



## An Excellent Report

Last term opened with the news that we had two weeks before inspectors from the Independent Schools' Inspectorate (ISI) arrived. Over five days they examined the School's compliance with regulatory requirements, together with its broader educational provision, concluding in their seventeen-page report:

*"Pupils' attainment in public examinations and the progress they make are excellent, and this is matched by outstanding achievement in extra-curricular activities. Pupils have exceptionally committed attitudes to learning. In their learning they combine a desire for success with a genuine curiosity and develop independent and collaborative academic skills which prepare them for adult life."* ISI 2.1 – The full report can be read at [www.abingdon.org.uk/inspection](http://www.abingdon.org.uk/inspection) ■

## Sporting Titles

Abingdon teams won a bumper crop of sporting titles last term: the U15A hockey XI won the Independent Schools' Hockey League, the U14As became county champions, as did the Junior, Intermediate and Senior cross-country teams, whilst the 1st VIII won the Thames Team Trophy at the Schools' Head of the River on the Tideway. ■



News



Arts



Sport



ASPA



Development



## Talks

### Friday 6 May

Dr Nick Brown, Department of Plant Sciences, University of Oxford, Principal of Linacre College  
Biology Society Lecture  
7.15 pm Charles Maude Room

### Monday 9 May

Steve Brooking OBE, Adviser to the Afghan Minister of the Interior  
'Is Afghanistan Worth British Lives?'  
Royse Society  
6.30 pm

### Tuesday 10 May

Anthony Horowitz talking about his writing for children, young adults and television, including *Foyle's War*  
In aid of Helen and Douglas House  
6.30 pm Amey Theatre  
Tickets: £15, £45 family ticket (2 adults 2 children)  
Available online –  
[www.abingdon-booking.info](http://www.abingdon-booking.info) / in person from Mostly Books, 6 Stert St, Abingdon / reserved and paid for on the night  
01235 849063 /  
[arts.sec@abingdon.org.uk](mailto:arts.sec@abingdon.org.uk)

## Other Events

### Saturday 25 June

Rugby Tour Dinner  
Guest speaker Scott Quinnell, former Welsh international and British Lions player.  
Champagne reception and 3-course South-Africa themed dinner in aid of the School's rugby tour to South Africa, 14-30 July 2011, and the charity *Goedgedacht Trust*, which aims to 'build people, strengthen community and promote democracy'.  
7 for 7.30 pm Charles Maude Room and afterwards the Dining Hall  
Tickets: £40 Black tie  
[peter.coke@abingdon.org.uk](mailto:peter.coke@abingdon.org.uk)  
All welcome

## Music

### Tuesday 3 May

Summer Orchestral Concert  
7 pm Amey Theatre  
Tickets: £6, £4 concessions, £16 family

### Wednesday 11 May

Thames Vale Youth Orchestra Concert  
7.30 pm Sheldonian Theatre, Oxford  
Tickets at the door

### Friday 13 May

School Bands' Concert  
7 pm Amey Theatre  
Tickets: £6, £4 concessions, £16 family

### Tuesday 17 May

Piano Duo Concert: Kaoru Wada and Malcolm Forbes-Peckham  
7 pm Amey Theatre  
Tickets: £6, £4 concessions, £16 family

### Monday 6 June

Junior Scholars' Concert  
7 pm Amey Theatre  
Admission Free

### Friday 24 June

Jazz on a Summer's Evening  
7 pm Amey Theatre  
Tickets: £8, £5 concessions, £20 family

### Wednesday 29 June

Lower School Gala Concert  
7 pm Amey Theatre  
Admission Free

### Sunday 26 June

Gerald Smithson Twenty20 Cricket Tournament  
OAs, Parents, MCR and 1st XI Abingdon School 10 am to 6 pm  
[www.abingdon.org.uk/oa/cricket](http://www.abingdon.org.uk/oa/cricket)  
[alumni@abingdon.org.uk](mailto:alumni@abingdon.org.uk)  
All welcome

### Thursday 26 May

A level and GCSE Art and Design Technology Exhibition  
6-8 pm Private View, Amey Theatre Foyer, Art Department and DT Department  
[james.nairne@abingdon.org.uk](mailto:james.nairne@abingdon.org.uk)  
All welcome

## Drama, Film

### Wednesday 18 May

Abingdon Film Unit Annual Screenings  
7.30 pm Amey Theatre

### Wednesday 25 and Thursday 26 May

*James and the Giant Peach*  
Lower School Drama Production  
25 May 1 pm and 7 pm Amey Theatre  
26 May 7 pm Amey Theatre

### Wednesday 15, Thursday 16 and Friday 17 June

*The Importance of Being Earnest*  
Joint 4th Year Drama Production  
7 pm The School of St Helen and St Katharine  
Enquiries: [reception@shsk.org.uk](mailto:reception@shsk.org.uk)

## ASPA

### Abingdon School Parents' Association

For further details on all ASPA events  
[www.abingdon.org.uk/aspa](http://www.abingdon.org.uk/aspa)

### Friday 6 May

ASPA Lower School Musical Bingo Night  
7 pm Sports Centre Entertainment Suite  
Tickets (including supper): £15 adults, £8 children  
[www.abingdon.org.uk/aspa](http://www.abingdon.org.uk/aspa)

### Saturday 11 June

ASPA 5th Year Parents' Barbecue  
5 pm Waste Court Field  
[www.abingdon.org.uk/aspa](http://www.abingdon.org.uk/aspa)

### Saturday 18 June

ASPA 3rd and 4th Year Parents' Boat Trip  
8 pm Nag's Head, Abingdon  
Tickets (including supper): £25  
[www.abingdon.org.uk/aspa](http://www.abingdon.org.uk/aspa)

For details of all events  
[www.abingdon.org.uk](http://www.abingdon.org.uk)

*“The increased academic success and the investment in staff, buildings and resources for learning since the last inspection indicate the governors’ effectiveness in guiding the school in recent years.”* ISI 5.1



## Governor Profile: John Bunce

John Bunce, OA 1963, is the OA Governor who represents the views of more than 5,000 OAs to the Governing Body. He sits on the Staff Committee and the Prep School Committee.

After university, he joined the management trainee scheme at International Computers and Tabulators (later ICL), staying with them for 13 years before leaving as Regional Director for the Midlands. Following this he was MD for Ericsson UK and then for Philips Business Systems UK before setting up his own Management Consultancy specialising in IT and Telecomms. Having sold this company he now runs Eventfulstays Ltd, which matches private property with people seeking accommodation close to an event e.g. Henley.

He is Chairman of the OA Club, a Freeman of the City of London (Worshipful Company of Information Technologists) and a member of the MCC. He lives in Warwickshire with his second wife and has two daughters, four grandchildren and a step-son. ■



## Paul Robson

Paul Robson is the Estates Manager Grounds who, with a full-time staff of nine, is responsible for the gardens and grounds of the School, Prep School and The Manor School. Educated in Swindon, Paul joined the DOE Public Service Agency of the MOD when he left school, and worked with them as gardener and groundsman for 20 years. He trained at Lackham College and spent time at Gloucester County Cricket Club and at the Institute of Turf Research in Yorkshire, studying seed research, turf management and sports field construction. He came to Abingdon in 1996 and was involved in the creation of Cox’s Fields and in the extensive landscaping of that area.



Paul lives in Northleach and his leisure interests centre round horticulture. He loves planting trees and shrubs and continues to take a keen interest in lawn seed research. He is also interested in genealogy and is an active member of the Northumberland Family History Society, which is where the Robson family comes from. ■

## Changes to the School Week in September 2011

Following extensive consultations with parents, boys and staff, from September 2011 the School will introduce a number of changes to its working week. Lessons will be extended from 35 to 55 minutes, there will be a longer lunch break on some days and there will be no academic lessons on Saturdays. Saturdays, however, will still be used for Other Half activities and sporting fixtures. For further details of these changes see: [www.abingdon.org.uk/new\\_structure\\_questions\\_and\\_answers](http://www.abingdon.org.uk/new_structure_questions_and_answers). ■

*“The process whereby decisions have been reached indicates strong management, particularly in relation to seeking the views of the whole school community.”* ISI 5.5

*“Boys understand the realities of other cultures through foreign language exchanges, visits to Europe and beyond by many departments ...”* ISI 4.5



The group of fourth-form Germanists from Abingdon and the School of St Helen and St Katharine at Cologne Cathedral, whilst on an exchange visit with the Ratsgymnasium, Bielefeld – the 45th year of the exchange. ■



A small group of A level Germanists at a remaining fragment of the Berlin Wall, one of the many historic and cultural places they visited during their stay in the city in February. ■



Sixth-formers on an Economics and Business Studies visit to Barcelona took in an inspection of the port facilities as well as visits to the Torres winery, the Seat car plant and a football match between Barcelona and Athletic Bilbao. ■

*“Pupils have excellent cultural awareness. They develop a good understanding of the world in which they live, appreciate its diversity, and recognise the need for tolerance and harmony.”* ISI 4.5



As part of the School’s Healthy Eating Campaign, Second-formers were shown how meals and snacks could be made healthier without having to compromise on flavour – in the case of ‘smoothies’ they needed no convincing. ■



Helped by the Chinese language assistant, boys celebrated the Chinese New Year by learning how to make ‘sui jiao’, the dumplings that are traditional fare for this festive season – and by learning how to eat them too! ■



Not everything the boys have tasted in the interests of education has been so enjoyable, as some of them discovered when they sampled the healing waters of Aquae Sulis at the Roman baths in Bath. ■

*“The range of choice at meals is good and supports healthy eating.”* ISI 4.9

*“Academic activities outside the classroom offer enrichment and challenge; for example, the biology club lectures and visiting speakers such as Bishop Michael Nazir-Ali.”* ISI 3.8



Dr Adam Boddison fascinated members of the Third Year when he demonstrated some of the mathematical trickery that enabled him to add up faster than anyone using a calculator, and apparently select the winning numbers in a lottery. By the end of the session the boys could do this too! ■

*“Activities such as the combined cadet force (CCF), the chess club and the big band, for example, encourage pupils to aim for high achievement levels and enable them to take on new challenges.”* ISI 3.8



At the Wiltshire Junior Chess Tournament last February, Ray Ren came 1st, Anthony Bracey 3rd, and David Chung 5th in the Beginners section; and in the Intermediates section Leon Wu, James Anderson-Besant and Joseph Truran all finished joint 5th. Abingdon chess team, City 4, who were promoted at the end of last season to Division 3 in the Oxford and District City League, finished the season in joint second place with Oxford University 3. ■

The Team Maths Challenge – three rounds of mathematical puzzlement – challenged Lower School’s brains on 4 March. Working collaboratively and in relays, the teams had a lot of fun whilst putting their maths to the test. Having won the regional final in November, a team of senior boys – Omri Faraggi, Thomas Salt, Geoffrey Yu and Peter Zeng – came third out a field of 65 in the UK final of the Senior Team Mathematics Challenge. ■



*“Pupils question values and assumptions, discuss moral choices and explore their own emotions and those of others.”* ISI 3.8



Among the motions at last term’s weekly debating sessions were ‘In hindsight this House loves Tony Blair’, ‘This House would teach at Abingdon’ and ‘This House would raise the age of consent’. After some very lively discussions all three of these motions were lost. ■



At the Monday Assembly before World Book Day, a group of boys and staff talked about books that meant something to them. Self-discipline, burning ambition, self-discovery, the concept of freedom and the philosophy of objectivism were subjects raised by the books discussed, which included Emma Donoghue’s *The Room*, Ayn Rand’s *Atlas Shrugged*, Nelson Mandela’s *Conversations with Myself*, Mark Cavendish’s *Boy Racer* and *Shackleton’s Boat Journey* by Frank Worsley. ■

*“The School aims to eschew manufacturing a child, aiming instead to encourage initiative, individuality and creativity whilst reinforcing the importance of respect and endeavour.”* ISI 1.4

## Music – workshops, master classes and platforms



L to R David Mears, Osman Tack, Ben Etherton



Jay Jung



Thomas Earl

At a cello master class on 2 February, six musicians explored with the cellist Robert Max ways of expanding their range of musical expression, together with the use of theatrical effects to enhance the music's impact. A teacher at the Royal College of Music and principal cellist of the London Chamber Orchestra, Robert Max's advice, both technical and artistic, was greatly welcomed.

The Singers' Platform on 25 March gave a fortunate audience nine wonderful singers who demonstrated a range of ability and versatility that would have done credit to a professional concert hall. Schubert, Brahms, Mozart, Handel, Purcell and

Britten were delivered with a style and confidence that brought credit to the Music Department.

The Chamber Music Workshop on 9 February saw a group of four distinguished musicians each give 50 minutes intensive coaching to a dozen or so boys prior to a play-through that evening, which demonstrated how much the boys had appreciated the experience.

At a piano master class on 16 March, David Owen Norris gave seven pianists – ranging from second-former Leon Wu to Osman Tack in the Upper Sixth – the benefit of his extensive musical knowledge

and expertise. Playing Schubert, Schumann, Brubeck, Chopin, Gershwin, Ravel and Piazzolla, the boys provided the audience with an evening to remember.

### Congratulations

Congratulations to Thomas Earl who has been selected as a saxophonist to play with the National Youth Wind Ensemble of Great Britain, and to the chamber trio David Mears (clarinet), Ben Etherton (cello) and Osman Tack (piano) who reached the final of the National Chamber Music Festival. ■

*“These sporting successes are matched by equally high levels of performance in music and drama. Members of the film unit have had notable success in winning prestigious awards and musicians are selected for national youth ensembles.”* ISI 3.3

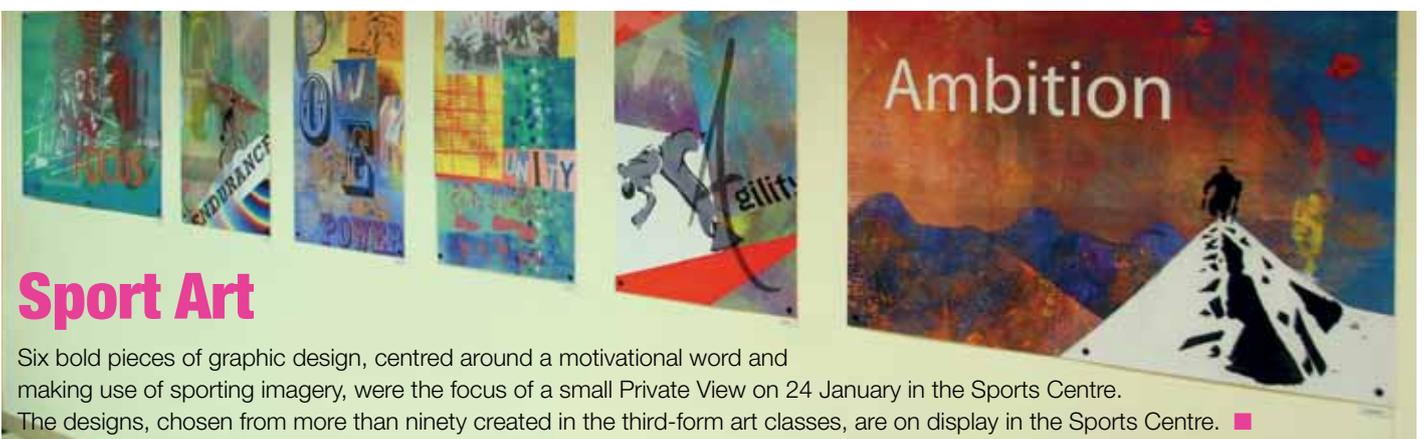
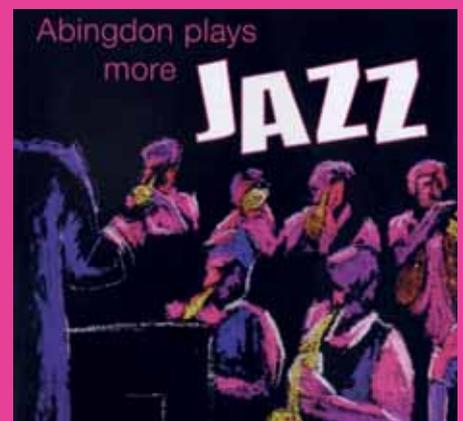
## Adventures in Wonderland

It wasn't Alice who fell down the rabbit hole but Alex, however, what he discovered down there was the familiar strange world of the Cheshire cat, pipe-smoking caterpillar, Mad Hatter's tea party and a ruthless Queen of Hearts. The first ever Third Year St Helen's and Abingdon joint drama production was a huge success – enjoyed not only by the audience but by the cast too. ■



## Abingdon Plays More Jazz

The same month that saw the release of Radiohead's new eight-track CD saw the release of a bumper fifteen-track album from Abingdon's Big Band. Recorded last July, the album includes *Summertime*, *Autumn Leaves*, *Fly Me to the Moon* and other jazz favourites. The CD can be bought for £10 from the School Shop. ■



## Sport Art

Six bold pieces of graphic design, centred around a motivational word and making use of sporting imagery, were the focus of a small Private View on 24 January in the Sports Centre. The designs, chosen from more than ninety created in the third-form art classes, are on display in the Sports Centre. ■

*"Pupils consistently reach excellent levels of achievement in a wide range of extra-curricular areas."* ISI 3.3

# Hockey – a brilliant season!



The U15A

In one of the School's most successful hockey seasons, the U15A came top of the Independent Schools' Hockey League, winning all their matches and finishing six points ahead of runners-up Marlborough. At the beginning of the season, the U14A beat St Edward's on penalty strokes to become County Champions, and progressed through to the semi-finals of the South Regional Finals. Underlining this success, 22 members of the School's hockey squads played for Oxfordshire or Buckinghamshire at all levels – U18 to U14 – during the season. ■



The U14A



## Playing for England

Tom Kyng (L),  
Peter Moore (R)

Tom Kyng and Peter Moore won selection to the English U16 rugby squad, with Tom picked to captain the A side for the RFU International Rugby Festival played at Wellington over the Easter holidays.

In the Queen Elizabeth Barnet School's Rugby Sevens on 10 March, the Abingdon U14 won the title having beaten Wellington decisively 41-0 in the final. The U16s just narrowly missed out, losing 12-14 to Tonbridge in their final. ■



## Representing Great Britain

Ben Bryant (L), Finn Ryley (R)

Ben Bryant and Finn Ryley represented Great Britain in the British Schools' Small-Bore Rifle Association team that competed in the 27th ISAS Competition held in Germany at the end of March, and shot with the England Schools' A team against Scotland, Ireland and Wales, where the English team won the trophy. Ben and Finn, with Matthew Allison and Daniel Belcher, will take part in the Junior International at Bisley this summer. ■



The Juniors

## Cross Country

Crowned Junior, Intermediate and Senior County Champions at the beginning of the season, five days after winning all three age groups at the Vale of the White Horse Championships, the cross-country team followed this up with 3rd place at the prestigious Knole Run, and 8th place at the King Henry VIII Relays in Coventry, which attracts top cross-country schools from all over England. The Seniors came 2nd at the Radley Cross-Country Relays, with the U15s and U17s both coming 3rd, and then the Seniors came 2nd again at the South East Schools' Championships making it another great season. ■



The Seniors

*“Sport, which forms a substantial part of this (Other Half) provision, and other activities such as music and drama, ensure that the pupils are able to develop skills beyond the academic curriculum. Pupils report that ‘The Other Half’ is one of the reasons they so enjoy their lives at Abingdon.”* ISI 3.11



The J16s at the start of the Eton Invitational Head

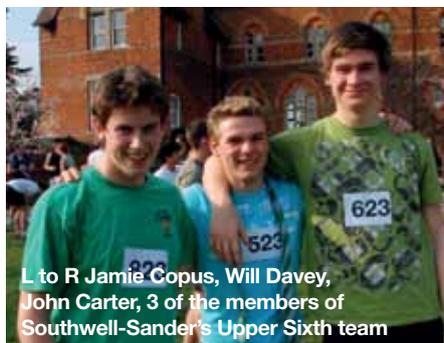
At the beginning of term, the Eton Invitational Head saw the 1st VIII take 1st place 21 seconds ahead of Eton, and the 2nd VIII come 4th behind the St Paul's 1st VIII. The Seniors' winning form continued at the Reading University Head where Abingdon won the Bourne Cup for the fastest school crew. At the Schools' Head of the River, the 1st VIII held off a challenge from Shrewsbury before closing on Eton in the final stages to win by 5 seconds.

As for the future, the J14s, showing dedication and a keen competitive spirit in their first term of rowing, performed well in a number of small fixtures against schools with a term's more experience. ■



## Road Relay

On Monday 28 March, 436 runners entered the Road Relay. Francis Malone-Lee, OA 1998, recorded the fastest time, 7.52, with John Carter in the Upper Sixth coming second two seconds behind. Southwell-Sander's won the Upper Sixth title (36.05), Davies's both the Lower Sixth and Fifth-form (37.01 and 38.44), Boyd's won the Fourth-form title (39.11) and O'Doherty's the Third (39.13). In Lower School the winners were 2W and 1H. ■



*"Pupils have achieved county and national honours in hockey, rugby, cricket and cross country and international success in rowing and fencing."* ISI 3.3



## Olympic Inspiration

World Champion rowers and Olympic hopefuls Alex Partridge, Alex Gregory, Ric Eginton and Matt Langridge named Abingdon's new eight *Animus*, Latin for the spirit of courage, passion and pride, when they visited the Boat Club on 9 February to help with a training session. ■

## Badminton

Having won the Oxfordshire Schools' Badminton Competition, the Abingdon team – James Zhou, Bernard Ng, Daniel Chen, Gem Vonseenin and Adam Uberoi – won silver medals at the regional final of the Center Parcs National Badminton Championship – the first time a school team has progressed so far in national competition. ■

## Swimming Champions

Abingdon swimmers achieved 54 top 8 finishes at the recent Oxfordshire and North Buckinghamshire County Championships; these included 8 gold, 9 silver and 8 bronze medals, of which Michael Esnouf won 8 in his age group. Nineteen clubs took part in the event. ■

## Fencing Silver Medals

The British Schools' Team Fencing Championships at Brunel University on 12 March saw eight Abingdon boys win silver medals as members of the U15 team - Herman Chan, Jack Dawson, Henry Crowe, Will Johnson – and U18 team – Thomas Chan, Bernard Ng, Omri Faraggi, Kit Bowen. ■

# Highest accolade for Abingdon Prep



Abingdon Prep received a tremendous accolade this term following five days of inspection by the Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) – the body responsible for inspecting leading independent schools. The inspection captured the atmosphere and ethos of the Prep School. Here are some excerpts from the ISI report just to whet your appetite.

*“The pupils’ achievement and progress throughout the School is outstanding.”*

*“The excellent relationships that prevail between staff and pupils encourage a caring atmosphere in which pupils thrive.”*

*“Pupils’ achievement is strongly supported by their excellent attitudes to learning, which they clearly enjoy.”*

The full report is available from [www.abingdon.org.uk/prep/school\\_notices](http://www.abingdon.org.uk/prep/school_notices). ■

## Hotly Contested House Music

147 boys from Years 1-8 took part in the first round of this year’s House Music Competition, making it a very difficult task to choose four musicians from each year to compete in the final. Our external adjudicator, Malcolm Harding, a very experienced musician, examiner and teacher, was very impressed with the standard of playing and singing, and gave the performers some helpful and encouraging feedback. Malcolm chose a winner from each year group and the overall winner of the House Music Cup, which went to Sebastian Evans (Dragon House) for his stylish recorder performance of *Greensleeves*. ■



## A Busy Sporting Term

25 squads, ranging from the 1st XI to the U8 D VI played over 120 football fixtures. Added to this were the cross country races, hockey matches / tournaments and the traditionally hard-fought inter-house football, basketball and badminton competitions.

Although success on the pitch for the senior football teams has been limited, their progress has been excellent under the coaching staff of Stefan Gerrard, Ben Tew and Peter Rhodes-Brown (Oxford United – Youth Coach). On an individual note William Whitworth (Year 8) was selected for the South East Preparatory Schools’ Representative XI. The U8s and U9s had a very successful season, winning the majority of their matches which bodes well for the sporting future of Abingdon Prep School. ■

## Scholarships

Many congratulations to all the boys who have won scholarships and awards to senior schools following the Lent Term’s scholarship examinations. It has been another excellent year for Abingdon Prep with eight boys receiving art, academic and music awards. Very well done to all the boys – a tremendous achievement. ■



## Peter Pan Takes Off

At the end of term the Prep School performed *Peter Pan* to a packed Amey Theatre and to tremendous acclaim. Simon Littlewood, who directed the production, writes: "Why do I ever doubt the ability of a cast of one hundred children to perform so brilliantly? From the opening moments, it became clear that they were merely pretending to ignore my pleadings about projecting their voices, using their hands creatively and reacting to their fellow actors. From the first song, *The Darlings*, to the last, *Don't say Goodbye*, the singing, choreography and acting were simply performed brilliantly. Amelia Wilkinson (Wendy) and Ethan Sarchie (Peter) discovered a previously hidden chemistry and a sinister Captain Hook (Xander Kynoch) drew unparalleled applause from a rapturous audience with his rendition of *Goodbye Peter Pan*. Anabel Pozniak was a charming Tink and the real strength of the show was the ensemble cast who all played their parts with passion and great skill and of course they were ably backed up by the three choruses.

To mention the whole cast by name would take this article beyond the confines of available space. Suffice to say, from Mr and Mrs Darling and their family to Smee and his fellow pirates, Chief Indian and Tiger Lily to all the Lost Boys, you made me immensely proud with your dedication and talent. I'm sure I speak on behalf of my fellow directors and producers when I say that we have been most fortunate to work with such a wonderful cast. The final encore of *You Gotta Believe* seemed so apt and, like the rest of the show, was performed with total exuberance." ■

## Victory at Magdalen College School

On 11 March, the Abingdon Prep U11 quiz team travelled to Magdalen College School for an inter-school quiz with 20 teams taking part. The seven rounds of questions covered everything from geography, history and politics to popular culture and general knowledge. The team worked extremely well together and kept calm and focused throughout. The team's final score was 64/80 and they topped the leader board by a clear 5 points to lift the cup and collect their medals.

Congratulations to all the members of the team – Peter Bicarregui, Patrick Gwilliam-Thomas, Max Humphries, Ben Hutchison and Patrick McCubbin (Captain). ■



## Maggots Making History



A life on the ocean waves may sound very appealing but, as Year 5 discovered in their history study of Nelson's navy, it had its less palatable moments! Having found out that the 'ship's biscuits' given to sailors were often riddled with maggots, the boys were fascinated to see this first-hand. Having left some biscuits in a container with live maggots for several days, they took great delight in watching the biscuits move across the container on a sea of writhing maggots. Despite some keen and eager volunteers, they did not get to taste the biscuits complete with added protein! ■



## Travel Awards

This term will see the Committee meet to decide the ASPA Travel Awards and the Paul Tappin Memorial Award. Last year, ASPA gave money to the six boys who last summer spent three and a half weeks in South Africa, working with the charity *Build the Nations* at the Shayandima Mission Base in Venda, Limpopo Province, teaching, building and distributing aid. ASPA also supported projects in Senegal, Melbourne, Malawi and Katmandu as well as the charity *Help for Heroes*

For details of how to apply:  
[www.abingdon.org.uk/aspa](http://www.abingdon.org.uk/aspa) ■



## Quiz Night

Over 80 parents in 14 teams took part in ASPA's 1970s and 80s Quiz Night. The questions, expertly set by Ed and Sarah Carter, rekindled fond and, in some cases, distant memories of bygone times! In the end the *Glam Rock New Romantics* narrowly defeated the *Young(ish) Ones* and the *Mulleys*.

The event raised money for ASPA funds to support Other Half activities. ASPA would like to thank all those who took part as well as *Withy King Solicitors*, *the Fabulous Bakin' Boys* and the Park Club for donating raffle prizes. ■

## Go On – Make a Difference!

All Abingdon parents are automatically members of ASPA (Abingdon School Parents Association), a parent body that supports the School's aim of educating boys in the widest possible sense of the word, and to this end raises money for Other Half activities and for travel awards. The Committee is composed of parents and staff and there is always room for any parent who would like to join.

### Ten reasons to join ASPA

- Make new friends – we all have something in common – our sons' welfare and education – and you'll meet people across the year-groups.
- Help out at SUS (School Uniform Shop), which has the added bonus of helping you find items of your son's lost clothing.
- Get that feel-good factor from knowing that you are supporting a good cause.
- Get access to events that you otherwise might never attend, and hear of events before they are published.
- Become acquainted with the inner workings of the School.
- Set your son a good example – do some voluntary work.
- A vigorous parent body plays a valuable part in the running of a school – get a say in ASPA decisions.
- Membership of the Committee is fun – we hold several meetings a year at which we consume wine and sandwiches.
- ASPA provides a forum for your own fund-raising initiatives and an opportunity for airing your suggestions.
- Show your son that you care about his School. ■



## Photographic Competition

Enter our termly competition – take a photograph of a recognisable piece of Abingdon clothing/uniform/kit/equipment being worn or displayed in an unusual place or an interesting situation – but not too interesting, entries will be censored! The competition is open to all boys, staff, OAs and parents.

Entries should be emailed to [aspa@abingdon.org.uk](mailto:aspa@abingdon.org.uk) including a brief description identifying the photograph's location. A £25 prize will be awarded for the best entry at the end of each term. ■



## Chapel Windows

With a total of just under £108,500 raised as this issue of Abingdon News goes to press, we are confident we shall soon reach our appeal target of £145,700. The proposed Mynheer windows will, without doubt, enhance the beauty of the Chapel. The striking designs and intensity of colour will allow, with each glance, a new and different spiritual dimension, and suggest food for thought whilst suffusing the whole area with warmth and shades of light. Each window depicts a Church season and a school term. ■



## Professional Dinners

At Abingdon, we are truly grateful for all the ways in which our wider community contribute to the life of the School. This term many parents (both past and present), OAs and other friends have supported careers events at School including two professional networking dinners. These events, hosted by the Old Abingdonian Club, not only offer alumni the chance to return to School for a different type of reunion, but they are also fantastic career networking opportunities for current boys.



On Friday 4 March David Allison (1993) hosted an event focussing on the ICT industry. The guest list included OAs from 1987-2005, and parents both of senior and prep school pupils. This included John Winters, who worked as a software engineer before he came to teach maths at Abingdon.

On Friday 11 March Gareth Morris (1976, OA Club President) hosted an event covering the 'creative communication' industries, including advertising, marketing and the media. We were very pleased to welcome John Smith, current parent and Chief Executive of BBC Worldwide, as our guest speaker. He was joined by a very impressive selection of OAs, with leaving years from 1957-2005, and parents (both past and present) including Jan Wiejak, who worked in the marketing industry for many years before also joining the Abingdon maths department.

Full reports and guest lists are available on the OA Club website at [www.oaclub.org.uk](http://www.oaclub.org.uk). ■

## Annual Fund Update

This year's annual fund has focussed on the Chapel windows and on bursaries, raising over £70,000 for the latter, which has enabled one boy to attend the School who would otherwise have been unable to do so. Other areas of School have also been the beneficiaries of the fund with the new space in the library, which allows for a more relaxed private reading environment, together with a reorganised reference collection, proving very popular with sixth-formers. The climbing wall has also been popular, particularly with boys who relish a challenge, teaching them the value of working in teams. The Music Department, Geography, Design Technology and the Archives have also benefited from the generosity of donors – for all of which we are all very grateful ...THANK YOU! ■



Then ...



and now



A request to the archives for information about a great-great uncle has led to the acquisition of a copy of the earliest known photograph of Abingdon School. Vincent Holliday and his two brothers were boarders from East Hagbourne who joined the School in 1868, 1870 and 1874. What none of their descendants realised was that the photograph of the large institutional building in the family album was a photograph of the School the three brothers had attended. The accompanying photograph, taken this January, shows both how much and how little it has all changed. ■

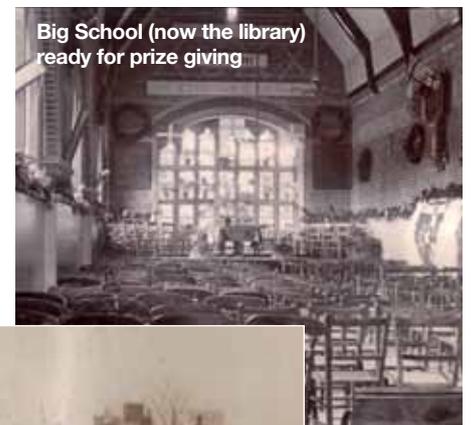
## Women behind the scenes at Abingdon School – Lydia Martha Layng

Many women have played a significant part at Abingdon although mostly behind the scenes and unremembered, among them Miss Mattie Layng, sister of the Reverend Thomas Layng, Headmaster 1893 to 1913. She was 26 when her brother was appointed Headmaster and she acted as his hostess on official school occasions until he married in 1899. However, she continued to accompany at School concerts – playing the pianoforte, the harmonium and the bass – help organise School regattas, look after the domestic arrangements in School House and occasionally teach German and French. She retired early in 1910 as a result of ill-health, having brought to her work “an unfaltering affection for the School, but also energy, kindness and thought” (*The Abingdonian* November 1910). Her brother left Abingdon in 1913 but Miss Layng lived on in 3 Spring Terrace until her death in 1931 – eight weeks after her brother.

There is a particular reason for us to remember Miss Layng – she was a keen photographer and took many of the earliest photographs of the School, its buildings, classrooms and boys, for which we will always be grateful. ■



Off to a match



Big School (now the library) ready for prize giving



Mattie Layng



## OAs v 1st XI Hockey

The Abingdon hockey season culminated on Friday 1 April with a 'ghosts' match between the 1st XI and an OA side, described by coach, Steve Brenchley (Common Room), as "one of the finest teams ever to grace Tilsley Park". Junior internationals, regular premier league players, university captains and current Oxford Blues all responded to the challenge and the final score was a fiercely contested 8-5 to the OAs.

The line-up included: 2004 Dom Roche; 2006 Chris Cowan, Toby Roche; 2007 Charlie Lester; 2008 Jonny Bayfield, Rhys Cadman (capt.), Harry Hole, Chris Newman, Shanx Tandon, 2009 Matt Purssell, Paz Rabindran, JJ Robinson along with Royden Burt and James Nairne (Common Room).

A full report is available at [www.oaclub.org.uk/hockey](http://www.oaclub.org.uk/hockey). Many thanks to Steve Brenchley for co-ordinating the fixture. ■

## OA 'City' Lunch

A new series of OA 'City' events was launched on Friday 25 March with a lunch at the British Bankers' Association, hosted jointly by Simon Hills (1975) and Gareth Morris (1976, OA Club President).

Guests included: 1971 Andrew Higgs, Andrew McMillan; 1975 Andrew Jackson; 1978 Robin Joy; 1979 Hugh de Lusignan; 1984 Barry Stanton, Ken Welby; 1989 Guy Peddy; 1991 Ben Clothier; 1997 Doug Stewart, Tom Burton; 1999 Ross Dawson, Robert Hutchins; 2000 Robert Rothkopf; 2001 Alex Teddy; 2002 Nicholas Smith; 2003 Darshan Puri; 2005 Michael Rothkopf. ■

## OA Regional Reunion: South-West



The OA Club's first regional reunion took place on Thursday 3 February. David Brice (1961) welcomed OAs, their partners and members of staff (both past and present) to an evening reception at Ashton Court Mansion in Bristol.

OA guests included: 1943 Ian Crudginton; 1944 Peter Jones; 1953 Robin Mills; 1954 Ken Smith; 1956 Michael Enser, Peter Fysh; 1959 Peter Wintle; 1961 Kit Spackman; 1962 Rem Lockton, Andrew Stuart-Lyon; 1966 Michael Liversidge, David Ray; 1968 Mike Stevens; 1970 Kevin Brown, John Cox, Vivian Lacey-Johnson, Ian Smith; 1976 Peter Stewart; 1976 Gareth Morris, 1979 Philip Ashby, Clive Neville, Chris Thomas; 1981 Edmund Thompson; 1982 Nick Rawlinson, 1993 Alistair Dale; 1994 Mike Litchfield (also Common Room); 2009 Jacob Swain. ■

## Abingdon Classics Society



OAs were welcomed back to School on Friday 18 March for the 2011 Classics Society Dinner and Lecture, which was given this year by Nicholas Purcell (St John's College, Oxford) and entitled *Looking at the audience at the Roman games*.

OA guests included: 1975 Andrew Gotch; 1990 Joshua Mandel; 1991 Bernard Randall; 1993 Adam Jenkins (also Common Room); 2002 Adam Addis; 2004 Stuart Gordon, Daniel Jepson; 2005 Christian Davies; 2005 Sam Withnall; 2006 George Scarfe; 2006 James Cook; 2007 Jasper Cooper; 2009 Oscar Hird, James Hunter, Charles Hutchence, Fergus McIntosh, Jacob Swain, Christopher Weller Jones, Jamie Wilder; 2010 Christopher Edwards, Thomas Finch, Alex Muir, Thomas Watkins. ■

### Looking ahead...

Thursday 10 May	OA Golf Day	Frilford Heath
Thursday 12 May	OA Regional Reunion: North-West	Royal Exchange Theatre, Manchester
Friday 24 June	Geography Reunion – Talk followed by drinks and BBQ	School
Sunday 26 June	Gerald Smithson Memorial Twenty20 Cricket Tournament	School
Saturday 10 Sept	20th Anniversary Reunion for 1991 Leavers	School
Tuesday 4 Oct	Antipodean Reunion Dinner	Sky Tower, Auckland, NZ
Saturday 15 Oct	OA AGM, Open Afternoon and Annual Dinner	School



## OA in Victorious Oxford Blue Boat

George Whittaker, OA 1999, competed in the Road Relay on 28 March, fresh from his triumph on the Tideway just two days earlier when the Oxford crew achieved an impressive four-length victory over the favourites Cambridge. George, studying for an MBA at Oriel, said the Oxford crew had been 'quietly confident' but had expected it to be a closer race. He also confessed that a weekend of celebrations hadn't perhaps been the best way of preparing for the Road Relay. Meanwhile, Felix Wood, OA 2009, who is in his second year at Cambridge reading Medicine, rowed in the Goldie crew. ■



George Whittaker with his first rowing coach, Rodney Mearns



## OAs at the Road Relay

Former Olympic rower Robin Bourne-Taylor, CGC, OA 1999, BBC sports commentator Rob Walker, OA 1993, George Whittaker, OA 1999, 2011 Oxford blue boat crew, and Francis Malone-Lee, OA 1998, who for many years held the course record at 7.58, ran in the School Road Relay on the 28 March. Tom Watkins, OA 2010, now at Cambridge, and Alex Muir, OA 2010, now at Oxford, made a two-man team and ran two legs each. Francis ran the race's fastest lap, 7.52, but the two-man team won the race in a time of 32.53. ■

## Your Life in His Hands

Jon Barclay, OA 2004, was one of seven doctors featured in the six-part documentary series *Junior Doctors – Your Life in Their Hands* on BBC 3 last February and March. The series looked at the lives of these recently qualified doctors working in Newcastle at the General and the Royal Victoria Infirmary. Jon, who was in his second foundation year when the series was made, divided his time running between emergencies as part of the hospital's crash team, playing rugby and practising with his band for the next gig. On 12 March he was a guest on *Harry Hill's TV Burp*. ■



Jon Barclay (right)



## New release from Radiohead

"*The King of Limbs*, another great album from Britain's most consistently brilliant band," said BBC Music's Matt Diver of *Radiohead's* eighth album, released as a download on 18 February and on CD and vinyl on 28 March. The band, originally called *On a Friday*, was formed in 1985 whilst all five members were at Abingdon School: Thom Yorke, OA 1987, Ed O'Brien, OA 1986, Jonny Greenwood, OA 1990, Colin Greenwood, OA 1987 and Phil Selway, OA 1985. ■

