate about music, and I would love the children that I teach to have the chance to discover just how beautiful their playing can sound on a good-quality grand piano. It would make a real difference to our Music lessons, and to the quality of our piano performances."

If you are interested in supporting this appeal, you can donate via the link, www.justgiving.com/campaign/Ratcliffe-Grand-Piano, or contact the Development Office by email at foundation@ratcliffecollege.com. Alternatively, you can post cheques (made payable to 'The Ratcliffe College Foundation') to the College directly; please indicate that you wish them to go towards the Grand Piano Appeal. Thank you.

Andrew Yell (82)
Development Director





THERE IS NO GREATER GIFT THAN THE GIFT OF EDUCATION

Legacy Giving

Ratcliffe College has been shaping the lives of its students since 1847. With the help of generous benefactors, we continue to improve our buildings and teaching environment, as well as giving students extra support when they need it, through much-needed bursaries. By remembering Ratcliffe College in your will, you can help to give the gift of education to many more deserving students in the future.

Legacies of all sizes play a significant role in the future of our College; with your help, we can continue to empower our pupils to learn and grow, as you once did, at Ratcliffe College.

If you would like to leave a gift in your will, please contact Mr Andrew Yell, Foundation Director, at ayell@ratcliffecollege.com or visit our website, www.ratcliffecollegefoundation.com, for more information.



The Ratcliffe College Foundation is a registered charity, No. 1144450

RATCLIFFIAN ASSOCIATION COUNCIL

INTRODUCING THE NEW SOCIAL COMMITTEE

At the beginning of the year, we decided to create a new Social Committee, made up of Old Ratcliffians from a range of class years, to support the delivery of the OR events calendar. This committee would work alongside Sarah Gretton and Katherine Lang in the Association Office, as well as **Ben Jackson (88)**, Association President.

Elisabeth Carley-Leonard (10), Alison Court (née Mason) (98), Sam Spillane (née Murphy) (91), Steve Clark (79), and Richard Gamble (64) answered our call and agreed to offer their time, expertise, and ideas. All of these Old Ratcliffians either have events backgrounds, are active members of the Ratcliffe community, or are particularly well connected within the alumni network. We are delighted to have them all on board!

Little did we know, at the start of the year, that a global pandemic was just around the corner, and that restrictions to our daily lives would somewhat foil our plans for 2020. However, in a typical year, the Association hosts around 15 events, from reunions and retreats to bar nights and sporting events. By working with representatives of the OR community in 2021, we hope that we can continue to adapt to the ever-changing world we live in, delivering a full and varied events calendar that is both engaging and relevant to our members.

If you have any ideas regarding OR events or other activities that you would like to put forward to the Social Committee, please email us at alumni@ratcliffecollege.com.

RATCLIFFIAN ASSOCIATION AMBASSADORS

The Ratcliffian Association is delighted to welcome on board current Year 13 pupils Eisha Patel, Emma Turner, Lauren Brown, Maddy Lindop, Molly Whitaker, Samuel Seidu, and Will Daly as its Association Ambassadors for 2020-2021.

Each year, a number of students are chosen to represent the Sixth Form by supporting the work of the Ratcliffian Association, particularly in its engagement with current pupils. Their role is important to us, because it provides a vital link between the Association and the College; it allows us to tap into the students' knowledge, experience, and ideas, to continuously find new ways to engage with them.

This is an equally important role for the Ambassadors themselves, as it offers a chance to get involved with the planning and running of Association activities, such as social, sporting, and careers events. It also provides them with opportunities to develop their practical skills, such as copy and report writing. All of these areas are useful for their UCAS applications and future CVs.

On leaving Ratcliffe, these students will provide an important connection to our youngest members of the OR community, offering valuable insight into how we can better engage with recent leavers.



THE RATCLIFFIAN ASSOCIATION GAP YEAR SCHOLARSHIP

The Association established this annual award to help one Year 13 student to fund a planned gap year initiative in the intervening year between leaving Ratcliffe and continuing with their studies or employment. Helping alumni of the College in this way is in keeping with the aims of the Association; by having such an award presented to a new leaver at Ratcliffe's Exhibition Day, we are able to raise awareness of the Association and its work among both new leavers and the current student body, as improved engagement with more recent leavers remains a priority.

Each year, we invite Year 13s to apply for an award of up to £250, for consideration against set criteria, with the winner being selected by a panel of Association Council members.

You can read our 2019 Gap Year Scholarship winner's story below, whilst congratulations go to our 2020 winner, **Hattie Lawrie (20)**, who hopes to travel to South Africa in early 2021.

MY GAP YEAR IN THE MIDST OF A GLOBAL PANDEMIC

Having been awarded the Ratcliffian Association Gap Year Scholarship for 2019, I had planned to spend some of my time exploring Southeast Asia...until the pandemic struck. The journey I was most looking forward to was Borneo. Fortunately, this was my first destination, so I got to spend a full two months on the island. I travelled through several locations in and around the island, spending Mondays to Fridays working as a volunteer, and the weekends sightseeing and immersing myself in the culture. During my stays in rural villages such as Tinangol, Pituru Laut, and Narawang, I worked mainly on the construction of hygiene facilities and schools; this meant that I spent most of my days mixing cement and lugging building materials and equipment through the dense forests that surrounded many of these rural communities!

While living on the remote Mantanani island, my work was centred more on marine conservation. We focused on helping the people of the area to create a sustainable system for beach-cleaning and recycling, in order to preserve the rich variety of marine life that so distinguishes this stunning tropical island. My absolute favourite part of the trip was my stay in the Kinabatangan rainforest – one of the most ancient and biodiverse rainforests in the world.

Our group of volunteers set up hammocks in the heart of the rainforest, next to the Kinabatangan River, and I was very much in my element, surrounded by the incredible colours and soundscape! Our volunteering consisted of monitoring tree

growth in reforested areas and clearing Salvinia (a harmful weed which kills underwater life) from the river; this meant floating around on a little wooden square with nothing but a lifejacket and a net in a river full of crocodiles! I also enjoyed a homestay visit in the indigenous community of Batu Puteh, just on the outskirts of the rainforest, which was both eye-opening and truly heart-warming. I feel so lucky to have had such a variety of experiences, especially knowing now that, if I'd gone any later during the pandemic, I would have missed out on them all.

The beginning of March concluded my stay in Borneo, and after a few days exploring Kuala Lumpur, I moved on to Cambodia. This was vastly different from my experiences in Borneo and a lot more hard-hitting. Seeing, first-hand, how the wounds of Cambodia's tragic history persist to this day, in the form of both poverty and visible destruction, as well as the personal trauma carried by each and every person native to the country, was a visceral and intensely emotional experience. Our work in Cambodia was, understandably, very centred around construction again. My knowledge of cement-mixing and the building techniques that I'd acquired in Borneo definitely came in handy there!

I had such an incredible time living in the rural community of Beng Pae and learning about another rich and beautiful culture. One day, however, after about a week and a half spent working in the village, the local police showed up on our doorstep, explaining (as translated by my manager) that there was a deadly virus spreading around the world, and that all foreign nationals were strongly advised to leave the country as soon as possible. Having little phone connection and no means of reading the news, this was, more or less, the first I had heard of the virus, or, at least, the first I had heard of the scale of it. Trying to get home was certainly an experience I will never forget! Both my travel insurance company and the airline I was supposed to be flying with had turned off their phone lines, so I spent several days standing outside offices



at the airport, trying desperately to get through to someone, as the hostel that I had moved to in Siem Reap, by the airport, was also due to close in a few days.

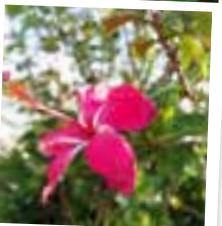
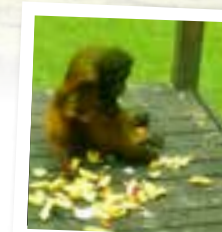
Eventually, I had to get my family to transfer me enough money to buy a new plane ticket (which had become steeply more expensive since the UK had gone into lockdown), and I booked a flight home for a couple of days later. Despite all the stresses of my final days in Cambodia, I did have one incredible experience that was like no other. Since I had a couple of days left before my flight home, I decided to visit Angkor Wat and the surrounding temples with a couple of friends who were also stuck in the country. Usually, the temples would be swamped with thousands of tourists from all over the world. That day, however, there must have been a maximum of 40 or 50 people in the entire area. It was like having a private viewing of the temples – we were, essentially, the only people there! Experiencing the temples so intimately and in such extraordinary circumstances was definitely a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity; it was a very spiritual experience that made my last days in Cambodia all the more meaningful.

What breaks my heart about the pandemic was not the fact that my travel plans were cut short, although that was very difficult to get over in itself. Having seen such poverty on my travels, it was the knowledge that so many areas of that country, and of the world in general, just wouldn't have the means to cope with the imminent crisis of COVID-19. Nevertheless, I look back on my gap year very positively; although it's a shame it ended the way it did, I had such an incredible time, and I've come out of it with amazing friends and experiences that I will take with me for the rest of my life.

I'm beyond grateful for the experience, and I would wholeheartedly recommend taking a gap year to all students leaving Year 13 in the years to come. It has given me some great stories to tell when I start university next month!

As for my plans now, moving forward from my gap year, I will be studying Modern and Medieval Languages (French and Spanish) at the University of Cambridge. It's a four-year degree, with the third year spent abroad, so I'm hoping that I'll be able to get the full travelling experience that I missed out on this year! In terms of my future travel plans, I still have a place as a volunteer in Nepal (the other trip I had planned for my gap year), as they've said that I'm welcome to go back there whenever I can! I've also been looking at scholarships to study other languages abroad, which I can, hopefully, fit in between my university terms. I'm very much looking forward to the next chapter in my life. Once again, my thanks go to the Ratcliffian Association for their very kind contribution and their support.

Hebe Jackson (19)



THE OLD RATCLIFFIAN MAGAZINE LIBRARY

Did you know that you can view and download *Old Ratcliffian* magazines dating back to 1887 on the Association website?

Just go to www.ratcliffianassociation.co.uk, click on the 'Old Rats' Header, and then 'Magazines'. Choose the magazine you'd like to view from the date-ordered list, or search for the relevant year using the search function.

There's a wealth of Ratcliffe history contained within over 300 of these magazines, from school life, academic achievements, and sports reports to OR news, event accounts, and many, many photographs! We hope you enjoy reading them.



NEW CAREERS & MENTORING INITIATIVES

One of the key aims of the Association is to develop a sustainable careers and mentoring programme that benefits both current Ratcliffe students and Old Ratcliffians, focusing particularly on our youngest members and recent school leavers. Over the past few years, the OR community has supported the College through INSPIRE talks, the Careers Convention, and Year 11 mock interviews. Whilst the restrictions during this year have left us unable to plan physical events, we have been working on new ways of engaging with the students and supporting their journeys, particularly in the Sixth Form, as they plan ahead for their futures.

One of these new initiatives is a series of short 'Inspire Me' videos, featuring interviews between BBC radio broadcaster **Ben Jackson (88)** (right) and Old Ratcliffians, whose interesting and varied careers will inspire students as they consider their own career paths. A second phase of the initiative will see these short videos developed into a programme of online mentoring for those students who want to further explore a particular career path. This short series will also be presented to ORs via a targeted monthly careers newsletter, as will the opportunity to sign up to the online mentoring sessions. If successful, we hope to develop the initial trial into an ongoing series of videos and mentoring schemes.



RECRUITING INTO THE RATCLIFFE FAMILY



In August, we were contacted by Old Ratcliffian **Francesca Gamble (04)**, who was looking for help recruiting a new team member for her latest project, 'Becoming More Human' – an original podcast series created with her brother, **Simon Gamble (97)**, and her 'Uncle Kevin', **Kevin Yell (71)**, as co-host.

Following a call-out on the Ratcliffian Association's Facebook page, we were delighted to learn that Fran had welcomed fellow OR **Emily Booth (18)** to the team! Emily (pictured, below) said, "One of my oldest friends, who I met on my first day at Ratcliffe, saw the OR post and tagged me in it. I loved the podcast idea, eagerly emailed Fran, and the rest is history! It's been really interesting to work with not just one, but two Old Ratcliffians in this job. It's amazing how, despite now being in different countries, we all started off our life and education in the same place. It brings a 'home-from-home' feeling to the work that we do together, and an automatic familiarity and connection between us that I deeply appreciate."

This is a perfect example of how the Association aims to develop its careers initiative, by encouraging ORs to utilise the connections that they have within their amazing Ratcliffe family. We encourage any OR in a similar position to reach out to us – we're here to help!



The Association also continues to actively encourage the OR community to come forward with work experience and career opportunities for both current students and ORs, and we are working in conjunction with the College's Head of Careers, Kate Grace, to identify and support students with particular career aspirations. Through these initiatives, we hope to further develop our Mentor Bank and improve the Association's online Jobs Board, in addition to planning more face-to-face careers events when restrictions are lifted.

CAREERS DEVELOPMENT COMPETITION

Earlier this year, Ratcliffe's Year 12 students were offered the opportunity to bid for a share of £1,000 towards their career development, thanks to a generous donation from an Old Ratcliffian. All of the students were given the chance to enter a competition which required them to put together a proposal to bid for a share of £1,000, specifically to enhance either their current studies (with equipment or software), or to attend a recommended careers programme or short course.

The Careers Development Competition was set up following an approach from an OR who left in 1968, and who continues to remember Ratcliffe with fondness. His wish was to support students at Ratcliffe who were facing the challenges of their next steps in life and, specifically, their careers. Whilst the competition offered the chance to win a share of the funding, it also enabled the Careers Office and the students' subject tutors to guide and enlighten them on how best to develop their current profiles, considering opportunities that might give them an advantage for forthcoming applications to universities and the job market, whilst developing their employability skills in the process.

The three successful students (pictured, above) were Sophie Brown, Rishi Desai, and Dhruvil Rajpara, now in Year 13, who all undertook courses during the summer of 2020 and reported back on how they helped them.

Rishi Desai participated in an Investment Banking course. He said: "This allowed me to simulate trading currencies and to manage a portfolio in order to optimise risk-reward. It also allowed me to access a new network and receive mentoring from industry professionals, which helped me to gain awareness of different pathways within the sector. The opportunity has supported my university application significantly and helped me to confirm my career aspirations."

Sophie Brown used the funding to undertake a C-Programming course during lockdown. She said: "I am applying to study Computer Science at university. This programming course was an amazing talking point for my personal statement, and it allowed me to continue my independent studies when schools were closed. It reminded me why I wanted to study Computer Science in the first place: I love to solve problems, and using code to do so is incredibly fulfilling."

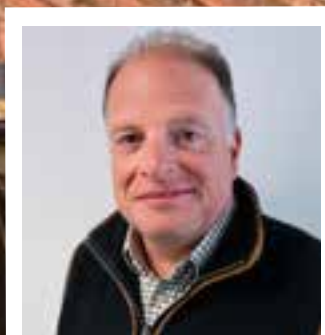
Dhruvil Rajpara used his share to attend an Engineering virtual internship, where industrial experts from across the world hosted sessions on topics ranging from driverless vehicles to AI technology. He said: "I found the session on nanotechnology particularly informative, as we discussed the use of buckminsterfullerene as a material to transport medicine, such as insulin, to targeted organs within the body. I was especially drawn to the concept of using engineering-developed technology to help future generations to cope with chronic conditions. Another part that really fascinated me was an experiment applying Bernoulli's Principle to the camber of an aerofoil to determine the lift and thermal efficiency of the wings of an aircraft. This task gave me an insight into the fundamentals of aerodynamics, which I found particularly intriguing, as it links perfectly to the science behind Formula 1 racing cars. F1 is a sector that I aim to work within in the future."

The Careers Office was incredibly grateful for the opportunity to support the Year 12 students in these activities. Kate Grace, Head of Careers, said: "2020 has been an incredibly challenging year for our students. We launched the Careers Development Competition shortly before school closed. The timing unwittingly allowed us to encourage all students within the cohort to research opportunities that could support their future career aspirations. The winning students were particularly thorough in their quests for activities, and they were able to pitch their ideas successfully. We were delighted to be able to fund them."

We are now looking for a donor to step forward to support the 2021 Careers Development Competition, to give this year's cohort a similar opportunity. If you are interested in supporting this worthwhile project, please get in touch with the Association Office or Andrew Yell, Development Director, on **01509 817000** or **ayell@ratcliffecollege.com**.

COUNCIL MEMBERS 2020-2021

YEAR GROUP REPRESENTATIVES



PRESIDENT:
BEN JACKSON (88)



VICE PRESIDENT:
JON REDDIN (HEADMASTER)



ASSOCIATION MANAGER:
SARAH GRETTON



**ASSOCIATION SECRETARY
& MEMBERSHIP OFFICER:**
KATHERINE LANG



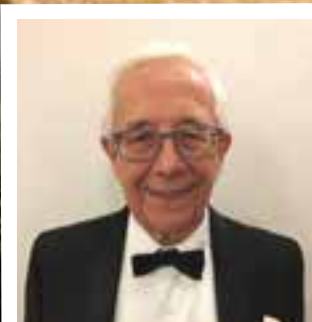
HONORARY TREASURER:
SIMON BURNS (83)



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



BURSAR:
CHRIS BELLAMY



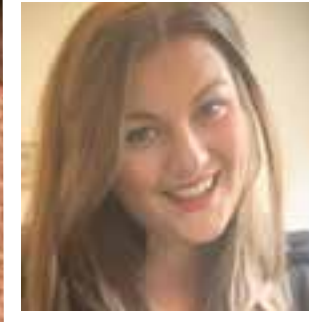
**PAST PRESIDENTS'
DINNER COORDINATOR:**
MICHAEL HEATH (56)



SCHOOL LIAISON OFFICER:
BEN HARRISON



DEVELOPMENT OFFICER:
ANDREW YELL (82)



10 - 20 YEARS:
**ELISABETH
CARLEY-LEONARD (10)**



40 - 50 YEARS:
MARK GAMBLE (71)



60 - 70 YEARS:
MICHAEL COKER (52)



10 YEARS OR LESS:
DAN AMIES (10)



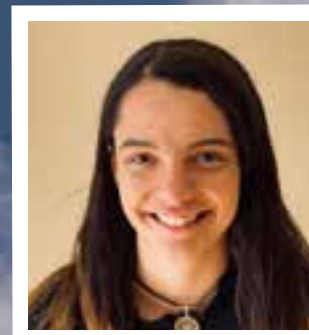
10 - 20 YEARS:
**ELISABETH
CARLEY-LEONARD (10)**



40 - 50 YEARS:
PETER ASTILL (71)



PAST PRESIDENT:
SEBAKO SIAME (91)



10 YEARS OR LESS:
SOPHIE RILEY (15)



30 - 40 YEARS:
BENEDICT HEATH (87)



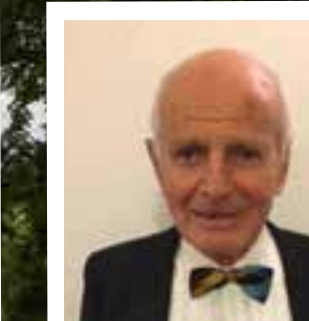
50 - 60 YEARS:
RICHARD GAMBLE (64)



PAST PRESIDENT:
EMMA WRIGHT (94)



30 - 40 YEARS:
STEVE CLARK (79)



50 - 60 YEARS:
DICK CUNNINGHAM (59)

RATCLIFFIAN ASSOCIATION ACCOUNTS

YEAR ENDING 31ST DECEMBER 2019

PROFIT & LOSS	2019 £	2018 £
Revenue		
Subscriptions		
School	44,604	39,615
Direct	4,907	5,037
	49,511	44,652
Other Income		
Advertising & Donations	546	2,450
School Contribution	2,000	2,000
Events Profit/(Loss)	74	(389)
Merchandise Profit	105	241
	2,725	4,302
Total Revenue	52,236	48,954
Expenses		
Secretarial & Temp Labour	(29,176)	(23,112)
Old Ratcliffian - Printing	(8,165)	(7,549)
Old Ratcliffian - Post & Packing	(2,498)	(2,973)
Website & Computer	(2,249)	(1,984)
Leavers' Presentation Gifts	(1,948)	(1,683)
Postage, Stationery & Phone	(636)	(1,135)
Professional Fees	(938)	(700)
Maintenance & Bar	(948)	(575)
Bank & Miscellaneous Charges	(428)	(443)
Subscriptions	(593)	(425)
Gifts & Trophies	(358)	(389)
Donations	(775)	(336)
Travel & Subsistence	(656)	(279)
Event Clothing	(253)	(209)
Advertising	(22)	(76)
Printing & Copying	(288)	0
Depreciation	(271)	0
Total Expenses	(50,202)	(41,868)
Profit for Year	2,034	7,086
BALANCE SHEET	2019 £	2018 £
Non-Current Assets		
Computer Equipment (Undepreciated)	272	543
Current Assets		
Bank Balance	42,029	32,767
Merchandise Stock	1,968	3,536
Debtors & Prepayments	5,721	2,383
Bar Stock	99	100
Cash	1,045	2,068
	50,862	40,854
Total Assets	51,134	41,397
Current Liabilities		
Accruals	(1,693)	(912)
Creditors & Prepaid Income	(7,715)	(793)
	(9,408)	(1,705)
Net Assets/Worth	41,726	39,692
Accumulated Fund of the Ratcliffian Association		
Balance Brought Forward	39,692	32,606
Profit For Year	2,034	7,086
Increased Balance Carried Forward	41,726	39,692

RATCLIFFIAN ASSOCIATION

EVENTS



THE LONDON DINNER

FRIDAY 7TH FEBRUARY 2020

Old Ratcliffians enjoyed the medieval setting of St Etheldreda's Crypt as the stunning venue for the annual London Dinner in February. With 63 guests attending, the evening began with Mass, held in St Etheldreda's Chapel, concelebrated by **Fr Philip Sainter (69)** and **Fr Simon Giles (60)**. The drinks reception followed promptly afterwards.

Dick Cunningham (59) performed the role of Master of Ceremonies, ably encouraging guests to take their seats for dinner at 8pm, with Fr Philip leading them in saying grace. Scottish salmon, roast rump of lamb, and a chocolate dessert were all enjoyed by the guests, followed by coffee and petit fours. Port and cognac, donated by the London Club, were also served. The guests then joined in the musical toast, 'Ad Multos Annos', accompanied by **Anne De Graeve (79)** on the piano, to toast the Association President and the Headmaster.

The guests then shared a sombre moment, as a toast was proposed to the late Mark Balmbra, a current teacher at the College, who passed away suddenly on Wednesday 5th February. **Andrew Yell (82)**, on behalf of the Headmaster, Jon Reddin, expressed the shock and sadness that the whole Ratcliffe community was feeling at this very difficult time, explaining why Mr Reddin was not present at the event.

Louise Jackson (91) then proposed a toast to her older brother, Association President **Ben Jackson (88)**. Ben began by encouraging guests to enter the traditional raffle by filling the envelopes on their tables with donations towards the cost of producing *The Old Ratcliffian* magazine. He went on to commend the College in dealing with the tragic loss of Mr Balmbra, especially Mr Reddin, for making the difficult decision not to attend the dinner at the last minute, instead remaining at his College and putting the needs of his staff and pupils first. Ben also talked eloquently about the beauty and history of the Crypt and what makes a 'Ratcliffian', ending with a toast to Ratcliffe College and Mark Balmbra.

This annual event is always a highlight of the Ratcliffian Association calendar, and we were delighted to see so many ORs coming together, once again, to enjoy an evening of good food, good company, and lots of laughter. With God's grace, we hope to be able to welcome even more ORs to the 2021 London Dinner.



FAMILY CANDLELIGHT CHRISTMAS EVE VIGIL MASS

TUESDAY 24TH DECEMBER 2019

A beautiful candlelit mass was held at 5pm on Christmas Eve in the Ratcliffe College Chapel, bringing together Old Ratcliffians, the Ratcliffe community, and current families on the holiest of nights.

In a twinkling service, led by Ratcliffe's Father President, **Fr Philip Sainter (69)**, children were invited to the altar to hear the Nativity story. Old Ratcliffians also took part in the service, providing readings and helping with the collections and offertory procession.

With the Chapel hosting over 500 guests, the evening was the perfect start to the traditional holiday. All of the guests were invited to share in mulled wine and mince pies after the service in the candlelit Refectory – a real treat for the returning ORs.



THE SIXTH FORM SOCIAL

WEDNESDAY 22ND JANUARY 2020

The Ratcliffian Association hosted another successful Sixth Form Social in January, welcoming back Old Ratcliffians to their beautifully refurbished bar. This event was an opportunity for Ratcliffian Association Manager Sarah Gretton to introduce the Association to Years 12 and 13, and for the students to socialise with Old Ratcliffians.

Association President **Ben Jackson (88)**, along with his sister **Louise Jackson (91)**, Chair of Governors **Louise Marsden (née Bullen) (91)**, and newly appointed governor **Sam Spillane (née Murphy) (91)**, all joined in with Mike Sleath's legendary pub quiz, forming a team with Headmaster Jon Reddin. They were a competitive bunch who, sadly, finished a close second behind a team of Year 12 girls!

A delicious 'fish and chip supper' was served from a traditional fish and chip van, which the guests thoroughly enjoyed, as well as drinks from the bar. Former staff members Nigel Taylor, Anne Taylor, and Graham Sharpe also returned for the evening, taking part in the quiz and enjoying being back at school with fellow staff members and their former pupils.



RATCLIFFIAN ASSOCIATION SPORTS EVENTS

THE CENTENARY SALVER THURSDAY 22ND OCTOBER 2020

This year's event at Luffenham Heath Golf Club took place in October, after the usual May date had to be postponed because of the COVID-19 restrictions. Representing the Ratcliffian Association at this year's rearranged event were **Chris Merriman (83)** and **Andrew Yell (82)**, **Sean McAuley (05)** and **Keith Edgar (01)**, and **Dominic Russell (78)** and **Jim West (77)**. A big thank you goes to Jim, who stepped in at short notice to replace our injured captain, **Abe Mee (92)**, who was recovering from a golf towel injury – you'll need to ask Abe to explain more!

We were blessed with lovely weather on the day, and the usual, beautiful Luffenham Heath course was a picture of colour in the autumn light. The format of the event meant that our best two pairs' scores would count against the best scores from the other local alumni teams. Each of our pairs played against a pair from a different school, but we didn't all play against the same schools. The event is always very friendly, but social distancing rules meant that our post-event lunch was taken in our playing fours, and that little interaction was possible with other teams or players (which explains the absence of our usual team photograph!).

Our top pair of McAuley/Edgar came in with 39 points, followed by Russell/West on 37 points, and Merriman/Yell with 36 points. Our 76-point tally was enough to earn us second place behind the Old Stamfordians, who achieved some excellent scoring in windy conditions. A great day was had by everyone, and it was good to beat Loughborough again!

FINAL RESULTS:

- 1st: Old Stamfordians (78 points)
- 2nd: Old Ratcliffians (76 points)
- 3rd: Old Oakhamians (74 points)
- 4th: Old Loughburians (68 points)
- 5th: Old Uppinghamians (67 points)

Andrew Yell (82)

Development Director



THE REYNARD TROPHY & RATCLIFFIAN GOLF SHIELD SUNDAY 18TH OCTOBER 2020

On a day that the October weather had designed for ducks rather than golfers, Rothley Park Golf Club hosted the Ratcliffian Golf Shield and Reynard Trophy competitions, bringing together Old Ratcliffians with Ratcliffe staff and students. Both competitions were played simultaneously, in a slightly different format to previous years. After lunch, the Golf Shield teams were announced, and the inevitable first-tee nerves started to kick in.

The first team on the tee for the Old Ratcliffians was made up of OR captain **Keith Edgar (03)** and **Paul Morris (06)**. After trading the first few holes, the ORs were lifted by Edgar's tap-in birdie after a near hole-in-one on the 4th. The ORs finished the front nine 3-up. The momentum continued, with Edgar and Morris dovetailing proficiently, taking the next four holes to win 7&5.

The succeeding pairing of **Alison Court (née Mason) (98)** and **Dominic Russell (78)** took the bull by the horns and showed a classy display of team golf, racing to an early three-hole lead after six holes. Both Court and Russell made their knowledge of the course count, seeing out the match on the 17th green and ensuring a 2&1 victory for the ORs.

The penultimate OR team of **Ben Surtees-Smith (99)** and **Bernard Murphy (67)** also made early scoring dictate the shape of the match, taking the first four holes for the ORs. They took the match 6&5, ensuring that the Golf Shield had the OR title engraved on it for 2020.

Finally, **Miles Dunn (19)** was a sole OR, taking on two of the school's representatives. The match score fluctuated in and out of the OR's favour in a closely fought contest. Dunn valiantly extended the match to the 18th hole, with the score showing the OR as being one down with one to play. The school won the hole and the final match, too.

The day ended with the ORs winning the Golf Shield 3 - 1. The Reynard Trophy finished with Bernard Murphy beating Dominic Russell on countback, after both of them scored 33 points. Keith Edgar (4th), Ben Surtees-Smith (7th), and Paul Morris (12th) each won a prize for 'Nearest the Pin'.

- 1st: Bernard Murphy (33 points)
- 2nd: Dominic Russell (33 points)
- 3rd: Keith Edgar (32 points)

Ratcliffe's team captain, Philip Gilchrist, said: "This was a great opportunity for ORs to talk to some of our current pupils and reminisce about old times. Despite losing to the ORs this year, it was a very pleasant afternoon to spend on the golf course. The students really enjoyed the OR company, and we all look forward to the next match, hopefully in the summer."

Keith Edgar (03)

Golf Secretary





Charlotte Perfect (15): "Having left Ratcliffe five years ago, I can't believe how quickly the time has gone! I've always been eager to move to the capital, and I was lucky enough to gain a place in the School of Law at Queen Mary University of London. I really enjoyed my studies, alongside the several jobs that I had as a student, including working for J.P. Morgan, *The Economist*, and for the university as a student ambassador. After three challenging years, I graduated with a first-class honours degree in Law, having made some great memories. I then pursued my legal studies at Queen Mary and completed an LLM in Competition Law and Legal Theory, obtaining another first-class honours degree. Whilst studying the LLM, I worked for a new model law firm, where I quickly gained exposure to all elements of the company in a role that included being a paralegal and a business development and marketing assistant. I was quickly promoted to business development and marketing manager, deciding that maybe a career as a lawyer wasn't for me! I have since landed my dream job in the pitch team at Slaughter and May, which has been very interesting throughout coronavirus. Five years on, I still look back fondly on my Ratcliffe days, and the friends for life I made during that time. They're pictured above, celebrating my 24th birthday with me in London (from left to right, **Phoebe Allen**, **Emily Hollis**, myself, **Alex Beason**, **Sarah Daniel**, **Sav Fishel**, and **Sophie Riley** – all from the **Class of 15**)."

John Plumb (53): "My wife, Jean, and I were delighted to celebrate our Diamond Wedding Anniversary on May 28th 2020. We held a virtual family garden gathering, courtesy of Zoom, at our 'Tudor Cottage' home, which we have occupied for 51 years and shared with our children, **Nicholas (79)**, **David (80)**, **Michael (82)**, Anne-Marie, and their subsequent spouses and families! We were also honoured to receive a papal blessing from the Holy Father Pope Francis. Ad multos annos."



Colin Conway (70): "In October 2019, I had a very memorable trip back to the UK from my home in Australia, where I've lived since 1974, although it took me ages to recover from the jet lag! During my visit, it was my good fortune to meet Ratcliffe Headmaster Jon Reddin, and it was great to learn that he came from my home town of Bedford. After seeing him, I then set off on a 10-day odyssey around England and caught up with a number of ORs, all of whom were very welcoming, shared a

good sense of humour, and, thankfully, were in good health. Firstly, I met up with **Tim Palmer (69)** and **Bernard Murphy (67)**, before travelling to Yorkshire with Tim to meet up with **John Bransfield (70)**, **Mick Conway (71)**, and **Sean Dooley (70)**. Next, I returned to Leicester and caught up with **Hugh Murphy (66)**, his wife, his son, and his daughter, **Mary Middleton (99)**, and with **Brian Beeby (69)**. I then went on to Cheltenham, where I met **John Costelloe (67)**, and down to Devon to see **Neil Conway (70)**. We then both drove down to Weymouth to meet up with **Victor (67)** and **Michael Marques (68)**, and our mutual good friend, **Patrick Howie (70)**. I also saw Penny and **Tony Doyle (70)** in Buckinghamshire, and Rita and **Tony Gallagher (70)**. All were magnificent in their generosity and hospitality. In between these visits, I flew to Ireland to catch up with **Jerry Cahill (70)** and his wife, and I enjoyed their company immensely. We all met at Ratcliffe in the very early 1960s, and it reflects very much on the school that we are still good friends."

François Grosjean (64): "Living in Switzerland, I stay in touch with the UK via Radio 4 and its PM programme, and I see that the UK has had a rollercoaster ride since March. I'm sorry for all of you. Here, things are calm, people keep their distances, there are no big crowds, and



the COVID numbers are staying low. My new book, *Life as a Bilingual: Knowing and Using Two or More Languages*, to be published by Cambridge University Press, is a selection of posts from my *Psychology Today* blog, 'Life as a Bilingual', which has been consulted by more than 2.1 million readers. It will include 121 posts written between 2010 and 2020, including 23 interviews. The posts are organised by topic, in 15 different chapters. I dedicate it to my two grandchildren, Ismaël and Mia, who are both bilingual, and to all those other children of their generation who also live with two or more languages. The book is scheduled to come out in the spring of next year."



Paul White (81): "I retired to Thailand nine years ago, where I began building an off-grid home – the perfect location for a lockdown. The house has 11.2 kilowatts of solar panels and 38.4 kilowatt-hours of battery storage. It is off-grid for water, with 33,000 litres of storage for the rainwater harvesting system. There are also three solar well pumps on the property. The water is filtered for drinking and household use, and it is heated by the sun. Dozens of fruit trees have also been planted, and there is a vegetable garden, as well as a fish pond. You can follow my progress by reading my blog at EcoHouseThailand.com."

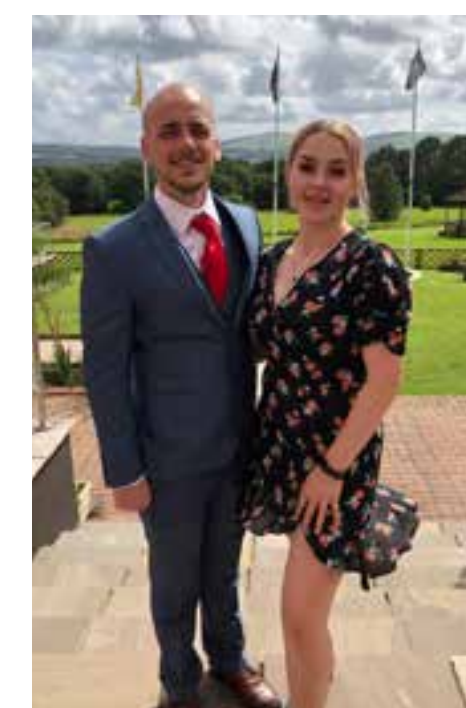
Philip Jones (59): "I keep in touch with several friends and contemporaries, including **Paul Rudd (60)**, **Brendan Donnison (61)**, **Brian Coe (60)**, **Simon Giles (60)**, **Tony Holland (56)**, and **Peter Deeley (59)**. I have retired from general practice as a chartered surveyor, but I have some property affairs on which I continue to act as a consultant for old, established clients. I am chairman of a property investment and development group based in Cheltenham, and director of a garden design and landscaping company (having moved from a house requiring intensive activity, with three acres of formal gardens and a small arboretum). I also continue as a trustee of several charitable trusts. In September



After hearing about **Robert Fallon (79)**, whose son suffers from a debilitating disease called Friedreich's Ataxia, the **OR Class of 1979** raised £2,000 in less than a week to buy him a mobile hoist. Now Robert and Julie's son, Luke, can go off to hotels

and places of interest for breaks, along with his carer, without specific disabled facilities being required. This will give him far more choice and freedom, especially facing the current climate of restrictions due to COVID-19.

2019, I went on an ecumenical pilgrimage to Rome; this was a sequel of a similar visit made three years ago to the Holy Lands of Israel and Palestine. Again, this was led by my good friends, Archbishop Bernard Longley (Roman Catholic, Birmingham) and Bishop John Inge (Church of England, Worcester), and senior clergy and laity from both denominations in Worcestershire. It was a wonderful experience, surrounded by friends, which included excursions to many locations, such as Subiaco, the Major Synagogue, and Castel Gandolfo. It also featured an Audience with the Holy Father Pope Francis; I had the opportunity of meeting and talking with him briefly. The overriding spirit of sharing these days with fellow Christians was something that I will never forget, and to do so for the first time since the Reformation was amazing."



Rosie Jones (16): "My partner, Daniel Graham, and I got engaged in February, just before lockdown, after three-and-a-half years together! He proposed on Polzeath Beach, which he knows is my favourite place, as I go there every year with my family. We'd spent a lovely few days down there, and it was so unexpected. We can't wait for the future! Sadly, we haven't been able to celebrate properly, being in Wales and separated from family and friends, but I'd love to be able to share the news with my OR family!"



Felicity Norris (12): "John Baird (12) and I got engaged over the summer, and we're looking forward to getting married next year! Having met at Ratcliffe, we didn't get together until a few years later."



In memory of **Paul Murphy (67)**, his wife and family have sponsored a chair in the Refectory, which now features his name and the years he spent at Ratcliffe. His daughter, Association Secretary Katherine Lang, said: "I can vividly recall Dad's stories about his time at Ratcliffe as a boarder when he was very young. Back then, the school was very different. He loved playing rugby, and he shared many hilarious stories about the tricks that the boys (never him!) played on the teaching fathers. Having his chair in the Refectory will keep his name alive for many generations to come." His granddaughters (Katherine's children) are pictured here on his chair in the Refectory. They are both at Ratcliffe; Ruby is in Year 10, and Daphne is now in the Swans class.



Clem Maginniss (74) travelled widely in Europe on rail project work during 2019, but since COVID, he has mainly been working from home, which has required some adjustment. In the meantime, he is still serving in the Army Reserve in a railway technical post, which requires plenty of time outdoors! He still keeps in touch with fellow ORs **Paul Morris (74)** and **David Simmons (74)**.

Ed Gamble (95) and **Alex Slack (née Gamble) (03)** held an event to commemorate what would have been the 40th birthday of their brother, **Patch Gamble (96)**. They hosted it at The Star Inn in Thrussington - a regular haunt of Patch and his friends during his short lifetime. There was a big turnout; among those who attended were **Myles Halley (75)**, **Pierre Bouvet (71)**, **Andrew Espinasse (98)**, **Robert Hull (97)**, **Sam Clemons (98)**, **Mark Snutch (97)**, **Hollie Stone (07)**, **James Fagence-Browne (07)**, **Bernard Murphy (67)**, **Sam Spillane (née Murphy) (91)**.



and far too many Gambles to list here! Ed booked the 'Samosa Wallah' to serve his delicious samosas to everyone, and **Alistair Richardson (00)**, the pub proprietor, managed to keep everyone plied with beers and sandwiches. Everyone was delighted to get together in memory of a very special young man, and to brighten up a dull Friday night in January in a famous haunt for Old Ratcliffians.

Adrian Toothe (71): "I arranged a small Christmas lunch with **Nick Briant**, **Joe Manero**, **Sean Wallace**, and **Michael Stephens** (all from the **Class of 1971**, like me) on December 2nd 2019. We raised a glass (or two!) to old friendships which were forged at Ratcliffe College."



Former Ratcliffian Association Secretary **Jackie Bennett** (pictured with her husband, Stephen) turned 70 this year, but it wasn't quite the birthday she was expecting. She said: "Now that I have finally arrived at this momentous milestone age, it feels much the same as any other birthday, and I certainly don't feel ready to be put out to pasture! I managed to celebrate, in spite of coronavirus, with a number of small gatherings, both here and in Portugal. My son, **Edward Gamble (95)**, very kindly flew his sister, **Alex Slack (née Gamble) (03)**, over to Portugal as a surprise birthday present for me. By coincidence, Angela and **Bernard Murphy (67)** were on holiday in their villa nearby, and they were able to join us, too. On a much sadder note, this April marked 20 years since my son, **Patch**

Gamble (96), was tragically killed in a car accident. We had planned a touch rugby festival at Ratcliffe in memory of Patch, but, as with so many other events, this had to be postponed. I was looking forward to this event for many reasons, none more so than having the chance to exchange stories and memories of Patch with lots of his friends (many of them ORs) over a few drinks. Sadly, due to coronavirus, this did not happen. I would like to take this opportunity to wish all ORs and their families whom I have befriended over the years in my various roles at Ratcliffe College a very safe and happy Christmas, and I look forward to seeing you in the not-too-distant future."



Fr Anthony Meredith (57) celebrated his 80th birthday this year with a trip to Seahouses in Northumberland, accompanied by his sister, Monica, Fr Denis Labartette, and Fr Paul Nellikulam. He also celebrated with a garden party, hosted by Teresa and **Richard Gamble (64)** before lockdown restrictions were put into place.



Br Nigel Cave (72), once again, led the memorial service on Remembrance Day in November, hosted by the Western Front Association at the Cenotaph, with honoured guests from the Royal Star and Garter Homes close by. The WFA promotes an interest in the people, campaigns, events, and aftermath on the Western

Front during 1914-1919. The UK fell silent for the 101st Armistice Day since World War I, to commemorate those who died in conflict. It is the centenary of the first two-minute silence, held on the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month. The Royal British Legion called on the nation to put their busy lives on pause, set aside their differences, and remember those who risked their lives.



Georgia Holt (16) competed in the British University and College Sport's (BUCS) Track Cycling Championships, claiming gold and the championship title in her individual events. She was one of more than 190 riders from 33 universities to compete over three days, taking part in the 200m individual sprint, 500m individual sprint, and the 500m team sprint with another Manchester Metropolitan University Sports Scholar, also named Georgia. In the 500m team sprint, a very close final left 'the Georgias' with a silver medal. Then, after qualifying fastest in both of her individual sprint events, Georgia Holt raced hard through the stages to become the 2019 BUCS Champion. She said: "Winning wasn't on the cards in my head; a back injury just a couple of months beforehand had stunted my training, so to go and race over two days without any 'niggles' was relieving, to say the least! The standard of riding had improved from last year, and in the last race of the individual sprint finals, my opponent and I ended up sprinting for the entire three laps at full capacity. It was probably the worst race I have ever had to ride; I was lying on the floor for a fair while afterwards, trying to recover! Despite that, it was such an enjoyable weekend,

and I'm so proud to have represented my university so well." Next for Georgia are the National Track Championships in Manchester in January. She added: "I'll be competing in the individual sprint, keirin, and 500m time trial over those three days, so it will be a really good chance to see how I've progressed since BUCS!"



Richard Palmer (83) (pictured, below right): "I recently ran the Virtual London Marathon at Rutland Water to raise money for my friend, **Andrew Ramen (83)**, who passed away in 2019 in his early 50s. Diagnosed with an incurable brain tumour in 2009, Andrew's chosen charity was Brain Tumour Research. On the day, the marathon route around the peninsula at Rutland Water was quite tough, so there were some slower miles. The last six were tougher, but the push to complete the route was driven by thinking of Andrew and the way that his life was taken so early. I now have a few months off, as I also have a place in London in October 2021 (COVID-19 permitting), so the Virtual London Marathon was really a preparation run! Andrew would be proud of the efforts made to support this great charity, and to help save lives in the future."



After winning the public vote in Channel 4's *The Circle* last year, **Tim Wilson (79)** was already aware of how it felt to live in lockdown, and he refers to his time in *The Circle* as just that. In an article featured in *WHYTT Magazine*, where he is interviewed by the editor-in-chief, Florence Bailey, about being an artist and animator, Tim talks about his time working in animation and education, with him finding time during lockdown to draw and be creative. He said: "Indeed, since coming out of *The Circle*, I have had a blast of creative energy, and I hope that the fruits of this will be seen shortly!" The article mentions how big a character Tim is, and how his work in animation is something that he has always drawn on throughout his life. He spoke about his illustration work for the *Radio Times* in the mid-1990s as something that he thoroughly enjoyed, due to its quick turnaround. We hope to be able to welcome Tim back to the College very soon, to enable him to share his talents and wisdom with our current students.



Image credit ©rodleon

There have been several articles printed in the press and online about how the British Army has secured funding from the government for 500 new armoured vehicles. Old Ratcliffian **Will Higham (10)** has been influential in bringing these machines, known as Boxers, to the British Army – an achievement of which he should be immensely proud. Will said: "I was the lead technical negotiator in the negotiation team that secured the final deal for the Ministry of Defence. My day-to-day role in



Having left the College 25 years ago, **Ed Gamble (95)** and **Adrian Farnham (95)** recently returned to the school, accompanying their daughters, Cora and Sage, as they began their Ratcliffe journey in the Swans class. They're pictured here on the girls' first day.

Nicholas Tomlinson (56) celebrated his 90th birthday this year. With a little help from the Ratcliffian Association, he was delighted to receive a visit from **Fr David Tobin (59)** and former Association Secretary Jackie Bennett, who visited him together at his home in Market Harborough. Jackie baked him a cake, and Fr David took him communion. Jackie said that Nicholas was thrilled to see them both. She added that she was pleased to be back in touch with him, as she used to enjoy her long conversations with him whilst she was Association Secretary, and she will be visiting him again.

the lead-up to the negotiations was as an engineering manager, responsible for the integration of mission systems, which are all the 'gizmos and gadgets' that go onto the vehicle, such as the communications equipment. Typically, these gadgets tend to be worth more than the vehicles themselves! Following the success of these negotiations, I have been promoted to lead engineer on another multi-billion-pound defence project."

Kate Adlington (née Rumbold) (97) is based at the University of Birmingham, where she's recently been working on a collaboration with the National Literacy Trust to set up a regional hub – called 'Birmingham Stories' – to help promote reading and boost literacy levels in the city. She said: "One of my favourite parts of this project has been working with adult learners and helping to build their confidence when reading unfamiliar texts. They bring so much motivation and life experience to the classroom, and I'm learning a lot from them. I work part-time, and I was fortunate to be able to continue to do so through lockdown, while also spending lots of time with my young family – a real bonus before Michael, now four, started school this autumn. Meanwhile, my sister, **Gemma Thomas (née Rumbold) (01)**, has been very busy at The White Horse Inn in Seagrave, providing takeaway food and drink, and grocery deliveries, to the local community throughout lockdown – amazing work!"



Sam Spillane (née Murphy) (91) has run her own event management business, SJ Events, since 2005. However, with this being on hold due to the pandemic, she has now launched a suite of business services for those who need ad hoc support with their communications, including press releases, presentations, websites, sales collateral, social media posts, and proofreading. Sam continues to offer support to LOROS, and she has been instrumental in facilitating their annual golf event, ensuring that the operation and logistics conform to all governmental guidance and safety measures. Sam is also an active governor at Ratcliffe, supporting her long-term friend and classmate **Louise Marsden (née Bullen) (91)** in her role as chairwoman. As ever, Sam has been keen to keep the spirit of Ratcliffe alive, despite the current challenges, and she recently organised a surprise virtual birthday party

for **Aisling Mitchell (née Murray) (92)** and **Sebako Siame (91)**. **Patrick Meredith (91)**, **Paul Ferguson (91)**, **Dan Bunnag (91)**, and **Ciaran Murray (91)** all made virtual appearances from their corners of the world, despite the fact that Patrick is now living in New Zealand, with an 11-hour time difference! 2021 marks 30 years since this group left the school, and plans are already afoot to celebrate this landmark occasion, however that may come to be!

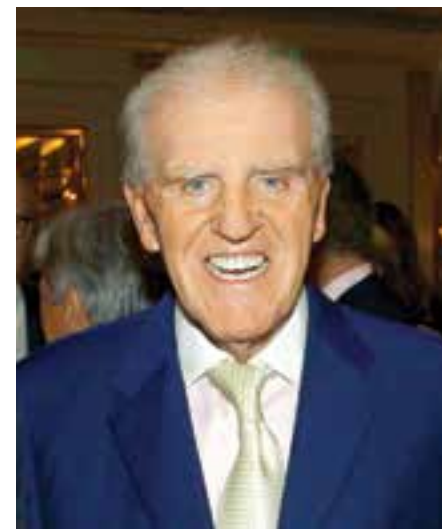


Fr Ted Mullen (60) celebrated his 50th anniversary as a Rosminian priest with a special Mass, held at St Theresa's in Birstall, on Friday 21st February. Marking 50 years to the day of his ordination, the service was concelebrated by Fr Ted, Fr Provincial Chris Fuse, **Fr Simon Giles (60)**, **Fr David Tobin (59)**, and Fr Anthony Furlong, with a celebratory gathering held afterwards. A particular highlight was the presentation to Fr Ted of a scroll signed by Pope Francis, along with gifts from his Birstall parishioners. **Fr Anthony Meredith (57)** recalled: "Fr Ted was ordained a priest in our house at Porta Latina in Rome, along with several others, by Cardinal Wright of Pittsburgh, USA. After his ordination, Fr Ted spent 16 years pastorally involved at Ratcliffe College; he was in charge of the RAF section of the Cadet Force, supported sports lessons (particularly athletics), and he found time to teach Science. For the last 34 years, Fr Ted has worked in parishes, with the exception of one year spent in Rome in our International House of Studies. He has



spent time in Dollis Hill in North London, St Mary's in Loughborough, and St Marie's and the Sacred Heart, both in Rugby. He also spent five years as Provincial in our English and Welsh Province. Fr Ted has always valued community life, and even now, he lives with us at the Rosmini Centre, while caring for the parishes of Birstall and Rothley. We wish him well. Ad multos annos."

Tony Gallagher (70) was delighted to find out that he is to be awarded a knighthood in the 2020 Queen's Birthday Honours list. He said that it was an "absolute surprise" to be given the title of Knight Bachelor for "services to land development and the property business". The official ceremony will take place at Buckingham Palace, where he will meet the Queen, in 2021. Tony lives in Chipping Norton, Oxfordshire, but he has strong links to Coventry, Warwickshire, and Solihull. He is described as a British entrepreneur who, over four decades, has built a huge land development and commercial investments portfolio, donated significant sums to charity and other worthy causes, and put in place the infrastructure to provide jobs and homes for thousands of people.

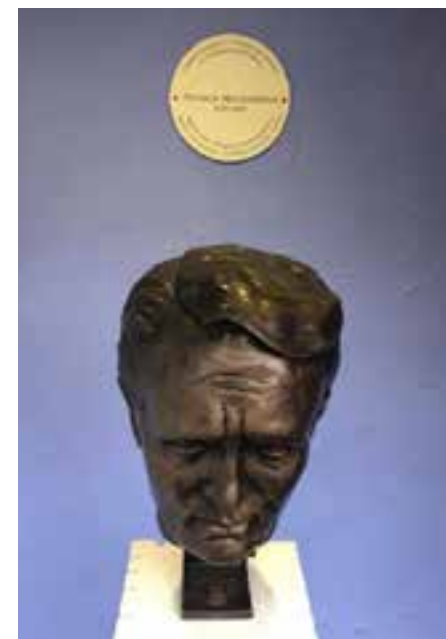


Andrew Duffield (68) and **Mark Leslie (68)** celebrated their 70th birthdays this year. Andrew marked the occasion with a family gathering in Manchester, and instead of a planned trip to Rome (cancelled, due to COVID-19), he spent a few days down in Devon. Meanwhile, Mark sent us this update: "We moved to the Cotswolds at the end of February, to a hamlet called Widford, a mile from Burford, in the valley of the Windrush. Widford is, rather appropriately, a 'deserted medieval village' that was wiped out by the Black Death. After moving in, we abandoned the

packing cases and had a family weekend in the New Forest, followed by a week in The Gambia with friends to celebrate my birthday (below), returning to a world that, within days, was in the grip of a pandemic. Lockdown was a great opportunity to settle in, decorate, and make the most of living in our Cotswold bubble!"



Stephen Moorhouse (68): "I went to Portmeirion in the summer for a family celebration. It was absolutely excellent. For me, of course, the special connection was Old Ratcliffian **Patrick McGoohan (44)**, who filmed *The Prisoner* in this Welsh location. He had great stature in the TV and film industry, and he was held in high regard by many of his contemporaries, and those who followed him. Surprising to some, one of my favourite films is *Braveheart*, because it features Patrick McGoohan and **Ian Bannen (46)**, both ORs, as the opposing kings. They both act everyone else off the screen. It's a great film to inspire budding thespians at the College." A plaque dedicated to Patrick McGoohan can be found in the Headmaster's Corridor at Ratcliffe.



OR STORIES: LIFE IN A PANDEMIC

Living through lockdown during the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic, the spirit of Ratcliffe shone bright. Here, the Ratcliffe community share their stories of hope, resilience, and inspirational personal challenges.



Victoria Meynell (née Illingworth) (00):

"As most of us reflect on what has been a challenging year, I, too, am looking back with a mixture of emotions. I'm still licking my wounds from what can only be described as some of the most difficult months, both personally and professionally, coupled with some fantastic lockdown memories as a family of five, and my experience of life back on the front line. It's fair to say I'm praying for a healthy and quiet 2021! Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, I continued to work full-time for the British Heart Foundation within the Health Services Engagement team. I love this job; it's so varied, and I get to support some fantastic services and health systems to ensure that they are delivering the best possible care for people affected by heart and circulatory conditions. I also spend some of my time working directly with NHS England and NHS Improvement on national health policy. Neither of these roles are directly patient-facing, and so, during the peak of the pandemic, I chose to join NHS Professionals, and I spent some annual leave and weekends back on the front line.

I genuinely think that, when you sign up to a career like nursing or medicine, wherever you end up, there is always something that calls you back when you're needed most. I felt compelled to step up and support my fellow NHS colleagues during such a difficult time. Within a matter of days, I was walking into a hospital that I'd never previously worked in, an hour from home, and right onto a COVID ward. I'm pretty

sure that pure adrenaline got me through that first shift; it had been almost 10 years since my last clinical ward shift, so it was pretty daunting, to say the least! What really struck me was the fact that the NHS staff all just rolled up their sleeves and got on with what needed to be done. A lot of the traditional 'roles' had gone out of the window, and the sense of camaraderie was phenomenal. It's fair to say, though, that nothing prepared me for dealing with a bereavement within the first 90 minutes of my first 12-hour shift. In over 15 years in the NHS, I have dealt with my share of death and the dying, but there is something that will stay with me forever about having the privilege of holding a person's hand while they took their last breath that day. COVID visiting restrictions meant that families were not able to be there. That was the stark reality, and I wasn't going to let them leave this world alone. The rest of my shifts went by in a blur of A&E, medical wards, and admissions, but somehow, the dreaded 3am to 5am period on a Saturday night shift still haunts me! (Those of you who do night shifts will understand!)

Between home-schooling our three children (pictured, below), day jobs, and front-line work, there was little time for much else. After a few weeks passed, it was time for me to take a step back; the peak had passed, and the pressure on the hospitals was reducing. I'd done as much as I was able to, and to be honest, my children and husband needed me back. My short period back on the front line was a drop in the ocean. The real heroes of this pandemic are all of the key workers who continued to deliver care and services, day in and day out, and, of course, Captain Sir Tom Moore!

Since my period back on the front line, life has continued in a daze of work, home-



schooling, attempted holidays, an actual short holiday, and illness. Whilst it's not been easy, I have learnt that, often, you are so much more capable than you think. There is always a little more room for something, and that's one thing that I will take away from this pandemic. It doesn't have to be a grand gesture; it might be checking on a neighbour, or adding some extra shopping for a friend who is isolating. Love is not always enough, but if you add compassion, courage, hope, grit, determination, and a good dose of cuddles from those who mean the most to you into the mix, I'm pretty sure we will be going into 2021 as better people. For now, though, I'm focusing on recovering from illness, my family, and putting my running shoes back to use. Thankfully (for both them and us), our two boys are both now at De Lisle School in Loughborough, and our daughter is at Bishop Ellis. I have a newfound respect for our education system; sadly, it often takes something being taken away to realise what a privilege schooling and healthcare is! A teacher I am definitely not! I wish you all a happy and healthy 2021."



In August, **Ben Surtees-Smith (99)** took on the Bone Cancer Research Trust Challenge of running 100 miles, but he totally smashed this target by running a total of 323 miles - 100 of which were in one week! He set out to raise £150, but his total fundraising efforts reached an incredible £1,336! Ben said: "I run with

Wreake Runners, a local club in Syston, but this sort of mileage pushed me to my limits. My daily mileage ranged from 3 to 16 miles, most of which I did solo, with some of my Wreake friends joining me on the longer runs." During his challenge, he was told by several friends on Facebook that he was like Forrest Gump, as he just couldn't stop running, so, on day 28, he decided to dress up as the man himself! Ben said: "I did it as a bit of fun, and as a talking point. It was surprisingly comfy to run in chinos, my checked shirt, belt, and cap!" He added: "I did the challenge because, throughout 2020, many charities weren't receiving their normal donations, due to practically all events being cancelled because of coronavirus. I wanted to use my running for something good - something memorable! I just want to say a huge thank you to everyone who donated and supported me throughout this challenge. It's an amazing feeling, knowing that, together, we've contributed to changing somebody's life. Remember, 'Life is like a box of chocolates - you never know what you're going to get!'" He also thanks the BCRT for the challenge and for being so supportive during the epic month of August! He said: "Well done to everyone who took part - you're all heroes!"



Hollie Stone (07): "It's been an unusual year for me and my tea room (Beardsley's in Rearsby), but one that, equally, seems to have gone by at a record pace! Having just celebrated our third birthday, it's fair to say that we've not seen the year out as we had expected - I'm sure nobody has! That said, there has certainly been a lot learnt from the challenges of 2020, and I have been so humbled by our customers' support and loyalty during such unknown

times. Having had a couple of quiet weeks at the end of March as people adjusted to life in lockdown, word of our newly adapted takeaway hatch quickly began to spread, and it seemed to be the perfect pit stop for those out and about doing their daily exercise. With so many people, like us, celebrating their birthdays and special occasions within the new restrictions, we were kept busy providing takeaway afternoon tea packages, allowing friends and families to have their very own high tea parties in the comfort of their own homes and gardens, including several fellow Old Ratcliffians. Whilst still continuing all of our extended takeaway services, we are now back open for three days a week, welcoming people to dine with us, both inside and outside. We have also just recruited more staff into the team, which will allow us to extend our opening times again very soon (most likely by the time this reaches print), and to make use of our newly developed sheltered outside seating area. I hope that no-one is faring too badly this year. Should you find yourself in the area, please do pop in for a coffee and a reminisce."

Joey Higham (16): "During lockdown, I ran five marathons in five days, with no training, to raise money for the mental health charity Mind. I knew I wanted to help the charity when I read about a New York doctor who took her own life after helping to treat COVID-19 patients. It highlighted to me that no-one is immune to the pressures that are going on around us. Everyone is running their own marathon at the moment, but the important thing to remember is, no matter how long your marathon may seem, you're not running it alone.

I ran my marathons on five consecutive days, starting on Wednesday 6th May and finishing on Sunday 10th May, in between finishing my coursework and the start of my exams at Exeter University. I said that, if, by the end of day one, I had raised £100, I would try and run a second; if I had raised £200 by the end of day two, I would try and run a third; if I had raised £400 by the end of day three, I would try and run a fourth; and if I had raised £600 by the end of day four, I would try and run a fifth. I've currently raised £10,953 for Mind.

I ran the same route on all five days, which consisted of running around the same 600-metre field (I believe that over 100 miles of the total 131 miles completed were spent going around that same field) in Loughborough, less than a kilometre away



from my house. The furthest I had ever run prior to that was over two years ago, when I completed a half-marathon. I played hockey at university, but all games finished at the beginning of March, and I had done very little fitness since then.

This was, by far, the hardest thing I have ever done, both mentally and physically. At the end of day two, my body started struggling, and I had blisters on top of blisters. While running, there were multiple times that I thought I would be unable to get to the end of that day, let alone run another few marathons! I completed the first one in just over six hours, but the final two runs both took me more than 10 hours to complete; the pain I was in was genuinely indescribable. But the level of kindness and generosity that people were showing kept me going, and I just aimed to keep putting one foot in front of the other. Now it's over, I definitely plan on staying horizontal for a while."

Mark Gamble (71), whose Two Birds distillery usually produces gin, turned his equipment over to making hand sanitiser, after recognising a need for increased production due to a national shortage at that time.





Emily Hollis (15): "Lockdown has been a whirlwind for me, as it has for many of us. After graduating from the University of Leeds in 2019, I was offered an opportunity that I took as a stopgap until I found my dream job. However, time went on, and it wasn't until February 2020, when something changed in my life, that I had the push I needed to hand in my notice. Two weeks after moving home from Manchester, COVID hit, and all of my plans suddenly came crashing down on me. Luck and timing were not on my side. In life, we seem to set such high expectations of ourselves that, when something goes wrong, we believe that we've failed. Having so much time on my hands was a new experience, but one that I will cherish forever. Spending time with family and friends (albeit virtually, with many a glass of wine), proved valuable, helping me to reflect. It also gave me time to help the vulnerable, by doing their shopping, and by providing a friendly voice down the phone for those who were isolating. During lockdown, I was lucky enough to be offered a job at Huel, a brand whose mission it is to make nutritionally complete, convenient, affordable food, with minimum impact on animals and the environment, and whose culture is like nothing I have ever experienced before. We put people before profit and, most importantly, do the right thing. For my role, I have moved to Berkhamsted, a beautiful town in Hertfordshire, which is surrounded by wonderful countryside and is home to many great pubs! Looking back, leaving my previous job was one of the best decisions

I've ever made. Change can be scary, but we should accept it, take action, and thrive. Having left Ratcliffe five years ago, many things have changed, but the incredible friends that I made at school never have – we just drink more tea and go to bed earlier! Here's to the next five years!"

Richard Wallace (79): "As senior vice president (TV and production) of Syco Entertainment, I spent lockdown with my family in London, but I had the challenge of making preparations for the *America's Got Talent* live shows in Los Angeles. As an executive producer on the show, my working Zoom day tended to run from 4pm to 2am (or later), to reflect the eight-hour time difference. In July, with direct flights to the US barred to Europeans, I flew from London to Madrid, to Mexico City, and then to Cabo, where I sat for 14 days to get 'COVID clean', in order to hop over the border into Los Angeles and join the crew.



Normally, our show is broadcast live from the Dolby Theatre in Hollywood (home of the Oscars), in front of a 3,500-strong audience. We deliver a two-hour performance show on Tuesday nights and an hour-long results show on Wednesdays, both live at 8pm on NBC. However, COVID meant that we had to pivot rapidly, and NBC made Studios 22 and 23 at their Universal Studios lot and neighbouring theme park available to us. The 400-acre site was largely deserted, apart from us, and strict COVID rules and procedures made sure that the environment was extremely safe.

Normally, I would spend show day crammed into a backstage broadcast truck with 14 other people. In COVID world, we sat separately in a room the size of an aircraft hangar, with a set of monitors each, and strictly enforced arrowed directions to navigate the room and exits. Without a live audience, we supersized Zoom technology to create a virtual audience in wraparound screens who watched from home as the show went out, reacting and enjoying the action as if they'd been in the room. Similarly, we were unable to do 'live' creatives (such as

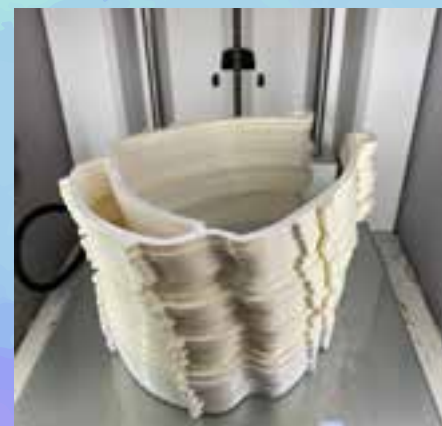
building props for staging), so we used XR technology to create virtual worlds for our contestants to perform within. We also used every corner of the lot; New York Street, Little Mexico, Western Town (last used by Quentin Tarantino in *Once Upon A Time in Hollywood*), and even Harry Potter's Hogwarts Castle became staging backdrops.

Some contestants were unable to travel to Los Angeles, so many performances were remotely directed in Australia, India, and Taipei. It got complicated, but as always happens when an insurmountable obstacle like COVID gets in the way, we were forced to think smarter. Those that did make it to LA were kept in a safety bubble at the nearby Hilton Hotel, and separated from the production team (bar their own personal producer). This was our biggest hurdle; the rolling conversation between the contestants and producers is part of our regular process, from dropping in on rehearsals to talking through creative choices. Instead, we communicated via Zoom or FaceTime, even though we were a matter of yards away from each other.

Just to make matters even more complicated, my boss (and star of our judging panel), Simon Cowell (pictured, left), had a horrific bike accident at his Malibu compound three days before our first show, putting him out of action with a broken back for the entire run. Nevertheless, in the end, we got the show on air. After five months of prep and seven weeks of intense (sometimes fraught) teamwork, we had the rest of COVID-bound Hollywood calling us up with just one question: 'How the hell did you do that?!'. There was only one answer: 'With great difficulty.'



After leaving Ratcliffe, **Harriot Rockey (12)** graduated from Newcastle University, travelled the world, and then went on to co-found her own company, Influence Network, with her business partner, Mike Duma. Since the launch of this social media marketing platform in 2017, they have worked with brands such as Rolls-Royce, Aldi, and I Saw It First. During the pandemic, Harriot and Mike helped with the PPE shortages faced in the NHS by 3D printing protective mask frames (pictured, below), which were then donated where they were most needed across the UK. With two printers at their disposal, they also worked with the local police, who added the visors to their printed mask frames. Their aim was to print over 100 a week, to ensure that nurses working on the front line got the protection that they needed as quickly as possible. The first batch were gratefully received by the Royal Derby Hospital.



Matthew Harris (16) was part of a group of over 50 volunteers who launched a non-profit interactive app, now-u, on July 1st 2020. During the worldwide pandemic, these volunteers from across the UK and beyond dedicated their time in lockdown to work on building a platform for change. Matthew said: "The central aim of now-u is

to educate, inspire, and empower people to help tackle some of the world's most pressing problems. Whilst the coronavirus pandemic is a global tragedy, first and foremost, it has highlighted people's willingness to help others in their times of need." Users are invited to participate in regular individual actions and to set challenges for influencers, companies, and governments. These actions, which are the key part of each monthly campaign, include signing petitions and open letters, pledging behavioural changes, sharing campaigns on social media, and making small donations of time or money to a cause. Matthew studied Chemical Engineering at the University of Cambridge and was looking for something to do immediately after graduating in June. His friend from university, Lizzie Elgar, came up with the idea for the app. She explained: "People can often feel overwhelmed by large-scale problems and powerless to help. But all of us have huge power to drive change. The global tragedy of the coronavirus pandemic has highlighted people's willingness to help others in their times of need." Matthew is lead copywriter, responsible for the team of copywriters who produce written content for now-u, from blog articles, newsletters, and video scripts to app and website content. He added: "Volunteering with now-u has been a tremendous experience. It's given me an insight into how our individual, small actions can manifest into lasting change in the world. It's been a pleasure working with such a diverse, dedicated group of people, and any current or former Ratcliffe students who would like some volunteering experience are welcome to get in touch."



Sophie Riley (15): "After leaving Ratcliffe, I moved to Manchester, where I have been gradually ticking off the years of a seven-year medical degree, which includes a foundation year, five years of medical training, and an optional extra year doing an intercalated degree. At the outbreak of the pandemic, I was in the middle of my fourth year, which was suddenly interrupted. With the cancellation of all clinical placements and exams, I was left at a loose end, so I started applying for a variety of jobs. I managed to get a job as a clinical support worker at the NHS Nightingale North West Hospital, located in the Manchester Central Convention Complex. The work entailed assisting the nurses and providing care for patients with COVID-19. The experience that I gained in the two months that I worked there, prior to its closure, taught me so much about how to deliver good patient care. I hope that I will take the skills that I learnt in this job into my future career as a doctor. My experience with CCF at Ratcliffe gave me some insight into the management of trauma patients, and from this, I have developed an interest in pre-hospital medicine. I was fortunate enough to get a place on a course run by Barts and the London, and the London Air Ambulance, where I will complete an intercalated BSc year in Pre-Hospital Medicine, before returning to Manchester in September 2021 to complete the last year of my medical degree. I'm excited to be spending a coveted year in London. As a bonus, I'm so lucky that many of my Ratcliffe school friends are also currently living in London, and I'm looking forward to getting to spend some time with them, too! I continue to value the time I spent at Ratcliffe College, and I feel privileged to have been part of the Ratcliffe community."



Catherine Burns (96): "In January, I got a call from the BBC News Health team. They were very busy working on reports about a virus affecting people in Wuhan, China, and asked if they could 'borrow me' from my usual department for a week or so to help out. I'm still there now, having spent the year as a BBC health correspondent covering coronavirus. We're working on this single story, but trying to cover every angle. There's the science: the virus itself, testing, face coverings, and developments in treatments and vaccines. There's politics, and the economy. But, at the heart of it are people, ranging from those who don't have any symptoms to patients who get scarily sick. Survivors who spent weeks on ventilators and bereaved relatives. NHS staff and care workers."

While I've been talking about it all on TV, some of my Ratcliffe friends are doctors who have been out there dealing with it in reality. I've had lots of helpful conversations with **Georgette Oni (96)** and **Georgina Meredith (96)**. I have so much respect for them, and for all of the healthcare workers, who have been incredible this year. As a journalist, it's been a strange privilege and responsibility working on such a huge, generation-defining story. One of the most bizarre parts of those early days was being classed as a key worker, and having to go to the Central London newsroom when most other people were having to stay at home. I spent (rare) lunch breaks walking through a deserted Oxford Circus and Carnaby Street. It was eerie. The closed shop windows were still full of Easter Bunny displays as summer started. It's been a time packed full of emotion, and so I've definitely had my fair share of online trolls criticising everything about me. It's about as fun as you'd expect. But I've also achieved things at work that I never thought I would get to do.

In the summer, Leicester became a huge part of the story. One Sunday, I got a call from the news desk asking me to get up the M1 as quickly as possible to report on an imminent local lockdown. My first priority was a live report from near Leicester's

Clock Tower. While I was waiting to go on air, I looked across at the McDonald's that was, basically, the main part of my Ratcliffe social life between the ages of 13 and 15. Then, for anyone who thinks TV is glamorous, I edited my piece for the *Ten O'Clock News* in the Shires (Highcross) car park. A few days later, there was another strange Ratcliffe coincidence, when I was interviewed on BBC Radio Leicester by the lovely **Ben Jackson (88)**.

Away from work, there's real life. I've had close family getting sick with COVID. And then there's home-schooling. I work part-time, so on my days off, I was doing phonics and number bonds with my kids. I've loved having all of the extra time with them, but I'm definitely not cut out to teach. My husband is much better than me, and he managed it with a full-time job, too. When I look back on 2020 in the future, I'll mostly think how much I missed my mum and dad; I hate not being able to see them as often as I'm used to. I'm 100 miles from Leicestershire, but sometimes, it seems like an impossible distance."

Alex Slack (née Gamble) (03): "So, 2020 for me has been...different. At the beginning of lockdown, I was invited to join **Ben Jackson (88)**, Association President, Old Ratcliffian, and parent, on his BBC radio show, where I discussed my top 10 tips for coping during lockdown. Due to COVID-19, this interview was done over the phone; it was great to be featured, and Ben and I shared our usual banter! My business, The House of LM, was going well, and I had an array of events planned for 2020, including exhibitions, incentive travel, celebrity weddings, and trips to Saudi Arabia to work on music festivals. Who was to know that COVID-19 would strike, and effectively wipe out 75% of my business? However, with every big disaster comes opportunity, and I decided to launch a business plan earlier than expected."



The Circle Club was initially meant to be a virtual private members club for individuals to enjoy. However, in June 2020, this changed, and it became a private members

business club in Leicester. We now have 30 amazing members, and the club is all about philanthropy, reciprocity, and abundance. We enhance businesses and raise their profiles within the community through our unique networking opportunities. Our coaching programme encourages both personal and business growth, all while holding each member accountable, to minimise procrastination. We host big online Zoom events for anyone in the UK to attend, to help them grow and develop their mindset. Our guests have included rugby professional Greg Bateman, who spoke about resilience, and Rosemary Conley CBE (pictured, below), who talked about 10 things that she has learnt in business over the years.



I have lots of exciting things planned for 2021. The launch of the Inner Circle is scheduled for January. This will be aimed at driven and successful people, by invite only, who will receive access to exclusive lifestyle events. We will also be launching the Circle Club Foundation, so that we can donate money to not-for-profit organisations and charities in the area. The plan is to expand into Nottingham by the spring of 2021, and then into Derby towards the second half of the year. Despite all of the challenges that have arisen in 2020, I have managed to pivot both my business and my mindset, and turn negatives into positives. I love the fact that I have been able to help so many businesses in Leicestershire during these difficult times; we are all just getting used to a new way of working. I hope that all Old Ratcliffians have managed to stay safe, survive, and pivot if they have got their own businesses. I certainly miss working at Ratcliffe, not to mention all the lovely Old Ratcliffians that I used to speak to on a daily basis. It really is a special place, and I always jump at the opportunity to go and pick up my nieces and nephews from the school whenever I can."

Tuesday 6th October was not so significant for most of us, but for Charlie Slack, aged seven, it marked his 200th day of running a mile a day for charity. Charlie's mum is OR and former Ratcliffian Association Manager **Alex Slack (née Gamble) (03)**. Charlie started his challenge on March 21st 2020,

the day that schools closed, as he wanted to do something good for charity. He even said, "Look, Captain Tom Moore is walking every day like me now," when he spotted him on TV. Not even holidays, tummy pains, sickness or a swollen toe have been able to stop Charlie from completing his challenge every day. His last mile is due to take place on Christmas Eve, and the village residents of Cossington are showing their support by coming out to run this with him. Charlie is running for three charities, one of which is Meningitis Now, as he nearly died from meningitis when he was a baby. The second is Young Minds, as Charlie says that running helps the mind, and the other is a local charity called Alex's Wish, which raises money to help treat Duchenne muscular dystrophy. So far, Charlie has run over 242 miles and raised over £1,500, but he would love to reach the £2,000 mark.



George Mount (99): "How do you celebrate turning 40 in lockdown? 2020 was supposed to be a great year - one to remember for parties, holidays, catching up with school friends, and improving and expanding our business. Then, boom! COVID-19 turned the world upside down and cancelled everything. So, instead of being in Italy in March (I know, we couldn't have chosen a better location!) celebrating my wife's 40th, we were shutting our coffee shop, implementing online ordering, getting up at 4am to make sure that we were able to get all we needed from the market and, of course, home-schooling! Since then, we have put a collection hatch in place, so that we can provide food and drinks safely with social distancing, continued with deliveries, increased our 'Cooks Ready Meal' range, and implemented an online shop. This year, we even have Christmas

trees covered, with online ordering, so that you can have one delivered to your door, avoiding all the fuss of people, masks, and hand sanitiser (the new liquid gold!). Instead of the festival of fun that we had planned for my 40th in September, I got a very rare round of golf in, and then it was back to work! COVID has meant that many things have been postponed, people have missed interacting with others, businesses and jobs are at risk all over the place, and life has had to change overnight. But it has also seen some great ideas emerge, with things put in place that might never have happened if it hadn't been for the virus, and it has led to some very different ways of working. Despite the good and the bad, I am hopeful for a better 2021, and maybe even a bit of time off. I hope everyone is staying safe and well."



Mollie Page (19): "Due to the pandemic, my university experience has been massively affected. Obviously, we can't socialise as freely as we would like to, and all of the exciting events that are usually planned have now been stopped. The academic side has also been affected, as we can't go into actual lectures and experience face-to-face learning with our tutors. As I'm training to be a primary school teacher specialising in special educational needs, I should be on placement in schools, getting valuable experience with children. However, my placement school can't accommodate this, so everything is virtual. To make matters worse, I can't even observe lessons online, due to some safeguarding issues. This means that I can only have meetings with the class teachers and other members of staff to find out more about the school that I will, hopefully, be attending for seven weeks in the new year (depending on the COVID situation). Despite all of these changes, I'm still enjoying university

life, and I've made some lifelong friends. I think that Ratcliffe definitely armed me with the tools needed to overcome the challenges that I'm currently facing. I have a positive outlook for the future, and I can't wait to be able to experience face-to-face teaching again." Mollie is pictured with her brother, Tom, who is a current Year 13 student at Ratcliffe.



Dominic O'Connor (90) is a consultant anaesthetist at Salford Royal Infirmary. During the pandemic, operating theatres were transformed into critical care areas for the treatment of coronavirus patients. Theatre teams were deployed to assist with the management of critically ill coronavirus patients, whilst maintaining access to operating theatres for emergency surgery and trauma. Dominic's wife, Dr Emily Shardlow, is a consultant at the University Hospital of South Manchester, specialising in intensive care medicine. At the peak of the pandemic, she managed the care of over 50 critically ill patients with coronavirus, which is over three times the hospital's usual capacity.





Dan Amies (10): "As a specialist geographic officer within the Royal Engineers, having completed an MSc in Geospatial Intelligence at the Royal School of Military Survey, I was deployed under Operation Rescript, the Ministry of Defence's response to the pandemic, to Skipton House in London. There, I provided strategic decision-making support to the Project Nightingale team within NHS England. With my geographic technician soldiers, we provided advice on where to site the Nightingale hospitals. This was achieved through a combination of multi-criteria analysis and service area mapping, overlaid onto population density, population density of over 64s, and multi-deprivation index mapping. This identified locations for Nightingale hospitals which would provide the best coverage, without wasting financial, personnel, and material resources. Crucially, it identified to the trusts those areas which could not be covered, enabling them to focus their efforts carefully. It was insightful and rewarding to be part of this planning at a national level, where I also had the opportunity to brief the Chief of Defence Staff. I am aware that I had a very different (dare I say enjoyable) experience during the pandemic, compared to most. I am humbled by the sacrifices, pains, risks, and hardships endured by all, but particularly by those in the NHS and on the front line. My thoughts go out to those who have been seriously affected."

A dedicated former Ratcliffe student, **James Howling (20)**, supported the incredible work of the heroic NHS workers by making essential PPE equipment at home on his own 3D printer, using skills acquired at Ratcliffe. He started the initiative as part of a group called 3D Crowd, which had approximately 5,000 members and received orders for over 300,000 shields during the first few months. The project was a real collaboration effort, with James working closely with

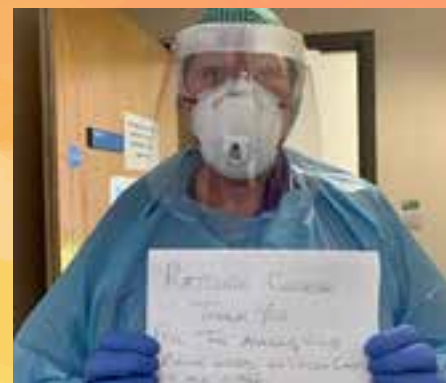
his father's contacts at the Rotary Club of Melton Mowbray, who showed their support by funding the filament for his 3D printer. Ratcliffe also loaned their school printer, allowing James to create a more streamlined process. Headmaster Jon Reddin said: "The school community is extremely proud of the initiative that James has shown in this project, together with his compassion to help others at this difficult time." Thanks to a JustGiving campaign, coupled with a donation from the Ratcliffe Parents' Association, James was able to purchase additional supplies and another three printers, enabling him to produce around 300 shields per day. Ratcliffe also extended its thanks to the Provincial Grand Lodge Charity Fund Trustees, who donated a further 3D printer to James' efforts, which will later be donated to Ratcliffe's Design and Technology Department. The shields were distributed to the Queen's Medical Centre in Nottingham, as well as care homes in the Leicester and Melton Mowbray areas, and to front-line workers, such as first responders and district nurses.



Ratcliffe's Head of Design and Technology, Adam Seth, and Head of Mathematics, Gary Higham, joined forces with James Howling to increase the production of PPE within the College. Over 250 visors were produced by Mr Seth (below) during the Easter period, many of which were delivered to Nottingham City Hospital by Mr Higham, along with 58 pairs of safety goggles, donated by the Science Department. Debbie Raynor, Ward



Manager at the Nottingham City Hospital Burns Unit (below), extended her thanks, saying: "The donations were so welcomed and very much appreciated. The team have been informed, and they would also like to send their thanks for delivering this equipment to us. Donations such as this help us get through the day, knowing that members of the public support us in our work."



Meanwhile, many more Ratcliffe staff members and students helped to support local key workers and front-line staff in the NHS during lockdown. The Linnett family produced PPE together; George (Year 13) and Sam (Year 11) were in charge of 3D printing, while Grace (Year 8) and Anna (Year 5) attached the sheeting to make the visors. Their first batch was delivered to their uncle, **Ben O'Connor (98)**, who works as a GP in Leicestershire, with more supplies going to the Leicester Royal Infirmary and Leicester General Hospital. Alex Davison (Year 12) also manufactured visors at home using his very own 3D printer, which were then sent on to Mr Dziemianko, who donated them to his mother's nursing home. Zara (Year 7) and Tilly Ety (Year 4) made fabric headbands for nurses, which attach to their masks and make them much more comfortable to wear for long shifts. They also made fabric bags for nurses to wash their uniforms in, and sent them to Glenfield Hospital. Ratcliffe staff member Penny Smith also did her bit by making headbands for nurses, which were sent to Leicester General Hospital. Headmaster Jon Reddin said: "I am so very grateful to everyone who has been working flat out to produce PPE for local hospitals and care homes, as have many members of the public and companies at this vital time in this pandemic. The work they are doing is phenomenal." After setting up a JustGiving page, Old Ratcliffians from far and wide donated to help fund the Ratcliffe community's efforts in supporting vital key workers during this terrible time.

Recent Ratcliffe leavers **George Linnett (20)**, **Harry Culpin (20)**, and **Alex Bown (20)**, worked for the NHS Track and Trace at a variety of testing sites in Leicestershire, prior to taking up their respective places



at university. Alex (pictured, left) said: "I worked for three months at the Birstall COVID Testing Centre – the biggest in the UK. I worked in test assistance, as well as traffic management. Working with hundreds of patients a day allowed me to witness, first-hand, the impact that the virus has had on individuals and families alike. The team on site worked tirelessly to make the testing process as comfortable as possible for all of the patients. It was a very fulfilling experience, and I was delighted to be an essential part of COVID-19 testing for the NHS."

Peter Coxe (72): "The recent update from the Association about the pandemic has triggered a memory of my alma mater. In 1970, during my Fifth Form Easter holidays, my sister was possibly in contact with a person suffering from German measles (rubella). This was unknown until after my brother and I had boarded a train from Exeter to Birmingham, on our way to

Leicester. With no mobile phones in those days, all our parents could do was inform the College. On arrival, my brother and I were kindly ushered to the Infirmary, where we were isolated until travelling home the next morning. The teaching staff were quick in preparing appropriate homework for us both. Our parents made it easy for us to get on with our work while enjoying some free time at home, even though they knew little about my brother's A Level Science or the O Level subjects that I was studying. Despite spending two weeks away from school, we both did very well in the public exams, and it's a great credit to the College that, before the days of online education or home-schooling, we were enabled to continue with our education with great efficiency. Thankfully, we did not contract the virus, but the wise precaution prevented risk to the domestic staff and others for whom that disease might have had serious consequences. This anecdote provides an earlier, albeit small, instance of quarantine."

RATCLIFFE REVISITED

Peter Tams (56), Old Ratcliffian and Past President of the Ratcliffian Association, visited the College on Thursday 30th January. Peter was accompanied by his son, Richard Tams, who is a governor at Ampleforth (pictured together, right). Shown around the College by Development Director **Andrew Yell (82)**, Peter was delighted to be back in the grounds of his old school. He was very impressed with the transformation of the Lockhart Garden, recalling his old days spent in the Square. He added: "I had a most enjoyable day at Ratcliffe and would like to thank Andrew for his kind hospitality, which Richard and I so enjoyed. I cannot say what a great joy it was to see my alma mater in such good shape, and we were so impressed by the members of staff that we met. Thank you for the time that you generously afforded us, and I wish you well in your continued dedication to Ratcliffe and its future."



Tom Murtha (Jnr) visited Ratcliffe in December, meeting up with his old friend, **Fr Anthony Meredith (57)** during his visit (pictured together, left). He was delighted to be back at the College. Tom is the son of Tom Murtha (Snr), who was the Head of Maintenance at Ratcliffe in the 1960s. Tom Jnr also worked at the College each summer between 1966 and 1973, when he was only a teenager, painting the walls and windows in the many corridors while the students were not in the school. The family lived on a council estate on the outskirts of Leicester at the time. Fr Morris was the headmaster, and Tom Snr's time at the College coincided with that of Fr Meredith, who was, then, a very young priest.

Meeting with Association Manager Sarah Gretton, Tom Jnr recalled how all of the maintenance staff lived in Sileby and cycled to work at that time. He also recalled his greatest accomplishment: putting the roof on the old boathouse with his brother-in-law, who also worked at Ratcliffe; the boathouse was subsequently sold in later years. He also fondly remembered Herbert and Jeff, two old builders who came in to work during the summer, who are, sadly, both now deceased.

Tom Jnr recalled a sign on the College gate saying "Vagrants welcome to come in for food". They were fed in an area which now houses the Catering Department Offices. Tom Snr modernised the College's heating system in the '60s by moving them over to oil. Tom Jnr remembers the huge oil tank which used to sit in the area just outside the Catering Department back doors, by the current barrier. He and his team were based in the Boiler House, which is in the same area. This is where they worked and ate.

Tom Snr was a devout Catholic and a great boxer, and he trained the East Midlands Catholic Boys' Boxing Club, which he was very passionate about. He also told his son about a time when he was asked to dig a grave for a member of the Rosminian Order who had passed away overnight, as the usual groundsman was off ill. This unfortunate, but very amusing, story has been updated by Tom Jnr, and it can be read in full on the Ratcliffian Association website, www.ratcliffianassociation.co.uk.





REMEMBERING BRENDAN MCCABE (00)

SATURDAY 18TH JANUARY 2020

A beautiful memorial service was held at Ratcliffe in January to mark the twentieth anniversary of **Brendan McCabe's (00)** passing. Brendan attended the College until 2000, when he was tragically killed in a car accident on 14th January of that year. Brendan's family, along with many of his classmates, returned to Ratcliffe for the service, where they were able to share happy memories of their time at the school and talk about the impact that Brendan had made on their lives.

Sister Anna Patricia led a beautiful service in the Blessed Sacrament Chapel, after which candles were lit and a prayer was said at Brendan's graveside. A bouquet was placed there by **David Yau (00)** on behalf of all of Brendan's old friends who were unable to attend. Following a short walk to the front of the College, the guests assembled once more by Brendan's memorial fountain to share stories of his time as a Ratcliffe student. The McCabe family appreciates greatly that Brendan's memory lives on at Ratcliffe through the symbol of the flowing fountain in front of the College, and amongst his thoughtful friends from his schooldays.



GIVING BACK TO THE SCHOOL

INSPIRING RATCLIFFE'S FUTURE ARCHITECTS

In January 2020, Old Ratcliffian **Sylvester Cheung (95)** provided an interactive presentation on a career in the built environment. Sylvester, who is the director of SC Architects, gave the students an insight into the various factors influencing the built environment, the role of architects, and the many higher education and career opportunities in this creative area.

INSIGHTS FROM A MUSIC VENUE OWNER

In February 2020, **Elisabeth Carley-Leonard (10)** spoke to Ratcliffe students from Years 12 and 13 on the subject of running their own businesses, managing events, and utilising social media marketing effectively. She shared with the students her own experiences of breaking into the music industry and becoming a lighting and sound engineer. As the owner of The Shed, a music venue in Leicester, Elisabeth was happy to take questions from the students and give real-life examples of working in this exciting industry. We would like to thank both ORs for taking time out of their busy schedules to support this important initiative.



A TRIBUTE TO DAVID THISTLETHWAITE (50)

We were extremely saddened to learn of the passing of **David Thistlethwaite (50)** in May this year. As many of you may remember, David was the longest-serving Ratcliffian Association Secretary; his gratitude for his education at Ratcliffe drove him to 'give back' to the school for so many years after he left. He left his mark on the College and all those who knew him, and here we pay tribute to him through the memories of fellow ORs. This tribute is extended in his obituary on pages 64 and 65.

The following is an excerpt from the 1990 *Old Ratcliffian*, written by **Fr Tony Baxter (38)** on David's retirement: "This year, David retired as Secretary of the Ratcliffian Association, after over 20 years in office. These have been years of most generous and efficient service, involving a great amount of work, mostly unseen, sometimes discouraging. The Secretary's task is an extremely important one: he is, with the Treasurer, the person who knows most about the Association, who sees to the smooth running of its affairs, and who keeps Old Ratcliffians in touch with one another and with the school. David takes his place amongst those Old Ratcliffians who, over the years, have given themselves so loyally and faithfully to the Association – such people as **Ernest Galliano (1913)**, **Philip Tams (1924)**, **George Meredith (1928)**, **Roland Chamberlain (1920)** (to mention only a few) – but no one has been Association Secretary for anything approaching 20 years. In his quiet way, David has been a tower of strength, and it is largely due to him that the Association has flourished so well, and that the Annual Reunion and Meeting have been run so smoothly for the past 20 years. In all the time I had dealings with David as Secretary, I never remember a phone call to him that did not elicit a ready and cheerful response, nor can I recall David 'losing his cool' or being at a loss as to how to handle difficult situations when they arose. The Association, the College, and the different Ratcliffe Presidents during his tenure of office owe an enormous debt of gratitude to David – and also to Audrey, who has shared his work and has never grudged the time that he has given to Ratcliffe and its affairs. Ad multos annos vivant!"

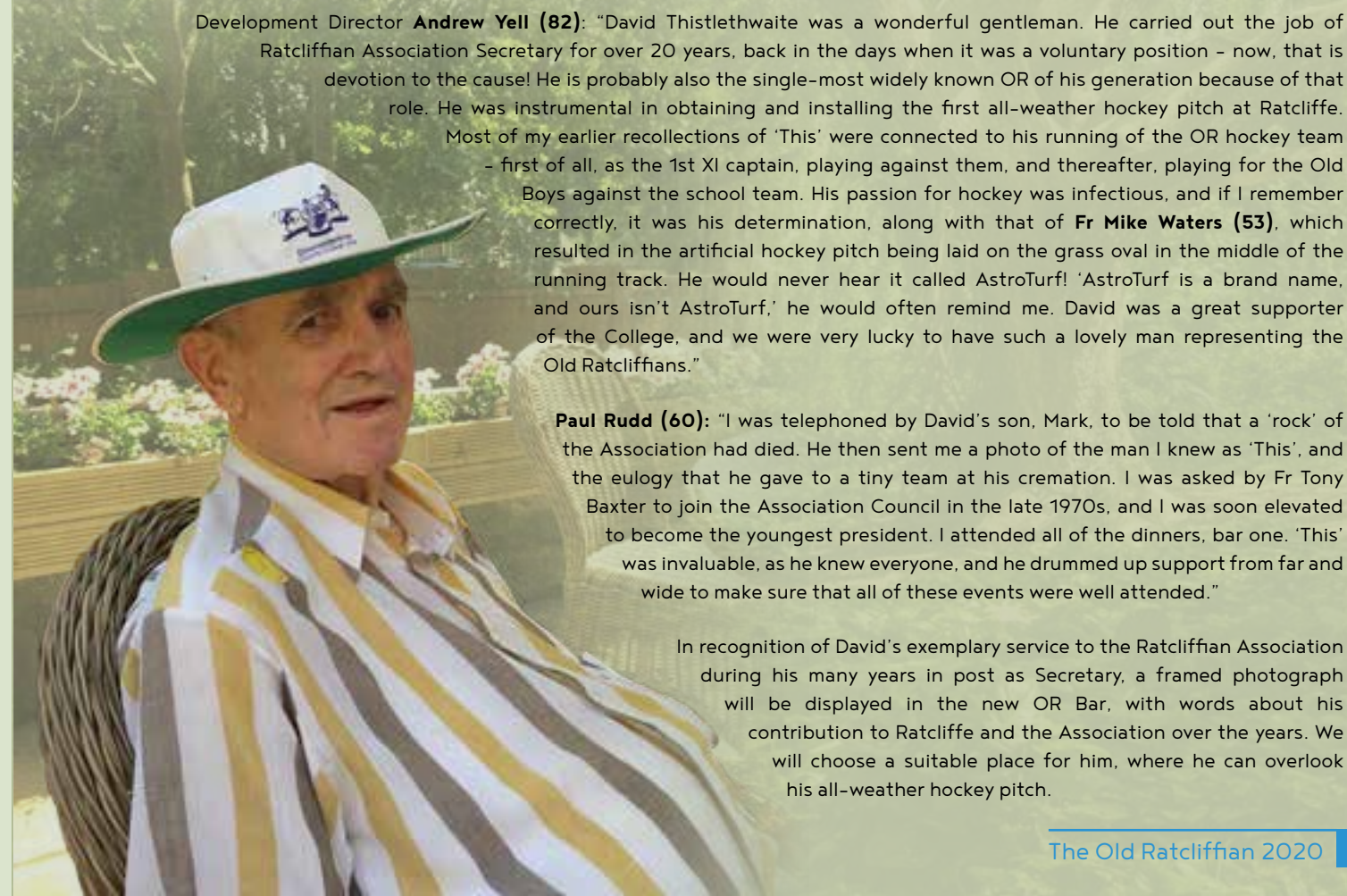
David's son, **Mark Thistlethwaite (78)**: "Dad was always supportive and encouraging in many ways. You'll remember those desk calendars that have a tear-off 'date-a-day' with a clever saying. Well, in 1979, the year after I joined the Royal Navy, Dad sent me two daily calendar messages: '25th January 1979: He that cannot obey cannot command', and '26th January 1979: If you can give your son only one gift, let it be enthusiasm'. He is still on my shoulder, encouraging me. He is the ultimate enthusiast!"

Development Director **Andrew Yell (82)**: "David Thistlethwaite was a wonderful gentleman. He carried out the job of Ratcliffian Association Secretary for over 20 years, back in the days when it was a voluntary position – now, that is devotion to the cause! He is probably also the single-most widely known OR of his generation because of that role. He was instrumental in obtaining and installing the first all-weather hockey pitch at Ratcliffe.

Most of my earlier recollections of 'This' were connected to his running of the OR hockey team – first of all, as the 1st XI captain, playing against them, and thereafter, playing for the Old Boys against the school team. His passion for hockey was infectious, and if I remember correctly, it was his determination, along with that of **Fr Mike Waters (53)**, which resulted in the artificial hockey pitch being laid on the grass oval in the middle of the running track. He would never hear it called AstroTurf! 'AstroTurf is a brand name, and ours isn't AstroTurf,' he would often remind me. David was a great supporter of the College, and we were very lucky to have such a lovely man representing the Old Ratcliffians."

Paul Rudd (60): "I was telephoned by David's son, Mark, to be told that a 'rock' of the Association had died. He then sent me a photo of the man I knew as 'This', and the eulogy that he gave to a tiny team at his cremation. I was asked by Fr Tony Baxter to join the Association Council in the late 1970s, and I was soon elevated to become the youngest president. I attended all of the dinners, bar one. 'This' was invaluable, as he knew everyone, and he drummed up support from far and wide to make sure that all of these events were well attended."

In recognition of David's exemplary service to the Ratcliffian Association during his many years in post as Secretary, a framed photograph will be displayed in the new OR Bar, with words about his contribution to Ratcliffe and the Association over the years. We will choose a suitable place for him, where he can overlook his all-weather hockey pitch.





Maria Greiner (née Burns) (02): "I'm about to finish maternity leave after having our daughter, Rosalie Pearl, at the start of the pandemic. She's brilliant; we just wish more of our family and friends had spent time with her. Our son, Rudy Bob, has just started at a bilingual school, which he loves. My husband and I are living just outside Amsterdam with our two children. We both work for Nike; I look after the Sportswear business with our partners in the Middle East, Eastern Europe, and Africa."



Jenny Pepper (06): "Noah John Samuel Kennedy was born on June 22nd 2020, named after my late father and sister. He has been a ray of sunshine for me and my husband since my mother and sister passed away this year. He loves long walks, listening to Van Morrison, and milk - lots of milk!"



Oliver and **Louise Wilson (née Bird) (06)**, who were married last year, are delighted to announce the arrival of Maggie Rose Wilson, who was born on August 29th 2020, weighing 6lbs 12oz. Louise said: "She's perfect, and the best addition to our family!"



Emily Eden (née Wells) (04): "What a year 2020 has been for everyone. We will always look back with amazing memories, though, as our beautiful second daughter, Florence Louise Sophie Eden, came into the world on May 29th 2020. To all the amazing front-line staff, thank you!"



Victoria Mensley (née Lancaster) (06): "Tom Mensley (03) and I welcomed our first child, Jack Charles Thomas Mensley, on 21st September at 9.16pm. He was delivered at Leicester General Hospital and weighed 5lbs 15oz. After years of trying for a baby, we were blessed with our miracle this year, and we couldn't be happier with our healthy little boy. We got married in July 2018 at Kilworth House. Tom's sister, **Louise Wilson (née Bird) (06)**, welcomed her baby just three weeks prior. Louise and I are best friends from our Ratcliffe days, being in the same year - it seems that Ratcliffians all stay fairly close after leaving! We even live in Ratcliffe village and regularly visit the old campus while out walking the footpaths. We hope to be out doing this with baby Jack and our Labrador, Bernie, very soon."



Suzi Rankine (08): "On April 24th 2020, my fiancé, Jack, and I welcomed our daughter, Annie Ina Lloyd. She arrived at 4.19pm and weighed 6lbs 14oz. As we recently moved back up to Leicestershire, Annie has been enjoying spending lots of time with her grandma, Mrs Rankine. She is already teaching Annie her phonics and nursery rhymes, as she did for many generations of Old Ratcliffians! Annie is a beautiful, smiley girl with a strong character of her own already. She has made 2020 the best year ever, despite everything, and we can't wait to watch her grow up!"



Hayley Cawthorne (98): "On Tuesday 8th September, Nick and I welcomed Ashton Luca Keodi White to our family. Born at 7.23am weighing 7lbs 13oz, he is our second happy and healthy baby boy. Finley has already told his new little baby brother that he needs to start walking and talking, so that they can play together in the garden. This has been a wonderful blessing during these strange times."

MARRIAGES



Duncan Ferguson (04): "In December 2019, I got married to Annabel McCrorie in Nanpantan. We now live in Sheffield, on the edge of the Peak District, with our dog, Lhotse (named after the fourth highest mountain in the world). I work for an expeditions company doing sales and marketing, whilst Annabel works as a physiotherapist in Barnsley. We're all quite adventurous, and whilst dog walking is our main getaway, we go mountain biking or skiing when we can. We've just purchased a four-by-four with a roof tent, so the plan is to do more overland travel in the next few years; we're hoping to drive to the Arctic Circle and see the Northern Lights."

Antony Raine (02): "On Saturday 8th August 2020, I married Francesca Currey in St Etheldreda's Church in London. The service was conducted by **Fr Philip Sainter (69)**. Francesca and I have been together for just over two years. It wasn't the wedding we'd planned, having had to rearrange it twice, due to COVID-19! Originally, we were going to get married in France with 150 guests, where Fr Philip was also going to officiate; he was a real pillar of support throughout our engagement. We ended up getting married at St Etheldreda's Church in Ely Place, and it was great to have this link to Ratcliffe. Due to government guidelines, we had a small ceremony, with just 30 people present, but we still had the most incredible day. In addition to Old Ratcliffian Fr Philip, my sister, **Chiara Raine (05)**, was also there."



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THANK YOU!

...to all those Old Ratcliffians who have contributed to this year's magazine. Your input is vital, and it's what makes this magazine so special!

IT'S TIME TO GET IN TOUCH!

The Old Ratcliffian magazine is all about connecting ORs and keeping the spirit of Ratcliffe alive, and that's why we need you!

Work has already begun on the 2021 edition, so if you have some news to share, a story to tell, or an idea for a feature you'd like to see on these pages next year, we'd love to hear from you!

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IN MEMORIAM

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

Christopher Browne (63)	Leo Simmonds (49)	Joseph Weston-Webb (99)
Helen Murphy (92)	John Newman (57)	Michael Wright (58)
Anthony Fearn (50)	Ewan Simmonds (59)	Andrew McGauley (71)
Tom Hiney (53)	Richard Brosch (53)	ASSOCIATE MEMBERS:
Peter Scott (48)	Guy Moser (51)	Mark Balmbra (Teacher)
Richard Nieuwenhuys (64)	Thomas Archer (63)	Gay Pepper
Basil D'Oliveira (44)	Antony Giles (65)	Edward Brennan (Former Chair of Governors)
George Guise (61)	Brian Reynolds (66)	
David Thistlethwaite (50)	Brian Baldwin (56)	

REQUIESCENT 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.

ANDREW JOHN MCGAULEY

MAY 22ND 1953 – SEPTEMBER 18TH 2019
OLD RATCLIFFIAN 1966 – 1971

Andrew died on September 18th 2019 at his home in Wythall, near Birmingham, following an extended battle, courageously fought, against cancer. His widow, Stella, sons, James and George, stepson, Christos, and stepdaughter, Sandy, survive him, as do his sister, Mary, and brother, Peter.

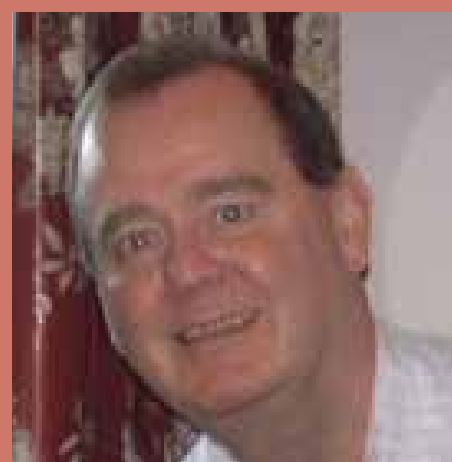
Andrew came from a family with strong Ratcliffe connections. His father, **James (30)**, uncles, **Kevin (23)** and **Gerard (25)**, and brother, **Peter (64)**, all attended the College. So, too, did Mary's husband, **Christopher Devereux (66)**.

Andrew was a keen and talented History student, and he was one of 'Doc' Orton's star pupils in the A Level group of 1969 to 1971. In rugby, he was a second row forward and was a regular member of the 1st XV in the 1971 season. He was in Leetham House and was also an RAF cadet in the CCF. After Ratcliffe, Andrew read Business Law at university and qualified as a solicitor, practising with distinction in several

firms in the West Midlands, ultimately in Birmingham. It seemed, for some years, that he would remain a bachelor, but then he met Stella, leading to their long and happy marriage. Stella brought Andrew an extended family from Cyprus, her birthplace, and the two of them spent a great deal of time at their holiday home in Limassol, with Andrew learning more about the island and its fascinating past.

Andrew was always interested in history, and he was a voracious reader. His well-filled bookshelves confirmed his interests, including political biographies, which he enjoyed debating, given any opportunity to do so. Sport was also an important part of Andrew's life, from his rugby days at Ratcliffe to his unswerving support of Aston Villa Football Club, as well as coarse fishing, when it was time for quiet contemplation.

Andrew was a family man, devoted to his wife and children. He loved his life and



considered himself to have been most fortunate. His illness deprived him of the retirement years that he should have enjoyed, but, to the end, he bore his illness with great fortitude. He died too young, and he is sorely missed. Requiescat in pace.

Christopher Devereux (66)
Brother-in-Law, with thanks to **Martin Foulds (71)**

RICHARD JOHN NIEUWENHUYS

AUGUST 2ND 1947 – MARCH 21ST 2020
OLD RATCLIFFIAN 1960 – 1964



Richard (or Ricky, as most people called him) died suddenly on March 21st 2020, at his home in Overijse, close to Brussels, in Belgium. It is always a shocking and awful event when someone passes away, no matter what the circumstances, but when that someone was a larger-than-life character and a true family man, it is always that much harder for those left behind.

By any measure, Ricky was an extraordinary person with a huge personality. Born in Altrincham on August 2nd 1947, his death at the age of 72 was far too early. He was a young person at heart, with unrelenting energy, an amazing wit and, having his finger placed firmly on the pulse of life, a sharp mind and a keen sense of business.

After attending St Joseph's School in Nottingham and Grace Dieu Manor School, Ricky headed to Ratcliffe College in 1960, leaving in 1964 to find his fortune. It is fair to say that his academic achievements were somewhat lacklustre; while he had an appetite for education in the broad sense, classwork did not capture his attention, and he left with only very modest results. But Ratcliffe gave him something special that was to remain with him, namely a tremendous circle of lifelong friends on the one hand, and the life skills to launch him into an incredibly successful career on the other. Ricky was going to make a great success of his life, no matter what, and

that success would be strengthened by his incredible spirit and enthusiasm.

His first step was to secure a job with C&A as a trainee. Afterwards, he worked with his uncle, Jan van Spaendonck, in his family's textile business, based in Tilburg in the Netherlands. These were formative years for Ricky that not only demonstrated his abilities to learn and develop his business talents, but also opened up his love of languages. Very soon, he became fluent in Dutch, and later, he added French and a little German to his linguistic armoury.

During the following years, he expanded his knowledge in the fashion business, working for various companies, including Flagship and Courtaulds in Belgium and Holland. A feature of all these posts was Ricky's ability to engage with co-workers, suppliers, and customers; his infectious passion and genuine warmth made him stand out, both as a colleague and as an individual.

It was only a matter of time before his quest for something bigger and more exciting was to spill over into a new venture. Ricky had reached a watershed; he could either work for someone else or go it alone. There was only ever going to be one way that this could end, and a release for his pent-up energy was inevitable. In February 1981, Ricky established his own fashion company in Brussels. Together

with his wife, Anita, and a small team of employees, he approached his business with a dynamism and zest that created a successful presence in the fashion world in Belgium. He had nerve and a fearlessness that saw him working for famous brands, mainly from Germany and Belgium.

In 1999, he sold the business and retired, spending his time at his houses in France and Belgium. Unfortunately, retirement brought with it a number of serious illnesses and life-threatening accidents. Although only 52 years old when the business was sold, barely a year passed when he didn't spend time in hospital.

The list of ailments that he suffered might well have filled a single volume of a medical journal, but he survived them all, including cancer and a stroke. He totally amazed doctors and medical professionals with his ability to shake things off and bounce back, no matter what he had to endure. There had to be a special ingredient that helped him through these debilitating hammer blows, and it was simply this: his unswerving zest for life and his outrageous sense of humour carried him through each time. On one occasion, upon admission to an oncology ward at a Brussels hospital when things were pretty dire, he soon had everyone laughing; the nurses, doctors, and patients, as well as the auxiliary staff, were all in stitches (excuse the pun) within minutes of his arrival. He became recognised as a regular at the local hospitals over many years, and a familiar face, for all the wrong reasons.

Ricky's sudden departure from life, whilst enjoying his favourite dinner and a glass of wine, was cruel and untimely, as was the timing, during the COVID-19 crisis, when none of his friends or relatives could attend his funeral. His wife, Anita, told me that literally hundreds of people had said that they regretted not being able to attend, because of the restrictions on travel and numbers allowed at the service that were in place. But I know that, when this pandemic is over, there will be a memorial service in front of a packed congregation. There will be tears (again), I am sure, but equally, there will be incredible stories, jokes, and laughter – the same jokes and laughter that defined the life of this remarkable person.

Frank Nieuwenhuys (68)
Brother

BRIAN LAWRENCE BALDWIN

NOVEMBER 28TH 1937 – AUGUST 29TH 2020
OLD RATCLIFFIAN 1952 – 1956



The youngest of 13, Brian was born in Cardiff to Irish parents, Marcella and Patrick. Sadly, he never got to know them. Marcella died in the Second World War, in the Blitz. During the attack, Brian and his siblings were shielded from the blast by their sister, Francie, who took most of the shrapnel from the bomb.

After their home was destroyed, Jim (Brian’s eldest brother by 18 years) made arrangements for Brian and his young brothers to travel by boat to join family members in rural Portlawn in Ireland. Brian later described himself as “wild” during this period, often leaving the house for days on end, just following his feet. Having never worn shoes in Ireland, he turned his nose up at his first pair, which he received upon starting school in Manchester. At their new family home in Stretford, Brian met his father for the first time on his seventh birthday, but just three-and-a-half months later, he passed away.

Jim became a father figure, and the biggest influence on Brian’s life. Brian’s generous nature was rooted in the exotic gifts that Jim brought for him whilst stationed in the army in India. These fostered a sense of magic and wonder that Brian would continue to instil in others throughout his life. His sense of fair play, his interest

in history, sport, and in people in general, were all guided by Jim.

Often described as “a loss to the boards”, Brian had a talent for storytelling and mimicry, always leaving his audience hungry for more. He loved musical wordplay, which can be traced to seeing Gilbert and Sullivan’s *HMS Pinafore* at the Royal Opera House.

The next great inspiration in Brian’s life was Ratcliffe, where he embraced its proud traditions and keen emphasis on character building. He flourished there, becoming vice-captain of Arundel’s rugby and cricket teams, and captain of the cricket team for one season. Under his vice-captainship, the cricket team was undefeated for an entire season.

One of the school’s disciplines was a period on Sundays devoted to writing letters home. Brian subsequently became a man of letters, and he and Jim maintained their correspondence for over 50 years. Brian also had a talent for boxing, where he represented the school. After leaving, he lived in London and fought regularly at York Hall Swimming Baths in Bethnal Green, often in front of large crowds. He was proud that, whether in school, amateur competitions, or the army, he was never defeated by a knockout – only losing once on points. He also thrived at rugby union, later playing for London Irish and Sale.

In the late 1950s, Brian trained as a salesman for Frigidaire, before accepting the call for National Service. He travelled to Cyprus as a private in the Royal Leicestershire Regiment, before being promoted to corporal. He excelled in this environment, winning trophies and awards for rugby,

shooting, and boxing. Later, Brian and his fiancée, Annie, moved to Waterford in Ireland, as he joined his brother in a venture renovating an old Viking building into a successful bar and restaurant called The Stronghold. Brian and Annie married, and their first child, Sally, was born.

In England, Brian worked in sales for Hilti and M&H Plant Hire in Manchester, where he became sales director. Three more children followed: Séan, Julie, and Daniel. In later years, he was remarried to Barbara, and he adopted a quiet life in rural Somerset, happily cultivating the land and looking after the wildlife. Despite his own physical setbacks, he cared diligently for Barbara as she declined. After her death, he moved to rural Surrey to be closer to his children and grandkids.

As his own health deteriorated, Brian never felt sorry for himself. He made light of his struggles and was always surrounded by laughter. His adversities didn’t define him, it was the way he faced them that did: with courage, determination, great humour, and consideration for others. He never lost the core strength that made him such a determined and successful fighter. Brian stepped up to life’s challenges like he approached the cricket pitch or boxing ring: with style, grace, fearlessness, and formidable reserves of power.

Brian often described his years at Ratcliffe as the happiest of his life, and it was fitting and poignant that he enjoyed a recent return trip a few years ago with his daughter, Sally, and son-in-law, Paul.

Séan Baldwin
Son

BASIL D’OLIVEIRA OBE FRIN RAF

FEBRUARY 5TH 1928 – MAY 10TH 2020
OLD RATCLIFFIAN 1939 – 1944

Basil started at Ratcliffe in 1939, and he always said that he developed his love of flying during his time at the school. He enjoyed a successful career in the RAF for nearly 30 years, joining in 1945, immediately following the end of World War II. He completed some of his training in

what was then Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe), a country that he always retained a lot of affection for.

Basil’s first job as a very young pilot involved taking part in the Berlin Airlift. He ultimately became the commanding officer

of 216 Squadron at Lyneham in Wiltshire, which then consisted of de Havilland Comets – the world’s first ever jet airliner, and a British invention. This squadron was a part of the Royal Flight, meaning the part of the RAF responsible for flying the Queen and other VIPs. Only two pilots in

the RAF were able to fly with the Royal Flight. Basil captained more than 650 VIP flights for many of the world’s leaders on their global travels, and in 1970, he was awarded an OBE.

Basil flew the Queen on her only ever official tour of South America in 1968, to Brazil and Chile. In Brazil, he was lucky enough to watch a football match in the famous Maracanã Stadium, and he personally met the great Pelé, who was, then, the world’s most famous footballer. The trip involved the Queen visiting Sao Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, and Santiago. He also once flew Prime Minister Macmillan to the summit with President Kennedy in Nassau in the Bahamas in 1962. This was to conclude the Nassau Agreement, which led to the UK being supplied with Polaris submarine-launched ballistic missiles for the first time. Basil received a phone call from Macmillan a few days beforehand, asking him if he could buy four bottles of champagne for the flight. Then, when they were waiting for Macmillan at Heathrow,



a steward came on board the aircraft and gave Basil a shoebox. The steward said that the shoebox had to be given to the prime minister, as it contained his breakfast. When asked what was inside, the steward replied, “Gulls’ eggs.” Enquiries were made as to how they should be served, but nobody had a clue. Eventually, it was decided to contact the Head of Catering at BOAC. He laughed and said, “Oh, the

prime minister eats the gulls’ eggs raw, and then he washes them down with bottles of champagne!”

After leaving the RAF, Basil became a director of the Civil Aviation Authority and then became the chief aviation advisor to the government. Alongside this, he had a keen interest in sailing, and in his latter years, he wrote regular columns in yachting magazines on navigational electronics. He always said, “I’ve never done a day’s work in my life – I’ve only indulged in my hobbies and interests!”

Basil was married to Molly for 62 years, and they had two children, Martin and Elizabeth. He enjoyed good health until his last three years, and he passed away on May 10th 2020, surrounded by his family. He was a great man and a true gentleman, and his family are immensely proud of his achievements.

Martin D’Oliveira
Son

ANTHONY CYPRIAN FRANCIS FEARN

JUNE 6TH 1932 – DECEMBER 12TH 2019
OLD RATCLIFFIAN 1944 – 1950



Tony Fearn was born on June 6th 1932 in Barcelona, Spain, where his father was the European manager for a Yorkshire firm. His brother, **Robin (52)**, was born two years later. In 1936, the family returned to England, and at the start of the war, they moved to Yorkshire. There, Tony attended Heckmondwike Grammar School for two years, before going to Ratcliffe in 1944.

Tony enjoyed his time at Ratcliffe, despite the wartime restrictions and hunger. His friend, **Douglas Chamberlain (50)**, recalls that, even as a young teenager before the end of the war in Europe, Tony had a remarkable knowledge and understanding of both national and international events. He would share his opinions when

asked to do so, and they were rarely wrong. He was kind and thoughtful, and popular with other students and teachers. Although not a leading sportsman, he enjoyed the cricket and rugby that were an important part of school life, and he captained the rugby team in his last term. He was Head Prefect in his final year, and he also fondly remembered playing the lead in a school production of *The Admirable Crichton*. Some of his contemporaries have told me how much they valued his company and friendship.

Tony attended the University of Strasbourg for six months, before going up to Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge, in 1951. In his first year, he shared a room with Leslie Bricusse, the composer. Tony did his National Service in the navy, although he never actually went to sea! In later years, he regretted that he had not done his National Service before Cambridge, as he felt like a boy among men there. While in the navy, he studied Russian.

After demob, Tony moved to London and tried various jobs, before joining a public relations agency. He stayed in that field for the rest of his career and remained well employed, despite a colleague telling

his wife that Tony was “far too honest to be a good PR man”. His talent was for writing, and he wrote, among many other things, the advice booklet given to the early winners of the National Lottery. He continued this talent in his retirement, when he wrote a much-appreciated weekly ‘Village Voice’ column in the local paper. He also read for, and edited, the magazine for the ‘Talking Newspapers for the Blind’. Together with his wife, Tony was an active fundraiser for Thames Hospice and a supportive parishioner at St Teresa’s Church. He also appeared in many amateur theatre productions in Beaconsfield.

In 1961, Tony married a young widow, Barbara, and they had two daughters, Katie and Clare. Sadly, Barbara died from cancer at the age of 44, and Tony subsequently married Trish. They would have celebrated their Ruby Wedding Anniversary in 2020, but Tony died peacefully in December 2019. His funeral was attended by over 250 people, including five of his Ratcliffe contemporaries. He leaves Trish, his daughters, five grandchildren, and his sister.

Patricia Fearn
Wife

GUY MOSER

SEPTEMBER 26TH 1934 – FEBRUARY 21ST 2020
OLD RATCLIFFIAN 1946 – 1951

My father, Guy, died on February 21st 2020 at the age of 85. It was a peaceful passing and a blessing, because he had been suffering from a number of ailments for the last few years.

He attended Grace Dieu between 1944 and 1946, and he then went on to Ratcliffe to join his brother, **Hugh (49)** (who passed away in 2016, aged 84) and his cousin, **Richard (48)**. Guy was amongst the second generation of Mosers to go to Ratcliffe, following his father, **Wilfred (1917)**, and his three uncles, **Ruy (1906)** (pronounced Ru-ee), **Cyril (1907)**, and **Edward (1917)**.

My father excelled at sport at Ratcliffe, playing for the 1st XV from 1949, aged 15, until leaving in 1951. He captained the 2nd XI cricket team and played for the 1st XI

hockey team for two years – a game that he continued to play until he married in 1961. He was awarded Full Colours.

My father spent his working life in the pharmaceutical industry, travelling all around the world from the 1960s to the 1980s. From the mid-1960s, he lived in Colchester, Essex, where he continued to live until his passing. He was a devout Catholic, and he was president of the Colchester Catenian Circle. He also continued to enjoy sport, playing badminton and golf in later life. He had one son, myself, and three grandchildren, who loved him, and his sense of humour, very much.

Jonathan Moser (80)
Son



JOHN LESLIE NEWMAN

FEBRUARY 1ST 1941 – APRIL 6TH 2020
OLD RATCLIFFIAN 1953 – 1957

I first met John in 1948, when I was sent to Woodbank School, on London Road in Leicester. John was already at the school, and I joined his class. We became friends, and we often visited each other's homes. John's elder brother, **Frank Newman (56)**, was the same age as my elder brother, **Bill Myers (57)**, and we'd all meet up together. Frank and John's parents had emigrated from Hungary before the war, and his father had started a family shoe factory in Leicester. The Newmans had brought with them high European culture, both in music and food. Young as we were, we used to listen to grand opera and eat delicious meals. This was a completely new world for me, and it appeared both exotic and wonderful. **Tony Holland (56)**, who lived near the Newmans, was also introduced to classical opera, which is still an abiding interest of his.

John was extremely fond of Woodbank School. He loved everything there, and until the end of his life, he could remember the names of the boys in his class and what they did in later life. When I had been at Woodbank for two years, John was sent as a boarder to Grace Dieu Manor School, of which, alas, he did not have such happy memories. However, we kept in contact

during the holidays, with Frank and Bill then being boarders at Ratcliffe College. Later, I rejoined John at school, when we both went to Ratcliffe in September 1953.

When John was seven, he was hit by a car; he fractured his skull, and only brilliant medical intervention saved his life. However, this near-death experience did not dim his legendary self-confidence, nor his enthusiasm for boxing, in which he excelled at Ratcliffe under **Br John Tedesco (38)**. He also played rugby and took up horse riding, which he continued after leaving school.

In 1957, John left Ratcliffe and started to work with his father in the family company. He studied shoe design and manufacturing at the Leicester Technical College. They worked closely together, with John dividing his time between them planning the next season's design, and production, representing the company in the North of England. In the late 1960s, they ceased manufacturing and opened shoe shops. John based himself in the Birmingham Bullring shop.

In the early 1970s, John opened an entertainment agency, which initially



involved providing entertainment for working men's and factory clubs, hotels, and pub chains. In 1974, John met Julia Sherriff again, at the tennis club where they had both been members and had originally met in 1964. This led to their marriage in 1976.

The entertainment agency expanded rapidly, covering wider circuits in the UK and mainland Europe, including American and British military establishments, particularly

the RAF. Julia was John's business partner in World-Wide Entertainments, and they were supported by Sylvia, their personal assistant. Julia also retained her working links with her family's companies. From 1984, the agency placed cabaret artists in hotels across the Middle East and Far East, and through specialist agents, cruise ships, and holiday venues in the UK. The agency was sold in 2000.

From 2000 onwards, John's idea of retirement took the form of dealing in stocks and shares full-time, which became his third career. This had always been a part-time interest, but now he studied and took part in intensive training courses, and he was soon dealing as a 'semi-professional' in English and American stocks, with much enjoyment and success. For his recreation, he took up golf and yoga, and he continued

his cultural life by attending Glyndebourne and the theatres in London and Stratford. He was also a great support to **Philip Jones (59)** when he was Ratcliffian Association President (from 2002 to 2003), offering him support and encouragement. Both John and Julia regularly attended Old Ratcliffian dinners at Ely Place and at the College. They also travelled extensively, especially in the Middle East, which they both loved, and they enjoyed cruising.

After his birthday in 2015, John became very unwell. Following neurosurgery at the Queen's Medical Centre, he was diagnosed with a primary cerebral diffuse lymphoma. He maintained some quality of life, but he was forced to forego his dealing in shares. He remained at home, with some specialist help to assist Julia. During these years, John was cared for by Julia's loving

devotion. Regrettably, in the end, due to developing severe Parkinson's, he had to enter a private care home. He died during the coronavirus lockdown, but not from it.

Julia and John did not have children of their own, but John was a loving and much-loved uncle to his brother Frank's family. John had a very serene personality and a deep Christian faith. During those years of illness, I never heard him complain or grumble when I visited him. His funeral, conducted by a friend of the family, Fr Simon Gillespie, took place in a natural burial ground not far from the home that they shared and Ratcliffe College. May he rest in peace.

Fr David Myers (59), with input from John's wife, **Julia**

EWAN WILLIAM SIMMONDS

APRIL 18TH 1941 – APRIL 3RD 2020
OLD RATCLIFFIAN 1951 – 1959

Ewan was born in Derby, the first child of William (Bill), an architect, and Eileen, a doctor and practising GP. In time, Ewan was joined by his sisters, Anne, Mary, and Hilary. In 1948, the family moved to Melbourne in Derbyshire, where his mother set up in medical practice.

After prep school, Ewan joined Ratcliffe in 1951. It was here that his love and talent for languages and athletics were first fostered. He often spoke of the happy times that he spent at Ratcliffe and, much later, when his family lived in Leicestershire for two years, he enjoyed becoming involved in the College's social life again.

Upon leaving Ratcliffe, Ewan went on to study Languages and Economics at Trinity College in Dublin, before taking up a graduate apprenticeship with GKN. However, finding that the world of commerce and industry was not to his liking, he eventually left to embark on a career as an army officer – a career that he loved, achieving the rank of major. He first discovered the army when he joined the CCF at Ratcliffe, later joining the Territorial Army whilst working at GKN. For the first 10 years of his career, Ewan served with the Royal Corps of Transport, before transferring to the Royal Army Pay Corps (RAPC). He served across the world in Aden, Singapore, Sharjah, and many

other places. As a staff officer, he visited and audited pay records of the army, taking him from Malaysia to Israel.

In retirement, Ewan was the RAPC Regimental Secretary, before fully retiring in 2006. During his service life, he had been involved in various sporting activities and, in retirement, he became a qualified coach with the Athletics Club in Winchester. His skills and patience helped several athletes to achieve top-10 rankings, and his leadership of Sportshall, for younger athletes, aided them in reaching many of its National Finals.

Ewan and his wife, Jennie, met when they were working in Germany – he was with the army, and she was teaching service children. They married in 1974 and have three daughters, Abi, Phillipa, and Helen, and four grandchildren.

Both Ewan and Jennie had a love of travel, and Ewan's linguistic skills enabled them to explore the quieter corners of Europe, especially France and Spain. A posting to Gibraltar was ideal for exploring the Andalusian hinterland, away from the crowds on the coast. They also spent many happy times in the South of France, often staying with Ewan's sister, Mary. Art was also a shared interest, and they enjoyed many visits to galleries in this country and



abroad. A special treat for them was to visit the Art Institute of Chicago, close to where their daughter, Phillipa, lives.

Ewan died at the age of 78. He had been suffering from a malignant melanoma for a year, and he had bravely and uncomplainingly undergone surgery and immunotherapy. He passed away peacefully in the Countess Mountbatten Hospice in Southampton, after a short stay in hospital. He leaves behind not only his immediate family, but also his two sisters, and a large extended family. May he rest in peace.

Jennie Simmonds
Wife

LIEUTENANT COLONEL THE REV TOM HINEY MC

DECEMBER 12TH 1935 – JANUARY 16TH 2020

OLD RATCLIFFIAN 1946 – 1953



Ratcliffe College was hugely important to Dad. 'Alma mater' is a much-used phrase, but for Dad, who had no mother, the school was literally that. He was, for the rest of his life, grateful for the faith and sense of belonging that he found at Ratcliffe. The mentorship offered to him by **Fr Claude Leetham (1915)** would last for years afterwards. Your readers may appreciate to know that Dad was received back into the Roman Catholic Church on his deathbed. He had drawn closer to the Church of his upbringing after the death of his daughter, Louise, in 2006, through a devotion to St Thérèse de Lisieux, which sustained him, and he received the full sacraments of return and anointment from a Roman Catholic army chaplain a few weeks before he died.

Thomas Hiney
Son

When Tom Hiney was born in a Dublin Catholic orphanage, one of the nuns described him as: "A little Napoleon; yet always with a wonderful smile." She spoke prophetically, because Hiney grew up to be a resourceful soldier and a popular army chaplain. Unusually for a future man of the cloth, he also appeared twice in a court of law: once for causing an explosion at Darlington railway station, and a second time for breaking and entering. Far more significant, however, was his Military Cross. He won it in 1961, while serving in Congo during one of the most distressing insurrections since the Second World War.

In the early 1960s, the murder, rape, and pillage that marked the civil war in the former Belgian Congo shocked a

generation. Hastily granted independence with only superficial preparation by the Belgian government, the rule of law had collapsed in the country. A quickly assembled UN force was mandated to safeguard civilians of all nationalities, and to restore order. The blue berets, alas, could not ensure protection. An early and unwisely small UN patrol was ambushed and shot or bludgeoned to death, leaving only three survivors. The British army was not involved directly, but two West African brigades of infantry contributing to the UN force contained seconded British officers, including Hiney, then an acting captain in the Royal Leicestershire Regiment. He was sent to the central Kasai province, where areas had fallen under control of the Armée Nationale Congolaise (ANC), which was in revolt and trying to seize political power.

A company from his regiment had been sent to Port Francqui (now Ilebo), 215 miles to the northwest, to rescue a group of Swedish UN officers abducted by ANC rebels, but the company's two British officers had been tricked while negotiating and taken prisoner. Hiney was instructed to form a composite rifle company from his technicians and administrators and rescue the officers and the Swedes. His small convoy was ambushed some 50 miles short of Port Francqui on a narrow stretch of road surrounded by thick undergrowth. He quickly got his men out of their trucks and returned the rebels' fire, but the usual tactic of defeating an ambush, by circling behind it and attacking from the rear, was impossible due to the density of the bush. Shouting encouragement and orders to his men, Hiney systematically rolled up the ambush from south to north, killing or routing each pocket of rebels in turn, until only a Bren gun position at a roadblock across the road continued to fire. Accompanied by his orderly, Hiney crawled forward and silenced it with a couple of hand grenades. With the roadblocks now cleared, the convoy moved on to reach Port Francqui, only to discover that the two British officers and all but one of the Swedes had been shot by the rebels.

Thomas Bernard Felix Hiney was born in 1935 and adopted two years later by Lieutenant Colonel Felix Hiney and his sister, Margaret. Growing up, he was told that his mother had died, and he only learnt of his adoption during a rare, but heated,

argument with his adoptive father when he was 18. He was educated at Ratcliffe College and Sandhurst, from where he was commissioned in 1956. Initially stationed at Darlington, his high spirits led to him planning to throw a thunderflash among his fellow subalterns gathered on a detachment at the railway station. After igniting the fuse, he was unable to open the carriage window, so he threw the grenade into the nearby lavatory. The explosion blew off the door and wrecked the facilities. He was charged with causing an explosion in a public place and fined £40 (about £1,000 in today's money). He would have been court-martialled as well, had the army district commander not had a sturdy sense of humour.

More seriously, after joining the 1st Leicesters in Cyprus engaged in fighting the EOKA (Greek Cypriot nationalist) terrorist campaign, he was charged with forcing entry into a Greek Orthodox monastery. He and his platoon had been searching for an EOKA arms cache, but the expertise of a London barrister was required to have the maliciously drawn charge dismissed. He subsequently served with his regiment in Germany and Hong



Kong before secondment to the Sultan of Oman's armed forces in 1964. Before long, an attack of jaundice brought about his medical evacuation. Command of a company with his regiment in Libya and Malta followed, before he left the army in 1967, at the age of 32.

Hiney then embarked on training for the Anglican priesthood at Ridley Hall and Fitzwilliam College, Cambridge. He was ordained in 1970 and served his curacy at Edgbaston, before returning to the army as a chaplain. Friends were surprised that

he chose the Anglican priesthood. His explanation was that, after visiting a fellow Royal Leicester officer and his family in their married quarters, he wished to marry and have a family of his own. This was borne out when he married Muriel Vowles, whom he had met at a church function in 1969.

Hiney's army chaplaincy gave him immense pleasure, and eventually, he became chaplain of the Royal Hospital Chelsea, from 1991 to 2001. It is not known how many of the pensioners that he encountered there were aware of his colourful past.

Hiney died in 2020, aged 84, after suffering a stroke. Muriel survives him, along with their two sons: Thomas, who followed his father into the Anglican priesthood, but is preparing to attend a seminary in Rome for his conversion to Catholicism; and Robin, who is the manager of a home for sufferers of dementia. A daughter, Louise, predeceased him.

Adapted, with kind permission, from *The Times*

LEO SIMMONDS KCSG

NOVEMBER 2ND 1930 – APRIL 10TH 2020

OLD RATCLIFFIAN 1944 – 1949



Leo's late father was a Catenian. Under the influence of his father and his close friend, Jack Sowerby, who was also a member of the Challoner Club and a City of Westminster Circle Catenian, he was initiated as a member of that circle, when the late Sir Alan Davies, a former lord mayor of the City of London, was president. In a period of over 55 years of membership, Leo served as president of the City of Westminster Circle on two separate occasions. In due course, he followed the late Bernard Kirchner as editor of the *Catena* magazine, holding this post for some 27 years. He was the main motivator of the Catenian Bursary Fund, of which he subsequently became chairman. He also served on his circle's Benevolent Board.

Leo became a parish and then a borough councillor in Wandsworth, and he fought an unsuccessful election as a Conservative candidate for the Wandsworth constituency. He also served a term as Ratcliffian Association President, was a eucharistic minister at his local parish church, and for many years, an active member of the Catholic Union.

Leo's Roman Catholic faith was always important to him. He became a knight commander of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem, supporting impoverished Christians in the Holy Land. He was also made a knight commander of the Order of St Gregory the Great by the late Saint John Paul II, in recognition of his many years' service to the Catholic Church and to Catholic associations.

Leo had five children: Veronica, Nicholas, and Christopher by his first wife, Barbara Simmonds, and Leonora and Patrick by his

second wife, Mary Clare Simmonds. Sadly, Nicholas predeceased his father. Leo was a staunch friend, an erudite after-dinner speaker, and a most agreeable companion. He was always good company, and he loved his family and friends. From time to time, he enjoyed entertaining at the Garrick Club in Covent Garden, of which he was a valued member for many years.

Sadly, Leo contracted coronavirus, which caused his demise. Because of the pandemic, a restricted congregation attended his funeral service, held at his parish church of Our Lady Queen of Peace in Richmond. He is very much in our thoughts and prayers at this time. In due course, it is hoped to hold a memorial Mass as a fitting tribute to this charming knight and delightful human being, who was greatly loved by his many friends. We pray for Leo and the members of his family that, with God's grace, we shall all meet merrily again in heaven one day, and how exciting that will be. May he rest in peace.

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Besides being Ratcliffian Association President, Leo was instrumental in introducing the Old Ratcliffians to the Challoner Club and their monthly meetings. He was also a founding member of what became known as the Old Ratcliffians' London Club and the annual London Dinner. The early days of the London Club owe a great amount to Leo. He also turned out for the Old Rats' rugby team at the age of 40, although he did not want that fact advertised!

Dick Cunningham (59)
Friend

MARK BALMBRA

NOVEMBER 5TH 1968 – FEBRUARY 5TH 2020
TEACHER AT RATCLIFFE 1991 – 2020

Mark Balmbra was a much-loved and respected member of Ratcliffe's teaching staff, having joined the school in 1991. The news of his passing came as a terrible shock to the whole College community. Mark taught Geography and BTEC Sports Science, and he was the contingent commander of the Ratcliffe College Combined Cadet Force – a position that he loved and served with great pride. Our thoughts and prayers are with Mark's family and friends.

Jon Reddin
Headmaster

Mark joined the College in 1991 as Sports Hall Manager, but he soon found his role extended to the PE and Geography Departments, where he was an accomplished teacher. However, his passion was for the CCF, and he rapidly grew into this role, becoming contingent commander. Striving tirelessly to raise the profile of the CCF, he worked behind the scenes to ensure that every cadet had the opportunity and support that they needed to be the best.

Mark regularly combined his love of the outdoors with that of helping young people to develop, and he went on to plan, instruct, and run the annual Easter camp, year on year. There were also numerous trips to North Wales and the Lake District, and these successful camps laid the foundations for the highlights of his organisational prowess, with the

most recent being the Ardèche and the Allier Paddlesport expeditions to France. Mark was never more at home than when paddling down a river or climbing a mountain, and his smile and excitement were dwarfed only by those of the cadets that he taught and mentored. Both staff and students alike benefitted immensely from his expertise and knowledge, fostering a love of the outdoors which many have continued to enjoy past their time at Ratcliffe and into adulthood.

Summer camps were always the highlight of the year, and as contingent commander, Mark would delight in taking us to exotic locations, like Beckingham in Lincolnshire and Catterick in Yorkshire. These camps were the culmination of the year's training, and they provided an opportunity for the cadets to get a brief experience of military life. Mark revelled in encouraging young people to take on leadership roles and become self-reliant, with many taking their experiences forward into successful military and civilian careers.

Mark's vision of the CCF is what we see at Ratcliffe College today: cadets standing shoulder to shoulder, Army and RAF, regardless of age, year group, gender, or ability. The CCF at Ratcliffe, under his guidance, instilled confidence, leadership, and empowered young people to fulfil their potential. Mark epitomised the principles of the CCF: responsibility, self-reliance, resourcefulness, endurance, and perseverance. He lived by these principles



and worked tirelessly to instil them into cadets, both past and present. Those of us fortunate enough to have known Mark in any capacity are richer and better for the experience.

For many years, Mark read the following passage from Laurence Binyon's 'For the Fallen' at Ratcliffe's Remembrance service, and with some slight alterations, I will finish my tribute with this:

*He shall not grow old, as we that are left grow old;
Age shall not weary him, nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun and in the morning,
We will remember him.*

Andrzej Dziemianko
Colleague and Friend

A memorial parade for Mark was held at the College on Tuesday 11th February 2020. Read more about this on page 18.

1990 – a period of 14 years. This was a time of great change in the Association, and he came to know many generations of ORs. David was also a very active member of the Social Committee, and during this period, the social side of the Association went from strength to strength. In addition, he was a trustee of the Ratcliffian Association and Cunningham Fund for many years, and a regular supporter at local OR dinners, both around the country and abroad (Paris!).

My enduring memory of David is as a jovial, larger-than-life character, propping up the



Association Bar during OR weekends and buying everyone a drink! He had a warm personality, having time for everybody, and he remembered the names of numerous ORs from many year groups. The original wooden bar hut, where we were served by Walter and Bernard for many years, was infamous for long drinking sessions during the Old Boys' Weekends. When the new Sports Hall was planned for the College, the OR bar was unfortunately deemed to be 'in the way', and it had to be demolished. David was among the group of ORs who successfully campaigned for a replacement

in the new building (over very many beers!). As a result, we had a magnificent Old Ratcliffian HQ and bar built for us.

David played hockey for the Ratcliffe 1st team, and he continued this love of sport, playing for the Orientals HC and Kings Heath Hockey and Cricket Club until he was nearly 60. He would bring a team to Ratcliffe every year to play against the College's 1st team, and he donated a trophy to be presented annually to the winners: The Thistlethwaite Cup. David was also regularly seen on the touchline at Ratcliffe, and he was very keen on the development of hockey at the school; he picked up the reins in this respect from **Bernard Powell (23)**, for whom he had great admiration. He was supportive of the hockey coaches, and he was a driving force behind convincing Ratcliffe's governors of the need of an all-weather hockey pitch. He was part of the fundraising team which enabled Ratcliffe's first pitch of this type to be installed.

David was a committed Catholic, and his faith, seen at Our Lady of the Wayside Church in Birmingham, Clevedon parish, and the Sacred Heart in Bristol, was

omnipresent. In his pyjama pocket, for as long as Anne and Mark can remember, he had his rosary with his handkerchief on top, and it is fitting that, when he died, he had his rosary in his hand, and it was still in his hand when he was cremated.

David was very interested in the First World War Italian Front, and particularly the Machine Gun Corps, in which his father served with the Royal Warwickshire Regiment. He gave several presentations on that campaign, and he also contributed a number of chapters to a book on the history of the Machine Gun Corps. This will be published in the next two years, to coincide with the 100th anniversary of the founding of the corps in 1922.

As you will have gathered, David was amongst the greats of the Old Ratcliffians. He certainly achieved his objective of 'paying back to the school' for his time and education there. He was a great man and a great friend. May he rest in peace.

Richard Gamble (64) and **Mark Thistlethwaite (78)**
Friend and Son

GEORGE ROBERT JOHN GUISE

JUNE 17TH 1943 – APRIL 19TH 2020
OLD RATCLIFFIAN 1954 – 1961



George Robert John Guise was born in Cardiff on June 17th 1943, the son of George Wilfred Guise, a civil servant in the Ministry of Labour, and his wife, Brenda (née Stokes). Young George was educated at Ratcliffe College in Leicestershire, and Christ Church, Oxford, where he read Physics. He went on to postgraduate studies in Geology at the Universities of Durham and Johannesburg, before joining

Consolidated Gold Fields, where his early roles included programming one of the first computers in South Africa. After returning to the UK, he became, in 1981, the company's youngest executive director.

Guise was soon recruited to the Number 10 Policy Unit. He made annual visits to South Africa, on which he reported to the prime minister (who later told him that this was "far more helpful than the regular Foreign Office briefs"), advising her against the imposition of trade sanctions, which he believed risked fuelling civil war. After her resignation in 1990, Guise made a new career as an independent consultant on privatisation, working all over the world. He also published a short memoir, 'Inside the Tank', in 2015.

Guise was a keen shot and a lover of classical music, especially Wagner. He was chairman of the Royal Philharmonic Society, where one of his fellow trustees was Sir Robert (later Lord) Armstrong, head of the Civil Service, who he believed had a hand in his recruitment to the Policy Unit. "Perhaps

there was a hope that I might heal the rift [between the Unit and the Civil Service]," he wrote. "If so, they were wrong."

George Guise married, in South Africa in 1972, Hilary Beck, who survives him with their three sons.

Adapted, with kind permission, from The Daily Telegraph

At Ratcliffe, George (known as Robert) behaved like an eccentric; he was very much his own man and a bit of a loner. He organised George Wells, who repaired the shoes, to repair his by using steel caps on the heels. Following the shoe repairs, you always knew where Robert was, as he clicked along the stone floors of Ratcliffe, making considerable noise. From an eccentric start, he obviously reached great heights. I can see him now, slightly bent, a bit dishevelled, striding along the corridors. Rest in peace.

Dick Cunningham (59)
Friend

ANTONY GILES MA (CANTAB) MB BCHIR

DECEMBER 19TH 1948 – JULY 15TH 2020

OLD RATCLIFFIAN 1961 – 1965

Tony was born in Epsom, Surrey, on December 19th 1948, as the youngest of a family of four. As our father was in the RAF, the family was regularly on the move, although we always kept the house in Epsom. In 1951, we moved up north to Grappenhall in Cheshire, near RAF Padgate, the National Service Centre for the RAF. In 1953, after the Coronation, our father's posting was to Amman in Jordan for two years. Following this were four years in France at Versailles and Fontainebleau with SHAPE and AAFCE. As a result, Tony, along with his sister Veronica, began school in France, from which came his great love of all things French.

At the age of 11, Tony began boarding at St Richard's in Little Malvern, as Grace Dieu had no room. Then, in 1961, he obtained a scholarship to Ratcliffe. (Two of his contemporaries have preceded him: **Dr Glynn Morgan (65)** and **Fr Bernard Rumsey (65)**, who both died young.) Tony was always the brains of the family, and he obtained another scholarship to Downing College, Cambridge, to study Medicine in 1965. After three years, he continued at St Thomas' Hospital, where he completed his medical studies and qualified as a doctor in 1971. After a few years at St Thomas', he took up an appointment at the Pilgrim Hospital in Boston, Lincolnshire. I remember going to stay with him and his partner, Keith Mallinson, in a large farmhouse called Toad Hall in Algarkirk, but the work was not enough to keep him occupied, so he returned to live and work in London in 1982.

So began a long association with the Kobler Clinic at Chelsea and Westminster Hospital. There's nobody better to explain Tony's involvement than his secretary of 10 years: "I am not sure exactly how long Tony worked for the Kobler Clinic, but it was definitely for over 40 years. It was opened by Princess Diana on September 13th 1988, and Tony was working there during that time. He put his blood, sweat, and tears into the NHS for many, many years, and he saved so many lives. I hear the stories all the time.

"Tony was a legend, but he was so shy about getting any praise for all his hard work from anyone who knew him, and that's why we loved him even more – because of his humbleness. I worked for Tony for 10 years and was always fond of him. He was such a pleasure to work for. He put his heart and soul into his work, and his patients adored him for that, as well as for the kind, gentle, and loving soul that he was. Everyone is in complete shock, but I have told as many of his patients as I could myself; I wanted them to hear it from me, having built up such a good relationship with them all. He is missed dearly and will forever be in our hearts."

Professor Simon Barton added: "Tony was one of the most dedicated and devoted of doctors. His patients all received superb care, and it was a pleasure to work for him for so many years. He was part of the history of the development of our sexual health and HIV service, and he will remain part of the fabric and memories of the



Chelsea and Westminster Hospital forever." The hospital opened a book of condolence from all those who were unable to attend the cremation due to the restrictions.

Tony was a special brother. He was always available for advice on medical matters, as was his sister, Veronica Bailey, who died at the beginning of the pandemic. Both of them have left an enormous gap in our lives, and we hope to be able to celebrate their lives when it is possible.

Keith was Tony's partner for over 40 years. They both came to my ordination in Rome in 1974 and have been part of all of our family celebrations. We hope to be able to bury the ashes of Tony, Veronica, and Bart Bailey in our parents' grave in Epsom when we are allowed to do so.

Fr Simon Giles (60)
Brother

RICHARD BROSCH

JANUARY 13TH 1937 – DECEMBER 27TH 2019

OLD RATCLIFFIAN 1948 – 1953

Richard joined the Catenian Association on December 1st 1975 as a founder brother of Streetly Circle. His Catenian pedigree was excellent, as his grandfather, also Richard, was grand president, a founder brother of Nottingham Circle, and a president of Birmingham Circle. In 1916, he founded the *Catena* magazine and was its editor from then until 1947.

In 2014, Richard and Annie, his partner, were guests of Nottingham Circle at a dinner to celebrate their 100th anniversary. Richard remained a popular and valued brother of Streetly Circle for the rest of his life, serving for many years as registrar.

Richard was born in Sutton Coldfield, the youngest of four children. His education

seemed to follow a family tradition: St Paul's Convent School in Sutton Coldfield, Grace Dieu Manor School, and Ratcliffe College in Leicestershire, where he showed an aptitude for Science and Maths, as well as an approach to authority which he thought was "largely a good thing, but not applicable" to him.



After school, he joined the family metal engineering business, JE Mapplebeck. He did his National Service as a commissioned officer in REME, the engineering branch of the British Army, after which he took a BSc degree course at what is now Aston University. When the family business was sold in the 1980s, he applied himself to consulting and entrepreneurship, most

notably taking to market the haemostatic medical dressing Kaltostat, which remains a brand leader to this day.

In 1958, on holiday in Cornwall, he met Wendy, a sophisticated London lady who was bowled over by this straightforward, good-looking Midlands lad. They fell in love, marriage followed, and so did their son, Jamie, and daughters, Lisa and Julia.

Richard had an athletic build, the constitution of an ox, and he was a brilliant engineer, a real life-force, and a gentleman. Indeed, he was a bit of a character. He could never bring himself to pay anyone to do a job that he reckoned he could do himself. Nor was he very good at following instructions or warnings, all designed in his mind for lesser beings. He was great company, and if you happened to be on his table at dinner, you knew you were in for an entertaining evening.

Richard was a keen rugby and squash player, and he brought to these sports more enthusiasm than grace, as well as a tendency to regard the rules as applicable

only to the opposition. He was a member of Streetly's team when they won the Province 6 five-a-side football trophy; his ability to get in the way of his opponents compensated for his lack of skill at the game and was invaluable. He was also invited to be part of his circle's entry into the Sutton Coldfield Circle's annual song contest, but he explained that his family had forbidden him ever to sing in public.

The last 33 years of his life were spent with Annie, who, although not a Catholic, took full part in Catenian activities, and was very supportive of his faith. They were devoted to one another.

Sadly, in his later years, Richard developed a degenerative heart condition from which he died shortly after Christmas 2019. His life was celebrated with a Requiem Mass at a packed St Anne's Church in Streetly, on January 16th 2020. He will be greatly missed by Annie, his three children, and five grandchildren. May he rest in peace.

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CHRISTOPHER BROWNE

MARCH 13TH 1944 – APRIL 22ND 2019

OLD RATCLIFFIAN 1958 – 1963

Christopher was born in March 1944 on the outskirts of Birmingham, and, after local primary schooling, he went to Ratcliffe in January 1958. Following his A Level exams, he went to Ireland as a medical student at the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons in Dublin, where our father had studied to be a doctor in the 1920s (being from Strabane in Northern Ireland). After qualifying as a doctor in 1969, Christopher did a great deal of work in hospitals in Dublin, as well as locally to his home near Naas in County Kildare, while also helping out at surgeries for local GPs. He even ran unofficial surgeries at his home, as neighbours often arrived in a panic, with children bleeding heavily from somewhere or other, and having blood all over the kitchen table and floor was a regular occurrence. Of course, he never charged a friend or neighbour (although a basket of fruit, eggs, or another commodity, would occasionally be found on the doorstep!), and he kept most of the village going with free prescriptions for decades. I am even told that, on an occasion when a neighbour's dog was hit by a car,

Christopher arrived at their house with his stethoscope, listened to the dog's heart, and gave him a tablet – so he did not only treat humans!

Christopher was commissioned as an officer into the Irish Defence Forces in October 1972, and he spent the next 37 years in the Army Medical Corps as a doctor, retiring as a lieutenant colonel in 2009. He was immensely proud of his service in the Defence Forces, and he loved his time in the army. His career took him on adventures to places such as Cyprus and Lebanon, both of which he visited several times, and also to the Sinai Desert, Somalia, Bosnia, Kosovo, and others.

Two stories are worth telling. When his first son was about six years old, he and his mother were watching the news on Irish television, and it was showing the Irish area of South Lebanon under heavy attack, complete with explosions and tracer bullets. (At the time, Christopher was serving as a doctor with the 2nd Irish UN peacekeeping force.) Just as the reporter



was saying that an Irish soldier had been badly wounded, there, on the screen, was his dad, sprinting in a crouched position

along a road with his blue helmet on, amid all the bullets. The next image showed him working on the soldier on the ground, with a medic holding a drip in the air.

The other story involves the Irish Forces in the Sinai Desert. They positioned themselves between the Israelis and the Egyptians; then, a belligerent tank unit attacked the Irish, and they had to evacuate. Less than an hour later, one of the same tanks was hit by a shell from the opposite side, and Christopher ended up performing emergency surgery on the crew members from that tank who, just minutes earlier, had tried to kill him. Just a few days before Christopher died in Dublin, his son, David, asked him about the times when he risked his own life to help others, both at home and abroad.

He simply replied, as he was dozing off, "Everyone deserves to be saved."

Christopher saw his last military patient in the Curragh Army Hospital at Christmas 2018, representing 47 years of medical care to the Irish Defence Forces, with last year bringing him into 50 years of practising medicine. In all, he helped and cared for literally thousands and thousands of people over the years.

Just one more story of a very personal nature. I used to visit him in Ireland as often as I could (usually once a year), and on one occasion, he offered to take my blood pressure. I knew it wouldn't be high, as I had recently stopped driving trains in England, so I agreed. First, he took it, then he called in his wife (a retired nurse), who took it

and then left without saying anything. He eventually told me to see my own doctor as a matter of urgency when I got home. He later said that my blood pressure had been so very high that, if I had been his patient, he would have called for an ambulance there and then, so it is highly probable that he saved my life that evening, and I might not be here now to tell you about him.

Christopher died of heart failure in a Dublin hospital on April 22nd 2019, leaving his wife of 48 years, four children, three grandchildren, and my family in England, not to mention various cousins in Northern Ireland, to mourn his passing.

Peter Browne (65)
Brother

she would have moved abroad and used her teaching skills there. She lived with her brother, Michael, for a while before he met his now wife, Sarah, and they moved to Birstall.

After undergoing some tests in her late twenties, Helen was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis. During this time, her mother, Sandra, lost a very short battle with cancer. Such a traumatic event impacted on Helen's condition and, over the next few years, she needed more assistance with daily activities. She moved back home to live with her dad, Hugo. Despite her efforts to maintain her independent lifestyle, the nature of her 'progressive aggressive' diagnosis saw her move to a specialist neurological clinic in Leicester. During her

12 years there, Helen received excellent care and support from her family. Michael, his wife, and their three daughters moved to Ireland, and they would continue to visit regularly. Helen also had many letters and photographs from friends in various corners of the world, which were such a delight to read and share.

We are blessed to have had such a shining light in our lives. Helen was incredibly brave, proud, and strong. We will always miss her, but we will never forget her beautiful smile, and her warm, kind, and caring nature. Our Helen.

Alison Court (née Mason) (98)
Cousin



HELEN LOUISE MURPHY

JUNE 17TH 1974 - DECEMBER 21ST 2019
OLD RATCLIFFIAN 1990 - 1992

Helen first attended Bishop Ellis Primary School in Thurmaston, before attending Evington Hall Convent. She then went on to Our Lady's Convent in Loughborough, prior to joining Ratcliffe in the Sixth Form to study French, Geography, and Politics at A Level. Although only at Ratcliffe for two years, she made many good friends. Her brother, **Michael Murphy (95)**, and cousins, **Andrew Mason (96)** and myself, were also at Ratcliffe, along with her cousins **Charlie Murphy (92)** and **Sam Spillane (née Murphy) (91)**, and family friends **John Yates (95)** and **Gianpaolo Mantini (95)**. Her other good friends there included **Niamh Sweeney (92)**, **Emma Thomas (92)**, and **Nadia Hawes (née Chbat) (91)**.

Helen had an infectious smile and her trademark red, curly hair. Not forgetting her red Fiesta - a popular getaway vehicle for many of the borders, making trips up and down to Sileby for essentials and takeaways, with her favourite tunes playing on the tape deck.

Growing up in Birstall, Helen's family attended St Theresa's Church, and she was part of the Youth Group formed by Fr Joe Mullen, along with **Toby Linnett (90)**. I remember her playing various instruments in the music section there, including the tenor recorder and piano. She had a

huge and varied CD collection, and she introduced me to so many kinds of music. I credit her for my love of soul, Prince, and some rap/hip-hop; I will always think of her when I hear 'Summertime' by DJ Jazzy Jeff and the Fresh Prince!

After Ratcliffe, Helen studied in Cambridge for a year, before completing her Combined Business Studies degree at Hull University. Like many graduates, she then chose to go travelling. She embarked on a trip around the world, through Malaysia, Australia, New Zealand (where she did a bungee jump!), Tasmania, and America. On her return, she moved to London and lived with her old school friends, Nadia and **Malcolm Hawes (93)**, where she began to plan her next trip with her brother, Michael, through Malaysia and back to Australia.

Helen soon settled in Australia and worked, for a time, in Sydney. I still have one of the letters that she wrote to me from her desk in June 2000. She was looking out over Sydney Harbour Bridge, telling me about the nights out and fun that they were having. Email was still relatively new then, and generally only through internet cafes, but Helen was great at writing letters. She was a very positive person; I loved being around her, and we always had a good laugh. Many people thought that



we were sisters, due to our big, curly hair - a comparison which I loved. Although six years older than me, she always looked out for me, like a sister.

When Helen returned home, she bought her own house and worked in Leicester for the NHS, and then for NIACE, an organisation dedicated to lifelong learning. She completed her TEFL (Teaching English as a Foreign Language) training and, ideally,

EDWARD FRANCIS BRENNAN

JUNE 10TH 1923 - JUNE 24TH 2019
RATCLIFFE COLLEGE CHAIR OF GOVERNORS 1986 - 1988



Ted Brennan, who died on June 24th 2019 at the age of 96, was a popular and well-respected member of the Catenian Association for over 50 years, having joined the Leicester Circle in June 1965, where he served as president in 1976. In 2015, he moved circles, joining the Kirby Muxloe Circle, where he remained a member until his death.

Ted was born into a working-class family in Hunslet, Leeds, in 1923 - a family that would eventually comprise Mum and Dad, Ted, his three brothers, and two sisters. In an autobiography produced quite late in his life, he remembers those early days in Leeds, when most houses were lit by gas mantles on the ground floor and candles on upper floors, with no indoor toilets, and a zinc bath for the weekly bath nights. It was a time before the welfare state. Doctor's bills were collected in weekly instalments, and both doctors and dentists were avoided where possible, because of the costs involved.

Having won a governor's scholarship, Ted was educated at St Michael's College, Leeds. He was a bright pupil, winning various school prizes, and ending his school career by matriculating, which meant that he had the necessary academic qualifications for university entrance. On leaving school, Ted worked as a junior clerk, including a period at Barclays Bank. In July 1942, he received his call-up papers for the RAF and spent the war years as an armourer and, later, an instructor. Towards the end of 1944, he was posted to RAF Leicester East, now Stoughton Aerodrome, and later to RAF stations at Syerston and Wymeswold. Whilst serving at Stoughton, Ted was invited to a Christmas party organised by the Leicester Circle, where he

first became aware of the Catenians and, more importantly, where he met his wife-to-be, Molly.

Ted was discharged from the RAF in February 1947, and in April of that year, he and Molly married. He then had to give consideration to his future career and decide whether to go back to the bank or pursue another avenue. At the time, the University of Leeds was offering places on degree courses to ex-servicemen, and Ted, on the strength of his matriculation, enrolled on a course leading to a Bachelor of Arts degree. Having decided to follow a career in teaching, he then completed a one-year course at the Leicester Postgraduate School of Education. On completion of his studies, Ted and Molly set up home in Leicester, and Ted accepted his first teaching post at Christ the King Primary School. This was to be the first appointment in a distinguished career which culminated in the headship of English Martyrs in Leicester, a comprehensive school with over 1,000 pupils.

Beyond his career in teaching, Ted used his talents in a wide variety of spheres. Early in his career, in addition to his day job, he was a tutor, and then tutor organiser, at Leicester Prison. He was, for many years, a member of the Diocesan Schools Commission, and he later became

a member, then judge, with the Diocesan Marriage Tribunal. During this time, he was awarded the papal medal Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice by Pope John Paul II. Ted served as a governor at Ratcliffe College and, later, he took the title of Chair of Governors; he was very proud to be the first layperson to assume this role. He also served for almost 25 years as a magistrate in both the adult and juvenile courts.

Ted lost his beloved wife, Molly, in 2011. He was very proud of his children – Kevin, Anne, Bernard, and Theresa – and took great delight in his eleven grandchildren. He will be much missed.

Kevin Brennan
Son

In the 1991 *Old Ratcliffian*, the College's Father President **Lance Hurdidge (40)** said in his President's Address: "Before I give my address, I would like to pay tribute to the dedication shown to Ratcliffe by Chairman of Governors Ted Brennan. He was always ready to spend time on school matters, and his professional advice as an ex-headmaster was of top quality. Ill health caused his retirement last summer. We are indeed very grateful to him for all he did."

JOSEPH JAMES WESTON-WEBB

FEBRUARY 8TH 1983 – MARCH 12TH 2020
OLD RATCLIFFIAN 1997 – 1999

Jody attended Ratcliffe College from 1997 to 1999. Prior to this, he attended Sutton Bonington Primary School and Harry Carlton Secondary School. Jody had an unusual childhood. He travelled with us during his first two years, and he had been around the world three times before he was one year old. He learnt to walk at 10 months old on the beach in Australia, chewing on a prawn straight off the barbecue!

As a toddler, Jody attended every one of the 40 performances of professional pantomimes that we put on at De Montfort Hall, and he could prompt the actors when they forgot their lines. He had his own Smurf's costume, and he would pose for pictures with the audience, as well as going out and selling tickets with Daisy the Donkey. Jody came to galas every summer weekend, and he travelled through Europe with us on the original American Hell Drivers Tour. He loved the bank holiday shows, but most of his friends at playschool didn't believe his stories about what he'd been doing all weekend!

When he was 10, Jody came with us delivering floors across America, from California to Orlando, stopping for a week's work in Denver to help install Calvin Klein's enormous white wedding dance floor. He missed a term's schooling to help us build floors and sell them in a factory in Orlando. When Jody was 11, he drove our 'John H' trip boat with up to 70 passengers on the River Soar and the River Trent. At 14, he bought his first trip boat and named it 'The Soar Bottom Lady'. He was too young to apply for a boatmasters' licence, so he had to keep to only 12 passengers per trip. When he was 15, he shared the driving of a 7.5 tonne truck from Orlando to Canada,

only panicking on the five-lane interstates in Atlanta.

It's no wonder that Jody took a while to settle in as a weekly boarder at Ratcliffe College. However, he did surprisingly well in his exams; as his IT teacher told us, we would have to bribe him to work hard and improve his grades. With the £400 that he won, he bought himself juggling swords, a fire-eating kit, a straitjacket, and a unicycle.

Jody left school at 16, and he worked for the family dance floor business, although he was soon sacked for poor timekeeping. He then worked as an electrician, a fire alarm installer, a lift technician, and he was always interested in electronics. With all these skills, he returned to the family flooring business, and in 2004, he came out to Orlando to help set up another family business: Fiascos Circus and Magic Dinner Show – fine dining ruined by staff and technology. He helped at the warehouse and workshop that we set up there, and he was involved in selling Disney memorabilia on eBay, as well as portable dance floors. He also made money importing old Minis (MOT failures) from the UK.

When we came back to England, Jody continued to help us in the flooring business, developing the lit floors and bars, which allowed us to show photos, pictures, and messages wirelessly, operated from a notebook or phone. When his dad, Grumpy Joe Weston-Webb, died in 2012, Jody took over running the family business and moved it to Riseholme Farm, where he lived with his partner, Vanessa, her daughters, Alex and Issy, and his son, Jason, who is now 10 years old. Jody renovated the house and turned the farmyard into a fully



equipped factory, employing 24 staff, with a turnover of £2,000,000.

Despite his unusual upbringing, Ratcliffe College grounded him and gave him the formal education and discipline he needed, and some lifelong friends. He has always worked hard and, I think, achieved more than anyone else could have possibly done.

Jody kept his illness a secret from all but a very few close friends and family members, and he was determined to beat it, making himself work right up until the last week of his life. In 2019, he bought himself an Ariel Atom racing car, and he used it on the roads, as well as at Donington Park's racetrack. In February 2020, shortly before his death, he fulfilled his dream of taking Jason, his son, to Orlando for a holiday.

Mary Weston-Webb and Katy Kerr
(née Weston-Webb) (02)
Mother and Sister

MICHAEL JOHN WRIGHT

FEBRUARY 12TH 1940 – SEPTEMBER 13TH 2020
OLD RATCLIFFIAN 1951 – 1958



Michael was a Lancastrian, and, like so many from that county, he excelled at all sports – but more of that later. He went to Grace Dieu at the age of eight, and then, of course, on to Ratcliffe. Although our years did not exactly coincide, we became great friends, and even now, I can remember being in the stands with him and his father, watching his beloved Everton playing against Leicester City at Filbert Street. The result is shrouded by the mystery of time, I fear!

Michael was a seriously gifted sportsman who achieved his Colours in rugby, hockey, and cricket. In the last-mentioned sport, he was known as the batsman who hit an almighty six and, in the process, smashed the clock on the cricket pavilion!

Michael left Ratcliffe in 1958, declining to go to university. Having left home at the age of eight, he wanted to enjoy a more

carefree life (and, anyway, he had no real idea what he wanted to do).

Initially, Michael went to work in Lloyds Bank in Manchester, but the appeal of that to him was limited. However, his father was instrumental in setting him on a career path that fitted him like a glove: he was a director of Conveyancer Forklift Trucks, and he started Michael there in the sales department. The rest, as they say, was history, in that Michael's career in sales for differing companies was highly successful, primarily because of his warm and generous personality. He could literally sell you anything when he put his mind to it.

Michael travelled far and wide, including a long stint as the export director of the Stafford-based Universal Grinding Wheel Company. As a colleague remarked at his funeral, Michael was a true professional,

always staying on top of everything he did. His paperwork and systems were first class, and he always prepared extremely diligently for his many sales trips, which took him all around the world. He met royal princes in Bangkok and ayatollahs in Iran. Indeed, in the early 1980s, he literally saved the jobs of the 2,000 people working at Universal by securing an order from Iran (not the easiest place to visit, even then) for grinding wheels worth, in today's values, some £2,000,000!

Michael married Dianne, who supported him in everything he did. Although he was 22 when he proposed to her, she was only 19, so they had to wait until she turned 21, at her parents' request. Their first child, Christopher, was born in 1966, and Stephanie in 1968.

Michael was a devotee of music, either played on the organ (which he learnt at Ratcliffe, with guidance from Ray Guinea), or using his wonderful bass voice in the various choirs that he sang in throughout his life. He was instrumental in founding the Lydian Singers, as well as being a longstanding member of the Chester St Cecilia Singers. Michael must have sung for literally thousands of people, sometimes with an audience of 2,000, like in the Abbey of Montserrat in Spain, and sometimes in Blackburn Cathedral, with a congregation of five! Two years ago, he was elected as a fellow of the Guild of Musicians and Singers. In 2004, Pope John Paul II awarded him a Benemerenti medal to mark his 50 years as a church organist.

Michael had many fond memories of Ratcliffe, often drawing upon them to relate to his grandchildren. One of his stories included a night-time visit to the "haunted library". This was designed to scare a small boy; however, in doing so, the others terrified themselves, when one of the white sheets in which they had dressed up caught in a chair, which fell over with a loud bang!

Michael died on September 13th while undergoing a heart operation, and he will be sorely missed. I remember him as a person whose company was never boring, but a joy to experience.

Sir Anthony Holland (56)
Friend

SERVICE MEDALS & THEIR SIGNIFICANCE

John Plumb (53): "The following facts motivate the pride that I feel in wearing the service medals of my late father and myself (requiring their removal from, and subsequent replacement in, the two framed photographs of both of us, right, that are prominently displayed at my home).

1. The annual Remembrance Day parades remind me to recall past military events and lost homes that have affected my life, and the lives of those that I have loved, and still love.

2. My father endured active service, mainly in Mesopotamia (Iraq of today) as a commissioned officer with the Honourable Artillery Company during World War I, until 1918. He survived the experience, and subsequently served in the Territorial Army. Returning to the UK as a refugee in 1940, he enlisted in the army again during World War II, only to die in 1941.

3. At the outbreak of World War II, my family comprised myself, my English father, my Swiss mother, and my younger sister. We lived in the French Jura Mountains. With the rapidly advancing German army cutting off any route northwards, we fled our home as refugees. We travelled along the French Riviera, entering the French-Spanish border town of Perpignan, traversing a hostile Spain, and waiting in the friendly Portuguese town of Lisbon for a boat, which eventually arrived. After zigzagging the Atlantic to avoid German U-boats, it deposited us at the Liverpool docks in 1940.

4. On the death of my father, my mother became a war widow, bringing up my sister and me in a country that she knew nothing of.

5. We experienced a consequential nomadic life in the UK, involving the fearsome effects of German V-1 flying bombs and V-2 rockets – a former one of which almost ended our lives at Carshalton in Surrey, as it struck our house's chimney pot and exploded nearby. We arrived at Wolstanton, Staffordshire, in 1944 as evacuees, and we stayed in the parish of St Wulstan's, whose parish priest, Fr Colum McCabe, was most supportive. The D-Day Normandy landings in June 1944 meant a lot to the Plumb family, since the subsequent liberation of France would enable them to access their former French home.

6. My mother suffered many months of ill health, and I helped to nurse her after leaving Ratcliffe. However, in November 1953, she died from cancer, aged just 46, leaving me and my sister to fend for ourselves.

7. Early in 1954, my deferred National Service call-up was actioned. I spent two years in the Royal Artillery as a TARA (Technical Assistant Royal Artillery), with the rank of bombardier, being deployed for most of the time in the BAOR (British Army of the Rhine) and defending Europe from the threat of Russia with our regiment of 25-pounder field guns!"



AN EXTRACT FROM THE MEMOIRS OF THE LATE ANTHONY FEARN (50)

In 1944, I joined Form 111B at Ratcliffe College. I owe the place a lot, and I have become more aware of this debt as I grow older. At that time, the school was entering a period in which it would produce some outstanding public figures, such as the exotic **Norman St John-Stevas (46)** and **Gordon Reece (47)**, later to become Margaret Thatcher's PR adviser. Actors such as **Patrick McGeehan (44)** and **Ian Bannen (46)** had either recently left or were about to leave. Later came **Alan Gordon (51)**, a fine runner, my brother, **Robin Fearn (52)**, UK ambassador to Spain, and **Douglas Chamberlain (50)**, a prominent cardiologist. The successful grooming of this amount of talent seems an impressive achievement, given that there were only around 200 pupils, and that most of the teaching staff had only external degrees.

The headmaster at that time was **Fr Cuthbert Emery (1904)**, a man of refined appearance who smoked cigarettes with great elegance, wearing a black velvet glove to hold the long black holder into which his cigarette was inserted. 'Tam', as he was known, because he came from Tamworth, was probably not the driving force in the management of the school. That surely came from his deputy, **Fr Claude Leetham (1915)**.

Day began with Mass in the Chapel. This was a so-called 'Low Mass', conducted entirely in Latin by a priest and a server or two on the main altar. On Sundays, there was additionally a mid-morning 'High Mass', with bells, incense, and music, plus a sermon in English. On Sunday evenings, there was Compline, followed by Benediction. I became a competent 'Low Mass' server and could rattle off the Confiteor at amazing speed.

During the week, we wore grey suits (long trousers, of course), and black suits on Sundays; the latter was an innovation by Fr Leetham, with a view to raising the overall tone once a week. All 200 of us ate in the impressive Refectory, seated on benches at three long tables, each of which was dedicated to one of the three 'houses' into which we were divided: Lockhart, Arundel, and De Lisle. Prefects and the headmaster had their meals at a separate high table. From the gallery at one end of the Refectory, during breakfast, a boy would read aloud a chapter from one of the Gospels. A powerful voice was needed for this function. I was eventually selected as a reader and got used to booming out words slowly and clearly.

Other things that kept us occupied included, naturally, sport. We played rugby football in winter and cricket in the summer. Hockey was introduced in the later 1940s. The school had a quarter-mile running track, and there was also boxing. On Saturday evenings, we had a film show – one full-length film, and at least one 'short'. This was one of the highlights of the week. At a time when much popular music on the wireless originated in the USA, these Saturday evening shows supplemented our introduction to American lifestyles and language. On Sunday evenings, the so-called Literary Society met; this was actually a debating society for members of the Senior School, which was very enjoyable. Apart from the weekly debates, we once held a mock general election. I headed the Communist Party and coined the hilarious slogan 'Down with the Lava-Tories'.

Fr Leetham was fond of stage productions, and pupils were encouraged to perform in plays, which he directed in a forceful, and sometimes quirky, fashion. I was lucky to be in a number of these enjoyable shows. Fr Leetham also taught French to Sixth Formers. There were only three of us in the class, and lessons took place in his study, where he would smoke a pipe vigorously whilst holding forth on the attractions of 17th-century drama.

Ratcliffe also helped to secure me (and many contemporaries) in our religion. We understood it, we experienced and took part in its often-magnificent liturgies, and (thanks, in my case, largely to Fr Leetham) we were capable of withstanding the shocks that were to come. And, unfortunately, still continue to come. I'm grateful to Ratcliffe, and it has been very enjoyable in recent years to meet up annually with a group of men (and their wives) with whom I shared classrooms, playing fields, and dormitories 70 years ago. These include Douglas Chamberlain, **Paul Simmons (51)**, **Nick Mayne (49)**, **Gerald Della-Porta (49)**, and **John Wolfie (49)**.

Anthony's memoirs can be read in full on the Ratcliffian Association website, www.ratcliffianassociation.co.uk.

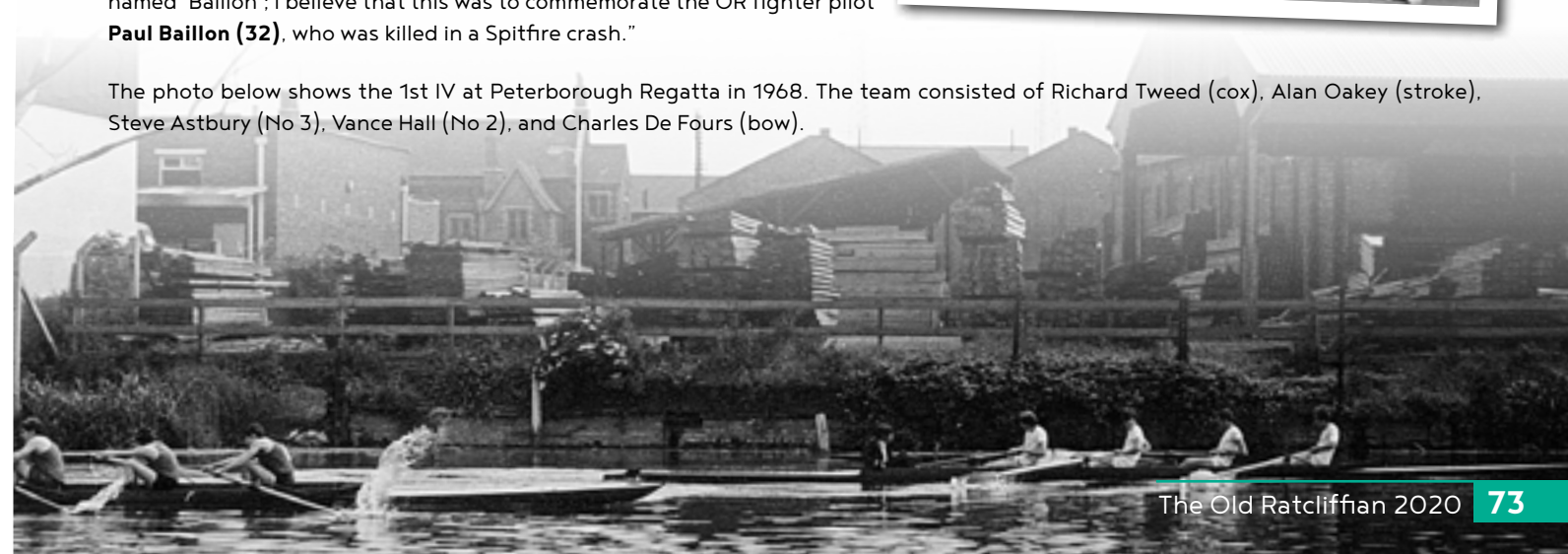
THE BOAT CLUB: A BLAST FROM THE PAST

Alan Oakey (69) recalls his days at Ratcliffe, when he was part of the now 'defunct' Boat Club. He said: "The 'brains trust' from over 50 years ago – myself, **Richard Tweed (69)**, and **Bob Pike (67)** – have come up with all but one of the club members' names. This photo (right) shows the 1966 1st, 2nd, and 3rd IVs. Back row: Alan Oakey, **Vance Hall (68)**, Bob Pike, **Tony Poels (67)**, **Gerald Garcia (67)**, unknown, and **Steve Astbury (69)**. Middle row: **Mike Piercy (66)**, **Kevin Costelloe (67)**, **Pat Curran (66)** (captain), **Stan Mak (67)**, and **Hugh Richardson (66)**. Front row: Richard Tweed, **Charles De Fours (68)**, and 'Mucker' **Barton (67)**."

Christopher Devereux (66) added: "When I was at Ratcliffe, the Boat Club flourished, regularly rowing on the River Soar. I was a cox in the second-crew boat and, if my recollection is correct, one of the club's boats (a four) was named 'Baillon'; I believe that this was to commemorate the OR fighter pilot **Paul Baillon (32)**, who was killed in a Spitfire crash."



The photo below shows the 1st IV at Peterborough Regatta in 1968. The team consisted of Richard Tweed (cox), Alan Oakey (stroke), Steve Astbury (No 3), Vance Hall (No 2), and Charles De Fours (bow).



MISSING LETTER TO THE ROSMINIANS



A letter from May 1945 has surfaced within the Rosminian community, written by Old Ratcliffian **Kenneth Cooper (33)**, whilst fighting as an officer in the army in Europe. Sent to Fr John Hickey, it conveys Kenneth's thanks to members of the Rosminian Order. He also asks for his letter to be published, so that it may be read by Old Ratcliffians.

Kenneth served in the 25th Light Anti-Aircraft Regiment, and he is now buried in Bridlington Cemetery in Yorkshire. Unfortunately, his letter is believed to have been hidden by the Rosminians in Italy, and, as a result, it was never published. We are pleased to say that the full letter and further details about Kenneth Cooper can now be found on the Ratcliffian Association website, www.ratcliffianassociation.co.uk.

RATCLIFFE'S SPORTING ACHIEVEMENTS

It was very pleasing to hear about the recent opening of Ratcliffe's new Fitness Suite – an excellent addition to the school's superb sports facilities. As pupils of the early 1950s, we were always proud of our facilities for sport – particularly of the sheer size of the grounds, and of our cinder running track, as most schools ran on grass. (Although, I do remember, for both high jump and pole vault, we still landed on sand.)

A short while ago, I read with sadness of the recent loss of **Mike Porter (56)**. Mike at fly-half was one of the many flair players who contributed to an unbeaten 1st XV record in the 1955–56 rugby season. His American-style pass, which spiraled with unerring accuracy, was sometimes decisive in initiating a blindside try in what was otherwise a very even game.

I remember vividly the other exceptional sportsmen in that team, and their excellence in the variety of activities on offer. They showed their talents in many areas, not just in rugby. I could mention **Michael Day (56)**, the English Schools high jump champion, and **Giorgio Taborelli (56)**, the swimming and athletics captain, as well as the Northern Public Schools discus and shotput champion, but there were many others. It's great to see these traditions, which offer invaluable opportunities for health and fitness, still alive and well at Ratcliffe.

Tony Sweeney (56)

Tokyo Olympics 1964 (Judo)

A SNAPSHOT OF RATCLIFFE COLLEGE

Michael Evers (66): "Whilst looking through the archives in our family's loft last month, I found a small brochure that my parents had given to me when I was a young boy. They had put my name down for Ratcliffe College in 1958 and had visited the school for the first time; I wasn't with them, so they brought this back for me. They gave me the small booklet, containing black and white photographs, and I have kept it carefully ever since. As you can see from these photographs, the school was extensively covered in creepers at the time. The stunner for me is the Old Chapel! The high altar at the far end is adjacent to the Colonnade. The impressive arched and vaulted ceiling was above the Emery Library in the 1960s, on the top floor of the converted building, with St Richard's Dormitory (behind the camera) on the same level, housing the Old Chapel's lovely rose window."



REMEMBERING FR ANTHONY LESLIE SLACK IC

OLD RATCLIFFIAN 1953 – 1959



Fr Les Slack died in Guildford in 2016, only a few months after he had retired as a parish priest and gone to live at Derryswood in Surrey. He had spent nearly all of his religious life in two houses – at Ratcliffe from 1970, after a year as a curate at St Peter's in Cardiff, and in the rural parish of Whittlesey (near Peterborough) from 2000 until his retirement in the summer of 2016. Although, amongst his family, he was known as Anthony, in the Order, he was Les from the time he arrived at Wadhurst as a novice in 1959; it was decided that, with another Anthony in the house (**Fr Anthony Meredith (57)**), it would be less confusing if he were called by his second name, Les.

Les was born in Manchester in 1940; he was a boy at Ratcliffe from 1953 to 1959, and he left the College to go straight on to the Rosminian novitiate at Wadhurst. After completing his two-year novitiate and taking his vows, he moved to Derryswood for his external London University Science degree and for his Philosophy and Theology studies, and he was ordained in the summer of 1969. Within a year, he was decreed to Ratcliffe, where he was to stay for the next 30 years.

Les was that most valuable type of clerical teacher – one much prized by the five Father Presidents under whom he served. At one stage or another, he was teaching either Chemistry, Religious Studies, or Latin, or a combination of two or more of them. He was also a Common Room Master for much of the time, with stints in charge of the Third Form (Year 9), the Fourth Form (Year 10), and the Fifth Form (Year 11).

He ran the Tuck Shop for almost 20 years, presiding over proceedings and dispensing stationery twice a day most days, assisted by a string of dedicated pupils, who benefitted from an early introduction into the world of retail business. He coached hockey for a period with, shall we say, carefully controlled enthusiasm. He oversaw the Staff Bar with great efficiency, not only in producing bills for individuals, but also

in ensuring that it was suitably stocked. He also helped with, and subsequently ran, the College's Scout troop, climbing the ranks of the Scouting community and ending up as a deputy county commissioner.

As regards the community and the religious life of the College, Les was the minister and then the vice-rector; he looked after the Chapel sacristy and trained the altar servers; and, for most of his time at Ratcliffe, he was chaplain to the Sisters of St Joseph of Peace in Rearsby, which involved saying daily Mass for them.

Outside his religious life and College duties, Les had several enthusiasms. One was railways; he liked nothing more on days off than to go and explore some forlorn, disused railway line, and he could wax eloquent about the joys of steam engines. On occasion, he was accompanied by Common Room colleagues George Friendship and Jim Hibbert. He also maintained a couple of motorbikes almost to the end of his life, which gave him transport independence, somewhat envied by other members of the community, who were restricted to sharing one or two cars between as many as 16 of them. Les also enjoyed playing bridge, and he was making arrangements to take it up again seriously shortly before he died.

Very early on in his time at Ratcliffe, Les developed a connection with the parish of St Jude in Whittlesey, providing a supply for the parish priest there when he was away on his holidays. It was serendipity that, in 1984, the Province took on three parishes in the Diocese of East Anglia, one of which was Whittlesey (combined with Ramsey). Thus, when it was time for Les to move on from Ratcliffe, it was not difficult to find him a place to minister, and he spent over 15 happy years in those fenland towns, supported by a devoted congregation. The parish suited him ideally, as it was not particularly demanding, and Les' health was not all that good; he had had heart bypass surgery in late 1990.

Laraine Eccles worked with Les in his last decade at Ratcliffe. She writes: "I met Les as soon as I started teaching Latin on a part-time basis at Ratcliffe in January 1990, as he taught some of the Latin classes. It was thanks to him that I remained at Ratcliffe for almost 26 years. I had not been there very long when **Fr Hurdidge (40)**, Father President, called me to his study and told me that I would not be required for the next academic year, as there would be no more Latin taught, due to the constraints of the



National Curriculum. Les told me, 'Don't let him get rid of you. What else can you offer?' I then taught some GCSE French until **Fr Tomlinson (52)** took over the reins in 1991 and reinstated Latin.

"Les had his first heart operation not long after I started at Ratcliffe, and I taught his classes while he was ill. I think that helped our friendship to develop, and I found him easier to talk to. From then on, his health was never good and, as I lived only five or six minutes from Glenfield Hospital, I visited him regularly when he was a patient. He never complained about his poor health, and he just got on with the myriad of tasks that he did around the College. We kept in touch when he moved to his parish in Whittlesey, and he asked me to go to appointments with him at Glenfield Hospital, as he said that two heads were better than one. There were many of these and, while he was still driving to them, after the appointments, he often used to go to the cash and carry that he had used when stocking the Tuck Shop at Ratcliffe. He thought the bacon there was better than anywhere else!"

Les was scrupulous in his vocation, took all the responsibilities of his priesthood very seriously, and was a loyal, steadfast member of the Order. He was a much-valued and supportive member of his own community, though in an unobtrusive way that he somehow made entirely his own. He had a great (not to say, on occasion, wicked) sense of humor. His list of jobs and his enthusiasms somehow do not get to the core of the man, who might have seemed almost invisible to the casual observer, but who actually characterised so much that was positive about the mission of the members of the Order in the College.

Les was brought back to Ratcliffe, where he had spent almost half his lifetime, for burial in the community's cemetery. May he rest in peace.

Br Nigel Cave (72)

*Further memories of Fr Slack were provided by **Clem Maginniss (74)**, **Andrew Coker (78)**, and **Fr Anthony Meredith (57)** – these additions can be viewed on the Ratcliffian Association website, www.ratcliffianassociation.co.uk.*

REMEMBERING RATCLIFFE'S SUMMER BALL

The first Ratcliffe Summer Ball took place on September 6th 1985, after a suggestion from the Ratcliffian Association's Social Committee. It was designed not only to act as a fundraiser for the College, but also to showcase Ratcliffe to a larger audience, enabling prospective pupils' parents to get a feel for the school and what it could offer their children. The ball continued biennially, gradually increasing in size, and the money raised paid for improvements in the Square, and the Ratcliffian Association's headquarters and bar, along with other projects.

The Summer Balls were organised by a committee of just four people: **Richard Gamble (64)**, **Joe Massarella (54)**, Jackie Gamble, and myself. Each member of the committee had their own responsibilities, and they were able to make decisions and delegate as necessary. We decided to use several different areas of the school each time, with each one having a different theme. There was always a marquee in the Square and a disco in the Refectory, but we also used some of the rooms along the corridor. The marquees varied from Spanish (red and yellow, complete

with flamenco dancers) to French (red, white, and blue, complete with can-can dancers). The Refectory had 2001: *A Space Odyssey* as its theme on one occasion, while the Old Library had a string quartet one year, and a live Irish ceilidh band another. The Masters' Common Room and the present-day Conference Room became a wine bar, a French bistro, or, one year, a pub, with one of the guests playing the piano for a very popular singsong for several hours! In addition, smaller areas, such as the corridor near the Refectory, were often transformed into Italian trattorias. Guests were able to wander around the different areas and avail themselves of any entertainment or music that they chose.

The excellent caterers, consisting of the lecturers and students from Loughborough Catering College, produced a wonderful three-course meal each time: a starter, which was followed by a magnificent buffet, and then a choice of sweets. Cheese and fruit tables were placed in various spots for people to help themselves. There were several fully stocked bars, and there were wine stations as well. As the balls were always held on the Friday before the start of the Autumn Term, we had two days to set them up and one day to clear them away; often, some of the overseas students and local pupils were drafted in to help, along with family and friends of the committee and some of the school staff.

The guest list increased a lot over the years, and in 1993, we held the largest Summer Ball ever; there were 763 guests, many having travelled a long way to be there. We had two marquees that year: an Arabian Nights-themed one in the Square (with a starlit ceiling, stilt walkers, fire eaters, and belly dancers), and an Irish-themed one on the edge of the cricket field (in green, white, and gold). Other rooms included Café René, Casablanca, and a ship, and the Refectory became the Cavern Club for the evening. It was certainly a night to remember, and we raised £13,000! We held just one further Summer Ball, on September 1st 1995 – our swansong. We had had a lot of fun during those ten years and the six Summer Balls, and we had raised a lot of money, but by then, it was time for us to step down and let others take over.

Angela Murphy
Summer Ball Committee member and wife of **Bernard Murphy (67)**



ECHOES FROM 35 YEARS

I remember, I remember, the Ratcliffe Summer Ball,

Sheer elegance and extravagance are the features I recall.

The idea was to raise some cash by the Association,

On impressive scale, to make a splash, provoke anticipation.

I remember, I remember, coming through the door,

Garlands of leaves, bowers of flowers, rising from the floor.

Groaning tables, wheatsheaf loaves, enormous stacks of cheese,

Sculpted butter and sculpted ice, so many delights to tease.

I remember, I remember, Arabian Nights or bistro,

Rooms with different music and themes, string quartet or disco.

Glass in hand, we strolled around, amazed by the variety,

Of style, and chat, and food, and fun, in cordial society.

I remember, I remember, dancing the night away,

Waltzing and bopping, singing and rocking, 'til nothing left to say.

Gather our group; coats on; thank you; good night and so well done,

I remember the invite said clearly, "Carriages at One".

Michael Heath (56)
(with apologies to Thomas Hood)

RATCLIFFE LINKS

GRACE DIEU MANOR SCHOOL: 1933 - 2020

Sadly, after 87 years, Grace Dieu closed its doors to pupils on July 3rd 2020. Established in 1933 as a preparatory school to Ratcliffe College, it was originally a boys-only boarding school for pupils from 10 to 14 years old, although a small number went there at an earlier age. Transferring to Ratcliffe was automatic in those days, as the College only catered for students from 13 years old upwards.

Grace Dieu became a very successful prep school in its own right, and in 2009, a new pre-prep building, the Gentili Centre, was constructed to cope with increasing numbers. The building attracted a considerable new intake, increasing the number of pupils to 320. However, the changing pattern of education soon started to have an effect on prep schools across the country, including Grace Dieu. During that period, entry to senior schools gradually changed from 13 to 11 years old, making Years 7 and 8 more difficult to fill at Grace Dieu. Senior schools, including Ratcliffe, continued to develop their own prep schools. With pupils maturing at a younger age, the level of pastoral care for them became greater, increasing schools' overheads, and therefore making those years unprofitable. In 2017, Grace Dieu closed Years 7 and 8, and their cohort at the time transferred to Ratcliffe and other senior schools. Unfortunately, a considerable number of younger siblings transferred with them.

To counter this fall in numbers, Grace Dieu's governors made a decision to open a nursery at the school, catering for children aged three months up to three years. It was hoped that this would bring new pupils into the pre-prep building, and this soon began to show positive results. It proved to be a tremendous success; within 18 months, there was a waiting list for places. Nursery pupils were starting to follow through to the pre-prep facility, and the future was looking positive. In 2017, Grace Dieu was awarded a rating of "Outstanding" by the school inspectors.

Unfortunately, the lack of numbers in the senior school were reflected in a weakening financial position. As the trustees were not in a position to keep funding Grace Dieu, the difficult decision was made to close it down at the end of the Summer Term in 2020. The contents of Grace Dieu have now been sold or given to local schools, and many youngsters have benefitted from this. The school buildings are currently up for sale.

Richard Gamble (64)
Chair of Governors and Trustee



NEWS OF THE ROSMINIAN BRETHREN

Here in the Rosmini Centre at Ratcliffe, we have a community of seven: myself, **Fr Ted Mullen (60)**, **Fr David Tobin (59)**, Fr Tony Furlong, **Fr Philip Sainter (69)**, **Br Nigel Cave (72)**, and Fr Denis Labartette. I have been the novice master for two years. We began with three novices, with one completing, who is now Br William Rees. He made his first vows at a Mass in the aerodrome farm hangar in September this year. Br William is now in the community at Porta Latina and is studying Philosophy at the Gregorian University.

I recently returned from preaching an eight-day retreat to six of our young men preparing for their final vows as Rosminians - four from India and two from Africa. Fr Ted Mullen recently handed over the local parish of St Theresa in Birstall to one of our Indian brethren, Fr Tom Thomas. Fr David Tobin takes care of our ascribed members, and he is ready to draw up a programme of talks and events for the Rosmini Centre, once COVID regulations allow it. He loves the quiet life and gardening. Fr Tony Furlong has recuperated well after a major health problem two years ago, and he is now in active retirement. Fr Philip Sainter is Father President of the College, and he is admirable in his care for his mother, who is 96 and living in Wilmslow, Cheshire. Br Nigel Cave is very involved in First World War affairs, while writing and editing books on the various battlefields. Fr Denis Labartette was the last chaplain at Grace Dieu, which, sadly, has had to close. He helps out in so many ways, winning all with his hospitality and cooking!

In Mansfield, Fr Antonio Belsito is our province procurator and is in charge of Rosmini Publications. There is a plan for that house to be sold, and to develop what was the farm milking parlour here into his residence, whilst also providing some extra accommodation for the centre. Fr Paul Gillham is parish priest at St Mary's, Loughborough, and he is assisted by **Fr Simon Giles (60)**, who has been saying Mass for our sisters in Loughborough. At St Marie's in Rugby, Fr Shinto is parish priest, and Fr Jose is rector of the retired community. Both are from India, as are Fr Tom Thomas in Birstall, Fr Aji in Cardiff, and Fr George in Derryswood, Guildford. Also in the Rugby community are Fr John Buckner, **Fr Charles Sormany (48)**, **Fr John Bland (53)**, and Br Joseph Gardner.

Fr David Myers (59) is rector at St Mary's, Derryswood, and he is ably assisted in so many ways by Fr George; he is a great worker, an enthusiastic gardener, and he cares well for

Fr Barry Farmer (48). Fr Bill Curran has a live-in carer. Also in the community are Fr Robin Paulson and Fr Bill Jackson. Fr Tom Deidun is rector at St Etheldreda's, Ely Place. In St Patrick's, Newport, we have Fr Brian Cuddihy and, in retirement, Fr Eric Willett. In Cardiff, we have two parishes. Firstly, St Peter's, with Fr Chris Fuse as parish priest and provincial. With him are Fr Aji, Fr Michael McCarthy, and Fr Jim McKnight. Secondly, in St Joseph's parish, we have Fr Justus Okibo, from the East African Province, as parish priest, and Fr Philip Scanlan, in retirement. Also in the community is Br Brian Butler.

In other Rosminian news, accompanying Father General, Don Vito Nardin, on his Curia are myself, Fr Felice Muratore (also rector in Stresa), Fr Geoffrey Feldman (from the East African Province), and Fr Laiju (secretary general). Geoffrey and Laiju are very much involved as formators of the students, and they look after the daily business arrangements. Fr Mario Natale is the rector of the community. We have 18 novices in East Africa, seven in India, three in Venezuela, and one in Italy. We have 21 students, including Br William in Porta Latina, Rome. The rest are from India, Africa, and Venezuela, and they are all studying for the priesthood.

A few years ago, the Indian Province branched out to Palmerston North Diocese, where Charles Drennan was bishop; he has since retired. Fr Manoj and Fr Robin have a large parish in Palmerston North, and they have also been able to successfully see a postulant through his early formation. He is from Vietnam and wants to join the English Province, but he has visa problems. After his year of postulancy, he could not get a visa to come to the UK, but he is being nurtured in our novitiate in Coimbatore. There is another student from Vietnam who has recently completed his time of postulancy and is looking for ways to get a visa. Because of COVID, he cannot get one for India. Let us hope and pray to the Lord that we can find a solution.

Finally, Fr Michael Hill and Fr Aidan Cunningham live a faithful and interesting life down in Dunedin. Michael is an able writer, and Aidan is parish priest in North East Valley, Dunedin.

If anyone would like any further information, please email me at anthonymeredith@mac.com.

Fr Anthony Meredith (57)



DIARY DATES 2021

PLEASE NOTE: Due to guidance and restrictions relating to COVID-19, the dates printed in this list are subject to change, possibly at short notice. Please look out for communications relating to Association events and activities, and see our website, www.ratcliffianassociation.co.uk, for the latest updates.

THE TAYLOR MIXED HOCKEY CUP RATCLIFFE COLLEGE, 2PM	MAR 21	MAR 11	ASSOCIATION COUNCIL MEETING VIRTUAL EVENT, 5PM
THE CENTENARY SALVER PUBLIC SCHOOLS' ALUMNI TEAM EVENT LUFFENHAM HEATH GOLF CLUB	APR 23	APR TBC	THE SIXTH FORM SOCIAL RATCLIFFIAN ASSOCIATION BAR, 6.30PM
THE RATCLIFFIAN GOLF SHIELD (OLD RATCLIFFIANS VS STAFF & STUDENTS) ROTHLEY PARK GOLF CLUB	MAY TBC	MAY TBC	2021 LEAVERS' MASS THE CHAPEL, RATCLIFFE COLLEGE
THE REUNION WEEKEND RATCLIFFE COLLEGE SATURDAY 26TH JUNE THE RATCLIFFIAN ASSOCIATION SUMMER BALL DETAILS TBC SUNDAY 27TH JUNE SURVIVORS' LUNCH MASS FOR DECEASED ORS, THE CHAPEL, 10.30AM ASSOCIATION AGM, THE OLD LIBRARY, 11.30AM THE GRAND MATCH (ORS VS 1ST XI CRICKET TEAM), 11.30AM BBQ & BAR, 12PM ONWARDS	JUNE 26 JUNE 27	JUNE TBC	THE REYNARD GOLF TROPHY (OLD RATCLIFFIANS) ROTHLEY PARK GOLF CLUB
THE RATCLIFFE GOLF DAY & DINNER ROTHLEY PARK GOLF CLUB	SEP 16	SEP 10	THE LONDON DINNER THE CRYPT, ST ETHELDREDA'S MASS 6.50PM, CHAMPAGNE RECEPTION 7.15PM, DINNER 8PM
THE 5 YEAR REUNION (CLASS OF 2016) RATCLIFFIAN ASSOCIATION BAR, 7PM	OCT 9	SEP 26	OR SPORTS DAY THE THISTLETHWAITE HOCKEY CUP, THE HALLEY FOOTBALL CUP & THE SUE ROBERTS NETBALL CUP RATCLIFFE COLLEGE, 2PM
THE PAST PRESIDENTS' DINNER THE OLD LIBRARY, RATCLIFFE COLLEGE, 7PM	OCT 29	OCT 21	THE RETREAT VENUE TBC, 21ST - 23RD OCTOBER
THE YORKSHIRE DINNER VENUE TBC, 7.30PM	NOV 19	NOV 14	ASSOCIATION COUNCIL MEETING CONFERENCE ROOM, RATCLIFFE COLLEGE, 10.30AM
THE RATCLIFFE COMMUNITY CAROL SERVICE RATCLIFFE COLLEGE, 4PM	DEC 12	DEC 3	LEICESTER CHRISTMAS DRINKS RATCLIFFIAN ASSOCIATION BAR, 7.30PM
YOU CAN REGISTER FOR ALL EVENTS AT WWW.RATCLIFFIANASSOCIATION.CO.UK . ALTERNATIVELY, YOU CAN CONTACT US ON 01509 817054 OR AT ALUMNI@RATCLIFFECOLLEGE.COM TO REQUEST A POSTAL REGISTRATION FORM		DEC 24	FAMILY CANDLELIGHT CHRISTMAS EVE VIGIL MASS RATCLIFFE COLLEGE, 5PM

Editor-in-Chief: Sarah Gretton
Editor: Katherine Lang
Copy Editor: Gemma Thomas (née Rumbold) (01)
Designer: David Ricks (07) at Light Up Creative Ltd

