

Abingdon

News

September 2005

The Newsletter of Abingdon School

No 9



Outstanding!



The outstanding U14 cricketers – see page 5.

This high achieving school has an excellent balance in the education it provides through an outstanding and wide-ranging extra curricular programme and the high academic attainment, which enables boys to win places at highly selective universities. ISI Report

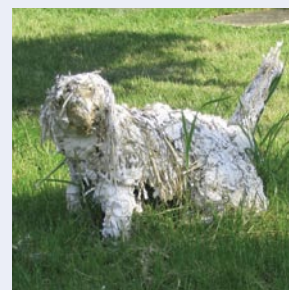
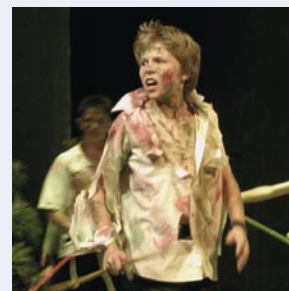
The opening lines of last term's report by the Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) only tells us what we have all long suspected – that Abingdon is a first-rate school. This view is confirmed by the inspectors' frequent use of the words 'outstanding', 'excellent', and 'very good' in relation to everything about the School: the quality of pupils' learning attitudes, their behaviour, the standard of teaching, pupils' attendance and the School's resources, premises and management. Further details of the report can be seen on pages 6 & 7 and throughout this newsletter. The full text of the report can be read on: <http://www.abingdon.org.uk/go/inspection>

Brilliant Results!



Evidence of the School's 'high academic attainment' comes with this summer's exam results. At A-level, 50% of all results were Grade A and five boys, Koel Ko, Tony Lau, James Li, Anthony Mak and Oliver Zeldon, gained five A grades each. The UCAS points score for the School was 402.

Of the GCSE candidates, 100% gained at least five passes at grades A* to C, and 69.2% achieved all A and A*s. One boy, Arjun Kingdon, achieved twelve A*s and David Rawcliffe and Stuart Robertson both got eleven.



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News

Pupils learn about their own cultural traditions and the richness and diversity of others not only through the school curriculum but through a host of trips, excursions and exchanges. ISI Report.

Libya



Over the Easter holidays a group from Abingdon made what is believed to be one of the first school trips to Libya since it was opened up to tourists. Due to the dry atmosphere the spectacular ruins from the 1st and 2nd centuries AD are in an excellent state of preservation. The photographs show Leptis Magna, the site of the most complete and impressive Roman ruins in North Africa, and the theatre in Sabratha.

School's First Spanish Visit

The new Spanish department made a very successful first trip abroad when a group of 3rd and 4th Years went to Northern Spain over the Easter holidays. Their cultural experiences spanned 15,000 years, from the cave paintings in Altamira to the Guggenheim Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art in Bilbao.



Osmington Bay

During the last week of the Easter holidays sixty-seven 1st Year boys, with six members of staff, travelled to Osmington Bay near Weymouth where, among numerous other activities, they abseiled, quad-biked, climbed and fenced. For many the greatest challenge was the 'Leap of Faith', which involved climbing up a telegraph pole and then jumping off to punch a ball suspended more than a metre away.

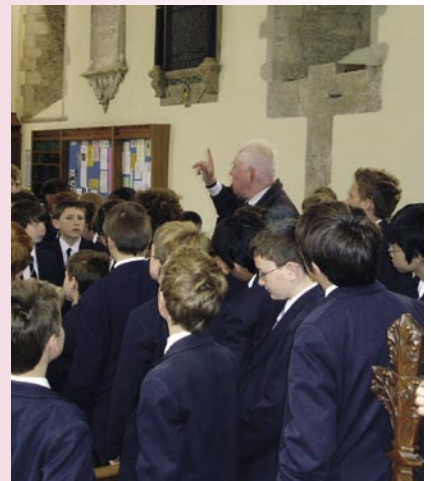


Paris



A trip to Paris by twenty-six 3rd and 4th Year boys over the Easter holidays took in visits to Notre Dame, the Arc de Triomphe and the Parc Astérix. The photograph shows the group with the Hotel de Ville in the background.

Abingdon



The entire 1st Year walked into Abingdon on 12th May to be shown around the old schoolroom and St Nicholas's Church. In this way, **Nigel Hammond** (OA 1957), a former member of Common Room, was able to tell them about the history of the School prior to its removal to the present site in 1870.

On 7th June 2006, as part of the 750 celebrations of the School, Nigel Hammond will conduct a walking tour of Abingdon entitled, 'In Search of the History of Abingdon School'. Details will be published in the 750 programme at the end of term.

Community Service



A community tea party at the School on 28th June.



Pupils from Culloeden Primary School, Tower Hamlets, making 'flubber' on their visit to the School.



The 'other half' gives pupils a wide range of opportunities to develop social concern and awareness. In the community service activity, pupils learn a range of pastoral and social skills by assisting in local primary schools and at after school clubs, visiting the elderly and also Abingdon Hospital.

ISI Report

Washing up in a residential home.



CCF

The school's CCF detachment makes an important contribution to the programme of (other half) activities.

ISI Report

During the Easter holidays, forty-six cadets and eight officers went on this year's Recruit Camp and Advanced Infantry Training Cadre. They honed their infantry and live firing skills, received tactical instruction, went on night exercise and took part in an orienteering competition.

Good-bye

Commander Rory Jackson has kept everything in the Bursary 'shipshape and Bristol fashion' since his appointment in 1995. On 4th May he launched a new boat for the 2nd VIII – named Commander Jackson in recognition of all that he has done for the School.



Dr Tim King (OA 1964) arrived at Abingdon as a 1st Year in 1956 and returned to it as a teacher in 1986. The years between were spent studying at Pembroke College, Oxford and teaching at Westminster and Magdalen College School.



The Upper Vith said good-bye to the School on Leavers' Day, 2nd July, with a service in St. Michael's Church, followed by Prize Giving in the Amey Theatre and culminating in a spectacular Griffen Ball in the evening.



Charity

Care and concern for others are encouraged. A charities group selects, coordinates and promotes suitable charities for which large sums of money are raised through various events, including an annual kayak race from Abingdon to Westminster.



Arts

The drama facilities are outstanding ... The department offers excellent opportunities for curricular and extra-curricular enrichment. ... School drama productions of a very good quality are annually produced, furthering the already strong and established links with the School of St Helen and St Katherine. ISI Report

Lord of the Flies

The Lower School Drama Club put on a performance of William Golding's *The Lord of the Flies* in the Amey Theatre at the end of last term. Their depiction of what could happen when a group of boys find themselves marooned on a desert island following a plane crash was both powerful and convincing.



Decline and Fall

On 23rd and 24th June 4th Year pupils from Abingdon and St Helen's (Year 10) delighted audiences with their performance in the first production of a new stage adaptation of Evelyn Waugh's novel, *Decline and Fall*.



Music

The quality and quantity of extra-curricular music is very good. The practical extra-curricular activity within the department is outstanding. ... There are excellent levels of participation in a wide range of instrumental groups including a high profile orchestra. Very high levels are achieved in the national chamber music competition. ISI Report



Among the many concerts last term the Chamber Orchestra performed three movements from Shostakovich's Chamber Symphony on 20th May whilst the Big and Brass Bands were in action on 13th May.

Photographs by Keith Cheng

Art

The quality of learning is very good at all levels. Pupils are happy and well-motivated. Much use is made of information technology to enable independent learning. ... Behaviour is almost always exemplary and good relations exist between pupils and staff. Pupils respect their own work and are supportive of that of others. ISI Report

The annual end-of-year Art Exhibition was held on the evening of Friday 1st July and the morning of Saturday 2nd. The drawing, painting, sculpture, ceramics, graphics and printmaking work of the GCSE, AS and A level candidates was on display in the Art School, Amey Theatre Foyer and the Ingham Room.



High standards are consistently achieved in team and individual games. A strong fixture list has been established in the school's major games ... The range of sport available is considerable. The programme gives pupils of all physical abilities choice from a diverse range of sporting activities, from canoeing to fives to table tennis. ISI Report



Cricket

Among performances of note this season, Patrick Stearne scored a half-century in the Eton, Pangbourne and Bloxham matches and Nathaniel Watkins was 63 not out against Bloxham and 70 against Radley. Joshua Smith scored 104 against RGS High Wycombe. Among the bowlers, Matthew Halford achieved 5 for 24 against Eton, and Sam Florey 5 for 27 against Pangbourne.

Under 14s win Lord's Taverners' Trophy

The Under 14 XI crowned their magnificent season of eleven unbroken victories with a ninety-eight run win over Bloxham in the final of the Lord's Taverners' Colts Cricket County Trophy. James Manasseh scored 83 in this match, and a total of 457 in the season, giving him a batting average of 57.1. Tim Deeks, in a seven-over spell, bowled 4 wickets for 17 runs.

Boat Club

The school has an international reputation for rowing. ISI Report

The School had two crews competing at Henley Royal Regatta this year. The 1st VIII, who were seeded, won through to the semi-finals of the Princess Elizabeth Cup before losing to the eventual winners, Eton. The 2nd VIII, who did very well to qualify for the Temple Challenge Trophy, were knocked out in the second round by Cornell University.



The Victorious Under 14 Team



Tennis

On Wednesday 29th June the U15s and U13s played in the Oxfordshire finals of the Nestlé Cup, neither team having previously lost a match. The U15s beat Gosford Hill and the U13s beat King Alfred's Sports College. As a result they will now play each other in the regional qualifiers in September.

Michael Watkins won the British U12 National Championship in Bournemouth this summer. He is the first Oxfordshire male to win a British title since Tim Henman became U18 champion in 1992.



Michael Watkins



Athletics

In the House Athletics Competition, which took place at Tilsley Park on 18th May, Elliott's took the overall trophy with a total of 702 points - an excellent victory given the numerical might of the Boarders, who came second with a total of 663 points.

Inspection Report

The inspection of Abingdon School by the Independent Schools Inspectorate was carried out between 25th and 29th April. A team of fifteen inspectors visited 192 lessons or parts of lessons, examined extensive samples of pupils' work, attended four assemblies and thirty-one registration sessions, observed fifty-four extra-curricular and sporting activities, held discussions with fifty-eight teaching and non-teaching staff, met four governors and analysed the responses of 485 parents to a questionnaire distributed in advance of the inspection.

The full text of the inspection report can be read on <http://www.abingdon.org.uk/go/inspection>. The following quotations are taken from it.



As pupils go through the school they develop in independence and increasingly show the ability to think, write and argue independently. The school's ethos of high academic aspirations informs pupil confidence, self-esteem and endeavour. In the classroom, pupils were observed reasoning, solving problems and applying their knowledge effectively.

The layout of the chapel is simple but appropriate and the newly installed stained glass window depicting the Trinity helps to provide a calm spiritual atmosphere.



The library is located in the heart of the school. A good range of 16,000 books meets both the educational and recreational needs of the pupils and is supported by a comprehensive range of newspapers, magazines and journals, a collection of audio tapes and DVDs. ... The library is particularly popular at lunchtime, when a relaxed but purposeful atmosphere prevails and boys read, study, and use the fourteen computers.



The headmaster, Mark Turner, taking his lunch in the Dining Hall as he does most days

The quality and variety of food served in the school is very good.



The whole campus provides a pleasant and peaceful environment well suited to education and supports the school philosophy that “education is a civilising activity to be conducted in civilising surroundings”.



Very good attainment is evident in the creative and performing arts and in business and sporting competitions. Those who are gifted academically or who are talented in music, sport or the arts are given the scope and support to achieve their best and reach the highest level of which they are capable; the achievements of the rowers are remarkable in this respect.



The sculpture garden

The Abingdon School Society - TASS



Questions and Answers

TASS/ Tappins Travel Awards

Every year, boys leaving the Upper VIth are eligible to apply for TASS/Tappins Travel Awards to support them in their gap year projects whether in connection with community or charity projects abroad or personal development projects. This year the following awards have been made :

Christopher Dixon – £500 (Tappins)
 Hugh Taylor – £500 (Tappins)
 Richard Mallet – £300
 Peter Jones – £300
 Patrick Stern – £200
 Oliver Zeldin – £200
 Nikhil Wilmlink – £150
 Richard Soames – £100
 Edward Hofman – £100
 Nicholas Turnbull – £200.

Thanks were given to Paul Tappins for his generosity in supporting two of the boys this year.

TASS 'Other Half' Awards: an example of the difference they can make!

Last year TASS awarded £500 to the squash club. This enabled it to commission Kristen Johnson, Oxfordshire county champion, to coach the boys at all levels throughout the school. The atmosphere was tremendous, with all the boys thoroughly enjoying the competitive and yet friendly sessions. It was particularly notable that Kristen enthused boys of all abilities. The improvement in play was striking, and by the end of the year several of our boys were on the way to becoming really strong squash players.

I very much regret that Kristen has now relocated to pursue his squash career, but I am hugely grateful to TASS that the renewed grant will make it possible to find another local player to continue the momentum of last year.

Thanks once again,

David Franklin (master i/c squash)



Burns Night 2004

SUS Second hand uniform shop

SUS is open between 12.15 and 1.15 on the following dates. It is manned by parents and sells, not surprisingly, second hand uniform items. This is either on behalf of parents or items unclaimed from lost property. Lost property comes to SUS after it has been in the school lost property system for 6 weeks. It is then listed and details passed to the boys' housemasters so that they can be reminded to collect it. If it remains unclaimed for a further half-term it is sold in aid of school funds.

Next term's dates:-

Saturday 3 September
 Saturday 10 September
 Saturday 1 October
 Saturday 15 October
 Saturday 5 November
 Saturday 26 November
 Saturday 10 December

Wednesday 14 September
 Wednesday 5 October
 Wednesday 16 November

Forthcoming Events:

15th October. 'Call my Bluff' Wine Tasting Quiz – a fun way to try new wines, test your knowledge, and meet other parents.

Burns Night 2006

This has been organised for Saturday 28th January in the Town Hall in Oxford. A highlight in the TASS calendar, as shown in these photographs from earlier this year.

Thank You

The TASS committee would like to express our gratitude, on behalf of parents past and present, to **Commander Rory Jackson** for all the support he has given, both as Bursar to the school, and as treasurer of TASS. We wish him well in his future activities.

Next meeting

The date of the next meeting of the **TASS Committee** is 12 September 2005 at 7.45pm for 8pm – all parents are welcome. If you would like to be involved, in any way, big or small, please contact Karen Brombley (Chair) on kbrombley@hotmail.com

Inspection

Pupils receive a very good education.

The school provides a stimulating but unpressured environment.

Pupils enjoy coming to school.

The broad range of opportunities available to pupils and the quality of pastoral care are very good.

Independent Schools Inspection Report, Josca's 2005

For a copy of the full Report, please contact: hm.sec@joscas.org.uk

Sports Day



The annual Sports Day was enjoyed by all under sunny skies with Phoenix House winning the overall trophy.



Prize Giving

The Abingdon Award: Alistair Nicoll

Governors' Prize: Robbie Winearls

Champion House Cup: Phoenix

Summer Concert



The Summer Concert boasted a large array of musical instruments and talents.

Colts Tennis



The Colts tennis team had a successful season winning 4 out of 6 fixtures.

Ridgeway Walk for Leukemia Research



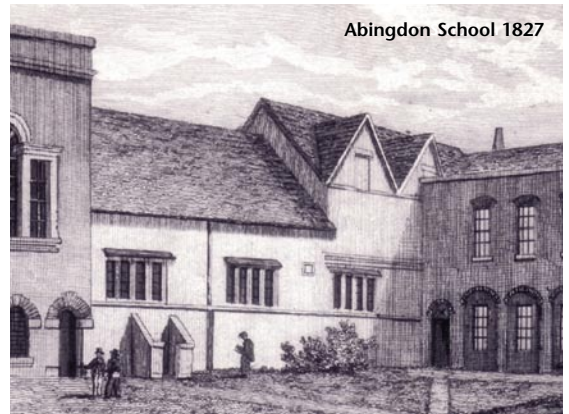
In June of this year, in the week immediately following the Common Entrance exams, two Year 8 boys, Edward Yeatman and Luke Parker, accompanied by Phil Parker, set off to walk The Ridgeway Trail.

The walk was intended to raise money for Leukaemia Research, and was in memory of Edward's father, Jeremy Yeatman, who died from Leukaemia in June 2004, aged just 40. The response to our cause from friends, relatives and the wider Josca's community of teachers, parents and boys far exceeded our expectations and it now looks as if we are going to raise in excess of £4,000 for the charity.

Out of the Past

The Revd. Joseph Hewlett

The School has recently bought the family papers and diaries of the Revd. Joseph Hewlett, a novelist who was headmaster of Abingdon from 1828 to 1839. *The Dictionary of National Biography* states that Hewlett "did not hold the post long" which, as eleven years appears to be a fairly respectable tenure for a headmaster, rather calls into question its judgement that Hewlett's "career there was a failure". It would certainly not have been a happy time; he became insolvent for the second time, and his wife was constantly unwell. In addition, Hewlett found it impossible to keep the School's numbers up - perhaps, as he said in one of his novels, because the headmaster was *compelled by statute to limit his teaching to the dead languages, and consequently, seldom had a town pupil.*



Abingdon School 1827

... and rowing at Abingdon

From Hewlett's diaries it would appear that he spent all his time wining, dining and 'cigarring' with the worthies of Abingdon and Oxford, since the School is hardly mentioned at all. However, on 28th June 1830 he notes, "Went to Sandford with the second crew." From the context Hewlett is talking about four-oar rowing and this casual remark takes the history of rowing at Abingdon School back from 1840 to 1830 thus making it, after Eton and Westminster, the third oldest school boat club.



School fours at Nuneham in 1870

Parsons and Widows

Among Hewlett's novels is a semi-autobiographical work, *Parsons and Widows*. This three-volume work came up for sale recently and was bought for the School by six members of the John Roysse Lodge: **Roger Chester** (OA 1964), **Nigel Hammond** (OA 1957), **Martin Iredale** (OA 1956), **Garth Round** (OA 1953), **Telfer Saywell** (OA 1958) and **David Willis** (OA 1965). Hewlett was a Freemason, a member of the Lodge of True Friendship in Rochford and Chaplain in the Provincial Grand Lodge of Essex. When he died, at the age of forty-seven, his Masonic brothers erected a headstone on his grave.



Who Are They?

Ian Macdonald has been organising the Badminton records and has come across a team he doesn't recognise. If you recognise any member of the team and can give an estimate as to the year the photograph was taken, please email the school archivist - sarah.wearne@abingdon.org.uk.

Abingdon School 1256 - 2006 A Celebration of 750 Years

In 2006 Abingdon will mark its 750th year as a school with a programme of events designed to celebrate the lives of some of the men who were educated here and the contributions they made to the life of this country. To this end, two evening receptions will be held during the course of the year. On 26th April, **Francis Maude** (OA 1971) will host a reception in the Palace of Westminster - more than thirty OAs have been members of either the Lords or the Commons. The other reception will be held on 29th June at Pembroke College, Oxford, founded in large part by **Thomas Tesdale** (OA 1563), for boys educated at Abingdon.

Details and dates of all 750 events will be announced in a special programme that will be published towards the end of this term.



President's Dinner 2005

John Bunce hosted a wonderful evening and spoke of 'exciting times' for a Club which was now moving forward and becoming a more visible presence in the School. At the same time, more regional events are being planned in the near future. This year's Dinner took place during the OA Weekend which featured 3 Alligator matches. Among the 69 guests attending the dinner were the following OAs: Gordon Dodge, Lionel Lacey-Johnson and Derek Slingsby (1944), Guy Willson (1945), John Hullett and John Norman (1952), Robert Elliott, Nigel Hammond and Richard Powell (1957), David Evans, John Foden, Andrew Rowles, David Morris, Peter Wintle and Stewart Womar (1959), Michael Neilan (1960), David Goodwin (1961), Robert Evans (1962), Michael Livingston (1964), David Bent, Garth Lewis and Alan Williams (1965), Paul Thompson (1974), Simon Hills (1975), David Blomley (1976), Michael Hasnip and Christopher Sowden (1977) and Julius Green (1982). Guests were entertained by the Waynflete Clerks from the Academical Clerks, the Grammy-nominated Chapel Choir of Magdalen College.

For more photos, please visit the Club's website.



Gordon Dodge, Lionel Lacey-Johnson, Derek Slingsby (1944) and Guy Willson (1945) in the Foyer of the Amey Theatre



2005 Cricket Season Results

The Alligators concluded their season having played 3 matches, winning 2, losing 1, with one further game cancelled. Next year's fixtures so far:

7th July v Lord's Taverners

8th July v HM's XI

9th July v Oxford Downs CC

10th July v Old Whitgiftians CC

Do you know where they are?

T J Fleming (2000), R Goodey (1937), K S Min (2004), J P Montague (1999), J R D Oswald (1971), D J Thomson (1991) and M J M Webb (1987)

At the Bankside Restaurant

City Lunch on 20th May was attended by some 20 OAs, including: John Bunce (1962), Laurence Llewellyn (1965), Nigel Taylor (1966), Simon Morden, Gareth Morris (1976), Michael Hurry, John Madgwick (1979), Jonathan Crick, Tony Edwards (1989), Hans Allnutt, Chris Stockford, Jack Wearne (1998), Andrew Chater and Benjamin Hunt (1999). Contact: jack.wearne@citigroup.com

Calling all 1960's Leavers

Last chance to book a place at the 1960's Trafalgar Night Dinner taking place on Friday 29th October. David Brice confirms at least 32 OAs attending. Contact him at: djbrice@dircon.co.uk or telephone 02380 402229.

Hog Roast and Disco

The first joint Abingdon/St Helen's Hog Roast and Disco evening is on Saturday 10th December. And, by popular demand, we have extended the invited guests to include all Leavers from 1995 to 2005 (instead of 1997 onwards). A flyer will be sent out to all these OAs and Old Girls in October. Tickets (£10 each) will be on a first come, first served basis. Old Girls contact is Sandie Burnett: sburnett@sthelens.oxon.sch.uk. OAs please contact: Marilena Kaye at: administrator@oaclub.org.uk.

Open Day/OA Day - Saturday 8th October

10.30 am Open Day begins

11.00 am AGM, Christ's Hospital Room

12.45 pm Buffet Lunch (£15 each)

02.30 pm *Days in June* – Amey Theatre, a film commemorating four Old Abingdonians who were killed in Normandy in 1944.

Happy Birthday!

Happy Birthday to Harold Styles (1923) who celebrated his 100th birthday on 26th June! Harold is pictured on the right along with his crew members of 1922, (l to r) N A Carr, I Williams, R L C Footitt and D.M. Brown.

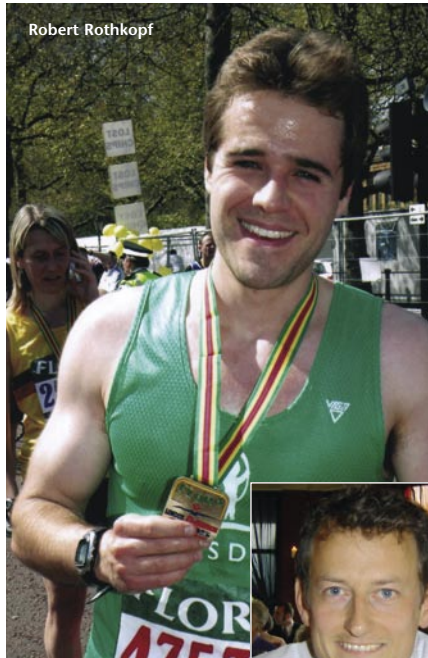


If you have any news, or would simply like to make contact, the OA Office details are: Marilena Kaye, Administrator, The Old Abingdonian Club, Abingdon School, Abingdon, OX14 1DE
Tel: +44 (0)1235 849074
Fax: +44 (0)1235 529517
Email: administrator@oaclub.org.uk

Marathon Men

Among the 36,000 starters in the 25th London Marathon on 17th April 2005, were three OAs: **Duncan Hancox** (OA 1993), **Antony Ashton** (OA 1996) and **Robert Rothkopf** (OA 2000). We're glad to report that all three were among the 34,175 finishers too. Duncan Hancox, who runs with the Abingdon Amblers, came 1,435 overall in a time of 3:04:47; Antony Ashton's position was 4,109 in a time of 3:28:02 and Robert Rothkopf's 4,230 and his time 3:32:31.

A week earlier Antony Ashton with **Richard Binning** (OA 1996) and **Oliver Greasby** (OA 1996) won the 2005 National Manhunt, a fourteen-hour test of endurance and night-time navigation in the mountains of North Wales.



Duncan Hancox

A 21st Century Conservative

Following the General Election in May, Michael Howard appointed **the Right Honourable Francis Maude** (OA 1971), formerly MP for North Warwickshire (1983-1992), as the new Chairman of the Conservative Party. As Chairman, it will be his responsibility to see through the creation of a new constitution for the party. The draft, published on 25th May, sets out changes in the way the leader is to be elected and attempts to articulate a statement of Conservative principles for the 21st Century, principles which Francis outlined in a speech to the Centre for Policy Studies on 15th June.



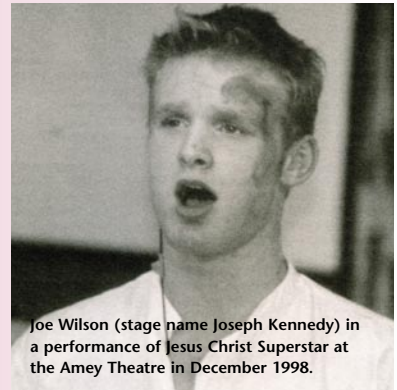
Francis is one of two Maude brothers to have attended Abingdon. His elder brother **Charles Maude** (OA 1969) died in 1993 and the room under the Chapel, the Charles Maude Room, once the gym, was converted into a drama studio and lecture and recital room in his memory.

As part of the 750 celebrations, Francis Maude will host a reception in the Palace of Westminster for members of the school community on 26th April 2006. Details will be published in the 750 programme at the end of term.

A Rose by Any Other Name ...



In the interests of exactitude, we are happy to correct a mistake in the last issue – **David Mitchell** (OA 1992) and Robert Webb won the European award, the Golden Rose, for best sit-com - *The Peep Show* - not the American Golden Globe award.



Joe Wilson (stage name Joseph Kennedy) in a performance of *Jesus Christ Superstar* at the Amey Theatre in December 1998.

Joe Wilson at the Barbican

Joe Wilson (OA 2000) who went from Abingdon to the Central School of Speech and Drama, won a part, under his stage name Joseph Kennedy, in Deborah Warner's production of *Julius Caesar* at the Barbican earlier this year. The cast included Simon Russell Beale as Cassius and Ralph Fiennes as Mark Antony.