

Welcome to the seventh edition

Four boys walk 250 miles along Pennines

FOUR boys from Roundwood Park Secondary School, Harpenden who set out three weeks ago to trek the 250 miles down the Pennine Way from Yetholm, just over the Scottish border, to Edale, Derbyshire, arrived home on Thursday last week after a wet walk.

Head boy Terry Holden, of Gustard Wood, Wheathampstead, and prefects Gareth Cade, of Harpenden, and John Anstee and Richard Elliott, both of Redbourn, encountered such wet weather in fact that they spent the last five nights at hostels, although they had planned to spend every night under canvas. The rain started after the first two days of the 13-day hike.

After travelling by coach from Hatfield to Newcastle, they hitch-hiked on to Yetholm, though it took them eight hours and they had to walk eight miles.

They encountered the most difficult part of the route the first day, when they found few marks to guide them through the Cheviots, and had to plot their way by compass and map.

10 hours a day

Each of the four carried about 35 lb. of equipment, but they walked for an average of about 10 hours a day and covered an average of nearly 20 miles.

Rain was not the only thing that soaked Gareth. He fell into a shallow river while crossing it by way of some slippery stepping stones. At another point Terry nearly suffered the same fate when a path along the ledge collapsed, but he was grabbed by one of his companions.

Another "mishap" was the bowl of burnt curry served in celebration of John's 16th birthday en route.

The boys encountered another difficult section when they had to contend with mist over Kinder Scout. At one place in the Pennines the route rose to a height of nearly 3,000 ft. above sea level.

From Edale, the four hitch-hiked home in pairs.

Despite the fact that they were

often wet and their kit was saturated, all four, given the chance, would like to do the trek again, although they would prefer more time, perhaps about a month, in order to be able to stop and explore the places of interest they passed.

John's immediate trekking is not yet finished, however, for on Sunday he is off to Luxembourg for 10 days with the 1st Redbourn senior scouts.

The other three are back to school for the last week of their school for the last week of their from their headmaster, Mr. A. Foxwell, to make their trip along the Pennine Way after taking G.C.E. exams.

Terry starts work next month with a Harpenden building firm, Richard in September with a Boreham Wood engineering firm, and Gareth and John are going to St. Albans College of Further Education to study for A-level examinations

The 50th Anniversary challenge from 1965 students to 2015.

In 1965, after finishing their GCSEs, four students decided to mount an enormous challenge to walk 250 miles along the newly opened Pennine Way. The boy saw this as a constructive use of their time before leaving and going on to college or work. The Head Teacher, Mr Arthur Foxwell, allowed them to have two weeks of before the end of term to do this.



This adventure and proposed challenge to our students hoping to leave in 2015 has recently been reported by Terry Holden [Head Boy 1964/5] who in conjunction with the three others [Gareth Cade, John Anstee and Richard Elliott [all prefects] have suggested that to mark the 50th anniversary of their challenge in 1965 perhaps such a venture can be repeated in 2015. This is currently under consideration.

RPS – A building site almost finished for now.....?



The two 'open spaces' either side of the entrance to the canteen have been covered and will be converted into additional canteen seating areas. The RH picture shows the 'space' that abuts the 'old' Sixth Form Common Room but which has since been converted into Lab 10.



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The Science 'raised' pond has been removed from the LH 'space' and there are plans to create a new 'student and science sensory garden which may contain a water feature' outside the science block.

The Paul Robert Barnett interview; Jan 2014

You studied Biology/ Geography at University – what made you study science and biology in particular?

I always wanted to do a practical subject which had relevance to everyday life, hence the joint honours course that I enrolled on in Geography and Biology. My original intentions were to study a higher degree in Biology and get a biology related job in industry. But one or two jobs interviews in Toxicology and animal testing soon dissuaded me from this career path.



Do you have any fond memories of your time at university?

Not sure if fond is the right word, but when I was twenty one I had jet black hair and beard and was quite often mistaken in Manchester and Salford uni bars as George Best!! Several people bought me free drinks – clearly a good scam for a few months till my footballing skills didn't live up to the reputation. I did also see bands such as Led Zeppelin, Deep Purple, Black Sabbath, David Bowie etc. which were mind blowing at the time and stick in my memory.

What made you go into teaching?

I had intended to do an MSc in Fisheries at Chelsea College, but the funding fell through and I had to quickly reapply for something else. A stop gap was teaching, so I thought. 36 years later here I am still in the profession and the nearest I got to the sea was a dogfish dissection. People do say that I look like Capt. Birdseye these days though!

Did you or have you ever considered any other career path?

Yes. When I was 22 I seriously considered following my late father's footsteps into the RAF as an officer. I went to Biggin Hill and did the 3 day training programme/ interviews and got through to the last 4-5, but was then rejected. I was told to reapply the following year, but I never did. Who knows what might have happened if I had?

Why did you choose Roundwood Park School and have you ever worked in another school?

As they say 'cream always floats to the top' and Roundwood had a good reputation in the late 70's, so I snapped up the chance to teach at the best school in the area. It has been my only school and will be my last whenever that time comes. Numerous kids have asked me 'are they going to bury you in the quad outside the biology lab Mr B?' They could well do if I go on much longer, but that wouldn't be a bad thing as it feels like my second home.

What aspects of your job at RPS do you particularly enjoy and if you have to pick one thing that you most enjoyed what would it be?

I love to actually 'teach', which means not worry about giving marks and levels for work, but just do the subject for fun and interest. Numerous kids over the years have loved to hear my stories of tape worms etc. writhing inside my body! Many enjoyable sixth form Biology field trips to Norfolk with Dr Dann and Ms Hood also spring to mind; when we use to watch students get stuck in the mud at Blakeney salt marsh and then cook chicken dinners for 20 people on 2 small ovens and play cards etc. in the evening after the fieldwork was over. I also enjoyed helping to run 'nature club' with Dr D – do you remember 'slinky' the snake, 'killer' the hamster, as well as all the gerbils running through the maze ?? Fun times.

You are the longest serving fulltime teacher at RPS what is it that made you stay so long?

The grass is never greener on the other side... the grass has always been the greenest at RPS. The school has a friendly working environment, well focused students who on the whole show a genuine appreciation for staff. I never find it difficult to face the day ahead – there is always something good to think about. We all need to make a judgement call in life about what is good for us individually and for our families. I made my decision 36 years ago and I don't regret it. In the words of the old school motto:

'Quid Retribuamus' – "what do we give back" – in my case probably 40 years of my life!



Are you planning to give up at any time in the future?

Planning to take my pension in the summer but not retire fully. Hoping to go part time over the next few years and maybe make it to 40 not out! This will be my 36th year and I still feel there is energy left in the battery to go on a bit longer.

What do you think you will miss most about your career at RPS when you leave?

Not being able to 'punish' the students with my vast array of silly one liners and sarcastic comments. e.g. 'you're a sharp as a tennis ball' – 'you've got more rattle than a box of marbles' – 'a slug with a wooden leg can go faster than you'. Decades of practice will be lost! Humour in my opinion is one way to survive in teaching and 99% of students know that if I'm sarcastic with them, then it means I like them.

Do you have any moments that stand out that you are willing to share about your experiences at RPS?

I have enjoyed the staffroom banter and friendly games of golf that we play in the summer months over the last 20 years. In the early days I loved the staff competitions, such as 'It's a knockout' on the school field with very keen PE staff!! Then there were the staff v sixth form football and hockey grudge matches, with one or two head wounds for Mr Woodhouse and Mr Jones.

The students have also contributed to many happy memories, including regular visits from past students who drop in to give me gossip and updates. I recently met up with my old 2007 tutor group in the Bell in Harpenden. A lovely evening chatting over the old days and finding out how well they've done and how appreciative they are of RPS staff.

You were a keen footballer at school and is it true you were known as the 'cat' in goal when playing staff games?

All true – I have been averagely good at football, playing at county level as a student. I like to think of myself as a forward with great striking potential, alas due to apathy from other staff I often got to play in goal where I have been described as a Peter Bonetti style player (alias the 'cat' - his nickname). I have also been likened to a 'leaping salmon'...but there is no truth in the rumour (which I promoted for at least 15 years!) that I use to play for Tottenham during the 1970's. I stopped this rumour when a parent asked if he could have my autograph – ouch so embarrassing!

Did you also take part in extra-curricular activities such as sports with the students?

The first decade at Roundwood I coached football to Year 7 & 8 students i.e. from 1978 onwards. I also ran several half marathons in the 1990's for the Roundwood Staff team alongside Mr Woodhouse and Mr Figg. For the last 15 years I have been the school's golf co-ordinator and use to run a staff v school competition at Harpenden Common which many of you may remember. Needless to say we use to get beaten most years.

What do you get up to in your spare time?

I use to be a coach for mini/ youth rugby at Letchworth Rugby club, but I now play golf as a means of exercise and relaxation. I love to travel and have taken several holidays in recent years in Greece and Spain. I am actively involved

as a governor at another hertfordshire secondary school and have been advising them on educational matters for the last 14 years. Beyond that, I go to see spurs home games whenever I can and the NFL games at Wembley every year with my son.

How do you balance the stress of being a successful teacher with family life?

I have always been a strong believer in family commitments and being actively involved in family life. My daughter Clare was recently married and that was a very exciting and enjoyable few months preparing for a 'daddy' speech etc. My son is currently preparing to move into his first bought property which again provides a lot of new challenges and enjoyment as a parent. The family commitments will soon be much less and I will have more time for myself and so the balancing act will be less difficult.

What are you plans for the future?

To live a long and healthy life hopefully. I will go part time with a bit of luck next year, but continue to promote my sixth form tutor skills to try and get more students into uni with the best grades as possible. I plan to spend some time during my days off playing golf, taking family walks/ visits etc. to places I haven't been. I would love to do a 'gap year' and go to Australia and New Zealand and be a student again!

When students look back on their time at RPS how would you like to be remembered?

Hopefully as someone who left a positive mark in their memory and who instilled a genuine interest in science into their life. No doubt many people will also remember me for my Pringle jumpers. Yep, I still wear them to this very day - some things will never change!! Thank you to all those caring students who have bought me numerous jumpers over the years – presents that I can say were genuinely appreciated and well worn.

Take care everyone. Mr B alias 'Barney'.

John Shiebert returns to add his experience to the canteen.

After leaving us in 2010, John went to Barnfield College where he studied 'professional cookery' and 'patisserie and confectionery'. Now fully qualified John has allocated time to return to his old school to help out in the school canteen, where his mother Mrs Andrea Shiebert works as one of the cooks. John will then be moving on to a new position where he hopes to expand the range of services provided and one day open his own business. John, besides being passionate about Marshal Arts, where he is also well qualified, is learning Japanese and hopes to go to Japan to study the art of Zen tea making.



Alumni help offers continue



Francesca Solari [class of 2007]. Having gained an MPhil [Manchester] in Respiratory Medicine and a BSc [Sheffield] in Physiology with Pharmacology, Fran is now studying medicine at Sheffield University and has offered to advise students on undergraduate applications to science and medicine.

Bilal Skoien [class of 2010] has recently accepted a position with RBS in Manchester following his BSc in Philosophy, Politics and Economics from the London Metropolitan University. He will be coming in to school in early February to talk about his degree year to Y12 students



Jenny King [class of 2010] Jenny [ex –Head Girl] gained a BSc in Drama from Exeter University and now works as an ICS volunteer for VSO. She has offered to come in and talk to some gap year hopefuls about what the ICS is about and how it can improve their uni/job applications? She is in the middle of fundraising for this at the moment and hopes that the sixth form can help out with a bake sale or some other fundraiser, which would be a bonus!

Dowie runner up in BT's Action Woman of the Year

The inaugural Action Woman Awards celebrated women who gave the most dynamic sporting performances of 2013 and the winner was decided by an online public vote. Downhill mountain biking star Rachel Atherton has been crowned the first-ever winner of BT's Action Woman of the Year Awards.

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Atherton's success followed a triumphant year during which she became the women's downhill mountain bike world champion and World Cup Series winner – the second time in her career in which she has achieved the elusive double. Downhill mountain biking star Rachel Atherton has been crowned the first-ever winner of BT's Action Woman of the Year Awards.

The 26-year-old from Salisbury was named victor on Saturday [25th January 2013] night's edition of The Clare Balding Show. "Wow! I'm absolutely gobsmacked to have won the first ever BT Sport Action Women Awards", Atherton said. The shortlist for this award was stacked with women who I personally take inspiration from." Rachel Atherton



Runner-up **Natasha Dowie**, who helped Liverpool Ladies to the Women's Super League title as the league's Golden Boot winner, while also being voted Players' Player of the Year, was thrilled to be recognised for her achievements last year. "To be nominated for Action Woman of the Year meant so much to me," said Dowie. "It was almost surreal when I got the news and just unbelievable when I saw who the other nominees were. I was almost too embarrassed to ask my friends and supporters to vote for me alongside those other amazing athletes.

"Whilst I've had football awards, I've never been nominated for anything like this before so it's a really big deal to me."

THANKS to all those alumni that emailed in to say they had voted for Natasha.

Making a contribution to help our students If you would like to offer any professional advice or opportunities for our pupils/students please let us know.

Alumni Grapevine – The following are some of the alumni that have made contact



Aaron (Littleford) Ross [????] Aaron is the Founder and CEO of Ruffl' - The mobile application that enables diners to discover great new restaurants with real-time availability and great offers wherever and whenever they want. Aaron is also Chairman of United World Colleges GB National Committee in London which seeks to select the best possible students for all UWC colleges and short courses.



Alex Greenwood [2000]. He gained a BA in animation and interactive technology and further qualifications. Alex is currently a senior IT Analyst at Aecom.



Alex Taylor [1984] Following 21 years in the Army, Alex left as an Administrative Warrant Office and is currently Client Account Manager at NSL Services Limited in London.



Amy Clark [2009] Amy gained a BSc in Geography from Southampton University. She is now a CRM Executive at Rank Interactive in London.



Clare Buckpitt [2004]. Claire studied diagnostic Radiography (BSc from University of Herts) and after working for the NHS now works for Siemens HealthCare.



Daniel Toyer [1992] after gaining a degree in Mathematics from Nottingham University, Daniel has moved to Australia where he is the Planning and Analysis Manager at Independent lime and cement in the Melbourne area.



David Amende [1980] Studied Mechanical Engineering at Imperial College, London before embarking on a career managing engineering projects.



David Hickey [1998] after gaining a BEng in Mechanical Engineering from Loughborough University, David is now a 787 Project Engineer at Virgin Atlantic Airways in Redhill.



Isabelle Mayne [2007] . Isabelle is now a Hedge Fund Accountant at GSA Capital



Jack Baker [2004] Jack studied Historical, Political and Sociological Studies with History at Exeter University. He is now an HSE Adviser at British Gas Business in London.



James Rourke [1999] James studied at the institute of Barristers Clerks and has worked extensively in the London Chambers' He is currently clerk to the Civil, Family, Immigration & Housing teams in the Chambers of Lord Gifford QC.



Jo Thompson [2001]. Jo studied Psychology at Nottingham University. She is currently the Sector Manager at PayPoint plc in St Albans.

John Rayner [1981] After qualifying in Vehicle, mechanical and electronic systems, John is an experienced field engineer and currently works for Hako Machines in Peterborough.



Lucy Johnston [2003]. After gaining extensive experience in banking, Lucy is now Assistant Manager, Property Finance at Close Brothers Group PLC in London.

Mark Pears [1984]. He is currently Deputy Director for Leadership Technology and Built Environment at Milton Keynes College. Prior to this he has lectured at Milton Keynes and Oxford & Cherwell Valley Colleges as well as working for many years as a Prison Officer at HMP Prison service.



Paul Davison [1997] After gaining a BSc in Real Estate Management from Nottingham Trent University. Paul worked as a chartered surveyor then moved into property management before moving to Australia in 2012. He is currently a Sales and Leasing Manager at Vend Property in the Perth Area, Australia.

Rebecca Walters [2007] Following her BA Media Arts and Cultural Studies from St Mary's University she worked as a graphic designer in many varied companies and is currently an Email Designer at Mothercare in St Albans.



Richard Harle [2006] After gaining a BSc in Veterinary Sciences from the Royal Veterinary College, U. of London. Richard is currently a Trainee Practice Nurse at Animalism Veterinary Surgeons.

Richard Turberville [??] Sales & Purchasing Manager at Abbey Chemicals in Cratfield, Suffolk, following an extensive career in management in the chemical industry.



Sabine Templeman [2010] Bachelor of Arts (B.A.), Social Anthropology & Human Geography from Oxford Brookes University. Now a Direct Marketing Assistant at Oxfam

Sandra Rowlands [1998] Marketing Co-ordinator at Key Travel in St Albans. Sara gained a BA (Hons) Tourism Studies from Bournemouth University





Sara Gibson [2000]. Gained a BSc in Psychology from the University of Nottingham and is now the Senior Account Manager at The Marketing Store in London.



Tanisha Shah [2008] Following her BSc in Building Surveying from Leeds Metropolitan University, She is now a Facilities Service desk Operator at KPMG



Thomas Bennett [2006] Principal Consultant at Vertex Solutions International Ltd. In Hemel Hempstead.

Tom Firmin [1994]. Tom gained a BSc in Geography from Nottingham University and then gained extensive experience in the food /drink retail sector before taking up his current position as Finance Planning and Analysis Manager at Whitbread.



Clare Stopp [1999] Clare gained a BSc in Geography from Southampton University and went on to work in Sales and Marketing. She is currently Director of Sales, UK, at ESPA International in Farnham, Surrey,

Apologies to those that have not been mentioned.

Staff changes & news

Miss **Rupa Shah** will be leaving at the end of the summer term to take up a Biology teaching post at her old school in St Albans.



We have been informed in early January of the sad news that **Mrs Joyce Knight** [Head master's secretary in the 1970/80s] has passes away at the age of 93. For those of us that were lucky enough to know her or work with her will have fond memories.

Visit your old school - Guided tours

If you are in the vicinity or live locally we would be delighted to see you and show you around the school. Please contact us by email or phone the school to arrange for a visit. Wednesdays are preferred but if you can only make another day we can arrange for a Sixth Former to show you around.

We would really like to hear any comment or views you have regarding the Alumni.

If you would like to be 'listed' on the Alumni listings please make contact. You can email in your 'synopsis (see current listings for ideas) with a photo or indicate if you have a LinkedIn photo.

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Also we are keen to publish your views or reminiscences and/or old school photos. Please email them in to this desk. B.smith@roundwoodpark.co.uk

No material/data will be published without your permission.

Find out what others have been doing?

Please go to www.roundwoodpark.co.uk/alumni to look at the alumni News and Alumni Listings as these are regularly updated. You can also look at back issues of the Newsletters.

Getting in touch?

There have been a few requests from Alumni to make contact with their 'old' teachers recently. Please email this office with your request and we will make contact with staff to ask their permission to pass on their contact details to you.

If you wish to appear on the alumni listings or have an item of news that you think would be of interest PLEASE email with attached photos if possible to alumnioffice@roundwoodpark.co.uk

Alternatively you can contact this office -

By the school web site www.roundwoodpark.co.uk

By email – alumnioffice@roundwoodpark.co.uk

By LinkedIn – Roundwood Park

By post - to Alumni Office or Dr BML Smith,

Roundwood Park School,

Roundwood Park, Harpenden, Herts. AL5 3AE

By telephone – 01582 765344 or ext. 208 on Wednesday only.