

The Abingdonian

2019







The Abingdonian

2018 – 2019

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Editorial



Thank you for picking up this year's edition of *The Abingdonian* - a reflection of an exceptional year of Abingdon's extensive achievements, events and activities. We hope you enjoy finding out about everything that has taken place, both inside and outside school hours.

The numerous articles dive into all three terms of notable news from school life. This year was particularly exciting as it saw the opening of Beech Court, leading to many new opportunities across the year groups. Academically, the School had another strong year, with very pleasing A Level and GCSE results. The Other Half continued to expand its vast selection of activities, with boys across the School taking the opportunity to develop existing skills and learn new ones. Many boys represented the School in sports, drama, music and art events, showing what the School has to be proud of outside the classroom. Trips to many different parts of the globe saw Abingdonians explore new cultures and expand their horizons, whilst enjoying great new experiences with friends and staff.

Many thanks must go to the lead editor, Mr Jenkins, and to the pupil editorial team of Rory Bishop, Ian Ip, Anderson Lai, Andreas Lo, George Nott, and Matthew Viner, as well as to all the contributing staff and students who helped in bringing this publication to you.

Sam Penrose, 5AMB

Head's Foreword



'Think like an artist'. This was the challenge that was thrown down by Will Gompertz, BBC Arts Editor, when he visited Abingdon for the official opening of Beech Court in the Michaelmas Term of 2018. In a highly entertaining speech, he invited us all to engage with the process of turning ideas into reality and to learn from the great artists as we do so.

His speech captured the spirit of Beech Court. I hope our art students will be inspired to new flights of imagination by their surroundings and by the views from the top floor. We certainly saw some remarkably original work from our A Level and GCSE artists at the Celebration of the Arts in the summer. The library represents the intellectual heart of the School and it's been great to see pupils taking full advantage of the facilities, working silently or collaboratively, or finding spaces to take time to read more widely. The Sixth Form Centre has not just provided important spaces for socialising and relaxing but also for intensive study and consultation with our wider sixth form team, including Careers and University support.

With its sense of purpose and buzz, Beech Court stands as a useful microcosm of the School as a whole. 2018-19 was an exciting year which saw Abingdonians display their customary commitment, dedication and flair. I was particularly delighted that the establishment of Abingdon School in Partnership, under the leadership of Robin Southwell-Sander, provided so many exciting and meaningful opportunities for our students to collaborate with their peers in local maintained schools. The year was also marked by a renewed commitment to developing the wellbeing of both students and staff under the leadership of the Rev. Gooding. 2018-19 also saw exciting developments in teaching and learning under the direction of Mrs Reading and her team.

It's great that the events of the year are captured so colourfully in these pages and I hope you'll enjoy reflecting on everything that made these 12 months so enjoyable and successful.

It takes an enormous amount of time and dedication to put together a publication of this quality so I am very grateful to Mr Jenkins and the editorial team for everything they have done.

Michael Windsor

Michaelmas 2018



Beech Court

Sixth Form Centre

In September 2018, I entered the Lower Sixth and Beech Court opened its doors for the first time. It was a marked improvement on all three of the facilities it replaced (the Art Department, Library, and Sixth Form Common Room) and the new Sixth Form Centre particularly stood out, not least because Mr O'Doherty, the Upper Master, referred to it as being 'world class' in the first assembly of term.

This epithet is well-deserved. The Centre serves, as one might expect, as the foundation of sixth form life, and it fulfils this role well. It houses spaces for both learning and relaxation, with sofas, cubicles, and rooms for silent study and group work. A steady gradation of seating, from the casual bar stools near the entrance to the enclosed workstations and 'no food or drink' signs at the far end, ensures that all needs are catered for. It would be disingenuous to pretend that the Centre isn't noisy or crowded at break-times, but it is large enough that this isn't really an issue.

Even during these short, busy periods, the room still feels spacious: a row of floor to ceiling windows and glass doors along its length makes it feel airy and bright.

The UCAS office is also situated within the Centre, ensuring easy access during the stressful Michaelmas Term of the Upper Sixth - Mrs Gibbard and Mrs Taylor are very happy for students to drop by during break, lunch, or free periods with concerns or queries about the university application process. The Library is close at hand on the floor above, so any books or resources needed for coursework or additional reading can be retrieved with minimum effort, highly beneficial as walking across the school is a laborious proposition for most of us. On that note, the Centre is centrally located, with a connecting walkway to Classics, History and Geography: it's undoubtedly more accessible than the old Common Room which was below us exiles in Franklin's and Morgan's.

When compared with the facilities that we had in Middle School, the Sixth Form Centre is entirely different. In Middle School the house room serves as the

focus of time not in lessons, but it has a far greater emphasis on leisure than it does on work. This is understandable - little independent work is required in Middle School, and most if not all homework can comfortably be done at home. In the sixth form, by contrast, an equal amount of work, if not more, is done outside the classroom - hence the value of the support that the Sixth Form Centre gives is fully realised. This is good preparation for university - you are given the facilities you need to work well without supervision, and whilst Mr O'Doherty does, on occasion, prowl through the cubicles to ensure valuable work is being done, the onus is on us to manage our time.

Whilst it may seem melodramatic to say that the new Sixth Form Centre has revolutionised or fundamentally changed school life, it has made a major difference to sixth form students, at least: from the wooden staves across the ceiling which have no identifiable purpose to the ubiquitously cerise colour scheme, it blends practicality and aesthetics to create a place that we can be proud of.

George Carver, 6DTP



If we build it... the first year of Beech Court Library

If we build it, they will come. That immortal phrase was uttered by precisely no-one involved in the creation of the new school library, yet it sums up a belief that underpinned the four years of research, imagination, planning, and construction that culminated in the opening of the Beech Court facility in September 2018. The aim was bold: a library which supported equally collaborative learning, private study and reading for pleasure, and that integrated mobile technology, digital resources and printed books.

Now, a year on, belief has become reality. We built it, they came – and they are using it in line with our expectations.

Responses to a survey sent out in the closing weeks of the 2019 Summer Term suggest that close to 85% of students are visiting the library regularly (at least twice a week), with a third making use of it “every day or almost every day”. The primary purpose of more than half of those visits is “to study with friends”. The survey results reflected what library staff have observed: for independent working,



many students make the library their first port of call. While the new library has well over three times the seating capacity of its predecessor – 182 seats rather than 48 – it is certainly not too large. Many afternoons see most if not all seats filled.

The substantial increase in use of the library has also translated into a substantial increase in book borrowing,

which has risen more than 40% year-on-year. According to the survey results, the purpose of close to half of all visits includes “requesting or borrowing a book”. While the library is far more than a warehouse for books, and many library resources have moved online, the printed page remains critical to independent learning, so the rise in borrowing is a cause for further quiet



celebration.

The survey, along with conversations throughout the year, reveal widespread enthusiasm for the new space. More than 95% of students reported that when they visit the library they “always” or “usually” find “what I’m looking for”. More than 95% also described the library as spacious, comfortable, easy to use and friendly, and more than half described it as inspiring.

Written comments suggest that students particularly like features which were at the heart of planning and design for the new library. The features singled out were:

- The variety of work spaces, which facilitate different types of study
- The spacious open-plan layout
- The separate area for quiet study
- The provision of charging points for laptops and Chromebooks
- The comfortable seating
- The colour scheme
- The selection of books
- The organisation of books
- Easy access to Chromebooks
- Easy access to the printer / copier

Numerous students have also singled out something less tangible but equally important: the atmosphere or “mood” of the library. In response to the question “What do you most like about the library?”, a great number of responses



were along the lines of “general mood”, “the nice feel” and “the productive atmosphere”. While the atmosphere or “mood” of a library is not the be all and end all, it makes a huge difference to the likelihood of students making best use of it, perceiving it in positive terms, and making return visits.

Inevitably, the new library does not please everybody all of the time. Some students have complained that the main area is too noisy at times, so library staff are working to ensure that the atmosphere remains conducive to study while encouraging students who want to work on their own to make use of the separate silent study room. A handful of Upper Sixth students preferred the traditional wood panelling and brick walls of the old library to the modern aesthetic of Beech Court. Overwhelmingly, however, when asked “What do you most dislike about the library?” the majority of students replied, “nothing”.

One boy’s words stand for many

and perhaps sum up what Abingdon students think of the new library: “It offers the type of space and working opportunities that no other part of the school can provide”. Given that Abingdon School offers so many innovative and popular places to study, that’s quite a compliment.

Graham Gardner

A reflection on the year in art

It has been an extremely exciting year for Art and Design at Abingdon. In November BBC Art editor Will Gompertz opened our new facilities in Beech Court. In his key note speech he enthused about how important it is for our students to think and work creatively for companies - especially in our current political climate.

This year our students have worked extremely hard to raise their performance in art by improving their skills in drawing and developing ideas and final

outcomes. I am delighted with the work that they have all presented for our exhibition at the Celebration of the Arts festival.

This year we have had five A-level students moving on to some of the top universities to study fine art, product design and architecture. They have done exceptionally well to meet the examination board's assessment criteria.

The GCSE boys also displayed some very high quality work. Their exam topic this year was Reflection. Some highlights from their exhibition included a sculpture of a fish made from sunglass lenses and exceptional photography albums. I also feel the quality of drawing and recording has improved at the school.

The Celebration of Art was well attended by parents and students, and the teachers across all the arts subjects exhibited some brilliant student work. The events this year at Beech Court have helped strengthen the importance of creativity. We are positively moving forward at Abingdon School.

In September we are planning to increase our Other Half provision with clubs that will encourage all ages and ability levels. The students will have to book their places quickly to join the likes of Smart Phone Photography, Doodle Book Architecture and our Up-cycling club.

I would like to thank all students, parents and teachers for their support this year.

Paul Williamson

In this past school year we have learnt a variety of exciting skills including painting, drawing and making clay models of aliens.

Personally, my favourite artwork was drawing my shoe. For the first attempt we had no help. The second time round we could help each other, and finally we were shown how to draw and shade it accurately. After we had finished our shoe I developed it into a painting. We also created a shoe cast out of cling-film and sellotape. I really enjoy studying other artists' work and working out ways they could influence my own projects.

I can honestly say I have improved my artistic skills a lot at Abingdon School.

I am also doing a lot of independent project work and enjoy art very much.

Roddy McVie, 1SCVM

My experience in the new Art Department this year has been very positive. I have been at the school since Lower School, so having spent four years in the old department it was a shock to move to a new building, though it soon felt very familiar. We moved into the department at the perfect time for my year as we were in the second year of GCSE coursework, which meant we were going to be in the department a lot more.

The modern and minimal look of the whole of Beech Court is very appealing, but the Art Department's studio-like lighting and clean, white architecture was most stunning to me. Whereas the old art classrooms had felt small and somewhat dark, the new build felt very open and bright, which made spending time there a much better experience. The many large windows and skylights give a remarkable view of the school

grounds from the top floor, and also lend a hand in lighting the large space. The classrooms transitioned from their traditional school look into resembling a museum or gallery, meaning doing work in there felt a lot more of a privilege.

A lot more artwork is on display in the new department too, which means you can get much more of an idea of what is being produced by all of the different years. The glass cabinets around the department holding various sculptures and intriguing three-dimensional forms again give the feeling of an exhibition all year round. The desks in the classrooms are very large and spacious, which means you can make a space for yourself within lessons and don't feel at all claustrophobic. The Sixth Form studio also looks outstanding, and although I have not yet had the chance to use it as I am in Middle School, doing so is something I am looking forward to taking advantage of next year.

Sam Penrose, 5AMB





House Singing

After narrowly missing out on last year's title, School House came into this year's House Singing Competition with a burning desire to re-establish themselves as the dominant house in the competition and reinstall the house pride we possessed three years ago, the last time we had won the competition. Despite last year's valiant effort, showcasing the importance of enthusiasm towards the choice of song and the staggering volume that can be produced as a result of this, my team and I decided to approach this year's competition in a slightly different way.

Though this required a lot of work in addition to rehearsals, we saw the importance in making our song selection, *The Greatest Show*, truly ours. After hours of enjoyable composition and key transposing with a broken piano in the house, we were able to produce a piece we could call our own, consisting of a range of musical features that captured the original essence of the piece, as well as adding our own hint of flavour to it. We preserved the original rhythmic intensity of the piece, including the characteristic stomps, as well as the strong masculinity in the Hugh Jackman solo, which was slightly altered to be instead sung by a dozen selected bass singers in unison for an enhanced effect. In addition, we also added multiple layers of harmony, as well

as a section of lyricless a capella in the middle. After this, we were fortunate to find an enthusiastic group, consisting of members of different year groups, and taught the song to them. Through this process, we were able to experiment and find out which parts of the song would be harder to teach, or were hard to sing and thus needed simplification, and most important of all, which bits worked. We proceeded to perform in front of the whole house during house assembly, and it was fair to say that we were quite severely affected by nerves, especially me as I had stepped in to conduct halfway through the song due to rhythmic blunders. However, the end product of the ensemble showed promise, and through this performance, I believe that we had showed the whole house that we were potential contenders and were approaching this year's competition with a plan to win. However, more importantly, I believe it showed everyone that the plan was a

plan that was doable, as the ensemble included members, such as myself, who had no previous experience in school-run musical activities, such as First Orchestra or Chapel Choir.

Traditionally, the House Singing Competition is quite a controversial topic of discussion, as you can love it and hate it, since it does take a fair chunk of time out of your day. With prior knowledge that the Abingdon Fair was occurring during our rehearsal slots, we planned ahead in hopes of making rehearsals as efficient as possible. Also due to us being a big house in terms of numbers, we decided to separate all the students into four groups, and each group was to be led by two people who knew the piece and were also able to sing it to them. This small group teaching approach was a method that was surprisingly successful, as many groups had learnt more than half of the whole song by the end of the first



session. Of course, a lot of credit is due to the School House boys for putting up with daily emails sent regarding venue changes for each group and to the tutors for keeping people on task as the temptation to speak has proven very prominent in each year of rehearsals.

After rigorous sessions and big uncertainties over how the parts would sound when merged together, everything started to come together during the session two days before the actual performance. Chatter questioning our song choice and how we were going to “butcher” another renowned song turned into discussion of praise coming from houses waiting to enter the Amey Theatre stage and foyer, who had overheard our rehearsal. Of course, we had minor issues and slip-ups to fix in the following sessions which made us quite nervous about the performance, such as some sections not projecting loudly enough. However they were all quickly corrected as we were all attentive and were more importantly proud and excited to show the school what we had made together as a house.

On the day, we were the second to perform, following O’Doherty’s House, the winners of last year’s competition. Performing second wasn’t exactly an advantageous position, as potentially our piece might be overshadowed by a performance only because it was performed more recently. With doubt over my conducting abilities, I started to panic, but what happened next is something that I will remember forever. Everyone in my team, as well as many people from my year group walked over to encourage me, saying I should just enjoy the moment, and it would pass before I knew it. Of course the nerves were still there until the moment I walked onto the stage, but the encouragement of my peers, as well as those who applauded in encouragement in the audience as I walked onto the conductor’s platform, reminded me of the beauty of this competition, where it is not about the individual, but instead it is an appreciation of everyone in the school across all year groups. The performance was over in a flash, and we were treated with silence. However, the next moment the outpouring of applause and smiles and thumbs up from members of my



team filled me with joy as we had not failed our week’s preparation, and “School House” chants erupted on stage.

I would like to point out that the quality of the performances given by other houses were beyond my expectations, and it is definitely true that the quality of performance is improving year by year. Most notably, I would say that Crescent House’s *Mr. Blue Sky* and Austin House’s *Don’t Stop Believing* had definitely got me really nervous about our chances of winning.

However, as the adjudicator used the words “exciting, interesting, and strong” to describe our performance, and after the announcement of Crescent House as second place, followed by even louder “School House” chants, I felt a weirdly familiar sensation within me. It was not the joy of winning the competition, but the sense of belonging and pride in being involved in something that means so much to that many people.

Although we did not have African bongos or a charismatic front man standing in front of the school bravely reciting a passage in an African dialect, I believe that our efforts and enthusiasm during and outside of our sessions resulting in a banger of a performance truly emulates the spirit of house singing - to bring everyone in the house together, and be ambitious together in hope for success. All that is left to say is that I am sure that after this year School House has established itself once again as the house to look out for, and I am sure we will live up to these expectations in the years to come. Finally, I would like to thank my team, Alvin Tam, Andreas Lo, Graham Suttie, Ilya Korzinkin, Hamish McAlpine, Jacob de Jongh, Alec de Jongh, Oliver Lee, and Dennis Wei, as well as those in the ensemble, and finally everyone in School House. Thank you for your efforts, you’ve all done yourselves proud!

Marcus Kam, 7KJY

Spanish Exchange

In October a group of 47 pupils from Abingdon and St Helen's experienced Spanish culture first hand in Santiago de Compostela in Galicia. Our boys had the experience of going on exchange to Spain and interacting with other Spanish native speakers. They had to socialise and communicate in a foreign country, which requires an effort of adaptation and patience to understand and be understood in a foreign language and a totally different culture.

We arrived on a cold and wet Friday morning in Santiago (yes, Spain is also cold sometimes!) and groups of Spanish families were huddled outside the bus to welcome and take the students home. The anxiety some students were feeling was immediately replaced with a feeling of relief, as all the exchange partners were happy and

eager to get to know their new English friends. The boys were all made very welcome by them and their families, and felt instantly at home.

Throughout the week, when the Spanish exchanges were in school, the Manuel Peleteiro School organized tours for the Abingdon boys around the most emblematic buildings in the city and nearby places, which helped them to acquire knowledge about the local culture. The boys spent a day in A Coruña visiting the Torre de Hércules, the oldest lighthouse in the world, and the Acuário, an interactive centre that promotes learning about the ocean and being more caring towards marine life. One of their favourite visits was to Domus, an interactive monographic museum on human beings. Pupils also travelled to Pontevedra and in Baiona had the chance to see a replica of the Pinta, one of Columbus' ships.

These places were such good days out, as not only did they allow our students



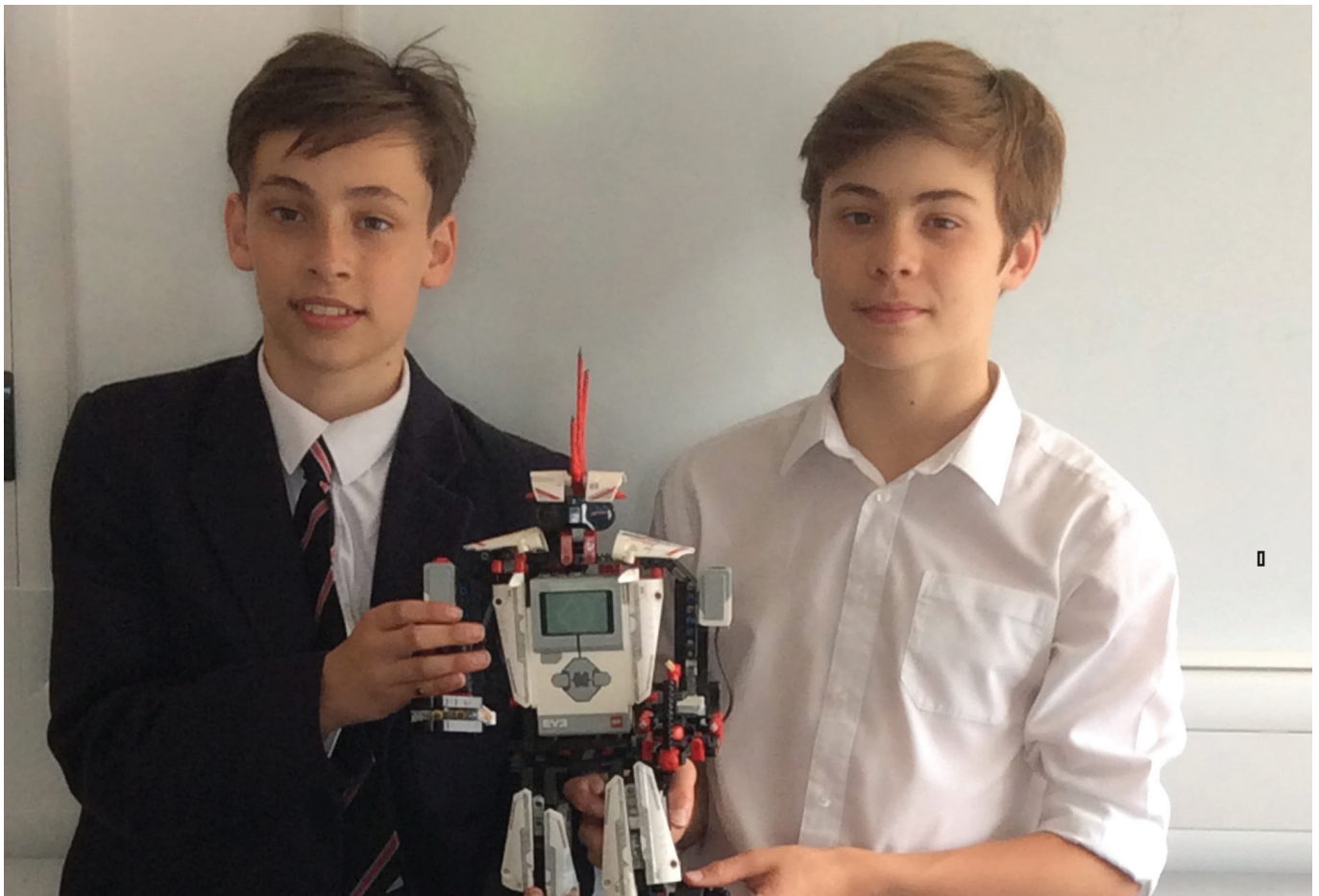
to learn many things about the immense history and heritage of Galicia, but also allowed them to try out Spanish in shops and cafes, when they were given free time.

The boys also spent some days at the school, attending interesting lectures on history, local folklore, and last but not least, lessons with their exchange partners (all in Spanish!). They tried their best to improve their skills and enjoyed the social aspects of Spanish life.

Needless to say, the experience was extremely positive for all the students, who built a relationship with their exchange partners with some of them already looking forward to visiting them again! These words from Youssef O'Sullivan who went on the exchange summarise very well the experience they lived: "I initially was unsure about going on this exchange, as when the letter came out for it last October, I did not know if I would enjoy it or not. When I look back on that time now, I laugh, as this past week has been such an amazing time for me, and the others, and such unforgettable memories have been made for us and our exchange partners. I would urge anyone unsure about going to give it a go, as it is such a great trip to go on".

Raquel Fraile





Lego Mindstorms Club

The simple lego brick. There's not much you can do with it - build with it, play with it, step on it - but there may be more to

the plastic brick than you originally thought there was. Lego Mindstorms Club gives students the opportunity to not only build amazing robots but programme them using simple easy to use software as well.

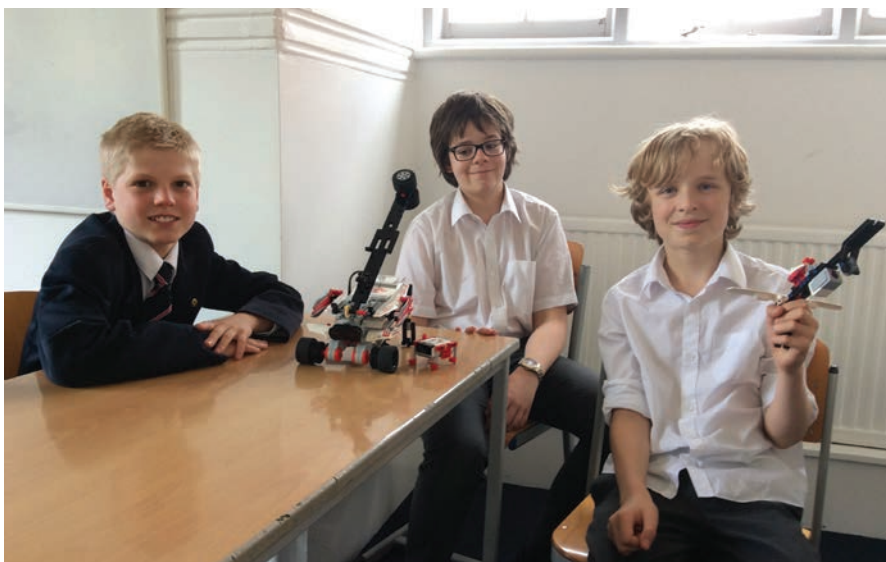
There are many robot designs to choose from such as the humanoid EV3STORM or the robot scorpion SPIK3R. You can build courses and test your robot's

strength and abilities with the remote controller, but not all robots need to move. You can build the Lego representation of the original Wachem game and instruments like guitars and pianos.

Programming skills could come in useful during later life, so why not learn them now? Lego mindstorms has a great website to produce easy codes and helps you get to grips with how to make your own later on. Once you have the codes all you need to do is to build a robot of your own or from the book. Lego Mindstorms gives instructions on how to make certain robots, but if you feel ready you could try building your own design of bot that can solve a rubiks cube in ten seconds or pick up water bottles and move them to you - the possibilities of robot design are endless.

If you have an interest in Lego Mindstorms then come to B311 on Tuesday afternoon to try your hand at the art of Lego programming. You can build your own future at Lego Mindstorms!

Leland Ebner, 2SJC



China Trip

A group of seven pupils and two teachers travelled to China in half-term. In the late evening of Tuesday 16 October we embarked on our first exciting excursion to the culture-rich city of Xi'an, and our mode of transport was a 'sleeper train', which provided excellent accommodation for the night, even if it was a little noisy. After a short but sweet rest, we woke up bright-eyed and bushy-tailed gliding through the outskirts of Xi'an.

It was not long until we disembarked from the train and were whisked off by our tour guide, who took us to enjoy a

traditional and local breakfast near the city centre, which consisted of delicious noodles and Chinese burgers. With our stomachs full, we set off to the local museum of traditional Chinese art, where we enjoyed the experience of having the works explained in thorough detail, as well as being able to write (or in my case attempt) some Chinese calligraphy. I particularly enjoyed some of the old Chinese communist posters that had been created in the late 60s. At midday, we were brought to yet another charming Chinese restaurant, and were met with steaming plates of food (of which we naturally learned the names in Chinese), and fuelled up for the rest of the day.

Next on the agenda was to visit the Fortifications of Xi'an. The view from on top was spectacular, and was made even better by being able to cycle on top of its nearly 15km perimeter. The wall shielded a beautiful part of the city from the endless housing blocks and skyscrapers, and within it lay lots of traditional housing as well as an abundance of beautiful temples. Having finished the cycle on the wall, we were driven up to the final highlight of the day, the bell tower in the centre of Xi'an. After having learnt the characters on all of the drums in the tower, we were able to enjoy the picturesque sunset over the square that was beginning to teem with life.

For dinner we enjoyed a buffet style meal, that was slightly rushed as the nightlife of the city awaited us. We took our bus to the city centre, and were greeted with a spectacle of light; water fountains had been turned on and were in their full glory, and almost every building had been illuminated, as if the city had had a makeover. After some shopping in the local mall we checked into our hotel, exhausted but inspired.

The following morning we woke up, excited to be visiting the world-famous Terracotta Army. After a short drive, we entered the dome of the main attraction, and saw why the spectacle had earned its fame. Row upon row of intricately detailed soldiers were lined up in their hundreds, and our guide explained that they had been crafted to protect the emperor in the afterlife. We visited three different buildings, which all held different soldiers of different status and rank. After visiting the attraction, we visited the small town that lies next to the site, and were fortunate enough to meet Mr Yang (the farmer who discovered the Terracotta Army), and had the opportunity to purchase some signed copies of his book.

The final highlight of Xi'an that we visited was the museum dedicated to the ancient tribe of Banpo, which used to live in the area. The museum did a great job of explaining their way of life, the activities they undertook and the equipment they used to get by in their age, and also helped us learn the vocabulary for some of the ancient equipment.



The final leg of our adventure in China began with another train journey from Xi'an back to Beijing. Much like on the first leg to Xi'an, the train compartments were small and yet comfortable enough for the trip. It proved a perfect opportunity for us to practise some of our Mandarin oral questions with our teacher, whether we liked it or not!. We arrived just past seven the next morning and we set off straight for Beijing No.9 Middle School located in west Beijing. The morning began with a nice welcome by the first year students (equivalent to our fifth year) the moment we arrived. After that we had some time to talk and share thoughts on the differences and similarities between China and Britain. It was truly fascinating to find out just how dedicated these students, and students throughout China, are to their education. School begins every morning at 7am. Each day the students have eight one hour lessons with one break and lunch. During these breaks they play in the schoolyard, and many run 2km each day!

Following this we had several lessons where we learned a lot about Chinese history and culture, from a fascinating lesson on the face masks of the Beijing Opera and the significance of the multitude of colours to a course in making lucky knots and bracelets. Perhaps the most fun part of the day was the lion dancing. A fundamental part of Chinese dramatics, lion dancing

is both fascinating historically and absolutely hilarious to take part in. This was followed by a great martial arts class in which some excelled more than others (I found it a somewhat less natural art).

The next day was probably the one we will all have the fondest memories of. One whole day was spent with exchange partners. During it we all did different things, some in groups and others alone with their partners but, no matter what was done, be it visiting Tiananmen Square again, visiting some of the most beautiful temples in China, or eating some traditional Chinese snacks or homemade dumplings, it was an experience like no other. What's more, we all learnt some fundamental and useful conversational Chinese and got a view into the lives of our exchanges. I can say for sure that we all learnt something interesting and new that day and our views of China have also changed.

The following day was our final full day. In the morning we went to the famous zoo in Beijing and got, after a long wait, a peak at the infamous Giant Pandas and several other animals only ever seen in China. In the afternoon, after lunch where we tasted Beijing duck (it was absolutely amazing), we went to see a more modern part of China, very much the future of China, at an art village set in an old factory. This not only proved a chance to see the new, youthful China, but it also was an opportunity to buy

some essential gifts for our families and friends. On the morning of 22 October we set off after an early breakfast to the airport where we boarded the plane and flew back home.

This trip was an eye-opening experience that allowed us to see the China we always hear about and, most importantly, proved an opportunity to speak the language, immerse ourselves in the culture, and give us a boost and motivation to continue to learn this fascinating language. I would like to give a big thank you to Zhang Lao Shi for organising the trip, Senora Pradas for accompanying us, Ling Lao Shi, our fantastic tour leader in China, and, of course, all our guides throughout the trip, the exchange partners and their families. Thank you all for a one of a kind trip! We can't wait to go back!

*Johan Nerlov, 5NP and
Maximilian Weaver, 5EPB*



Classics Trip to Italy

The scene of the Renaissance, the home of the Romans, the birthplace of opera - prospects that could hardly be imagined by the somewhat bewildered group of Abingdonian classicists at 3:30 am, Saturday 20 October. With the lights all too bright and the suitcases all too heavy, we were more than glad to pile into the Alitalia flight and fall asleep. By midday, we reached Hotel Portamaggiore and soon set off to explore the centre of Rome. Our first stop was the Palazzo Massimo museum, a brilliant collection of enchanting mosaics, famous statues - including Augustus as priest - and beautiful murals portraying countryside panoramas. The sofas too were a welcome treat for tired boys (as well as Mr Chase).

Following this, we visited the Baths of Diocletian, or rather the church built by Michelangelo in 1563 on top of its ruins. We were met with the majesty and grandeur of immense paintings, towering marble columns and resplendent decorations. Its enormity and wealth of colour tempted Mr. Jenkins to utilise his photographic apparatus, the results of which can be seen on display in the classics department to this day. We strolled back to the hotel, enjoyed a much-anticipated dinner, and hit the hay.

Sunday saw an early rise and a journey by coach to the archeological site of Ostia Antica, the harbour city of ancient Rome. 'Os' meaning 'mouth' in Latin, the city was located at the mouth of the river Tiber and served as Rome's seaport. However, due to silting it now lies two miles from the coast. The excellent preservation of its elaborate frescoes, mosaics, and buildings formed a captivating experience. After a brief lecture inside the theatre, the Abingdonians were set free to explore. We swarmed into nearly all the passages and buildings, yet the site of exceptional attraction was the ancient bar or 'popina,' where Mrs McKend took up the part-time role of barista.

Our next stop was the Ara Pacis or Altar of Peace; a dedication by Augustus to



the goddess Pax. Commissioned by the Senate on 4 July 13 BCE, it was originally located in the northeastern corner of the Campus Martius, the flood plain of the Tiber. Gradually, the altar became buried under four metres of silt, and was reassembled in the Museum of the Ara Pacis in 1938. The Luna marble reliefs are carved to the finest details, displaying the Augustan vision of civil religion and the prosperity and profusion that comes with peace. Tristan Tonks, resembling Indiana Jones down to the finest details, provided an informative tour of the museum.

From there, we invaded the city centre, passing the Pantheon, the Altare della Patria, and several alluring ice cream vendors before eventually arriving at the Capitoline Museums. Beautifully decorated ceilings of gold and dark blue surrounded us, while paintings and statues told of the stories and myths of Rome. The building itself was a work of art. Upon arriving at the Capitoline Wolf, one classicist unable to restrain his enthusiasm delighted in stroking the priceless statue. This action provoked the security guard to berate our colleague wildly, yapping in a bizarre compound of Inglese-Italiano.

Naturally, the Colosseum was on the itinerary and by 8am the next day we had already assembled inside.

Overwhelmed by its enormity and architectural splendour, boys jostled each other and fellow tourists in hot pursuit of the most social-media worthy picture. Indeed, this was a feature of the whole day, given the Palatine Hill's view of the stunning skyline of Rome, the Forum Romanum's grand temple ruins and the Pantheon's symmetry and mathematical perfection. Abingdonians were fiercely competitive, with Dr Burnand's promise of chocolate for the best photograph always in mind.

After a brief lunch at 'Il McDonald's', we split into three groups. Some of us visited a new museum which displayed the archeological findings around Trajan's Forum. We also learnt about the Conquest of Dacia as depicted on Trajan's Column - particularly interesting for me, as I often visit my grandparents in Romania (modern Dacia). We concluded the day with a visit to the picturesque Piazza Navona where we splashed out on ice creams and crêpes.

The next day we bid goodbye to Hotel Portamaggiore and set out for Sorrento. Gradually, the landscape began to change; mountains rose up and we were soon driving along the coast. Stopping at Sperlonga and visiting the cave in which Sejanus had saved Tiberius from a rock fall, we re-enacted Odysseus killing the Cyclops. Despite



diminishing the action dramatically, we were advised to use water from a bottle instead of a stake to 'impair' Henry Muller's eye. We also explored Capua amphitheatre, where among the maze of passages, chambers, and tunnels that lie underneath the stage, Dr Burnand joined the second years in a game of tag. After a filling dinner at Hotel Tourist, the Abingdonians ventured into the centre of Sorrento, discovering a seemingly endless labyrinth of colourful stalls that sold everything from leather duffle bags

to limoncello.

We spent the whole of Wednesday visiting Pompeii, the ancient town near modern Naples. Pompeii was destroyed, together with Herculaneum, Stabiae, Torre Annunziata, and other communities by the violent eruption of Mount Vesuvius in 79 CE. The circumstances preserved the remains as a unique insight to Greco-Roman life; even the colour remained on the murals of houses. From the amphitheatre to the House of the Faun and its Alexander Mosaic, we ended up in the theatre where everyone (including some unfortunate tourists) was subjected to a mock-Roman play courtesy of the sixth formers.

On the sixth day, we discovered the beauty of Campania. Stopping at Amalfi we had a chance to dip our feet into the clear waters of the Tyrrhenian Sea and relish the 5-euro ice creams, while at Paestum, the huge Greek temples set against the backdrop of the verdant Italian mountains were magnificent. The ruins are famous for their three ancient Greek temples of the Doric order, dating from about 600 to 450 BCE. Before returning to Sorrento, we paid a visit to Paestum's museum, which also contains the finds from the Greek site of Foce del Sele.

On Friday, our last day in Italy, we visited

the Roman town of Herculaneum, beneath the suburbs of Naples. As the sister-site to Pompeii, we were surprised to see wooden lofts, wine racks, and bed frames. Instead of volcanic ash, the inhabitants of Herculaneum were buried by a pyroclastic surge, which carbonised wood and left the city under 16-25 metres of rock. Most of the furniture, from a baby's cot to household shrines, is now conserved in storerooms, but a few pieces remain on the site to give an evocative impression of Roman life.

On our way to the airport, we spent some time in the grand Naples Museum. On display was a collection of Greek and Roman antiquities including mosaics, an accumulation of Roman erotica from Pompeii, sculptures, gems, glass, and silver. Wistfully, we boarded the flight home and soon after midnight the next day were all back at Abingdon, with a much greater insight into the history and languages we are studying. With the lights once more all too bright and the suitcases all too heavy, we were more than glad to pile into our beds and fall asleep.

We are very thankful to the teaching staff who accompanied us and in particular Dr Burnand, for organising such a delightful trip.

David Haar, 4MP



4 March 1914 members of Abingdon School Boat Club with two Old Abingdonian crews

Remembering the Abingdon 1st IV

It all began with this photograph – unnamed and undated it must have marked a special occasion – but what special occasion and when?

The striped blazers and caps, which even in those days would have been cerise and white, indicated that ten people in the photograph were members of the Abingdon School Boat Club – the river was a bit of a giveaway too. As we have an almost continuous run of 1st crew photographs from 1881 to the early 21st Century, it wasn't too difficult to identify the five Abingdonians standing together on the right as the members of the 1914 1st IV – from the right: Lupton, Davenport, Eason, Ellis (cox), Donkin. The Abingdonian then provided the names of the other five, the 2nd IV – from the left: Sanders (cox), Race, Parry, Cullen and Knowles. So, who was everyone else?

Well, as I've found myself saying rather a lot just recently, Abingdon was a very small school in 1914. There were only 66 pupils on the roll that September term. Consequently I find I can quite easily recognise any boy from that era who appears regularly in a team photograph. In this way I recognised Wilfred Cyril Williams, standing fourth from the

left, his identification confirmed by the Pembroke College, Oxford badge on his blazer. Williams went up to Pembroke in 1913. In fact, I could identify all the dark-blazered men: Burkett, Cooke, Woods, Enoch and Parker. The Abingdonian identified Burkett, Williams, Cooke and Woods as the Old Abingdonian 2nd IV and named FV Enoch, WH Enoch, Mills and Parker as the OA 1st IV. Laurence Greatbatch, the man in the long coat and cloth cap, coxed both OA boats.

All the dark-blazered men, that is, except for the first on the left. He was more difficult. However, as I could recognise the man fifth from the right, wearing the pale blazer with the dark trim (a Jesus

College, Oxford 1st VIII blazer), as the master in charge of rowing, Sidney Harold Baker, I guessed that the other man was Melville Channing-Pearce, the assistant rowing master, who joined the staff from Worcester College, Oxford in 1913 – his identity confirmed by the Worcester College blazer he is wearing.

The event turned out to be the Abingdon School versus Old Abingdonian annual boat race, which took place on Wednesday 4 March 1914. The OAs beat the school 2nd IV by three-quarters of a length in a time of 4 minutes 4 seconds; the 1st IV beat the OAs by seven lengths in a time of '3 mins 34 2-5. sec'. In reporting the event the



Arthur Davenport



Arthur Davenport (centre) No. 9 Section 11th Battalion Tank Corps

Abingdonian recorded: 'Some excellent photographs were taken of the four crews at the Boathouse'. The school archives have two of them.

It was some time later, when I was looking at it again, that I realised that of the 21 people in the photograph only 11 of them survived the war. Every one of them served in the armed forces; Williams, Burkett, Cooke, Woods, Cullen, Davenport, Lupton and Baker were killed and Eason died of appendicitis. By way of a postscript to this: Chaning-Pearce's brother, a doctor in the RAMC, was killed in October 1917, and his son, Paul, a twenty-one-year-old sergeant in the RAF, was killed in action over North Africa in 1942.

All this detective work was some time ago. However, in March 2018 Keith

Hoult of Strike Films approached me for help with a short documentary he wanted to make on the successes of the Boat Club over the past 100 years for a Wicker's World Foundation course that he was about to begin. Soon realising that it would be difficult to cram the successes of the Boat Club into a short documentary, we wondered whether the First World War might produce a topic, and this photograph immediately sprang to mind.

For it to have the greatest impact we restricted the film to the crew of the 1st boat, three of whom died in the war, and to the master-in-charge of rowing, who was also killed. Alan Eason was the first of the crew to die. He hadn't left school until the summer of 1915 when he was just 18. He immediately took a commission in the Royal Berkshire

Regiment but died in January 1916 following an operation for appendicitis. Frank Lupton, a second lieutenant in the Royal Fusiliers, was killed on 4 August 1916 leading his platoon into action on the Somme. Sidney Harold Baker, having initially been told in 1914 that at 34 he was too old for active service, eventually got a commission in the Gloucestershire Regiment and was killed in action on 23 March 1918 when his position was overrun by the Germans on the third day of their Spring Offensive. Arthur Davenport, like Eason, didn't leave school until the summer of 1915. He served originally with the Rifle Brigade and then transferred to the Tank Corps. He was killed when his tank was captured by the Germans on 23 August 1918.

Some years ago I was sent a photograph of Davenport and his seven-man tank crew. The men are wearing shorts because it got very hot inside a tank, and they are all carrying revolvers because there was not enough room for their rifles and they needed something to be able to defend themselves with should the tank break down or be captured. But the most striking thing about the photograph is the expression on Davenport's face. The fresh-faced young man who captained the 1915 1st XI has the blank, unfocused, 'thousand yard stare' of a person who has detached himself from his surroundings, the stare of a person suffering from battle fatigue and shell shock.

Sarah Wearne



Abingdon School Boat Club cap



4 March 1914, Abingdon's 1st IV in the river, the 2nd IV against the bank

Dambuster Visit

Lawrence ‘Benny’ Goodman, the last surviving 617 ‘Dambuster’ Squadron pilot, opened the School’s new flight simulator suite donated by Tony Edwards, OA (1962) in November.

Our existing flight simulator, also kindly donated by Tony Edwards, had proved a useful training and recruitment tool and we thought we should expand on this concept. With the new simulators we would be able to practise combat procedures and teach aerobatics on top of basic training.

Having decided the scope of the project, I set about researching the components required. The basic concept was to create two flight simulators which could be linked together to allow for an instructor to teach a lesson to

a student in the same aircraft, thus emulating a “real” aircraft. This would require two custom computers, and two identical flight simulator frames. During the Summer Term and over the holidays, I and other RAF section fifth year NCOs set about constructing the simulators. The whole experience gave us a tremendous understanding of engineering and electronics, with the fifth year cadets taking this experience to heart in order to compete to run the flight simulators over the next year. This took about two to three months in total and by the start of the Michaelmas Term we were ready to start final testing and configure the software.

The software that the simulators run on is one of the most advanced pieces of flight simulation software available to date, with real-time airflow modelling and in-depth system simulation, with

the ability to set any component in the aircraft to fail, giving the cadets an extra challenge! It is also compatible with Virtual Reality (VR) headsets, which allows the cadets to look around the cockpit as if they are sitting inside it. We have used this to provide greater immersion and to help build the cadets’ ability to correctly judge any situation they may find themselves in. This is key to being able to transfer their skills to real life, when they go on air experience flights at RAF Benson.

With the software all set up and final checks complete, the opening ceremony was approaching. It was rather nerve-racking, as Squadron Leader Lawrence “Benny” Goodman would be attending to open the suite that was named after him. However, after an amazing lunch where Benny recounted his perilous missions during the Second World War in 617 Squadron (The Dambusters), we headed up to the CCF HQ building.

With cadets from Radley and a wide range of Abingdon staff and boys present, the event was very well attended. Tony Edwards gave a gripping description of Benny Goodman’s many missions and achievements, and after a short break for tea and coffee Benny opened the suite to much fanfare. All of those who attended got a chance to fly a circuit in the Grob Tutor training aircraft, the same aircraft that the cadets would fly at RAF Benson.

In all, the flight simulator project provided a unique and unparalleled insight into engineering and project management for all of the RAF NCOs involved. We are extremely grateful to Tony Edwards for donating both of the flight simulator suites in use.

John Dickson, 7JEF



Abingdon and the Great War

As students at Abingdon school, we're surrounded by a sense of history and reminders of our heritage. However, it's rare to have an opportunity to explore this heritage and share it with a wider audience. I was therefore excited to be involved in the *Abingdon and The Great War* presentation in the Amey Theatre on the evening of Thursday 8 November.

After a short but enthusiastic rehearsal period involving six senior drama students directed by Mr Taylor, we took to the stage. Finding out how best to approach the topic of The Great War theatrically is always a challenge. The principle of appreciating those who gave their lives in order for us to live in a free world is rightly upheld. Yet as performers, we are not only tasked with honouring and educating, but also entertaining.

The material for the presentation was drawn from the 1913-1919 editions of *The Abingdonian*. From my perspective, reading about the familiar rituals of school life from over a century ago – such as the end-of-term services at St Helen's Church, or prizegivings attended by the Vice-Chancellor of Oxford University – created an immediate connection for me between the school's past and present. However, I was not there purely to remind our audience of the sun-blessed cricket season of 1913.

My fellow-readers and I also had to tell of the hardships faced by serving OAs, and of the impact on the school of the letters they sent from the front. Back at Abingdon, the realities of war seemed remote and unreal until news of casualty figures began to arrive. Re-reading the stories of Abingdon men such as Trooper Bury and Lieutenant Meredith as they told of furious artillery assaults and the injuries they inflicted, gave all of the performers a transparent understanding of our predecessors' history.

Another revelation for me was reading of the creation of an Old Boys' Corps. This 12,000-strong force featured an array of disparate characters drawn from different professions who were nevertheless united in their enthusiasm for defending their country and serving to the best of their ability. It seemed to me this element of the Abingdon mentality can still be seen today in the principle of cohesion and community. For the Old Boys' Corp in 1913, this meant a readiness to be called upon when needed.

As actors, we relished the opportunity provided by *The Story of the Zeppelin*, one of the many original poems contributed by pupils that featured in the pages of *The Abingdonian* during the War. Using our hands to beat out a rhythm gave a sense of both the power and menace of the Zeppelin airship, but also its abrupt end when it crashed in flames. Throughout the performance, photos provided by Abingdon's archivist,

Sarah Wearne, helped to bring the extracts to life as they were projected onto a large screen behind us. One of the most powerful moments came at the end, when images of Abingdon's Roll of Honour were displayed, showing the names of more than 370 Abingdonians who served, accompanied by George Butterworth's poignant musical setting of A. E. Housman's poem *Is My Team Ploughing?* Music of the period was used throughout the presentation to underscore and amplify the emotions embedded in the texts.

The impact of the readings was also enhanced by other elements of design, such as the lighting by Nick Lloyd and George Killick. At one point, red pools of light splashed across the stage floor, calling to mind not only the bloodshed of the War, but also its timeless poppy emblem. As our story reached its conclusion, we read the magazine's simultaneously gleeful and gruesome report of the town's celebrations when at last victory was announced. That night, a burning effigy of the Kaiser was paraded in the market square, as it was in towns throughout the land. But now, *The Abingdonian* correspondent's words served only to remind us that we must always be wary of divided and hate-ridden times, whether we read about them in history books, or catch glimpses of them on the horizon.

Samuel King, 5VP



AbingMUN conference

On 1 December, representatives from almost every country on the planet gathered in Abingdon to discuss the future of the environment, the global economy and human rights; the international order as we know it. This was Abingdon's first Model United Nations conference, hosting nearly 150 students from schools across Oxfordshire. The idea behind MUN is a simple one. Each of the 11 schools involved submits around three delegations, each one representing a country. Then each student - usually around four per delegation - goes to a committee. For example, Tarik Kurkcu represented Turkey at the Economic and Financial committee, whilst Russia on the Human Rights committee was represented by a student from St Helen's. The most important part, however, is that students debate said issues from the point of view of the country that they have been allocated. The student from Malvern St. James apparently had a lot of fun representing Saudi Arabia on the Human Rights committee, for example.

It was a great success for our first conference, with praise pouring in from the heads of all the schools that attended. Advice from students that I'd met at other schools really helped. As it was our first conference we were a bit worried that we'd be unable to cope with all the coordination required. With this in mind we made sure to ask the students that we met at other conferences for advice on how to organise it. That, combined with multiple coffee-fuelled nights of troubleshooting, and the help Mrs Yarker and Mr James in helping to set up posters and banners on the day, meant that we were able to pull it off.

The school was lucky enough to have in attendance Colum Wilson OBE, a civil servant who'd spent time in, among other countries, Israel and Zambia, and had helped to coordinate aid into Syria. His speech was very well received.

We were particularly pleased with how well the actual mechanics of the conference worked, especially as



this was our first conference. Eight committees, each debating different issues, were running at the same time. This meant that each of the two chairs in charge had to know exactly what they were doing, and be able to solve problems quickly and effectively. On top of that, we also had a committee type that no-one has tried before; a one-day simulation of the international court of justice where nations take each other to trial. No conference that we'd been to had ever done it before. It was completely new territory for all of us, and at one point we were so worried about it that we almost scrapped it. But thanks to the intensive work of Cara Shepherd of St Helen's it went ahead as planned, and it was so successful that we hope to do it next year as well. The contributions of first and second year were also very hopeful, with students such as William Howat and Toby Pinnington helping to ferry messages and material from committee to committee.

Another thing that went well was the appearance of the conference in order to raise the profile of the school. "We loved it," said one of the sixth formers who came from far afield to attend. "We were a bit apprehensive, as it was Abingdon's first conference, but the professionalism displayed in the conference and how it worked was definitely something that we'll be back for next year."

One thing that didn't go as well was printing out the necessary sheets of paper in time. In order to make sure that everyone knew where they were going,

and what issues they were discussing, hundreds of documents and posters needed to be printed out. Due to a combination of misunderstandings and miscommunications, most of the briefing papers and posters were frantically printed out in the twenty minutes prior to the conference. Midway through we actually ran out of paper and had to cobble together blank A4 pages from around the school - not a situation that we wanted to be in. That's definitely something that we'll do well in advance of our next conference.

A few of the seasoned MUNers tell me that the build up to the MUN conference offered something for everyone. "I'm in charge of our design team. I like taking part in MUN, but drawing and design is also something I'm interested in. The logo was designed by me." said one fifth year, gazing proudly at the black griffin framed by laurel leaves and a globe. "The reason I enjoy the conferences is because of the awards at the end. I did so well that I won a certificate, and a little gavel to go along with it."

Overall, it seems that MUN attracts a variety of people, and can cater for a host of different interests. The thing that struck me most, however, was the open-minded attitude of everyone involved. To quote our Secretary General Alasdair Czaplowski: "It's my firm belief that MUN not only offers something for everyone, but, as our conference has shown, also allows everyone the opportunity to achieve."

Lancelot Wilson, 6DTP

Lord of the Flies

Lord of the Flies was written in 1945 by William Golding. Over time it has been developed into a movie, and written as a play.

We started rehearsing after Michaelmas half term - that feeling of getting a new script in hand is always an exciting one! As always, rehearsals got off to a steady start, as we read through the script for the first couple of times to get to grips with the plot. We then got onto the acting side of things, and that's when the real fun began. Everyone worked really hard in rehearsal to find their character; Ben Smith as Ralph and Dylan Kaeuper as Jack quickly created a fierce rivalry for each other. The other boys in the cast also worked very hard forming the remaining stranded schoolboys on the island, all with the important role of moving the drama and tension forward to its tragic ending.

The show was fast evolving into a very dramatic and intense piece of drama as rehearsals drew closer to Christmas time. Lines were frantically being learnt, characters and relationships were forming strong connections with each other, and everyone was thoroughly enjoying the experience of being part of such an exciting venture. Excitement doubled when we found out about the first ideas for the set! The idea of actual sand and palm trees being on stage with us was amazing and really gave us more confidence to fully commit to the demands of the performance. The ensemble of forest creatures (a new edition for this version of *Lord Of the Flies*) was also starting to come together to represent the 'beast' that is so often referenced through the play.

Some of the choreography used in the final piece was absolutely amazing. Simon's (Freddy Chelsom) death was one of the main highlights of the show, and that was down to the contributions from the ensemble, for it took much focus and timing from them to make the gestures and physicality through the death sequence look seamless.

Performance nights had arrived; those unforgettable first night nerves had started to get to all of us and there was



real energy and excitement amongst the cast. Waiting in the Ingham Room, going over lines and waiting for our cues was very tense indeed! Curtain call was called and we all assembled in our starting positions, hearing the audience pour into the theatre. Getting out on stage to present the piece to the audience is always the best part of the process. Both shows were excellent, lines remembered, cues on time. It looked a real finished product which was what we had all been aiming for and working towards.

Thanks so much to Mr McDonnell for directing the show and putting up with us! Also, a humongous thank you to the fantastic tech crew for bringing a real desert island into the Amey Theatre, and maintenance staff for doing everything they did to make it such an enjoyable experience - thank you very much.

Eddie Good (Piggy), 4NJH



Rugby

Two captains, one at the beginning and one at the end of their Abingdon rugby careers, reflect:

I knew when I came to Abingdon that rugby was a sport that the school excelled at and when I started my first training session, I wasn't in any doubt. We had around two weeks to get to know all the boys in our squad and then we would play our first match against Cokethorpe.

With two or three training sessions each week led by awesome staff, we were ready and raring to go against Cokethorpe. It was a tight game with few scoring opportunities but after 40 minutes we came out 15-10 winners. It was a great result for our first game for the school and it propelled us onto wins against Caldicott and Bedford Modern. Next, on Open Day and on centre stage on Waste Court, we faced the Prep School. This would be a reality check and a learning curve for us all. However, we picked ourselves up and trained harder. I had never been in such a determined team. Into October we first had Oratory Prep School away in horrible conditions. It was a close game for much of the contest but the odd error

here and there is what arguably lost us the game. It was a quick turnaround and we then played Lord William's four days later. This was the game where we rediscovered the confidence and belief we had at the start of the season. Everything was working and tries were frequently being scored. We were back to our best.

Then it was half term and a rest, but after the break, we were back at it again with training for a week to get our skills back into the groove. A tough match against the Dragon was next, and we arrived with the sun shining, but two minutes before the match the conditions drastically changed and rain poured down on us. The match got started and we went down early with missed tackles being a big part of that. However, we fought back and got ourselves back into the game and we were hungry for more. Sadly, we couldn't quite find the line and lost 25-10. Moving on we then had a rematch against the Prep School and we were hungry for revenge. We got an early lead but failed to capitalise and it stayed two tries apiece for a long time. However, a sudden line burst from the Prep meant that they would win 15-10. Although disappointed with the result, we bounced back in the next match against Royal Latin School. Tries flowed

freely again as they struggled to get through our strong defensive line. It was a solid win to pick ourselves up from the disappointment of the Prep School game.

A loss at the hands of RGS Guildford halted our progress but on 1 December we played our best match yet. A total of eight tries were scored and only three conceded. It was a match with fast flowing passing moves and crunching tackles and a great win in the penultimate match of the season. With confidence at a new high, we travelled to Moulsoford for the last match of the season. We came up against a well drilled side but some great passages of play kept us in the game. Unfortunately, it wasn't to be as we were defeated 25-10 on the day.

On the whole, there were lots of positives to take from a great first season at the school and the team will be properly ready to face many more challenges in the coming years.

Jack Veal, 1PCWM

Rugby has played a central role in my time at Abingdon. It has led to lots of great friendships (importantly not just within but across year groups), strengthened characters and created sentimental bonds that will stay with me



for years to come.

I would love to tell you about how my years playing rugby here were scattered in glory with many famous victories against the likes of Radley and Eton.. But, unfortunately, for my year group, that hasn't been the case. We were not the most successful year group on the pitch, but we became one of the closest teams. Off the back of our rugby, we developed resilience and realised that rugby is really about creating long-lasting friendships and understanding team values rather than the winning and the losing, and, like all sports, was just a game (although a great one). For us, it was less about the outcomes, but what was subsequently taken from each game.

I found beginning the Michaelmas Term each year playing rugby a great way to start the year. In the first and third year with influxes of boys from a wide variety of primary and prep schools, the rugby acts as a catalyst for friendships, breaking the ice with the game taking over break-time conversations. Rugby in the Middle School was certainly a highlight for me. It gives you the opportunity to play with your mates at a variety of standards as there are usually up to 5 teams. This means anyone who wants to be part of the Rugby Club can be, regardless of ability. The intensity of training tends to vary, although come weekend matches there tends to be an ambitious feeling amongst all sides. I know that weekend matches playing with your school mates is certainly something that I will miss when I leave school.

In the Seniors, I found that there was definitely a step up in terms of a more competitive atmosphere and a more physical environment. For me, the culmination of my time at school was representing the Pink and White in both my Lower and Upper Sixth and, for my last year, being the captain of the team. It had always been an ambition of mine as I moved through the school. The opportunity to play in national scale tournaments and challenge top level sides weekly at school boy level can be daunting, but also very rewarding. The fixture card is challenging but with it comes high rewards knowing you are competing at the top. It also offers the

chance of recognition for successes for teams and individuals alike.

A special moment from this year's season was to draw away at Eton. Torrential rain suited our game plan but not our vice captain, Oliver Dickson, who was on cameraman duties that day and wearing a white shirt. To be behind the entire game, until a try in the last play by Charlie Atkinson, demonstrated the characteristics of resilience and determination that had been developed throughout our rugby careers at Abingdon. A proud day for the team and coaches (and Dicko's hairy chest).

Trying to unpick highlights from many great memories from the past seven years is a difficult task. However a memory that I will never forget and one which sums up rugby at Abingdon (and perhaps the sport in general) was the tour I went on to Japan. My year, combined with the year above, toured Japan for 15 days staying in five different locations, including a short

stay being billeted with Japanese host families. We were fortunate to play in cities, on mountains and in a stadium, winning almost all our games. Despite being a rugby tour, off the field was of parallel importance during our time there. We were fortunate to spend time eating great food, attempting to speak Japanese (with limited success), and visiting temples and shrines along with the urban landscape of Tokyo. The most crucial part of the tour occurred both on and off the field. Going on an adventure like this resulted in team bonding and great friendships being formed off the back of this. Everything that was learnt on the tour was taken into the following season and, I imagine, will stay with us all well into the future. The 15 day trip demonstrated why rugby is such a great game in every sense and that's why it is such an integral component to life at Abingdon School for so many boys that pass through the school.

Ed Hayes, 7APW



Modern Languages Trip to Berlin

Visiting the capital city of Berlin provided fascinating insights into German culture and history, and aided language learning and use tremendously, simply by being constantly immersed in German everyday life.

Highlights of the trip included several walking tours and guided cultural visits, such as to the GDR museum and former Stasi (secret police) HQ. The Berliner Mauer museum and TV tower were equally interesting, and the cultural impact of Berlin's rich history was certainly felt by many.

The third year group also enjoyed interactive experiences at the Technikmuseum and the Computer game Museum, the Rittersport Schokowelt, several Christmas markets as well as a guided tour of the Olympic Stadium.

Of particular interest to me was the

German History Museum, which displayed many interesting artefacts dating back as far as 500 AD, when 'Germany' itself did not formally exist. At the heart of Europe, Berlin had experienced life under the Holy Roman Empire, as an empire in its own right, as a divided city, and finally as a unified metropolis.

Naturally, the trip yielded various other benefits beside historical learning. We were also able to navigate the complex U-Bahn and S-Bahn routes around Berlin, mainly with the guidance of Ms Widdern and 'Verkehrsminister' James Chung. Our group enjoyed not only traditional German cuisine like pretzel and bratwurst, but also Vietnamese food and Turkish döner, reflecting some of the culture of the largest migrant communities in Berlin. As an aid to our cultural learning we visited the Maxim Gorki Theater to see a play entitled "Get Deutsch or die tryin'", which, although confusing at times, conveyed messages about integration and the problems that many immigrants face, particularly relevant in relation to mass immigration from Syria in recent years. A trip to the backstage of Berliner Ensemble, Bertolt

Brecht's theatre, was also a treat, the spinning section of the stage particularly fascinating since it contained wheels from old WW2 tanks.

The various Christmas markets around Berlin added to the excitement of the trip, and our visit to the Gendarmenmarkt on the last night was especially rewarding; there was a live concert and plenty of gift shops. In our free time on the penultimate day of the trip we were given free rein to wander the city in small groups of three or four, in which we could explore independently. It was certainly a lot of fun to visit previously unseen places, and I found it stunning that, even after four days in the city, there were still areas I had yet to discover.

I would recommend the trip to anyone interested in German culture, art, history, drama, and/or language; it was overall a stunning and well-timed trip that was worthwhile, relatively short and action-packed. Make sure to wear walking boots!

Oliver Williams, 7JEF



Physics Trip to Geneva

At the start of the Christmas break, a group of 40 travelled to Geneva in Switzerland to visit the varied scientific facilities in the region. During the time there the students learnt about the historical significance of Switzerland in the development of science and got to see the cutting edge technology that is pushing forward the boundaries of modern physics.

Upon arriving in Geneva the group travelled to the History of Science Museum. Here many important artefacts are kept showing the history and development of scientific instruments, many of which are from the original observatory founded by Jacques-André Mallet in 1772. The telescopes found here played an important role in the development of Genevan society. They allowed the accurate study of the night sky, which attracted many scientists who did not want to make the long trip to Paris or Greenwich. Even more important than this, however, was the implication that telescopes had for time keeping. The big problem faced by sailors in the 18th century was that there was no easy way of knowing your location at sea. The solution to this problem was to create books of data and coordinates that could be taken on the ship and were used by referencing the location of significant stars in the sky. In addition, the focus on accurate time keeping allowed watch makers to calibrate all their watches to an unmatched standard. It was fascinating to see how one building was crucial to making Geneva what it is today. Following this, the students divided into small groups to complete a walking tour treasure hunt of the city, finishing back at the hotel. This involved visiting the old town with buildings dating back to the 12th century and the ruins of Roman temples dating back to the 1st. The maze of small streets and picturesque squares overlooked the lake of Geneva with its prominent Jet d'Eau, a massive water jet stretching 140m high and throwing 7000 litres of water into the air at any given time.

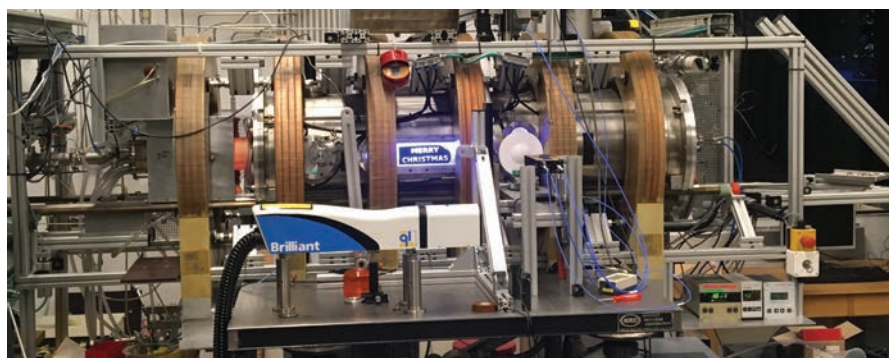
The following day we again took the

tram service but this time to visit the Conseil Européen pour la Recherche Nucléaire or CERN where the LHC is located. The Large Hadron Collider is the world's largest and most powerful particle accelerator, making headline news with the discovery of the Higgs boson in July 2012. The 22 member countries of CERN spent around 1 billion euros in building the equipment and conducting the experiments. Protons are accelerated by supercooled Niobium-Tin magnets to 99.9999991% of the speed of light around a 27km tunnel, making this journey 10,000 times a second. The protons are sent in packets so that an alternating magnetic field will boost their speed, one packet sent clockwise and the other counter clockwise. They collide at set points where the detectors are placed. Through Einstein's famous $E=mc^2$ equation, energy and matter are related so the smashing of two packets of protons creates a lot of energy and subsequently lots of different particles to be released. Now the job of the massive detectors and even bigger supercomputers is to try and figure out what happened. For every 1 billion billion protons that collide only 1000 Higgs particles are produced so the chance of observing one is very low. Luckily there are 600 million collisions per second to increase the chances, but the downside

of having so many collisions is that there is a huge amount of data that need to be processed at the data centre, so much so that it has to export its data to other supercomputers. The astronomically large numbers associated with the LHC were awe-inspiring - it's truly a marvel of modern technology. The highlight of the visit was getting to see the antimatter factory, the only facility in the world producing antimatter at this scale.

Other interesting visits included one to the Geneva plasma physics centre where scientists study the stability of plasma for use in fusion systems helping to research how to effectively achieve nuclear fusion in power plants such as ITER and DEMO. We also saw the new Geneva observatory responsible for finding many new exoplanets, which houses modern telescopes far more advanced than the telescopes found in the museum, and the Seujet hydroelectric dam which helps produce 56% of Swiss electricity with the other two hydroelectric dams in the country. As well as exploring the sites from Geneva the group travelled to the city of Lausanne to visit the EPFL university and the exhibitions on machines and big data there.

Ben Simmons



Lent 2019



Loserville

As in every year, 2019 saw the Drama Department produce a senior production starring the St Helen's girls and Abingdon boys. As it was Abingdon's turn to produce a musical, hopes were high of something spectacular. These hopes were even higher seeing as it would be produced and directed by Mr Phillips, since he had directed *Les Miserables* four years earlier which to this day is spoken of extremely highly. So to put it in short, I was so excited going in to Loserville.

The play itself is the story of a young nerd named Michael Dork (Jacob Henney) who invents communication between consoles (basically e-mail) in the early 70s while falling in love with Holly Mansen (Alix Addinall), all spliced with songs from the album *Welcome to Loserville* by Son of Dork. Essentially it has a 70s aesthetic with early 2000s pop rock and, if anyone

knows what my music taste is, they would tell you now that I was loving it. I signed up as soon as I could and couldn't wait for the auditions to be done. I got the part of Marvin, one of Michael's friends, and the rest of the cast were brilliant in their given roles. The rehearsal stage began and we

were immediately thrown into the music and the script. The full cast songs were lively and fun even if we were almost always attacked with rounds of "shush" from Dr Preece. After the songs we got on to the choreography, a personal favourite for many reasons. Choreography was done by Mrs Phillips





and Charlotte King, the last of whom choreographed *Fiddler on the Roof* last year at St Helen's. They had so much fun with the dances and you could tell. Each full cast piece was as wild and extravagant as you'd expect a musical to be and they definitely hit the mark on the 70s cheesiness. Their routines were excellent and made the performance a thrill to be a part of. The pure acting scenes were amazingly directed as expected from Mr Phillips so we seemed to be set up for a great show.

After the Christmas holidays we saw the beginnings of our stage. It was a circuit board green colour with a great sign at the top of the stage saying "Loserville" and it felt perfect. Eventually we saw the stage acquire the circuit board wires and luminous paint across the floor for a proper 70s tech aesthetic. The stage was set and the performances were due.

Our costumes had been rigorously prepared by Miss Fever and Mr Cook and the tech crew had prepared the lights. Our mics were on thanks to Mr Lloyd and opening night was upon us. It was a thrill. We had one mic mishap but we gave it our best shot. Second night went similarly. Final night was when mics got a bit... broken.



My microphone in my pocket had a connection problem and so it sounded absolutely terrible. This fault was quickly overcome by our amazing tech crew. Before the second half started we had everything dealt with and the show was back on. Final night ended and we got to do an encore of one of our favourite songs, *Ticket Outta Loserville*. It was a great performance and I loved all of it. I can't wait to see what musicals come out of Abingdon in the coming years and I look forward to seeing who follow our footsteps in the next couple of years.

Kit Mannix, 6KL





Basketball

2018-2019 was a fantastic season for the Basketball Club. We won all matches apart from one, which was a phenomenal performance. This was the best set of stats for the club for many years.

We secured some great wins against strong teams like Stowe, MCS, and Radley amongst others. One outstanding fixture was MCS away when we were 11 points down in the last quarter. The team dug deep to score a winning 3 pointer in the dying seconds of the match - a truly memorable performance!

The team has been captained by Win and Adewale (who has also trained in the USA) who have both done a great job in guiding and nurturing the squad both on and off the court. There have been some great rallying team talks which have turned around big games and helped us to win some key matches. What has really impressed me is that they never gave up in matches - they kept their heads until the very end and were great sportsmen throughout.

It has been a real pleasure to get to know these boys over the last five years and to see them develop into



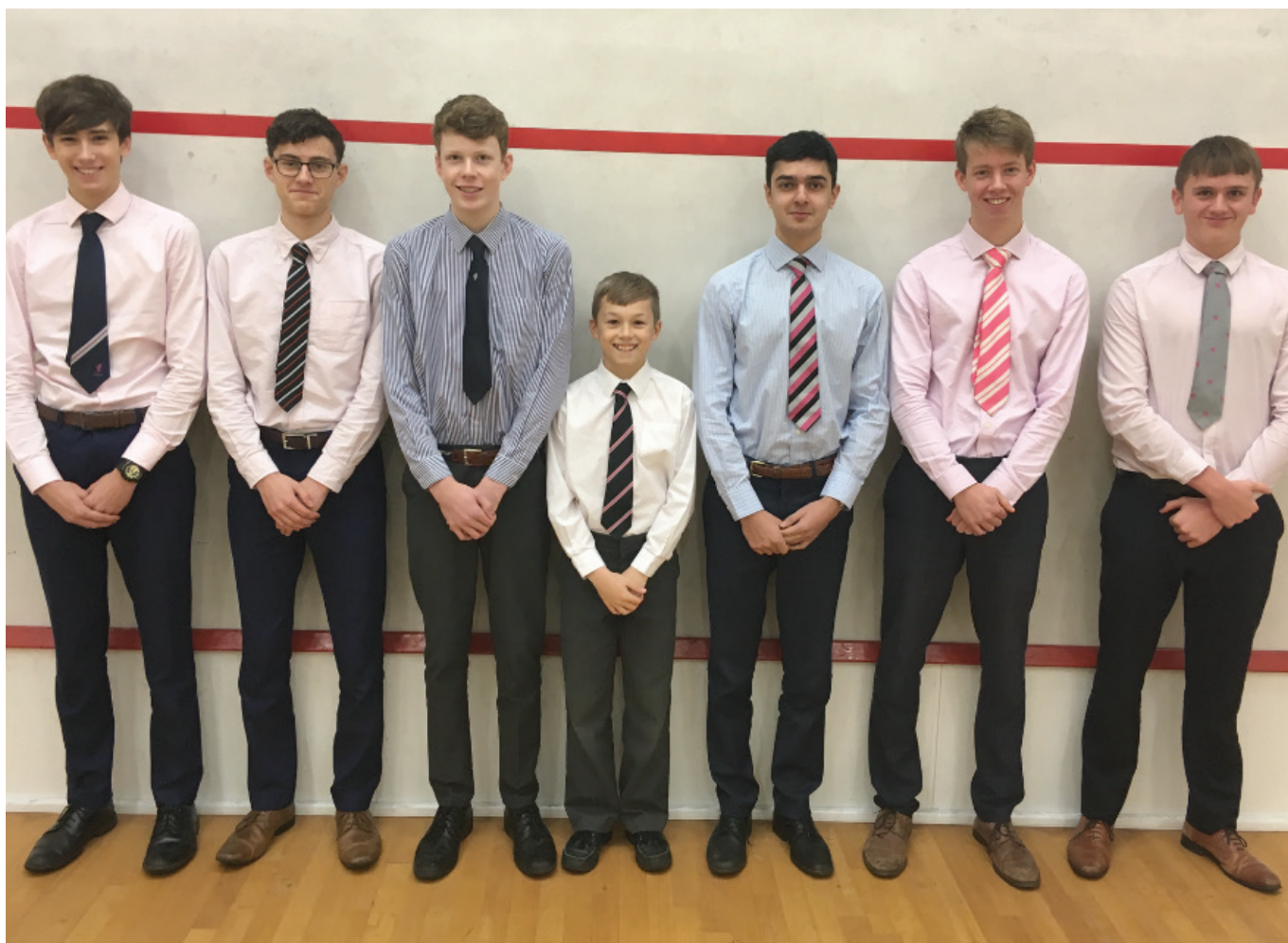
such fine athletes. The squad this season consisted of: Vincent Chen, Adewale Adebute, Win Kongpin, Archie Delafield, Kai Miles, Brian Lim, Chuka Okonjo, Max Upton, Tony Du, Oliver Deans, Ivan Chan, Jason Chan and Min Laohavisit. Thank you all; we will miss our leavers and we wish you well. We look forward to developing our squad to fill the big shoes left by our leavers.

I would also like to thank Dr Frampton and Miss Fraile for their coaching support in the club.

Well done!

Paul Gooding





Squash

Abingdon squash had a quite outstanding year. Our senior squad was the strongest ever, including Nikhil Vyas, Will Taylor, James Munday, Toby Rowles, Alex d'Arcy, Felix Loeffen, Sam Christie and Max Hall. Our juniors were Max Struthers, Jai Biswas-Gladwin, Max Sheppard, Joshua Massey-Thompson and Joseph Betts.

Apart from playing our usual local fixtures, we focused on the National Schools Competition. In the first round we had a convincing win against Bristol Grammar School, but were unlucky in encountering two of the top teams in the country, Wycliffe and John Hampden. We then went into the Plate Competition, and qualified at the top of our group, beating Bryanston, Merchant Taylors and John Hampden B by convincing margins. In March we travelled to the National Finals in Nottingham. The team for the tournament consisted of Nikhil



Vyas, Will Taylor, James Munday, Toby Rowles, Felix Loeffen and Alex d'Arcy. Every boy played outstandingly well against strong opposition. We beat Bryanston again to take us into the semi-final, where we then defeated King's Canterbury to reach the final. There was great play throughout the order, but we were unlucky in the end

to lose by a narrow margin to Exeter. We received silver medals as runners up, and we will be even stronger for next year with almost all our players still with us. It was a great performance and a real achievement for Abingdon squash.

David Franklin

Chess

Right at the start of Michaelmas Term, when the furniture in the new and newly refurbished chess room in Big School had barely been arranged, we enjoyed a visit from Rafi'i Al-Akiti (OA 2016) and Ray Ren (OA 2017), both former first team players, now at university in Nottingham and Bath respectively. It was pleasing, for the coaches at least, that last year's newcomers Ross Tselos and Oliver Yau had the measure of them in skittles games.

Abingdon's National Schools' Championship campaign got underway, as in previous years, with eight boys competing in the English Chess Federation's rapidplay qualifying tournament, held again at Eton, on Sunday 23 September. Six played in each of the five rounds, and the time control was 20 minutes plus a 5 second increment. At the end of the fourth round, Abingdon were well placed to qualify, having defeated King Edward's B (5-1), lost to Eton (2-4), defeated St Thomas More High School (6-0) and achieved an excellent draw with a very strong Wilson's School A (3-3). But a tough draw in the final round against King Edward VI Grammar School A, resulting in another loss (1-5), left Abingdon short by half a point (2.5/5). Fortunately, as some players had already guessed, Abingdon had qualified anyway for the regional stage of the Championship by virtue



of the Club having six members with ECF grades averaging 125 or more. The individual results at Eton were 1. Ross Tselos (4/5), 2. Oliver Yau (4/5), 3. Thitipat Ditrungroj (3/5), 4. Seb Watkins (1/3), 5. Eric Huang (2/3), 6. Ethan Chui (1/3), 7. Frederick Beneat (1/3) and 8. Harutyun Badalyan (1/3). Ross, Oliver and Thitipat on Boards 1 to 3 were mightily impressive, scoring between them 11/15.

Over four months passed before the first match in the regional stage. On Tuesday 29 January, Abingdon played Eton away from home. Each player had 60 minutes on his clock plus a 10 second increment. What on paper should have been a severe test, proved to be an easy win 5.5-0.5, largely because Eton's top two players were

absent sitting the Physics Olympiad.

1. Luke Eadie (134) - Ross Tselos (162)
2. Roland Bourne (137) - Oliver Yau (154)
3. Oliver Shaw (101) - Thitipat Ditrungroj (113)
4. Harvey Lin (120) - Seb Watkins (111)
5. Patrick Huh (119r) - James Beckinsale (107)
6. Barnaby Wreford (91r) - Eric Huang (106)

James' aggressive attacking play paid off handsomely, and he won quickly against a bamboozled opponent. Seb also outwitted a higher graded Eton player. But Eric got into trouble after the opening, losing a couple of pawns, and only turned the game around with a rook-winning skewer. Somehow the outcome on the top two boards never seemed in doubt. But Thitipat made sure of the result with an intelligent draw offer whose acceptance cost Eton the match straightaway.

We had hoped to play Desborough College in the regional semi-final, but MCS, back in the fray after a long absence, were gifted this easy route to the final while Abingdon had once again to face National Champions Reading. Reading had defeated Aylesbury Grammar School 5.5-0.5 in their first round match.

Given that some of Reading's best players were inactive and that their



top player of previous years, FIDE master Matthew Wadsworth, was now at Cambridge, there seemed a small chance of an upset, especially as Ross and Oliver were on such good form. But what we did not know until Reading's team finally walked through the door, on Friday 8 March, was that they had recruited yet another very strong player. This was FIDE master Richard Mladek, one of the top ten players in the Czech Republic.

1. Ross Tselos (162) - Richard Mladek (209)
2. Oliver Yau (154) - Anthony Zhang (215)
3. Thitipat Ditrungroj (113) - Peter Isaksen (183)
4. Seb Watkins (111) - Shaan Mohan (137 expired)
5. James Beckinsale (107) - Harvey Zhang (158 expired)
6. Jonathan Lee (94) - Branson Rizzo (94r)

Abingdon's players made their Reading counterparts work hard for the victory. Oliver stood better at one point and Jonathan did manage a nicely controlled win, but the match result was never really in doubt. Reading went on to dispatch MCS in the regional final. It is an indication of the Reading boys' recent strength that Matthew Wadsworth, their first board last year, played on Cambridge's first board in this year's Varsity Chess Match and held the strongest female player in the world, Hou Yifan, currently at St Hilda's, to a draw!

The Oxford and District Chess League, whose matches are centrally scheduled from October through to May, was again the main source of competition and development for our best players. After 14 matches, we had finished top of Division 4, having won 12 and lost only 2. Sixteen players were fielded in total. Five turned out for more than half the matches. They were Seb Watkins (7.5/9), mostly on Boards 2 and 3, Jonathan Lee (7.5/8), mostly on Boards 5 and 6, Eric Huang (5/8), mostly on Board 4, Oliver Yau (5.5/7), on Board 1, and Frederick Beneat (5.5/7), mostly on Board 6. The other contributors were



Mr English (3.5/5), on Boards 3 to 5, James Beckinsale (2.5/5), on Boards 2 and 3, Thitipat Ditrungroj (1/5), on Boards 1 and 2, Ethan Chui (3/4), Stephen Lin (2/2), Richard Oh (1/1), Henry Riehl (1/1), Mr Barber (0/1), Sam Ferguson (0/1), Charlie Leyland (0/1), and Zander Wallwork (0/1). Having defeated Oxford University 3 away at Hertford College in November, it was rather drole fielding a Lower School side against them for the return match in April. (We had already secured promotion.) Stephen Lin even won his game! Jonathan Lee won the Sam Phipps Trophy for the player in Division 4 with the best game points percentage.

There was no simultaneous display this year as Mr Wells was away for a long period on international duty with England's juniors and we decided that he was better employed getting through the backlog of ODCL game analysis. Next year!

The House Chess did take place, however, as normal, on the last Wednesday of term, as part of the inter-house competitions. The Crescent team of Oliver Yau, Ethan Chui and Jason Ng seemed favourites to win, and Oliver's victory over Ross in the first round augured well. But Austin ultimately took the prize, all three of their players accruing vital game points. The Austin team was Eric Huang (1.5/4), 2. Jonathan Lee

(3/4) and 3. Peter Suh (4/4). These are the full results. (Teams are listed first by total match points then by game point difference.) 1. Austin (3, +5), 2. James's (3, +4), 3. Crescent (3, +2), 4. School (2, +2), 5. Franklin's (2, +1), 6. O'Doherty's (1.5, -1), 7. Pygott's (1.5, -2), 8. Morgan's (1.5, -5) and 9. Border's (0.5, -6).

The individual knockout tournaments also took place in the Michaelmas Term, though they were not finally concluded until late in March. Colours were decided randomly and each player had 30 minutes on his clock. In the final of the sixth form tournament, a repeat of last year's final, Thitipat Ditrungroj defeated Richard Oh to win the Harding Cup. In the Middle School final, a particularly tense and exciting encounter, Ross Tselos defeated Oliver Yau to win the Pearce Cup. And in the Lower School final, Zander Wallwork defeated Sam Ferguson to win the Nightall-Jakubovics Cup. Both Zander and Sam did well even to reach this final, knocking out favourites Frederick Beneat and Harutyun Badalyan respectively along the way. All three winners received book prizes.

The main event of the Lent Term was the school stage of the UK Chess Challenge, comprising seven weekly rounds of rapidplay. From 30 Abingdon entrants, there were 12 who made it through to the county "Megafinal." Ross Tselos was again School



Champion, finishing on 18 out of 21 points. Joint second were Seb Watkins and Zander Wallwork on 17 points. Fourth on 16 points was Frederick Beneat, and joint fifth on 15 points were Jonathan Lee, Ethan Chui, Charlie Leyland and Henry Riehl. Qualifying as best in their age categories were third year William Riddell and first year Stephen Lin, both on 13 points. Oliver Yau and Eric Huang were also selected as “wild cards.”

On Sunday 5 May, ten of these boys travelled to Desborough College, Maidenhead, to play in the West Berkshire “Megafinal”, a county stage of the UK Chess Challenge. (Seb had an exam the next day and the other boy absent failed to find the minibus!) After six rounds of rapidplay, with

20 minutes on each clock plus a ten second increment, Abingdon had won three trophies as well as five medals for second and third place. Players on 3.5 points or more qualified for the Southern Gigafinal in July. Ross Tselos (5.5/6) won the U15 trophy and headed the combined U14 to U18 section. Eric Huang (3.5/6) was second at U15. Ethan Chui (4/6), who drew his game with Ross, won the U16 trophy and Jonathan Lee (3.5/6) got the second-place medal. Henry Riehl (2.5/6) was awarded the U17 trophy and William Riddell (1/6) was second at U14. In the combined U12 to U13 section, Frederick Beneat (3.5/6) was third at U13. Also playing at U13 were Charlie Leyland (2.5/6) and Zander Wallwork (1/6). Just missing out on qualification

at U12 was Stephen Lin (3/6), who got a medal for third place.

The recipient of this year’s King Trophy is Thitipat Ditrungroj. Thitipat has been a faithful supporter of Chess Club and a diligent student of the game, making best use of the coaching provided by Grandmaster Peter Wells on Wednesday afternoons. While modest about his own abilities, he has been a key player in many important matches over the years. This season he focused increasingly on his academic work as time went by, but his early season contribution at Eton and in the ODCL has been vital to Abingdon’s success. We wish him well in his medical studies at Srinakharinwirot University, Bangkok, which has a partnership programme with the University of Nottingham.

Finally, after twelve stimulating and enjoyable years as Master in charge of Chess, I am pleased to record that I am handing over the reins to the excellent Mr Barber, who has visited the Club already a number of times this season and even played a game for us in the ODCL. I am sure that with the skilled assistance of Mr Poon and Dr Burnand, and the superb coaching input of Mr Wells, the Club will continue to prosper and remain a force to be reckoned with in school chess. Many thanks to all the staff, parents and especially boys who have contributed to the success of Chess Club over the years.

Andrew English





History Battlefields Trip

The Battlefields trip lasted from Monday 15 April to Wednesday 17 April; we visited monuments, graveyards, preserved trenches, museums, from Ypres in Belgium to the Somme in France and many places in between.

We began our trip with a visit to the Lijssenthoek cemetery. This cemetery holds 10,784 graves, three of which were women (two foreign labourers and a nurse). The site had a peaceful yet sobering feel as these were the graves of men who died trying to recover from their injuries or even diseases out in the

trenches. Afterwards we headed over to Hill 62, a preserved trench system surrounded by shell holes. The first thought that comes to mind in that place is: "How on earth did millions of soldiers put up with such horrifying conditions for over four years?" Then it was on to the second cemetery, this one with 12,000 graves and the names of 35,000 soldiers whose bodies couldn't be found, which coupled with the names on the Menin Gate, make 90,000 lost bodies. That evening, at the Menin Gate, we also saw a ceremony to honour the fallen.

On Tuesday we started with the Somme which somehow only showed one piece of information proving that it was the Somme: a giant bomb crater at Hawthorn Ridge near an area known

as the Sunken Lane. On the way to the Newfoundland memorial, we found a shell that hadn't exploded. At the Newfoundland memorial was a statue of a female deer (Newfoundland's most common breed of deer) calling its young. We then went to the Langemarck German Military Cemetery, which felt more grim compared to the others. We finished the day at the Thiepval memorial to the missing, which had 72,000 names and 600 graves, and the Ulster Tower; both of which had a peaceful sense about them.

For the last day on the battlefields trip, we first visited the Neuve-Chapelle Indian Memorial which seemed somewhat less religious than all of the other memorials or cemeteries. Following that there was a trip to a Canadian memorial where the statues faced in the direction of the allied trenches, one of which was Lady Canada calling her people home from war. We then had the opportunity to go inside the tunnels dug out near the town of Arras before going through some preserved trenches at Vimy Ridge, which included mine craters.

All of the memorials, regardless of their size, felt like they were acting as a warning of what happened when the world turned on itself and many were caught in the cross-fire. Other sites helped to expand our knowledge of these horrific events. It was a good trip and thanks go to Mr McGill, Mr Knowland, Mr Chase, Mr Jackson and Mr O'Doherty for accompanying us.

Peter Harris, 3SJB





Cross Country

When reflecting on the 2018/19 cross country season there are numerous things to celebrate. Year on year I wonder if the next crop of Abingdon runners will live up to the high standards that have gone before them, and every year the boys step up to the mark and exceed expectations. This year the cross country squad has tasted success on a tough local race circuit and had 10 pupils receive the honour of pulling on the Oxfordshire vest at the English Schools National Cross Country Championships.

David Bunn has captained the squad superbly well whilst balancing his school work, racing for Great Britain, and signing for a Finnish orienteering team. His performance at the King Henry Relays was one of the most committed and determined runs I have witnessed from a school boy, clawing back a total of seven places over the 2.3 mile course, to place the team in eighth position, at what is widely regarded as the unofficial national relay competition with schools travelling from up to 400 miles apart to compete.

This season has been coined the year of the 'young guns', with a large amount of running talent in the lower

age groups. The Abingdon boys in both the third and fourth year have turned heads, appearing in a number of senior races, and placing high up the rankings. They experienced an unbeaten run going into the English Schools Cup Final in Woodbridge and ran superbly well to finish seventh in the country. Many of the squad will be returning to the same competition next season, which is an exciting prospect.

As the club continues to grow we have sought greater ways for boys to compete and represent the school. As well as the Abingdon Cross Country Cup we have also added the Abingdon Relays, held at Cox's Field, which offered the boys a different racing experience to that of the traditional mob races. We hope to expand the competition and invite more schools in the coming years.

I must once again thank the staff, boys and parents for their hard work and dedication to training, racing and supporting the boys throughout the year. The weather is not always kind and the terrain and racing can be brutal, but the Abingdon boys always dig deep and do so with a smile on their face, which makes me proud to coach them.

Elliot Birkbeck





Bridge Club

Having enjoyed another engaging year of Bridge, James Healey and his fellow team members celebrate how Bridge is “a fun way to challenge yourself and have a good time!”, as he and partner Ediz Hunter managed to gain a total of 3000 points, securing an easy victory. Bridge Club this year has come with many successes, and challenges, for its 40 members. In these past three terms, we have introduced many new members to the club, many of whom have now comfortably grasped the concept of our card game. This term we said goodbye to our Upper Sixth members: Jack Lester, Piers Mucklejohn, Drew Farwell, Pierre-Louis Peuch, Tom Pettit, Oliver Williams and James Chung. They have been the backbone of the club since they were in the third year and have been instrumental in introducing many people to the game.

The club has a particularly friendly atmosphere, allowing us to invite our friends along and enjoy it even more. Our confidence in our ability to play Bridge has increased a great deal this year, enabling us to enjoy it outside of session time and also during additional sessions on Saturdays.

James Healey, 4HMAB, Ediz Hunter, 4HJW, and Leo Sinclair, 4CB



Quotes from club members:

‘A great way to spend time with your friends’

Leo Sinclair, 4CB

‘It’s an enjoyable way to relax on a Wednesday afternoon’

James Healey, 4HMAB

‘Bridge is fun and tests the mind’

Harry Vinall, 2SCVM

‘It’s a good way to socialise with other Bridge players’
Henry Drake, 2PCWM

‘It’s a satisfying way to challenge yourself and have a good time’

Ediz Hunter, 4HJW



Hockey

Abingdon School Hockey Club has once again had a fantastic season, with over 160 pupils participating and 16 teams being fielded on a weekly basis in the Independent Schools' Hockey League. The fixture card continues to be very competitive with fixtures against Bradfield, Marlborough and MCS, and again Abingdon continues to punch above its weight and compete regularly with these larger establishments.

The season started in December when a mixture of fourth, fifth and sixth formers ventured to San Sebastian for their pre-season tour. This was without doubt one of the biggest highlights of the year. Against fierce opposition that included a number of Spanish internationals the boys coped exceptionally well, matching them both in skill and determination. With other activities including learning to play pelota, surfing and having the most incredible pinchos, we were very lucky to be hosted by the fantastic Stuart Locke from MSG tours. On this trip it was brilliant to see the boys gel as a unit, not just within their respective

teams but also as a club. The energy that went into every training session, tactical session and game was amazing and the boys were real role models for Abingdon School out there.

There have been so many highlights throughout the season but there is no better place to start than the 1st XI. This year they went un-beaten in all their games in the Independent Schools' Hockey League, scoring 20 goals and only conceding 7. They are the most successful team that the Hockey Club has ever had and I cannot thank all those who were part of the squad enough for being such superb ambassadors for the sport within the school. The most memorable match was the last match of the season against Bradfield. With the league already won, the boys needed the game to finish with an un-beaten season. With tension at its highest level, the boys proceeded to grind out a result after going 2-0 down in the first 10 minutes. The team came together as a unit and with a moment of magic from Freddie Smith, they were back on level terms at 3-3. With 5 minutes left, Abingdon managed to score a fourth leading to a 4-3 victory in the most wonderful match of hockey. Due

to the monumental effort of the squad I have decided to list the names of all those that were involved in the team: George Simmons, Daniel Cooney, Toby Pratt, Tom Mills, Rory Mitchell, Nathan Hudson, Ray Prince, William Franklin, Freddie Smith, Thomas Shannon, Jamie Lawson, Edward Bury, Kipp Mainstone, Ollie Graham, Jayden Zamler, and George Siriwardene.

The U16s continued to impress, with a strong year group and copious amounts of talented players. The U16 A and B team recorded some great winning blocks against Cheltenham and St Edward's. With the boys entering the sixth form we look forward to them driving the club's success even further next year.

The U15 As and Bs have also had the most incredible season. After a tough season for the U15 As last season, the boys regrouped, worked hard and finished third in the ISHL league behind some very strong teams. The way that this group have come together is testament to their character. The U15 Bs recorded some great results including a great win against Wellington in the second game of the season.

The U14 As and Bs had some



fantastic results with some great wins over Marlborough, St Edward's and Bloxham. The boys in this year group have the potential to play some magical, free flowing hockey, and we cannot wait to see how they progress into next year.

The U12s performed magnificently at the U12 regional tournament. Playing some difficult matches during their group they ended up in the plate competition. Faced with some top quality schools, Abingdon showed grit and some fantastic playing ability to

overcome all of the teams in their way. They won the plate winning 2-0 against Reigate. A special mention to all of the boys involved in the squad: Frederick Arnold, Harry Brinson, Roddy McVie, Conor Rogan, Sam Siriwardene, Luke Skates, Jack Veal, Oliver Veal, James Wakefield, and Jacob Wilkins.

There was also a Lower School tour to Reading Hockey Club, which allowed the boys to experience some top quality coaching and to watch and ball boy at a premier league game. Abingdon were split into an

U13 A and U12 A team, and both showed fantastic fitness, work rate and intensity in a round robin tournament against RHC colts sides. Both teams went on to win all their games. After the matches the boys were treated to waffles and were lucky enough to watch their coaches and Old Abingdonian Max Carter-Keall play for RHC 1st XI in a great match v Surbiton.

There are so many more highlights for the club. Freddie Smith was selected for the England U16s training squad; the Hockey Griffins parent body continued their support of the club with donations for new ties and goal keeping smocks. We have created a new partnership with Reading Hockey Club that allows the pupils to be coached by some of the leading players and coaches in the country, and we are also excited to announce that we have employed a full time hockey professional Mr Hobley. Everything culminated in the end of season dinner where the Hockey Griffins put on an amazing night that included a speech from Andrew Hall, our former Director of Sport.

Overall it has been the most exciting and fulfilling season. A huge thank you goes to all involved - bring on next year!

Olly Deasy





German Exchange to Bielefeld

“Seriously, I sat down for breakfast to enjoy my cornflakes and they gave me a teaspoon. They literally didn’t have

any other spoons, what’s up with that?” I would wholeheartedly recommend the joint German exchange with St Helen’s to anyone doing German for GCSE. It offers a brilliant chance to improve your German through thorough practice and gives you an opportunity to actually hear how a native speaks German. I feel that my German improved significantly as I had to adapt language that I already

knew in actual situations. In addition to this you are given the amazing chance to see how Germany works and spot the unique differences between Germany and the U.K. Even though I detested the German tram system, it was so interesting how alien a country could be, despite being from the same continent. This chance to see a nation that we only hear about on the news





and in the history books shouldn't be underestimated. The trip really helps humanise Germany as a whole and makes you realise that maybe we're not so different after all (even if they do eat cornflakes with tea spoons). It's also shed loads of fun, and you get free pizza. Across the week-and-a-bit that we spent in Germany we took part in a variety of activities, whether with the school group or with our exchange. Some of the highlights include: an English visit to the Dortmund football museum, complete with a friendly football match expertly filmed and commentated by Charles Maddison; an English visit to the beautiful medieval town of Hamelin (famously the home of the Pied Piper - but not as we know him) during which many of us enjoyed typical German pastries in the sunlight; a joint theatre project in which groups of both German and English students recreated famous talent shows such as the *X Factor* or *Germany's Next Top Model*. It was all good fun as we struggled together to try and integrate a series of famous English and German literature quotes. Ultimately, however one group was crowned victor with their performance of a warped version of *Germany's Next Top Model*. Other highlights were: a joint trip to an ice skating rink; top tip, Tonya Harding made it look a lot easier than it actually is; a trip to Doktor Oetker, during which we learned the history of Germany's

most recognisable dessert brand. We also tasted their amazing pudding and pizza, which certainly rival England's recognisable Jaffa cakes. Finally we come to the England v Germany football game, in which each nation was split into three teams which battled in tight six minute games. Germany is alleged to have won, however, those who witnessed it must agree that they were somehow cheating. After all there's no way they could have beaten the English at football! The German school system seems to be far more relaxed than the British one. They get to school at 7.40am, and with the hour's time difference, this was especially early for us on the first few days. However, the early start is followed up by an early finish as well, with the Ratsgymnasium Bielefeld ending its school days sometimes as early as 1.30pm. You may think they make up for this lost time by piling on the homework like there's no tomorrow, but no. In all the time I was there, I barely saw any homework set or done. Perhaps they have shorter holidays to catch up on lost time in the school day? Wrong again! While they do have shorter holidays, it is only a marginal difference and doesn't add up all the extra hours. So how are the pupils so clever? I've absolutely no clue but they certainly aren't as stressed about school work as we are here. At least, that's the impression that I got. On the differences between the two schools

specifically, they have more condensed buildings with more classrooms for the amount of space than at Abingdon, although they have a similar number of pupils. As to what they do in all this free time? Well, that one depends on the person. However one thing is for sure: whether they choose to spend it on their phones, playing sport, shopping, eating or any number of other activities, they have far more free time than we do at Abingdon. We also noticed a lot of differences between family life in the UK and Germany. The most obvious one, I found, was that my exchange family was much more tidy and organised (with their possessions) than most British families I know. This was quite a shock to the system to me seeing that my family is the furthest thing from this clean, crisp, everything-has-its-place style I found in Bielefeld. It seemed almost alien, in a welcome way, and I think it speaks to the cultural differences that the exchange is all about. Apart from this, the family were all very nice people. They were just as polite as any British family and were generally very hospitable. I'm sure it's not only this family that was this kind and polite. Politeness aside, a final word of warning to future exchange participants; German cereal is vastly inferior to its British counterparts and they do seem to drink an unhealthy amount of sparkling water and fizzy apple juice!

Charles Maddison and Johnnie Willis-Bund, 4LCAM



First Year Adventure Trip

My best memory of the trip to PGL was the blind trail. We had tons of fun walking blind through strange obstacles. It was especially scary when Mr Moore and the instructor started tickling us with branches! I had a very fun time on the trip and I would highly recommend it to any first years.

Alex Leech, 1PCWM

I thoroughly enjoyed the first year adventure trip as it was very character building. The vertical obstacle course was a challenge for me because I am scared of heights. However, when I was up there I defeated my fear and the view was amazing. The course helped me and my friends bond closer together. It has created many great memories.

Finnbar Scott, 1PCWM

My favourite activity at PGL was definitely the giant swing. I don't know why it was my favourite as after I did it I wanted to be sick, but thinking about it now I think more about the exhilarating

happiness I felt. I also enjoyed watching the others have a go and seeing how some people found it fine, some people had a very nice time, and some people (like me) found it sickening.

Arthur Robertson, 1PCWM

My favourite activity on the first year adventure trip was the buggy building. I loved this activity because it was fun but challenging. It was also very funny as one of my friends fell off the wooden seat and got his legs rolled over by a barrel. Luckily he was okay, but we had to build it all over again using rope and wooden planks.

Oliver Vivian, 1PCWM

My favourite event was the zipwire because you felt so great flying through the air over the trees. It was also funny to watch a few members of the group get stuck and the instructor having to fetch the ladder. It was quite nerve-racking climbing up the stairs and standing on the edge of the top of the tower that you were going to jump off, but after a few minutes it was fine. I had an amazing time doing the zipwire.

Lucas Sammartino, 1PCWM

My favourite moment in the PGL trip was the giant swing. It was a thrilling experience and I am very glad I did it. I also liked the buggy building quite a lot but it was very hard to stop the vehicle falling apart! Overall it was a very good trip and I would highly recommend it to any first years wanting to go on a trip.

William Darbishire, 1PCWM

My favourite activity at PGL was the giant swing - I love things like roller coasters and fairground rides, so this was fun! Another fun activity was aeroball - basketball on trampolines! I had a great time playing with all my friends and doing lots of great activities. I would definitely go again.

Henry Drake, 1PCWM

My favourite activity on the PGL was the giant swing. The giant swing involves you being elevated to an enormous height and then releasing, essentially a swing from the sky. When you're up there you probably won't want to swing but trust me it feels like you're flying!

Harry Wildgoose, 1PCWM

Raft building was my favourite activity. We were technically the best group as



we were the only ones who didn't have a raft that fell apart, but the best bit was when Tom Hyder-Smith made an attempt to start pushing everyone off but slipped and belly flopped into the freezing lake. It was the biggest splash I think I had ever seen!

Matthew Stone, 1PCWM

I really enjoyed the adventure trip and created lifelong memories from taking tabasco shots to going on the zipwire. There were loads of thrilling and exciting activities like vertical climbs and raft

building. All these activities helped me and my friends bond closer and build our character whilst facing or helping others face their fears. Everyone always has a good time even if your mates put toothpaste on you whilst you're sleeping!

Sam Siriwardene, 1PCWM

The best activity at PGL was raft building. It was the best activity because everyone laughed and smiled. We all got very wet and it cooled us down a lot. It also brought out our competitive spirit. It involved lots of teamwork and it was a

good mix of practical and thinking skills.

Hamish Bloom, 1PCWM

My favourite moment of the adventure trip was raft building. We played a game where we had to push each other off the raft we had all built. Somehow I managed to survive and was the last person on my raft. Then I noticed that the other group had capsized their raft and were looking directly at me. I pulled out my paddle and paddled as fast as I could away from them. Amazingly I made it to the side completely dry and finally safe where they couldn't get me - until the instructor gave permission to throw me into the water.

Bertie Dinsey, 1PCWM

My favourite activity on the first year adventure trip was the zip wire which was the highest one I've ever been on. It went from one side of a field to the other. When you are connected you have to go through a metal bar, which is then slid back behind you, so you're standing on a narrow ledge, about 20 metres up while the instructor disconnects you from the tower. 20 seconds later, you're told to jump off. The feeling of elation when I did it was immense. It felt like I was flying.

Daniel Chamberlin, 1PCWM





Second Year Adventure Trip

During the second week of the Easter holidays, 30+ intrepid second years descended on Plas Pencelli (The Big House in Pencelli), not a prison but an outdoor education centre in the Brecon Beacons in rural South Wales. Here we would go on to undertake a wide range of exciting and challenging daytime and evening activities, ranging from hiking up the open plains of southern Britain's highest mountain Pen y Fan (Head of the Valley), to crawling through the enclosed subterranean caverns of Porth Yr Ogof (Gateway to the cave), there was seemingly no end to the adventures available at Plas Pencelli!

After meeting in the bus park, we left the suburban streets and bustling towns of South Oxfordshire, bound for the quaint country lanes and copious fields of sheep of rural Wales. We arrived at our destination at about 5pm and were immediately sorted into one of three different groups: the red group, the blue group or the green group, and were given a warm welcome by the staff at Plas Pencelli who told us the timetable

for each day. There would be two activities; a daytime activity from about 10am-4pm, and an evening activity which would take place from around 7pm-9pm. Our first evening activity was a leisurely evening stroll around the quaint village of Pencelli which allowed everyone to get some much needed fresh air after an afternoon of travelling. Unfortunately, the absence of any shops meant we had no opportunity to replenish our stocks of sweets, much depleted during the journey on the bus, much to our disapproval!

Still, we woke up early on Monday morning, eager to get the week started and were told what we were going to be doing that day. My group, the red group, were told we were to be going canoeing on the river Wye for our daytime activity. Brilliantly I was partnered in my canoe with Mr. Jenkins, who surprisingly turned out to be a veritable power house of watersport expertise and we completed the course in a record time only beaten by Jack Cabell and one of the instructors (just). The real highlight though was when we got to tackle the rapids which we canoed down initially, and were then told to beach our canoes, walk up to the start, and swim down. Everyone was understandably hesitant

at first, but eventually, we all got into the water and conquered the rapids at least once (apart from Mr. Jenkins who clearly saw discretion as the better part of valour here). We arrived back that evening happy and in good-spirits, even more excited for the week ahead now that we had got a taste of the sort of activities that Plas Pencelli has to offer. That evening, we tackled orienteering, which saw, or rather heard, the shouts of 12-13 year old boys as they ran around the 17 acres of land on the Plas Pencelli site, lighting up the mellow Welsh evening silence as we hunted intently for the slightest glimpse of the red and white target squares dotted around the site.

On Tuesday, our daytime activity was to be 'mountain day', a day filled with climbing three of the highest mountains in southern Britain, Crybin, Pen y Fan (which is the highest mountain in the South of the UK), and Corn Du, the final mountain of our expedition. Crybin, started off as a gentle, constant incline, luring the group into a false sense of security which was shattered as we got to the last 50-60 metres of the peak, where we began to notice that the visibility had decreased rapidly. Thick fog shrouded the mountain, interspersed with small pockets of visibility, but alas,



these were few and far between. There was only one path ascending to the top as the mountain was only about six or seven metres wide as we approached the summit, with a sheer drop on either side as we climbed the rocks jutting out of the pathway, pulling each other up and giving encouragement to everyone at every step. This baptism of fire galvanised us as a group and we quickly became proficient if not in mountain climbing, at least in giving

encouragement. This seemed to work for us as we completed all three mountains with relative ease, becoming stronger and closer as a group by the end.

Wednesday brought an opportunity for us to further hone our mountaineering skills climbing in a limestone quarry which was great fun, particularly the abseiling - who knew throwing yourself off a cliff could be so enjoyable? Caving was also another highlight of the week,

with many people describing it as their favourite activity, including me! Whilst inside the caves of Porth Yr Ogof we walked, crouched and crawled around the caves, ducking in and out, and climbing up and down through the ravines between the two levels of the caves.

The rest of the week was characterised by the active nature of the activities particularly the last morning when we went gorge walking, which included walking through a dark, abandoned train tunnel, sliding down waterfalls and scrambling through the slippery rocks. A particular highlight was when we had to jump onto a branch hanging over the plunge pool of a waterfall, which we then did a forward roll over, plunging into the lake below.

Personally, I thoroughly enjoyed the whole trip, and felt I was challenged and tested by every activity, which reinforced my resilience and perseverance skills. The Plas Pencelli staff were very helpful and supportive, cheering us on through even the most demanding or gruelling sections of the activities. We all had a great time, arriving back exhilarated but a little exhausted. Luckily we still had a couple of weeks' holiday to rest our aching limbs before the start of term.

Oliver Clark, 2RHH



Summer 2019



Abingdon School in Partnership

The aim of Abingdon School in Partnership (ASiP) is to build relationships with the local community, and in particular our partner schools, to both benefit and challenge all staff and students.

The School has a long history of working with partner schools on a range of projects, from teaching Classics in senior schools to primary school sports days. The opening of the School's Science Centre and the subsequent Abingdon Science Partnership initiative has broadened our association to around 30 schools.

Fitzharrys School and Abingdon have worked together for four years. Joint activities include action-based research for staff and wide-ranging student collaboration including joint drama performances, swimming coaching, A level geography teaching and more recently sixth formers planning,

resourcing and delivering the teaching of certain curriculum areas within maths and science.

As a forward-thinking, outward-looking school, Abingdon is keen to forge further links with schools, both primary and secondary, within the town and surrounding area.

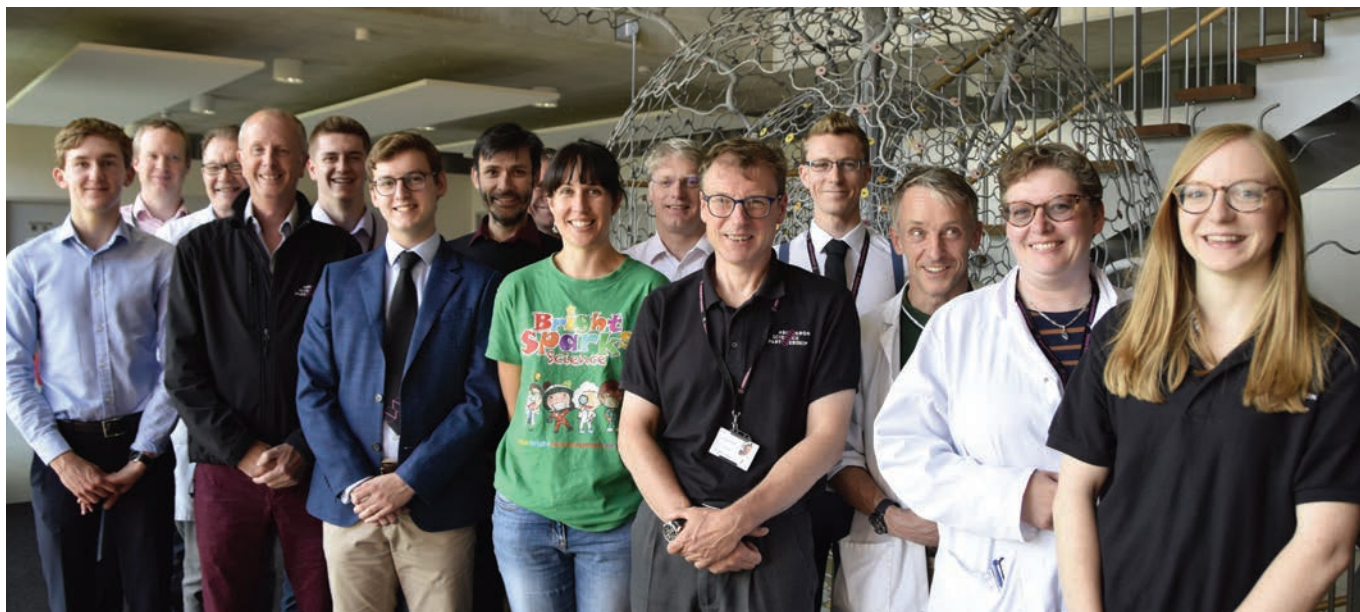
Over the course of this year ASiP events have seen almost 7,000 student experiences for our partner schools, involving over 280 Abingdon students and almost 30 staff. Teaching staff have volunteered over 1,000 hours of their time, while support staff have given more than 1,500 hours of theirs.

The highlights of ASiP's recent activities have included:

- Annually, several hundred pupils from around eight local primary schools obtaining the British Science Association CREST Star and Superstar award
- The co-ordination of groups from five schools to work with particle physicists from University of Oxford, University of Birmingham and CERN to build ATLAScraft, a simulation of the

ATLAS detector in Minecraft

- Receiving a Royal Society Partnership Grant to work in partnership with University of Oxford's Wildlife Conservation Research Unit and seven local schools on a project to observe the olfactory response of the European Badger
- Regular teacher CPD events in association with Oxfordshire Science Learning Partnership, the Ogden Trust, Practical Action and the Institute of Physics as a Lead School for the Stimulating Physics Network
- Sixth form academic mentoring involving the teaching of maths, English and science to KS3 students from across the town
- Model United Nations conference involving eight schools and more than 120 students
- Cross-town swimming partnership
- Sixth form peer support training
- Abingdon Film Academy
- Extensive primary school programme involving more than 500 primary school students in events



such as the humanities day, business challenge, fun with languages, mini-olympics, and DT outreach

The best people to tell you about the impacts of ASiP events are our own students; below are insights from some of the boys who have got involved.

Robin Southwell-Sander

I was lucky enough to be involved with Abingdon Science Partnership for four years as a senior science ambassador. Taking on responsibility for organising the staffing of events with science ambassadors from across the school was a great way to improve my leadership skills; ASP also gave me opportunities to engage with science in the community, and I've learned skills that have had benefits for me both inside and outside the ASP context. Twice a month, I took part in Saturday Science Club, where we open the Yang Science Centre to groups of children aged 5-7 and their parents for fun and engaging introductions to different areas of science. This gave me the chance to improve my skills as a communicator, as I helped demonstrate science and manage large groups of youngsters. I've also had experience of communicating across all age groups of the local community, such as when I had the chance to design and run a "scale of the universe" demonstration for the Family Science Fair, part of the wider Atom Science Festival in which ASP was a leading partner, teaching

parts of what I learned through my astronomy GCSE. Learning astronomy in collaboration with classmates from other local schools was a great way to meet new people and expand my knowledge of the workings of the universe (and I even got a qualification out of it), while teaching that knowledge to others was a very rewarding experience.

Alasdair Czaplewski, 7JEF

I made a wide range of rewarding contributions to the ASP this year. One of my main contributions to the partnership is leading the Primary Science Club, which is now running on a weekly basis due to the number of volunteers. This means we can alternate between planning and teaching. Each week, we run an experiment which our volunteers

choose and design in order to ensure it is safe, fun and educational. Primary school students repeatedly give positive feedback about our experiments, and volunteers have said that they feel the sessions further their understanding of topics which they might not cover in their lessons at school. For our volunteers the experience has also been invaluable as there are so many roles which they can take. Developing leadership and team working skills is a clear benefit, but many volunteers have also said covering topics they are studying for their GCSEs has helped them revise the topic, as they clearly need to be able to understand it in order to teach it! I have also been working on a project supported by a Royal Partnership Grant given to ASP to design and exercise an experiment performing behaviour



analysis of badgers. This project is in partnership with WildCRU, a part of Oxford University, and Tenesha Allen, who is using the project for her PhD, which goes to show the fantastic variety and complexity of projects that are on offer within the partnership. Overall, I feel the partnership has been an outstanding feature of Abingdon's Other Half and I am looking forward to seeing what contributions I will make in the future.

Freddie Nicholson, 5RLR

Over a period of three months, I worked with students from the Lower Sixth of other schools in Abingdon to tutor GCSE students from across all schools. In the beginning I was concerned that we might not work well with the students from the other schools, but we fit together well as a team, and I learned much about leadership and the importance of communication. Through the partnerships programme, I also made friends that I maintain today. I felt that our teaching of students improved my confidence in communicating with the lower years as well as helping me learn more about teaching.

MUN and debating provide excellent opportunities for students, including myself, to build skills. As Secretary General of Abingdon MUN I can say that MUN provides me with the opportunity to learn from and make friends with other students. It also engages younger students with students from other schools, allowing them to meet different types of people who they otherwise would not encounter. Debating has taught me organisational skills; our cross-school debating competition has meant I'm organising and coordinating 12 teams of three from the schools within our town. Finally, MUN has given me the opportunity to develop leadership skills; learning how to manage a hastily-put-together team of students who don't know each other has been a great learning experience.

Lancelot Willson, 6DTP

I came into the Abingdon Science Partnership not sure what to expect. I was put into a team with a few other

people from other local schools in Abingdon, which was a challenge in itself as I had to get to know and work with people I had never met before and deliver a comprehensive set of lessons to a group of local primary school children. From the experience, I massively improved my leadership skills by having to coordinate a team to deliver well-planned lessons and was able to build upon my communication skills because I was required to interact clearly with younger children. This experience has also made me more aware of a potential career in teaching.

Alexander Scott, 6RMT

I first joined ASP in order to complete the volunteering section of my silver DofE. I was part of a small group of students teaching science lessons to primary school children once a fortnight. I was surprised to find that I really enjoyed being part of this partnership scheme, and have continued to be a science ambassador well beyond the completion of my DofE and have taken part in the science mentoring scheme. As part of these experiences I have had to communicate with teaching staff and technicians to prepare lessons and equipment; I have worked with students both from different year groups and different schools to plan an engaging and educational lesson; I have led and organised a group of younger students to prepare and teach lessons; and of course presented many lessons myself. From this scheme,

I have learnt many lessons and developed numerous skills, including communication, management, public speaking and leadership. These have already helped me and will continue to benefit me at university and in my subsequent career.

Lloyd Langley, 6TCG

Having worked with the Lower School at Abingdon, I had some experience working with younger children. This, however, only involved running hands-on activities and so I was excited for the opportunity teaching maths presented me. At first it was a challenge, as both the Lower Sixth students and the students from Year 8 had never met before. As soon as everyone got to know each other, however, I found the teaching really enjoyable, especially seeing the improvement of the students from the beginning to the end of each lesson. This was made even more rewarding by clearly seeing that students found the teaching interesting and useful. As a result, the mentoring has put me into the shoes of the teacher and given me a good insight into a possible career in the future.

Henry Insley, 6DRM

The ASiP opened up a new role to the Lower Sixth pupils, offering them the chance to become a Peer Support Leader within the school. The training kicked off with a two day training course courtesy of Nick Luxmoore, a leading figure in the fields of school





counselling and youth work.

We were working alongside pupils fulfilling the same role from John Mason, Fitzharrys, Larkmead and St. Helens. The key principles of our training were based on the importance of listening skills, such as listening to what is not being said, listening to people talk about others and deducing what it says about them, and even listening with your eyes! There was a lot of active group work, including the dreaded role-playing, where we tried to get to know our colleagues from the other schools whilst incorporating the multitude of social techniques we had been taught. Beyond this, Nick highlighted the importance of how we respond and act, emphasising the use of open questions and empathy as the fundamental methods of response. We rounded off with nine different games/exercises that I'm now able to implement in tutor time. These are a good way for me to engage on a more personal level with the younger pupils and will allow them to get to know each other better.

Overall I learnt some really interesting and advanced social skills. I hope the role will allow me to offer support to the younger boys and enable me to help people and get along with them for the rest of my life.

Archie Delafield, 6MAS

I was involved in teaching biology to

Year 9 students from schools around Abingdon. The most challenging element of this was having to teach a student who didn't really want to be there; this didn't disrupt any of the lessons, however, and I think the student in question did actually have a good time and picked up a few things. I found the actual teaching and interacting with younger students the most enjoyable parts of the process, from which I learnt many valuable skills; most notably, the partnership scheme has helped me develop clear communication and organisation skills. I would definitely recommend the partnership scheme to others both because of how enjoyable it was and because of the skills it teaches you.

James LLoyd, 6RMT

On Thursday 13 June, Thomas Long and I, feeling really quite nervous, were shown into a classroom at Buckland Primary School, containing 28 Year 5 and Year 6 boys and girls. We had been attending Abingdon School's Other Half Language Leader programme for six months, in which we had been planning and creating resources for a Spanish lesson; our chosen topic - Sport. Luckily, the children were very kind and welcoming and, once the lesson had begun, very calm and well-behaved. Everyone put their hand up instead of shouting out, they all worked hard, and they weren't

afraid of asking for help if they were stuck. We finished with a game of vocabulary noughts and crosses on the board, and the class clearly showed that they had remembered almost all of what they had been taught. This was really satisfying! Once we finished they all said 'Gracias' and most of the class said that they would like to continue learning Spanish in the future.

Overall it was a very rewarding and enjoyable morning and the Language Leader course has given me a better understanding of the work that goes on to prepare and give lessons. I am really hoping to do it again.

Grant Rogan, 4RSS



Rowing

From the still winter mornings to the golden-lit open skies of summer evenings, the location of the school's boathouse is always a source of natural beauty. Getting ready to disturb the stillness of another day's flat water are the throngs of rowers that pass through its doors daily. This hive of activity - whether it is J14s learning to row, or Senior rowers preparing their crews for an upcoming race - stems from the ever-present atmosphere of thriving interest and intrigue, in a sport where the boys must learn to master 'the art of going forwards, backwards'.

As the weeks and months of the season progress, the boys develop into skillful athletes as they hone their craft and develop the cohesion of their crews. A key part of this is the training camp over the Easter break out in Temple-sur-Lot, France - a beautiful location in the southern French countryside - which allows the boys to experience, train and progress on international waters, with a good balance of work to boot. As this year's camp neared its end, it was time for each crew to take to the water in competition with the rest of the Boat Club, with a side-by-side race between the 1st VIII, 2nd VIII, J16s and J15s. It's always a great spectacle to have between six and eight crews barreling down the stretch of water, seeing which

crew can finish first after a staggered start.

As the Summer Term began, the boys set their sights high: on success at a national level. The newest and youngest athletes of the Boat Club absolutely took this to heart, and the J14 squad attacked the National Schools' Regatta with the fearlessness and raw determination of first-time racers. In some tough racing, the A crew finished in the top 12 in the country, while the Bs came away with a much-deserved bronze medal - a fantastic way to begin their rowing careers at their first regatta, and

hopefully the first of many to come. The C and D crews also raced to an impressively high standard, beating a good handful of B and C crews in the process.

For the J15 rowers, this was their first foray into sweep rowing, which strangely is sometimes no easier to master than the two blades of sculling. Developing their proficiency in smaller boats helped them take responsibility for their movements, allowing them to master the direction of one oar more specifically, catching the water like the flick of a fishing rod (of which there are a number that





frequent the the Thames at Abingdon). With such a diverse group, coming from many different sporting backgrounds, it was very encouraging to see how they moved through the season and developed as a squad, culminating in both A and B boats finishing in the top nine of the country at National Schools.

The J16 rowing year always stays with them for years to come, as it's the last opportunity to race as a single year group before moving up to the Seniors, certainly giving the boys extra incentive to finish the season on a high. Setting their goal at the start of the year at getting medals in both the A and B events created a very deep skill level and fierce competition throughout the squad. The intensity with which the boys approached their training saw regular changes to both crews as the season progressed, and provided a welcome break and outlet from GCSE revision. Once the dust had settled, and National Schools had been raced, the J16 As found themselves with bronze medals, and the Bs repeated their 2018 result to come back with silver once again.

A memorable point of the season for the Seniors is always the lead-up to Henley Royal Regatta – that period of training where exams are over, and all that's left to do is get lost in the noise and rhythm of the boat, squeezing



every little bit of speed out of the crew. The 2nd VIII combined with some of the J16 As after National Schools to form a crew to attempt qualification for the Temple Challenge Cup. Although the crew did not qualify, the Lower Sixth and fifth year members found the experience invaluable in putting together the foundation of the coming season's new Senior squad, and are already looking ahead to next season with anticipation.

For the 1st VIII who traditionally prequalify for the Princess Elizabeth Challenge Cup, there was a tough task at hand on day one of the regatta. This didn't deter the throngs of supporters in pink and white blazers turning up to

cheer the crew out of the boat tents for their race, and certainly gave them the loudest send-off of any crew that day

Unfortunately the crew didn't make it past the first day, but they came back to the boat tent knowing they had performed as well as they were able. The moments following highlighted how much passion and effort all the boys put into this sport, and how invested they become throughout the course of the year. We wish the outgoing Upper Sixth all the best for the next chapter of their academic lives, and look forward to welcoming them back to the Boat Club as Griffens.

Rory Copus

Athletics

The Athletics Club has had a fantastic season with a number of boys pulling on the pink and white vest for the first time, smashing personal bests and standing on the top step of numerous podiums.

The Achilles Relays is always an early season highlight. The first meeting was held at Iffley Road in 1963 and has seen performances rank as all-time bests for school boy age groups. Arriving at the meet off of a strong cross country season, the junior (U15) middle distance team obliterated the field in the 4x800m, winning the Guy Butler Trophy in a time of 9.07. This was only 15 seconds off the all-time meet record. The senior middle distance runners backed up this performance, finishing with a bronze medal in the 4x800m in a time of 9.06. The junior sprint squad also showed a lot of promise, running a time of 51.3s in the final of the 4x100m.

At the second relay meet of the season, The Radley Relays, the junior middle distance team once again stole the show with some impressive performances. In the medley relay (200m, 200m, 400m, 800m) both Abingdon teams finished on the podium, with one team only two tenths shy of the all-time record. First place went to Callum Aiken, Henry Channon, Thom Denning and Johnny James, while Stefano Rajasundaram, Harvey Vinton, Joshua Mensah and Will d'Arcy claimed the bronze. Special mention must go to Thom Denning who ran an impressive 400m time of 56s. The 4x100m team also finished in third place, in a time of 48.7s.

As the season progressed, the boys ran, jumped and threw themselves into form. Personal bests were set at Stowe, Marlborough and Harrow, culminating in 11 boys being selected to compete at the County Championships at Horspath athletics track. Congratulations must be extended to the boys listed below, who represented the Vale District. A special mention must go to Johnny James and Henry Channon, who were selected to run in the 1500m at the English



Schools National Final, an event that brings together the best athletes in the country and is held at the Alexander

Stadium in Birmingham.

Elliot Birkbeck



Futures

This year, the Drama Department put on a play called *Futures*, which everyone attending the two weekly Other Half drama sessions was invited to take part in. The show set out to examine what it's like to be eleven or twelve years old, and explored the relationships between children of that age and their parents. The performance was inspired by the work of a youth theatre group in London called Company Three. That group's objective is to create "a space in which young people can talk to adults, and in which adults will really listen."

The creation of the show involved a range of different research processes. Initially, students and parents were asked to complete questionnaires to gather information and build a picture of how young people and their parents communicate and interact.

We then recorded interviews with Mrs Fever and began to create a script using the material we had collected. Rehearsals involved a lot of improvisation, during which, as a

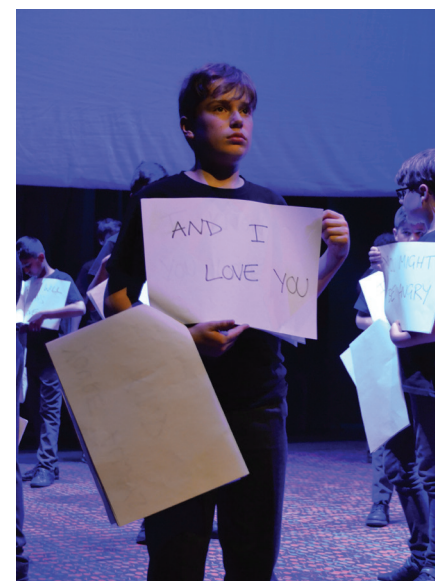
group, we were in charge of shaping the stage directions. Improvising stage layout was much harder than it sounds, as it involved a lot of cooperation from all the actors. We had to work on our communication skills as well as finding a way to agree on what was best for the group performance. This was an exercise in teamwork!

Parents were also asked to send us pictures of themselves with their sons when they were babies. These were displayed on a screen above the actors at the start and the end of the performance. Mine was when I was in a Spiderman costume with my dad! It was fascinating to see the pictures of my friends as babies and how they had changed over the years.

Later, we were asked to write down ten messages for our parents on pieces of card. At the end of the performance, we found our parents in the audience and stood in front of them. We then displayed each card to them in turn. Many of the messages were very personal and honest. The idea was to show our parents how we have been feeling but may not have been able to tell them face to face.

Both of the two performances went very well. It was extremely scary because we all felt the pressure of performing in front of our parents, relatives and friends, and having to be so honest about our feelings. Everyone who took part had a really great time in the rehearsals and the final performance. I hope the parents loved it as much as we did.

Harrison Cruikshank, 1PCWM



Shadowing the Carnegie

The 2018-19 school year saw a record number of students take part in the annual Abingdon Carnegie Shadowing Scheme, now in its nineteenth consecutive year. 14 Lower School boys joined forces with students from seven other schools across Abingdon to debate and ultimately decide the best book for young people published this year.

The Carnegie Medal, awarded annually for the year's most outstanding book for young people, was first awarded in 1936; the winner then was *Pigeon Post* by Arthur Ransome (part of his *Swallows and Amazons* series). Since then, notable winners have included *Northern Lights* by Oxford author Philip Pullman and *A Monster Calls* by Patrick Ness.

While the national winner is decided by a panel of national judges, the Shadowing Scheme enables young people to choose their own favourite. This year, more than 3,000 schools across the UK took part in Shadowing. Abingdon schools were the first to instigate a Carnegie Shadowing partnership, a model which is now common across the UK. Carnegie Shadowing helps participants hone their critical skills, expand their idea of what makes a 'good read', and strengthen their ability to debate and collaborate.

At the Carnegie Tea in March, Abingdon students discovered which eight books were shortlisted for the Carnegie medal and voted for their favourite. Over the next three months, they read, discussed and reviewed the titles, meeting with other schools in May for a quiz that tested their knowledge of what they'd read and submitting book reviews for the programme finale. The three strongest reviews are published below.

The finale came in the form of the Carnegie Forum in June, with more than 100 students coming together at Christ Church Barns in North Abingdon. After a welcome from Abingdon School Headmaster Michael

Windsor, Lower School boys worked in groups with students from other schools to devise and perform three-minute dramas to promote their favourite book from the Carnegie shortlist.

While the devising process and the performances promoted cooperation and collaboration, it also encouraged inter-group competition and individual achievement, with prizes on offer for best performance and best contributor in each group.

Performances were judged by figures from the local literary community, including acclaimed author Nicki Thornton. While the judges weighed up the performances, participants enjoyed socialising and, all-importantly, demolishing substantial quantities of cake.

The Mayor of Abingdon gave out prizes. Sam Siriwardene received an award for best individual contributor to a group, while Harry Vinall was highly commended for his review of *A Skinful of Shadows* by Francis Hardinge.

As ever, all of the Lower School boys were whole-heartedly enthusiastic about their involvement in Carnegie Shadowing, with first years looking forward to taking part next year and second years regretting that moving up to Middle School would make them ineligible.

Graham Gardner

Review of *The House with Chicken Legs* by Sophie Anderson

This book was folk tale and fairy tale all rolled into one. It was amazing. *The House with Chicken Legs* follows the story of 12 year old Marinka, who feels like she does not belong in her

grandmother's world, or in the world of Benji or Nina. At its heart, this is a book of self discovery that leaves Marinka firmly knowing where she belongs.

Baba Yaga lives in a magic house with a life of its own. The house, at first glance, looks relatively normal. But a close inspection reveals what lies beneath it; chicken legs that enable the house to move about in accordance with Baba Yaga's wishes. The house moves to uninhabited places away from the living. The book twists and turns like a dark road, it is unexpected and I was always trying to anticipate what Marinka would do next.

I would say that my favourite character was Jack, the jackdaw, because of how his name is amusing and he likes to hide things in people's ears, just like my cousin. Jack also helped Marinka because he gave her the sense of security she needed; I can tell this because when Jack was away for a few days, Marinka started to worry. However, Jack is not really a character, so I would have to say Marinka because of her inquisitive personality, a bit like mine! I think that all the characters felt as real to me as my favourite type of sweet, because I loved them and I knew they were real, but I felt that they were so real, they were unreal.

My favourite part of the book was when the house suddenly moved to the ocean and Marinka played with the ghost in the water. Marinka realises she is a ghost too, then everything starts a steep downhill descent from there: Baba Yaga disappears, Marinka's friend disappears, the house gains a few cracks and Marinka is forced to stay near by the house forever.





Review of *Bone Talk* by Candy Gourlay

This book made me want to laugh and cry. It took me into a world that is completely different from my world in every possible way (it is set long ago in a Filipino hill village) but the characters are so realistic and so human. You can relate to them very easily - the closeness between Samkad and his dog; the friendship between Samkad and Luki (a girl who wants to be a warrior); the competitiveness and closeness between Samkad and his father; the pull between wanting to be grown up and wanting to be a child.

Even though the world the author describes is very foreign and the way the main characters live is very different from the way we live today, you can still relate to the characters very easily and you are drawn into their world very quickly.

The author is very good at creating a sense of danger. It feels as if you are on the edge of some sort of great disaster or terrible change all of the way through the book. The book describes a tipping point - you feel as if nothing is going to be quite the same ever again.

I liked the way that the author shifts the responsibility for things going wrong all of the time. At first the opposing tribe are the enemy and we think Samkad has let his village down. Then we see that there is a much bigger enemy which will be much more dangerous to their way of life and Samkad helps his father see that.

You are really on the edge of your seat all of the way through the book. I didn't think it could possibly have a happy ending. The description of how the Americans humiliated his father was terrible to read. A lot of what happened was very sad but I was pleased that it wasn't all bad (I was really worried that the dog would die!); it was much more complicated than that.

I would recommend this book to a boy or girl who wanted to broaden their horizons and who likes action and adventure.

Hamish Bloom, 1PCWM

Although I enjoyed this book considerably, there were some minor imperfections. I don't think Sophie Anderson should have called the 'main character' Baba Yaga, because it sounds scary and slightly abnormal. However, as Baba Yaga was not mentioned too much, it was hard to form a connection. All she really did was make borsh and other types of comestibles for the dead. I also felt that the ending was weak. To me, it seemed to have that feeling of, "I woke up and realised it was a dream;" the actual ending was a happily ever after ending that, despite the disappointment, neatly wrapped up the book in a crispy, perfect square of wrapping paper. It was simply not good enough, however, to deserve that red ribbon tied around the top.

Alexander Lees, 2SJC

Review of *A Skinful of Shadows* by Francis Hardinge

The book is about a young girl from a mysterious family, with a background she doesn't know. Her mother is extremely protective, and secretive. Although she doesn't know it, she, and her family, have a special power, but one which can cause her pain and suffering.

My favourite character is the lead character, Makepeace. She shows strength and resilience, courage and resourcefulness. Her development as a voice and character through the book is intriguing and exciting. Her journey, both physically and metaphorically, is dangerous, complex and yet uplifting and enlightening. Her character feels real, even when dealing with unreal situations.

The book is set in the English Civil War, and it is interesting to see the perspective of a young person, who is distant from the war yet gets caught up in its deadly grasp. The story unfolds slowly, bringing you with the main character as she explores both her own being and her family, and the spirits. The story keeps you guessing and has plot twists at every turn.

My favourite part of the book was the ending, when she was once again friends with James, and free from the family she hated. She had made peace with herself and the spirits.

At the beginning I didn't really like it, as I felt it started slowly. However, as I got further into the book, I liked it more and more, and the slow beginning made sense. There was a lot of setting the scene in the beginning! The book was not predictable, and I wanted to read on to find out what on earth was going to happen next.

I feel the book is written really well, and I can see why it has been shortlisted. Of all the books this was my favourite.

The book is very gripping and a page turner, I didn't want to put it down. I stayed up late one night to carry on reading it, way past my bed time. My mother read it too and she really liked it.

I loved this book and would recommend it to readers of age ten and over. I now want to read other books by this author.

Harry Vinall, 1SCVM

Middle School Scholars

What a year! The Scholars have had a truly inspiring set of lectures and trips around the UK, ranging from a talk on the surprising origins of memes to the somewhat more professional artforms found in the Wallace Collection. The range has been gigantic, and in this article I hope to share some of the highlights from the year.

To kick off the season, the fifth years were taken to Oxford for a privileged look around the prestigious New College, followed by The Pitt Rivers Museum and the Bodleian Museum and Library, before concluding in a particle physics laboratory. This inspired a number of intriguing articles, available in the Michaelmas edition of the Scholars' Newsletter, on areas visited in the Oxford tour. One such article that piqued my interest discussed the history of the Bodleian, and the range of contributors to its collection. This included most noticeably John Radcliffe, who, thanks to his generosity and contribution to the field of medicine, had the JR hospital in Headington named after him. As well as his medical advances, he became an MP for Buckingham in 1713. I found this article particularly interesting as I myself was born in the JR and have always wondered about the source of its name.

We also had our annual Scholars' dinner, during which a chosen few presented research pieces they had worked on over the holidays. One such talk was a fascinating look into mental dissociative disorders, and how sufferers use them as a form of retreat from stressful situations. This was topped off, as always, with an excellent dinner. We were also treated to two lectures, one, by Dr Sally Rogers on poetry and its derivations through history, and the other on Latin grammar. While the latter would usually be a fairly dry topic for an evening presentation, especially after a long day, the speaker, Oly Sayeed, perfectly recaptured the audience's attention. He entitled his lecture 'Latin Grammar: A two thousand year old meme?'

which certainly intrigued us, and he further held our attention by delivering a detailed analysis of Latin grammar; this included the idea of entropy in language, with the easier words and simpler sentence structures used more often as time passes, simplifying the language.

The Lent Term lent itself to an aquatic theme, with the third year trip to Portsmouth dockyard, offering the chance to explore a number of ancient ships, such as the HMS Victory and HMS Warrior. The Scholars were also given an opportunity to steer a tugboat without crashing it into some historical ship or modern war tanker. As the same number of life vests and occupants returned as left, I think it's safe to assume it was a dry trip, though perhaps the same cannot be said for the accompanying staff. We also heard a lecture by OA Tony Edwards on the sinking of the Turpitz. In his lecture, he showed the fascinating design behind the Tallboy bomb, used to breach the hull. He also shared recordings of his friend who had been involved as one of the pilots on the mission, giving his speech a personal edge. This was followed by an excellent lecture from Commander Tony Long, who left the Royal Navy, having captained battleships, such as HMS Monmouth, to become the CEO of Global Fishing Watch. The group uses advanced tracking systems to review the movements of fish throughout the oceans and aims to reduce illegal fishing. His talk focused on the techniques used to detect illegal fishing and track migrational fish movements, giving the Scholars an excellent insight into the modern use of surveillance for crime prevention in international waters.

The evening concluded with dinner for a small group of Scholars who learnt about Commander Long's exciting days in the Navy. This concluded another excellent term of Scholars events, further details of which can be found in the Lent Term Scholars' Newsletter.

In the Summer Term, the fourth year Scholars were taken into London to experience the Wallace Art Collection, as well as attend a crash course in painting evaluation, leaving all the scholars more cultured than before (if indeed, that were possible), and giving them a wide range of expert vocabulary to deploy at social gatherings. Examples of this are 'sfumato' - the blurring of hard outlines - and 'pochade box' - a type of painting stand used by those artists working en plein air, as an alternative to an easel. The Scholars also visited the British Museum, the home of the contentious Elgin Marbles. A brief and informative history of the tensions is available in the Summer edition of the Scholars' Newsletter, which also includes some inspired prose and sonnets, reflecting artefacts found in the Museum. The trip was extremely informative and proved an enjoyable day out.

Overall, the year has been extremely varied and enjoyable, and has left the Scholars thirsty for more. We owe special thanks to both Mr Jamison and Dr Burnand for organising such exciting trips and finding an excellent range of well informed speakers. We look forward to the new academic year and, with it, the prospect of many more intriguing events and lectures to come.

Jack Tilley, 4LCAM





Tennis

Another successful tennis season at Abingdon School has come to an end, with 2018-19 turning out to be a really excellent year. I have been so pleased with the successes that the boys have enjoyed. To put no finer point on it, they have been smashing! The Summer Term had over 40 fixtures of varying sizes, and it is impossible to mention each and every one. There have, however, been some highlights which are worthy of a permanent record in *The Abingdonian*.

It was particularly enjoyable to see the boys victorious at the annual Radlingdon competition, taking both the cup and the plate. The Radlingdon has been a long-standing event between Radley and Abingdon School where the top 32 players from each school battle it out in a series of doubles matches. Despite some strong opposition, Abingdon managed to get a pair into both the cup and plate final. Max Hall and Sam Christie sealed the deal with a hard-fought but emphatic win against Radley's 1st and 2nd seed. Rightfully proud, the pair walked away having been awarded the Radley Sausage, much to their consternation.

Abingdon's 1st team also progressed through four rounds of the Glanville Cup, beating St Edward's, MCS, King George VI and Rugby School in the process. This meant that they qualified for the final; unfortunately, this was held during the summer holidays, when a number of our team had commitments

elsewhere. It was great, however, to see our boys competing at a top level.

Both our seniors and juniors have competed strongly in other national competitions, with the U18 team also coming sixth in ISL league and the U15 As and Bs placing 14th and 15th out of 32 in the Eton Junior pairs. This team was made up of a number of our youngest players from the first and second years. We are fortunate to have such talent in the Lower School and look forward to seeing the likes of Jack and Oliver Veal, Samuel Hughes, Hayato Frellesvig, Khadim Sagna, Max Woodthorpe Browne and John Cairns, as well as many others, playing in the 1sts as they get older.

I would like to congratulate all students who have competed for the school this year. They have conducted themselves with dignity and shown resilience when under pressure. I would also like to extend my thanks to parents who have given support over the season and been immeasurably patient when last-minute changes have affected matches. To those boys who are leaving us this year, I wish you all the best and hope that tennis continues to be a feature of your lives; for those who stay with us, I hope you will join me in looking forward to next year's fixtures, where we can build upon our successes.

Tom Allen



Charities Committee

This year was another very successful one for the Charities Committee. We have overseen fundraising for numerous charities, helping a wide range of causes on both a national and international scale.

Over the course of the academic year, the school supported:

Mary's Meals - whose vision is that every child receives one daily meal in their place of education and that all those who have more than they need share with those who lack even the most basic things.

Crisis UK - whose aim is to support people out of homelessness for good, by providing education, training, health services and employment and housing assistance, and by helping people who are homeless find a rental house and keep living there.

Blue Skye Thinking – who support research into the treatment of

childhood brain tumours striving to give all children diagnosed a better chance of survival and improved quality of life during and after treatment.

UNICEF's Indonesian tsunami relief fund - this followed a tsunami, triggered by a 7.4 magnitude earthquake off the coast of Indonesia, which affected more than 1.5 million people. UNICEF worked with the Indonesian government to help get lifesaving supplies to children and families affected and help rehome the displaced residents.

Agape – Abingdon's partner charity in Moldova, the poorest country in Europe, since 2000. It aims to serve the educational, emotional, physical and spiritual needs of those suffering the effects of poverty.

Meningitis Research Foundation - a leading UK, Irish and international charity which aims to bring people and expertise together with the aim of creating a world free of meningitis and septicaemia through the use of effective vaccinations and research.

Oxfordshire Search and Rescue – who work to ensure a timely and well

orchestrated response when there are missing persons, and who can be called out by Thames Valley Police at any time of day all year round.

Alexander Devine Children's Hospice Service – which provides specialist respite, palliative and end-of-life care in homes across Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and neighbouring counties. Its aim is to support children and families through the difficult end-of-life process and offer support every step of the way.

The big event of the Michaelmas Term was the sponsored walk, which saw all students in the school participating in a half marathon, either walking, running, rowing or canoeing 13 miles. Everyone gathered sponsorship from people they knew to complete the walk, and an impressive total sum of £31,023 was raised for Mary's Meals and Crisis UK. In addition to this, the committee also organised one home clothes day and one Christmas jumper day, which combined raised over £2,000. Also in the Michaelmas Term, in an initiative for Mary's Meals, pupils in Lower School made backpacks filled with supplies that a child would need for a school day. 56 bags were created and sent





far and wide to help children in areas of deprivation go to school.

In the Lent Term, two charity football tournaments were organised, with the money raised from entry fees being donated to Meningitis Research and Mary's Meals. The Lower School also organised a cake sale, and raised over £120 for Oxfordshire Search and Rescue.

The Summer Term saw many group and individual successes. Ahead of their trip to Moldova in July, a group of Lower Sixth boys cycled, ran and rowed 398km in the gym – a distance which equates to the length of the Dniester as it flows through Moldova - raising over £1000 for Agape. Dr Howe's second year tutor group raised £850 for Alexander Devine Children's Hospice Service with a charity marathon and cake sale.

It has been a great pleasure to work behind the scenes in support of all the different charities, and to work with such a large and enthusiastic team of volunteer students and staff in the committee. Specifically, I would like to thank Mrs Ley and Sra Pradas for their



strong leadership of the committee and the number of hours they put in to making it run smoothly. As a community I think we can feel very proud to have made such a substantial

impact on the wide array of charities that have been supported this year.

George Nott, 5VEM

CCF

The CCF have experienced an incredibly hectic year, competing in numerous challenges. These have included a recruit cadre at Longmoor, a charity event that took us to Germany, bushcraft at Bramley, a museum trip to Winchester, 'kip on a ship' on HMS Belfast, the annual Christmas dinner, and visits to MOD Lyneham and RAF Duxford.

We welcomed 60 new starters into the CCF at the beginning of the Michaelmas Term. In November, the cadets conducted two Remembrance parades, one at school and one at the town's cenotaph. One Upper Sixth pupil, Max Martin, was nominated for and then appointed a Lord Lieutenant's Cadet, a hugely prestigious award. Max is the first for several years to be appointed from the ranks of Abingdon CCF.

Other highlights included the Easter camp, CTT central camp and a live firing range weekend conducted at Longmoor ranges. The annual adventurous training expedition took place in Yorkshire, where 20 cadets faced a via ferrata, scaling heights of over 200 metres, and white water rafting down the River Doe. We opened a new flight simulator room with state-of-the-art, side-by-side, dual simulators and had Sqn Ldr Benny Goodman (The Last of the Few) open the room that had been named after him.

This year's sponsored event was to run, cycle, swim and walk (virtually) from Abingdon to our sister town of Shongau in Germany, a total of 1253km. Upper and Lower Sixth boys participated, and completed the task in under 20 hours. This was a fantastic achievement, raising £1,400 for Parkinson's UK.

The CCF bid a fond farewell to the Upper Sixth cohort, dining them out at Edward Brooks Barracks with a traditional regimental dinner, and welcomed Mr Moore, Mrs Simpson and Sgt Stan Mathews onto the contingent books as volunteers.

As yet another sun sets on an extremely gratifying year of activities for



the CCF, we look forward to next year's challenges, and the fulfillment of

conquering all that is put in our way...

Captain Lee Edwards



First Year Latin Trip to Fishbourne Roman Palace

On 1 July the first years and their Latin teachers went on a trip to Fishbourne Roman Palace: a topic in our recent Latin lessons. In our textbooks we had got up to where Quintus was about to visit King Tiberius Claudius Togidubnus at his palace (Fishbourne Roman Palace), for a party honouring Emperor Claudius making him king. This made us want to see the remains of Fishbourne, which are near Chichester in Sussex.

We watched an interesting 15-minute video about what the palace was like in Roman times and about the discovery and archaeology of it. We learnt that the palace was first discovered in 1960, when a workman was using a JCB to dig a trench through a field for a water main; it was then excavated by amateur archaeologists. We were told that we could not see all the palace because about half of it is underneath houses and a road. Also, there was a great fire in around AD 270, which ruined most of the palace.

The remains of the North Wing of the palace are under a protective building, and we could see the mosaics on the floors. We also saw where the entrances of rooms were and the underfloor heating.

All of the mosaics (over 20) were done in a wide variety of colours (apart from one older, black and white mosaic at a lower level) and many of them were based on the sea. Most of the mosaics were well preserved and very interesting to look at.

We noticed that the centres of the mosaics were done to a higher standard than the edges of the mosaics; this was because the skilled mosaic makers did the insides (which were harder to do) and the trainees did the edges of the mosaics as they would be likely to have furniture over them, so a mistake wouldn't be too bad.

My favourite mosaic was 'Cupid Riding a Dolphin' because it was very complicated and had a wide variety of colours but was still done to a very high standard.

We also looked at the garden. The north side of the garden had been cultivated to show how it would have looked when it was in Roman times, and the south section of the garden, featured the herbs which the Romans would have grown; the herbs we saw included chives, oregano, fennel and cumin. In the garden we also saw the outlines marking where the pool at the entrance had been.

We visited a small museum with Roman objects discovered in and around Fishbourne. These included chains, necklaces, beads, a reconstruction of some of the roof of Fishbourne, pots, and other artefacts.

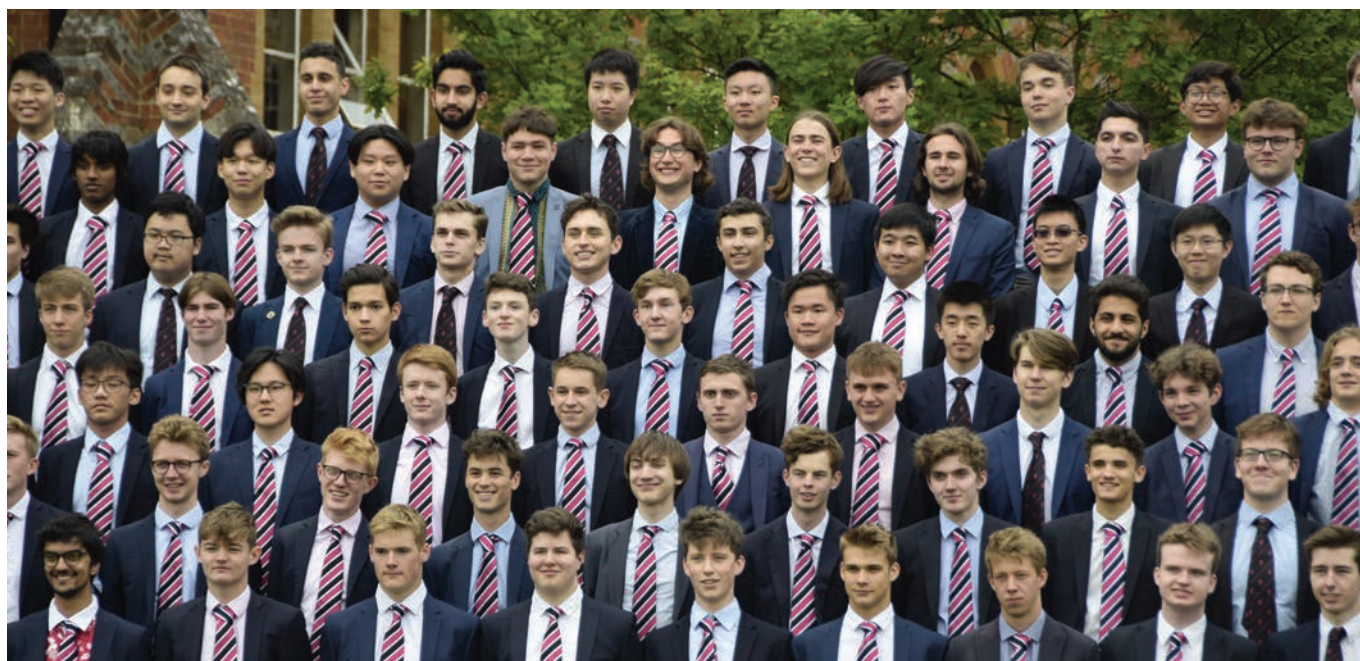
We then attended a session run by

one of the Fishbourne Palace staff. In one of the activities, two volunteers from each tutor group got to put on Roman-style clothes to show the rest of us what Romans would have looked like. In that same activity we also got to have a hands-on experience with some of the artefacts found at Fishbourne, as well as look at a reconstruction of what a Roman room might have looked like. After all the activities we were given some time to look around the gift shop and buy things if we chose to.

I recommend visiting Fishbourne because it is very interesting, and you can learn a lot about what life there was like back then. It is also not that far away, as you can get there from Abingdon in under two hours.

Philip Ashton, 1HFCP





Leavers' Day

Thank you, Mr Venables, for your speech and fascinating insights into life as a High Sheriff. My congratulations also to all prize winners today. It's on occasions like these that one comes to appreciate the breadth of achievements and talent at the school, and these prizes are testament to all your hard work throughout the year, so congratulations.

Now, governors, teaching staff, parents and guardians, if you'll afford me the pleasure, I'd like to take this opportunity to address my peers and reflect on our departing year group.

Gents, we made it. Let's hope the 'real world' is ready for the cohort of Old Abingdonians coming its way. As ex-members of the Upper Sixth, we now find ourselves at a significant milestone in our lives, about to embark upon new challenges in environments where brandishing a prefect's tie grants authority over no-one and inquiring as to the softness of the cookies may be something of a faux pas. For me, this realisation is quite surreal. Undoubtedly, this leaving process - the glory of leavers' day prizegiving, and the Griffen Ball - is tinged in a certain nostalgia, as we leave behind the environment and, hopefully to a limited extent, the people that have defined our lives for the last five or seven years for most.

Leaving school, though, above all, is exciting. Who knows what the future will hold? The great thrill about this moment in our lives is that nobody really knows. Sure, university perhaps, then a job, which may fit the majority of us. But what about 10, 20 years' time? Pondering this question, it struck me that we're actually all in possession of the answers. I turned, of course, to the yearbook. So, I ought to wish the best of luck to Connor Brown in the Olympics, congratulate Charlie Cardno on his Nobel Prize, and wish Colm Lambert all the best for his teaching career at Abingdon - I'm sure you'll make a great addition to the Common Room, Colm. Who knows whether these predictions will really ring true? What I can say with certainty, though, is that wherever our paths lead, each and every one of us will carry with him fond memories and a firm personal foundation from their time here at Abingdon. And the more we come to realise the significance of this community in our development as people, the more I think you'll agree that we as a collective owe a few big thank yous for the education we've been so privileged to receive here.

The first of these should be addressed to the group sat mostly behind me. I think I was 14 when I realised a surprising truth about teachers - they, like us, may have places they'd rather be on those rainy Monday mornings in

December near the end of Michaelmas Term. And they, like us, are human. They have the capacity to make mistakes, and may be tempted to cut the odd corner here or there. And I think from this realisation you begin to appreciate the daily commitment of our teachers and the profound investment they make in our lives, not only as brilliant repositories of knowledge, but also as role models and as people to turn to with any query, be it academic or not. Author C.S. Lewis said that "the task of the modern educator is not to cut down jungles but to irrigate deserts." Certainly, a great teacher can inspire. But to inspire you must first be inspired yourself, and so to the inspired and inspirational gathering of teachers here today I'd like to say, on behalf of my year group, thank you, for not cutting down our jungles and for irrigating our deserts.

The second thank you should be addressed to the unsung heroes of our education. As a parent, the investment you make in your son when choosing a school such as Abingdon is not to be taken lightly, and this investment certainly shouldn't go without due thanks. So, I think it's important that my peers and I recognise the sacrifices you as parents have made so that we could enjoy the education that we have, not only in financial terms, but also all those little things - ferrying to and from Saturday fixtures, for example.

While I'm sure there may be a sense of relief among parents that your days as personal chauffeurs have come to a close, I hope and I am indeed confident that you will be looking back on your decision to go with Abingdon as a good one. I certainly wouldn't wish to have been anywhere else.

Finally, if you'll indulge me just a moment more, I'd like to say a heartfelt, perhaps rather personal thank you to my peers. To the boys with whom I've shared this education. As a year-group - although perhaps not making Abingdon history with the standout sporting successes some may have hoped for - we've been exceptional for our camaraderie; for our spirit; for the community we've all created through attitude, application, and friendship. Indeed, being a part of a group of 151 boys who all get along with each other has had a vast impact on the time I've enjoyed here. So, thank you, boys. Thanks for the memories: the ups, the downs, the successes, the failures, the surprises, and for granting me undoubtedly the greatest privilege of my life so far.

Ethan Webb, 7BW



Cricket

2019 was a strong season for the Cricket Club with some outstanding team and individual performances across all of the age groups, including the 1st XI defeating the MCC for the first time in a long time! It was also a year in which we successfully piloted two-innings matches at Lower School and C team levels in order to provide greater opportunity and involvement for all of the players in these sides, and this is something we will continue to offer into next season.

Amongst the most successful sides of 2019, the U12As won 9 of their 11 fixtures, and there is a huge amount of promise from this age group looking forwards, whilst Mr Pygott's impressive U14Bs remained unbeaten until the very back-end of the season. The U15 age group, following a successful pre-season festival in Eastbourne, won 18 of the 26 completed fixtures and impressed enormously with the progress that they made collectively across the season, with a number of these boys having the opportunity to represent the 1st XI with great success later on in the season.

In the senior sides, there were some thrilling performances over the season. 1st XI captain, Harvey Jupp, led from the front with an outstanding all-round performance over the course of the year, making 553 runs at an average of over 50, and taking 25 wickets at 14 runs apiece. Fellow wrist-spinning allrounder, Hector Chambers, was the leading wicket taker with 32 wickets at 16 runs, whilst also making 487 runs at an average of 31 with the bat. The leading run scorer across the Cricket Club was Freddie Smith, who made 570 runs at an average of 41; he should also be congratulated on being selected to represent the Oxfordshire 1st XI this summer.

The final week of the term, saw a young 1st XI travel to St John's Leatherhead to play in the annual festival. Despite beating Oundle and Brentwood schools on the first two days, the defeat to St John's meant that we finished a creditable second again this year. That said, there were



some excellent performances with both bat and ball over the three days, particularly the impressive innings of Matthew Fowler and Oliver Deans, against Oundle and Brentwood respectively. We look forward to being hosted by Oundle School next summer.

Overall, the Cricket Club ended the 2019 season with a win percentage above 60%. Full colours were awarded to captain Harvey Jupp, Hector Chambers, James Coombs, Jamie Lawson and Freddie Smith, whilst half

colours went to William Ginks, Eliot Hyman and Thomas Owen. Lower School full colours were awarded to Tim Fowler and Thomas Mennie, with half colours awarded to Ethan Barksfield, Elliot Broadbent, Sam Ferguson, Jack Veal, and Oliver Veal. Finally, a special thanks must go to all of the coaches who have worked with the boys over the course of the year. We look forward to welcoming Mr Richards to the team next year.

James Golding

Edinburgh Fringe

In 2017 Mr Taylor commissioned Charly Clive and Ellen Robertson (St Helen's old girls) to write a play for a group of Upper Sixth actors to take to the Edinburgh Festival Fringe in 2019. The play they wrote was called *Contact Light* and it was about the last party, a party to end all parties, before the dreaded A level results day. The main character was called Andie and she had a 13-year-old brother called Percy who was "on the spectrum and addicted to space." Percy is annoyed because the party is the same night as the Perseids meteor shower that Andie normally watches with him. The play had lots of themes, including moving on, friendships, our place in space, and how riotous house parties can be.

The auditions for the part of Percy were held in school at the beginning of the Summer Term and six of us tried out for the part. The wait over the next few days was extremely tense, but the feeling when I read Mr Taylor's email offering me the part was second to none (although my sister said that I wouldn't have to act as giving me the part of an annoying 13-year-old was just typecasting!).

There were two main blocks of rehearsals - one week at the end of term and another week towards the end of the summer holiday, just before we headed to Edinburgh. I was quite nervous to begin with because everyone in the cast had been acting together for the past seven years and I did not know how, or if, I would fit in. Even by the end of the first rehearsal, however, I felt that I really was one of the cast. Rehearsals were very hard work but at the same time lots of fun. The feeling of going in to the rehearsal in the morning unsure about a scene and then leaving in the afternoon understanding it fully was incredibly satisfying. One of the most challenging parts of rehearsals, though, was learning the jig which came at the end of the play and had been choreographed for us by Charlotte King. Lots of people - including me - seemed to have not just two left



feet but also an inability to move their arms at the same time as their legs. Somehow we managed to master it, and the run-through we did for parents just before leaving for Edinburgh (which, in a weird parallel with the play, took place on the eve of results day!) went smoothly. We were all very excited for our first performance in four days' time.

When we arrived in Edinburgh, the first thing we all noticed was the amazing atmosphere that you could only associate with the Fringe. Our venue was also absolutely incredible. It was called the Pianodrome and was made out of 50 recycled pianos. It also had a string-light sculpture that looked fantastic and was perfect for creating the right effect for the meteor shower scenes. Our first performance there was the technical rehearsal, which, in true Edinburgh spirit, ran from 10pm-1am on Sunday night. It was exhausting, but there was no time to be tired as the first of our six shows was due to start just hours later that day!

From then on, my days fell into the pattern of flyering in the city during the morning and early afternoon with the other cast members (which was fun but tiring, as we walked for miles!) and then heading to the venue for the performance at 5pm. All the shows went really well and our audiences were very large compared to lots of other fringe shows. There were plenty of

highlights to remember - the excited satisfaction of the first night; taking our bows at the end of each show; the moment when the theatre dog, Perro, walked onstage during the penultimate performance while the play was being filmed - and simply spending time with the cast. The last show was definitely our best, but by the end there was barely a dry eye in the house and it was very emotional backstage. That evening we all went out for dinner, then walked up Calton Hill which offered a memorable view of the city, the night sky - it was supposed to be the last night of the Perseid meteor shower, too! - and the fireworks bursting over Edinburgh Castle at the end of the nightly Tattoo. The next morning, we met for brunch. Saying goodbye to everyone was extremely hard. We all felt thrilled that the show had gone so well, but very sad that it had come to an end.

I loved my time in *Contact Light* and will remember the experience and the people forever. I would now like to say thank you to some people who have helped over the last few months: Mr Taylor, Ms Watt, Mr Verjee, Mr Phillips, the backstage team at Abingdon, all of the people at the Pianodrome and all of the company. The experience was one of the most enjoyable of my life and has made me realise how much I want to continue acting.

Rupert Mathieson, 1HFCP



Moldova Project

A group of Lower Sixth pupils travelled to Eastern Europe in the first weeks of the summer holiday for this year's Moldova Project trip. Working with Abingdon's partner charity Agape, they organised two summer camps for Moldovan children, one based at a school in the Moldovan town of Ialoveni and another in Lacu Rosu in Romania. Here some of the boys reflect on what they feel they gained from the experience.

The trip to Moldova has taught me so much, especially when I was able to see the effect of our teaching and the activities we ran throughout our time in Moldova. A great thing about this trip is that there is a language barrier, which not only encourages the children to speak English but also creates a rather niche opportunity for us Abingdon boys to learn a language which is not spoken widely in this country: Romanian. The amusement on the faces of the children when we mispronounced a word five times in a row was astonishing! This entire trip would not have been possible without the help of Agape, and being able to work on the front line for a charity was something I had never experienced before. I was able to see very clearly in both Ialoveni and Lacu Rosu the effects that this charity has on so many young children I have made friends in Moldova that I hope

to keep for a number of years. The trip was inspiring and I cannot fully express in words how incredible the trip was for not only the children in Moldova and Romania, whose spoken English improved significantly, but also my own personal growth. This trip has changed me as a person and I hope to return to Moldova one day.

Matthew Buhler, 6TJG

Any expectations I originally possessed of what I would find in Moldova were completely thrown out of the window upon arriving in Chisnau. I had

expected to feel very much like an outsider, but the hospitality

provided by my host family, and everyone else we worked with on the trip, was second to none. I found Moldova itself a very interesting country, as it is nothing like any of the others I have visited. I thoroughly enjoyed the three days spent running activities in the school in Ialoveni, as I immediately began forming friendships with the translators and children alike; these certainly carried through into Romania, and I know that I will continue



to converse with several of these people for years to come. In addition to witnessing the evident benefits to the children's lifestyles, confidence, and - most notably - English-speaking ability, I am pleased to have also gained much invaluable experience from teaching and running the activities; this trip really does provide unique opportunities that no other trip can. It is indeed a satisfying feeling to look back and know that you have made a difference.

Oliver Williams, 6RP

Our hosts were incredibly hospitable to us, despite us being strangers living in their home. The kindness shown by the family was also shown by everyone else we met throughout our visit: the volunteers, the children, and the teachers at the school. Although I have never really been good at crafts, sport or English, the children were

happy to learn from me and the other boys, developing their understanding of the language with every lesson and enjoying our company. We all learned more about the other country's culture and the different traditions that we all had. I have made many new friends, whom I will not be forgetting, and I hope that we have left a memorable impression with all those we saw in our travels. I can say I was proud of all that they had accomplished and I hope that what we have taught them will be useful for all those involved as they move forward in life.

James McRae, 6AMP

Without having heard about Moldova before, I had no idea what I was expecting from the trip. All I expected was that it would be some sort of ordinary voluntary experience. Yet, after a fantastic 10 days, the truth is that the

experience was far from ordinary.

The exciting, inspiring and intense content of this trip has really blown me away. Before I knew it, the 10 days had gone by in a flash. The idea of having to organise and run lessons and activities for children seemed daunting at first glance. After having planned and done my first activity, however, I realised how enjoyable it was to teach and communicate with the children, who were all eager to take away something new every day. This motivated me to give my best not just during activities but also when planning them; I was determined to give them not just knowledge but also a big smile on their face to bring home. It was not only the children who learnt something during this camp; I have also learnt lots of things, from not only the children, but also the people of Moldova: the host family, the translators, the teachers, and members of Agape. The unique opportunity to be submerged in Moldovan and Romanian culture was definitely eye-opening. The joy and satisfaction when seeing children take something away from this project is what makes the Moldova Project such a unique and fruitful experience.

Perry Tsai, 6NJSK

Travelling to Moldova and Romania has provided me with a new insight into how similar we all are to one another. Having never visited Eastern Europe before, I had no idea what the culture was like and how this would impact the relationships to come. With the apparent differences in upbringing between a boarder at Abingdon School and a student living in a community house in Moldova I was very worried how well we would be able to 'connect' with the children. After the first day all of my worries were blown away. Seeing the children improve at English throughout the week so rapidly was truly amazing and filled me with a sense of accomplishment. The children were really well-mannered and had their priorities well-set. This allowed connections to form which I would not have thought possible over such a short period of time. These friendships will surely last for a long time to come.

Tommy Macphail, 6NJSK





First Orchestra and Big Band Far East Tour

From the 30 June until the 9 July, the Abingdon First Orchestra and Big Band toured the Far East of Asia. Two coaches left the bus park at 7.15am on Sunday 30 June. After a comfortable journey to Gatwick, lengthy flight to Hong Kong and a connection to Tokyo, we met our guides, Simon and Patrick. Once we'd checked into our hotel, we went for some local food, Italian to be precise. The next morning, we went to the Harajuku district to Takeshita Street, a popular shopping destination. The street is lined with colourful and irreverent shops which were great fun to peruse. We then walked to the Meiji Jingu, a shrine dedicated to the deified spirits of Emperor Meiji before setting up for our joint concert with the British School Tokyo (BST) in the Showa Women's University Hitomi Memorial Hall. The concert was part of BST's 30th anniversary celebrations and it was great to see the other musicians play to their incredibly high standard.

On Wednesday 3 July, we visited the Tokyo Sky Tree. Constructed in 2008,

it is the world's second tallest building, standing at 2080ft. After a stomach-churning lift to the top floor and a slow walk around the observation deck with both hands clutching the rail the entire time, we came back down to ground level and sighed with relief. Then we went on a boat trip to the Hamarikyu Gardens, home to a 300-year-old pine tree. After a lovely walk through the gardens, we left Tokyo on the Shinkansen bullet train to Nagoya, where we met our host families from Toho High School, who were going to look after us for the coming days. This was my personal highlight of the trip as it was incredible to live with a Japanese family, even for a short period of time.

After staying with the family for a night, we had a day at Toho High School, joining in with English lessons, trying our hand at origami and even wearing kimonos! We then rehearsed with the Toho Marching Band for our joint concert. There is only one word to describe the marching band – phenomenal! Their synchronisation and precision were absolutely mind-blowing and made us wonder how we could possibly follow such a spectacle. It was a truly memorable experience to be on the stage with 65 Abingdon boys and 65 Toho students. A real highlight has to be playing Elgar's *Pomp and Circumstance March No.*

1 and Vaughan Williams' *English Folksong Suite*, 130 players strong. After a second successful concert, we went back with our host families for the night.

The farewell the next day was a hard one, but no sooner had we said "Sayōnara" than we were off to the Toyota Motor Museum, home to cars from the late 19th century to the present. After this, we visited Nara Park, home to around 1,500 deer. The Shinto religion believes that the white deer were protectors of the city and thus have resided there ever since. You can buy deer crackers (shika senbei) to feed them – this led to some interesting and humorous encounters with some hungry and impatient deer. Nara is also home to the Eastern Great Temple with the 15m tall Vairocana Buddha, which was truly a sight to be seen. The next stop on our jam-packed day was the Kinkakuji Golden Pavilion, a Zen temple in northern Kyoto where the two top floors are completely covered in gold leaf. Once we checked into our hotel in Kyoto we were ready for bed.

The next day (6 July) we were up at 4.30am to see the monks perform their daily prayers, which was a really special experience and definitely worth the early start. The main proportion of the



day was spent watching the Big Band perform in the Doshisha Chapel of Doshisha University and walking around Kyoto before our 'Geisha Walking Tour' with Peter Mackintosh, one of the few Westerners ensconced in the geisha world, and our 'Evening with a Geisha'. It was incredible to see the geishas sing and play the shamisen. This was the last activity in Kyoto, thus ending the Japan stint of the tour. The following morning we flew out of Osaka airport back to Hong Kong, where we met our new guides, Margaret and Simpo. We were then taken to Victoria Peak, the highest mountain in Hong Kong, which offers spectacular views of Kowloon. After a long day of travelling, the landscape was lovely to see and a rather breathtaking introduction to our time in Hong Kong.

The next morning, after breakfast, it was straight onto the coach to Repulse Bay, Deep Water Bay and Stanley Market — a huge market selling jewellery, souvenirs, oriental knick-knacks and technology. We then went to St John's Cathedral, built in 1849, to rehearse for our final concert. Then we walked to the HSBC building for a grand reception. The concert in St. John's was our last performance of the tour, where we played our full

repertoire to a nearly full cathedral. The Beethoven piano concerto with three soloists was a real highlight, with wonderful performances by Alvin Tam, David Bicarregui and Ashwin Tennant.

The next morning, we celebrated our successful concert with a trip to one of the two theme parks in Hong Kong — Ocean Park. The park is home to a multitude of activities, including roller coasters over the sides of a cliff and a grand aquarium, home to over 5,000 fish. After a long day in the park, our tour was complete. The drive to Hong Kong International saw us on our way back, arriving on home turf at around 7am.

Overall, the tour was an incredible success and a trip of a lifetime with so many new experiences and memories made. We were truly lucky to have been given the opportunity to go, and gratitude has to be extended to the Japanese families with whom we stayed; the teachers, guides, and Abingdon School staff who accompanied us; and, most of all, Mr Stinton, who put in so much work and effort to make the tour run perfectly.

Robin Collins, 4HJW





Rugby Tour

In the early afternoon of 8 August, 51 students and five members of staff embarked on the trip of a lifetime: a rugby tour to South America. After meeting at school and taking a quick group photo, we made our way to Heathrow Airport by coach with everyone excited to finally begin the tour. After checking in and wading through security, we enjoyed some free time to roam the terminal and have dinner together before the flight.

After a 15-hour and very smooth flight, we met our tour guide and set off for the Costanera Center, while being able to get our first impressions of Santiago from the coach journey. Upon arriving at the tallest building in South America (a staggering 302m) we were in awe. We took a lift up to the top of the building, which is an open topped 360 degree viewing spot from where you can see the entirety of the picturesque city of Santiago. After a quick look at the centre itself, we set off for the Atton El Bosque hotel, which we were to stay in for one night.

We checked in and enjoyed some relaxing time in our rooms before visiting the site of our first fixture, The Grange School, for a quick runout training session. We then returned to the hotel where we had our first tour dinner, which was also a first real taste of South American cuisine (also known as 'lots of very tasty meat'). We set out the next morning to Valparaiso and Vina Del Mar. Valparaiso was a beautiful city to visit, with brightly coloured

houses all overlooking the mighty port on the south-west of Chile. We then travelled to Vina Del Mar where we had lunch and then explored the surrounding area, before returning to The Grange School to meet our hosts.

We arrived at The Grange courtesy of our hosts for a 9am local time ahead of a 10:30am kick off for the 2nd and 3rd teams, with the 1st team kicking off at 12pm. All three teams put in a fantastic, passionate performance, showing great promise, especially considering that they were the first games of the tour. The Grange were very strong opponents who achieved victory in all three games. We then enjoyed lovely post-match food with our opposition, before speeches from coaches and captains. Tour 1st team captain Jimmy Strange even gave his speech in Spanish, which would be a trend for all four fixtures on the tour, much to the approval of The Grange. After leaving the school site with our hosts, we spent our last evening with them before heading for Cajon Del Maipo.

Following the wonderful experience with The Grange, we set out for the glorious region of Cajon Del Maipo, Vitacura. We visited the Ave Fénix project, an attempt to recover part of what was the El Volcán Military Railway, which went from Puente Alto through Cajon del Maipo. We heard about the history of the site, and were fortunate enough to be able to ride the recovered railroad on a one carriage train. We then made a short journey to Craighouse School to meet our new

hosts in preparation for our game the next day. After meeting our hosts we spent the evening with them and got plenty of rest before our last game in Chile the following afternoon.

The next day we had a morning tour of Santiago. Highlights included visiting the presidential palace, an enormous, pristine building surrounded by Chilean flags and armed guards, and the Santiago public library, another beautiful building. We had some free time to explore the shopping areas in the city, before returning back to Craighouse with time to warm up and prepare for our second fixture.

We once again were able to put out three sides against our opposition and once again played great rugby across all the teams, with the 1st team victorious, courtesy of a last phase try to seal the win. After once again enjoying a lovely post match BBQ, and hearing some speeches from both schools, we left with our hosts to get some rest before our morning flight to Mendoza.

Taking in a final view of Chile, we boarded our plane for a short flight over the Andes to Mendoza, and after landing, left for a quick tour of the local area, including going on a walk uphill to experience a fine view of our surroundings. The next day we had a tour of a glorious vineyard in Mendoza, where we were shown how wine is made and were allowed to sample wine and grape juice. We then had a training session at the Liceo Rugby Club, the destination for our third match.



how special and unique this place is.

We then got settled into our hotel before leaving for a tour dinner in a unique restaurant from where you could see the border between Paraguay, Brazil and Argentina.

The next day we set out for a full-day tour of the Argentinian side of the Falls, including the Gran Aventura boat ride. The day began with a walk along the bottom of the Falls, then up to the top, from where we could gape at the water crashing below us. We finally got to the boat trip where, wearing our stylish ponchos, we went close up to several of the waterfalls, which showed just how useless the ponchos are when it comes to being under so much water! We then returned to land, dried off, and returned to our hotel before our flight back to Buenos Aires.

On the last day of the tour we set out to work with the charity Botines Solidarios to coach children from Villa 31. Playing a mixture of football and rugby, we all had a great time - it was a truly wonderful experience. We then met for our final tour dinner, a wonderful buffet in the centre of Buenos Aires, which proved a lovely end to a fantastic tour. The flight home went by quickly, with us all getting some much needed sleep before arriving back at school. The tour brought us all great fun, great rugby and unforgettable memories. It was the perfect way to wrap up the summer and to set us up for a new season of rugby.

Krishan Handa, 5KEML

We spent the following morning with our new hosts before our afternoon kick-off against Liceo. Due to a series of injuries, we only put out two sides, with the 2nd team winning 12-5, and the 1st team putting in a strong performance before the game was called off due to further injuries. We then returned to our hosts' homes before a really action-packed day in which we enjoyed the Potrerillos Valley rafting and zipline experience. We spent the whole day at the valley in two groups, taking turns rafting in the pristine water at Potrerillos or soaring above the valley. It was a truly remarkable experience.

The following day, we flew from Mendoza to Buenos Aires, the capital city of Argentina, which we toured, taking in our new scenery. We then had

our night at the Tango, which included introductory lessons for all (and we have the certificates to prove it!), as well as the opportunity to marvel at the incredible show. The next morning we set out for a full day excursion to the Candelaria Estância, a classic Gaúcho Ranch. There we had a tour of the grounds, enjoyed a classic Gaucho Asado (BBQ), and watched classical Gaucho dancing.

The next day brought about our fourth and final match of the tour, against St Matthew's School, where we fielded two sides once again. We maintained the high level of rugby that we had played throughout the tour, with two very close games being played.

We then travelled to Iguazu Falls and spent a day on the Brazilian side. From our first look around, it was obvious



My Google Experience

At the beginning of the Summer holidays, I experienced the trip of a lifetime to Google HQ in San Francisco. It all started towards the beginning of the Michaelmas Term, when I found out about an open source initiative run by Google as a competition called Google Code-In. Over a period of 50 days, I remotely volunteered my time to open source, a type of software which is free for anyone to take and modify for the greater good. In this time, I completed 24 tasks, which ranged from creating webpages for the organisation to writing and improving programmes that would be used in schools across the world.

After five weeks of hard work, the competition came to a close and the judging of the tasks began. Just before the start of the Lent Term I received an email from Google titled 'You are a Google Code-in 2018 Grand Prize Winner!' I was overwhelmed to hear this news and could not wait to see what was in store for me.

After I completed my GCSEs, my father and I were flown to San Francisco from Heathrow. This trip was my first to America, so it was definitely going to be an incredible experience. After the 11-hour flight we arrived at San Francisco International Airport, ready to head to the San Francisco Google Office near the Bay Bridge. We were greeted by Stephanie and Saranya, Google employees in charge of the GCI project, who were very welcoming. We were briefed about the schedule for the week ahead, and given a lot of Google merchandise — and a new phone! After some ice-breaker activities, we were escorted to our hotel in Union Square. By this time it was 6am BST and I had been up for almost 24 hours, so I was shattered! However I could not wait for the visit to the Googleplex, the main Google campus.

We woke up early the next day and headed to the Googleplex in Mountain View, an enormous complex which we were able to look around to see the campus which was enormous.

I took some photos in their Android statue garden, and we were then off to Google's Cloud campus. Here we met a Googler who had originated from our country and spoke to us about his day to day job. We also attended a series of talks around Google's Cloud work including topics such as Deep Learning, Google Assistant and the future of Chrome OS and how it is made. I was also amused to find a 'Testing on the Toilet' poster with a challenge on that is changed, I believe, every week.

On the third day we were given a 'Fun day in San Francisco'. This included a Segway tour across San Francisco, which was a surreal experience as we zoomed around Pier 39 (also known for its sea lions!). We then had a group lunch on the pier and spoke about our contributions during the Google Code-In. In the afternoon, we headed to the Golden Gate Bridge — it really was an experience to see it outside of a poster. It was huge, and I was amazed at the

sense of scale as we looked back over San Francisco. The day finished with an evening yacht trip with a group meal and reflections on the day.

The final Google day was a presentation day. We had all prepared presentations to show the work we had done during the Code-In, and we showed them to a group of Googlers and our fellow students and their parents. The day finished with an awards ceremony, where I was presented with my Code-In trophy. The bus trip back to the hotel was our final time with the Googlers, and we parted ways to spend our final day exploring San Francisco with fellow students.

The experience as a whole was definitely something I won't forget for a very long time, and I made some great friends who I am still in contact with today.

Freddie Nicholson, 5RLR



Inter-House Sport Results

	U18	U16	U15	U14	Overall
Athletics	James's		James's	Franklin's	O'Doherty's
Badminton	O'Doherty's	Austin	School	James's	Austin/O'Doherty's
Basketball			Austin		
Chess					Austin
Cricket			James's		
Croquet					Pygott's
Fencing					Pygott's
Football	O'Doherty's	Austin	Austin/Border's/Pygott's	Pygott's	Pygott's
Golf					James's
Hockey	Crescent		Border's		Austin
Pool	O'Doherty's	School	Pygott's		Crescent
Rowing			Austin		
Rowing Ergos	Austin		Border's	School	Austin
Rugby	Morgan's	Morgan's	Franklin's		Morgan's
Shooting					Franklin's
Squash	Morgan's	Pygott's	Pygott's	O'Doherty's	O'Doherty's
Swimming	Border's		Border's	Franklin's	Border's
Table Tennis	Franklin's	Austin	O'Doherty's		Austin
Tennis					Austin
Water Polo		Border's			
Tug of War			Border's/Pygott's		

Lower School Inter-Tutor Group Competitions

	2nd Year	1st Year
Summer Reading Challenge	2C	
Rugby	2H	1G
Lower School Challenge	2H	1G
Cross Country	2J	1M
Chess	2H	1M
Road Relay	2C	1M
Hockey	2H	1P
Public Speaking	2J	1P
Water Polo	2J	1G
Table Tennis	2H	1M
Athletics	2C	1P
Reading		1P
Cricket	2H	1G
Tennis	2H	1M
Swimming	2H	1P
Countdown	2H	1P
Tug of War	2C	1P
Overall Winners	2H	1P

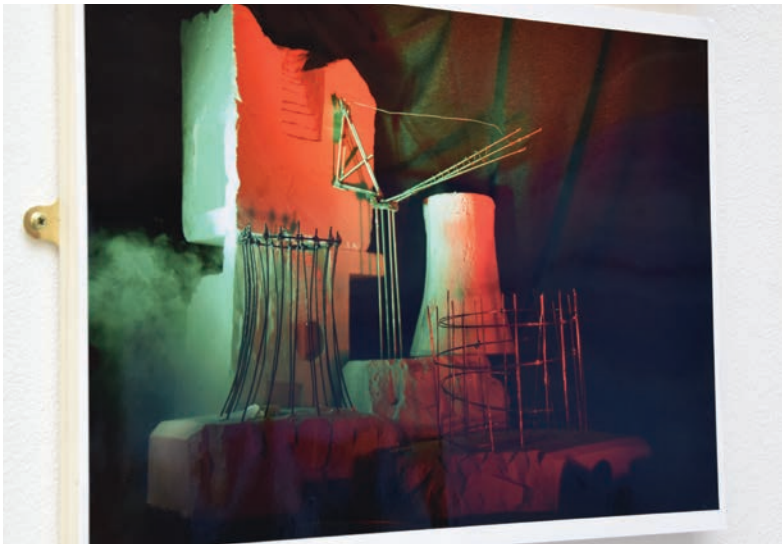
GCSE and A-Level Art



Alfie Marshall, GCSE



Will Lowry, A level



Charlie Bromage, A level



Freddy Martin, GCSE



George Rich, GCSE



Ian Kwan, GCSE



Sam Penrose, GCSE



Louis Ellis, A level



Ian Kwan, GCSE



Hugo Leedham, GCSE



Gabriel Dobson, A level



Max Hems, GCSE

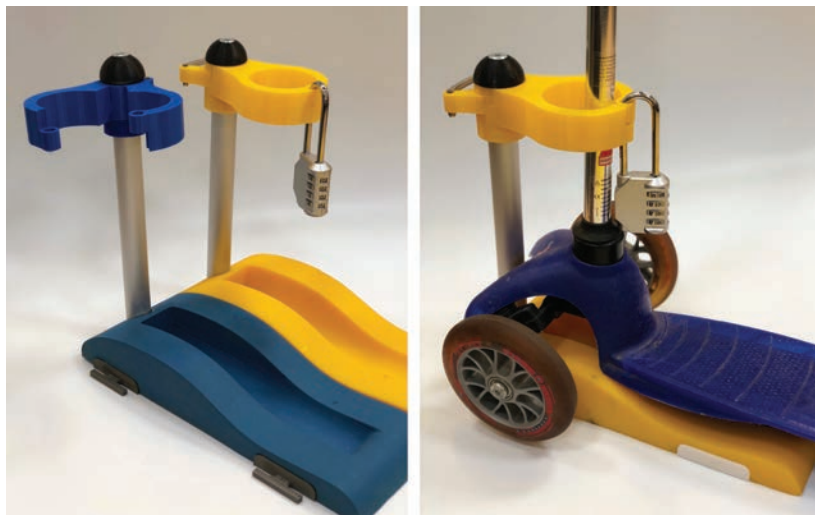
GCSE and A-Level Design Technology



Freddie Nicholson, GCSE - Self-watering kitchen herb planter



Will Franklin, A level - Modern collapsible furniture



Charlie Cardno, A level - Charlie Cardno - Primary school scooter security and storage



William Shorrocks, GCSE - Vaccine transportation concept



Danyaal Cooper, GCSE - Device to measure hydration goals



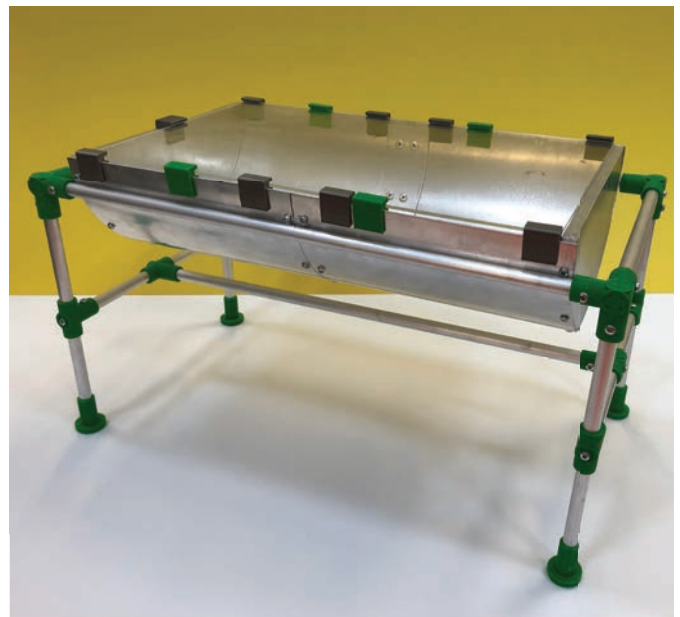
Josh Buckingham, A level – Surfboard storage unit



Josh Buckingham, GCSE – Surfboard storage unit



Shi Hong Kuang, GCSE - Aid to assist the less able



Mike Mclennan, GCSE – Solar BBQ Concept

House Reports

Austin House



Following another wonderful set of public examination results, the boys started the year in great spirits and it wasn't long before the first house competition was upon us in the shape of the House Singing Competition. Following the slight disappointment of just missing out on the podium the previous year, there was a buzz of confidence surrounding this year's piece. The catchy hit *Don't Stop Believin'* from the TV series *Glee*, with a brief guitar solo – what could possibly go wrong?! A huge thank you to Andy Zhang, Oliver Breach, Toby Rowles, John Allen and David Bunn for their help and contributions to this year's competition.

There were some outstanding performances across the course of the year in the inter-house sports competitions. Once again, our U18 team of Matthew Bell, Robert Smith, Thomas

Symington and Daniel Wilmot took home full points on the ergo, before the U15 quad of Freddie Badcock, Oliver Muller, Oskar Muller and Jamie Wright completed the rowing double, winning on the water in the Summer Term. There were also great wins on the badminton courts and football field for the fifth years who also finished first across the whole of the year – we look forward to seeing their continued contributions in the sixth form! Overall, the house finished a very respectable second across the whole year with the hope to go one better in 2019/20.

I would also like to pay tribute to all of our outgoing Upper Sixth students – they have been a simply fantastic year group. Not only have they been incredibly successful and consistent in their academic endeavours and results, but





they have been wonderful contributors in all areas of the house over the years. It was with great pleasure that we saw their thoroughly well-deserved results in August and we wish them all the very best with their futures as they begin their adventures outside of the Abingdon bubble.

Over the course of the year, full house colours were awarded to John Allen, Oliver Breach, David Bunn, Toby Rowles, and Andy Zhang, with half colours going to Charlie Betts, Jonathan Lee and Joshua Li, all for their outstanding contributions to the house.

Finally I'd like to take the opportunity to

thank Miss Fraile for all she has done as a tutor in Austin House and wish her all the very best as she moves to School House.

James Golding



Crescent House



One of the highlights of the year for any Housemaster is the annual House Singing Competition, held in the last week of the first half of Michaelmas Term. Although the preparations can sometimes be stressful, and there is always a worry as to whether it will all come together in time, it is also one of the few times that the whole house, all 102 boys, day and boarding, stand and compete together. House spirit is always on display at these occasions, and it was no exception this year. Benjamin Adams ably conducted an enthusiastic and joyful rendition of *Mr Blue Sky*, by Electric Light Orchestra, for which Crescent House were jubilant at being awarded... third place! It is easy to snigger, but this ended a decade-long absence from the podium for Crescent, and more importantly, really brought the house together in a way that was a pleasure to see. I thank all the boys for their contributions to the event this year, and every year.

It has been a successful year in sports for various Crescent boys, and it is always great to see so many excellent individual and team performances. There were some significant achievements in the various inter-house competitions throughout the year. In the Michaelmas Term, Crescent students

had great success in the badminton, with Perry Tsai and Brian Ho winning the U18 doubles competition and Tong Tong Sukamongkol performing well in the singles, meaning the U18 team came second. Able contributions from James Deng, Benjamin Wallis-Smith and Conrad Chung meant that the Crescent badminton team finished third overall. The U18 rugby team of Ed Hayes, Alisdair Cornforth, Oliver Botting, Louis Heard, Joshua Jackson, Nathan Hudson, Kai Miles, Andrew Russell and Ethan Webb put in an excellent set of performances and, although they weren't quite able to win the competition, they finished a strong second. In the pool competition, Dan Keeble finished second in the U15 event, while Owen Ravden finished fourth, giving Crescent House second place overall in the competition.

The highlight of the Lent Term inter-house sports was an excellent first place in the U18 hockey competition, with outstanding performances from a team consisting of Rory Mitchell, Kipp Mainstone, Louis Heard, Will Stacey, Harry Capon, Nathan Hudson and Brian Ho. With all of those boys being either fifth year or Lower Sixth, they are well-placed to continue their success next year. The fifth year Crescent team

also put in a fantastic and consistent performance in the Road Relay at the end of March. A team of Freddie Cunningham, Kipp Mainstone, Rory Mitchell and Hugo Wade completed the course in 36 minutes and 9 seconds, and were the overall winners of the event.

The Summer Term brought the inter-house athletics, and various Crescent boys demonstrated their prowess. Chigozie Oge-Evans won the U14 shot A event, while Harry Nye won the U14 400m B event and Jonathan Cai the U15 javelin B event. In the inter-house sports, Joshua Ebner and Isaac Tan won the U15 tennis doubles competition, while Archie and Harry Notley came second in the croquet.

There were many Crescent boys representing the school in a wide variety of sports, with too many fantastic achievements to include here. Some stand-outs though include Kai Miles and Scott Yap's continuing success in the swimming pool, as part of the swimming team that finished sixth in the Otter Medley Cup and seventh in the Bath Freestyle Cup. Both of these are national finals with over 80 schools competing across the UK and these are the best finishing positions the school



has achieved. Rory Mitchell performed very well in the Cross-Country County Championships, and qualified to represent the Oxfordshire team at the National Schools Championships.

Off the sports field, a Lower Sixth team including Crescent boys Perry Tsai, Ivan Chan and Brian Ho came first in the Blott Matthews Challenge, an engineering competition for schools across the country. Ethan Chen represented the school in the Royal Society of Chemistry Top of the Bench Challenge at Oxford University, finishing as runner up out of seven schools for the Thames Valley region. Sam Christie was awarded runner up in the Cambridge University Marshall Society economics essay competition, as well as coming second equal in the Royal Economics Society's 'Young Economist of the Year' essay competition, out of a total of 1300 entries. Benjamin Adams and Callum RAVDEN gave excellent performances in the school's production of *Loserville* in the Lent Term.

A number of Crescent House boys achieved some excellent public examination results over the summer. Eric Zhong (2 A*s, 7 9s and 1 8), Nicholas Ko (3 A*s, 7 9s and 1 8), Timmy Chiu (3 A*s, 6 9s and 2 8s),



Andrew Jin (3 A*s, 6 9s and 2 8s), Scott Yap (1 A*, 2 As and 7 9s) and Rory Mitchell (2 As, 7 9s and 1 8) all achieved over 8.5 average in their grades. At A-Level, Sam Christie and Ed Hayes achieved 3 A*s, while Ethan Webb achieved 1 A* and 2 D1s (the highest possible grade in the Pre-U qualification).

Over the course of the year, the house was ably led by Heads of House Jate Jaturanpinyo and Henry Barlow, with Jate and Ed Hayes representing Crescent as school prefects, and Ethan Webb as Head of School. I thank them and the other senior boys for all of their support and hard work.

We said goodbye to Mr Miller and Mr Cousins as tutors. Mr Taylor and Mrs McKend join the house in September. My thanks go to all the tutors for everything they do, as well as to Miss Poole in her role of Assistant Housemaster and Mrs Deaves-Small as Matron.

The Heads of House for 2019/20 will be Perry Tsai and Oliver Botting, while Kai Li and Nathan Hudson will be school prefects. I am confident that they and the rest of the Upper Sixth will lead the house ably, in what I am sure will be another very successful year for Crescent House.

Matthew Kendry

School House

Looking back at the year which has just gone by, it is fair to say that School House has enjoyed some truly memorable moments. Building on an impressive second place in last year's House Singing Competition, we were able to recapture our title-winning form this year with the song *The Greatest Show*, from the film *The Greatest Showman*. Although other houses may have been somewhat aggrieved by the boisterous celebrations and questions over whether Alec de Jongh sabotaged Crescent's performance, we did not care one bit as Marcus Kam lifted that trophy aloft for the team. Many thanks go to Marcus and Alec for leading that trophy charge, as well as to all the other members of the house, who sang loudly, if not accurately, on their way to victory.

House Singing aside, the year has been filled with numerous other highlights which we can fondly look back on. The annual Work Exhibition returned, showcasing all the best creative work which the house had to offer. Ranging from artwork to revision notes, it was clear to see that members of School House always take great pride in their work and were rightly praised by their peers and teachers within the house with the gift of a good quality Mars bar. Other memorable highlights

have included tutor group quizzes in the Hospitality Suite on Wednesday afternoons, with questions ranging from which teacher was featured in various baby pictures to pop culture and sport. There was no shortage of shouting answers out and teams are still waiting to hear the results from the latest quiz any day now.

Another stand-out moment for the house was the Road Relay, back for its 50th run, after extensive roadworks prevented the occasion from happening in 2018, and School House flocked to the Albert Park course in their swaths, with record numbers participating overall within the school. Special mentions go to Simon Maddison, Thitipat Ditrungroj and Nicolas Markham who all volunteered to run twice in place of absences within their respective teams, displaying once again School House's ability to work together in times of need. Earlier in the year, a band of School House members also decided to run together for the charity walk (a ten mile run which may have slightly exceeded the ten miles stated by the PE Department). The group was made up of elite runners in the form of Matthew Kunov, Tristan Tsoi, Simon Maddison and Marc Tuazon. Although communication was poor and the group





we be without the help of Storm? As the matron of School House, she has seamlessly fitted into the running of the house, establishing good relationships with the students and providing the effort, positivity and compassion that have ensured that School House is more than just a place for dayboys and boarders, but has become something much larger than that — a family.

I joined School House from Lower School, and it felt like going back to step one almost, making new friends and being shown another part of school which I hadn't even realised existed before. Although this place may have changed throughout my five years in the house, with the PS3 on which we played FIFA and Call of Duty no longer being present in the "Study Room", but I can wholeheartedly assure you that the community spirit within the house remains stronger than ever and I am confident that the house will continue to thrive and perform well in competitions in the years to come, and that the next Heads of Houses will continue to lead School House to greatness as Ilya Korzinkin and I have done!

Mark Tuazon, 6BDS

split off immediately from the start, all of them finished with convincing times (with a few forgetting to bring any water or snacks for the run), showcasing once more School House's prowess in multiple fields.

We would like to place on record our thanks for our housemaster, Mr. Litchfield, for continuing to make School House great again, by coordinating house activities aimed at further reducing boundaries between years, as well as providing thought-provoking House Assemblies, and for his ability to not let his support of Liverpool FC interfere with his handling of the house. Thanks also go to all the longer standing

tutors within the house, Mr Simmons, Mr Evans, Mrs Yarker, Miss Milarski, Mr Jackson, Mrs McKend and Mr Johnson, although extra credit goes to Mr McDonnell for his enthusiasm and attempts at magic and conjuring. This year we also welcomed Miss Perry into the house; she had no problem adjusting to the hectic atmosphere within the boarding house, her help with physics and escape room puzzles in particular has been a welcome addition. While we only had Ms Snedden for a brief stay, it is fair to say she made a lasting impression within the house, and we of course wish her well in her future endeavours. And of course where would

Border's House

It was a pleasure to welcome back all the members of the house at the start of the academic year, and of course to welcome plenty of new members. Along with a host of new third years and a new fourth year, we welcomed Mr Barber, Dr Ambrose, Rev Gooding and Mrs Ley to the tutoring team.

Term kicked off at a frantic pace with the first week ending with a new scholars' presentation where third years Max Siriwardene and Laurence Peverall received their ties for sport and music respectively. The focus then shifted on to the more experienced scholars as fourth years John Bonchristiano and Alexander Boorer entertained and informed with presentations on image recognition software and concussive injuries, before fifth years Alfie Marshall and Daniel McNamara explained the impact of climate change on wildlife, and the dark history of Cambodia. It was all very impressive stuff and great to see intellectual muscles being flexed so early in the year.

Before we knew it, the first major competition was upon us with the whole house gearing up to have another crack at winning the House Singing Competition. We eventually settled on *Africa* by Toto, with Head of House Oliver Dickson conducting and Chanka Pathinayake accompanying on piano for a third straight year, a contribution for which he was awarded his full colours. Alas, despite by far our strongest performance as a house, we once again had to settle for our traditional placing of "joint fourth". A lot of fun was had by all however, not least the sixth form who, after the annual whinging at the start of the week, ended up performing with real gusto on the day!

Still, there was plenty of talent on show elsewhere in the Michaelmas Term, with an excellent mentoring programme being put together by Deputy Head of House William Cope, strong presentations on historically influential women by Rev Gooding's fourth year tutor group, and five of our sixth formers (plus guest coach Nat Reading) recording an emphatic 8-5 victory for the 2nd XV against Radley with Christopher "rocket-

for-a-boot" Monnery scoring the winning penalty from the half-way line. Elsewhere we saw Eddie Williams involved in partnerships work, Liam Deegan being awarded the prestigious Arkwright Scholarship for Design Technology, and five of our third years contributing to the hugely successful production of *Lord of the Flies*.

The end of term saw the usual inter-house competitions, with some incredibly enthusiastic performances and some notable successes including both the U15 and U18 swimming teams being victorious, meaning that we were overall

winners of the swimming trophy. It is noteworthy that three of the U18 team were in the fifth year with super-sub Edward Jones completing the four man team. Elsewhere the U15 rugby team were narrowly pushed back into second place.

We saw off the term with our celebration assembly where we handed out House Prizes, beautifully handcrafted once again by Joshua Buckingham, followed by the now traditional candlelit carol service in Chapel. My thanks go out to School Chaplain Rev Dr Steer for leading the service.





The Lent Term started with a bang as the fifth years produced some mock results to be proud of, but also showed great maturity in responding to any less positive results. The academic theme continued with our first competitions of 2019 focussing on debating. It turns out that some of our boys are pretty good at arguing (who knew!) with Luca Frauenfeld and Johnnie Welby progressing well in the fifth year event, Edward Jones and Harry Witts making some strong points in the sixth form competition, and Alastair Gray and Felix Kind getting stronger each round before eventually being crowned third year debating champions! Not the only success for Felix this term as he also ended up personally scoring a fifth of all goals recorded by the entire football club across the season!

After the disappointment of cancellation the previous year, the annual Road Relay

competition was back on this year with strong team performance across the full age range. We also had an individual winner in Rowan Miell-Ingram who dominated the fourth year competition.

The inter-house sports competitions were particularly successful at the end of the Lent Term. The U16 waterpolo team of Daniel McNamara, Tom Graham, Archie Griggs, Luca Frauenfeld and Jake Ginks defended their title to once again be crowned champions. Other successes saw James Munday and Louis Ellis both finish second in their respective squash competitions, William Cope winning house pool, and the U18 and U16 football teams finishing second and third in their competitions. The real stars though were the fourth year. Border's were winners of U15 football, ergos, and hockey (in a mixed team with the third year).

The Summer Term is always a busy one, with public and school examinations looming, and farewells to say. Saying goodbye to this crop of Upper Sixth formers was tough to do as they really were a wonderful bunch, but a lovely dinner at the White Hart at Fyfield with boys and tutors was a fitting way to end; Oliver Dickson's speech being a particular highlight.

Elsewhere the glorious sunshine allowed the focus to shift to summer pursuits. There was much success on the river with Daniel McNamara and Tom Graham winning medals in the J16 VIII at the National Schools Regatta, and Daniel Barratt winning a first medal at J14 level. Harvey Jupp led by example, scoring runs with ease as 1st XI cricket captain, and giving the younger cricketers in the house a fantastic role model. The summer also sees DofE really ramp up with dozens of boys involved at Bronze, Silver and Gold level. The end of term competitions also saw much success with Alexander Boorer securing silver in the squash, Seb Muller claiming victory in the tennis, and the tug of war team winning the inaugural competition.

The highlight of the Summer Term though was undoubtedly the athletics competition, where we saw a host of victories. Billy Blomfield, Alfio Boccaccini, and both relay teams were victorious for the third year. Caleb Owusukwaah, Alexander Boorer and Rowan Miell-Ingram all picked up victories in the fourth year. James Munday was our sole individual winner in the sixth form, and, alongside Joshua Ponting, Lucas Ellse, and Ed Bury, made up half of our cross-year relay team who dominated the inaugural Golden Mile relay to cap off the day.

Whilst the third years, fourth years and Lower Sixth may have been having fun in the sun, it was serious business for the fifth years and Upper Sixth who were facing public examinations. Fortunately they did themselves proud with some incredible results and it was a real pleasure to see such delight on the faces of these wonderfully rounded young men on results day.

David Border

Franklin's House

Heads of House for the year were Alasdair Czaplewski and Louis Brosnan; Deputy Heads were John Dickson and Oscar Frost; and House Prefects were Jamie Chick, Daniel Bacon, Didier Delgorge and Oliver Williams. Talented and energetic, they were a most friendly and helpful group, and they set a great tone for the house.

The House Singing Competition was the first arena of inter-house combat. Led by Didier Delgorge and accompanied by Ashwin Tennant, we sang *The Heart Never Lies* by McFly, with hearty sincerity. We were widely held to be the best singers, but fate eluded us this time.

The Michaelmas round of the house sports was soon upon us, and the house did outstandingly well. In the U18 table tennis, always a Franklin's strength, Huba Varady triumphed in the singles, and Kiran Gathani and Alister Jamieson played brilliantly in the doubles to win us first place overall. In rugby the U15s had a fantastic tournament. Tom Robson, Dominic Wood, Samuel Turner, Rufus Cox, Lachlan Borthwick, Alex McPherson and Luke Prior played with skill and energy from the start, and they deservedly ended up as champions. Our U14 swimming team, Christopher Skelton, Johnny James, Benjamin

MacLennan, Jonathan Pannett-Smith and Trystan Moore put in a brilliant performance to win the competition. They won almost every race, and Christopher set a new school record. The overall result in the swimming was that Franklin's came second overall, our best performance ever in the pool.

Next came the Road Relay, a competition in which we have historically done extremely well. Our fourth year team of Luis Vasconcelos, Johnnie Willis-Bund, Jay Patel, and Sebastian McAllan were brilliant and came second in their year. Our third years, Johnny James, Benjamin MacLennan, Christopher Skelton and Jonathan Pannett-Smith were also superb, and also came second in the year, with Johnny James running an astonishing 8.23, a school record for his age group. Our Lower Sixth team, Oliver Elly, Kiran Gathani, Lancelot Wilson and Tom Phillip, went one better; they put in a fantastic run and won their competition with a superb time.

Then came the Lent Term house sports. We put in strong performances in football, the best being in the U14 competition; Jonathan Pannett-Smith, William Blaylock, Samuel Turner, Lachlan Borthwick, Zac Connell and Alex MacPherson played really well to come

second.

Max Hems and Conrad Smith achieved a fine second place in table tennis doubles.

In the U16 water polo, Lawrence Putt, Euan Baldwin, Zach Rhodes, James Robinson and Johnny James battled superbly to come third. The ergo competition went particularly well. Trystan Moore, Josef O'Connor, Rufus Cox and Luke Prior came fourth in the U14s, Harry Watkins, Johnny Stavropoulos, Sam Hayes-Newington and Matei Duta came third in the U15s, and Matthew Hoults, Daniel Woodrow, Lachlan Jones and Samuel King clinched second in U18, despite being very much younger than the opposition. Franklin's achieved a tremendous second place overall. Last but not least, in the shooting competition, James Magé, Alex Oldham, Benjamin MacLennan and Jenson McKay all contended superbly and won the competition outright.

The Summer Term sports competition proved very exciting for us. Eddie Good, Theo Hinnells, Alex McPherson, Oliver Pritchard, Krishen Rao and Hugo Stone came third in the cricket. In the tennis, Cosmo Gooch, Dominic Wood, Luis Vasconcelos, Samuel Turner and Ben Masterson came second overall. In basketball Freddie Coode, Lucas Marsh and Lachlan Borthwick also won second place. In rowing, Sam Hayes-Newington, Harry Watkins, Trystan Moore and Luke Prior came second overall and in squash, Edward Scott Payne and Jake Morris played superbly and were the overall winners.

In summary, totting up the results from all the house sports competitions over the year, Franklin's came fourth overall; and our third years, talented bunch that they are, came first.

There were amazing individual successes in all areas, and the following are selected highlights: Edward Scott Payne is now the top fencer in the country in his age group. Benjamin MacLennan is on his tail, having been crowned U14 southern regional champion. Nicholas Skelton is a national swimming champion, and Christopher Skelton is also a brilliant prospect. Johnny James is one of the





fastest middle distance runners in the country. Ashwin Tennant again proved himself one of the top mathematicians in the UK, and he and Seb Watkins achieved an astonishing perfect set of top grades at GCSE; Seb was awarded a scholarship in recognition of it; Euan Baldwin, Oliver Martin and Conrad Smith also did superbly, only missing a nine in one subject. Johnny Stavropoulos won a silver award in the UK Advanced Linguistics Olympiad, with the highest mark in the school. George Carver won the prestigious Sheriff's Law Prize. Jamie Robson achieved a distinction in his ABRSM-ARSM diploma in singing.

It was a great year for the house, with all boys making progress with their work and Other Half, and cooperating cheerfully with each other in our community. They were brilliantly supported by their tutors, for whose hard work and friendly help I am very grateful. We said goodbye to Neil Hunter who heads off to New Zealand, and au revoir to Lucy Moonen who is having her second baby but will return next year.

David Franklin



James's House

I find myself writing this review of 2018/19 on the eve of the new academic year. With a backdrop of climate change and Brexit protests, there is plenty to worry about, but I'm buoyed by the fact that five members of the sixth form have given up the final day of their holidays to come in and help with the induction of our new boys. These sixth formers are a diversely talented bunch, including someone who has just achieved straight 9s in his GCSEs, someone who was rowing in the first VIII in the fifth form, the A team football captain, one of the biggest improvers at GCSE and one of my Heads of House. Ostensibly it's difficult to say what they all have in common except the navy and silver tie, and yet there is a unity, a willingness to serve others and work for the greater good. They all strive towards the house values of positivity, loyalty, determination, respect and resilience, and all offer optimism (at a time when it is needed most), and for that I am very grateful.

The academic year starting September 2018 brought an incredible third year intake, who at once seemed to understand what the house was about. They got stuck into house singing and helped us make what I felt was a really tuneful fist of *Country Roads* (a popular

choice amongst the boys). Here I am grateful to Jacob Henney for his patience and positive leadership and Alex Lawrence's help once again on the piano. Next year will be our year... The second half of term passed in a blur, as many of the academic hard yards were made, and was brightened by the news that Freddie Nicholson had been placed in the top six in the country in the Google Code-in securing an all-expenses-paid trip to Google HQ in San Francisco. Term ended with a somewhat fruitless campaign in inter-house sports – though we have discovered a third year who can do the butterfly stroke in the shape of Joe Watkiss – a rare thing indeed!

The Lent Term always seems a highlight for me from a house perspective, perhaps it's the prospect of the New Year or the fact that house singing is done and can be forgotten about for another nine months! More likely though it is seeing the house come together as a team, perhaps typified by everyone contributing to the food bank appeal where we collected more than any other house, filled my Seat Ibiza twice over, and supported a huge number of local families, including seven displaced from Syria. Teamwork was also key in our third year quiz team (captained by Mark Taylor) winning the House Challenge competition, and our fifth years (Samuel Miles, James





Gibson and Charlie Franklin) winning inter-house debating for the second year running. I was equally proud of our efforts in the Road Relay where 23 teams successfully completed the course (including two staff teams). Alexander Pennington was the fastest Lower Sixth (second in the school overall) and we had strong showings from teams in the fifth year (second place), Lower Sixth (third place), Upper Sixth (second place) and staff (first place). Across staff and boys there was a 89% turn out and every member of Middle School who wasn't injured, ran. Incredible stuff. Lent also underlined what a depth of theatrical talent we have in the James's with School Prefect Tom Mills and Head of School Howard Hawkes supporting Jacob Henney who played the lead in *Loserville*. Just days before, the hilarious *An Inspector Calls* had seen another James's stalwart (Louis Renouf) playing a lead role (the corrupt Mayor, which Louis assures me had in no way been based on his housemaster!).

The Summer Term got off to a flying (bouncing?) start with a joint house social to Rush Trampoline Park from which we returned with smiles on our

faces and unscathed apart from a pair of glasses lost to a foam pit! Whether we could say that everyone emerged from the Leavers' Dinner unscathed is another matter (!), but it was nice to send off such a great set of house stalwarts in high spirits. I would like to thank Alfie Monger-Godfrey, James Madeley and Billy Haist for all they did as Heads of House. The outgoing Upper Sixth are a year group that I was very fond of and I am very proud of how they did at A Level with a great many of them securing their first choice university place and the likes of Howard Hawkes and Tom Petit gaining a clean sweep of A*s. They hand over to a very capable Lower Sixth, who comprise four school prefects – David Harding, Archie Delafield, Oran Forrestal and Louis Renouf (who will be the third Head of School from the House in four years) - , a great set of house prefects, and two strong, approachable and selfless Heads of House in the form of Archie Bermingham and Alex Lawrence.

The end of the Summer Term allowed us to focus on a few projects, such as starting to turn the house's attention to reducing our carbon footprint, with

Mr Gold's tutor group leading the way by going vegetarian for the week and reporting back in house assembly. It was great to see this environmental gauntlet being picked up by third year Rahul Singh who will act as our Eco Rep and drive this important agenda forward over the coming years. We ended the Summer Term on a high by bolstering our collection of cups and certificates (long overdue!) by winning inter-house athletics at U18 and U15 level, as well as inter-house golf and cricket. The summer break saw the aforementioned (super) set of A-Level results, followed by the fifth years securing incredible GCSEs where James's performed as the (equal) strongest house with five boys gaining straight 8s and 9s (Charlie Franklin, Hugo Leedham, Max McNally, Thomas Rolfe and Benjamin Wright). I would like to thank all the members of James's House for making my fourth year as housemaster probably the most rewarding and look forward to continuing to strive towards making the house a better place together next year.

Simon James

Morgan's House



It is rather a sad moment for me to sit down to write my last article for the Abingdonian as Housemaster of Morgan's. It has been a great honour to lead the house over the last five years, but I know that I leave it in the more than capable hands of Tom Donnelly, under whom I am sure great things will continue to come.

This has been a great year in Morgan's. We may not have won much – indeed we may have come dead last quite a bit – but luckily school life is more

than competitions and the important successes in life are rarely measured in certificates. There is much that the boys of Morgan's have to be proud of. Throughout the house boys have been doing incredible things, from Archie Turnbull and Ben Smith taking the lead role in plays to Charlie Atkinson being selected to represent England for the U18 rugby team, and much in between.

The departing Upper Sixth were the first third year group in Morgan's, and so on a personal note it is nice to be

able to say that I have 'seen them through'. I'd like to thank them for all their support over the years; they have been enthusiastic participators in house life and have done a great job leading the house and setting a good example to others. I'd particularly like to mention house prefects Colm Lambert, James Ashby and Sam Bell. They did a great job and have always been supportive of events and initiatives within the house. Colm's boundless energy will be hard to replace, as will James' quiet authority





and Sam's kindness towards others, particularly in the care that he shows for younger members of the community.

I have been lucky through the last five years to have some wonderful tutors in the house: I would like to thank them all, current and past, for all their help. Their care for the boys is what makes the house, and Abingdon, so special, and I feel very fortunate to have had such wonderful tutors to work with. I'd like to say a particular farewell to the quirky legend that is Nelly Petrov, off for a new life in the Middle East. Nelly was a great tutor, who was very protective of 'her nerds', and always knew what was going on in their lives and how to help. I wish her the very best.

Henry Morgan



O'Doherty's House



The year seems to have flown by and it is only when writing this that I realise just how much we have done and achieved. We welcomed our new third years into the house along with Mr Eames-Jones in September and kicked the house activities off with our annual 5-a-side football and pizza evening. The newly appointed House Prefects and the third year mentors did a grand job of organising this and it was a competitive, yet fun evening. Speaking of football, our new acquisition this year was table football and this has proved to be extremely popular. The best part about it is seeing different year groups playing against each other and establishing friendships. There was a bit of an issue putting it together as we found that we were missing most of the parts but the boys who helped soon rectified this once the second box arrived. I am always really impressed in how the boys take on a challenge and how it brings out the leadership and team spirit in them. Another house activity that brought the boys together was a house quiz and pizza evening - yes pizza again! Raffy Armon-Jones and Dawid Klewicki did a fantastic job as quizmasters and the Upper Sixth produced a challenging and varied set of questions. The boys were extremely

knowledgeable but the staff beat them hands down in the dingbats round!

We once again had a house theme each term and this year these were courage, discovery and collaboration. The courage theme linked into my sabbatical, which was in the second half of the Michaelmas Term. During this time I went outside of my comfort zone and travelled on my own to Uganda, to visit a school for mentally and physically disabled children, and India, where I travelled across the north of the country taking in the magnificent art and architecture. I had the most amazing time and want to thank Mrs Beynon for looking after the house in my absence. The theme in the Summer Term ran alongside our annual House Challenge, which was this year won by team Italy. Having a theme each term encourages the boys to think about things beyond school and it was great hearing different year groups give presentations during house assemblies and in tutor periods.

Throughout the year O'Doherty's House performed to their best in the inter-house competitions. These kicked off with the House Singing. This was a time of extra pressure considering we had won it twice in a

row but everyone rose to the occasion. *Build Me Up Buttercup* was the song of choice and we certainly belted it out under the enthusiastic lead of Henry Steinsberg, our conductor. We didn't secure a podium slot, which is a shame, but we certainly sang our hearts out. Inter-house debating saw us against some very strong teams in some of the opening matches and unfortunately we did not get through to the final stages. All the teams had planned well and delivered their speeches with confidence though and I have high hopes for next year. As a house we always want to go into competitions giving it our very best, even if we might know we are not the strongest in certain fields. This attitude has meant that over the course of the year we were securing consistently high scores in individual competitions. We were overall winners of the badminton in both the U14 and U18, U15 table tennis, U18 football, pool, U16 water polo and the Road Relay event, overall second in rugby, U16 football, U15 ergo, fencing and joint second in hockey, and overall third in swimming, squash and joint third in basketball, cricket, golf, tug-of-war, U14 football and ergo. We were also overall winners of the Inter-house Athletics Competition

with some impressive performances across the board, including some superb track successes in the fourth year and a surprise winning relay team in the Lower Sixth. The sporting year ended with us being crowned as the overall winners of the inter-house sports competitions for the entire year! I am so proud of the boys and their determination and willingness to participate. I wish I could mention every individual and their contribution but there just is not enough space on the page.

All the boys have been kept busy with the Other Half and have enjoyed trips and events during the holidays. Boys have contributed to sports, music, art, publications, drama performances and all host of other activities. There have been academic scholar presentations, not to mention the Summer research and EPQ presentations. Many of the boys were involved in DoE, CCF, Young Enterprise, mentoring and Science Partnership work. Other boys have been busy outside school too through representing clubs, county and even country. This is a huge achievement in itself but to juggle this alongside their academic studies is outstanding.

During the course of the year the Upper Sixth have been pivotal. My Heads of House Charles Hall and Pierre-Louis Peuch have been particular superstars helping me organise events and the day-to-day running of the house. Most of all though, they have been a stellar role model for the younger boys. The same can be said of the House Prefects and I thank Ben Lovejoy, Daniel Cooney, James Bowen, James Stammers, Will Franklin, Jamie Masters, Jack Johnson and Henry Steinsberg for stepping up to the role with diligence. To mark the end of their time at Abingdon, the tutors and I took the Upper Sixth for a meal at the Nag's Head once the stress of exams were over. They are going to be sorely missed. Each one of them has stamped their mark on the house and I am in no doubt that they will go on and make a mark in the future. Here is a little tribute to them:

*The time has come when I have to say goodbye,
And I am truly sad, that is no word of a lie.
Right from the outset you have been supportive and kind,
The best bunch of boys a housemaster could find.
Each one of you has brought to the house something unique
And on many occasions have brightened my week.
Although not a poet I wanted to pen
Something about each one of you young men.
It won't be witty or profound or sublime,
But I can promise you a tacky old rhyme!
James Bowen you have helped me broaden my mind,
Lending me books of a variety of kind.
From the start of the fifth year Ben you were the first one I'd see
And I want to thank you for putting up with the "too cheery" me!
Jamie, your positivity and honest outlook on things
Has always impressed me due to the cheerfulness it brings.
James Morton-Smith you juggle your studies and sport with ease
In a way that would leave most other mortals on their knees!
Whilst not seeing you, Nat, in the house room you would always say
A friendly hello whilst going about your day.
My conversations with Conor always left me wanting to know more
About geography, the gym and skiing galore.
Will, you have been my go to when needing honest feedback and advice
And I have to say your suits are really rather nice. (That is not sarcastic BTW)
We might not have had many long conversations to date
But speaking to you, Andy, about your love of music was great.
I will never forget seeing Henry in Moldova's Got Talent last year
And will miss your endless energy and positive cheer.
James Stammers, your help in all matters of house sports
Has led us to victory whether on the river or courts.
I have always enjoyed times spent with you, Dan,
You are a remarkably thoughtful and kind young man.
Right from the outset, Jack, you have been reliable and strong
Giving up your time to help no matter for how long.
Pierre, you have supported the house with your presence and care
And this is testament to your genuine kindness and natural flair.
Charles, I have enjoyed seeing you grow in confidence in your House role
And I consider you a genuinely fun loving and talented soul.
I could write so much more but my poetry is poor
And you all have so much more exciting things in store.
So go out into the world and shine brightly and strong.*

To end I would like to express my huge thanks to all the tutors and congratulations to Miss Williamson on the birth of her son, and thank Mrs Preston for looking after her tutor group with care and interest.

Emily O'Doherty



Pygotts' House

Welcome to the first Pygott's House end of year report. Replacing a well-loved, charismatic and inspirational leader is never easy as people as diverse as Anthony Eden, David Moyes and Chris Evans have all found out to their cost. Rob Southwell-Sander built up a great house over recent years and it's been my pleasure to take it over. Hopefully it won't end in the equivalent of the Suez Crisis!

To business. The first house event of the year was house singing. Mohsen Ansari and Henry Muller took charge and went to extreme (spreadsheet based) lengths to pick the perfect song – *California Dreamin'* by the Mamas and the Papas. They did a great job of marshalling the house and we came a very creditable second overall. We only didn't win because, in the words of the judge, "we looked utterly miserable." Something to work on for next year...

We were successful in the Michaelmas inter-house sports competitions. Bertie Walpole and Nicholas Staroske won the U14 Badminton, Kane Watson won the pool and Will Taylor and Joshua Massey-Thompson brought home the squash trophy. The term ended with the annual house carol service led by Rev Steer. Oliver Judge, Ediz Hunter, Oliver Paton, Arthur Boulton and Henry Muller read beautifully.

In the Lent Term over half the house took part in the Road Relay, 25 of whom ran it in under 11 minutes (it took me 13). Of particular note were the third year team of Will d'Arcy, Henry Channon, Robin Hambidge and Marc Sheriff who ran the fastest third year time in the event's 50 year history (37 minutes 22 seconds), breaking the fourth year record as well in the process and beating every single Upper Sixth team.

There were many victories in the Lent Term inter-house sports. While most of these were moral victories, somehow we managed to win U14 and U15 house football and the (massive) football trophy overall. The U15 team did incredibly well to hang on in their final game against Austin House. Kane





Watson put in a particularly memorable performance in goal. We also won the fencing!

The Lent Term also brought the house quiz and house debating. Sadly victory was elusive, but there were some excellent performances. The fifth form team of Aidan Coster, Patrick Hannon and Kit Matthews made the final of the debating and the sixth form team of Henry Pickess and Louis Yue did well to win their first round match. A



highlight was seeing the incredible preparation of Robin Collins and Naoki Parker in the fourth year competition.

Victories abounded in the Summer Term inter-house sports. Jai Biswas Gladwin won the Middle School squash trophy while Matthew Buhler and Alex d'Arcy won the croquet. There were other notable performances from Robin Hambidge and Nicholas Owen in the golf and Alexander Bryant who competed in the squash with no knowledge whatsoever of squash.

Green Army spirit was in abundance on sports day and we fielded an almost complete team (no minor feat). The third years did us proud, coming second overall. Adam Rashid won the 100m B event, Robin Hambidge won the 800m B event, Henry Channon won the 400m A event, in the second fastest time of anyone in the school, and Thomas Harding won the long jump B event. The fourth year came fifth overall with Ben Dray winning our only victory in the discus. The sixth form should be praised for their wonderful team spirit. As the day dawned we had half a team, when it came to the crunch they all pulled together. Special mention to the guys who competed in events whose rules they barely understood. David Grozin, Louis Bevan, Gabriel Tribe, we salute you. Henry Insley brought us our only

victory — in the 1500 metres. Sadly this wasn't enough to lift us above eighth place overall. However, last year we came last, so we're on the up!

Academically this has been a splendid year. The house managed to amass a total of 765 commendations over the year (100 more than last year) and Mr Taylor's third year tutor group got the most with 213. Ross Tselos (for the 2nd year running) and Edward Saunders won the top commendation award at the end of the year with 31 commendations each. The Middle School won a large number of academic prizes at the Middle School awards evening – namely, Edward Saunders, Ross Tselos, Geordie Anderson, Ediz Hunter, and Naoki Parker. Oliver Simpson won the award for the most Head's Praises with 5 (for his amazing contributions to school music) and was closely followed by Henry Channon and Will d'Arcy.

My special thanks to Henry Muller (Head of House), Mohsen Ansari and Noah Walker (Deputy Heads of House) and all of the tutors. I've thoroughly enjoyed my first year in charge, and that's largely due to the spirit of the boys and the tutors. It's people that make places and these guys are the best. Bring on next year!

Richard Pygott

Lower School



The new academic year started with a very exciting development for the boys of Lower School in the shape of a brand new Houseroom space in the former Lower Library. After several years of planning (and a not inconsiderable amount of last minute painting and furniture installation), the new space was opened on the First Year Induction Day and it was clear from day one that the new “zoning” arrangement which laid out dedicated areas for playing games, quiet reading, general chatting, and cards and chess was going to work very well. The boys were quick to make good use of the new facility and older boys jealously stared in at the amazing new Games Room as they lined up for lunch, while there were times in the first few weeks when it was difficult for the boys to get on the new air hockey table due to members of the school’s Senior Leadership Team constantly wanting a game. The Lower School Housemaster meanwhile was now installed in a bigger office that gave him a much better view of what was going on in the Houseroom and allowed him to display a much bigger selection of Star Wars memorabilia!

As ever Lower School boys have been very busy this year and have thrown themselves fully in to all aspects of school life with energy and enthusiasm. It is difficult to pick out only a few

highlights but it is always good to see the boys working well as a team and so moments like their performance of *Hall of Fame* at the House Singing Competition, the U13A rugby team’s plucky draw against Guildford, or their support for each other to overcome fears and obstacles on the two adventure trips do stand out. Many of the boys also had considerable individual success and, although space precludes mentioning all of these, particular praise goes to Arthur Robertson for his conducting debut leading Second Orchestra in their performance of Beethoven’s *Hymn to Joy* at the Summer Concert, Harry Winsey for winning a silver medal at the British Tumbling Team Finals, Daniel Chamberlin for being a leading light on the Environment Committee, Frederick Beneat on being selected for the English U16 bridge squad, Zander Wallwork on being declared the Lower School chess champion, and Alexander Darbishire for representing Oxfordshire at the National Schools Cross Country Championships in Leeds. Special mention should also go to those who were awarded scholarships at the end of the Lent Term on the basis of their performance in the various assessments: Thomas Chorley (art), Jack Higgs (design technology), Philip Kimber (academic), Toby Lee (design technology), Toby Pinnington

(academic) and Can Tugcetin (music).

The boys have certainly shown their competitive spirit this year and have enjoyed taking each other on in various inter-tutor group competitions, some physical, some more cerebral, over the three terms. The last few weeks of the academic year saw them battling it out on the athletics track, tennis court, swimming pool and cricket pitch, as well as testing out their maths and vocabulary in a new Countdown Challenge. 2H had been in imperious form for much of the year so it was not a surprise when they topped the table this year, but the first year competition was incredibly close and on the penultimate day of competition it was still possible for all of the three groups to win. 1P, either inspired or terrified by the sight of Mr Price screaming them on in the final day’s tug of war, just pipped 1G and 1M – Mr Moore and Mrs McRae are already plotting revenge and it looks likely that things will be very close again next year.

The boys were fortunate to hear from several visiting speakers over the course of the year including Caspar Craven, who told the inspiring story of how he sailed all the way round the world with his young family in 2016, and Al Sylvester, who spoke about the challenges he faced when leading the RAF’s first unsupported attempt on the



Geographic South Pole. The message speakers such as these gave about the importance of teamwork, of staying focussed on your goals, and of being resourceful and resilient will certainly stand the boys in good stead as they move up the school.

In the last week of term we welcomed Paralympian Talan Skeels Piggins as our guest at the annual Be the Best Celebration to hand out the end of year prizes. Academic Prizes were awarded to Jack Veal (1G), John Cairns (1M), Oliver Veal (1P), Philip Kimber (2C), Tom Woodrow (2H) and Toby Pinnington (2J). Matteo Bignone, Harry Gee, Philip Kimber, Thomas Mennie, Dillan Patel and Khadim Sagna were

presented with Baker Awards. The Broadbent Cup for Sporting Excellence went to Jack Veal, the Lower School Fencing Trophy to Harrison Blumfield, the Cooper Cup for Excellence in Reading to Alexander Lees, the Dillon Cup for Service to Olly Tibble and the Woodgett Cup to Addison Hill. As ever it was when compiling the citations for these awards and on noting how many boys had been awarded colours ties and other awards over the course of the year, that one realised just how much the boys do inside and outside the classroom.

The departing second years have certainly made the most of all the opportunities on offer to them during



their time in Lower School and fully embraced our "be the best you can be" ethos – I am sure that they will continue to do so in Middle School. The first years have also had a strong start to their time at secondary school and are well placed now to help the new first years settle in in September. My thanks go to all the boys for helping our first year in the new houseroom be such a positive one and to the amazing team of tutors who give up so much of their time to support and guide the boys so skilfully.

Adam Jenkins



Staff Farewells

Jing Li

Jing comes from Nanjing in China which is an area where the four seasons are very distinct. Despite being busy, her home city is very peaceful and modern and she really loves living there.

During her year as Mandarin Assistant at Abingdon, she was hoping to learn much about Western education systems, to learn more about the UK and to improve her English. She also wanted to reflect on herself and observe how different she would be when away from home for an extended period of time as she would normally visit her home in China at least once a month.

She feels she has indeed discovered not only much about the UK but also about herself in her year here and she believes that the awareness of the differences in education systems will be really useful for her in the future.

She was very involved in the Chinese Department and her highlights at Abingdon included much of her own teaching such as the fun with languages sessions, the lesson she taught for

the Spanish exchange group, a poetry performance in Oxford and a Chinese cookery lesson. She found Abingdon a beautiful and peaceful town and the people very friendly and helpful. She also travelled a lot to cities such as Manchester, York and Liverpool, which she enjoyed.

The two things she will not miss much are chasing after boys to attend assistant lessons and the food, as she found it very different from home and a little difficult to get used to it. Ever positive, however, she says it sparked her motivation to improve her own cooking.

We will miss her very much and wish her all the best for the future.

Alexandra von Widdern

Fernando Sanchez Lopez

Fernando hails from Spain, a little town called Ávila, which is sunny but very cold in winter, quiet and beautiful. On his return, he is most looking forward to seeing his family and friends again.

He came to the UK hoping to improve

his English as he had never been abroad for extended periods of time before. In addition to that, it was his first 'serious' job, so he felt it was a good challenge to test his ability to adapt to new situations away from home. For him, the year as Abingdon's Spanish Assistant has been a very worthwhile experience in which he has learnt a lot and which has allowed him to make new friends.

He found Abingdon very peaceful, while Oxford reminded him of his university town Salamanca. He also visited Bristol and has more travel plans for the remainder of his time in the UK. What he will not miss about the UK will be the proverbial weather, the spiders and the high food prices. Chasing after boys not attending his lessons and some of the British food would also be added to that list.

His year at Abingdon brought numerous highlights for him, for example the MFL debating competition in which two of his students made it to the final and meant he experienced that wonderful sense of joint success. Other highlights included the MFL sixth form European Day of Languages dinner



Jackie Simpson



Jackie joined the Economics and Business Department in September 2018 on a one-year contract. With her husband teaching in the Chemistry Department and her son at the Prep School, Jackie joined with plenty of knowledge of the school but with little knowledge of teaching economics or business given she hadn't taught before and her degree was in chemistry! With an impressive background in business and finance behind her though, Jackie was undaunted by this challenge which she approached with her typical energy and enthusiasm.

Her lessons were always meticulously planned and her pupils really appreciated the efforts that Jackie went to – particularly when it came to making Friday afternoon Kahoot quizzes! Jackie's efforts were also very much appreciated by her colleagues within the Department as she was always a cheerful, self-reliant person who was happy to carry out any job, no matter how big or small, which needed doing.

Outside of the classroom, Jackie was always willing to volunteer to get involved and help out where she could whether this be through the CCF or by scribing for A Level Chemistry candidates. Jackie's year in the CCF was an undoubted success for all parties with her throwing herself into it wholeheartedly, attending camps and going on several trips. In



in September and an outing by all the assistants to a language event where they cracked the escape room and left as the winners of the event.

Receiving the 'Please Don't Go' award from the Upper Sixth leavers shows how much Fernando will be missed.

Alexandra von Widdern

Birte Hellwig

Birte comes from the north of Germany, from Wilhelmshaven, which is a small city by the sea. The area is flat and windy, which is why it is populated by wind turbines to harness alternative energy. She is looking forward to seeing her friends and the sea again on her return.

From her year in the UK, she was hoping to gain good experience of working with students, travel and to learn more about the UK, improve her English and make new friends. She feels that it has been a good experience and that having to step outside her comfort zone at times has really helped her personal development.

When she first arrived as German Assistant in Abingdon, she was surprised

at how small it was, however, this has allowed her to really get to know the town and she has found it nice and peaceful. Having Oxford, London, Heathrow and a good train network at her disposal meant she could gain many cultural experiences and visit places like Dublin. She took particular delight in hearing such a wide variety of accents on her travels. Fish and chips on a Friday in the dining hall was another favourite. The one thing she will not miss about the UK are the high train fares.

Her highlights at Abingdon were numerous: the Common Room social events, accompanying boys to events such as the debating competition, and setting up her own exchange project with third years as a cultural ambassador with a link to Trier. She truly enjoyed seeing the boys progress in her time here resulting in their ability to have normal conversations with her in German.

We will miss Birte's gentle, quiet and efficient presence in the Department and wish her the best of luck for the future – possibly even in the UK!

Alexandra von Widdern

her year with us, Jackie also ran a very successful day of business competitions for local prep schools and organised a sixth form trip to the Mini plant in Cowley.

Jackie was a fantastic colleague and she now leaves us to complete a PGCE in chemistry at Oxford University next year. She will undoubtedly be missed and we wish her all the best of luck with this next step in her teaching career.

Adam Hepworth

Duncan Miller

Duncan Miller joined the English Department in September 2018, having previously taught English at Shiplake College. He quickly established himself as a creative, dynamic teacher, always keen to try new things in the classroom. These attributes also served him well in his role as Head of Key Stage 3 English, taking steps to marry up the first to third year curriculum with the new GCSE specification, working with Graham Gardner to generate reading lists for students and organising the visit of author Martin Stewart for World Book Day.

Outside the classroom, Duncan threw himself into Abingdon School life. A keen triathlete, he helped with school athletics and in the Road Relay saved the English Department team from the ignominy of last place with an excellent time. He also coached rugby and football and made a significant contribution to the boarding programme, as well as winning the 2018/19 prize for 'shortest

commute', with his back door visible from his classroom desk. We wish Duncan all the very best as he returns to Shiplake to develop his skills in Learning Support.

Matthew Coolin

James Latham

James has been a superb member of the Sport and PE Department for the past three years. When James joined in September 2016 as a Graduate Sports Assistant he had just returned from a year in Australia where he was playing for Mornington Cricket Club in Melbourne, prior to this he had studied Human Geography at Leeds where he also represented the university at 1st team level in both cricket and hockey.

In his time here James has coached numerous rugby, hockey and cricket sides and has certainly been able to pass his knowledge of all three sports on to boys from the Lower School all the way through to the 1st teams. He has driven up the standards in the U16 hockey and provided an excellent platform for the boys into the senior sides.

In James' second year he was instrumental in the wider use of the refurbished fitness suite and the greater focus on Athletic Development. He not only enabled more boys to access the fitness suite but he also made the environment welcoming to all ability levels; we are already seeing fitter and healthier students at Abingdon because of his hard work.

To this day James is still playing representative cricket back in Hertfordshire and is a keen golfer when the busy schedule of an Abingdon teacher allows. There are many unforgettable moments surrounding James and his time at the school and I am sure we will not forget his 'shocking' blonde hair on return after an Easter break — we have never been able to confirm just how natural his hair colour has been.

James leaves us as a well-rounded sports professional who is looking to explore new opportunities in the city as well as continuing to expand his personal training business. We wish him well for the future.

Pete Bignell



Nelly Petrov

Nelly Petrov joined Abingdon in 2010. She came from Kennet School in Reading, where she had worked as a lab technician, before training as a teacher. She quickly proved herself as a very good and hard working teacher, who really cared about her pupils. With her youthful outlook and Gothic temperament she brought a breath of fresh air to the Physics Department, keeping us in touch with current affairs and news from Reading Festival!

She was particularly inspiring and enthusiastic with students who found the subject difficult, always taking the time to help the weaker students achieve their full potential, and her results with lower ability sets were particularly impressive.



She really got to know her students on a personal level and listened to their problems and cared about them long before it became fashionable to focus on mental health and wellbeing.

Nelly was a boarding tutor in School House, which she very much enjoyed, and started legendary games such as "Mafia". Her sunny disposition at breakfast had to be seen to be believed. With her own multi-cultural background, coming from Russia and Israel by way of the United States and Ireland, she was able to understand and empathise with many of the difficulties that our overseas boarders face.

As a qualified swimming coach she gave a lot of time and effort on the pool side. Her biggest commitment outside the classroom, however, was undoubtedly the science clubs, she ran, both Lower School science club and Middle School engineering clubs. Over many years groups of boys learnt to make rockets, use air pressure to crush drinks cans and even sample their DNA, as well as create lots of explosions.

Nelly is undoubtedly something of a science "geek" herself, and she fostered an environment where "Nelly's nerds" could feel at home, and many of the younger boys would trail her around like a scientific Pied Piper of Hamelin, hoping to learn more or to tell her their tales of scientific endeavour. On Open Morning, she would spend the whole time on the Van der Graaff Generator, dishing out electric shocks to potential pupils and their parents, until health and safety rules banned it. Her poise and sangfroid as she wrestled the Biology Department snake back into its home on one occasion only fuelled the rumours that she had been trained by the Secret Service.

On the Geneva trip she loved visiting Cern and particularly enjoyed sampling Swiss culture with the fondue restaurant being a highlight. She loved attending the Griffin Ball every year, meeting the parents and saying goodbye to her charges.

She leaves us for the sunnier climate of Dubai, where she is now Head of Physics at Sunmarke International School.

John Brooks



Andrew English

Andrew English has contributed in many ways during his time at Abingdon. Having studied philosophy at Lampeter for his first degree, he gained an MLitt from further study at Oxford. He then retrained to teach mathematics and taught at Reed's School, Cobham and Emanuel School in South London.

Originally recruited to teach the full range of maths sets, coach rowing and contribute to the CCF, during the last 21 years he has also taught Lower School science, general studies philosophy and tutored in Franklin's for 12 years. Forthright in his dealing with tutees, he pushed them academically and encouraged them to think about ways to improve. He believed that boys should work to improve themselves, rather than for rewards. He encouraged reading and chess playing in tutor periods, and also tried such innovations as teaching them to juggle!

His most significant contribution has been to raising the standard of chess at Abingdon. Andrew has been fully committed and hugely enthusiastic, running internal competitions (cups for the Lower, Middle and Upper School and interhouse chess), and taking part in a large number of external competitions: the National Schools Chess Competition, the UK Chess Challenge and the Oxford and District Chess league. He has also made use of the giant chess set and run an annual simultaneous display to generate interest and engagement with chess activities. Working with Grand

Master Peter Wells, he has developed a three yearly cycle of puzzles for students to attempt each week, sharpening their tactical skills. His dedication, energy and enthusiasm have been greatly appreciated by the boys and chess has certainly flourished in his time at the helm.

Andrew has now taken early retirement, aiming to complete a book on Wittgenstein's philosophy of mathematics.

David Dawswell, David Franklin and Martin Poon





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