

Abingdon

News

The Newsletter of Abingdon School

September 2006

No 12



ABINGDON 750

At the Great Wall



Abingdon's musical fame now stretches far and wide following the Music Department's triumphant visit to Hong Kong and China in July. The group, seen here at the Badaling section of the Great Wall, gave four very well received concerts, including one at the British Embassy in Beijing. In addition they visited a Buddhist temple, a martial arts demonstration, Ming Dynasty tombs, the Summer Palace and Tian'anmen Square. Throughout the tour they were provided with lavish hospitality by their hosts.

Record Breakers!

An all-time-record 89.6% of A level results were at grades A and B this year with five boys achieving five grade As each. At GCSE, 66.1% of candidates achieved grades A* and A with seven boys getting ten or more A*s. Congratulating all the boys, the Headmaster, Mark Turner, emphasised that credit must also be given to the staff who guided them towards these impressive results.



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Challenge £30,000

The challenge is to raise £30,000 so that the Abingdon Film Unit can go to Cambodia to make a film about landmine victims for the charity *Landmine Victim Support*. Last term's *Make a Difference Day* saw a variety of fund-raising activities from sponge-a-teacher to a quick cricket contest. *Shake Your Tail Feathers*, an evening of fantastic jazz in the Amey Theatre, raised £1,100 for the cause. More money came from Abingdon's rowers who competed in – and won – the annual Dragon Boat Race on the Thames at Abingdon. Whilst on 4 July, just four days after losing to Portugal, a slightly revamped English team beat Germany 2 – 0 in a closely fought match on Waste Court Field.



The Dragon Boat victors



The English and German teams



Fantastic jazz in the Amey Theatre

Gold Medallists

The School has won eleven medals in the recent Maths, Physics and Chemistry Olympiads, four of them gold. John Morgan won gold for physics, coming in the top fifteen in the country, Timothy Middleton, Richard Slade and Geoffrey Pennington won gold for maths, the latter finishing in the top five in the country for his age group.



Three physics medallists.

Any Questions?

Local residents and community representatives joined parents, staff and boys in a packed Amey Theatre for a live broadcast of Radio 4's *Any Question?* on 21 April. It was a stimulating and thought-provoking evening, hosted by Jonathan Dimbleby and with the former Conservative deputy prime minister, Lord Heseltine; royal biographer, Sarah Bradford; former diplomat, Jeremy Greenstock and Treasurer of the Labour Party, Jack Dromey, on the panel.



Mugs For All

All members of the School community: teaching, housekeeping, ground, maintenance and administrative staff, together with the boys, were presented with a mug at the beginning of last term to commemorate the 750th anniversary of the School. The mug was designed by James Nairne, Head of Art, who also designed the 750th-anniversary logo.



The Perfect Present

The School Shop has a number of 750th-anniversary mugs for sale – stock up now for presents, to replace breakages or as an investment!

Price £12.50
 From the School Shop
 01235 849107
shop@abingdon.org.uk

Success!

The meaning of success was the subject of Lord Patten of Barnes' address to the leavers at Prize Giving on 1 July. The former Chris Patten, now Chancellor of the University of Oxford, challenged the leavers to consider the inequalities of the world and to measure success by more than their own personal achievements.



A Remote Experience

The Duke of Edinburgh Gold Qualifying Expedition to Knoydart in the Western Highlands gave twenty-three boys an experience of living in an extremely remote area. The only village on the peninsula is Inverie and the only way to get there and back is by ferry from Mallaig – unless you want to walk the sixteen mile route over rough country.



Arrival and departure from Inverie



Don't Rain on My Parade!



Despite the words of the song – it poured! However, driving rain was no reason to prevent Abingdon's Combined Cadet Force putting on an impressive show for the Biennial Inspection Parade. Watched by a crowd of invited parents and guests, the parade was conducted by Brigadier Patrick Davison-Houston CBE.

Award Winning Musicians

It has been an eventful term for the musicians: in recent exams fourteen candidates, including five taking Grade 8, achieved Distinction. No wonder *The Good Schools Guide* have awarded the Department this year's prize for the "highest sustained performance by boys taking A level music in an independent school in the UK".

Awards continued to come in over the summer holiday when the School's musicians achieved a double success in the National Chamber Competition.



Concert at the Chen Jing Lun Middle School, Beijing

Sound and Fury

This multi-media spectacular of drama, music, film and fire on 30 June, explored the origins of language, expressed the eloquence of the great orators and celebrated the triumph of harmony. The dramatic highlight of the evening was an outdoor firework display by Tristram Bainbridge, OA 2005.



Art Show

An eclectic range of work was on show last May at the annual A level artists' end-of-year exhibition held in the Arts Centre foyer and Art Department studios.

Treasure Island

A scene from the Junior Drama Club's production of *Treasure Island* last term.



Date for your diary – Abingdon at the West End: a Celebration of Music and Performance at the Lyric Theatre, Shaftesbury Avenue, London W1, Sunday 3 December

Cricket

The 1st XI had a successful end to their season when they beat Radley for the first time in fifteen years, the score, Abingdon 169 all out to Radley's 160. Meanwhile the Under 14s won the final of the Oxfordshire section of the Lord's Taverners' Cricket Competition for the second year running, beating Magdalen College School by 83 runs.



The Under 14s



The 1st XI against Radley

Athletics

The Athletics County Cup produced two Abingdon champions: in the high jump, Will Stephenson with a jump of 1.83 metres and in the 100 metres, Michael Summers whose time was 11.7 seconds.

The Boarders were the overall winners of the House Competition, winning both the 3rd and 4th-year levels, Elliott's won the 5th-year level and Franklyn's the 6th.



Athletics at Radley

Rowing

In the Princess Elizabeth Cup at Henley Royal Regatta this year the 1st VIII beat Monmouth and The Oratory but lost by a third of a length to Philips Academy, Andover, USA. This followed a season in which they won the Junior eights at Reading, Wallingford and Bedford where they also won the Senior One eights.



1st VIII at Wallingford

Tennis

A good season for the Tennis Club saw the 1st VI win all their inter-school fixtures. The results bode well for next year since all six players will still be at the School. Both the Under 15 A and B teams won their sections of the Oxfordshire Independent Schools' Tournament.



Scenes from the Summer Term

Palace of Westminster Reception



Among the guests at the reception at the Palace of Westminster on 26 April were were, from the left, the Headmaster, Mark Turner, with Ed Vaizey, MP for Wantage; Francis Maude, OA 1971 MP for Horsham and Chairman of the Conservative Party with Michael St John Parker, former Headmaster; Tim Parker, OA 1973, Chief Executive of the AA.

History Walk



Former master, Nigel Hammond, OA 1957 in the Roysse Room with some of the forty people who joined him as he went *In Search of the History of Abingdon School* on 7 June.

St John's, Smith Square Concert



The audience appreciating the evening sunshine during the interval at this well attended concert on 3 July.

Henry Olonga



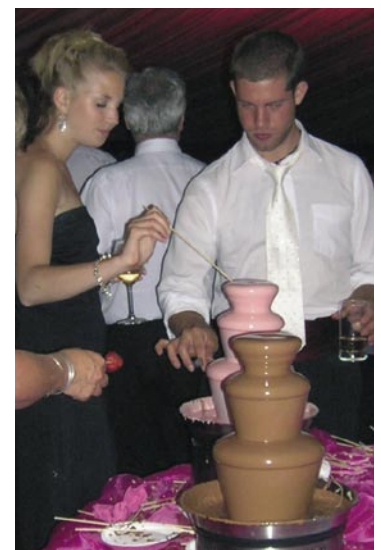
The former Zimbabwean cricketer, Henry Olonga, at the School on 5 May.

Pembroke College Reception



The reception in Pembroke College gardens on 29 June following Michael St John Parker's lecture on the history of the Abingdon Pembroke connection.

Griffen Ball



Some of the many sideshows that made the Griffen Ball such an enjoyable event on 1 July



Chris Tarrant

Lord's Taverners' Match



The Abingdon Alligators beat Chris Tarrant's Lord's Taverners' team by 198 to 148 at a charity cricket match on War Memorial Field on 7 July. James Mugnaioni, OA 2005, bowled former England captain Mike Gatting for 13.

The Abingdon School Society - TASS



All That Jazz

Jazz on a Summer's Evening worked its annual magic on 23 June when a capacity audience heard Simon Currie's Abingdon Big Band, augmented by a number of OAs, play an attractive repertoire that included many old favourites such as *The Pink Panther* and *The Chicken*.

Normally it is the Music Society that provide refreshments at concerts but this time TASS volunteered to do so, keen to show their appreciation of jazz and to enhance this 750th anniversary event with champagne and strawberries. Ten members of TASS, smartly dressed in black and white, served up 14 kg of strawberries topped with lashings of cream together with 132 glasses of champagne. Not a bottle remained unopened – a sure sign that everyone enjoyed themselves!

Tass Christmas Card

The winner of the TASS Christmas card competition was 1st-year Charles Studdy. The cards will be on sale at Open Day and from the School shop, order forms will be included in one of the School mailings.

£10 for pack of 25 cards



Charles Studdy's *Three Kings*



Going the Extra Mile

Each year the Upper Sixth are invited to apply for TASS/Tappins Awards to support them in their gap year projects, whether they are concerned with community, charity or personal development.

This year the following awards have been made:

Ben Davis £300, Ed Hofman £100, Aaron Lewis £500, Andrew McGrath £100, Thomas Wakeling £100, Ian Dorward £200, Philip Cope £400, Matthew Smith £500,

The Tappins Award has been given to the Film Unit, which plans to make a film in Cambodia on landmines and the problems faced by people, especially girls, as a result of landmine injuries.

Forthcoming events

Everyone warmly invited:

30 September – Open Day.

20 January 2007 – Burns Night

Oxford Town Hall, champagne, haggis, bagpipes, tatties and neaps, songs and merry dancing.

There's plenty of room for more!

A warm welcome awaits anyone who fancies joining the TASS team – there are plenty of jobs to go round.

Why not help out at one of the next term's events - no need to commit yourself - just see what it's all about. You have the choice of:

Open Day, 30 September, one of TASS's main fundraising events, where members serve lunch and refreshments to current and prospective parents. We only need an hour or two of your time, everyone who has helped out in the past has found it great fun.

Burns Night, 20 January 2007, requires fun-loving volunteers to join an experienced team, including speakers from all ethnic origins (particularly those with Scottish accents!)

Parents' Evenings TASS serves hot food and beverages at all Parents' Evenings, ideal for those who have come straight from work, and we are always looking for volunteers to help out.

If you would like to help in any way, big or small, then contact Karen Brombley Tel: 01235 529659 or kbrombley@hotmail.com. If you would like to attend a TASS meeting the next one is on Monday September 11th at 7.45pm for 8pm in the Christ's Hospital Room, Mercer's Court.

Second-hand Uniform Shop Opening Hours 12.15 – 1.15

Saturday 2 September
Saturday 9 September
Wednesday 13 September
Saturday 7 October
Wednesday 11 October
Saturday 4 November
Wednesday 8 November
Saturday 25 November
Wednesday 29 November
Saturday 9 December

Manor Adventure

Years 5, 6 and 7 all headed to Shropshire for a four day adventure camp. Supervised by camp staff and the form teachers of the respective classes the boys and staff took part in abseiling, kayaking and running an obstacle course to name but a few of the activities on offer. The camp was thoroughly enjoyed by all and is sure to become an annual event.



Anniversary Ball

The Josca's annual ball boasted unprecedented numbers, glitz and glamour this year to mark the 50th anniversary celebrations. The event was a huge success and is testament to the hard work and dedication of the Josca's Parents' Association.

Year 4 Production



The Year 4 class staged a performance of *Star Trash* at the end of last term..

Pre-prep Party



The Pre-prep 50th Anniversary Street Party took place under sunny skies.

Josca's School Annual Sports Day



The Josca's Preparatory School Anniversary Sports Day again took place in near perfect weather conditions. The boys, dressed in their house colours, were keen to demonstrate their athletic abilities in front of a large gallery of onlookers. Events included the pre-prep 'sack' race, high-jump, long-jump, cricket ball throw, shot-put, accuracy throw and various track events culminating in the house relay races. The U9, U11 and U13 Victor Ludorum Trophies were won by John Corran, Georgie Craik and Danny Burford respectively with the overall house cup going to Unicorn House.

Spot the Difference!

The location is the same – a corner between the old schoolroom and the Headmaster’s house – but one hundred and forty-nine years separate the two photographs. The old photograph shows the whole school in 1867 with the Headmaster, William Strange, sitting in the middle and his Usher, Edmund Harper, beside him.

The new photograph shows the 1st years on 3 July, the day they recreated *A Morning in the Life of a 19th-century Schoolboy* at the old grammar school. Are boys taller than they were in 1867? Masters’ beards are certainly not as impressive these days as they used to be!



Abingdon Museum

There will be an exhibition of watercolours by Oswald Couldrey, OA 1901, at the Abingdon Museum until 26 November. The exhibition coincides with a temporary exhibition of items from the School's archives, including this recently donated blazer, which belonged to the Abingdon architect Duncan West, OA 1939.



The 2nd IV 1939, Duncan West on left.

The bathing place, 1939

Oswald Couldrey

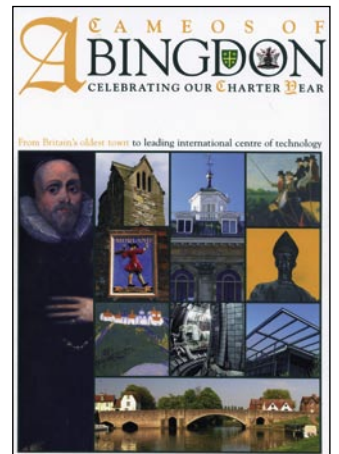
in Abingdon and India

Abingdon Museum
 17 June - 31 August: the Abingdon pictures
 1 September - 26 November: India

The County Hall, Market Place, Abingdon, Oxfordshire OX14 3HG
 Tel 01235 523703 • Free admission

Cameos of Abingdon

Published to celebrate the 450th anniversary of the granting of a Royal Charter to the town of Abingdon, this beautifully produced book, which tells you everything you might like to know about the town, can be bought for £8 from local booksellers.



Christmas Present?

The old School films, *Ut Profficias* (1953), *No Tumbled House* (1955) and *Letters to America* (1964) are all now available on a single DVD. Price £10 + p&p. Contact the OA Club.

It is with mixed feelings that I am preparing my last OA Club News page before I leave Abingdon School to take on a new post at University College, Oxford. It has been a most enjoyable six years for me. Whoever takes over this role will be inheriting a much-loved position and I wish him/her well. I know the Club will continue to go from strength to strength as there is a real sense of enthusiasm from OAs. All the best! *Marilena Kaye*

This issue is sent to you along with *Griffen 2006* and the last edition of the 750th Anniversary Programme of Events. Please note Sunday 3 December – the OA President has booked the West End's Lyric Theatre for *A Celebration of Theatre & Performance* featuring OAs past and present. We hope to see many of you at this OA 750th grand finale!

OA Reunion Day

It is good to see so many OAs attending the many events organised to celebrate the School's 750th, in particular the OA Reunion Day on Saturday 22 April where 148 people attended – 103 of them OAs who left between 1933 and 2004. *No Tumbled House* (1955) and *Letters to America* (1963) were shown in the afternoon – two very thought-provoking films.

Other events

Some of the other 750th events attended by OAs included the Palace of Westminster reception on 26 April, the CCF Parade & Dinner on 24 May, the Reception at Pembroke College on 29 June, which included a talk given by Michael St John Parker on the history of the Pembroke-Abingdon connection, the Concert at St John's Smith Square on 3 July and the Charity Cricket Match (Lord's Taverners v Alligators) on 7 July. Some OAs even attended performances by the School Orchestra in China in early July!

OA Golf Day – 9 May 2006

Among the winners at the OA golf day at Frilford Heath Golf Club were: The Secret Partner competition: Philip Candy (1957) & Mike Neilan (1960); runners-up were Robin Scibilia (1976) & David Evans (1959), and in Third Place, were Mike Morris (1965) & Alan Pezaro (1954). The Roysse Cup was won by Mike Morris and John Edelsten (1952) was Runner-up; Robin Scibilia was in Third Place and David Evans in Fourth Place. Next year, the OA Golf Day will be at Frilford Heath on Tuesday 8th May 2007. Jack Trenaman's (1958) full report on yet another successful day at Frilford Heath and David Letley's (1966) other photos can be found on the OA website.



If you have any news, or would simply like to make contact, the OA Office details are:

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Tel: +44 (0)1235 849074

Fax: +44 (0)1235 529517

Email: administrator@oaclub.org.uk
www.oaclub.org.uk

OA President's Dinner

This year's Dinner united 62 OAs who left between 1936 and 1998. Julius Green (1982), President, ensured that the evening would be particularly special and memorable. During the meal, the 105 guests were entertained not only by performers from the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, but also by our very own Sixth Form boys performing excerpts from *Bouncers*. The dinner culminated in a delightful speech given by the eldest OA present, Bill Beaton (1936) who came from Scotland to attend this special occasion. The festivities continued in the Charles Maude Room, which had been transformed to include a bar, jazz pianist, lounge chairs and a casino corner.



Casino in the Charles Maude Room at the President's Dinner

OAs attending were – from 1936, Bill Beaton; 1941, Bill Bradfield; 1952, John Hullett; 1953, Hugh Leach; 1953, Garth Round; 1957, Robert Elliott, Nigel Hammond, Richard Powell; 1958, Jack Trenaman; 1959, David Evans; 1960, Michael Neilan; 1961, David Brice, Terence Libby; 1962, John Bunce, Robert Evans, Richard Welch; 1965, Alan Williams; 1971, James Cox; 1972, Noel Crosse; 1974, Paul Thompson; 1975, Simon Hills; 1976, David Blomley; 1978, Peter Jones; 1980, Ted Eveleigh, Mike O'Shea, Julian Prentis, Bryn Rhys, Nick Wright; 1981, Julian Hamilton-Peach, Andy Rowe, Nick Ward; 1982, Tim Spittles; 1983, David Alford; 1984, Eric Bridges, Andrew Campbell, Jonathan Mayo, David Newport, Barry Stanton, Neville Trippett, Andrew Ward; 1986, Simon Bird, Ian Elms, John Stamper; 1987 Martin Landray, Anwar Salleh, David Smith; 1988, Dominic Morrison; 1997, Benjamin Cullum, Nick Dando, Dan Evans, James Horton, Rupert Janisch, James Peterson, Ian Priest, Ed Ryder; 1998, Hans Allnutt, Euan Macdonald, Roland Marshall, Chris Stockford, Nick Warmingham, John Watts. Former Common Room included Frank Burrow (1991-2000), Andrew Gasson (1977-1987), Keith Hasnip (1954-1994), Charles Parker (1974-1997), Bill Potter (1955-92), Nigel Payne (1965-1997), David C Taylor (1966-1997).

Future OA events:

30 September: Open Day
11 am OA Committee AGM

1 October: 60s Club Event
Contact Richard Bampton (1961)
angelarichard@hotmail.com

November: City Lunch
Contact: matthias.bader@hawkpoint.com

3 December: West End extravaganza
See 750th brochure

Old Abingdonians

70 Years On

William Beaton returned to the School for the first time since leaving in 1936 when he attended the 750th Anniversary OA Open Day on 22 April. Delighted with everything he saw, he returned again as Guest of Honour for the OA President's Dinner on 8 July where he delighted fellow guests with a hilarious account of his memories of the School. In the intervening seventy years he has been a national boxing champion and an Olympic Games shooting trialist. He served in the Fleet Air Arm during the Second World War and afterwards became General Manager of the Clydesdale Bank. He now lives in Ayr.

His brother Alan, who also attended the School, died in 1997.



William Beaton with Noel Crosse, OA 1975.

Julius Green OA 1982

This year's President of the Old Abingdonian Club, Julius Green, is a West End theatre producer, working both for his own company and as Associate Producer for Bill Kenwright Ltd, the UK's most prolific theatre production company. Julius read History at Cambridge but spent most of his time there acting and directing! He is on the Board of Directors of the Edinburgh Festival Fringe and the Society of London Theatre. His latest production, *Cabaret*, opens at the Lyric Theatre, Shaftesbury Avenue on 10 October.

It is thanks to Julius that the School is presenting the revue, *Abingdon at the West End: a Celebration of Theatre and Performance*, at the Lyric on 3 December.



David Mitchell OA 1992

Mitchell and Webb, stars of Channel 4's *Peep Show*, will be touring the country this autumn with their new live sketch show. They will be at the New Theatre, Oxford on Tuesday 14 November.

Gareth Butler OA 1982



Gareth Butler joined the BBC World Service after reading History at Cambridge. He moved to Radio 4 and then in 1997 into BBC television. He has spent most of the last ten years working at Westminster, from 1999 to 2002 on *Westminster Live* and *Dispatch Box* and since 2003 as deputy editor of *The Politics Show*. In 2005 he co-authored *British Political Facts Since 1979*, a definitive political record of the past quarter of a century.

Marilena Kaye



By the time you receive this newsletter Marilena will have begun work as the Alumni Relations Officer for University College, Oxford. Our loss is their gain as, for the past six years, the School's OAs have been in wonderfully capable, efficient and friendly hands. At the time of going to press there has been no decision on Marilena's replacement but throughout the coming months, until a permanent appointment is made, there will continue to be someone in the OA office whose job it will be to keep in touch with you all.