



Read all about it!

In a term packed with success across the whole spectrum of School activities, the Cross-Country Club became the National Schools' Champions and the U13 hockey XI County Champions; two members of the Film Unit won Best Documentary and Best Animation awards at the BFI's Future Film Festival; Abingdon's chess team, playing as City5, have won promotion and are the only unbeaten team in any division of this adult league; two Abingdon boys, out of more than 1,000, were selected for training to represent GB at the International Physics Olympiad and an Abingdonian has been offered a place as percussionist in the National Youth Wind Ensemble. You can read all about it, and more, in the pages of this magazine. ■

London Premiere for AFU Film



Lord Dubs, Chairman of the All Party Parliamentary Group on Moldova, Ala Beleavshi, Moldova's Chargé d'Affaires in London, Keith Shannon and John Beyer, OA, current and former British Ambassadors to Moldova, joined a large and appreciative audience for the premiere of the Film Unit's *One Foot on the Ground* when it was shown at the BFI'S National Film Theatre on 12 March.

Following the life of a 23-year-old Moldovan basketball player, the film quietly contrasts the assumptions, expectations and opportunities in Moldova compared with those in the UK. ■



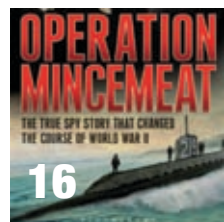
06

Arts



08

Sport



16

OA News





Governor Profile Jon Gabitass

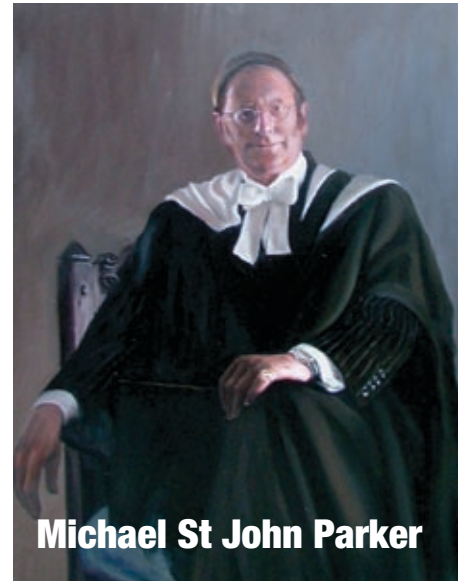
Jon joined the governing body in 2005, soon after becoming chairman of what was then the Josca's Committee. He is also a member of the Education, and Finance and General Purposes Committees, and is a governor of St Helen's with a mission to support links between the two schools. In addition, he is a governor of Godolphin and Latimer School in London.

Jon's background is in teaching: first at Clifton College where he taught English,

coached the 1st XV and played club rugby for Bristol; last, as Headmaster of Merchant Taylors' School, where he and his wife Fiona spent 13 very happy years; and in between he was Head of English and the Second Master at Abingdon under Michael St John Parker. His two daughters were pupils at St Helen's. When Jon retired in 2004 he and Fiona moved back to the Abingdon area, settling in East Hendred.

In retirement, Jon's interests still revolve around education. Apart from governing, he appraises other headmasters and visits about 20 schools each year throughout the UK on behalf of an educational charity which awards grants to develop science and technology.

His other interests include walking in various parts of the world, plugging gaps in his reading, gardening – something he hated as long as it was a necessity but enjoys now as a pleasure – and his two granddaughters in Oxford, for whom he acts as babysitter, storyteller, treat-provider, miracle-worker, clown and punchbag. ■



Michael St John Parker

At an OA reunion at The Athenaeum on 17 March, the Chairman of the Governors, David Lillycrop, unveiled a portrait of Michael St John Parker, headmaster of Abingdon 1975-2001. The portrait, painted by Jonathan Hills, now hangs in the Dining Hall beside those of several of his predecessors. ■

Professional Mentoring



Current boys and OAs at Oriel College

A recent initiative has seen the OA Club set up a series of professional dinners, which allow current boys and young OAs the invaluable opportunity of meeting OAs and parents, both past and present, with careers in the same field. On 25 March Professor Mike Stevens, OA 1968, currently Professor of Paediatric Oncology

at the University of Bristol, hosted a very successful medical dinner at Oriel College. This follows an equally successful law dinner hosted last September at the Middle Temple by Sir Vivian Ramsey, OA 1968. Dinners planned for next year will feature finance and engineering. Details will be announced soon. ■

Long Service Awards

At the end of the Christmas term, a number of presentations were made to members of the housekeeping, boarding, maintenance and grounds staff who have given long service to the School. The awards, presented by Governor Tanya Hawley, went to David Percival and Mike Cox who have worked at Abingdon Preparatory School for 22 years; Nick Barnard, who has been at Abingdon School for 23 years, Gwen Annells for 25, Di Bloomfield for 33, Patricia Nicoli for 36 years, and Jean Dunn for a magnificent 47 years.

Jean, who has lived in Abingdon all her life, began work in 1963 in James Cobban's own household, where her sister, Joyce, was nanny to the Cobban children ■

Abingdon School – the Turner Years

Mark Turner, who takes up his new appointment as Headmaster of Shrewsbury in September, has been Headmaster of Abingdon since January 2002.

Mark was educated at Rossall School and read Geography at Mansfield College, Oxford after which he went to RMA Sandhurst and joined the Royal Artillery. After a period of time in the Army, during which he served in Northern Ireland, he studied for a PGCE in Cambridge. Before he came to Abingdon Mark had been Head of Geography and a housemaster at Oundle and Headmaster of Kelly College in Devon.

His time at Abingdon has seen a major refurbishment of all the boarding facilities, the extension of the Arts Centre, the building of a new boat house and of the Sports Centre and phase 1 of the dining hall improvements.

In addition, Abingdon Preparatory School has both grown and become more fully incorporated into the School.

We wish Mark and his family well at Shrewsbury and thank him for his excellent stewardship of Abingdon School over the past eight and a half years. ■



On a visit to Moldova to see for himself conditions there



With the first of his three Chairmen of Governors, the Rt Hon. Francis Maude PC MP, OA 1971, at the Opening of the Arts Centre in 2003



Helping to build the Boat House in 2003



With Tom Ayling, Second Master until 2007

A Chance to Say Farewell

Over the course of the Summer term there will be several opportunities for parents and OAs to say their goodbyes to Mark Turner, in particular:

- Friday 25 June** Sheldonian Theatre, Oxford – 7.30 pm
Abingdon's musicians will perform in a Farewell Concert
Tickets will be available from the School Box Office
- Sunday 27 June** Twenty20 Cricket Tournament – 10 am onwards, Sports Centre
Members of the 1st and 2nd XI will compete with OA, staff and parent teams for the Gerald Smithson Memorial Trophy
- Friday 2 July** Farewell Drinks Reception – 6.30 pm, at School
Parents and members of the School's wider community will be invited to a reception where a presentation will be made to Mark Turner, and his portrait will be on display.

Details of all farewell events are on the School's website:

www.abingdon.org.uk/farewell_events

If you would like to contribute to a collection for a farewell gift go to

<http://shaping.abingdon.org.uk/Home/HM-farewell>

Snow!



School returned late after the Christmas holidays when the heaviest snow for years closed a number of roads in the county making it impossible for the school buses to operate. Boarders, who had returned before the snow fell, found themselves competing for the top prize in igloo- and snowman-building competitions instead of sitting the expected exams. ■



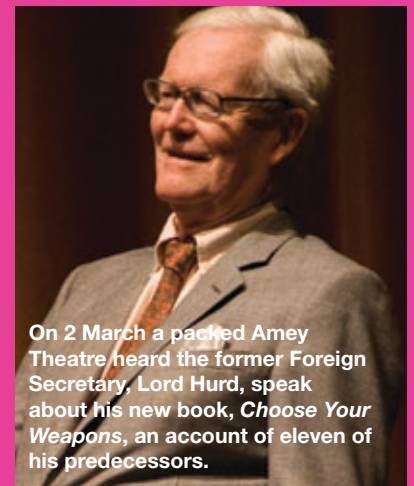
The Headmaster inspecting an igloo

Authors at Abingdon

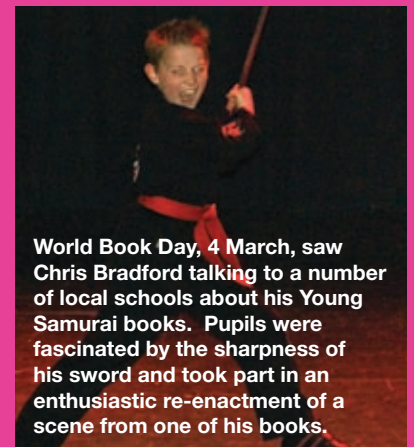
During the course of last term a number of authors visited Abingdon.



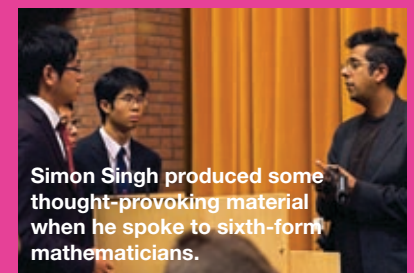
Marcus Sedgwick had 1st and 2nd year pupils from both St Helen and St Katharine and Abingdon hanging on his every word when he talked to them on 4 February about vampires and other subjects in his books.



On 2 March a packed Amey Theatre heard the former Foreign Secretary, Lord Hurd, speak about his new book, *Choose Your Weapons*, an account of eleven of his predecessors.



World Book Day, 4 March, saw Chris Bradford talking to a number of local schools about his Young Samurai books. Pupils were fascinated by the sharpness of his sword and took part in an enthusiastic re-enactment of a scene from one of his books.



Simon Singh produced some thought-provoking material when he spoke to sixth-form mathematicians.

Rising to the Challenges:



The Chemistry Challenge team

Fourth-form Chemists, Omri Faraggi, Luke Carter, Charlie Hames and Thomas Chan, thoroughly enjoyed competing in the final of the Royal Society's Chemistry Challenge despite losing by one point to The King's School, Canterbury. David Choy, Geoffrey Penington and Joshua Stedman won gold medals at the British Physics Olympiad and Geoffrey Penington, having got 100% in the UK Senior Maths Challenge, won a gold medal at the British Maths Olympiad. Meanwhile, Joshua Stedman, Geoffrey Penington, Joon-Ho Sung and Thomas Salt took Abingdon to third place out of 70 schools at the final of the UK Mathematics Trust's Senior Team Maths Challenge. ■



Paris

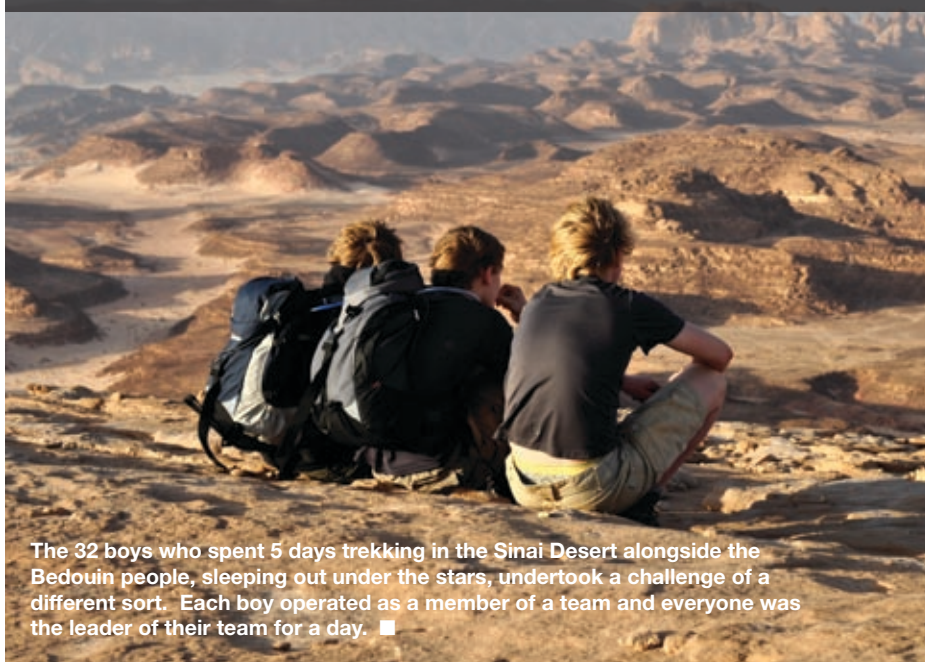
Sixth-formers visiting Paris in February, saw the Musée d'Orsay, Montmartre and the Eiffel Tower as well as the National Immigration Museum and the Science and Industry Centre. The visit, for AS and A2 French students, is designed to enhance their cultural understanding of the country. The photograph shows the boys visiting the grocery where *Amelie* bought three hazelnuts and an artichoke. ■

RS at the Ashmolean



Third-form Religious Studies pupils visited the recently refurbished Ashmolean Museum to study ten works of art that relate to their GCSE course. Among the works by Uccello, Michelangelo and Van Dyck, Holman Hunt's *A Converted British Family Sheltering a Christian Priest from the Persecution of the Druids* was a particular favourite. ■

Trekking in Sinai Desert



The 32 boys who spent 5 days trekking in the Sinai Desert alongside the Bedouin people, sleeping out under the stars, undertook a challenge of a different sort. Each boy operated as a member of a team and everyone was the leader of their team for a day. ■

Easter Tea Party



Guests from some of Abingdon's residential homes and local church congregations attended an Easter tea party at the School on 18 March. ■

One Foot on the Ground

This 30-minute documentary examines the experiences of young people growing up in Moldova. Made by Tom Bateman, Matthew Copson and Will McDowell, all members of the Abingdon Film Unit, the film aims to raise awareness of the country and promote the work of the charity *Agape*, which works with young people



there. Having seen the film, the British Ambassador to Moldova has asked if it can be shown to members of the British Embassy staff in Chisinau and the filmmakers have been invited to present it at the first meeting of the new All Party Parliamentary Group on Moldova at Westminster. ■

The Thwating of Baron Bolligrew

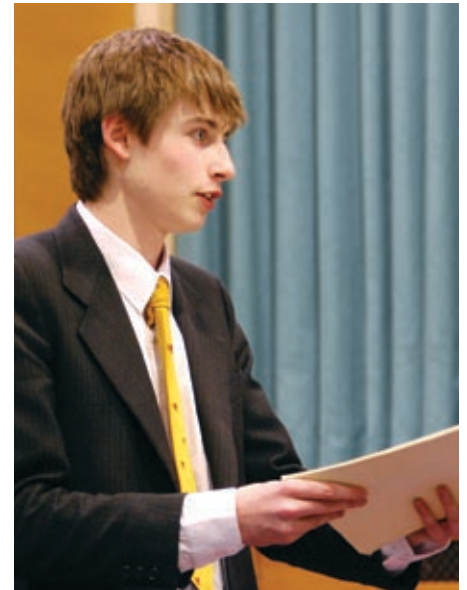
Lower School's accomplished and vibrant performance of Robert Holt's *The Thwating of Baron Bolligrew* could be seen for one night only at the Amey Theatre on 25 February. Combined with special effects, puppets and animatronics from the Amey Theatre tech crew, it was a night to remember. ■





Chillingirian Masterclass

A large audience in the Charles Maude Room saw Levon Chillingirian, of the world-famous Chillingirian String Quartet, give a masterclass to five violinists and the senior string quartet. Levon Chillingirian's tuition contained great technical and musical insight and it was fascinating to be able to watch and hear the boys' progress. ■



National Chamber Music Finalists

After regional qualifying rounds and nationwide semi-finals, two Abingdon chamber ensembles made it through to the non-competitive national finals of the *Pro Corda* Chamber Music Festival, an event that celebrates the central role of ensemble playing in the development of young musicians. Anthony Lloyd, Adrian Lo and Joe Mason played Elizabeth Poston's *Trio* for flute, viola and piano; David Mears, Ben Etherton and Ozy Tack played Nicholas Rota's *Trio* for clarinet, cello and piano. ■

Singers' Platform

Abingdon's senior singers gave a superb concert of Handel, Mozart, Bach, Vaughan Williams, Britten and Quilter, performed by baritone, bass, tenor and counter-tenor voices. Many of the School's singers come to us from chorister backgrounds and, under the tutelage of Andrew Yeats, the School is proud of the progress they make. In the Michaelmas term, Sir Robert Tear will return to conduct a Singing Masterclass – look out for the date if you would like to attend. ■



Prize-winner Ozy Tack at the piano

Film Festival Awards

Abingdon achieved a double success at the British Film Institute's *Future Film Festival* at the National Film Theatre, which aims to find the best up-and-coming talent in the 13-to-25 age category. The best animation award went to Pierre Leveque's *On No My Dog* and the award for the best documentary went to Tian Ji's *The Soldier*, made with Matthew Copson and Ben Hollins. The film reflects on the soldier's twenty-six-year career in the British Army and his experiences in Iraq and Afghanistan. The film is by turns both moving and thought-provoking. ■

Both these films can be watched on the AFU website, as can all the Film Unit's films: www.abingdonfilmunit.com

Congratulations

Congratulations to Gerald Chan who won the Oxford Music Festival's Sidney Harrison Memorial Award, an open, piano solo class award for playing two contrasting pieces by Chopin; Ozy Tack, who was the overall winner of the Chandos Symphony Orchestra's Young Musician Competition, and Alistair Duff, who won a place as a percussionist in the National Youth Wind Ensemble of Great Britain, the nation's top wind and percussion ensemble. ■

Undefeated!



Abingdon's senior cross-country team ended the season undefeated. On 6 March they won the South East Schools' Championship at Harrow and on 17 March they competed against schools from all over the country in the Lucton Relays at RGS Worcester where the intermediates, showing brilliant athleticism and total dedication, won by a margin of 50 seconds. For the seniors the challenge was not only to win but also to end the season undefeated, which they did.

In the Radley Relays the U19As won emphatically, and the U19Bs came 4th; U17As came 1st and the Bs again 4th, and the U15As 2nd and the Bs 6th. At Marlborough the intermediates secured seven out of the top eight positions, Alistair Duff winning the category, which all goes to show the talent and dedication of the School's cross-country teams across all the age-groups. ■

An Excellent Season



The Hockey Club completed one of their most successful seasons with a fine set of results against Magdalen College School on the last Saturday of term when, as in the matches against Pangbourne, they won or drew every game. The 1st XI only lost two matches and the 3rd and 4th XI just one match between them in the entire season. The U15As also only lost two matches whilst the U13As are county champions. ■



England U16 Training

The February half term saw the England U16 rugby squad training at Abingdon prior to their participation in the U16 Four Nations' Tournament in Rome at Easter. The England staff were very impressed by the Abingdon facilities, particularly having a 1st XV pitch so close to the Sports Centre with its physiotherapy room and swimming pool, which they used for hydrotherapy. ■

The Boat Club

Despite the weather keeping the junior crews off the river for up to 6 weeks at the beginning of term, the Boat Club has had an excellent start to the season. At the Peterborough Head, Abingdon J16 pairs took 1st, 2nd and 3rd places and the J18 VIII won their event. Most encouragingly for the future, the 1st VIII took 2nd place at the Schools' Head of the River on the Tideway, with Eton 1st and Shrewsbury 3rd, whilst the 2nd VIII came 3rd behind Eton and Shrewsbury, taking 17th place overall out of 257 crews. ■



Abingdon v Abingdon



Winners of the U13 Oxfordshire Tournament, Leon Wu and Alex Turner

Such is the strength-in-depth among the Abingdon Badminton squads that several championship finals turned out to be all-Abingdon affairs: in the U19 doubles section of the Oxfordshire Schools' Badminton Championship, Richard Moon and Julian Martin beat Peter Zen and Gary Ling; in the singles, Edward Callow beat Richard Moon, whilst in the mixed doubles Richard Moon and Louisa Green (St Helen's) beat Ramon Bonfield and Aislinn Baird (St Helen's). The same was the case at the U13 Oxfordshire Tournament with Alex Turner and Leon Wu emerging the victors. ■

ESSA Water Polo Finals

In the finals of the Bowl Competition, Abingdon were unlucky not to end the season as the winners of their U16 English Schools' Swimming Association (ESSA) league. The tournament-style competition saw Abingdon make the final where, although they drew 1-1, they had to take 2nd place on goal difference.

Abingdon's excellent training facilities have played a major part in enabling swimming coaches David Boyd and Celia Shephard to secure UK Masters' rankings of 3rd and 2nd for butterfly in their respective age bands. Celia Shephard, having met the qualifying time for the World Masters 200m butterfly, will represent Abingdon in both the 200m and 3km open water races this summer. ■



Chris Davies



On 23 March, Jon Gabitass, the Chairman of Abingdon Prep School's governors, announced that Chris Davies will be leaving the Prep School at the end of the Autumn term 2010 to take up a new Headship at Edgeborough Prep School in Surrey. Chris has had a tremendous 11 years at Abingdon Prep, successfully steering the transition from Josca's to the larger, well resourced and well respected school that Abingdon Prep is now. Chris's leadership, enthusiasm and sense of humour will be missed by all at the Prep School but we wish him every success with his new appointment. ■

Jamie Gordon – a world premiere



The world premiere of 'The Case of Jamie Gordon' was unveiled at the Prep School on Thursday 18 March. After months of rehearsal and gnawing of finger tips the production drew favourable notices from audiences on both nights. The cast took evident delight in pretending not to know their lines right up to the dress rehearsal, where, miraculously, they were word perfect. The acting was assured, balancing the comic opportunities skilfully against the difficult subject matter that the play tackled. Ben Oliver and Josh Saphie added their own blend of humour, while Luke Shepherd and Will Johnson played the part of aging school masters uncomfortably well! Sam Herbert was authoritative and Jack Pozniak bumbling as the two policemen and Will Mylrea-Hemmings was a revelation in his first acting role. Finally, Jamie Sudlow and Max Moyle made sinister baddies and much fun was had by all! ■

Sport Summary

A busier sporting Spring term we never did see – in addition to the 107 football fixtures from U8 to U13 there have been water polo games, hockey tournaments (our U11 team have reached the South of England finals!), football tournaments, a swimming distance event (a total of 65 miles were swum by 61 boys) and, of course, the House cross-country.

On the football pitch all XIs produced some winning football at some stage and senior XIs in particular enjoyed strong seasons overall. Over the term every boy who was fit enough to play in Years 3 to 6 represented the School in a football team, and in Years 7 and 8, over 60 boys had the opportunity to play for one of the four senior XIs. That in itself is the greatest success of the season. ■





Tuesday 9 March saw the first House Music Competition. This was open to all pupils from years 1-8. The standard was very high and the four judges had a difficult job on their hands. The year group winners were: Rosie Williams (Year 1), Matthew Hoult (Year 2), Gus Miller (Year 3), Jack Lester (Year 4), Jonathan Dawson (Year 5), Jonah Walker (Year 6), Sebastian Evans (Year 7) and William Johnson (Year 8), with the overall competition winner being Jonathan Dawson. ■

A first for House Music

Prep Staff are musically challenged

Five brave members of staff (Mike Rees, Lenka Sowter, Jaany Ravenscroft, Simon Currie and Tara Copus) took up the challenge of learning a completely new instrument and taking their grade one exam – all in one term. The aim was to raise money for our Prep School charity, *CLICSargent*. All five staff members were successful, raising £900, and three even managed distinctions! ■

Scholarships

Abingdon Prep is celebrating the School's best ever year for scholarships with 14 awards including two out of the top three, and three out of the top six, of the awards to Abingdon Senior School. This is a marvellous achievement, reflecting the very hard work the boys have put in to reach the levels of excellence required.

Many congratulations go to the following boys:

Academic

- William Johnson, Abingdon – *Abbot de Blosneville Award*
- Ben Oliver, Abingdon – *Abbot de Blosneville Award*
- James Rice, Abingdon – *Blacknall Award*
- Joe Foster, Cokethorpe School
- Alexander Sheard, Magdalen College School *Academic Scholarship*
- Martin Simera, Magdalen College School – *Academic Scholarship*

Music

- Toby Davies, Abingdon
- William Johnson, Abingdon
- Isaac Parr, Kingham Hill School
- William Johnson, Magdalen College School

Sport

- Stuart McLeish, Pangbourne College

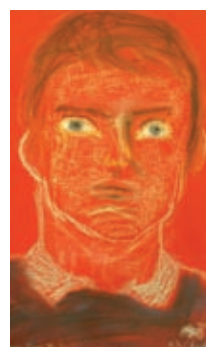
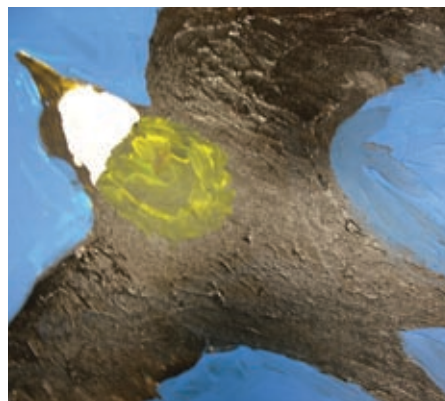
Art

- Ben Oliver, Abingdon – *Louis Davis Award*
- Jack Bradley, Abingdon – *Louis Davis Award*
- Matthew Pickup, Cokethorpe

Imaginative Art

Have you ever... traipsed through a jungle? Seen a snake? Had a lizard run across your feet? If you haven't, don't let it prevent you from designing amazing tropical jungle batiks like the ones our Year 5's have created. They followed in the footsteps of Henri Rousseau who claimed he had visited all sorts of countries and habitats when actually he had remained pretty close to home in Paris.

The rest of the boys have been busy too with Year 4's Georgia O'Keeffe inspired chalk pastel drawings of large flowers, Year 6's Aboriginal artwork and the still life studied by Year 7 and 8 using vibrant watercolours and looking carefully at light and shadow to make their work have impact. Year 3 have enthusiastically immersed themselves making money, using copper sheets and embossing tools, they have designed their own Greek coins as part of their Ancient Greek topic. ■



ASPA's First Year



Come and share good company and delicious food at the ASPA suppers

It was little over a year ago that the old TASS constitution was revised and ASPA (Abingdon School Parents Association) was born.

ASPA is keen to provide parents with opportunities to socialise together as well as the means to communicate between themselves, whether to confirm their son's very sketchy arrangements with a new friend or to organise an outing for the whole tutor group.

The ASPA Year Group representatives liaise with Tutor Group representatives who maintain and circulate lists of parent contact details within the Year Group. We are delighted that these lists are being put to such good use as the recent Webb's Third-year outing to *Bowlplex* shows.

The series of Parents' Social Evenings – usually a curry on a Friday night – for Third, Fourth and Fifth year parents have been a great success and are definitely to be



The fifth-year parents' supper

continued. The Fourth-year event raised over £1,000 for relief work in Haiti.

Last year's Lower School car treasure hunt resulted in the award of the new Lower School/ASPA cup. On Friday 14th May 2010 the cup will be awarded to the winners of a quiz – questions being set by Lower School masters and tutors!

With our change in objective we have been able to relinquish any commitment to fund raising which has allowed ASPA to focus on social events. These events do take time and effort to plan and organise and we always appreciate new committee members, both for their hands-on help and their fresh ideas. Please do contact Wendy Lambe, Vice Chair ASPA (aspa@abingdon.org.uk) if you would be interested in helping or indeed if you have any other ideas or projects which you think ASPA could organise or become involved in. ■



Joanne Yellowlees-Bound and Peter Garratt auction items for Haiti at the Fourth-year Parents Supper

SUS

The Second-hand Uniform Shop (SUS) provides a means for parents to buy good condition, second-hand Abingdon School uniform, which has either been outgrown or unclaimed from lost property.

Opening hours 12.15 to 1.15 pm on the following dates:

April: Saturday 24th and Wednesday 28th

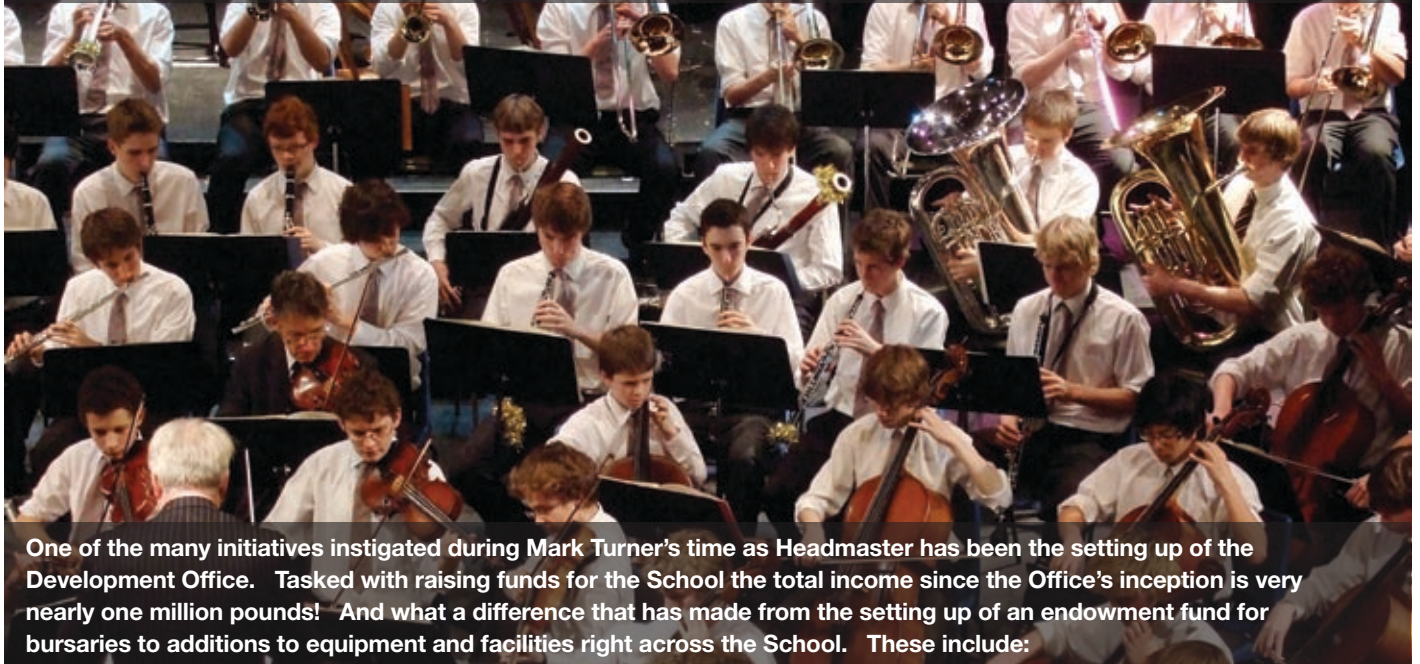
May: Saturday 8th, Saturday 22nd, Wednesday 26th

June: Saturday 12th, Wednesday 16th, Saturday 26th

July: Saturday 3rd July

Lost property can also be located at the SUS and parents are welcome to come and look for items which their sons may have lost. These can include spectacles, pencil cases, calculators, mobile phones, watches as well as uniform and sports items. Last term there were named items of equipment belonging to 78 boys, so please do come and look if one of your boys has lost an item as there is a good possibility of it being with SUS. ■

Let's Make it a Million!



One of the many initiatives instigated during Mark Turner's time as Headmaster has been the setting up of the Development Office. Tasked with raising funds for the School the total income since the Office's inception is very nearly one million pounds! And what a difference that has made from the setting up of an endowment fund for bursaries to additions to equipment and facilities right across the School. These include:

- One boy on a full bursary starting in September 2010
- Bursary support towards school trips for current bursary students
- The creation of a new science classroom ensuring all science lessons are taught in a laboratory environment
- The installation of a state-of-the-art climbing wall in the Sports Centre (scheduled for completion before the end of the year)
- A plethora of equipment in the Sports Centre including basketball goals, cricket nets, fitness suite equipment, an electronic scoreboard, fencing equipment, ergometers and other extras such as table tennis tables
- One chapel window
- A digital microscope and resin block specimens for the biology department
- Photography, sculpture and contemporary art books
- Machine tools, drills and other bench equipment for the DT department
- An E-flat clarinet and a bass trombone
- New space in the library for a more relaxed private reading environment for sixth-formers and a reorganised reference collection
- Heart monitors for the 2nd VIII rowing crew
- Funding for the Alpha Course and DVDs for use in Christian Union and the Alpha Course
- Televisions and kitchen equipment for Crescent, School and Waste Court Houses
- Lifejackets for kayaking
- A sophisticated digital camera to support photography in art
- A physiotherapy room in the boathouse and other rowing equipment including part payment for a coxed four
- Archive storage equipment
- An interactive electronic voting system for use in all areas of the curriculum
- A large format video screen for use in drama and for the Film Unit
- A ball machine for tennis

Financial support has also been given to the Film Unit for their film in Moldova and to the Debating Society for their trip to the European Youth Parliament.

And, there is still funding available which is allocated by the Senior Management Team on the basis of request from Heads of Department who need additional equipment.

Current applications include:

- Violas
- Inter-house trophies
- A plasma screen for modern languages
- Support for an artist in residence
- A trailer for CCF and the Duke of Edinburgh scheme (funds partly raised)
- Construction of a rowing landing stage to allow more boys to row by enabling more boats to be put in and out of the water

With your help we can fund these and other requests, together with further bursaries and, of course, the chapel windows.

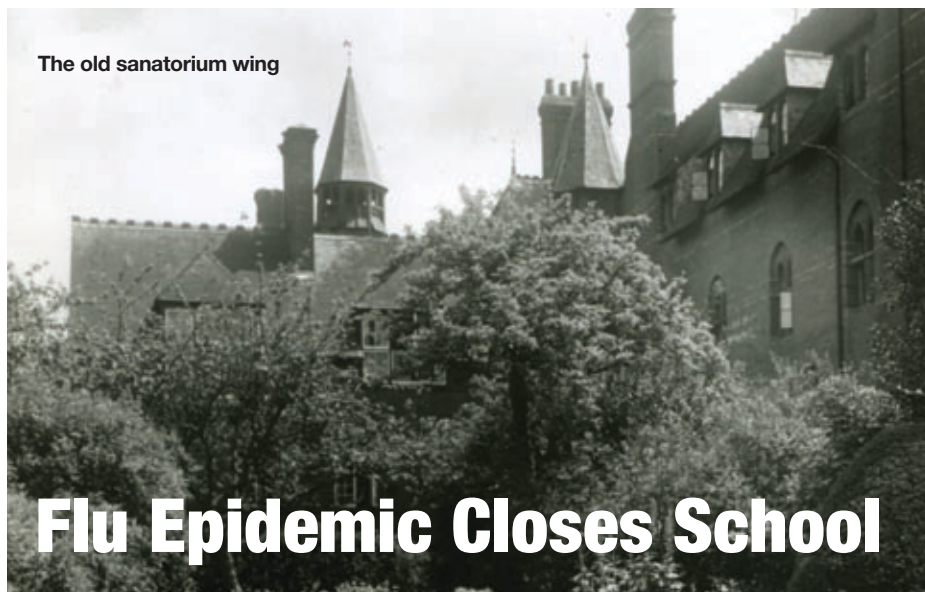
Please help us to 'MAKE IT A MILLION' before the end of the Summer term. We need just another £40,000.

Donations can be made by way of a farewell gift in the name of the Headmaster, Mark Turner, to mark his time at the School.

Donations can be made online, go to:

<http://shaping.abingdon.org.uk/Home/HM-farewell> ■





The old sanatorium wing

Flu Epidemic Closes School

It was 3 pm on 10 October 1918 when the influenza pandemic that was sweeping the world hit Abingdon School, 10 days later the School was closed; 43 boarders and 32 dayboys – 75% of the School – were ill and the sanatorium was full.

By the time the pandemic burnt itself out, in June 1920, over 50 million people worldwide had died, 250,000 in England, but luckily no boys from Abingdon School, who were in any case outside the age group most affected – adults between the ages of 20 and 40.

Reports in the December *Abingdonian* were remarkably light-hearted, one boy writing, “A thermometer was all that was needed to convince you that you were already nearly dead ... it was very cheering to read in the papers how many had died ... and how really dangerous it was.” Perhaps this light-heartedness had something to do with the fact that 8 days after the School reopened – on 3 November – the Armistice was declared and Britain, after four years of war, was at last at peace. ■



1963, a snow-clearing party of sixth-formers

Snow Disrupts School

The Big Freeze of 1963 disrupted the School for almost the entire Lent term. A blizzard on Boxing Day 1962 left snow that didn't clear until the beginning of March. However, it wasn't the snow that caused most problems but the cold: temperatures were regularly below freezing both day and night so that at one time even the Thames froze. Sport was completely disrupted and only 2 of the term's 13 hockey fixtures could be played. Instead, snow clearing provided the boys with exercise; both the Borough and Christ's Hospital gratefully accepted the School's offer to take responsibility for keeping the footpaths clear round the School and Albert Park. ■



Philip Deacon

OA Influenza Deaths

Pupils at the School might have been spared fatalities but not the Old Abingdonian community: PL Deacon, “undoubtedly one of the cleverest boys we ever had,” and a “positively brilliant” footballer, was 38 when he died on 8 October 1918 in British East Africa; former science master, Lieutenant John Hood, died on 15 November in Malta, he was 28, and Captain Cuthbert Ellison was 29 when he died in Abingdon on 18 February 1919. ■



People observed, William Boxall

Boxall Donation

Thanks to the generosity of Mrs Zona Hardy, the School now possesses a number of sketches from life by Sir William Boxall, which belonged to her late husband, Mr David Hardy. Boxall was a portrait painter who in 1866 became Director of the National Gallery. The gift is particularly welcome since the School's major art awards are named after Sir William, who was a pupil at the School in the early 1800s. ■

1969-1972 Leavers' Reunion

On Friday 5 March 2010 Old Abingdonian leavers from 1969-1972 reconnected with old friends and former members of staff at a reunion drinks reception held in Boarders' Hall - better remembered by many from their time at Abingdon as the kitchen!

Many of those present had travelled considerable distances including one OA and his wife who made the journey all the way from Austria! Those in attendance included:

1969: Akinkunmi Akinbiyi, Michael Bellinger, Ian Fifield, Andrew Hall; 1970: Martin Andrews, Stephen Boyers, Kevin Brown, Ian Browne, James Cox, Richard Deane, Martin Eagle, Jonathan Frere, Jerry Godfrey, David Marshall, Richard Savory, John Walker, John Weir; 1971: Anthony Dugdale, Ian Garnier, Andrew McMillan, Julian Shellard; 1972: Stephen Bailey, Christopher Clayton, John Lay, Kelvin Sykes. ■

1976-2005 Leavers' Reunion

On Wednesday 17 March 2010 Michael St John Parker (Headmaster 1975-2001) hosted an OA Club reunion for 1976-2005 leavers at The Athenæum, Pall Mall, London. The event was a huge success with over 120 OAs present as well as current and former members of staff. At the reception a portrait commemorating his headmastership was unveiled by the Chairman of Governors, David Lillycrop. ■



Michael St John Parker with some of his old boys



The Garden Room at The Athenæum packed to capacity

Griffen Rugby 7s Tournament

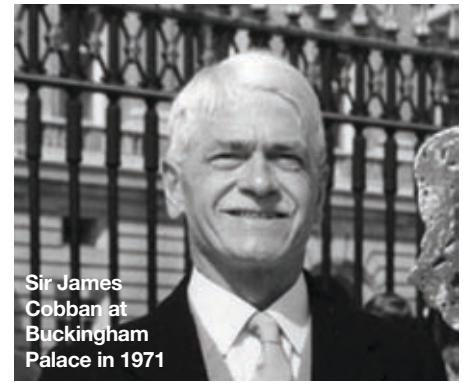
The third annual Griffen Rugby 7s Tournament took place at School on Sunday 14 March 2010. Three teams of OAs competed alongside alumni teams from Bloxham, Magdalen, Solihull and St Edward's. The winners of the tournament cup were Solihull with the shield being awarded to Oakthorpe Invitational, captained by OA Jonathan Bayfield (2008). ■



The Headmaster and Jonathan Bayfield (2008)



On Wednesday 24 March 2010 a team of Old Abingdonians contended against the School's 1st XI hockey team. The match was fiercely contested with immense skill exhibited by both sides. The final score was 3-2 to the 1st XI. ■



Sir James Cobban at Buckingham Palace in 1971

Sir James Cobban Centenary

Saturday 27 November 2010

Sir James Cobban's four daughters, Diana, Mary, Helena and Hilary, will be attending this special event and would be delighted to see as many of their father's old boys and partners and members of his Common Room as possible. ■

Celebrations include:

- Afternoon Tea
- Tours of Abingdon School
- Chapel Service: Evensong
- Drinks Reception and Dinner (the OA Club annual dinner)

Further details to follow.

Forthcoming OA Events

- Sunday 27 June 2010
- Sunday 27 June 2010
- Friday 22 October 2010
- Saturday 27 November 2010
- Michaelmas Term TBC
- Michaelmas Term TBC
- Michaelmas Term TBC

- Gerald Smithson Memorial Twenty20 Cricket Tournament
- OA Reunion for 2000 – 2009 leavers
- 60s event - Gurkha Museum, Winchester
- Sir James Cobban Centenary Celebrations
- OA Reunion: Cambridge
- Professional Dinner: Finance
- Professional Dinner: Engineering

Full details of events and other activities are available on the OA Club website: www.oaclub.org.uk
 The OA Club, Abingdon School, Park Road, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 1DE
 Tel: 01235 849098
 Email: oaclub@abingdon.org.uk



OAs in Varsity Chess Teams

Abingdon was the best represented school at the 128th Varsity Chess Match on 6 March. Stuart Robertson, OA 2007, played for Cambridge on Board 5 and Graham Morris, OA 2004, for Oxford on Board 6. The match was drawn 4-4 ■

OAs in Medicine

Dr Brian Smith, MB, BS. MRCS. LRCP, D Obst RCOG, DA, FRCA.

Brian Smith, OA 1957, studied at St Mary's Hospital, and qualified in 1962. After house jobs in orthopedics, surgery and medicine, and SHO jobs in obstetrics and anaesthetics, he spent 6 years as a GP, with obstetrics and anaesthetics, at the Kuwait Oil Company Hospital. He returned to Britain as an FRCA and worked as a Senior Registrar in anaesthetics at the Middlesex Hospital. In 1974 he took up a teaching and ICU research post in San Francisco. He worked from 1976 to 2002 as a Consultant Anaesthetist at Wexham Park Hospital, maintaining his interest in ICU and obstetrics and continuing to teach. Now retired, he rows and plays tennis. ■

Professor Mike Stevens, MD, FRCP, FRCPCH, FRCR

Leaving Abingdon in 1968, Mike also studied at St Mary's Hospital, (now Imperial College) graduating in 1974. He worked first in adult medicine before switching to paediatrics, working in Oxford, Manchester and Jamaica. He trained in paediatric haematology oncology in Toronto and was appointed Consultant Paediatric Oncologist at Birmingham Children's Hospital in 1985, moving to Bristol in 2001 as Professor of Paediatric Oncology. He has been a Trust Medical Director and a Director of R&D, and has served as Chair of both UK and European societies for paediatric oncology. He leads a European clinical trials research group and has interests in late effects of treatment and the care of survivors. ■



Graham Morris



Stuart Robertson, left

Ben Macintyre Operation Mincemeat

Operation Mincemeat, the latest novel by Ben Macintyre, OA 1981, tells the story of how 'secret' papers, carried by the body of a vagrant disguised as a Royal Marine officer, convinced the Germans that the Allied landings in 1943 would come in Greece rather than Sicily.

The success of the hoax is considered to have influenced the course of the war. ■



Nicolai Jürgens

The same race that saw Matthew Rossiter, OA 2008, stroke the GB VIII into third place at the 2009 U23 World Championships last summer (see January's Abingdon News), saw Nicolai Jürgens, OA 2007, stroke the German VIII into silver medal position. Well done to both of them. ■



The German U23 VIII, Nicolai Jürgens, back row right