



# RICHMOND SCHOOL NEWSLETTER



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[www.richmondschool.net](http://www.richmondschool.net)

May 2007

## NEW SCHOOL

We were delighted that the Planning Authority approved our Planning Application for the new build on 28 April, which means that work can commence on site during the summer holiday.

Following a lengthy and comprehensive process we are now close to appointing a contractor. We have been pleased that all of those interviewed have demonstrated recent experience of school builds and fully recognise the need to construct the new school with the minimum of disruption to teaching and learning.

I should be in a position to give you full details of the contractor, phasing, timescales, etc. within two or three weeks, when I will write to you again.

## PARENTS' EVENING QUESTIONNAIRES

Many thanks to those who have completed the questionnaire at our parents' evenings this year. Over 600 parents took the time to answer our questions, giving the school an opportunity to evaluate working practice. Six questions were asked and the findings are below:

- On timings, 75% of you support a 5.00-7.00 p.m. parents' evening and consequently we are seriously considering this for next year. The benefits include earlier finishes for staff, students and parents as well as a less 'jaded' start to the next day when staff have just completed what is a 12/13 hour day.
- Preferred means of communication with school varies, with the majority still favouring the letter, followed by the student planner. This is also an opportunity to remind you that our new Website is up and running at [www.richmondschool.net](http://www.richmondschool.net).
- Up to 90% think homework is about right. However, the figure drops to nearer 80% in Years 8, 9 and 11, where more parents feel too little is being set. We will be investigating this through departments and also appropriate use of the student planner to record homework.
- A huge 97% are happy with the teaching and learning, although we will continue to explore ways to improve.
- Another 95% of you thought the planner helps student organisation, and the school really appreciates your regular signing and monitoring of this.

- On average, 94% of you said your child had no worries or concerns about school. We would like this figure to be higher still and hope that parents and students alike feel comfortable in contacting school to discuss such issues.

We would welcome further feedback from parents, prior to putting final proposals to the Governing Body later this term. Please contact Steve Speakman, our Head of KS3/4 if you have comments to make regarding any of the above.

## LOST PROPERTY

We are getting increasing amounts of lost property and few students coming to claim their belongings back. I am also concerned that a small minority of students are saying that their belongings have been stolen when, on a number of occasions, they have been lost.

All students need to use their lockers properly and look after valuable items. Thanks for your assistance with this issue.

*Phil Beever - Head*

## BACK FROM THE COLD

21 Geography students from Richmond School have returned from a successful, fun, yet highly educational tour of the SW of Iceland.

They spent 5 nights and 5 days in the Geographically dynamic country, visiting key landmarks that will help them to prepare for their forthcoming exams.

Students climbed to the summit of Eldfell Volcano, which erupted in 1973 with disastrous consequences for the 5000 inhabitants. They walked along the fissure line and across the basaltic lava flows.

One of the educational highlights of the study tour was the visit to the Black Glacier, which is an outlet valley glacier from an icecap and has visible evidence of rock movement.

Students were also able to appreciate the availability of natural renewable energy in the form of Hydroelectric power as well as geothermal. They saw at first hand the environmental, financial and recreational advantages, and all enjoyed many an hour in the geothermally heated outdoor pools in

the towns, including the world renowned Blue Lagoon.

*Rachel McNutt - Head of Geography*

### **SCHOOL SPORT - SUMMER TERM**

Playing in a five day football tournament can be tough for any player, but add soaring temperatures and for some the first time away from home, and the physical effects can multiply.

This was the reality for 47 Richmond School Students, aged between 12 and 18, who spent some of their Easter break in Barcelona competing in the International Copa Cost Daurado football tournament.

It was a new experience for the young players, many of whom had never experienced 'continental style' football. The students were able to develop their skills and played superb football against very strong opposition. The Richmond School teams played well against Professional Academy Clubs and did themselves, and England, proud.

The U16 team reached the semi's, but lost out to Nastic in a close game ending 2-1. Although the players were bitterly disappointed at losing to Nastic, they realised that they had been beaten by an exceptional team. The other teams performed well, finishing 5<sup>th</sup> out of 12 teams and 9<sup>th</sup> out of 16 teams.

The students not only performed outstandingly, but have brought home many fond memories, not least from their final day of enjoyment at the Port Aventura Theme Park!

*Ian Snape/Fraser Dalgleish/Jon Bielby*

### **Rugby**

Thank you for your continued support and efforts in raising money for the Canada 2008 Tour. Our next fundraising event will be a Summer Dinner Dance to be held at the Morrit Arms Hotel on Friday 29<sup>th</sup> June. For tickets please contact Martin Burgess at school.

### **Hockey**

*U12s Durham County Cup*

Semi Final: St Patricks 0 Richmond 4

Final: Egglecliffe 4 Richmond 0

*U16s Durham County Cup*

Semi Final: Egglecliffe 0 Richmond 1

Final: Richmond 4 Redhouse 2

The Boys have competed in the County cups recently with the U12s losing in the final, whilst the U16s played brilliantly to beat Redhouse 4-2 in their final. Congratulations to all players.

### **Cricket**

*Team News*

The cricket season is underway and all year groups are competing in the Area and Yorkshire Cups. We wish them good luck!

### *Individual Honours*

Congratulations to the following students, who have been selected for the Area and County teams:

*Area Representatives:*

U15: Sam Wood, Tom Hodgson, David Young, Jack Vickerman.

U13: Robert Carr, Lewis Stabler, Stephen Mather

*County Representatives*

U13 Yorkshire: Lewis Stabler, Robert Carr

U14 Durham: Jack Vickerman

U15 Durham: Tom Hodgson

### **Athletics**

A team of athletes attended the Area athletics trials at Claireville Stadium. We are eagerly waiting to find out if any participants have been selected for the Area team.

### **Dance Factor**

Congratulations to Katie Wilson, Rhiannon Jones Laura Barningham and Harriet Arnott, (Year 9) who were the winners of the Risedale Sports Partnership Dance Factor event, which was held at Bedale High School on Thursday, 10 May. Richmond had four talented groups of dancers in the competition who all worked hard on their routines and performed extremely well.

### **Youth Games**

This year's event is to be held once again at Ampleforth College in York, on Sunday 3 June. Many Richmond School students have been selected to represent Richmondshire, competing against all other areas of North Yorkshire. This is the first year Richmond have had a Gymnastics team entering the competition. Good luck to all competitors.

*Rebecca Shaw - School Sport Co-ordinator*

### **PERFORMING ARTS**

Ah, springtime – new life, fresh starts, good things stirring in Performing Arts!

### **Visiting performances and workshops**

Spring has been packed with performances and workshops from visiting companies. On 20 February **North Yorkshire County Youth Dance Company** gave an inspiring performance to all of Year 8 and a workshop for forty Year 8 students, including plenty of boys who wanted a challenge. The Company includes eight dancers from Richmond School, who displayed brilliant leadership in the workshop. Years 9 and 10 enjoyed an **Indian Music workshop** (kindly paid for by Arts in Richmondshire) on 22 February. **Ricochet Dance Company** gave an A-level Dance workshop on 9 March, while on the same day Year 7 enjoyed a thought-provoking drama performance of 'The Chrysalis' by **Fourth Wall Theatre Company**, followed by a workshop for some of the year group. To mark the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the abolition of slavery and to support the History Department in their teaching, **CTC Theatre**

performed their play 'Sweet' on 25 April. A-Level Theatre students were put through their paces by **Big Wow Theatre Company** in a physical theatre workshop on 4 May, based on their compelling tour-de-force, 'Insomnababble'.

On 17 April the whole of Year 9 went to the Georgian Theatre for a performance workshop of '**The Tempest**' with a difference – the actors were not professionals but senior Drama students from our Physical Theatre Group. (They could have passed for professionals though!) The aim of the workshop was to engage students with Shakespeare in the run-up to their SATs, and we are thrilled that the English Department prefer our in-house version! Thanks to Nick Cox (a past Richmond School parent) for lending authentic gravitas to the role of Prospero.

### **Student performances**

Other student performances have come in all shapes and sizes. Year 10 Drama students presented some assured comic scenes from '**Teechers**' by John Godber on 27 February, while Year 11 intrigued audiences with their self-devised and very original '**Nightmarish Visions**' on 13 March. Miss Lumb choreographed the dancers in the highly successful **Fashion Show** run by Miss Adamson on 15 March. The **Spring Concert** on 28 March had a wide range of musical offerings. **A2 Music** students gave an informal concert of exam pieces on 20 April, followed the next day by the massive, sold-out '**Music for Schools**' concert which brought together students from our school, SFX, the Methodist Primary and the C of E Primary. The **AS Theatre Studies Triple Bill** on 24 April was almost sold out too, cramming the Georgian Theatre with punters eager for cross-dressing Greek comedy, elastic-stretching Greek tragedy and mind-bending modern drama (the latter enhanced by a set by our first-ever A-level set design candidate). Finally, in an act of musical altruism, the **Swing Band** entertained distraught Year 11s at the leavers' assembly on 11<sup>th</sup> May.

### **Swaledale Festival 2007**

Imagine... It's a golden summer evening... you emerge from a wonderful performance of theatre or opera in the 'Cathedral of the North', catch your breath at the stunning dales scenery, stroll over to the Bridge Inn to enjoy a fine ale, and ask yourself... what could be more sublime than the **Swaledale Festival**??

The Swaledale Festival is a major arts event which draws artists from all over Europe and audiences in their thousands. This year we are extremely proud to be contributing – for the first time – to the Festival programme. We start on Bank Holiday Monday (28 May), when Reeth comes alive with '**Festival on the Green**', featuring Richmond School **rock bands** and our ever-popular **Circus Club**.

On Thursday, 7 June at 8pm, Grinton Church hosts '**Peer Gynt**', a stunning version of Ibsen's poetic drama performed by our graduating A-Level

Theatre students. This is the Festival's debut theatrical performance (ever!), an honour we do not take lightly! Using physical theatre, madcap comedy, shadow-play and even bell-ringing, the cast weave an unforgettable spell. A professional chamber ensemble will open the programme with Grieg's 'Peer Gynt Suite'.

The Festival's finale at 8pm on Saturday 9 June is '**Carmen**', also at Grinton Church. A large choir of students from Richmond School, local primary pupils and international opera singers give full voice to Bizet's ever-popular classic. Our A-Level Dancers' **flamenco-inspired dance**, with live guitar accompaniment, will provide an extra shot of Spanish passion.

In addition, Richmond School violinists will participate in an Elgar strings workshop, playing alongside professional musicians, while our young composers will have the unique opportunity of hearing their creations played by the renowned King's Camerata.

With all this to choose from, we hope you will join us to savour the Festival's unique and very special atmosphere. For tickets please phone the Box Office on 01748 880019.

### **Staffing**

Miss Lumb and Mrs Townend have now completed their maternity leave posts, so we say goodbye and thank you for all they have done since September, including their hard work on the extra-curricular side.

We look forward to welcoming Victoria Hargest (Head of Dance) back from maternity leave after May half-term, and we are delighted to have recently appointed Ruth Ademokun-Jones as permanent Teacher of Dance. Miss Jones has a Diploma in Musical Theatre from Italia Conti Academy as well as a BA Hons in Dance Performance, and did her teacher training at the Royal Academy of Dance. She has already made her mark with her street dance classes and her choreography of the Spanish Dance for 'Carmen'. The team grows ever stronger!

### **Coming up...**

It's Sondheim, it's big musical numbers, it's madcap farce, it's saucy spoof, it's togas a-go-go, it's a cast of thousands, it can only be... '**A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum**'. The **big show of 2007**, on 6 – 8 December, promises to be an hilarious romp through Roman comedy, with something for all the family. First-round **auditions** for Years 7-11 are on Monday, 11 June, 3.45 to 5.00pm in the Drama studio, and for the Sixth form are on Thursday, 21 June, 3.45 to 5.00pm from the 00 p.m. in the Drama Studio. Anyone interested is warmly encouraged to attend – all willing students who audition will be offered a part of some description!

Don't miss our **Showcase Evening** of dance, drama and music at 6pm on Tuesday 10 July, and our musical **Summer Concert** at 7pm on Tuesday

17 July, both in Middle Hall. You can also enjoy the sounds of our Wind Band, Flute Choir and Brass Ensemble in Richmond's Friary Gardens as part of the town's '**Bands on the Green**' season on 15 July at 3pm.

As always, we hope to see you in an audience, soon!

*Liz Moss - Director of Performing Arts*