



The Abingdonian

2018





The Abingdonian

2017 – 2018

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Contents

Editorial	2
Head's Foreword	3
Michaelmas Term	4
Lent Term	16
Summer Term	42
Inter-House Sport Results	75
House Reports	76
Staff Farewells	96

Editorial



It is always compelling to look back over a year at Abingdon and reflect on the diverse range of activities and events that have taken place. We hope that this issue of *The Abingdonian* does justice to all the enterprise and achievements of the pupils and staff.

Academically, 2017/18 was very noteworthy and GCSE and A Level results were once again very pleasing across the board. In addition the Other Half continued to thrive, providing many clubs that allowed the boys to expand their interests outside the classroom. A wide variety of drama productions took place throughout the year, hundreds of boys were representing the School each week in various sporting arenas, and music and the arts flourished. Numerous trips saw Abingdonians travel across the globe, offering exhilarating opportunities for pupils to learn about the world around them.

Many thanks go to the lead editor, Mr Jenkins, and to the entire pupil editorial team of Billy Backhouse, Rory Bishop, Sam Hayes-Newington, Anderson Lai, Andreas Lo, Freddie Nicholson, 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, 4AMB

Head's Foreword



A year in the life of a school encapsulates so much. The arrival of new pupils and staff, the seasonal rituals and celebrations at the start and end of term, our fortnightly routines of lessons and activities, the challenge of exams and the exhilaration of results, the adrenalin rush of sport, performances, trips and expeditions. In leading Abingdon, it is such a great pleasure to be able to witness the life of a busy community, committed to opportunity for all while achieving the exceptional. I savour the chance to see what our pupils are up to, to drop into lessons or stand on the touchline, to listen to concerts or eavesdrop on debates.

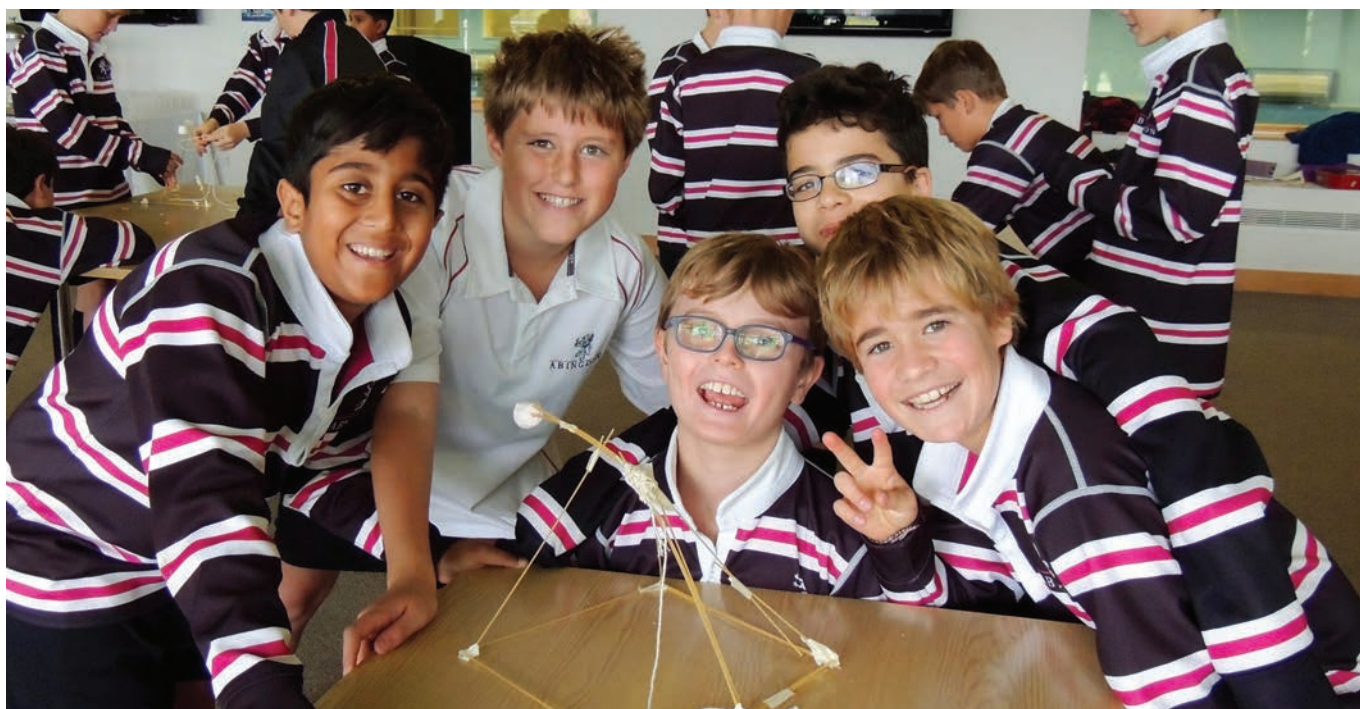
A great strength of our school is the space it affords pupils simply to be themselves. This is achieved through the scale and ambition of the Other Half as well as the breadth and range of the curriculum but the quality of relationships is also key; not least the respect that Abingdonians show to their schoolmates whatever their preferences or particular abilities might be.

This makes Abingdon a special and rewarding place to be and we are fortunate that this latest edition of *The Abingdonian* captures the rhythms and routines of 2017-18, as well as the triumphs and successes that pupils and staff have enjoyed together.

I am grateful to Mr Jenkins and his editorial team for all the work that they have put in to produce this magazine. I very much hope you enjoy reading it.

Michael Windsor

Michaelmas 2017



My First Week

I am thoroughly enjoying Abingdon School so far and I am finding all of my lessons exciting, particularly Latin and Science. I like them because they are very different to subjects I did at my previous school. I could hardly believe it when I saw just how many activities we could choose from in the Other Half. I am very lucky to have come to this school!

Alexander Lees, 1MWL

My first week at Abingdon felt very different to primary school, mostly because it is much bigger and there are a lot more older people. It's a lot more independent but there are plenty more opportunities. I really like doing all the activities and I am looking forward to many more in the future.

Theo Scampton, 1MWL

I really enjoyed my first week here at Abingdon. I was made very welcome by all the second year pupils, and the

food was really nice compared to my old school! I have enjoyed travelling on the bus, meeting all the new teachers and I have enjoyed the wide range of sports and activities. My favourite lesson so far has been Geography, as I seem to be constantly laughing!

Maxwell Tonkinson, 1SW

I was a bit nervous on Monday as I wanted to make a good first impression. As I got out of the car, I repeatedly fiddled with my tie as I tried to smarten myself up and look presentable. Though, before long, I started to settle in and really enjoy the activities I did. Meeting my second year mentor seemed very comforting, since he went to my primary school.

Toby Pinnington, 1AJ

Before my first day I felt nervous and found the whole prospect of secondary school a bit daunting. After this first week, all my worries have disappeared! I have managed to understand where most places are without asking and have

really enjoyed the Other Half activities that I have done. All in all I have loved my first week in Abingdon School and can't wait till the next one!

Matteo Bignone, 1AJ

I really enjoyed my first week and I feel I am getting to know my way around. While everything is a bit busier than at primary school, I am getting used to it.

Highlights of the week included Chess Club and Latin lessons, the latter I particularly enjoyed because it was something that I had never done before.

Philip Kimber, 1MWL

I have really enjoyed Abingdon so far, from the moment I stepped in the door I felt very welcome! Wherever I go there has been another pupil to guide me or give a sense of comfort. All the lessons have been enjoyable and I have got to grips with almost everything! I can't imagine what great things I am going to experience at Abingdon next!

Luke Harden, 1AJ



I've really enjoyed my first week, all the teachers are really nice, the food is much better than my former school's food and the variety of clubs give me so many different opportunities.

I have loved the science and shooting clubs in particular and I think I'm making some new friends! Overall, I would say that my first week has gone amazingly.

Edward Hodges, 1MWL

I have really enjoyed Abingdon thus far, there are so many fun other half activities that the school has to offer and it has been really tough choosing from them. The lessons have been consistently fun and exciting. There are so many activities in sports and I loved my PE lessons in particular. I am really looking forward to doing drama in the amazing Amey Theatre as well as DT as I can test out all the new equipment. I am really excited to be going to such an amazing school and it is a big difference to going to a my previous and comparatively much smaller school.

Toby Lee, 1MWL

My first week has been full of great opportunities and stacks of fun. I have enjoyed the other half activities most of all, I do lots of sport in and out of school



and it is one of the reasons I came to Abingdon. I love the atmosphere of pupils running to classes and the bell ringing two feet away from you in the lunch queue. Altogether it has been an amazing (and tiring) first week.

Fergus Chettleburgh, 1MWL

I have had brilliant first week at Abingdon. I love all the options which are offered to me. I enjoyed all the lessons which I haven't done before, also I enjoyed how the teachers push you, but are always there to help. I found it weird when I went on the bus on the first day, but I got used to it.

Tom Woodrow, 1SW

Abingdon School has been a whole new experience for me because normally at my old school we would have stayed in the same classroom all day; whereas, in Abingdon you are in a different classroom for each lesson. I found my first week at my new school very enjoyable even though it is a lot bigger compared to my primary school and it is easy to get lost which happened to me last week three times. I now feel quite confident because I've learnt the locations and the timings of my lessons now. I'm enjoying lessons here at Abingdon and all my teachers are really encouraging and if you do not feel so confident they will always be there for you.

Can Tugcetin, 1AJ



House Singing

The winning House Singing entry this year came again from O'Doherty's; *Fallen* by Imagine Dragons. The judge, Mr Gladstone, Director of Music at Radley College, admired the great start, the tightness of the band, the clarity of the words, the variety of dynamics and the brave ending - a calculated risk that paid off handsomely.

School House came in second with the song *All Star* by the unfortunately named group, Smash Mouth. Theirs had a strong energetic and engaging start, some effective legato singing and strong direction from Jeremy Salkeld. The cardboard Shrek cut-out was felt to be somewhat unnecessary, however.

Third place was given jointly to Southwell-Sander's with *Sweet Caroline* and Lower School with *I Just Can't Wait to be King* from *The Lion King*. The former house was complimented for its successful use of harmony in the introduction, a stylish trumpet countermelody, and a well-controlled performance with an excellent conductor in Henry Muller, who brought great attention to detail in sustaining notes. Lower School were congratulated for some effective choreography, a confident sound and strong piano accompaniment, even though they were in danger of over-ramping the "cute"



factor with an appearance at the end of a stuffed toy Simba!

Congratulations to all the 1000 participating singers, their housemasters and their conductors! There was a great atmosphere throughout the afternoon of enjoyment, enthusiasm and healthy competition.

Michael Stinton

Some of the conductors share their thoughts on the competition below:

Austin House

Inevitable was the difficulty of the job, but we all pulled through - (probably) not with regards to musicality, but

definitely in terms of enthusiasm. Winning almost seemed not an option, given the fierce competition between ten Houses, but even more daunting was to stimulate the excitement of the House - after all, not everyone likes to sing, and House Singing makes this fact all the more evident. I wanted my House to win (which explains the ambitious arrangement of the 'mashup'), but I had an even stronger desire to make House Singing 2017 a unique and memorable one for the House. Rehearsal after rehearsal, we scrapped more and more of the harmonies I had written in, but with this came precious and valued enthusiasm, rarely seen in this annual event. Before I knew it, we were all practically "chanting" (not to



mention that the song deliberately had a chant towards the end), but I was so entranced by the engagement exhibited by all my House peers that I did not mind. Eventually, all the musical quality that was imbued into the arrangement was pretty much thrown out of the window, and what was left was sheer enthusiasm. And that's what made our performance - and the entire process of preparing and rehearsing - so enjoyable. We all got a great laugh out of this performance, and though 2017 may not have been the best year - musically speaking - for House Singing, it was undeniably a memorable one for Austin House.

Brooklyn Han, 7RP

Border's

It is impossible to deny that the Border's House singing process got off to a chaotic start. With a change of conductor after the first rehearsal followed by a series of song changes that ultimately resulted in us performing our original song, our prospects for the final performance looked bleak after the first few rehearsals. However, with continued enthusiasm for the song and the competition, our performance slowly developed in complexity and quality.

Our final delivery of *Seven Nation Army* incorporated an acapella baseline as well as a brilliant solo from Oliver Dickson,

which came together to form a well rounded song that the House threw themselves into. The performance on the day perfectly demonstrated the enthusiasm and dedication that Border's House had for the competition this year. With the upcoming music talent in the younger years of our House, I am confident that the future has only positive things in sight.

Ben Hall, 7DCB

Lower School

I was delighted to be chosen as conductor and to have such an opportunity to lead and sing to the rest of the school. I truly loved the experience and would do it again in a heartbeat. I am over the moon with the amazing result JOINT 3RD!

This has been a great achievement for me. I am extremely grateful to the rest of the House for working with me and I think that everyone enjoyed themselves on the stage due to the fun song choice. Walking onto the stage I felt extremely nervous; I was a deer in headlights and I knew that if our House hadn't done so well, I could sense that most of the responsibility lay on my shoulders but once we started singing all the stage-fright drained away.

From the front I thought it sounded great but I knew our competition was tough and feared that we might not get

placed, but it was a huge relief when our position was read out. I was elated! I am graced to have such an experience as this my passion .

Archie Wood, 2HFCP

Southwell-Sander's

I found the House Singing a very positive experience. There was a stark difference from the three years previously as we were directly in the driving seat of preparing our House song. In Southwell's we worked as a team, Mohsen Ansari and I planned the song together beforehand so that when we went into the rehearsals we had a clear plan of what we were going to do. From the beginning Nicholas Lockett played the piano and Tom Woods played drums. Later on Mohsen played the the trumpet as this was a particular feature of our song - *Sweet Caroline*. In the first few rehearsals as a House we just tried to learn the lyrics and sing the song through. We then tried to add more harmonies as we went along and we found that certain harmonies worked better than others. I found conducting a really enjoyable experience because it was fun leading from the front and having a direct effect. It was also quite nice throwing in some different ideas that other conductors in our House had used in the past.

Henry Muller, 6NSH



Classics Trip

Last October the annual Classics Trip took us to Provence in the south of France, so named because from the second century BC it was a province of the Roman Empire. Its conquest is famously described in Caesar's *On the Conquest of Gaul* – the Roman name for modern France and other neighbouring parts of Europe. We were able to see the extent to which the Romans reshaped the environment for the local inhabitants not only by building important roads, bridges and aqueducts, but also by taking care of other aspects of people's lives with magnificent temples, amphitheatres and triumphal arches. We visited Nîmes, Vaison-la-Romaine, Orange, Marseilles, Avignon, and stayed in Arles.

My favourite monument from the whole trip was the spectacular Pont du Gard, an aqueduct near Nîmes, for which we had a memorable tour guide who informed us on many occasions that it is misleadingly called a bridge ('pont'). It is considered to be so spectacular because it has three levels of arches, the top one carrying the channel of

water running from the source to Nîmes for its 50,000 inhabitants, a distance of 31 miles even though a direct route would be only 12 miles. This was an engineering feat because they had to maintain a gentle, downhill gradient consistently along the entire aqueduct. Equally impressive was the theatre at

Orange which is the best preserved of any Roman theatre having the stage wall and a statue of Emperor Augustus. These are both extremely large-scale monuments: the theatre stage wall was 103 metres long and 37 metres high, and the building is still used today.



We also visited the remains of the old Roman town in Vaison-la-Romaine, including a beautiful mosaic of a peacock. The Romans also built a bridge there which, although built 2,000 years ago, has survived numerous floods which modern bridges have not withstood.

A prominent feature of Roman rule was the celebration of success in war, not least since many of the towns were built around a core of veteran soldiers. The triumphal arch at Orange was built to honour those veterans who had fought against the German tribes in the Gallic

Wars. The carved panels depict scenes of military victory: the chained prisoners, war chariots, and captured shields were a stark reminder to the local population of Roman prowess in war.

Another stunning building we observed in Nîmes was the Maison Carrée, a Roman temple dedicated to the adopted grandsons of Augustus who both died at a young age. We were reminded that thanks to the Pax Romana (the peace created as a result of the Roman conquest of Gaul), the local population could develop their culture and peacefully trade with each

other rather than put their resources into fighting nearby tribes.

We all thoroughly enjoyed the trip and seeing a great variety of monuments, built to last and to show off the power and wealth of the Roman Empire. Being there helped to understand the scale in which the Romans built and their ambition to impose their way of life over their conquered territories, a way of life which has continued to shape Provence until the modern day.

Danny Lloyd, 7OTL





Black River Bridge

This year's Lower School play which was performed in December was *Black River Bridge*, a new play specially written for the school by Andy Cargill, and directed by Mr McDonnell. The play was about the role of child soldiers in the American Civil War and the devastating effect of the war on their lives.

The rehearsal process was extremely fun and it was fascinating to learn about the American Civil War, a subject we previously knew little about. As the play has lots of action scenes in it this led to some slightly chaotic rehearsals to begin with because we only had one hour a week to rehearse and there were lots of fast moving scenes to devise. However once we had done a full run through in the Amey Theatre everything came together. The most difficult scene to perform was the final battle of the titular Black River Bridge. In this scene the cast was split into three groups who had to stick together, repeatedly running

across and behind the stage to portray the different points in the battle. This was difficult for each group to coordinate, but in the end it was executed well and we worked effectively as an ensemble.

Two of the things that contributed to it becoming a really interesting performance were the music and the special effects. The effects included large projections of real boy soldiers from the Civil War onto a gauze curtain, a fog machine and different colour lights and battle sound effects.

I played a child soldier, called Orion Howe, who had run away from his home to join the army during the American Civil War, which took place from 1861-65. Orion Howe was a real soldier who fought on the Union side against the Confederates. It is estimated that up to 750,000 people died in this war, including many child soldiers and drummer boys. Orion Howe himself dies during the battle scene in the play. I found it difficult to play the part at first because I had to do an American accent, which I had never done before, and it took a while to understand

the story of the battle which the play portrays. However it was interesting because we got to learn about the American Civil War and it made us think about the implications of what it would have been like to be a child soldier caught up in that war.

Another reason for it being a fantastic show was how all the cast members and crew performed as an ensemble. There was great teamwork between the whole cast which led to a great performance. The show would not have been possible if it wasn't for the Amey Theatre Technical Crew who helped backstage as well as dealing with special effects. The show was very exciting and we were all a bit nervous, but once we had done our first performance the nerves went away. Special thanks to Mr McDonnell, Edward Hodges, Kevin Yuan, Matthew Hui, Alvin Tam, Dominic Swain, Miss Fever and Mr Lloyd.

Lachlan Borthwick, 2SCVM



Community Service

Twenty musicians, fifteen prizes, eighteen quiz questions, two big boxes of chocolates, ten bouquets of flowers, eighty mince pies, eighty slices of fruit cake and two hundred and forty finger sandwiches equals a Community Service

tea party.

Each term the Community Service volunteers host a tea party in the school dining hall. This is a much anticipated event by both boys and Abingdon residents and it provides a lovely focus and culmination to the wide programme of visiting that goes on during the term. The boys enjoy inviting the ladies and gentlemen, who they have visited, back to their school. Two students have

great fun as Masters of Ceremonies introducing the eclectic range of raffle prizes from jigsaw puzzles to scented candles and hoping that they will pronounce the names of the flowers correctly in the gardening round of the quiz. We have been hosting three tea parties a year for at least 18 years and they have become a regular diary entry for the local residents.

Victoria Middleton



Rugby

After a superb senior rugby tour to Japan the Rugby Club approached the 2017 season with great anticipation.

Our Lower School had a great season and created many fond memories. The new first years showed themselves to have passion, hunger and desire for the jersey. Close competitive matches against Dragon, RGS Guildford and Royal Latin showed a season of improvement.

Our second years were impressive

with some wonderful performances against renowned schools in the area. There were some cracking wins over Cokethorpe, Abingdon Prep and RGS Guildford. The success of the Lower School programme is always how many boys continue to select rugby when entering their third year and it will be great to see how many of these boys will represent the School again next season.

The inaugural Lower School trip to Twickenham took 50 pupils with their parents to watch England play Samoa after their own morning fixtures. It was a fantastic day out and one which will

be repeated and run by our Touchliner parent committee for the England v Japan fixture next season.

The U14 year group had a really good season, with lots of strength and depth across the age group. Our C & D XV's played in some very close highly competitive matches against the likes of Rugby School, Sherborne, and Berkhamsted, winning against Cheltenham College and St Edward's. The B & A XV's had some big wins against Sherborne and St Edward's too, and although they might not have come out winners on the score board against



Eton and Radley, both matches were terrific games and big performances.

At half term the U14s went on tour to the South West to play King's Taunton and Blundell's School. There was success on the pitch, with massive team bonding off it when boys took part in outdoor adventure activities.

Our U15 age group had a big season with many boys playing the game. Our B, C & D XVs were extremely strong, winning all their matches and beating many of our opposition schools convincingly. Big wins against the likes of Eton, Radley, Marlborough, and Cheltenham were real highlights of the season. The A XV had wins against Cokethorpe, Cheltenham and Berkhamsted and close matches against Sherborne, St Edward's, and Rugby. Wonderful wins over Marlborough, RGS Guildford, and Radley meant the season finished strongly for them.

Our U16s age group made huge progress over the season. The B & C XVs may well have initially found the step up challenging, however their endeavour and approach to matches were superb. Wins over Cheltenham and St Edward's were testament to the effort and close matches against the likes of Radley,

Marlborough and RGS Guildford showed where the teams had progressed to. The A team had a wonderful year. They were undefeated and from a performance perspective played some attractive rugby that was built on hard work with magic moments in matches like Cheltenham away and Sherborne at home. We look forward to seeing their progress in the sixth form over the next couple of seasons.

Our Senior XVs had a solid year with over 80 boys choosing to represent their school at rugby. There were strong wins in many matches for the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th XV sides against the likes of Radley, RGS Guildford, Marlborough and Cheltenham. Our 1st XV started the season really well off the back of a summer tour to Japan and won away against a strong Berkhamsted side. The season was challenging with many matches close and a fixture list that included strong St Edward's, Sherborne and Radley sides. There was a terrific away win over RGS Guildford which was built on a lot of hard work by the boys on the training field.

Our Touchliners group as ever supports the boys both on and off the field, providing financial help for new training



equipment and also starting a new club trip to the London leg of the World Rugby Sevens in the Summer Term.

The Club is in an exciting place and we look forward to the 2018 season.

Matthew Gold



Geneva Physics Trip

During the Christmas break myself and other pupils from Abingdon School went to Geneva in Switzerland to visit the fantastic physics facilities that the country has to offer. During my time there I 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.

On our arrival at Geneva we participated in a walking tour of the old town with buildings dating back to the 12th century and the ruins of Roman temples dating back to the 1st century. The maze of small streets and picturesque squares overlooked the Lake Geneva including the Jet d'Eau, a massive water jet stretching 140 metres high and throwing

7000 litres of water into the air at any given time. Having visited the old town we then took the tram service that runs through the streets of Geneva to the History of Science Museum. Here many important artifacts are kept showing the history and development of scientific instruments that have been made in Geneva, 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 impact that telescopes had on 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.

The following day we again took the tram service but this time to visit the Conseil Européen pour la Recherche Nucléaire or CERN. There are a multitude of experiments conducted at CERN and we were lucky to see one of them, the LHC. The LHC or Large Hadron Collider is the world's largest and most powerful particle accelerator even making mainstream headline news with the discovery of the Higgs boson in July 2012. The 22 member countries of CERN spent around one billion euros in building the equipment and conducting the experiments. Protons which are subsidiary components of the nucleus of



atoms are accelerated by supercooled Niobium-Tin magnets to 99.9999991% of the speed of light around a 27km tunnel, they make 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 is sent clockwise and the other counter clockwise, they collide at set points where the detectors are placed. When they collide a lot can happen, 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 the release of lots of different particles. Now the job of the massive detectors and the even bigger supercomputers is to try and figure out what happened. For every one 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. The downside of having so many collisions is that there is a huge amount of data that needs 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 and truly it's a marvel of modern technology.

Other interesting things that we saw included the Geneva Plasma Physics Centre studying 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. The new Geneva Observatory is responsible for finding many new exoplanets and housing modern telescopes far more advanced than that of the telescopes found in the museum. The SeuJet hydroelectric dam helps contribute to produce 56% of Swiss electricity with the other two hydroelectric dams in the country. There is a heavy emphasis on being environmentally friendly, finding ingenious solutions to the problems of hydroelectric power, for example making stairways for beavers to cross between the two sides. As well as exploring the sites from Geneva we traveled to the city of Bern to visit the Einsteinhaus, the actual apartment that Einstein published arguably his three most important works: his paper on the photoelectric effect which won him the nobel prize in 1921, his paper on Brownian motion and finally his paper on special relativity which changed the way physicists looked at the world.

Overall I learnt so much during our time



in Switzerland. It is amazing how you can study the largest objects in space in the Geneva Observatory and only a few miles away you can probe the smallest objects in the universe at CERN. The history of science in Switzerland is rich and it continues to make history today as more work is being done at the University of Geneva in all areas of science. The trip has inspired me to further my understanding of particle and plasma physics and I would highly recommend visiting.

Robert Smith, 6RP

Lent 2018



A Matter of Life and Death

A Matter of Life and Death is based on Powell and Pressburger's 1946 film of the same name, and a stage adaptation made by Emma Rice and Tom Morris for Kneehigh Theatre Company and performed at the National Theatre in 2007. It is best described as a Second World War fairy tale. It follows RAF pilot Peter Carter (played in the film by a dashing David Niven, and in our production by the no less suave figures of Arthur Musson and Archie Gittos) who mysteriously survives after his bomber

crashes over the English coast. As he prepares to jump from his stricken plane, he radios his final position to June, an airforce wireless operator (played by the spirited figures of Amelia Wilkinson and Eliza England), and they fall in love with the sound of each other's voice.

After Peter has been washed ashore, he meets June for the first time in classic Hollywood style. However, Peter begins to suffer strange headaches and unsettling visits from the time-stopping heavenly messenger known as 'Conductor 71' (played by Molly Pavord) - an angelic figure who's been sent from the Other World to collect Peter after missing him in the fog over the Channel on the night he was supposed to die.

These visits culminate in a trial before the heavenly Court of Appeal to determine whether Carter should live or die. Defending him at the trial is June's friend, Frank Reeves (whom I played), a village doctor and expert neurologist who diagnoses Peter's condition but dies in a spectacular motorcycle accident on his way to the hospital to summon an ambulance for Peter. The counsel for the prosecution is the intimidating figure of Jacob Bohl (Samuel King), an American G.I. killed by friendly fire in the disastrous Slapton Sands D-Day training exercise of 1944. Bohl delivers some compelling rhetoric, asking why Peter should be allowed to live when so many with arguably greater claims to life have died. The 1946 film delivered what must have felt like an obligatory happy ending, with Peter and June living happily ever after. However, the Kneehigh version reflected our own less certain age by resolving the trial on the toss of a coin. This meant the ending could change each night based on whether the coin showed heads or tails. We, naturally, followed our own path, offering both endings each night. One Peter survived; the other did not.

The key innovation of our production was the double casting of Peter and June, which meant we could give the audience the happy ending they were perhaps expecting but also honour the hard-hitting reality that outcomes are not





always the ones we wish for, especially in the terribly random context of war. The production featured a great performance by Molly Pavord as Conductor 71, whose earthly alter ego was re-imagined in our version as infamous WWI spy Mata Hari. Molly not only impressed in her dancer's movement and mastery of a Dutch accent, but also sang beautifully, supported by the live music provided by Dr Jason Preece, Hayden Ramm and Jacob de Jongh. Arthur Musson and Archie Gittos each brought their own kind of flair to the heroic and beleaguered pilot protagonist, while Eliza England and Amelia Wilkinson showed emotional delicacy and skill in an ensemble cast that tackled

a multiplicity of roles with gusto, whether playing airmen, surgeons or a range of historical figures. One memorable scene involved a physical theatre version of a table tennis match in which Eliza and I were lifted and spun in the air by a team of long-suffering fourth years.

The production would have had far less impact without the spectacular and ethereal set, created by Nick Lloyd, George Killick, Emma Fever and the rest of the industrious Technical Crew. The glowing spheres hanging from the roof of the auditorium represented the universe and created a vivid image that brought a sense of a life beyond death much closer for the upturned faces of the audience. The sinister base costume of white surgeons' gowns and masks set the tone at the beginning of our play for the otherworldly events. The period-specific costumes, designed by Emma Fever, were equally remarkable and enhanced the action considerably.

Overall credit has to be given to our two directors, Jeremy Taylor and Max Hutchison, who strove from the beginning for a style and outcome

I never thought would be achieved. Through their hard work, we were able to stretch and extend our own (and Mr Lloyd's) creative limits to best deliver what I am proud to call my final production at Abingdon.

Joseph Salter, 7OTL

At the head of the 22-strong cast was Upper Sixth drama scholar Joseph Salter in the role of Dr Frank Reeves, the local GP and neurological expert who studies Peter Carter's symptoms and reassures him about the outcome of his appeal to the heavenly court. Joseph drove the action forward with a powerful energy and bold physicality, not least in the delightfully choreographed game of table tennis, in which lessons learned from rugby line-out drills proved invaluable as players were lifted high above the stage in slow motion. Joseph is a very talented actor who has also been an exemplary drama scholar and supporter of Abingdon drama throughout his time with us.

Jeremy Taylor



CBSO Concert at Symphony Hall, Birmingham

On Friday 2 February, the first years were treated to a brief history of music concert given by the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra (CBSO). We were privileged to hear nine pieces, ranging from Gabrieli to Bingham. All the pieces were superbly performed by the CBSO. It was a true auditory and visual feast. Here are some reviews of a selection of the pieces we heard:

The Four Minute Mile **By Judith Bingham (20th Century)**

The Four Minute Mile is a dramatically fast piece of symphonic music. The CBSO managed to get the time down to three minutes and eight seconds by playing it even faster than it is supposed to be. The story behind this is that Judith Bingham had to make a piece of music about anything (literally anything), but the piece had to be under four minutes. When the piece started it had a bang because this was to represent the four minute mile race so this was like the bang of a starting gun. Next it goes a bit slower to represent the running round the track. When it gets to the final part there is a bell to mark the final lap and finish the piece.

Gran Partita - Serenade for Thirteen Wind Instruments **By Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart** **(Classical)**

The Adagio from the *Gran Partita* is a slow piece. The CBSO woodwind and some of the brass section were playing the third movement of this piece composed by the famous composer, Mozart. The clarinets and the bassoons play a quiet pulse in the background. The oboe stood out the most because it played the really high arching melody above the other instruments.

Eroica Symphony **By Beethoven (Late Classical/Early Romantic)**

The Eroica Symphony was composed by another famous composer called Beethoven. Beethoven actually went deaf but still continued to compose music. In 1803 he composed this piece of music and he called it *Sinfonia Eroica* (they played the third movement of this – a scherzo). It starts off quietly with just the strings then it gets louder almost immediately with three horns of the orchestra, then it gets repeated.

Sonata XIII **By Giovanni Gabrieli (Late Renaissance/Early Baroque)**

Sonata XIII was a piece played by eight members of the brass section. It was a repetitive piece with slow parts and fast parts too. As an opening piece it was performed very well. It combines a lot of different lively rhythms and some smoother solemn music. The ensemble was divided up into two groups who were separated and played from high balconies opposite each other so that they could create echo effects.

The Rite of Spring **By Igor Stravinsky (Early 20th Century)**

The Rite of Spring was certainly a very dramatic and different piece. It was definitely not what might be expected from the title. It tells a tale of prehistoric Russia, where tribespeople worshipped the seasons. The CBSO made this piece sound like spring was in full stride, with the start sounding peaceful. It did not gradually reach a climax to show that spring is finally brought to life, but instead, it went from calm and peaceful to angry and violent

very quickly with the violinists playing short and sharp bows. The sound and rhythm were jagged, harsh and unexpected. The brass instruments seemed to shout strange chants. The percussion instruments were really loud, especially with the thunderous sound of the timpani (kettle drums) and the shimmering sound of the tam-tam (gong)..

Winter (from The Four Seasons) **By Antonio Vivaldi (Baroque)**

Vivaldi lived in Venice, a century after Gabrieli, and this is one of the four pieces that he wrote in 1723, each inspired by a different season of the year. In this piece the music really did sound chilly at times. It truly made the listener think of winter. Like the winter weather, the mood shifted slowly like freezing fog. At other times, the music raced and whirled like snow in a blizzard or a howling gale. The jangling sound of the harpsichord was very intriguing. The violins, violas, cellos and basses created an impressive sound, but the solo violinist was truly inspirational.

Jack Higgs, 1MWL



Bridge Club

As the year comes to a close, the Bridge Club is able to look back at the past year and celebrate its successes whilst wishing farewell to some familiar faces. This time of year truly is of bittersweet nature, as we say goodbye to various veteran bridge players, such as Bede Pharoah-Lunn, Wei Han Huang, Peter Bicarregui, and Henry Churchman-Davies. Their dedication to the game and contribution to the club will leave the current Lower Sixth of the club with big shoes to fill in the year ahead.

However, we can also celebrate the successes that this year has seen,

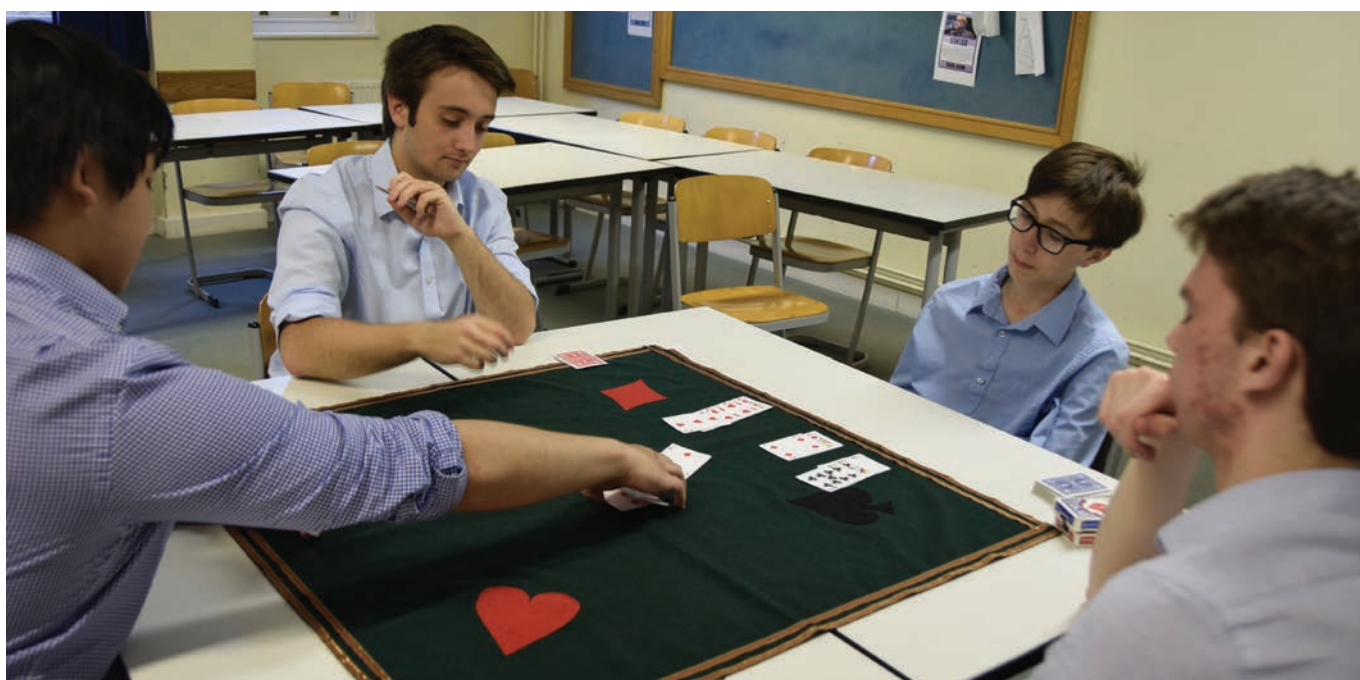
such as the expansion of the club to include students from all around the world and of varying ages. As Edmond Wang puts it, 'the club offers a fantastic opportunity for people to practise the English game and have traditional fun in the meantime.' The wonderful thing about bridge is that it's a languageless game which allows players from all around the world to come together and work as a team. Ultimately, bridge is also able to offer an escape from the business of school life during a Wednesday afternoon, in the middle of a long school week, and lets you 'just have fun with your friends', as Sam Andersson puts it.

But bridge can offer more than just fun and games. For those who wish to excel at the game and put in the

effort, bridge can 'develop teamwork and critical thinking skills', according to Drew Farwell, as it offers players the ability to work together with a partner, like traditional sports, whilst also requiring strategy and thinking ahead, much akin to chess, and has a competitive edge which makes for thrilling and entertaining games.

Those who wish to take the game to the next level have also had the opportunity to meet with a bridge instructor who visited earlier in the year and various bridge courses have been advertised to those who wish to go beyond the call of duty. Overall, this year has been a successful one for the Bridge Club and we look forward to an even better one next year.

Piers Mucklejohn, 6NSH



Basketball

As always is the case with Abingdon basketball, the club enjoyed another great season. There is a sense of unanimity among all involved regarding the pride with which we look back on this season.

The 2017/18 season was one of change. First of all, a star player and legendary teammate left for greener pastures, well before his time was up. The effect of his leaving cannot be understated. He was quite possibly the most talented player to ever put on the Abingdon uniform. Losing him gave us the options of throwing in the towel or coming together. We chose the latter and to a degree, losing him was a blessing in disguise as it catalysed our greater camaraderie as a team. This allowed this year's team to function as a true unit. We built upon each other's strengths and diminished individual weaknesses.

Secondly, we were in unfamiliar territory due to coach Rev Gooding's sabbatical during the Michaelmas Term. Rev Gooding founded the Abingdon basketball team and had overseen the club from its genesis to its now thriving state. He is synonymous with all things basketball at Abingdon. In spite of the magnitude of this absence, Dr Frampton ably led the club in the interim. Alongside the capable assistance of Chemistry Department office-mates Mr Border and Mr Litchfield, Dr Frampton ensured that things ran like clockwork as we players had become to expect. This translated to a strong start to the season, with the team winning all Michaelmas fixtures. It has to be reiterated that this feat was achieved in spite of Rev Gooding's absence, which is a testament to the strength of the infrastructure he created, as well as the resilience of the players in such uncharted waters.

By the time Lent rolled around, Rev Gooding had returned from his sabbatical and we picked up right where we left off. With an unusually packed schedule, practice time was limited, meaning we had to ramp up the intensity during the few

sessions we had. On-court results were very encouraging. Hard-fought losses against strong sides and a particularly unexpected second-half collapse served as valuable learning experiences, particularly for the younger members of our squad. The lessons taken from the aforementioned defeats were especially evident in the home fixture against St Edward's, where a hardened Abingdon side utterly dominated the opposition, setting a school record for the biggest win in the process. However, numbers alone cannot encapsulate the brilliance of our team. This year, we have had our share of defensive clampdowns, as well as stretches of smooth ball and player movement totally unlocking the opposing defence. Unfortunately the statistics will not remember these moments, but I and the team will.

It would also be remiss for me not to give a mention to our Upper Sixth leavers. 2018 marks the end of the road for three team members: Kurt Lee, John Ong, and Joshua McDermott. Kurt and John joined the school last year. Kurt made an immediate impact on the team. His reliability in the mid-range, as well as the calmness he exuded will be surely missed. John on the other hand, came into his own this year and through sheer hard work and determination nailed down a spot on the team sheet. John gave us a large vocal presence, was a complete role model for everyone, and had an astounding ability to play above and

below his size. His leadership will also be sorely missed. Finally, Joshua had only started with us this season, but made significant progress nonetheless and gave us another dimension due to his combination of height and coordination. Joshua was unearthed during the previous offseason by Rev Gooding, and this is a testament to his remarkable eye for talent, as well as his ability to nurture that talent.

This season was also significant for developments beyond the first team. The outdoor hoop in the MUSA is now fully operational, and it brings great joy to us on the team when we see boys honing their craft there. A passion for basketball is now clearly visible at Abingdon. The strength of the club is no longer the school's worst kept secret. There is no better example for this than the Thursday training session, where a mass of younger boys are being prepared to fulfil the jobs of leaders of subsequent iterations of the club. Hopefully they improve on the foundation that we and those who have come before us have laid for them.

I would like to thank the coaching staff, our loyal legion of boisterous fans, and most importantly the players for making this season such a memorable one. Luckily most of us will be returning, and I hope this time next year, when I write the next edition of this article, I will have just as much to boast about as I do now.

Supasin Kongpun, 6GRM





Ski Tour

On Friday 9 February a group of 43 students and 5 staff left Abingdon on a coach for the annual school ski trip to Saint Gervais in the French Alps. After a long journey we arrived in the resort on Saturday just in time to check in and collect our equipment from the ski hire shop.

Students shared self-catering apartments that were located approximately 1.2km outside of the centre of town giving the options of eating out as a large group reserving tables in restaurants as small groups, or even the challenge of the boys cooking for themselves with provided ingredients on two of the nights.

A large snowfall during the preceding week led to strong snow conditions as well as sunny weather for the majority of our time there. The main skiing area extended from the top of the Bettex cable car at 1400m up to the top of Mont Joly at 2525m giving us a good variety of skiing options. On the first day all students spent 6 hours in ski or snowboard school provided by ESF, refining techniques previously learned and giving us an opportunity to familiarise ourselves with the resort.

The morning of the second day gave the students' their first opportunity to explore the slopes freely with their friends and the majority of the group returned to the various routes shown to them by the instructors previously.



Lessons then resumed from 2.00pm to 5.30pm each day with the instructors enjoying guiding the more able groups off piste and down black runs that they were not allowed to ski outside of lessons.

The trip was very enjoyable and the

boys were a credit to the school.

Thanks go to the other staff that accompanied the trip: Mrs Griffiths, Mr McGill, Mrs O'Doherty and Mr White.

Ben Simmons

Cross Country

When looking back at the 2017/18 cross country season there were a number of highlights on both a personal and collective level. The junior squad reached the final of the English Schools' Cross country Cup and six Abingdonians represented Oxfordshire at the National Cross Country Championships. Abingdon continued to perform well on a tough race circuit and returned to the King Henry VIII Relays for the first time since 2012. This race, founded in 1972, and hosted by King Henry VIII School in Coventry,

is now regarded by many as

the best inter-schools cross country relay race in the UK, and has seen competitors such as Seb Coe, Alistair and Jonathan Brownlee, and Richard Nerurkar all cut their teeth around the course. This year the Abingdon team finished seventh out of 44 of the best cross country schools in the country, beating the likes of Shrewsbury, Sedbergh and Harrow.

On Tuesday 23 January Abingdon hosted the first U13 Cross Country Cup Fixture. Athletes from five schools including Abingdon, Abingdon Prep, New College, Magdalen College School and Blessed George Napier competed

for individual and team awards around the 2.8km course. The notoriously consistent wind that blows at Cox's Field had dried the course out nicely, allowing firm footing and some fast cross country racing. Henry Channon of New College broke the tape in a time of 9 minutes 47 seconds, having been pushed hard all the way to the line by Quinn Miell-Ingram (APS) who finished just milliseconds behind. William D'Arcy (APS) completed the podium, finishing third in a time of 9 minutes 53 seconds. The Abingdon team placed well, with Alexander Darbishire finishing seventh and Callum Aiken tenth, helping their team to second place in the overall standings. This was no match however for an extremely strong Abingdon Prep squad who finished with four runners inside the top 10 allowing them to take home the team silverware. It is fantastic to see so much young talent coming through and will make for some exciting racing in the future.

The ESAA National Cross Country Championship is the most eagerly anticipated event of the winter for young runners. It is an event that brings together the best athletes in each of the 48 counties in England to compete for the honour of being the best in the country. This year seven Abingdon pupils including Calum Steer, Henry Barlow, Fergus Mitchell, David Bunn, Matthew Kunov, Alexander Pennington





and Rowan Miell-Ingram qualified to run for Oxfordshire at the prestigious event. The team travelled up to Temple Newsam Park in Leeds in mid-March just as the Beast from the East was taking full effect. The athletes woke up to a bitterly cold day with snow on the ground and driving wind across the exposed course. The conditions made the course brutally tough with steep climbs and descents and thick mud to sap the energy and slow even the fastest of runners. The boys competed valiantly and went home exhausted but satisfied with their performances on the day.

During the Michaelmas Term the junior cross country squad entered the English Schools' Cross Country Cup and embarked on a journey that would eventually see them stand shoulder to shoulder with the fastest runners in the country. The county round of the competition was held at Blessed George Napier School in Banbury. Abingdon finished in first position with four athletes crossing the line within the top 10 finishers. Callum Aiken raced superbly finishing in fifth position overall, helping his team qualify for the regional round.

On a classically wet and gloomy November morning the mood was subdued on the minibus as we drove through the wind and rain. Fortunately,

as we approached Lincroft School in Bedfordshire, the clouds parted and winds dropped to leave pleasant

conditions, albeit a little greasy underfoot. The 2.8km course had a mixture of both playing fields and even a farmer's field to negotiate. The pace set was ferocious from the start, with only Callum Aiken able to stick with the front runners. As the pace settled, the junior team paced themselves well, finishing strongly and in third place collectively. This performance earned them a place in the national final, a first for Abingdon School in this age group.

This race took place at Sevenoaks School in Kent and the course encompassed every aspect of a true cross country race; A flat start before competing for position at the first corner, including undulations to break the rhythm of even the most experienced runners, steep ascents and descents, technical woodland, and of course muddy sections to test even the tightest of spike laces. The junior athletes arrived early to walk the course and soak up the atmosphere. After a thorough warm up the team were ready to toe the line against the top 156 runners in the country. The whole team raced valiantly with Alexander Darbishire and Callum Aiken finishing only one minute behind the overall winner.

This was an outstanding achievement and one that the squad will look to replicate and improve upon next season.

I must thank all the pupils, staff and parents for what was an excellent

season of cross country. Such dedication and commitment to train, compete and travel across the country in all types of weather is what makes the Cross Country Club such a great community to be a part of.

Individual results:

63	Alexander Darbishire	10:54
78	Callum Aiken	10:59
104	Thomas Mennie	11:13
128	Jonathan Pannett-Smith	11:25
142	Robin Hambidge	11:40
147	Geordie Anderson	11:53

Team Result: 26th

Elliot Birkbeck



Lower School Public Speaking Competition

2018's Lower School Public Speaking Competition was full of close matches, culminating in 2M's victory over 1L in the grand final by a mere two points. The standard was very high this year with all the speakers doing extremely well. Standing up and talking in front of all your peers is no mean feat. A big thank you to all the boys and staff that made this year's competition possible, either by participating, judging or watching.

The format of each match was as follows. Each team had a chairman, a main speaker and a vote of thanks. The chairman introduces the main speaker with an attention grabbing, short address to the audience, underlining the central topics covered in the main speech. The main speaker then follows with a four minute explanation of any chosen topic. Topics this year included climate change, politics and the downsides of technology. Finally, the opposition's vote of thanks concludes by thanking the other team for speaking and gives feedback on the speech, but isn't allowed to criticise the opposition. Then the other chairman speaks and so on.

Writing a good speech isn't easy. It takes a lot of hard work and often many hours of researching and writing. In my opinion, the most challenging part of

getting a speech ready is condensing it down to a suitable length. All the chairmen and main speakers this year wrote some excellent speeches.

Considering that the vote of thanks isn't allowed to prepare beforehand, this role is particularly challenging. Having to stand up in front of your classmates with next to no plan of what to say, and thinking on your feet, is a particularly difficult task. I think that everyone who took on the role of vote of thanks did very well and rose to the challenge.

To conclude, this year's Lower School Public Speaking Competition was a spectacular event with large numbers of students participating. Again, I thank all the staff and boys involved for helping to make this contest possible.

Mark Taylor, 2SCVM



Inter-House Debating Competition

At the start of March, the Inter-House Debating Championship began as the housemasters sent out the motions to their potential representatives. For the students involved, this annual event is enjoyable, but more importantly, highly competitive; due to the niche nature of the competition, fierce rivalries endure through the years.

Two students represented each year group in each house during the competition, and each debate was moderated and judged by teachers. Furthermore each side was awarded points based upon the overall quality of their debating, and the side with fewer points would be eliminated at the end. The winner would then move on to the next stage of the tournament.

Due to the uneven number of houses, one house had to be removed from the contest based purely upon their points score in the opening heats, even if they won their debate - a system that can seem severe, especially if you get matched up with one of the better teams initially.

The proposition's first speaker had the arguable disadvantage of going first, giving their opponents an opportunity for rebuttal that they themselves lacked, and was then followed by the opposition's first speaker. The same order was maintained for the following speakers.

After these initial three minute speeches, the spectators - often friends cajoled into attending or enthusiastic, and just as competitive, tutors and housemasters - asked questions of either side. In order to maintain the fairness of the proceedings, the judge would ask questions if the spectators' questions had been weighted towards either side.

The debate was then finished by a single two minute speech from both sides that could be divided up between the two speakers from each side

however they saw fit.

Poor time management was heavily penalised (after three minutes), and it was generally preferable to improvise the last few seconds of a speech or to cut short the closing statement, at the risk of lowering its overall quality, rather than lose precious points that could determine the eventual victor.

The motions were generally serious in nature, in stark contrast to the usual fare at the Debating Society itself; they ranged from topics such as policies on illegal drugs, to the one child policy, to artificial intelligence.

This wide-ranging variety of subjects forced you to research outside of your usual purview, and was hence a valuable experience, both in research skills and in expanding knowledge of important questions; as a case in point, I knew little about a prospective abolition of the monarchy before debating a motion about it, but in having to explore the arguments of both sides, I discovered

a complex issue that prompted further investigation.

The debating itself was of a high standard, with evidence used to back up arguments throughout, and with a fine display of rhetoric from all sides; often only a few points difference between the teams in the heats. I suspect most, if not all, speakers would agree that the calibre of their oratory had improved after the competition; a good structure was key in making your argument clear, and if sources were not properly referenced it allowed your opponents to call into question the validity of any statistics used to support your points, something that O'Doherty's keenly exploited against us in the fifth year final. Despite this, Lancelot and I took Franklin's to victory.

As always, the competition was a real test of skill and knowledge, and something that I, and all of the other debaters, will look forward to next year.

George Carver, 5AJPE





Football

Off the back of a highly successful inaugural football tour to Spain, the 2018 football season was another highly successful one for the Football Club. With an ever improving fixture card no games could be taken for granted, in what was an action-packed ten weeks of football. The energy, enthusiasm and commitment shown by all boys (and parents!) was terrific despite the weather's best attempts to dampen the spirits on occasions with a number of excellent performances including the 2nd XI beating St Edward's 1st XI, the U15 As 6-1 win over Bedford Modern and the U16 A's 2-1 win against Haileybury. More importantly however, participation

rates were again at their highest and it was great to see all Abingdon sides trying to play the brand of football that we aspire to achieve.

After their Michaelmas Term Futsal League, the Lower School sides got their season underway with fixtures against Caldicott, the U12s securing a 2-1 win. The U13 As then made a terrific second half comeback to beat Hampton 3-2. All four sides beat Reading Grammar, with the U13 As also going on to beat the Dragon 3-1. Overall the Lower School amassed 148 goals in 40 games playing an excellent brand of attacking football.

There was great excitement around the U14 age group, with all three sides playing an excellent brand of possession based football and progressing noticeably over the

term. The U14 Bs put in a terrific performance to beat Aylesbury Grammar 3-1, whilst an almighty effort saw the U14 As draw with Hampton 1-1. The U14 Cs beat Hampton Ds 6-1, before the U14 As and Bs beat Reading Grammar 2-0 and 6-1 respectively. The U14 Bs beat Bedford Modern 3-2, whilst the C team scored 31 goals in their seven games.

The U15 As got their season underway with a 7-1 win over Aylesbury Grammar before going on to beat Burford in the first round of the cup 5-1, with James Daly netting four! The Bs secured convincing wins over Reading Grammar and Radley, scoring 39 goals in their eight games during the season, winning four and drawing four. The Cs finished the season on a high with a 2-1 win against St John's Leatherhead having already got convincing wins over Sherborne and Haileybury. The U15s eventually got knocked out in the third round of the cup to The Oxford Academy in the school's first entry to this tournament.

The U16s made great progress throughout the Lent Term, and after a slightly slow start the 16 As got their season up and running with an outstanding 2-1 win, away at Hampton. Both the As and Bs then went on to beat Reading Grammar before all three U16 sides secured victories over Haileybury. The 16 As enjoyed the experience of playing under the lights at Tilsley Park when securing a 3-1 win over Magdalen College School, playing a very encouraging brand of football.



Moving into the senior sides, the 5th XI's efforts on the training ground payed off as they secured a 4-4 draw with Haileybury and a last minute equaliser earned them a 2-2 draw against Cheltenham College 2nd XI. In his last season for the Club, Mr Mason's 4th XI put seven past Haileybury and five past Wellingborough before beating Shiplake on penalties after a 5-5 draw. A 10-0 win over St Edward's 2nd XI was another encouraging moment from their season. Also in his last season for the Football Club, Mr Evans' 3rd XI made a slow start to the term before putting 11 past the St Edward's 2nd XI and beating Hampton 4th XI 3-1. Then they very narrowly lost 3-2 to Cheltenham College 1st XI.

The 2nd XI had a mix of youth and experience and made a great start to the season with a 2-1 win, away at Berkhamsted, before beating St Edward's 1st XI 2-0 and securing a 2-2 draw with Hampton. Further victories followed over Shiplake, Haileybury, Bedford Modern and St John's Leatherhead in what was a highly successful season for the side.

Despite suffering defeat in the returning captains football fixture on the final evening of pre-season, the 1st XI squad bounced back superbly going unbeaten and winning the Rugby College Football Festival for the second

year in a row.

This was a great platform for the first fixture of the season, and a 2-0 win away at Berkhamsted. Further wins followed over Magdalen College School under lights at Tilsley Park before a last minute equaliser secured a hard fought 2-2 draw against Hampton. A 4-0 win over Radley was another highlight as the 1st XI went on to beat Haileybury 3-1 and Bedford Modern 5-1 before finishing the season with a great 3-3 draw with St John's Leatherhead. A memorable moment has to be the inaugural Corinthian Casuals fixture, which saw the 1st XI play the Corinthians XI on Waste Court followed by an enjoyable dinner for both sides; this was a great experience and we are delighted that the Corinthians have asked to return next year.

In addition to seeing all of the current

Abingdon pupils take to the field over the course of the term, it was great to be able to welcome back 40 Old Abingdonians to play a fixture as a curtain raiser to the St John's Leatherhead fixture. It is hoped this will continue to grow as a spectacle and is always nice to welcome old boys from the Football Club back. The final event of the season saw the annual Football Club Dinner at which it was a pleasure to welcome ex-England and Manchester City Assistant Coach Derek Fazackerley to present the awards before providing the boys with some words of encouragement for the future. It was a fitting way to draw to a close another highly enjoyable season of participation, progress, and success for all those involved.

Tom Donnelly



Chess Club

Qualification for the National Schools' Championship was Abingdon's first task this season, and our prospects looked much brighter once the quality of the newcomers joining Chess Club became apparent after the initial Wednesday afternoon training session. Unusually gifted players Harutyun Badalyan and Frederick Beneat, already graded 83 and 97 respectively, had joined the first year, and Abingdon's new best player was Ross Tselos, graded 146, who had joined the third year.

Eight Abingdon boys competed in the English Chess Federation's Qualifying Tournament at Eton on 17 September. Six played in each round, and the time control was 20 minutes plus a 5 second increment. Abingdon succeeded in qualifying by winning three of the five rounds. In rounds two and four we suffered heavy losses to Dublin's Gonzaga College (0.5-5.5) and The Judd School A (0.5-5.5), but these were outweighed in rounds 1, 3 and 5 by comfortable wins against Mill Hill County High School B (6-0), North London Collegiate School A (4.5-1.5) and RGS High Wycombe (5-1). Surely Abingdon's best individual result of the day, perhaps of the year, was Ross Tselos's draw in round two with Gonzaga College's Henry Li, graded an impressive 215. Justifying their coaches confidence in them were 1. Ross Tselos (3.5/5), 2. Thitipat Ditrungroj (2/4), 3. James Beckinsale (2/4), 4. Richard Oh (2.5/4), 5. Frederick Beneat (0/3), 6. Seb Watkins (3.5/5), 7. John Ong (3/3) and 8. Alfie Luo (0/2). Each player is to be congratulated on his

part in a fine team performance.

Four months passed before the first regional contest in the National Schools' Championship, time for players to develop their game both at Chess Club and through town and county representation. On 25 January, six Abingdon players travelled to Surrey to face ACS Egham International School. Each player had 60 minutes on his clock plus a 10 second increment. Abingdon's team, listed here with the new January grades, was Ross Tselos (143), James Beckinsale (116), Thitipat Ditrungroj (112), Richard Oh (104), Seb Watkins (102) and Jonathan Lee (91). Egham's Martin Kopernicky (181) and Kamer Yildizli (175) were graded significantly higher than our top two boards, but Abingdon had the edge on the bottom four boards.

Ten minutes into the match, it was clear that both Seb and Jonathan had been drawn into playing too fast by their younger opponents, and the chance of an Abingdon victory looked slim. But they both successfully clawed their way back into winning positions and, with Richard looking comfortably in control on Board 4, the match then hinged on Board 3.

After about an hour, Seb, Richard and Jonathan had all won their games and Thitipat was clearly conducting a strong attack. When his opponent finally resigned, the match was won, and Ross and James could enjoy their games without having to worry about the overall match result. Both played well - James was indeed a clear pawn up after the opening - but both eventually succumbed to quality play.

Next up, on 22 February, were Reading Blue Coat School in a regional semi-final, which was played at home. Our task was made easier by the absence from the opposition side of Ethan and Jake Bains-Gillespie, graded 150 and 134 respectively, who had apparently taken up cross-country running. And by this time yet another talented newcomer had joined Abingdon: third year Oliver Yau from Hong Kong, who seemed in training better than his FIDE grade of 1526 (about ECF 110). Our team for this match was 1. Ross Tselos, 2. James Beckinsale, 3. Thitipat Ditrungroj, 4. Oliver Yau, 5. Richard Oh and 6. Seb Watkins.

Abingdon won the match comfortably 5-1. Only Thitipat lost his game, playing Reading Blue Coat's sole graded player. There was also a reserves match, which Abingdon won 2-0. Our reserves were Eric Huang (106) and Frederick Beneat (98).

In the regional final, played on 23 March, Abingdon again faced Reading School, who had got there by knocking out Desborough College and then Eton College.

1. Ross Tselos (143) v Matthew Wadsworth (218)
2. James Beckinsale (116) v Anthony Zhang (216)
3. Thitipat Ditrungroj (112) v Peter Isaksen (166)
4. Oliver Yau (106) v Nikhil Kadambadi (163)
5. Richard Oh (104) v Ryan Wong (156)
6. Seb Watkins (102) v Alex Vanlint (153)

Reading this year fielded their strongest available team, and so the disparity in grades was enormous, averaging 65 points. Still, Abingdon's build up had gone well - four ODCL matches in four weeks - and we were up for the fight.

Last year's 2-4 loss was our best recent result against Reading, who were then National Champions. This time Abingdon again punched above its weight, losing by just 1.5-4.5 to an even stronger Reading team. Oliver Yau scored a spectacular win on Board 4, overcoming a 57 point rating gap, and Thitipat scored his best ever draw,





against an opponent rated 54 points higher on the ECF scale. The whole team earned plaudits for once again being Oxfordshire's last representative in the tournament and for putting up such stiff resistance in the final to opponents of the very highest calibre.

The Oxford and District Chess League, whose matches are scheduled from October through to April and May, was again the main source of competition and development for our best players. This season we played independently as "Abingdon" in Division 4. After 14 matches, we had finished in the top half of the table, having won five, drawn one and lost eight. 13 players were fielded in total. Four turned out for more than half the matches. They were Thitipat Ditrungroj (4/11), mostly on Board 1, Seb Watkins (6/13), mostly on Boards 3 and 4, Jonathan Lee (5/10), mostly on Boards 5 and 6, and Eric Huang (3/8), mostly on Boards 4 to 6. The other contributors were Mr English (4/7), Oliver Yau (4.5/6), Richard Oh (4/6), James Beckinsale (2/5), John Ong (3/3), Dr Jeffreys (0.5/2), Frederick Beneat (0.5/2), Peter Wan (0/1) and Harut Badalyan (0/1). Ross Tselos (1.5/3) continued playing for his old club MCS Blackbirds in Division 3.

On 29 November, the annual clock simultaneous display was again conducted by Abingdon's superb coach Grandmaster Peter Wells. Mr Wells, playing White on the odd-numbered boards, faced 20 opponents from across the year groups. There were 75 minutes on each clock. Last year Mr Wells won 20-0, but this year the School achieved one of its best ever results against him by reducing the deficit to 16-4. The

seven talented Lower School players did particularly well, holding on for much longer than in previous years, and the best game prize went to first year Harutyun Badalyan, who managed, in the end, to win his game on time - just! (It was checkmate against him next move.) The other winners were John Ong, again on time, and Dr Burnand. James Beckinsale, taking advantage of a rare blunder, and Jonathan Lee both drew. The full Abingdon team was 1. John Ong, 2. Thitipat Ditrungroj, 3. Richard Oh, 4. Jonathan Lee, 5. Alister Jamieson, 6. Peter Wan, 7. James Beckinsale, 8. Seb Watkins, 9. Luke Ffrench, 10. Ross Tselos, 11. Eric Huang, 12. Alfie Luo, 13. Fran Trotter, 14. William Riddell, 15. Shreyanshu Mohanty, 16. Frederick Beneat, 17. Harutyun Badalyan, 18. Aahaan Sharma (substituting for Zander Wallwork), 19. Mr English and 20. Dr Burnand.

House Chess has established itself as part of the Michaelmas Term's Inter-house competitions, and this year's tournament, played on 13 December, was one of the best. The star individual performance was by Ross Tselos of Southwell-Sander's, who won all four of his games on Board 1. But the battle for top spot was really between School House, James's, Franklin's and Austin's, whose teams of three all included at least one School team player and other good players on the lower boards. In the end School House, led by James Beckinsale on Board 1, took the trophy by defeating Southwell-Sander's in the final round, thus winning in all four rounds. The full results are as follows (teams are listed first by total match points then by game point difference):

1. School (4, +5), 2. James's (3, +4), 3. Franklin's (2, +4), 4. Austin's (2, +3), 5. Southwell-Sander's (2, 0), 6. Crescent (1.5, -1), 7. O'Doherty's (1.5 -3), 8. Morgan's (1.5, -5), 9. Border's (0.5, -7).

The individual knockout tournaments also took place in the Michaelmas Term, though they were not finally concluded until 27 March, when all three finals were played on the same afternoon. Colours were decided randomly and each player had 30 minutes on his clock. In the Upper School tournament, Thitipat Ditrungroj defeated Richard Oh to win the Harding Cup, his unsound Halloween Gambit proving sufficiently scary for an early victory by checkmate. In the Middle School tournament, Ross Tselos demonstrated classical middle-game attacking play to defeat James Beckinsale, winning the Pearce Cup. And in the Lower School tournament, Harutyun Badalyan made better use of his passed pawns to defeat Frederick Beneat, winning the Nightfall-Jakubovics Cup. All three winners received book prizes. Just getting to the final was a significant achievement. There were 24, 68 and 36 entrants respectively in the Upper School, Middle School and Lower School tournaments.

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 14 who earned sufficient points to qualify for the county "Megafinal." Ross Tselos was School Champion, winning all his games and so achieving a rare maximum score of 21 points. Second was Richard Oh on 19 points, and third was Frederick Beneat on 17 points. Joint fourth on 15 points

were Thitipat Ditrungroj, Seb Watkins, Jonathan Lee, Eric Huang, and Dashiell Hathaway. Qualifying as best in their age categories were the Upper Sixth players John Ong and Sean Kao on 14 points and the second year players Alfie Luo, Fran Trotter, William Riddell and Shreyanshu Mohanty on 13 points.

On 25 March, 15 members of Chess Club travelled to Crowthorne to take part in the Wellington College Junior Chess Tournament and Training Day, organised by Grandmaster Nick Pert. This was in place of the usual half-term trip to the Wiltshire Junior Chess Congress in Swindon, and it proved a worthwhile new departure. Nine boys entered the tough U18 section and five entered the Improvers section, which is for players with little or no experience of chess tournaments.

At the end of six testing rounds of rapidplay (20 minutes on each clock plus a three second increment) Abingdon had won three trophies and two medals. In the U18 section, Ross Tselos (143) won a trophy for second place, finishing on 5/6 with an excellent grading performance of 167. Frederick Beneat (3.5/6) and Jonathan Lee (2.5/6) also performed at a level above their current rapidplay grades. In the Improvers section, Max Woodthorpe Browne (5/6) won a trophy for second place and Zander Wallwork (5/6) won a trophy for fourth place. Medals were awarded to Shreyanshu Mohanty (4.5/6) and Charlie Leyland (4/6) for strong performances. Also participating were, in the U18 section, Seb Watkins, Eric Huang, Alfie Luo, Fran Trotter, William Riddell and Harutyun Badalyan, and, in the Improvers section, Mark Taylor and Aahaan Sharma.

On 21 May, 12 boys travelled to St Gabriel's School, Newbury, to play in the West Berkshire "Megafinal", a county stage of the UK Chess Challenge. After six rounds of rapidplay, with 20 minutes on each clock plus a ten second increment, Abingdon had won five trophies as well as three second-place medals. Thitipat Ditrungroj (5/6) won the U17 trophy and headed the combined U14-U18 section. James Ng (1/6), benefitting from the total absence of GCSE pupils, won the U16 trophy. Seb Watkins (3.5/6) finished ahead of Dashiell



Hathaway (2/6) to win the U15 trophy, and Oliver Yau (4.5/6) finished ahead of Eric Huang (3.5/6) to win the U14 trophy. In the combined U12-U13 section, Harut Badalyan (4/6) finished ahead of Frederick Beneat (3/6) to win the U12 trophy. Abingdon's four U13s were William Riddell (2/6), Alfie Luo (1.5/6), Fran Trotter (1.5/6) and Shreyanshu Mohanty (1/6). Section winners and players on more than three points qualified for the Southern "Gigafinal" in July. Ross Tselos had already qualified for the Southern Gigafinal by winning the U14 trophy at the Oxfordshire Megafinal in April, heading the combined U14-U18 section at that event.

The recipient of this year's King Trophy, presented at Prize Giving by Dr King himself, is John Ong. Not only has John been a keen supporter of Chess Club, bolstering our ODCL team on numerous occasions, but he has also become a notably successful practitioner of the quicker form of the game, achieving a rapidplay grade of 125 and helping Crescent last year secure victory in the House Chess tournament with a perfect score of 4/4. He is going on to study medicine at Birmingham University.

In Michaelmas Term 2018, after an absence of 11 years, Chess Club will return permanently to Big School, to rooms B207 and B208, moving up from Mercers' Court with Mr English, Mr Poon and the rest of the Mathematics Department. Thanks to all the coaches and for everyone's patience with the temporary arrangements in the second half of the Summer Term. I hope the

advent of wobble chess made up for the giant chess set's being in storage.

Andrew English





Squash

Abingdon Squash Club again entered the National Schools competition this year, and the first match was against Bradfield. The team consisted of Nikhil Vyas, William Pearson, Will Taylor, Ben Goriely-McDonald, and Felix Loeffen making his debut for the school in his first year. Our four old hands played superbly, winning without dropping a single game. Felix, playing a boy twice his size, fought through fatigue to secure a memorable victory on his debut. He was unanimously voted man of the match by the others.

Next in the same competition we played St Edward's, fielding our strongest team ever, consisting of Nikhil Vyas, William Pearson, Hector Chambers, Will Taylor and Ben Goriely-McDonald, and the quality was clear from the start. All five members of the team won their matches with complete conviction, and no one dropped a game.

We then played a friendly against Cheltenham College for the first time. Felix played again at 5th string, and narrowly lost against a sixth form opponent. James Munday made his debut in the team at 4th string, and played some impressive squash. Nikhil, William and Will then played outstandingly well to win their matches to clinch the fixture 3-2.

Back in the Nationals again, we next took on Wellington, always a formidable team. We had our strongest team again, however, and showed how much progress we had made. Nikhil, William, Hector, Will and Ben exacted revenge for the last time we played them by winning an impressive 4-1 victory. This also ensured our qualification for the next round for the first time ever.

We then played a friendly against RSG High Wycombe, and it was a useful training exercise for the team. RGS are a very good side, but we played another clinical game for an impressive 4-1 win.

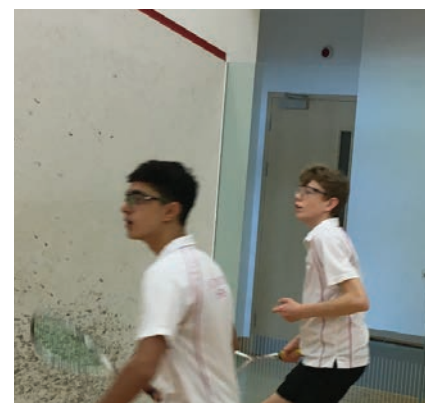
For the last Nationals game in the group we played Eton, one of the strongest schools in the country. Ed Pettitt came in at 5th string, and was unlucky to lose out. Nikhil and William had daunting opposition and lost at 1 and 2, but Hector and Will played brilliantly to win their games. Although this meant a 3-2 loss, we had won enough individual matches to secure first place in our qualifying group; an outstanding

achievement.

Having qualified for the knock-out stages, we were unlucky to draw Wycliffe, a squash academy and the strongest team in the country. Ed Pettitt did extremely well to win at 5th string. Everyone else fought hard and played great squash, but the opponents were nationally ranked players, and we ultimately lost out 4-1. Wycliffe went on to be crowned National Champions again, so this was no disgrace!

After the great run in the Nationals, Abingdon took on our old rivals, Radley for the last match of the season. Toby Rowles played well in a fine debut match but narrowly lost; Nikhil, William, Will and Hector all then gave a superb display to score a thumping 4-1 win against a very strong team. It rounded off our best season ever.

David Franklin





CCF

Another hugely successful year has seen Abingdon CCF grow in stature within the Brigade and this was reflected in an outstanding, albeit very damp, Easter Camp conducted at Longmoor Training Centre. The week-long camp for all members of the Cadet Force was challenging to say the least. With its arduous training programme, inclement weather and long hours, it saw the cadets faced with huge challenges throughout. The contingent was also put through its paces when Lt Col Tom Perkins (OA), MBE, The Royal Scots, along with Brigade staff carried out the Biennial Inspection. This consisted of a full formal parade and competition day held at Dalton Barracks. The contingent passed with flying colours and was commended by all at Brigade. The report that followed was classed as "Outstanding" and reflected just how much hard work the staff and cadets put in to achieve this incredible result.

The Michaelmas Term saw an additional 68 boys join the recruit section of the force increasing the contingent strength to just below 150 in total. The RAF

section has almost doubled in size and is seeing its best numbers in many years. Flt Lt Kate Ley should be congratulated on all of her hard work making the members' training so enjoyable and varied.

In addition to the strength of the section growing, it has also benefitted from a very generous donation from Mr Tony Edwards. This has allowed the contingent to purchase another state-of-the-art flight simulator. This newer variant has the capability of helicopter flights and side-by-side sorties to be undertaken.





As well as the flight simulator, the cadets have also been able to procure a small fleet of training drones and these will put them through their paces when we are next on a military training establishment, probably in September.

As mentioned before, there was also the annual Easter Camp where over 100 willing cadets travelled to Longmoor Training Centre and put themselves through a week of intensive soldiering tasks. The weather was very challenging as it rained for seven out of the eight days whilst we were there. This was followed by typically English glorious sunshine on the trip back north to school. This year the CCF were able to welcome back OAs, Tom Farish, Michael Mann and Henry Waterson who ably

assisted the week bringing with them some of the experiences they have encountered whilst serving with their respective Officer Training Corps within their universities. They were extremely hard working during the week and we are grateful for all of their support.

The cadets had a massively busy year. A highlight was when they undertook a sponsored event in which they collectively ran, cycled and rowed the 874 miles from John O'Groats to Lands' End, raising over £1200 for the Jon Egging Trust. They have also taken part in the RAF 100 Muster Day Competition, consisting of visits to 17 Port & Maritime, the RMP HQ re-opening, and HMS Bristol, flying at RAF Benson, and a very poignant visit to the National Arboretum,

paying respects to our fallen men and women. There was an adventurous training boot camp in North Yorkshire and paintballing in Reading, to name a few things we've gotten up to this calendar year.

As yet another sun sets on a very enjoyable year's activities at CCF and we look forward to next year's challenges, we hope to ensure the boys put their all into everything they undertake.

All aboard, to be continued...

Captain Lee Edwards



Young Enterprise

Young Enterprise is an organisation focused on teaching young people valuable business skills. For many years now, Abingdon School has entered teams into the scheme, and yet again this year many took an interest. Boys who signed up to the weekly other half sessions were split into four teams of around 12 people, and prescribed a Business Advisor to guide them through the process. First and foremost teams chose roles for each member. These included titles such as Operations Director, Marketing Director and Finance Director. Most prominent of these

roles is the Managing Director, who is responsible for designing the meeting structure and keeping everyone on track with their tasks, among other things.

Deciding the name was the first group choice that had to be made. This year's decisions were: XYLO, ZERO Degrees, Woodworx and Global Chef. The first item of business was brainstorming a product/service idea. The general consensus of all was to go down the route of products. After a few sessions of idea sharing, thoughts were narrowed down into two or three concepts.

After making business plans, it was swiftly time for the teams to start manufacturing for the Christmas season of sales. A range of products were produced to a very high quality.

XYLO made laser-engraved, wooden notebooks, etched with their bespoke designs. ZERO degrees got winter clothing items printed with their logo. Woodworx handmade lots of different products, ranging from bug-homes to stress balls. Global Chef produced a cookbook compiling recipes from around the world.

The Christmas markets and trade stalls were all very popular, all teams having many customers. This was overall the period where each company tended to make most sales, meaning things were off to a flying start. Having many fairs in a short period forced everyone to learn how to approach possible customers and learn appropriate sales techniques with much haste. St Helen and St Katharine School and Abingdon Prep School were just some of the selling opportunities that the companies secured during the season.

In the New Year there were two more events attended by all teams: the Cowley Trade Fair and Banbury Trade Fair. Both of these were very important as they were Young Enterprise organised. These were also the first times that the companies had been judged by the official Young Enterprise adjudicators, so tensions were high. The Banbury Trade Fair took place during the harsh weather of early March; temperatures reaching below zero and





ZERO Degrees won the following:

Highly commended company at South and Vale Area Final

Woodworx won the following:

JSP Manufacturing Award

Best Personal Contribution (Max Williams) at South and Vale Area Final

Best Business Plan at South and Vale Area Final

XYLO won the following:

Best Trade Stand at Cowley Trade Fair

Best Customer Service at Banbury Trade Fair

Highly Commended Product at Banbury Trade Fair

Runner up for Best Personal Contribution at South and Vale final

Best Trade Stand at South and Vale Area Final

Company of the Year at South and Vale Area Final

Best Trade Stand at Oxfordshire County Final

Best Use of Online Media at Oxfordshire County Final

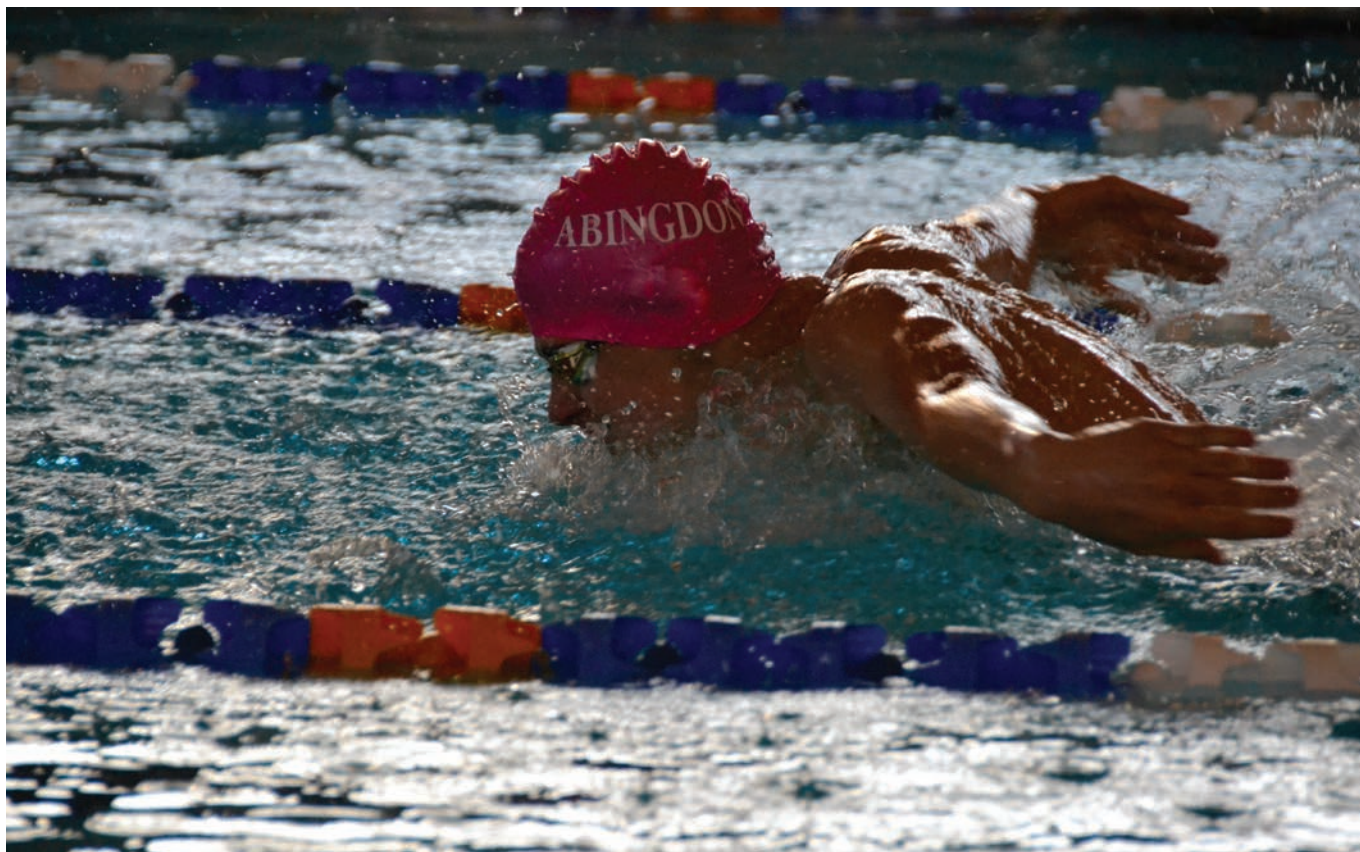
some patches of snow meant that footfall was pretty low. Despite this, all companies remained in good spirits while embracing the cold.

The South and Vale Final was all in all very successful for the Abingdon School teams. After an evening of trade stall judging, performing presentations about the companies and the reading of business plans, it was decided that the three teams entering into the Oxfordshire County Finals were Stellar (An OLA School YE Company), ZERO Degrees, and overall area final winners, XYLO. It was a great success to see two of the three winners being from Abingdon.

The Oxfordshire county finals were the same sort of setup: trade stalls judged, presentations shown, talks from members of the judging committee and then finally the prize giving. Though neither company made it though to the next round, it was still a very enjoyable event, with the overall winners and runner ups of the event being very worthy.

It was excellent to see how many awards the Abingdon companies managed to acquire across the board, meaning many prizes made their way into the hands of hopeful students.

Sam Penrose, 4AMB



Swimming

The Swimming Club has had yet another successful season. Led by Head Coach Amanda Ford, all age groups have continued to compete both nationally and locally with some terrific achievements, and the school has progressed on the ESSA circuit. In addition to the competitive swimming program, long course-training trips and the collaborative swimming partnership with Fitzharry's have continued for the second year, both schools working in synergy to develop swimmers from across the ability spectrum.

ESSA Secondary Relays National Finals 2017

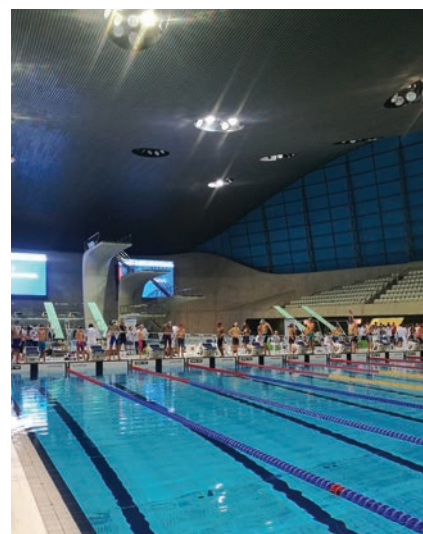
To qualify for the English Schools Swimming Association (ESSA) finals held at the Olympic pool in London, Abingdon had to be placed in the top 30 in the country. The intermediate team of Nicholas Skelton, Daniel McNamara, Rory King and Josh Roche had qualified fifth fastest for the 4x50m medley and tenth fastest for the 4x50m freestyle. The senior team of Simon Chester, Silas Gill, Kai Miles and Scott Yap had qualified

29th for the 4x50m freestyle.

The intermediate boys medley team was first up with some tough opposition from the likes of Millfield, Mount Kelly and Plymouth College - schools whose sporting and swimming academies are internationally recognised. The team qualified in 11th, just outside a place in the final. Later, in the freestyle relay, the boys qualified in eighth place and later in the final the team held onto eighth place against strong opposition with strong swims. The team are now ranked eighth fastest in the country. Next came the turn of the senior boys, with the teams qualifying 20th separated by less than 0.60 of a second so racing was going to be close. The boys did not qualify for the final, but they quickly perked up when they realised they had risen six places in the rankings and are now 23rd in the country. A terrific effort, and another progressive performance for all involved.

Warwick 50's

On what was their first outing for the school for many, the U12 and U13 swimming squads attended the Warwick 50's, in a fast paced and challenging competition. They didn't come away with any silverware, but did represent the





school well with a lot of promising talent to look out for in future years.

Abingdon Sprints

Abingdon welcomed eight strong swimming schools to the fifth annual Abingdon Sprints Gala. On what was an extremely fast paced afternoon of swimming the youthful Abingdon squad more than held their own against competition including Harrow, Bromsgrove, Cheltenham and Marlborough. There were a number of highlights including first year Can Tugcetın winning the U14 50m breaststroke - a fine effort for an U12 swimmer who is eligible for this event for another two years. U15 swimmer Nicholas Skelton also won the U16 100m individual medley in a time of 1 minute 1.01 seconds. The U16 4x50m

freestyle consisting of Daniel McNamara, Nicholas Skelton, Scott Yap and Josh Roche also finished first in a time of 1 minute 46 seconds. This is a great achievement with all four boys still eligible for this event next year. Overall the Abingdon team finished second in the U16 and U18 age groups, and third in the U14 age groups. A number of new Abingdon records were set including:

U16 50m butterfly: Scott Yap - 28:43 seconds

U16 100m individual medley: Nicholas Skelton - 1:01:20

U16 4x50m freestyle relay: Daniel McNamara, Scott Yap, Nicholas Skelton, Josh Roche - 1:45:98

Bath & Otter Cup

The U18 swimming squad travelled to

the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Pool to compete in the prestigious Bath and Otter Cup. In the morning session, the boys swam exceptionally, finishing ninth in the country in the Bath Cup 4x100m freestyle relay in a time of 4 minutes 4 seconds. The afternoon session moved onto the medley events, and having qualified through their heat for the final in tenth position, the boys went one better in the final, finishing ninth in the country in the 4x50m Otter Cup medley relay in a time of 1 minute 58 seconds. This is the best overall performance by Abingdon School at this event.

Tom Donnelly





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 Eton, Marlborough and MCS, and Abingdon continues to punch above its weight and compete convincingly.

The season started in January when a senior squad toured to Clifton for a pre-season tournament against many top class teams from around the country. With a number of Upper Sixth leaving last year, it was great to see the new senior players slotting into the system well and playing some fantastic hockey throughout the round robin tournament.

The first block fixture of the season was against St Edward's, and, with the 1st XI playing under lights for a 'Friday night lights' game, the weekend started with a fantastic buzz! A 6-1 win for the 1st XI laid down the expectations for the rest of the teams... and they all stepped up! Overall it was a fantastic block, with

stand out performances going to the U16A, 3rd XI and U14B team. The best of the bunch was a 14-0 wins by the U15A team, a fantastic way to start off the season for the Club!

With some fantastic block fixtures to follow against Marlborough, Cheltenham and Wellington, the season and boys were well on their way. A few highlights were the U14As showing significant improvement, recording a narrow 3-2 loss against a strong Marlborough side, the U16Bs continuing their strong start by drawing against Cheltenham 1-1 and the 2nd XI recording a superb display and result against Wellington, winning 4-1. However the most pleasing moment was getting a 4th XI out against Marlborough, although losing narrowly; it was great for those playing to represent the school in a block fixture!

The next match was against our rivals down the road Radley and, despite snow playing havoc throughout the week, we managed to squeeze in as many fixtures as we could. The U16As and U15As continued their winning starts, winning 6-2 and 5-1 respectively. There were some tougher matches for the 1st XI and U14s - I know the boys

left everything on the pitch but they couldn't quite get the results they were looking for.

With more block fixtures against the likes of Eton and Bradfield as the term went on the boys were exposed to some great hockey – and some great school teas!

Our last block fixture was against the other local rivals, MCS! There were some fantastic performances with the 2nd and 3rd XIs both recording victories, winning 3-2 and 4-1 respectively. The U15As continued their magnificent form winning 8-2. The U14 As played out of their skin and managed to earn themselves a 0-0 draw.

Inbetween the block fixtures the U16s and U13s competed in their respective county championships.

U16s County Tournament

The U16s headed to Oxford Hawks to participate in the County Championships. With four games only lasting 20 minutes each it was going to be about who played the more attacking tournament hockey. With St Edward's up first, Abingdon took the lead, but failed to convert their other chances, ending



the game in a draw. With Bloxham next, the boys needed to secure a win, which they did in style, playing some lovely flowing hockey. Against Radley the boys played well, solid in defence and dangerous in attack. Again it was another close encounter, ending in a draw. In the final match against MCS, Abingdon needed a win to go through. The boys played some attacking hockey, but were caught on the break to concede an early goal. They managed to re-group, playing some good hockey, and got one goal back, ending the game with another draw. So overall we were unbeaten, and had put in a good performance all round.

U13s County Tournament

The U13's first game against was against New College. Barnaby Hindley made a couple of good saves, one outstanding one with his stick, to keep us in contention and then Luke Hooper produced a good finish to nick it at the death to earn Abingdon a draw.

Next up were MCS. We started strongly, taking the lead with a very composed finish by Ollie Northwood as he lifted it over the advancing keeper. We continued to dominate but unfortunately didn't convert our pressure into the vital second goal. The final result was a 2-1 defeat but we deserved at least a draw if not better from the game.

Then came St Hugh's, fresh from a 5-3 victory over MCS. The boys knew they had to win to have any hope of progressing and stepped up really well, producing a solid and organised display at the back. Max Siriwardene was outstanding both in his positional play and his distribution and was ably

supported by Thomas Wilson and Tom Robson who marked their strikers out of the game to the extent that they didn't have a single shot on target. Joshua Mensah carried well from right back and was a constant threat, whilst the movement and inter-play up front from Luke Hooper, Ollie Northwood, Sam Inskip and Stefano Rajasundaram were excellent, carving out numerous opportunities. The result was a comprehensive 3-0 win.

To win the tournament the boys needed a convincing win against Bloxham. Abingdon started strongly and dominated the game from start to finish. The result was another awesome display with some well worked attacks and 4 clinically taken goals.

Abingdon was crowned as County Champions ahead of MCS courtesy of their far superior goal difference of plus 7. The team then went on to play in the U13 Regional Tournament where they won the shield final in convincing fashion 5 - 1 against St Benedict's.

We have been very fortunate to welcome several top hockey players to work with the boys this year. International coaches Lee Morton, Dan Kyriakedes and Ben Francis came in and did some coaching with our teams before the Commonwealth Games fixtures in Australia. GB player Tom Carson delivered a goal scoring Master-class and GB Olympic Coach Jason Lee was guest speaker at our end of season dinner.

Overall it has been another magnificent season for the Hockey Club as we have played 140 fixtures, with all age groups and abilities getting plenty of games.

The U15s won their ISHL league for the second season running, scoring 68 goals in 10 games and only conceding 12. This U16As came second in their league for the second year running, scoring 39 goals in 10 games and conceding 9. The Club had 22 players represent the county squad over all age groups, with 8 players progressing to represent their regions. Max Carter-Keall represented England U18 and Freddie Smith is currently trialling for a place in the England U16 squad. A huge thank you to the parents, players and coaches for all their hard work - bring on next year.

Olly Deasy





French Exchange

19 fourth year Abingdon boys took part in the second leg of the French exchange and they all enjoyed the week spent in Aix-en-Provence. The group made a very early start on Friday 30 March at 3.00am. The Eurostar departed from St Pancras at 6.50am and after a change in Lille, the TGV arrived in Aix-en-Provence at 3.35pm. The boys were reunited with their exchange partners at the Lycée de la Nativité and left to spend the Easter weekend with their host families. The three-day weekend gave the pupils the opportunity to be fully immersed in French culture, celebrating Easter and taking part in a wide range of activities ranging from skiing in the Alps, to visiting the beautiful seaside resorts of Saint Tropez, Cassis and Marseille.

For the rest of the week, each day was dedicated to further exploring Provence. The visits started on the Tuesday with L'Occitane in Manosque;

we were able to see the museum, the factory and walk around the aromatic "jardin provençal". We then drove to Cadarache, the largest technological research and development centre for energy in Europe where the boys received first-hand information about Magnetic Fusion Research. Wednesday morning was spent in school, attending lessons and the afternoon was free! (French pupils don't have lessons on Wednesday afternoons.) On Thursday, we headed for Les Baux-de-Provence, a listed heritage site in a spectacular position in the Alpilles that has won titles such as "one of the most beautiful villages in France". It is crowned with a ruined castle overlooking the plains to the south. We then saw a unique art exhibition in Carrières de Lumières. The monumental old quarry hosts extraordinary multimedia shows; spectators are totally immersed in the images projected on the all the surfaces of the rock. The ground is completely covered too and becomes a vast carpet of images. The show started with *Flower Power*, a journey into the graphic universe of the 60s and then moved on to a beautiful and

striking homage to Picasso and the Spanish painters.

Our last visit was dedicated to the Roman world. Provence is so called because it was the first Gallic province of the Roman empire, long before Caesar conquered the rest of Gaul. We visited the world-famous Pont du Gard, the highest of all elevated Roman aqueducts and one of the best preserved. It was added to UNESCO's list of World Heritage Sites in 1985 because of its historical importance. In Nîmes, all were impressed by the Roman amphitheatre built around AD 70. This ancient building encloses an elliptical central space 133m long by 101m wide and, with its 34 rows of seats, it has a capacity of 24,000 spectators. The French and English partners spent their last evening at the school, enjoying a delicious barbecue. The group headed back to the UK on Saturday 7 April; very luckily escaping the TGV strikes that were taking place in France at that time!

Maud Cottrell

Charities Committee

2017-18 has been a busy year for the Charities Committee. With record numbers of boys wishing to take part the group was full of enthusiasm in September for the year ahead.

Fundraising in the Michaelmas Term supported two causes, The British Red Cross chosen by Upper Sixth student Patrick Gwillim-Thomas, and SSNAP nominated by Mr Stinton. Patrick was keen to support the work of the British Red Cross particularly their work helping those affected by the Grenfell fire disaster, but also the other projects that they support in the UK from hiring wheelchairs to assistance for those seeking asylum. SSNAP is a charity based at the John Radcliffe Hospital that provides support for sick newborn babies and their parents. The charity raises money to buy equipment for neonatal care, funds research fellowships aiming to improve outcomes in neonatal care and supports families who have children currently in the NICU.

Activities in the Michaelmas Term included a home-clothes day, Christmas jumper day (which was unfortunately disrupted by very seasonal snow), a collection at the

Christmas Concert and a Christmas quiz. Unfortunately the quiz did not receive as many entries as we would have liked, rumour has it that the questions were just too hard!

The Lent Term brought a flurry of charitable activities. A bit of inter-house competition enabled us to donate almost 1000 items to the Abingdon Emergency Foodbank which was a phenomenal effort. James' House deserves a special mention for the sheer quantity of food they provided. Mrs Ley's car hasn't been quite the same since it was involved in transporting all of the food from school to Christ Church Abingdon where the foodbank is organised. We were so pleased with the success of this event that we are planning to run it again in the future.

A team of Lower Sixth formers bravely volunteered to take on the organisation of the Middle and Upper School 4-a-side football tournament. Their chosen charity Elephant Family works to protect the Asian elephant through conservation projects and working with governments to change policy. After a bit of last minute panicking the tournament came together with both the Middle and Upper School events running smoothly with a large number of keen participants. This built on the existing success of the annual Lower

School tournament which raises funds for the Meningitis Research Foundation.

Home-clothes day in the Lent Term supported Mary's Meals, a charity suggested by Tom Mills in the Lower Sixth. He was keen to spread the message of the charity that aims to help children out of poverty by encouraging school attendance. Their simple way of doing this is to provide a school lunch and at present they serve over 1.3 million lunches every day! This turned out to be our second charity event of the year to be hit by snow! But fortunately a last minute rearrangement meant all was not lost and a significant sum was donated to Mary's Meals.

An accidental delivery of 20kg of fudge from Hancocks wholesalers to the tuckshop provided the committee with an impromptu fundraising opportunity. Despite calls from some committee members to dispose of the fudge (by eating it themselves), Hancocks kindly donated the delivery to be sold for charity. Never has so much sugar been sold so quickly and a tidy sum was donated to OA Carl Olavesen alongside a donation from the Music Society to fund a keyboard for a choir in Mambwe, Zambia.

As the summer took hold the committee focused on passing their exams and looking ahead to the sponsored walk next academic year. A final fundraising push was made for Interhouse Athletics where record quantities of ice lollies and chilled drinks were consumed helping the tuck shop make a small profit this year.

This is just a selection of the charitable activities taking place at Abingdon over the year. Many small student led groups have embarked on sponsored walks, rides and runs; held cake stalls, silences and challenged themselves to help others. The Charities Committee wishes to thank all students, staff and parents for their support over the last year.

Kate Ley



Summer 2018



Abingdon Science Partnership

The ASP has co-ordinated a huge variety of new and developing projects over the past year. This has included working with other schools, with the local community and with scientists on exciting schools' outreach projects. We have provided opportunities for primary and secondary pupils from Abingdon and beyond, as well as hosting training for teachers offered by the Weatherall Institute for Molecular Medicine, the Ogden Trust, the British Science Association and the National STEM Learning Centre. Some of the key projects are described here by those that have taken part.

Primary School Science Club

Every Tuesday after school, we have

invited a group of local primary school children into the ASP Lab, with the aim of inspiring them to pursue a career in science, by teaching them interesting and fun scientific methods through experiments. For a month beforehand we would plan the lessons with a team of senior school pupils. We would also decide who would act as the leader and who would produce all the resources. The lessons that were the most enjoyable (as voted by the primary school pupils) were a fish dissection, making bottle rockets and making magnetic slime. All of these experiments were followed up with a presentation to teach the scientific principles at work in these experiments. This session actually led onto many of the boys involved entering for CREST awards, a novel scientific award which shows service to the STEM subjects, or crediting this for a DofE service activity.

Colm Lambert, 6JFB

GCSE Astronomy

For the last two years the ASP ran an Astronomy GCSE class on a Thursday evening with Larkmead and John Mason schools, which culminated in an exam in June. Mr Thomas organised the sessions well and provided handouts and exercises to do where relevant, and gave as much independent help as possible given the short time frame in which we had to learn. Of course, there was a lot of independent work involved, and for revision purposes we chose to create a shared google document in which we all cooperated to gather notes.

In addition to learning astrophysics and cosmology theory we made our own observations as part of the coursework; one aided observation with the help of modern equipment, and one unaided observation with the naked eye. For my unaided observation I chose to observe the constellations Orion and

Cassiopeia, and the asterism the Plough, and made sketches, as well as noting key astronomical information, such as apparent 'brightness' or magnitude of stars, on a scale from 1 to 6 (the Antoniadi Scale) and the apparent colour of the star. Here I was able to successfully apply my theory work in the field. For my second observation I used a telescope to take accurate photos of the moon at different phases, which I then labelled with the key features that were visible at that time. I was lucky enough to snap a photo of the 'Super Blue Blood Moon' on the 31 January, which coincided with my aided observation work. In all photos the crater Tycho was clearly visible and identifiable, and I was able to use this as a reference point for directions. Naturally, there were many other observations available - some people chose to look at Cepheid Variable stars, or, where possible, use the school's solar telescope to observe sunspots. The experience was made all the more rewarding because coursework observations made the link between theory and practice.

As a student of Physics at A Level, I can see that what I have learned in Astronomy has helped my cosmology and astrophysics work, and tied up loose ends from Physics GCSE. For everyone involved it was an enjoyable and interesting experience, and it gave us and students from Larkmead and John Mason (who made up the majority of the class) the opportunity to take a subject that's not usually offered. There were also many social opportunities and outings organised, an example of which was the telescope evening at Oxford University's observatory. As such, I see the success of the Astronomy GCSE class as a model for how the ASP should run; a chance to link the pupils from various schools in an interactive and enjoyable scientific environment.

Oliver Williams, 5TJD

Genome Decoders

Over the last year five Lower Sixth students have been working on a project to decode the genome of a whipworm as part of the science partnership programme along with

John Mason and Fitzharrys (and 50 other UK schools). The project is run by the Institute for Research in Schools (IRIS), with the aim to decode the genome of a whipworm that causes a less known tropical disease that leads to a large number of deaths in less developed countries mostly found in Africa. The disease caused by the whipworm has been the subject of minimal research and there are no current treatments. As part of the project we were given a section of the DNA and various types of data (such as RNA tracts and intron coverage) to help identify where the exact position of genes are in the worm's genome. All the data had been collected and analysed by the Wellcome Trust Sanger Institute and it has been our job to refine some of the predictions made by computer software on the specific position of genes. We are the first people to see and analyse this data as the scientists have used software to produce the DNA sequence. We have been able to work together as a group but then also work on the project in our own time either at home or school using software called APOLLO. Working in the small group has also allowed us to solve some often very challenging parts of the gene prediction!

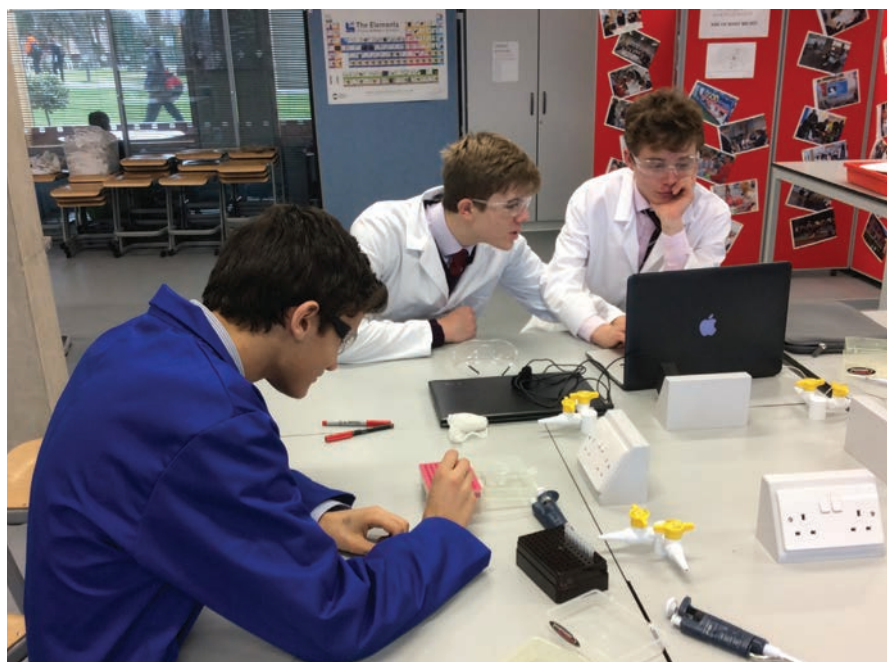
This project as well as being very enjoyable has given us a rare opportunity to contribute to one of the

largest student citizen science projects in the UK which will provide information on new treatments to use against the whipworm. It has also helped us in our A Level studies when we come to genomics, DNA replication and protein synthesis in the syllabus.

Noah Walker, 6RKJ

Science Factor, Timepix, and Photonics

What initially started off as playing around with some data from a Timepix radiation detector on a Wednesday afternoon has gradually turned in to us taking part in a novel and exciting experiment trying to turn light into matter. Our first breakthrough came when looking into the angular dependencies of this advanced radiation detector, where we found an interesting and inexplicable trend. We made a poster and attended conferences, and even got invited to one at the Royal Society (which was unfortunately cancelled due to snow). We then entered a competition for the new Timepix 3 detector, and based on our previous work and future plans, we won. Soon we will be the first school in the world to have access to this amazing piece of technology. All this work got us known in the IRIS (Institute of Research in Schools) community, and we were asked to help out a group of researchers at Imperial College who had used two Timepix detectors





in a photonics experiment, where they collided photons from a gamma ray and X-ray, hoping to observe the creation of electron-positron pairs. We travelled up to Imperial College for a day, giving a presentation on our own research, and listening to an introduction to the experiment. We then sat down in a group and tried to come up with a plan for the next steps of this experiment. We are currently in the analysis stages, and we can't wait to see where this new project takes us.

Oliver Breach, 6RP

ATLAScraft

The ASP was invited by Oxford University to take part in a project in collaboration with CERN to create a simulation of the ATLAS experiment in the popular game Minecraft. The ATLAS experiment is the famous detector that was used to discover the Higgs Boson particle. The project started at the beginning of the year with five Abingdonians and several other pupils from local schools including Fitzharrys and Didcot Girls taking part in an introductory session where they learnt the basics of particle physics, had a virtual tour of the ATLAS control room, and researched the complex detector

parts they would have to recreate. After the first session, the project was continually worked on in pupils' spare time, with meetings happening every few weeks. The detector used real map data from CERN to allow the surrounding buildings and facilities to be as accurate as possible, including famous buildings such as the Globe of Science and Innovation, the mural wall and car park. The pupils from the different schools all worked together online to create the final detector which was then officially released by CERN in November 2018. Almost 24,000,000 blocks in Minecraft were placed by the students and the end result of the project was certainly impressive, providing a lasting legacy for CERN and Oxford physicists to use in their outreach activities.

Freddie Nicholson, 4RLR

ASP at the TES Schools Awards 2018

The ASP's increasing reputation as a centre of excellence in science partnership was recognised this year when it was shortlisted in the Communities and Collaboration category for a TES Schools Award. The nomination recognised all the valuable work the ASP has been

doing in building partnerships with local primary and secondary schools, giving practising scientists the opportunity to work on exciting outreach projects with schools and supporting community initiatives, especially the Abingdon ATOM Festival of Science and Technology. As this was the tenth anniversary of these awards, ASP Co-ordinator Jeremy Thomas was invited to a bonus event at the House of Commons, meeting other shortlisted nominees and our local MP, Layla Moran. The Awards ceremony took place at the glamorous Grosvenor House Hotel in June. ASP staff and representatives of partner organisations, such as Science Oxford and local schools travelled up to the event and enjoyed an evening hosted by comedian Al Murray and attended by the Secretary of State for Education, Damien Hinds, Chief Inspector of Schools, Amanda Spielman and many other top people in education. Unfortunately, the ASP did not win in its category but being shortlisted in the last eight amongst such an amazing variety of worthy projects was an honour and a tribute to the enthusiasm and co-operation engendered by our partnership projects in Abingdon.

Jeremy Thomas

Lower School Musical Ensembles

Junior Strings

Junior Strings this year has been a huge success with many new members joining from the first year creating a string ensemble of over ten players! Over the year we have played a variety of fun and enjoyable pieces and many have said that the Junior Strings this year has been the best they have ever heard.

This year Junior Strings has been a large ensemble of two double basses, three cellos, one viola and over six violins, meaning the music we have been producing has had a full sound. The music we have played has been fun and exciting and we even got to choose what we played. This has meant we have played a variety of different pieces ranging from John Williams' *Star Wars* theme tune to *Raindrops Keep Falling on My Head*, by Burt Bacharach. Over the year we have played in a number of different concerts including the Lower School Gala Concert and many of the lunchtime concerts. At each of the different concerts we played well and were given lots of praise for great performances.

The main objective of Junior Strings is to have fun and this shows as everybody turns up week in and out to make music. When we play we try to make a welcoming environment where people can make mistakes which means the inexperienced players can develop their playing and derive maximum fun.

In my opinion Junior Strings has been incredibly fun and the concerts we have played in have gone extremely well. Well done to everybody involved in Junior Strings!

Jonathan Pannett-Smith, 2HFCP

Junior Blues

Junior Blues is a great club to join if you are an enthusiastic musician looking for excitement in music. We are all friendly with each other and have a wonderful instructor called Mr Owen (he is also a guitar teacher). Anyone can join from beginner to expert. We perform at the end of each term. Our main performance is at the end of year Gala Concert. We performed a medley in which consisted of songs such as *The Chain*, *Sweet Child of Mine*, *House of the Rising Sun* and *Smoke on the Water*. Any instrument can fit into our songs as we like to have a large variety. We even had two pianists on one piano!

We performed at four concerts this year in front of the school, teachers, and our families. Our aim in Junior Blues is to have fun together and to excite the crowd! This year has been great in Junior Blues and everyone has taken to their instruments very keenly. We can all say that it has been a great experience. It is a fantastic way to enjoy magnificent songs that we don't hear that often. We have had a very successful year. Well done to everyone in Junior Blues and a huge thank you to Mr Owen for allowing us to have this great experience.

Fran Trotter, 2HFCP

Lower School Band

Lower School Band is a group made to get any level of musician involved in playing with their friends. We have a very mixed group, from grade 8 players to players that are just starting off, which provides the Friday lunchtime rehearsals with a fun and positive vibe and attitude. We've played a large range of songs and melodies, ranging from solo featuring pieces to songs that we all know and like.

With a large band this year, with lots of potential, we have a very varied base of instruments, with doubles on every part. This gives the band real strength, as it means the more experienced players can help the people starting off to develop their playing, with the help of Mr Townsend, our band leader and conductor, who helps us celebrate music through playing. Everyone always turns up, and we all show loyalty, which proves the fact we have lots of fun, and enjoy playing music with our friends, which is what it's all about. It also improves the players, helping us understand what it's like to be in a band, and this really develops musical understanding, and means we learn lots as well.

We regularly have concerts in front of our peers and parents, which have actually all gone to plan! It's a great way to enjoy music and have fun.

Felix Kind, 2HFCP





Athletics

The Athletics Club has enjoyed many highlights this season. Pupils have experienced success on both an individual level and in a team capacity. Abingdonians have competed on a local, county, regional and national level which shows the club is growing healthier as each season progresses. It was fantastic to be able to welcome visiting schools to Tilsley Park on two separate occasions to compete in our Lower School multi-event which is now in its second year, as well as the Inaugural Senior Athletics Meet, something that we look to expand on in the future.

Achilles Relays

Competing at the Achilles Relays this year was particularly poignant after the

passing of Sir Roger Bannister only a month before the competition took place at the famous athletics track on the Iffley Road, where history was made all those years ago.

Before proceedings got underway a fitting tribute was made to Sir Roger, who stunned the world by running the first sub-four minute mile in a time of 3.59.4. A feat that was once deemed impossible. Inspired, the senior athletes qualified for the final of the 4x100m in a time of 46.9 seconds, averaging 11.7s per runner. Special mention must go to junior athlete James Connelly who ran for the seniors, due to a late withdrawal, holding his own against the older competition. The juniors narrowly missed out on a place in the final of the 4x100m (51.3s) and 4x200m (1min 50.2s), but ran respectable times for their first taste of track racing.

The senior 4x400m team secured third place in a time of 3min 38s. Special mention must go to Thomas Butcher who ran a blisteringly quick leg, showing great potential for the rest of the season. The 4x800m backed up their 400m counterparts also placing third. The intermediate and junior middle distance runners ran valiantly against a quality field including the likes of Harrow, Eton and Millfield.

Radley Relays

Early in the season athletes from all age groups made the short journey to Radley to compete in their annual track meet. This is an event that attracts some of the top independent schools in the country including the likes of Harrow, Eton, Rugby and St Paul's.

The senior squad consisting of

Alexander Moss, Thomas Butcher, Calum Steer and Adewale Adebutu came away with two team gold medals, winning the 4x100m and medley relays. The medley relay is the highlight event, consisting of 2x200m, 400m and 800m. The senior team put in a storming effort and despite the low temperatures and stiff breeze came within four seconds of the all time record, held by Marlborough College since 1970.

The junior team consisting of James Connelly, Daniel Burger, Luka Shanidze and Rowan Miell-Ingram also walked away with their first pieces of silverware, finishing second behind Harrow in the medley relay, in a time of 4 minutes 14 seconds.

The intermediate squad made up of Joshua Ponting, Alexander Pennington, Fergus Sweeting, Kipp Mainstone, Liam O'Hickey and Jasper Rolls also ran well in both events but narrowly missed out on the medals.

ESAA Track and Field Cup

Each year Abingdon enter the English Schools' Track and Field Cup. This national competition is open for all schools to enter and is completed in three rounds: county, regional and the National Final. The Abingdon intermediate and junior squads performed well enough to progress through the county round of the competition in first place, earning the chance to compete at the Norman Green Athletics Centre in Solihull. A combination of multiple PB's and excellent performances on both the track and in the field resulted in the intermediate team placing a close second with 397 points and the Juniors placing first with 388 points on the day. Results collated across the Midlands show that Abingdon finished fourth overall, which was not quite good enough to qualify for the National Final, but was still an excellent achievement.

Individual Success

Abingdon were well represented at the Oxfordshire Championships with a number of boys representing the Vale

district. The Championship combines the four Oxford districts (North, South, City and Vale), bringing together the best athletes in the county to compete for the title and the chance to represent Oxfordshire on a national level.

The boys performed superbly taking a clean sweep of victories in their track events. Joshua Mensah finished third in the shot put, while still a year young, showing great potential.

Congratulations must be extended to James Connelly who, off the back

of his performance at the County Championships, was selected to run the 100m for Oxfordshire at the English Schools' National Final, held at the Alexander Stadium in Birmingham.

Finally I would like to thank everyone who has supported the Athletics Club this year. The programme would not exist without the dedication and commitment shown by the boys, staff and parents.

Elliot Birkbeck



Abingdon Film Unit

It's been a bumper year for the Film Unit. Lots of new recruits joined in September and by December there were no fewer than nineteen films in production. Had that number been achieved, it would have been a record - as well as a marathon to sit through - so perhaps it was fortunate that by the time of the annual screening, eleven films had been finished, with a further two tied over to next year. Filmmaking is hard. It requires determination and staying power as well as ideas and creativity. It's not for everyone. But the achievement of those who stay the course is significant. As Kurt Vonnegut wrote, "Practising an art, no matter how well or badly, is a way to make your soul grow."

By that measure, several AFU filmmakers now have souls in rude health. This year, David Bicarregui, Joe Bradley, Liam Deegan and Fraser Scott all completed their third film, and tackled ever more challenging material in the process. Liam and Fraser tried to make a spoof action film when they joined the Unit, but it took them two years and two documentaries to achieve that goal. Now armed with an understanding of how to tell a story economically, they delivered *The Last Slice*, the comic tale of a battle for the last piece of pizza. The film went down well, not least with boarders, whose demolition of the interval refreshments suggested they'd identified with the hungry protagonists, played by Harry Buchan and Matthew Buhler.



David Bicarregui's idea came after a bus ride from Abingdon to Oxford and a chance conversation with a fellow traveller. *In Transit* overcame the technical challenges of recording interviews with passengers on public transport to serve up a delightfully quirky documentary reminding us that beneath our traditional reserve lies a well of human experience and feeling we all too easily fail to register, let alone share. By turns trivial and profound, *In Transit* felt like the cinematic embodiment of W H Davies' famous lines: A poor life this, if full of care / We have no time to stand and stare.

Joe Bradley turned his camera on someone who's had to stand and stare for most of her life, but not by choice. Diana Messer lost her hearing at the age of 7 and has felt left out ever since. Joe's film *An Outsider* gave Diana, now in her eighties, the chance to look back at her life and share her feelings. Joe showed her viewing old photographs and home movies, peering through windows, standing alone in the snow or trailing behind

others on a country walk, each shot conveying her isolation. In the film's most telling sequence - one entirely without sound - we saw Diana in close up at the dinner table, her eyes scanning the mouths of others as they formed words, smiled, laughed and revelled in the togetherness of a shared experience while Diana tried, and failed, to become part of the group.

Hard on the heels of these AFU 'veterans' were a clutch of filmmakers tackling the cinematic equivalent of 'Difficult Second Album Syndrome'. Jake Drew would have achieved his holy trinity of films had it not been for the rogue who stole his laptop in 2017 and deprived him of a year's work. Undeterred, Jake returned to the subject of his first film - refuse bins - to create a sequel to his popular 2016 piece, *The Recycling of Love*. *Has Bins* was the wordless tale of a waste bin's escape to the country after being rescued from a recycling plant by its 'parents' - two larger wheelie bins. In years to come, commentators will no doubt wonder at Jake's preoccupation



with anthropomorphic waste bins. My own view is that he's tapped into the Zeitgeist and offered us a lesson for our times.

Tristan Mann Powter established his credentials last year with an impressive debut film about Abingdon's Traditional Morris Men. This year, he explored another facet of his home town in *The End of the Line*, a lovely documentary telling of the demise of Abingdon's railway line - affectionately remembered as "The Bunk" - at the hands of Dr Beeching.

Freddie Nicholson opened his account last year with a portrait of Thirsty Meeples games café in Oxford. This time, he brought us *Living Local*, the story of Rupert Griffin, founder of Tiddly Pommies, an 'experimental local micro-enterprise' based in Cutteslowe Park producing juice from the 'enormous quantities of apples' in East Oxford and the surrounding area that go unused each autumn.

Freddie Marshall was one of the contributors to last year's Sobell House film. In *SAD*, he offered a highly imaginative evocation of Social Anxiety Disorder, featuring the AFU's first use of a 'Lensbaby', a device giving an out

of focus blur at the edges of an image. Freddie used this to great effect to convey the disconnected feelings of his protagonist, played by Alfie Marshall.

James McRae has also explored a disorder on film, having looked at Dissociative Identity Disorder in 2017. This time, he teamed up with AFU new boy Max Kidd-May to produce *Thinking Makes It So*, the inspiring story of explorer Steve Brooks and his attempt to fly a helicopter between the North and South Poles.

First films are arguably the hardest to make, so it was pleasing to see six new filmmakers cross the finish line ahead of the annual screening. Alongside Max Kidd-May's debut were first films from Flynn Walker, Oliver Liddell, David Merritt, Jude Green and Patrick Heath. Flynn's *The Long Game* told the story of Swindon Town owner and ex-premiership footballer Lee Power – still the only former player to own a Football League Club. Oliver's *Winning Moves* explored his dad's rise from factory floor to managing director of a leading games manufacturer. David, Jude and Patrick combined on *Long Live the Southbank*, a portrait of the first generation of skateboarders to ply their trade on London's Southbank, only to

find themselves in a battle for space with developers.

After reminding us that Michael Grigsby would have been the first to say there are no winners or losers in filmmaking - anyone who makes a film has achieved something of great value! - the Headmaster presented the Michael Grigsby Awards to Freddie Marshall, David Bicarregui and Joe Bradley. The 2018 films, along with all previous AFU films, can be seen at <https://vimeo.com/abingdonfilmunit>

Mention must be made of the AFU tutors – our wonderful team of professional filmmakers for whom it has also been a spectacular year. Colin O'Toole and Jonas Mortensen won the BAFTA for best short film with *Cowboy Dave*, based on a true story drawn from Colin's Manchester childhood, while Duncan Pickstock premiered his latest film *HS2: Whose Line is it Anyway?* and Matt Copson created *Blorange*, a new exhibit for the Fondation Louis Vuitton in Paris and won a prestigious art prize in Germany. We are enormously fortunate to work with such talented and inspiring artists.

Jeremy Taylor



Shadowing the Carnegie

This year saw 11 Lower School students join forces with students from five other Abingdon schools to shadow the judging process for the 2018 Carnegie Medal. It was our 15th consecutive year of Carnegie Shadowing.

The Carnegie Medal is awarded annually by children's librarians for the year's most outstanding book for young people. Established in 1935 - when it was awarded to Arthur Ransome for *Swallow and Amazons* - it is the UK's oldest and most prestigious children's book award. Many authors refer to it as "the one I want to win". The eight titles on the shortlist for 2018 ranged from Lissa Evans' *Wed wabbit*, the story of two children who accidentally find themselves in a world ruled by a malevolent soft toy, to Angie Thomas's *The hate u give*, a gripping drama about a girl who becomes a political activist after her best friend is killed by police.

Shadowing for the 2018 award began in early March, when students began the process of reading, reviewing and

discussing the eight shortlisted titles at a tea hosted by Larkmead School. After listening to tips from actor and storyteller Gerald Dickens, a great-great grandson of Charles Dickens, participants discussed their first impression of the books and voted on which one they thought would be the most interesting to read.

At the Carnegie quiz in May, this year hosted by Fitzharrys School, Abingdon students competed in teams made up of students from all the schools involved to answer 10 questions on each of the shortlisted books. An award for Outstanding Carnegie Shadower went to Dheeraj Khollanthotathil.

The Shadowing process culminated on 18 June in the Carnegie Forum, held at Christ Church, Abingdon. Abingdon students again worked as part of mixed teams, facilitated by PGCE students from The University of Oxford, this time to create and stage a three minute performance to promote their favourite shortlisted book. The panel of judges included children's author Lee Sterrey, Gerald Dickens, David Heywood from the UK's largest school book supplier, Browns Books for Students, and Sarah Dennis, proprietor of Abingdon's Mostly Books. Prizes were awarded by the

Mayor of Abingdon.

The finale of the Forum saw students vote for their favourite shortlisted Carnegie book. The winner of the Abingdon Joint Schools Carnegie Award 2018, by a narrow margin, was Angie Thomas's *The hate u give*. The choice of the national Carnegie judges, Geraldine McCaughrean's *Where the world ends*, was judged the least favourite of Abingdon students, continuing the pattern of disagreement that has characterised the local Shadowing process since its inauguration 15 years ago!

To their frustration, Abingdon students very narrowly missed out on prizes awarded for best reviews and best individual contribution to a performance, but it was a very close run contest, and everyone involved enjoyed the day immensely.

Graham Gardner

Rook by Anthony McGowan

Rook by Anthony McGowan centres around two brothers, Nicky and Kenny. Nicky is the youngest and he looks out for his elder brother Kenny, who has learning difficulties. One day when they are both walking their dog through the



woods, they discover an almost dead rook. Kenny, who really likes wildlife, asks his brother if they can take the rook home and care for it. His brother agrees. The book focuses around their adventures looking after the bird alongside Nicky's flirtations with a girl who he really likes and the challenges he faces from bullies. This is a highly compelling book which I thoroughly enjoyed.

My favourite character is Kenny because he loves wildlife, just like I do. At times I felt that I was in the book. It was extremely gripping and a real page turner.

My favourite part of the book was the moment when Nicky got on the bus and tried to follow Sarah home. However, when the ticket collector arrived, he ran off at the nearest stop, so unfortunately, he did not get to declare his love to Sarah. Fortunately, by the end of the book, he and Sarah do discover their love for each other.

The book deals with some very emotional issues such as when all the bullies turn on Nicky and insult his brother Kenny. Nicky has to deal with a great deal of emotional pain many

times. This book was moving and certainly kept me on the edge of my seat, at times wiping a tear from my eye as I turned the pages expectantly. I think this book would appeal to ages 10 upwards as it does deal with some sensitive matters.

I do wish the author had made the ending a little clearer though, especially regarding whether or not the rook survived. However, overall I thoroughly enjoyed the book. It is very well written and I liked the focus on nature. I don't think I would really compare it to any other book because it was quite unique in its content. I would give it 9 out of 10, missing one last mark because of how predictable the book was at times.

Alexander Lees, 1MWL

Wed Wabbit by Lissa Evans

Wed Wabbit is about a girl called Fidge who gets stuck in a bizarre world filled with three thousand Wimbley Woos, along with three companions: Dr Carrot, Ella the elephant, and her annoying cousin Graham. In order to escape this nightmare of a place, Fidge must solve several almost impossible

tasks and defeat the dictator of the land who can't use the letter 'r' properly. And the worst part of all this for Fidge is that the entire situation is all her fault.

I did find some aspects of this particular book quite enjoyable; one of these aspects is the fact that the whole thing is in a place that Fidge knows more about than she thinks. Another thing is how Graham's character evolves during and after the experience due to the ending and the lessons learnt. However, there were also parts that I couldn't really understand, like how the story breaks the laws of physics numerous times over, not to mention how the story affects the real world and also reality itself.

Overall, the book will give people an okay read, with puzzles that make sense in its own universe, but nevertheless will annoy those with a logical mind set. For those who like stories with their own rules it is good, but otherwise it won't give you the best of times.

Peter Harris, 2SCVM



Model United Nations

This year is set to be the biggest yet for Abingdon Model United Nations. From relative obscurity, Abingdon has gained national recognition as a leading MUN school, and preparations are well underway for our first conference, AbingMUN 18, to be held on December 1 2018. But what is MUN, and why do we enjoy what we do?

Model UN is a global simulation of the United Nations in which tens of thousands of students at school and university level take part worldwide. Participants take on the role of 'delegates', and are each assigned a country or 'delegation', whose views they must represent in debate on a wide range of issues against delegates representing different countries. This often means that the view a delegate is arguing is different from their own - it's common to have to argue in favour of Saudi Arabia's stance on human rights, for example, or in favour of North Korea's on nuclear proliferation. Unlike regular debating, MUN debate doesn't rely almost exclusively on rhetoric: to succeed at the highest levels, an understanding of international

diplomacy and relations, of the functioning and structure of the UN, and of the mechanisms of international law is required. Delegates propose practical solutions to the problems they're tasked with solving in the form of 'resolutions', documents laying out a course of action to tackle the problem, which are then examined, supported and torn apart by other delegates in the committee. This kind of intense, realistic debate can last from one day long to, for the very biggest conferences, up to five days, in which time delegates develop close bonds with their colleagues and also get a sense of how work is done at the real United Nations.

MUN conferences take place around the country throughout the year, and we at Abingdon MUN are lucky enough to attend some of the best. Malvern St James MUN runs for one day in November, and is the perfect introduction to MUN: debate tends to be fun and fast-paced, and Abingdon students picked up several awards including highly commended delegation for China, our flagship delegation, and numerous individual accolades. This was my first experience of taking part in a MUN Security Council: the SC is smaller than other MUN committees

and debates pressing issues of international security. I was lucky enough to win the best delegate award there and gained experience of SC debate.

Between MSJ MUN and MUN MCS held in Oxford later in the year, our MUN team had extensive training, running two day-long workshops at Abingdon in December and March. The March workshop featured a Security Council simulation running with a completely new set of procedure rules I put together based on my experiences of the Security Council at MSJ - my mission was to deliver an experience which was more like the real UN than at other MUN conferences by, among other things, doing away with committee chairs who normally keep order in the committee and replacing them with a President who is also a delegate, while introducing elements of procedure that real UN delegates would be familiar with but don't exist at the secondary-school MUN level. In some ways, the experiment was a disaster: the technology I had tried to employ let us down a bit and debate at times felt slow. Despite this, the people taking part seemed unexpectedly positive about the experience, and several months of refinement and



honing later, the model is ready to be wheeled out at our own inaugural MUN conference.

Clearly the training paid off as Abingdon students excelled at MUN MCS in February: we won a huge thirteen individual awards including best delegate awards for Raman Handa in Historical Committee (a hugely impressive achievement on his first conference), Hayden Ramm in Health and Environment, Patrick Gwillim-Thomas in Human Rights, and for me in the Security Council. Alexander Mannix, Patrick, Hayden, Louis Brosnan, Alec de Jongh and I were also named best delegation as China, meaning that Abingdon essentially won the conference - a fantastic performance from everyone involved. Our success continued at Haileybury in March at our first truly international conference. Spanning three days, HMUN was a vast spectacle with hundreds of delegates in attendance. Abingdon again took the top spot as Japan, comprising Alexander Mannix, Thomas Morris, Hayden Ramm, Ben Ffrench and Silas Gill, was named one of three distinguished delegations. Hayden, Ben, Silas and Lancelot Wilson all individually won distinguished delegate awards in addition, while Abingdon delegates (plus two St Helen's MUNners) won six highly commended awards between them, a suitable send off for our outgoing Upper Sixth MUNners. I was no help in contributing to the awards tally at all as my application to serve as Guest Chair of the GA2: Economic and Financial committee was accepted by the conference organisers, so the efforts of our delegations were carried by the up and coming future leaders of AbingMUN such as Hayden Ramm and Lancelot Wilson who were appointed Deputy Heads of MUN by Mrs Yarker and Mr James after the conference.

Lancelot did not waste time in making his mark on Abingdon MUN. In the Summer Term, he devised and delivered a course to take ten completely new third year MUNners and train them up for their first conference, Bishop Thomas Grant MUN in June, a conference designed explicitly for third years and below.

In the space of a term, Lancelot had them so well drilled in MUN procedure and debate that come the conference, they were able to put in an outstanding performance, with Abingdon delegates winning awards in all three committees. I was chairing the Security Council, in which both of Abingdon's representatives, Owen Henney and Ted Smethurst, were particularly impressive. Before Abingdon broke up for the summer, we had time to fit in one last MUN event, a lively one-day workshop at St Helens which provided a final opportunity to hone our skills before the summer break.

I'm often asked to justify why Model United Nations is important and worthwhile. I think an understanding of the UN is vital and will become increasingly so over the coming years for anyone who wants to be a part of solving the greatest problems that we are faced with at this time. Issues of nuclear proliferation, of climate change and the need to develop clean energy or perish, of humanitarian crises caused by migration and epidemics, of rogue states and civil wars, can only be addressed by an international community acting in concert. As countries ever more often seem to be turning their backs on international cooperation, seen in Trump's abandonment of the Paris accords, Brexit, and the problems of division within the P5 crippling hopes of

progress, the United Nations will need to reform to survive. The alternative is a descent into a future characterised by fragmentation and war, the destruction of our environment, and inability to prevent the human suffering that could so easily be resolved by an international community acting together. I view Model UN as my chance to inform myself about the issues we will all have to face in the hope that one day I'll be in a position to help tackle them. I know that many of my colleagues in Abingdon MUN, and the like-minded people we've met though our years of taking part in MUN conferences, share this sense of duty, and are rehearsing for when the time comes that we can act. Therefore we feel that MUN and activities like it are absolutely worth the time and energy we invest in them.

Alasdair Czaplewski, 6JEF





Rowing

When you are in the midst of winter training, the summer regattas and National Schools' are a great motivator for everyone in the Boat Club, and that possible success always feels comfortably far away.

As fourth years we started the season in three mixed VIII boats giving everyone a great opportunity to improve and show their potential. We entered Wycliffe Head and, shortly after the race, our coaches released the selected teams. Personally I was thrilled with the boat I had been selected for, but everyone was able to look at their crew and know they all had huge potential.

Schools' Head of the River was then fast approaching; we were conscious that many of our keen rivals, unlike us, would already have been in serious training since the first term so we all really focused on making maximum progress in the time we had. There was simply an atmosphere of pure excitement in the boathouse; for the fourth years it would be our first time going to Schools' Head. Although the 6.8km on the London Thames was concerning, if not terrifying, our coaches had given a great way to approach the race: "focus on what we can do well." This was possibly a very obvious point to make, however, it gave

all the rowers a great clarity of mind. We needed not to overcomplicate our thoughts, but perform consistently in the essentials, which would pay dividends over the long race course.

Overall, the Boat Club gave a fantastic performance at the Head, and we finished third. It was concluded by our Head of Rowing, Mr Earnshaw, telling us that, as a club, we had the most crews finishing in the top four of their categories. This successfully wrapped up our winter training, leaving our minds to turn to the stunning sights of the Bordeaux training camp where we would be heading in a few weeks time.

There was huge momentum heading into the training camp and every

fantasy of what the camp would be like was completely fulfilled (apart from the snoring I had to put up with). It was a new experience for the fourth years and, in terms of our training, it was completely idyllic. But the aspect of the camp that was a surprise for me was the way our squad changed just from living together for a week. There was more cohesion and harmony within the crews and between all the rowers. The camp demanded a fairly tough training schedule, however; this was only capitalised on because of the trust the squad had built up between each other. This led to complete focus during the sessions, so our improvement was vastly accelerated.





The Boat Club returned from camp and spent the time we had before National Schools' consolidating the progress that had been made. Minor regattas and events before National Schools' were used to practise our race profile and decipher who the main competition would be when we arrived at Dorney Lake on 26 May.

Finally, the day came. Training for this regatta had started in September and yet we all felt that we needed more time and wished the race was on any other day. However, in the cold and the damp, our crews paddled up to start their time trial. My head seemed clouded and there was an overwhelming sense of fear that I wouldn't do my best or that I might make a crucial mistake.

The time trial went well for all our crews, but our hardest test was still to come. Each crew knew that their rivals were completely committed to beating us in the races. In any race every crew on the start line has the mentality that they could win the race. As rowers we are always well aware of this, knowing that if we want to perform at our best level we must have complete ownership of the race. When my crew was at the start line we were all incredibly nervous, but we shared these nerves. We all had the responsibility to commit for our teammates. Through the pain and the blistering calls from our fantastic cox, Edward Peacock, the feeling in the crew was one of complete trust. Crossing the line in second place was a feeling that will be ingrained in my memory forever.

While sitting by the boat after our National Schools' Final, receiving my silver medal, I realized that to succeed two fundamental elements must be in place: firstly, success requires training and constant commitment, and secondly trust within the members of a team.

Samuel King, 4MEE



Orienteering

Whilst fully committing to school life and the Cross Country Club, David Bunn has also been training and competing at the highest level in orienteering. The past year has been his busiest season yet, as he starts his transition onto the international stage.

David's goal for the season was to gain selection for the European Youth Orienteering Championships, to be held in Bulgaria at the end of June. Unfortunately, between September and December he was constantly nagged by injuries, which prevented him from building the base fitness he had aimed for. Still, come the selection races in April, a good block of uninterrupted spring training left David feeling in good shape, and he managed to take the third and final spot in the GB team.

Come the European Championships, navigational mistakes cost David a good result in the sprint distance (which was held on an abandoned fortress), and again in the long distance he was left frustrated at what could have been. However, in the relay David put any previous performances behind him and executed a strong performance, taking GB from 16th to 12th on the last leg, only a few seconds off a top ten position. If the second leg runner hadn't lost minutes of time due to getting blinded by a branch to the eye, a podium position may have been on the cards.

This season also saw David sign for a Finnish orienteering team, based in Helsinki, and as a result he has raced in the biggest orienteering relay in the world - The Jukola Relay. The seven leg relay starts at 11pm and runs through the night, with most runners wearing

head torches to be able to see and read the map in the dark. David ran fifth leg and enjoyed being a part of a race with 18,000 competitors and many more spectators. The event is so big that the forest it was held in became the 13th most populous 'settlement' in Finland, for the weekend!

For the remainder of the season, David will be spending a lot of time training and racing in Finland, Denmark, Sweden and finally Switzerland in October, where he will make his second appearance for Great Britain.

Elliot Birkbeck



Berlin Trip

Last June, the fourth year kicked off their supposed post-exam break with the annual History Trip to Berlin. The tour was specially designed to cover key locations relevant to the iGCSE History course, which covers both the rise of Nazi Germany and superpower relations.

After a predictably early start and a brief flight from Heathrow, we descended on central Berlin, where we first took in the Reichstag, the German Parliament, in all its glory and subsequently viewed the large memorials nearby, most notably the unpretentious Holocaust monument composed of hundreds of grey stone blocks rising out of the pavement. Naturally, the famous Brandenburg Gate was on the itinerary, where boys jostled one another and other tourists in pursuit of the most social-media-worthy photo. After lunch, during which language skills were tested, we visited the Topography of Terror and adjoining remnants of the Berlin

Wall, which housed the headquarters of the Gestapo, complete with grim open cells in which subjects would be 'interrogated' in the basement.

The second day began with the full realisation that we were to visit a concentration camp, an unknown quantity for most of the boys. Leaving the horrors of Sachsenhausen Concentration Camp, in which appalling conditions, overwork and contempt of human life were all too apparent, the subdued atmosphere of usually vocal teenage boys was almost tangible. Next was a visit to the Wannsee Conference House in Potsdam, just outside the city. Here, within what would otherwise be a perfectly pleasant country home, the infamous 'Final Solution' of the 'Jewish Question' had been devised. Much time was spent understanding the impact of the Holocaust for both individuals and ethnic groups, as shown in the exhibitions on site.

We had been due to spend the rest of the day inside the Berlin Olympic Stadium, built for the 1936 Games;

unfortunately, however, a show by the less GCSE-relevant Rolling Stones took priority over our visit.

Our final day involved visiting the main site of the Berlin Wall, preserved in the original layout, followed by a trip to the DDR museum; its documentation of life in East Germany proved interesting in many different respects. We finished our time in the city by travelling to the former East German Ministry of State Security (Stasi) prison, which had been kept in remarkable original condition. Shown around by a former detainee, who had attempted to cross over the Wall, we investigated the rows of cells and 'interrogation' rooms. Following a delayed flight and a 1am landing at Stansted, we arrived back from our whistle stop tour with a much greater insight into the history we were studying.

We are very grateful to our guides around Berlin, and to the teaching staff who accompanied us. Our particular thanks go to Mr Hallinan, for organising such an enjoyable trip.

Lachlan Jones, 4MEE





Shooting

This past year has seen the Rifle Club enjoy great success thanks to some most impressive shooting from the club members, who were very ably supported and trained by our coach Alan Smith alongside the new master in charge of Shooting, Mr Johnson.

During the Michaelmas Term, our A and B teams participated in Division 1 for both 5 bull and 10 bull in the inter-school leagues, a notable achievement in itself. The C team also shot well in Division 5. All teams faced tough competition, but managed to put in impressive scores across the board. Particular mention should go to Freddy Martin and Drew

Farwell, both of whom came second in their respective leagues.

In November, the Club also went to the Lord Roberts Centre in Bisley to compete in an inter-schools competition. Abingdon was placed seventh out of 62 competing teams and Noah Keighley won in his age category. Following this, we participated in the annual Winter Open competition, again at Bisley. This is the largest school rifle-shooting competition in England, with around 200 of the best young shooters in the country taking part. The competition was both enjoyable and successful; Noah Keighley again won in his age group, and Drew Farwell came second overall, while also winning his age category. During this term, Drew Farwell was also

selected to be in the England A team for the BSSRA Schools National Match, shooting for the winning team.

During the Lent Term, the A, B, C and D teams all shot very well in the leagues, with both the B and D team winning their divisions. Drew Farwell came top in the leagues for the A and B team, with James Hogge coming second and third in the same leagues. Near the end of the term, the same boys were both selected to represent the BSSRA at the International Saison Start for Shooters 34th ISAS 2018 in Dortmund, Germany. An outstanding achievement for both boys.

The annual shooting competition between Abingdon School and Stade took place during the Easter holiday. As has become tradition, the club travelled to Stade, Germany, to participate in a friendly competition. During the stay, the participants thoroughly enjoyed trips to Hamburg and the U-Boat Museum at Bremerhaven and benefitted from using the host's electronic ranges for practice before the match. The Abingdonians had hoped to beat their hosts and reclaim the trophy, but after an extremely close-fought competition they lost by a mere 2.5 points. Next year the club members will be welcoming their counterparts from Stade to challenge them on home turf.





As the Summer Term was the last time the current captains, James Hogge and Anthony Yang would be with the club, the boys wanted to do their very best in every division. The A team won Division 2, with James Hogge exiting on a high by finishing second in the league. The B team shot admirably given the tough opposition - and the C team won Division 2, shooting at 5 bull targets. This was a strong finish to the leagues for Abingdon, showcasing their hard-work throughout the year and the considerable input from the coach, Mr Smith.

During the summer, Drew Farwell and Will Shorrocks were selected by the BSSRA to compete in the Junior International Competition at Bisley, with competitors coming from wide-ranging locations, including South Africa. This represents a very impressive achievement for the boys, who were placed well. Later in the summer, a select number of boys travelled to the annual August meeting, again at Bisley. James Hogge performed particularly well, finishing second in C class and earning himself a promotion to B class for next year, while Drew Farwell won the Under 18 category.

The Rifle Club also travelled to Beckley, Oxfordshire to compete in the Summer Small-Bore Championship meeting. The



boys found it an extremely enjoyable experience. Abingdon won the Symonds Bowl, Freddy Martin won D Class, with Benjamin MacLennan coming second, Will Shorrocks and Archie Griggs won the C and D Class pairs, and Drew Farwell won the Junior Trophy.

With the club captains Anthony Yang and James Hogge leaving at the end of the year, Drew Farwell will be taking over captaincy of the club with Will Shorrocks as the Middle School captain and Marius Williamson as the Lower School captain.

Looking back, 2018 has been another successful year for the club and it holds great promise for next year. All that is left to say is well-done to all the shooters - and the Rifle Club looks forward to welcoming the squad at the start of next term.

Drew Farwell, 6DRM



Cricket

The Easter holiday saw two squads from the U15 and U17 age groups visit Barbados on a pre-season tour of this wonderful island. It was an amazing opportunity to visit and play cricket on the island that has produced some of the West Indies' - and the world's - most revered cricketers. There was some very exciting cricket on display throughout the 10 days, and although our opponents attacked every match, the Abingdon sides were always in every game, with the squads returning a strong 80% win percentage. There was also plenty of opportunity to experience and explore the culture and natural beauty of the island. The boys got to enjoy a tour of the iconic Kensington Oval; a jeep safari tour of the island including a visit to the surfing mecca of Bathsheba; a lively 'Friday Night Fish Fry' at Oistins, and the entertaining Harbour Lights Beach Extravaganza. The tour finished with a catamaran cruise along the west coast of the island with a traditional bajan lunch and the opportunity to snorkel in the clear Caribbean waters with sea turtles – a great finale to an amazing experience.

It has been an unusually hot and dry summer for the cricket season and the

ground staff must be congratulated for the fantastic work they have done to keep the school grounds and cricket wickets looking and playing at the fantastic standard that they have. The season started positively with a match against Reading Blue Coat School, a new fixture for us in 2017, in which there were plenty of runs from all age-groups on some well-prepared pitches. Following their achievements as County Champions in 2017, the U15s hosted a very strong Stowe side early on in the season in the regional stages of the National Cup. While unfortunately losing to their opponents, this year group produced some scintillating cricket during the 2018 season, with the U15C matching the U14B side in achieving near-unblemished records.

The 1st XI struggled to set competitive

totals throughout the 2018 season, owing to some inconsistency with the bat. When the side batted freely, however, they proved an exciting side, with plenty of young cricketers showing lots of potential for future seasons. Within the senior side, Harvey Jupp continues to represent Gloucestershire as a member of their Academy, whilst Hector Chambers is representing Berkshire and Freddie Smith has broken into the Oxfordshire 2nd XI side as an U15. In 2018, across all age groups, the School boasted cricketers representing Oxfordshire, Berkshire, Gloucestershire and Sussex, as well as boys playing in the Cherwell League and Home Counties Divisions. In addition, the same year saw Old Abingdonians Callum Russell, James Fitzjohn, Leo Bethell and Max Mannering (all 2015 OAs) represent Oxfordshire 1st XI in the





Minor Counties Division.

The finale to the 2018 school season was the hosting of the annual 1st XI Cricket Festival at Abingdon, involving Cheadle Hulme School, St John's Leatherhead and Brentwood School. The well-contested festival saw Abingdon finishing second to St John's. We also got to hear from Lt. Col. Colin Whitworth, who shared his story and some life tips at the festival dinner - but only after the England football team had competed victory over Colombia! Hosting the festival was a great way to finish the season and say farewell to some real stalwarts of the Cricket Club. The festival matches were played across our main pitch on War Memorial Field as well as at the local Abingdon Vale Cricket Club, with whom we continue to build strong club links. They made use of the School's facilities at the start of the Summer holidays and we now have Abingdon School cricketers representing the club at U13, U15 and through each of the senior teams.

In the Lower School, the U12s showed great promise and played some magnificent cricket throughout the season. The U13s got off to a slow start, but found their form in the latter part of the season, with a number of the players stepping up to represent the U14 sides to great effect. In the U14 teams, there was the luxury of substantial competition

for places, resulting in a rotation system throughout the term. The As peaked with an emphatic win against Portsmouth Grammar School, with the Bs and Cs following suit. This is a year group with great cricketing potential, which bodes well for the future.

On occasion, the U15 sides lost players to the senior sides, presenting chances for others to step up. There is a great deal of cricketing depth in this year group, and we look forward to seeing how the players develop in the senior age groups next year. The senior sides played some great cricket, particularly in the second half of the term, although the 3rd XI's first game versus Reading Blue Coat probably trumped them all, with the captain respectfully retiring his innings on 80 runs, denying himself the chance of a century, in order to offer others the opportunity to bat before winning the fixture.

Special mention must go to Oscar Fountain for his 4 wickets in an over, including a hat trick for the 1st XI, and also to Jack Deeker for scoring a century for the U12Cs on debut for the School - quite some achievements!

Overall, the Cricket Club ended the 2018 season with a win percentage just below 60%. Full Colours were awarded to captain Oscar Fountain as well as Fergus Mitchell, Max Owen, Samuel



Warren, Josh Washington and William Webb, while Half Colours went to Daniel Bacon, Sam Collins, Joshua Franklin and Jamie Lawson. Lower School Full Colours were awarded to Alastair Gray, Max Siriwardene and Max Struthers with Half Colours going to Geordie Anderson, Ollie Northwood, Marc Sherriff and Joshua Willson.

James Golding

First Year History Walk

Towards the end of the Summer Term, the entire First Year were given the opportunity to explore the history of Abingdon and how the school has played a vital part in the town. A Lower School Assembly saw Mrs Wearne, the school archivist, show us a presentation and talk about the school's history. A week later, we were able to learn more on a walk into Abingdon Town, where we split into tutor groups before visiting several areas of particular interest.

The first was the county hall, built in the 17th century, which was designed by Christopher Wren, who also oversaw the training of the building of Saint Paul's Cathedral. We went upstairs to the museum where we learned all about Abingdon through its history - from Roman pottery to the closure of the Morland's Brewery and the MG Factory.

After seeing the museum, we walked up the stairs to the top of the building



where we had a great view of the old schoolroom, built in 1563. This, we discovered, had been paid for by John Roysse to provide previews for Abingdon School. The school stood on this site for 300 years. Unfortunately, we were not cleared to enter because of building work.

We then went to St Nicolas' Church,

where one of the Churchwardens talked to us about the dissolution of the Abbey. We were intrigued to discover that some of the materials from the Abbey were used to construct other buildings in the town but the biggest pieces of stone were taken down the Thames to build Whitehall in London! We also saw the monument to John Blacknall and his family. We had learned the week before that he donated money to the school, and is commemorated today with the Blacknall scholarships.

We were also able to visit the former site of the Abbey, having learnt how the Abbey had made the town important but subsequently been demolished. We had a chance to appreciate the huge extent of the Abbey, which was built in the shape of a cross, and walked around what is thought to be where the walls stood.

Afterwards, we walked to St Helen's Church, where we filled in a quiz and saw the grave of John Roysse. St Helen's, we found out is wider than it is long, and parts of it date back to more than 1000 years ago!

We finished the walk with a look at Christ's Hospital, where we learnt that historically 'hospitals' were not only centres of treatment for the sick, but also places of 'hospitality'. Christ's Hospital gave the land for the current school site to be built in the 19th century and today the school still has links with the charity.

Leland Ebner and Philip Kimber, 1MWL





First Year Fishbourne Trip

At the start of the last week of the Summer Term, the first years were treated to a visit to Fishbourne Roman Palace, near Chichester. The palace, the largest residential Roman building north of the Alps, is believed to have been finished during the reign of the Roman Emperor Vespasian, somewhere between AD 75 and AD 80. It is said to have been the home of King Cogidubnus, who was a 'client king' to the emperor and one of the key monarchs in Early Roman Britain.

We began by watching a fascinating documentary about Fishbourne Palace, which revealed many helpful pieces of information, including how the site

was excavated by a group of amateur archeologists in the 1960's. It is thought that the palace was inhabited for over 200 years before it was badly damaged by a fire and fell into disuse. According to ancient sources, the palace had over one hundred rooms with a footprint larger than Buckingham Palace. A detailed architect-style model certainly helped us to imagine what the original palace resembled.

We then had the opportunity to study some ancient artifacts and learn what insights can be gained from something as small as an old cow's tooth or a piece of polished clay. We also viewed a reconstruction of a typical Roman kitchen and saw what type of food they cooked and consumed (their diets consisted mainly of seafood).

After lunch we went to the Roman museum and wrote about the various

artifacts it houses. We thoroughly enjoyed exploring the museum and writing about the Roman underfloor heating system, known as the hypocaust. From the museum, we moved to the most impressive part of the entire site: the mosaics. Here, we completed a game of mosaic bingo, which entailed finding the parts of the mosaics that were pictured in their original form. The main spectacle, however, was the surviving depiction of Cupid upon a Dolphin. I had been really looking forward to seeing it and was truly astounded.

Finally, we explored a Roman-style garden, starting with the outside triclinium before moving on to the herb garden, where we studied six herbs. A peculiar fact that we learnt was that the Romans treated wounds with marshmallows! We completed our tour of the garden by examining the entrance, reflecting on how impressive and daunting it would have been to walk up there to visit King Cogidubnus.

Overall, the trip was very informative and it was fascinating to find out more about the setting of the stories that feature in our Latin course. While the highlight for me was definitely the opportunity to view the ancient mosaics, I immensely enjoyed the entire trip.

Alexander Lees, 1MWL





Leavers' Day

Good morning, ladies and gentlemen.

This is one of those moments when we can stop to look back on our experiences and look forwards to the future. At Abingdon, day-to-day life is incredibly busy, with all of us engaged in a healthy mix of activities, so it might therefore feel strange and unfamiliar to just stop for a few seconds and reflect. This is a valuable chance for us to consider what we have achieved in the past years and will go on to do in the years to come. Hopefully we are all enjoying what is really a celebration of our time here, and revelling in the mystery and uncertainty that facing the future brings.

Within the departing Upper Sixth there is a great variety of interests and qualities. In the time I have now I cannot begin to do justice to even the smallest proportion of what we as a year group do. Be it on the river, solving abstract equations, on the rugby pitch, as a flautist, kicking a football, in the orchestra, debating, charities committee - the list goes on. We also have a real assortment of different cultures, from several continents, and many more different perspectives on life, but somehow we make up one whole

that is much much more than the simple sum of its parts. As we take our different paths in the next stage of our lives, it is this cohesion that now holds our year group together.

We are greatly indebted to all the teachers here, who have always supported us when we were struggling, inspired us when we were looking to push ourselves, and taught us to both question what we learn and be adaptable as we prepare for life beyond school. They have shaped the ambitions and abilities of all of us sitting here today. On behalf of the whole Upper Sixth I'd like to thank all the staff. In addition, we would not be here today, of course, without our parents, and so it is only right that they celebrate and enjoy this moment here with us.

So there are those who have made such large impressions on each one of us as individuals, but there are also those who, equally importantly, play essential roles in supporting the entire school community. Without these foundations our learning would have been so much more of a challenge. So thank you to all those working tirelessly behind the scenes to keep the school running.

I would like especially to extend thanks to Mr Dawswell, to Ben Hall and to the entire prefect team this past year, for the many hours of work they have put in



keeping the school operating smoothly and efficiently, and to the Head for being in control of it all. I wish the new team of prefects and Heads of School best of luck for the forthcoming academic year.

It goes without saying that we are by no means leaving the school community – we will be Abingdonians for life, as part of the OA club, but also because we will have all taken on one aspect or another of the Abingdon ethos.

I am going to finish by returning to what I earlier termed the cohesion within our year group. The basis of this is simple – it is the friendships that have developed amongst us. These will be the active legacy of our time here at Abingdon. So treasure them and nurture them, as we move onto new challenges in our lives.

Thank you.

Patrick McCubbin, 7KL

Morning gents, teachers, parents and family.

Today marks an important milestone in our lives, as the 14 years of our school careers draw to a close and we prepare to undertake the daunting prospect of entering into the adult world. When deciding what to talk about in the short moments I have with you this morning, I thought it would be a good opportunity to look back and reflect on what our time at Abingdon has allowed us to do and perhaps more importantly, what it has given us and how it has prepared us to face the challenges of the world today.

Over the past few years, we have been lucky enough to attend a school that gives us the opportunity to excel to such a high level in so many different fields. While academic success is at the heart of every undertaking at Abingdon school, it is certainly not the only priority. This has allowed pupils to thrive and flourish, supported by superb facilities and guidance, the quality of which I don't think many of us will truly appreciate until we have left it all behind.

Furthermore, what I have been most grateful for and feel sets the boys at Abingdon apart is the sense of community across all the year groups, which, alongside strong friendship groups, is certainly a part of daily school life. I truly believe that our year as a whole has developed a strong sense of companionship defined by the countless experiences that we have shared over the past two to five years.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who have supported us during our time at Abingdon and made our time here both successful and enjoyable. Firstly, the Head and Mr Dawswell, for expertly supporting and guiding the prefect team so that the day to day running of the school could be as efficient as possible. On that note, I would also like to thank the prefect team for their mostly dedicated help in all manner of events over the past year, and Patrick, whose work ethic and dedication are unparalleled. I would also like to thank the teachers for their continued support in both our academic and extra-curricular lives, and most importantly the parents, whose undying support we certainly couldn't survive



without, and probably take for granted.

As leavers, we are at a point in our lives in which we are preparing to make some significant decisions, the effects of which will likely determine the direction we initially take in life. For many of us, our future seems certain, whether that's a gap year or a university place; we are all in the privileged position of having countless opportunities available to us. Yet, while I do not feel it is my place to offer any profound advice regarding the decisions that anyone else will make, it is important to remember that plans change and ideas fail. While some of us perhaps believe that our time at school has not taught us to deal with the challenges that we will inevitably face, I am confident that we will all one day value everything that our time at Abingdon has taught us. It is a place that encourages and thrives off its diversity and individualism. It is a place that produces versatile young men with genuine academic curiosity and a desire to push themselves. It is a place that guarantees a kind and safe environment in which students are free to try, to fail, and to succeed across every aspect of school life. Hard work, selfless commitment and dedication are some of the things that dominate the personalities of the boys at Abingdon. These, I feel, are the key characteristics that every boy sitting in this room has developed through their time at school, and are the skills and experiences that we can hope only to strengthen and build on as we embark on the journey ahead.

I wish you all the best for the future.

Thank you for listening.

Ben Hall, 7DCB



Moldova Trip

On 10 July, 14 Abingdon boys set off from the Coach Park to embark upon a trip the like of which none of us had experienced before. Whether we felt ready to begin this trip at 3am on a Monday morning was questionable, we were all, however, incredibly excited about what lay ahead: 10 days in one of Europe's poorest countries, Moldova. We got on a flight to Vienna, much to William Cope's disappointment, who seemed to have dressed for a trip to Ibiza in his salmon pink chino shorts and Hawaiian shirt. After a short stop in Vienna, we arrived at Chisinau airport, where we met the man that some in previous years had described as 'The Man, the Myth, the Legend'. This was Nicu, usually referred to through his other title, the Director of Agape, the charity supported by Abingdon School.

Very quickly we became accustomed to the fact that Moldova was going to be very different to Ol' Blighty, through not only the consistent heat, but also the bumpy car journey to Ialoveni, our home for the next few days. The lack of development and contrast with the UK was clear not only in the roads, but also at the school where we would be spending the next five days helping children learn English, have fun in art and release lots of stored up energy in sporting activities. The school, in its buildings, resources and amenities, was incredibly different to what we

are so fortunate to be treated to at Abingdon, and, I believe, this hit home hard with quite a few of the Abingdon Sixth Formers. We realised then how much we simply take for granted and how lucky we are. At the school, tired and dishevelled from our early start, and rather nervous, we were introduced to our host families, with whom we would be staying for the next few days. Before we knew it, we were on the way home with them and all feeling quite relaxed.

Our families all lived in the town of Ialoveni, which is very different from Abingdon. The families grow most of their own food in their gardens, with the more affluent having space for keeping

chickens or ducks. We tried foods we had never tasted before, and had a mainly vegetarian diet. The only shop we found in the town supplied less than my village store. My host family was very hospitable, but only their eldest, twelve-year-old son had any reasonable English. So my house mate - Max Hall - and I soon learnt that Google Translate and Mr Jenkin's crib sheet of useful Moldovan phrases were going to be our trusty friends!

The first morning, up bright and early, we were taken to the school to begin running the activities. Something we learnt quickly as a group was the importance of making a plan for the day; seemingly, hours of Splat and Duck Duck Goose were not quite going to satisfy the teachers and children alike...





Each morning we split ourselves into three groups: six of us teaching English, four of us running sports activities and another four running art activities. Although, at first, controlling the 120+ children proved to be demanding, we got to grips with it as the days went on, realising that we could grab their attention much more easily through the use of gestures and a smiling face. The children showed real determination in all the activities they took part in, and evidently loved the opportunities on offer for them. Their enthusiasm to learn and obvious enjoyment of all we organised was a real incentive to us in our planning and made it especially rewarding.

A particular highlight for the Abingdon boys in Ialoveni was the annual Moldova v Abingdon football match, during which, any hope for peaceful relations between the two nations was quickly wiped out by Howard Hawkes' crunching challenges. England were convincing winners, a feat that sadly couldn't be replicated by the national team that evening, as, whilst sitting at a local restaurant which wasn't known for its speed of service, we saw them bow out of the World Cup to Croatia.

During the afternoons of the days we were in Ialoveni, we immersed ourselves in Moldovan culture. One afternoon we visited the largest wine cellar in the world at Milestii Mici. With 34 miles of tunnel underground, it holds 1.5 million bottles of wine, and is certified by Guinness World Records. Another day we went to Chisinau, the capital of Moldova, although only ten kilometres

from Ialoveni, it couldn't have been more of a contrast, much more sophisticated, with an industrial and commercial centre, but with the old Soviet-style clusters of living blocks still dominating the skyline. We also did some community work and helped one elderly woman fix her broken fence, a task that, even though completed in the baking heat, really gave us boys a sense of fulfillment thanks to seeing her face light up at the sight of the completed project. This task also gave Mr O'Doherty a chance to prove his fence-painting skills, some fine work of which even Mrs O'Doherty was proud.

At the end of our time in Ialoveni we said our final goodbyes to the children for whom we had been running the activities - it was fantastic to see the impact that we had made on them while looking after them for the past few days. We then set off for Romania in two coaches: one full of Abingdon pupils and one full of Moldovan children. The much talked about eight hour drive was upon us.

That evening we arrived at Lacu Rosu, a national park in the mountains of Romania, where we were surrounded by gorgeous countryside and incredible scenic views; yet of course, it was the idea of free WiFi that thrilled the Sixth Form boys no end! This was to be our home for the next few days. These days were filled with a huge variety of activity, ranging from some questionable acting, if we can call it that, from James Madeley during our filmmaking day, to some even more questionable dancing from Andrew Russell in the internationally-televised *Lacu Rosu's Got*

Talent. The picturesque mountain walk proved quite a challenge in the heat, and we had great fun in the rowing boats on the Red Lake. During the evenings we played games with the children; one night, we even made our own board games and played them with each other.

I believe the moment at which the ten days of hard work truly paid off was the last night. We had just said our goodbyes and thanks to all the staff and translators. As soon as the presentations ended, the children began to cry. Realising the impact of ten short days on these children was something incredibly special to see; for them, the Abingdon visit is something they really cherish and look forward to hugely every year. This is just one of the many reasons I would encourage as many Abingdon boys as possible to go on this trip. For some of these kids, meeting English boys of a similar age is a once in a lifetime opportunity.

Our thanks go to Mr and Mrs O'Doherty for accompanying us on the trip and to Mr Jenkins for organising the whole venture. We had so much fun with them and the children we were helping. My time in Moldova made me realise how fortunate we are to live in a country such as the UK and how privileged we are to have the opportunity to attend a school such as Abingdon. It is something I will remember all my life.

Henry Steinsberg, 6SAE



Sailing Trip

In the first week after the end of the Summer Term, 32 Abingdon boys went to Athens to enjoy a week of sailing on two 50ft yachts around some Greek islands. Our journey took us to six islands as well as Athens and past the north-eastern tip of the Peloponnese.

Our first day of travelling included a delayed flight from London before a traffic jam on the bus journey from Athens to the marina in the rain. When we finally arrived at the marina, we quickly unloaded our luggage onto the boats and went for a tapas dinner at a nearby restaurant.

The next day we had a relaxed morning, with breakfast at nearby Dia Noche's and a trip to the shops to stock up the boats. Later that morning we motored out of the harbour and raised the sails to cross the shipping lanes westwards towards Aegina. On the way out, we had a distant view of the Acropolis and the Parthenon.

Rounding the north side of the island, we stopped in the sun for a swim. In the late afternoon, we anchored the yachts against the cliffs of Agcistri, an island west of Aegina. More swimming



there was followed by dinner at a small taverna round the corner, which we reached in our slow 2.5 horsepower tenders.

The second day of sailing was a trip past the island of Poros on the Peloponnese where we stopped for lunch in town. We then sailed further south and finished in the large bay of Dhokos. Across the bay, a superyacht which might have belonged to Zuckerberg was anchored for the evening. The evening football was followed by sleeping on deck for the night.

The next day, we had a short morning sail to the marina at Idhra – famous for being crowded. We had some free time



on Idhra to get some lunch and later to watch the football.

Our fourth day was the longest day of



sailing. We left Idhira marina mid-morning and sailed eastwards, passing the small island of Georgios south of the tip of Attica and going all the way to Kithnos. It was a rough crossing; several of the crew were looking quiet and thoughtful that day. At the end of it, however, we had a relaxing dinner ashore and enjoyed ice cream afterwards.

The next morning saw us sailing north towards the west side of Kea. We found a fairly crowded bay, but in the evening made it to a scenic dinner at a restaurant on the hill.

The next day, we went back west and stopped for lunch in the bay at Sounion, where some of us went up the hill to the temple of Poseidon. Enjoying a good

wind, we made our way back past the shipping lanes to the western side of Aegina, where we anchored for the night and watched the sunset while enjoying dinner at a restaurant.

On the morning of the last day, we had to bring the boats back to Athens by 9am, so we left Aegina at 5:30am and got in some early morning sailing around the north side of the island. We arrived at our marina on time while avoiding the morning shipping and had a late breakfast at Dia Noche's.

Our whole group then went by tram up to the Acropolis, where we took some great photos of the Parthenon and theatres in the sun. Lunch on the way down was followed by the long bus ride



back to the airport where we caught our evening flight back home.

Dashiell Hathaway, 4RAJ



Biology Olympiad

Last summer I took part in the International Biology Olympiad (IBO). This is a practical and theoretical biology competition between the winners of the national biology olympiads of seventy countries. Yet it is also so much more than just a biology competition, and this year was no different: it was an intense exposure to a very different culture – it was held in Tehran, Iran – and a large scale social event, with over two hundred and fifty students from those seventy countries.

So how did I end up in Tehran? On the back of a rigorous process, beginning with exams held in school in January and ending with practical assessments at Warwick University over Easter, four of us were chosen to represent the UK in the IBO – Brandon, Rebecca, Amir and myself. Over the course of the Olympiad, it was notable just how strong a bond the four of us formed, which was very important as we relied on each other to deal with everything that came our way.

Once A-levels were out of the way, as seemingly everyone else embarked

on the biggest holiday they'll get until retirement, I began a week trying to balance cramming the one thousand four hundred-page Campbell textbook, working through a decade of past IBO papers, while overcoming the aftereffects of the Griffen Ball. Having spent my last day of preparation journeying into London and back to pick up my Iranian visa from the consulate in the basement of a house in Kensington, the challenge of the Olympiad loomed larger than ever.

The pace did not let up throughout our training week. First we were at Kew Gardens, where we were given a whistle-stop tour of the thirty plant families we needed to be familiar with. Then it was to Imperial College and dissection training with Dr Steve Cook, during which I found out all kinds of weird and wonderful facts about the anatomy of squids, dogfish and locusts. Following this, we tumbled on to an awards ceremony at Savoy Place before catching a late night train to Reading University. Here we spent the next two days being tested on a plethora of biochemical practicals, from ELISA to enzyme kinetics; I also enjoyed talking to Dr Mike Fry about his research, which builds on both the physical modelling and experimental sides of biochemistry. Training week

finished with a trip into the bowels of the Natural History Museum in London, where experts showed us a vast selection of exhibits on a large proportion of the tree of life. We were also treated to stories of the inner workings of the museum, such as the time the new giant squid was lowered into a tank of (toxic) formalin without due diligence being given to Archimedes principle, as well as a brief look at part of Darwin's collection from the HMS Beagle. I'd like to thank Maggy Linford and Jon Bennett, the jury members of the UK team, who led all our training and spent a sleep-deprived week in Iran translating our papers into a readable form of English.

After a restless, disorienting flight from London we arrived at the airport in Tehran, greeted with a rose by our guide for the week, Alieyeh. After checking into our hotel and taking a small breakfast, we settled into our rooms and then socialised over lunch. We were then escorted to the opening ceremony which featured many acts playing cultural Iranian music and an Olympiad anthem. Since the UK hosted the IBO last year, I had the privilege of swearing the annual oath of fair play, alongside a member of the Iranian team, as an act of handing over. After dinner we were able to watch the World

Cup final, sitting with the Croatians to share in their pain at their loss to France.

The next day we went on an excursion to Sa'dabad. This is a large complex with many museums, galleries, and palaces, including a splendid collection of artworks and a room walled entirely with mirrors. In the evening, we had the opportunity to view a limited selection of the equipment that would be used in the practical exams the next day; this was to guarantee all students were familiar with it, as equipment varies throughout the world. As a team we spent the rest of the evening second guessing (incorrectly!) what practical would come up based on the equipment we had seen; this did at least focus our minds on the challenges that lay in wait for us the next day. To top it all off, just as we had got ourselves an early night, the entire hotel suffered a late night call-up telling us to hand in our electronic devices for the week.

The time had now come for the practical exams. Collective opinion was that the exams were notably tough and time-pressured, although they largely ran smoothly. After the last practical we walked to a university sports ground for a cultural evening. This allowed us to let off some steam playing football, eating Iranian food and socialising with many teams we had got to know quite well by this point. The following day we had a rather odd excursion to a western-style shopping centre, where we seemed to be the main attraction, with TV news crews and photographers following us everywhere. The afternoon excursion was postponed, so we had time to prepare for the next day's theory test and get an early night, which by this point was much appreciated.

For the theory exams we sat in columns facing each other, which sometimes made it difficult to concentrate. The theory tests were very tricky, with no-one feeling confident afterwards. In the evening we visited the Milad tower, the sixth tallest freestanding structure in the world. The highlight was going up in the tower's



lift looking out over Tehran, and the guide delightfully reminding us 260m up the tower just how earthquake-proof it was. From so high up, the imposing mountains that provide a dramatic backdrop to Tehran, dominating the skyline, were especially clear. We were then reunited with our juries over dinner and talked about the previous few days.

The final days, with the exams out of the way, were great fun. We were taken to several exhibitions, including of Neolithic tools found in Iran, Islamic artworks and calligraphies, and a photographic exhibition featuring people looking at paintings in the Louvre. In the evening we returned to the university sports ground for another cultural night, where my archery skills were shown up to be less than adequate, getting back to the hotel at midnight. In the morning we visited a beautiful mosque, where the ceiling was completely covered in mirrors. Men and women had to be separated, visiting different sections of the mosque. After a brief walk around the mosque, we visited the adjacent bazaar. It was extremely busy, with small alcoves filled with spices and carpets lining the narrow streets; unlike the previous shopping trip, this was something we could never see at home.

After a late lunch, we got back in the coaches to go to the closing ceremony. The whole team was nervous, with the consensus being that any medal would



do. The hall was set out like a UN summit, with each team having their own desk with a little flag. After all the bronze medals had been read out, our thoughts were a mix of hope and dread that we'd all missed out on any medal. Once all the medals had been read out, the hall fell into chaos as the speaker tried to keep the ceremony going while every team celebrated with their jury and took pictures. We were ecstatic with our own performance, winning three golds and a silver, and sung all the way back to the hotel, including a biology-themed adaptation of *Three Lions* 'Bio's coming home'. Dinner afterwards was where everyone got together one final time. That evening was quite melancholy, with teams gradually leaving and everyone saying farewells at regular intervals, packing up the many gifts that we had been given by all the nations we had talked to – from the Aussies to the Danes to the Finns to the Icelanders, to name just a few.

Patrick McCubbin, 7KL



Madagascar Trip

When I first heard about a field trip to Madagascar, I knew I had to go! The idea of three weeks in such a remote country, seeing the wildlife, scuba diving and helping scientists with their research, couldn't have sounded more interesting. And therefore I found myself on one of the longest plane journeys I have ever taken; eight and a half hours to Ethiopia and then four and a half hours to Antananarivo, the Capital of Madagascar. Before being bundled off (me in the most cramped car, with someone holding the backdoor shut the entire time) to one of our only hotel stays, we all had to exchange our Euros into the Madagascan Ariary, the national currency One Euro being approximately 4000 Ar - I don't think my wallet has ever felt so full.

Once at the hotel we were acquainted with the zebu - a cow-like animal with a camel's hump, which provided our most delicious meals throughout the trip.



Another new experience was having to take malaria tablets and use malaria nets (in addition to the many vaccines we had to take prior to the visit). After a night at the hotel we were driven again, this time, to the north of Madagascar, in the Mahajanga Forest. To enter the forest, half of us were loaded onto a huge cattle truck and the others into very old 4x4's to manage the very bumpy drive through the forest. At the campsite, with Operation Wallacea, we immediately saw our first lemurs, swinging from tree to tree right above our tents. This, snakes in the showers, and huge spiders in

the toilets became regular occurrences, making all moments of the day exciting.

Throughout the week in the forest, we went on trails, locating different types of arachnids, invertebrates and birds, all the while, we benefitted from lectures on the unique biology of Madagascar and conservation efforts employed to help protect it. My favourite research trail was logging the different species of lemurs along the walk, where we used our torches to locate their eyes high up in the trees. Unfortunately the forest was not home to the 'King Julian' species of



lemur, though we did spot the Coquerel's Sifaka, the Brown Lemur, the Mouse Lemur and the Fat Tailed Dwarf Lemur. Half way through that week, we went on a hike, wading through rivers to a satellite campsite called Matsedroy. Here we learnt how to catch frogs with our bare hands (Louis Heard and Ben Wilson being by far the best at this), locate tiny scorpions using ultra violet light torches. Shockingly, Mrs McRae's group were stalked by an alligator! We also visited a local school, playing a very aggressive game of football and dancing with the children. As white people aren't common in the rural villages, often people would stare at us and the children would scream 'vasar vasar', meaning 'white people, white people'!

Another new experience for everyone was the food of the Madagascan jungle. Long gone were the steaks and meats of the capital city. Here every meal involved rice and beans, much to some people's dislike, meaning lots of food being purchased from the kiosks to snack on, and heavy use of condiments to make the rice and beans seem more appealing.

In the second half of the trip, joined by the girls from Plymouth Grammar, we drove up north towards Nosy Be. The

focus now was marine conservation. Madagascar has some of the most undisturbed coral reefs in the world. Here many of us gained our PADI open water diving qualifications, diving up to 18 metres in depth and seeing huge and colourful fish, manta rays, 1.5 metre long turtles, jellyfish, sea urchins, lionfish and eels. Once we had gained our diving qualifications, we assisted the scientists by carrying out underwater surveys, such as measuring coral bleaching. To do this we had to employ all the skills we learnt in the lectures, and by doing so, many of us gained further PADI Marine Eco Surveyor Qualifications. After lectures and dives we relaxed in the sea, ate zebu steak and calamari from local restaurants, spent thousands of Ariary thanks to very persistent street vendors and learnt many different card games to pass the time.

We were all very sad to leave the diving site and start our three day drive back to the airport. Once back in the capital city, where we were greeted by the locals, we bought weird snacks and other food from the street vendors to keep us going, (I even ate two chicken heads, much to the disgust of everyone else in my van). I am truly happy that I went on this trip and I cannot wait to travel to another exotic place.



Colm Lambert, 6JFB



Chalke Valley History Festival

At the Chalke Valley History Festival, the Sixth Form historians had the chance to engage with the past through talks, and activities, taking history beyond and outside the classroom. I particularly enjoyed listening to Rob Holland on the Second World War, who praised the longevity and quality of British equipment, noting it as integral to Allied victory. He argued convincingly that the British forces were more prepared for a

long, attritional war than the Germans, which can be seen primarily through the UK's war production. For example, the use of shorter but thicker boots, while ostensibly trivial, saved tons of leather and thus resulted in the production of more boots at a faster rate. I had not considered this before, and the talk led me to re-evaluate my outlook on the role of the British army in the war.

Beside the lectures, there were live demonstrations of Napoleonic muskets and mediaeval artillery, which brought home, for me at least, how much technology has developed over the

past 200 years; even for a trained professional, the Brown Bess musket would take up to 25 seconds to reload, resulting in an average firing rate of less than three balls per minute. By contrast, the military today have artillery that can fire six shells per minute over 40km.

I also had the opportunity to try sending signals using morse code and found the process of transmitting words and phrases to be more difficult, yet more enjoyable, than it seems in films. Afterwards, I was shown some WW2 spy equipment, and realised that, when packed into a suitcase, the gadgets weighed more than 14kg. Imagine trying to act as if you had packed for a holiday when hauling that around!

The trip was certainly fascinating and entertaining, and I was able to buy some signed books, including *Killers of the King: The Men Who Dared to Execute Charles I* by Charles Spencer. I recommend the trip to anyone who is interested in expanding the breadth of their historical understanding, and having some fun doing so. Thank you to Mr Jackson for organising it and Mr McGill for accompanying us.

Oliver Williams, 5TJD



Inter-House Sport Results

	U18	U16	U15	U14	Overall
Badminton	Crescent	Crescent	Crescent	Crescent	Crescent
Basketball					School
Chess					School
Cricket					Morgan's
Croquet					James'
Fencing					O'Doherty's
Football	Border's	School	Morgan's	Franklin's	O'Doherty's
Golf					Southwell-Sander's
Hockey	O'Doherty's		Austin		O'Doherty's
Pool	Crescent	Crescent	Crescent		Crescent
Rowing					Franklin's
Rowing Ergos	Austin		Franklin's	Border's	Austin
Shooting					Morgan's
Squash	Morgan's	Border's	Austin's	Border's	Austin
Swimming	Austin		Border's	School	Austin
Table Tennis	School	Franklin's	Austin		Austin
Tennis			O'Doherty's	School	Border's
Water Polo					Border's
Xbox FIFA	Southwell-Sander's	Morgan's			Southwell-Sander's

Lower School Inter-Tutor Group Competitions

	2nd Year	1st Year
Summer Reading Challenge	2M	
Lower School Challenge	2M	1L
Cross country	2C	1J
Hockey	2P	1W
Public Speaking	2M	1L
Water Polo	2P	1J
Table Tennis	2M	1J
Athletics	2P	1L
Reading	2M	1L
Cricket	2P	1L
Swimming	2P	1J
Tennis	2M	1J
Tug of War	2M	1W
Overall Winners	2M	1J

House Reports

Austin House



Once again, the year got off to a wonderful start with the announcement of another excellent set of public exam results for the boys in the house. The boys were then quick to show how well they could work together during preparations for the annual House Singing Competition. Unperturbed by the previous year's slightly daring choice, Brooklyn Han had even more advanced ideas for October 2017. The mash-up

of *Uptown Funk* and *Get Lucky* sung a cappella was the challenge and the boys rose to this with great motivation and belief. The final rehearsal was a triumph, although our final performance didn't quite meet these dizzy heights and we had to settle for another joint fourth place once again! Special mention must go to Brooklyn Han for his drive, determination and sheer musical expertise as Director.

There was continued success across

the inter-house sports competitions, in an unprecedented year of competing with snowy conditions. On the ergos, the house kept up its fine reputation in both the U18 and U15 competitions. On the table tennis tables, Henry Lu, Archie





student body, we have been lucky to have so many fantastic ambassadors for the house and School, boasting more than our fair share of school prefects and one Head of School. To name but a few: Patrick McCubbin proved himself to be a fantastic Head of School and one of the most modest students to grace the House: Alexander Moss, William Stewart and Lafite Lo led the house admirably and are the most selfless young men you could wish to meet. I must also mention two young men, Evan Littler and Greg Davies, whose tireless attitudes and self-motivation throughout their final year saw them make fantastic strides, with well-deserved achievements in the Summer – they are examples to us all.

We wish our leavers of 2018 all the very best for their very bright futures and look forward to celebrating the success of the remaining Austin House boys over the course of the next year.

I would finally like to offer warm welcomes to Mr Allen, Miss Rocker-Cook and Mr Davies, who join the tutor team for the upcoming academic year.

James Golding

Baker and Jake Wallis proved formidable in the U15 competition, Joseph Betts swept to victory in the U15 squash, and the U18 swimmers took the swimming title in the school pool.

December 2017 also saw the house's first international trip, venturing to Sexten in the stunning Three Peaks region of the Dolomites for an amazing ski trip. 26 boys took to the empty slopes, all

of contrasting abilities, and were an absolute credit to the School. They will be lucky to experience any better skiing conditions ever with amazing snow, beautiful surroundings, clear blue skies and almost empty slopes! Hopefully, the opportunity to repeat the trip in 2019 will be one that proves just as popular.

The end of the year always brings with it inevitable changes in personnel. In the

Crescent House



It is always a pleasure writing these articles every year, as it gives me an opportunity to look back and reflect on the impressive and diverse range of activities the boys in Crescent House are involved in. The Other Half is an important part of what makes Abingdon School tick, and as housemaster it makes me proud to see so many of the Crescent boys fully subscribing to that ethos.

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 great achievements in the various inter-house competitions throughout the year. In the Michaelmas Term, Crescent students had great success in the badminton competitions, with Perry Tsai winning the U18 singles badminton, and Brian Ho and Tong Tong Sukamongkol coming second. In the U14 competition Finn Wilson and Jacob Drew won the doubles and Jonathan Cai came second in the singles. Overall, Crescent comfortably won the badminton competition. Rory Mitchell won the A string squash, while Peter Zhou and Daniel Keeble won the U16 and U15 pool competitions

respectively.

In the Lent Term, the Crescent boys again triumphed on the badminton court and pool table. Brian Ho and Jason Ng won the U16 badminton, with Tong Tong Sukamongkol coming second in the singles. Ernest Chu won the U15 singles, while Andrew Jin and Leo Wu won the U15 doubles, meaning overall Crescent were victorious again. In pool, Daniel Keeble won the A competition and Harry Notley won the B competition, to come first overall.

The Summer Term brought the inter-house athletics, and various Crescent boys demonstrated their prowess at jumping and throwing. Oliver Heard won the third year high jump, while in the sixth form competition, Freddie Fleck won the high jump, Daniel Ooi won the long jump, Edward Hayes won the shot, and Kai Miles won the discus. On the cricket pitch, the Crescent House U15 team was unlucky not to win the competition for the second year in a row, losing to the eventual winners, Morgan's, in the semi-final.

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 however were Henry Barlow and Freddie Cunningham qualifying for the British Biathlon Championships. Henry and Fergus Mitchell also represented Oxfordshire in the English Schools' National Cross Country Championships. Kai Miles and Scott Yap were part of the swimming team that broke two county relay records, as well as being part of the U18 Bath & Otter Cup squad that finished ninth in the country. Kai Li excelled in the shooting range, winning a gold medal at the South East Region cadet shooting competition.

Off the sports field, Crescent boys did particularly well in a number of mathematics competitions throughout the year. Edmond Wang was part of the winning team in the UKMT Maths Challenge Regional Final, while Sean Kao both competed in the national final of the Senior Team Maths Challenge, coming an impressive 17th, and was a member of the Princeton University mathematics team, which came third out of all overseas entries. Benjamin Adams and Callum Ravden gave excellent performances in the school's production of *Fiddler on the Roof*.



The 2017 Crescent House song, conducted by Tom Preston, was *Some Nights* by Fun. The boys put in a great deal of effort, but for the tenth year running failed to make the top three. Our luck must surely change at some point, and I am confident that there are blue skies ahead in 2018!

A number of Crescent House boys achieved some excellent public examination results over the summer. With the introduction of the new grading system for GCSE in some subjects, they can't quite be as snappily summarised as previously, but Jason Ng (8 A*s, 3 9s) and Harry Notley (8 A*s, 2 9s) achieved the highest possible grades. Perry Tsai (8 A*s, 1 A, 1 9) Tong Tong Sukamongkol (8 A*s, 1 A, 1 9), William Putt (8 A*s, 1 9, 1 8) and Nathan Hudson (7 A*s, 2 9s, 1 A) also achieved close to the maximum. At A-Level, Jai Sidpra achieved 4 A*s and Sean Kao achieved 4 A*s and an A, winning his place at Cambridge.

Over the course of the year, the house was ably led by Heads of House Justin Chow and Josh Washington, with Jai Sidpra, Fergus Mitchell and Anthony



Yang all representing Crescent as school prefects. I thank them and the other senior boys for all of their support and hard work.

We said goodbye to Rev. Moody, Mrs King and Miss McCutcheon as tutors. Mr Miller, Miss Widdern, Mr Knowland and Mr Cousins 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 Miss Deaves-Small as

Matron.

The Heads of House for 2018/19 will be Jate Jaturanpinyo and Henry Barlow, while Jate and Edward Hayes will be school prefects. Ethan Webb is one of the Heads of School. 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

This year was one of continuous improvement in School House. Our sport has kept going strong throughout the year including confident victories coming from inter-house swimming and athletics. Not only have we had a fair number of victories, but there has been a marked improvement in participation across the board reflecting well on our house ethos. Sport has always been a comfortable domain for School House in my time, but recent developments have also seen School House as runner-up in House Singing. Since we performed *Shosholozza* three years ago, its chorus has often been taken up in the common room with a sense of calling back to past glory. I am proud to say we reclaimed this glory with a rendition of, the perhaps less culturally significant, *All-Star*. Although in the end we felt robbed of first place, the smiles on our faces as we sang alongside the Shrek cardboard cut-out were clear evidence of how much we were enjoying ourselves. Alongside whole house achievements congratulations also go to my fellow Upper Sixth pupils who are heading out to university this year.

Particular thanks go to our team of

prefects who have been helpful in organising house events, with special mention going to Jeremy Salkeld our conductor and Benjamin Wilson, who went out of his way to start maths tutoring sessions for younger years.

It goes without saying that our achievements this year have come as a result of the help provided to us by the diligent team of teachers in School House. Mr Litchfield has gone from strength to strength as our housemaster for the second year, with his incredible dedication to the house paving the way for improvements across the board, especially in the boarding experience. After school hours, our extremely dedicated team of boarding tutors, consisting of Mrs McKend, Mr Jackson and Mr Latham, have continued to provide the entertainment and assistance needed to foster the unrivalled community spirit in School House. As this year's new member of the boarding tutor team, Mr McDonnell has been an excellent stay-in tutor, with his cheerful presence enlivening the atmosphere in School House. In addition, his sticky chicken wings have risen up to be a worthy rival to





fifteen years. The use of the word family is particularly suitable, as Di has acted as a mother to all of those who have had the pleasure to pass through School House, whether as visitors, day boys or boarders. The patience, kindness and diligence she displayed during her tenure as our matron transformed School House into a home away from home for us boarders. It is certainly not an overstatement to say that Di is an irreplaceable part of School House. Despite that, I'm sure that Storm, our new matron, will do an exceptional job, as she has already established an excellent rapport with the boys whilst covering as the matron for some of last year, displaying the same degree of compassion that made Di such a popular figure amongst the boys.

Weihan Huang, 7JFH

With another great year covered and nostalgia already kicking in, I would like to say a few words on my time at School House. When I first arrived in school I had come straight out of prep school only to be separated by school or house from my very limited pool of friends. It was probably because of this alienation that I was able to break through the ironically deafening study room and reclusive boarder population to really find a home away from home in School House. The free time I have spent in the houseroom has made up a lot of my time in school and they were by no means wasted hours. The community formed by YouTube and silly stunts in a room barely 30 feet long have kept me sane throughout the years by providing both friends to talk to and a get-away from the web of clubs and work I formed around myself. In this way my time at School House has been an integral part of school life and, although smart reforms by Mr Litchfield have safely returned the study room to its original purpose, I am sure School House will continue to be a safe harbour from the tides of school life for others, as it has for me and my fellow Head of House Weihan.

We wish the best of luck to Ilya Korzinkin and Marc Tuazon in running the house next year.

Patrick Gwillim-Thomas, 7JFH



Mr Jackson's fish finger sandwiches, steadily becoming a highlight of the boarding experience. Meanwhile, our other new duty tutor, Miss Milarksi, never fails to lift our spirits with her caring qualities and the baking activities that she frequently organises. Mr Evans, Mr Hallinan, Mr Johnson, Mr Simmons, Ms Widdern and Mrs Yarker have tirelessly supported all the boys in School House as tutors, providing a stable platform from which we were able

to excel in all our endeavours. Sadly, Mr Hallinan has left Abingdon School after his outstanding contributions during his time here as a history teacher, and the EPQ and Oxbridge coordinator. We sincerely wish him all the best at his new job as the Head of History at Winchester College.

Last but certainly not least, this year sadly marks the departure of Di, our matron, who has been an ever-present part of the School House family for

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, both students and tutors alike. Everyone was greeted with the sight of a wonderful new mural adorning the houseroom wall, put in place by Head of House Gianluca Cau Tait.

Term kicked off for the new third years with the annual team-building exercises. They worked well as a group to overcome a range of fiendishly difficult tasks set out by the CCF and their tutors, before ending the day with a shooting

competition in the range where Caleb Maijeh turned out to be the deadliest of the new third years - but was at least apologetic after roundly thrashing his Housemaster!

Before we knew it, the first major competition was upon us with the whole house gearing up to have another crack at House Singing. We eventually settled on *Seven Nation Army* by the White Stripes, with Head of School Ben Hall conducting and Chanka Pathinayake once again accompanying on piano. Alas, despite our best efforts it was not to be our year, with the judge harshly (but

fairly) describing our efforts as “funereal”!

Still, there was plenty of talent on show elsewhere in the Michaelmas Term, with third year Rowan Miell-Ingram dominating his age category in cross country and often beating the sixth form, Alfie Marshall, Liam Deegan and Fraser Scott producing fascinating films for the Abingdon Film Unit, and Harvey Jupp being selected to tour Sri Lanka with the Gloucestershire Cricket Board. Elsewhere we saw nine members of the house playing for the 1st and 2nd XVs against Radley, Daniel McNamara breaking into the top ten swimmers in the country during the ESSA finals and Callum Wilkinson providing us with a fascinating EPQ presentation on the role of women in the Odyssey.

The end of term saw the usual inter-house competitions, with some incredibly enthusiastic performances and some notable successes, including Harvey Jupp and Jamie Lawson winning the U18 table tennis, the U15 swimming team cruising to victory in the pool, and James Munday and Ollie Graham winning U16 squash.

We saw off the term with our celebration assembly where we handed out house prizes, beautifully handcrafted by Joshua Buckingham, and then a candlelit carol service in chapel. My thanks go out to Border's parents and Rev Steer for leading the service, and Nathaniel Reading for putting together the readings.

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 2018 focusing on debating and quizzing. My thanks go out to the many boys who stepped up to have a go in these tough competitions. Sadly, despite some great performances there were no overall wins here but I was hugely impressed with our debaters who made the semi-finals in three year groups. Sadly the annual Road Relay had to be cancelled for this year – a combination of snow and roadworks making the course unsafe – much to the disappointment of our Sixth Form A





house values.

Sadly, it was soon time to say goodbye to our departing Upper Sixth, who, after an emotional leavers' day, came together one last time for dinner with their tutors and Housemaster. They were a wonderful bunch and will be greatly missed. Still, this gave the opportunity to spend lots of time interviewing and selecting new prefects and Heads of House. This is a process I always greatly enjoy and am always blown away by just how amazing so many of our young men are.

They were certainly amazing on the sports pitches and river too! Tom Graham winning a medal at the National Schools' Regatta was the first highlight of the summer but certainly not the last. Liam O'Hickey and Jamie Volak won their respective 100m competitions during inter-house athletics and were joined by Rowan Miell-Ingram (1500m), Evan Hambly (800m), Greg Lister (shot) and Nathaniel Reading (discus) as individual winners. More pleasing through was the overall team effort where we won the U18 competition and were second overall on the day. It turns out that we have some talented racquet sportsmen too, with Alexander Boorer winning U14 squash and Seb Muller winning U14 tennis, which, when combined with second place in the U15 doubles for Johnnie Welby and Henry Bury, helped us to overall victory in house tennis.

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.

Sadly the end of year means we must say goodbye to many members of the House. We wish everyone all the best with their adventures beyond Abingdon. Our best wishes go especially to our three departing tutors. Mrs Mansfield, Mr Mason and Miss Drose have been wonderful members of the house and will be greatly missed.

David Border

team who were looking for the overall win. Fortunately the end of term sports competitions were able to go ahead. Perhaps unsurprisingly, given the house boasted six members of the 1st XI, the sixth form comfortably won the football under the leadership of Head of House and 1st XI captain Joseph Lilley. Fantastic leadership was also shown here at the other end of the age scale with third year Will Wallis unable to compete but instead prowling the touchline on his crutches to support and guide his teammates to a podium finish. The U15 swimming team that had been so successful in Michaelmas added a ball to the mix and won the U16 water polo. Not to be outdone, the third years showed huge power and fitness in winning the U14 ergo relay, and Gianluca Cau Tait potted a victory in the U18 pool. My highlight of the afternoon though was the dedication

shown by Ben Hall who sprinted out of an A level language oral exam, straight onto the squash court to win his first match. This kind of dedication and commitment to wider school life is an excellent example to us all.

The Summer Term is always a busy one, with public and school examinations looming, and farewells to say. We started off with a new social, The Great Border's Bake-off, where the third years consumed their own bodyweight in competitively produced goods! Fortunately this didn't slow down Seb Muller who went on to represent Oxfordshire on the tennis court, winning both his singles matches. The third year as a whole, under the guidance of new tutors Mrs Preiss-Chapman and Miss Drose, showed great bravery in taking to the Amey Theatre stage alongside their mentors to give presentations on the



Franklin's House

Our Head of House for the year was Joshua McDermott, supported by deputies George Newton and Charlie Craig. Alex Ainslie, Rory Buchanan, Harry Donoghue and Samuel Fenton were the house prefects. They were a remarkably pleasant and friendly group, and ensured that a pleasant atmosphere prevailed from the top.

The first event in the calendar was the House Singing Competition. We were led by Rory Buchanan, with Didier Delgorte providing expert piano accompaniment once again. Abba, iconic, fantastic and indeed chiasmic, tempted us to *Take a Chance* on them, and we did. We were both enthusiastic and musical, and gave an excellent performance which the judge somehow missed. I hope he does better next time.

Then came the first inter-house sports competition. In chess, our fine team of Seb Watkins, Louis Brosnan and Alister Jamieson competed extremely well, and achieved a fine third place. George Tanner, James Moore and William Quirke came a strong second in the U18 table tennis. Joshua McDermott came second in the U18 badminton. Max Hems, Matthew Hoult, Euan Baldwin and Lawrence Putt came second in the U15 swimming, which was particularly impressive because we were missing our best swimmer in the school,

Nicholas Skelton, who was at a national competition! This would certainly have been a first place, so we were really champions.

The Road Relay did not take place, for once, as Park Crescent was being dug up. This was frustrating because we have most of the best runners in the school. We look forward to sparkling in this event next year.

The second house sporting competition went particularly well for Franklin's: Euan Baldwin, Lawrence Putt, Lancelot Wilson, Hamish Hardy, Josh Sperrin and Owen Henney competed hard to come third in the water polo. Matty Ball and Alister Jamieson came second in the U16 badminton, and with Oliver Elly, Rohan Gathani, Ashwin Tennant and Jamie Robson also doing well in the U15s, we came third overall. Huba Varady, Rahul Ghandinesen and Kiran Gathani were brilliant in the table tennis and were champions in the U16 competition. Matthew Hoult, Lachlan Jones, Samuel King and Daniel Woodrow were again unbeatable on the ergo and won their competition. Then the day was crowned by the U14 football: Freddie Coode, Sebastian McAllan, Eddie Good, Jay Patel, Dominic Wood and Lucas Marsh were quite brilliant, and they won their competition in great style to take the trophy.

The house athletics competition is always a highlight of the summer, and it brought some fine Franklin's performances.

Third places were won by Sam Hayes-Newington in the discus; Cosmo Gooch, Lucas Marsh, Luis Vasconcelos and Harry Watkins in the relay; and Matthew Hoult in the shot. Second places went to Jack Tilley in the high jump, Conrad Smith in the long jump, Oscar Frost in the 200m, Jamie Chick in the 400, and Oscar Frost again in the long jump. Winners of their events were Luis Vasconcelos in the 1500m, Harry Watkins in the high jump, Dominic Wood in the long jump, Nicholas Skelton in the 1500m, and Jamie Chick in the long jump. It was a highly successful day for us as well as a very enjoyable whole-school event.

The final sporting competition of the year ended the Summer Term. Oscar Frost and Louis Brosnan tried their hand at golf and did well to come fourth against top opposition. Marcus Williams and William Quirke competed well to win third in the croquet. The triumph of the day, however, was undoubtedly on the river. Matthew Hoult, Daniel Woodrow, Samuel King and Sam Hayes-Newington, coxed by Conrad Smith, were again oarsome to win the competition in great style. Lachlan Jones was commended for brilliant house spirit here because he would certainly have been a winner too, but graciously agreed to stand down to let the others row.

There were many individual Franklin's achievements in the year. Edward Scott-Payne continued his brilliant progress as a GB fencer. Nicholas Skelton set more records and proved himself a national standard swimmer. Alasdair Czaplewski led the MUN at a national level, and Louis Brosnan continued to impress on a big stage with his suavely incisive debating. Joshua McDermott was a fine first team badminton player, and George Newton was a mainstay of the 1st XV. Jimmy Strainge continued to be a leading rugby player in his year group, as he was in tennis. Huba Varady, Kiran Gathani, Rohan Gathani and Alister Jamieson all made great contributions to school tennis, and Seb Watkins was a key member of the school chess team.





Didier Delgorgue and Ashwin Tennant are fantastic musicians central to music at Abingdon as well as top performers in their own right. Last but not least, the GCSE results for the house were superb, with Franklin's reinforcing its Ravenclaw credentials. No fewer than four of our boys, Matty Ball, Edward Gill, Tom Phillip and Jimmy Strainge, achieved perfect results with the highest possible grade in every subject; and three more, Oliver Elly, Alister Jamieson and Kiran Gathani, were perfect in every subject but one. This was a fantastic achievement, showing huge dedication over time as well as academic talent. Edward and Tom were also awarded scholarships in recognition of their progress.

At the end of the year we said goodbye to two tutors. Mr English was a tutor in the house for many years. He was always a towering presence, literally as well as metaphorically, and we will miss his forthright manner and his integrity. Mrs Downer moved on to another school after a year in the house. She was a kind and engaged tutor for her group, and I was grateful for her contribution. We wish her well in her next job.

In all it was another very successful year for Franklin's, and I am grateful to the boys and the tutors for making it so.

David Franklin



Morgan's House



This has been a great year in Morgan's House. Ably led by Thomas Butcher and Harry Walsh, there were many highlights, particularly from a group of leavers who had always loved the thrill of house competition.

I'd like to thank everyone in the house for their contributions over the year. The year began with another great entry in the house singing, wonderfully led and organised by Alex Chapman and Adam Bradley. After some dithering over song choice the house came together for

a wonderful performance that, in true Morgan's fashion, was well received but didn't quite win.

Mr Dempsey came away with the win in the house pool competition, revealing a youth misspent perhaps? The house quiz and curry night was a great success, with the Upper Sixth writing and hosting a great event enjoyed by over 100 parents, boys and staff. Quizzing is somewhat in the Morganite's blood, with yet another win in the House Challenge competition, this time for the

fifth form, and a place in the final for the sixth form too.

Sport is something we seem to be getting better at: as well as another dominant year on the squash court, Morgan's won the fourth form cricket, football and, for one year only, the Fifa competition that replaced the rugby due to the snow. I must admit to being slightly concerned that we did so well at this, but a win's a win... With a close second in the house rowing too it was a very successful year for us. The injection





of enthusiasm for all things sporting has been very welcome, and it is nice that the house is finally starting to win a few sporting events. The fourth year in particular have been really impressive, and with almost half the year group in the A squad for rugby we shall hope for no snow in the winter of 2018!

The departing Upper Sixth have been a real asset to the house over the years. They are a varied bunch, and have many diverse talents and interests amongst them. I have always been impressed by how they have managed to rub along together, and there are groups there whom I am sure will stay in contact for many years to come. Notably two will even be colleagues of mine next year, with Thomas Harvey and Henry Plumpton coming back as sports

assistants, and I look forward to seeing them around the common room!

I would also like to pay tribute to a departing colleague and legendary tutor, Dr May. There will be tributes to her elsewhere in this edition, but she was a wonderful tutor to many in Morgan's, and Boyd's before that, and will be sorely missed. Dr May worked incredibly hard with all her tutees, and was always willing to go above and beyond the call of duty to care for those in need. We wish her a happy retirement.

Henry Morgan

James's House

In an era where mass and social media constantly expose us to the stellar successes of others, while not showing us the failures or thousands of hours of tedious practice which went into these, the risks are twofold: first, we ignore the sacrifices which go into any achievement, instead assuming that the successful individual has some God-given talent; secondly, we are in danger of becoming dissatisfied with our own successes: excellence becomes normalised as the new average. The House Abingdonian article runs the risk of doing similar, so I would like to preface the James's House review of 2017-18 by saying that the accomplishments mentioned hereunder are, invariably, the product of a huge amount of graft and dedication—these guys are talented, sure, but it's their talent for hard work which we should really celebrate. Having read maybe 5,500 subject reports this year, I would add that every member of the house should take pride in how far they have come this year. We should equally celebrate that unglamorous but vital work of striving to improve, day in day out.

Whilst there are some mind-boggling achievements here, what has made me most proud of the boys this year has been their spirit of togetherness and collective effort. That we managed to supply more supporters for inter-house debating than our opposition meant as much as winning seven out of our nine matches; naming 23 road relay teams (before cancellation) meant just

as much as our third years winning the House Challenge; filling a Ford Fiesta with donated groceries for the Food Bank collection meant perhaps most of all – and this was just one term!

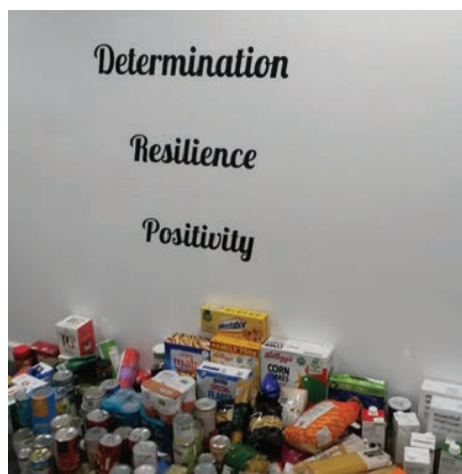
The Michaelmas Term started brightly, with our Lower Sixth clearly full of confidence (a potent combination of excellent GCSEs and shiny new suits) because they annexed the sixth form section of the house-room, turning it into what would ostensibly resemble a poker den whilst our Upper Sixth had their backs turned, busy gaining UCAS offers. Later in the term hard work would be further rewarded with Oxbridge offers for James Hogge (Cambridge, Computer Science), Angus Alder (Oxford, Mechanical Engineering) and Aravind Prabhakaran (Cambridge, Computer Science). The sixth formers offered real leadership throughout the term too, giving enthusiastic help wherever it was needed, and boy was it needed with House Singing!

Having been struck by an epiphany whilst at a friend's wedding reception, I was unusually confident of our song choice this year. It was in the bag. Two minutes into our first rehearsal, it was clear that *We are Young* by Fun was entirely unsuitable, with a ludicrous top note. It very much was not in the bag! To Thomas Morris, who did an incredible job as conductor, this is a public apology! Thomas was ably assisted by Daniel Rohll, Charlie Franklin (stunning solo in spite of a phone going off), Aravind Prabhakaran

(on the piano for the umpteenth time) and Saxon Supple (whose impromptu 16-bar drum intro at final rehearsal nearly gave me a coronary!) – a huge thank you to them all.

The second half of term saw snow storms, house-branded mugs designed by James Chaplin, and the least tasteful Christmas decorations the houseroom has seen to date, before concluding with the usual round of inter-house competitions. Here we managed to retain the prestigious rugby trophy (largely due to that competition being cancelled) whilst also excelling at lounge games (third overall in table tennis, second in pool and chess). Further success came with David Haar's U14 badminton victory and James Chaplin winning singles table tennis.

In the new year, James was promoted to Head of House – recognition for all that he had done during the previous term. His selflessness set the tone for what would prove to be a superb term. Highlights included the whole-house trampolining social and our third formers winning the House Challenge (squad from Isaac Mortiboy, Sukrit Kaul, Ludovic Benney, Saul French and Captain Ted Smethurst). Individual successes were hard to keep up with, but James Hogge taking top prize (and £1000) in the prestigious National Cypher Challenge and Howard Hawkes winning the High Sheriff of Oxfordshire's Law Essay Competition were especially noteworthy. Harry Gale's selection for the ISGA England Golf team was





equally memorable. Inter-house sports were less so (save for David Harding's badminton victory).

Debating was strong though, with Teds Woodfin and Smethurst making the third year semi-final, Samuel Miles and James Gibson contesting the fourth year final, and Tom Mills and debutant Tom Batchelor (stepping in for Howard Hawkes) winning the sixth form final in front of some 300 people. These successes represent a collective effort, with tutor groups coming together to prepare motions (a reminder of how strong our tutor team is - something I am continuously grateful for), and our supporters always outnumbering the opposition. This togetherness made Lent perhaps my most enjoyable term in charge of the house to date (that and the snow day!).

In the summer, revision 'nests' came and went in the house study room, and goodbyes were said to the Upper Sixth at a leavers' dinner – a convivial occasion, and one which I will remember fondly. James's was very well represented at Prizegiving, with Howard Hawkes, Joseph O'Shea,

Jack Bevan, Max Carter-Keall and James Hogge amongst the recipients – recognition of contributions which stretch the full gamut, from services, through elite sporting performance, to intellectual endeavour. Further success came in the Middle School with David Harding being nominated for a prestigious Arkwright scholarship, and Freddie Nicholson being selected from over 23,000 students for the Cyber Start Elite Camp for up and coming cyber security experts. And before we knew it, the end of term was upon us.

In the penultimate week of term, every available member of the house contributed to an overall third place in inter-house athletics, where the Middle School boys excelled at lobbing things – discus and shot victories for Youssef O'Sullivan and Karum Sangha respectively, and third year George Owen throwing the javelin further than any other member of the school! – and the sixth formers proved quick on their feet – Richard Oh (100m), Tom Mills (400m) and Jacob Henney (800m) winning their events, before our relay team of Richard, Jacob, Billy Haist, and

Howard Hawkes stormed to victory. Strong inter-house performances were also seen on the basketball court, golf course and croquet lawn.

Just as pleasing, probably more so, was the burst of productivity from our fourth years, who proceeded to raise £57 for our house charity (Confident Children out of Conflict) and redecorate the front of the houseroom, in spite of energy-sapping temperatures. Whilst the earlier parts of term were characterised by individual accomplishments, these final days of the year were very much about collective achievement. The efforts of Thomas Rolfe, James Gibson and Freddie Nicholson (not to mention Mrs Reading!) with the cake sale, and Hugo Leedham (supported by Freddie, James and Harry Batchelor) with the painting, rather summed up what it can mean to be part of a house here at Abingdon: the opportunity to have an ambitious idea, and through collective effort see it to fruition and in so doing, make the world a slightly better place.

Simon James

O'Doherty's House



It has been another busy, successful and action-packed year for O'Doherty's House and I am yet again in awe of the boys. Their commitment to academic work and to the Other Half is relentless, and I have seen a genuine determination to improve and develop whether in the classroom, on the sports field, on stage or personally. We have celebrated some outstanding exam achievements and there have been numerous individual accomplishments - too many to name, I am afraid. The team of house prefects, led by my joint Heads of House James Hall and Noah Williams, has been a source of great help, especially during house events. The team of tutors has also worked tirelessly behind the scenes helping support, guide and nurture the boys. We are sad to say goodbye to Mr Crisp, and wish him all the very best in his new role as Middle Master. He has been a fantastic tutor and has supported the house unequivocally.

Inter-house competitions continue to be a key part of the year and we continue to make our mark. Winning the House Singing Competition for the second time in a row was amazing, and I thank the team of musicians for all their hard work and enthusiasm





in helping to make this happen. The debating competition was especially tough this year and despite some fantastically eloquent and confident presentations, we did not place. In terms of sport, we had a slow start to the year but did win the fencing, football and hockey events in the Lent Term. Our third years were particularly strong in the inter-house athletics competition, as were our rowing squad, and I will look forward to seeing them perform next year in the hope that we pick up more silverware!

As per last year, we adopted a house theme each term, which provided a focus for house assemblies and tutor periods. This year the themes were, in term order, determination, curiosity and creativity. Alongside this we had a whole house challenge during the last six weeks of term, which was an opportunity for year groups to mix, and was a huge success. Each team was allocated a country and they could undertake challenges that would gain them points. Challenges included

making a dish from that country, taking a team photo with the national flag, doing an assembly or speaking a couple of sentence in the language of their country. Brazil ended up being the winners, and Mr James made the most amazing trophies as prizes.

We once again had our annual 5-a-side football and pizza evening to welcome the new third years into the house, and this year we also had a similar sixth form event, which despite not being as well attended, provided some much-needed entertainment on the pitch. Our trip to Rush Trampoline was another well attended social, as were the summer drinks for the parents at the end of the year.

At the end of the year we bade a sad farewell to the Upper Sixth, who will be sorely missed. The leavers' dinner was a lovely occasion, and it was great to see the Heads of House do a presentation in honour of the year group. I am sure that they are going to make a big impact in the world and make a positive impression on

everyone they meet. In keeping with the house theme at the time, I read them the following quote from Stephen Hawking as a reminder to stay curious and enjoy learning:

"Remember to look up at the stars and not down at your feet. Try to make sense of what you see and wonder about what makes the universe exist. Be curious. And however difficult life may seem, there is always something you can do and succeed at. It matters that you don't just give up."

Our successes this year are down to each and every one of the boys getting stuck into helping out. I know that sometimes they do not really want to compete or do an assembly, but they do, and for this I am extremely proud and pleased. Each time they put themselves outside of their comfort zone they are learning something new about themselves, gaining confidence and growing as individuals.

Emily O'Doherty

Southwell-Sander's House

*As the beast from the east leaves us with snow on the ground
Another group of Upper Sixth are gap year or uni bound.
It's time to reflect on five or seven years past
And look at the milestones that will be their last.
First up we bid adieu to a true gent, Cam
The final Green Army member of the Aitken clan,
Next up is legend of the 2nd XV
Bristol-bound with his PS4 is where Appsey will be seen.
Josh B is rowing his way to history for his uni place,
Mr Reliable will be difficult to replace.
Harry deserves to be Cambridge-bound
Managing land is where he will be found.
While Kilimanjaro is no match for Clokey
Core sport seemed a bridge too far for Tom C.
The house will miss Scott and his cheerful grin.
He's a star of the science world or even teaching?
Medicine for Ben with some squash for fun,
Working out the science to live to 151.
Computer science for Will is the key to big bucks -
If that doesn't work he can ref the FA Cup.
Ish is heading to uni with white coat and rugby ball.
Living life to the full at a lecture or in a maul.
Choir boy Langley, gets things done with no fuss
Just as long as mum doesn't drop him at Freshers' in the Big
Red Bus!
Classics at uni has Nick L's confidence brimming.
Let's hope there is no core sport swimming!
Adriano is destined to be a Tech king -
He's the next Zuckerberg in the making.
Making good use of his charm will be thespian Muss,
Schmoozing girls and going large with the minimum of fuss!
Pavord's going to set the uni world of Chemistry alight -
Tell him a joke on a bus and you'll get quite a fright!
Four years of Oxford Classics will make Ben feel glad,
Sipping a beer while ruminating over Homer's Iliad.
Hockey player Stoker is unafraid to think,
As long as he and Pavord don't meet for a Uni drink!
Ewan will use what he learnt in his EPQ
To get bought every drink and get to the front of the nightclub
queue.
For Tom W, the unbeaten season was not meant to be -
A career in conservation after 3 years at uni?
For all they achieved the Green Army cries 'Well done'.
Good luck with exams and summer festival sun.
To those staff who have helped you along the way
With revision, stress and break ups, we say Hip Hip Hooray!
As your attention drifts to the summer festival and the first
banging set
Don't forget to take with you your growth mindset!
Now all that's left for me to say to the class of 2018
Is wherever you go, remember the Army Green!!!*

For the final time I find myself penning a summary of the Green Army and all that has been going on in the house during the last year. As I hand over the reins of the house to Richard Pygott it is strangely poignant to think I won't be doing this again. As is customary I begin with the Upper Sixth and include their leavers' poem which illustrates hopefully what a versatile bunch of guys the leavers of 2018 are.

As the Lower Sixth navigate their exams, well done to Connor Brown, Joshua Franklin, Qasim Naqvi and Angus Blomfield who have just been selected as school prefects. Connor continues to progress brilliantly with his rowing, trialling for the GB squad over Easter and, along with Henry Muller, hopefully having a successful summer for the 1st VIII. Worth particular note is the excellent work of the house mentors which include all the lads mentioned already along with Tom Harvey-Jamieson, Mohsen Ansari, Max Martin, Toby Pratt and Charlie Cardno. They have all been hugely reliable and supportive especially when it comes to looking out for the current third year and helping promote the house values. In addition the Lower School Assistants of Joshua, Angus and William Diver have been very reliable. Max and Toby have also had a very good year within the CCF showing strong leadership and teamwork. Both lads have done outstandingly well to receive a scholarship to Sandhurst after University, and Max has received the added accolade of being selected as the Lord Lieutenant's Cadet. Finally some super contributions to the Martlet have been made by Piers Mucklejohn and Alexander Thulin, while Drew Farwell continues to progress brilliantly with his shooting. They are an enthusiastic year group who spur each other on, and it is great to see so many already well on their way to making UCAS decisions as well as involving themselves in the EPQ programme.

The fifth year are currently in the middle of exams, which is always a stressful time of year, but they have prepared well and I am confident of



their success. It was great to see such a strong field apply to be Lower School Assistants and house prefects, and those who were successful in both or one include Matthew Buhler, Lloyd Langley, Henry Pickess, Patrick Heath, Arthur Boulton, Henry Insley, James Tuffill, Harry Horsnell, Louis Yue and Joe McConnell. Worth extra mention is Arthur Boulton who is carrying on the house's strong tradition with road cycling having been selected for the National Youth Series in the Isle of Man. As ever we have to say goodbye to some fifth years who are moving on for the sixth form. Good luck for the future to Harry Buchan, Alex Zhang and Rafe Fleming.

The fourth years proved themselves to be a hardworking but friendly bunch who, over the course of two years have very much come out of their shells and built some very good friendships, normally based around some competitive table tennis or phone games! A big thanks has to go to Benjamin Broadbent, Aidan Coster, Will Farr, Ethan Frahm and Freddie Knott for putting together an excellent edition of the house magazine, showing creative and collaborative skills. Will Taylor continued to excel for the school in squash reaching the position of third in the school, which is a super effort for a fourth year. Thomas Owen and Henry Wooding both progressed as cricketers

and had some amazing experiences on the Barbados cricket tour, with Thomas representing the U17 development squad, while special mention should go to Will Farr and the way his hard work and determination to get better epitomises the house values. Lastly and perhaps most importantly for me is the way they embody the values of inclusivity and support for one another, which is a joy to watch.

The third years are to be congratulated for navigating the choppy waters of the first year in Middle School. They have generally settled very well and quickly immersed themselves both into school life but also into house competitions. Flynn Walker, William Jenkinson, Xavi Butler and Robin Collins all took part in the superb Middle School production, while Robin and Naoki Parker helped the Green Army to victory in the house debating. Ross Tselos is really making a name for himself in the Chess Club, while Joshua Massey-Thompson, Thomas Long, Leo Sinclair, William Jenkinson and Ediz Hunter had a good first year in the boat club. Worth special note is Tom Long's fantastic effort of riding with his dad from London to Brighton in aid of The British Heart Foundation. The tutor group put together some excellent assemblies where plenty of lads got involved both presenting and behind the scenes, showing themselves

to be collaborative, supportive and hardworking.

So there we have it, another busy year in the Green Army draws to an end, and as I reflect for the final time I am left feeling somewhat melancholic that my time in charge of such an outstanding set of students and staff has come to an end. Heartfelt thanks have to go to my outstanding tutor team whose efficiency, professionalism and genuine care for their tutees has made my job all the more manageable and enjoyable. I would also like to show my appreciation to the parent body who have been incredibly supportive of events such as the candlelit carol service or summer strawberry and wine drinks as well with the numerous considerate phone calls and emails over the last nine years. Abingdon is a special place to work, and being a housemaster at Abingdon has been a huge privilege and provided great professional satisfaction. To all the hundreds of Green Army lads who have moved through the school during my time, good luck with your future and remember those house values when the going gets tough. Good luck to Mr Pygott who I am in no doubt will do a brilliant job. And finally... over and out... Mr SS, Maggie and Millie!

Robin Southwell-Sander

Lower School



It has been another very busy and successful year in Lower School and, as ever, it has been a great privilege to watch the boys develop, be it the first years adapting and settling in to life at secondary school or the second years taking on more responsibility and preparing for the move to Middle School.

Toby Garbett, Olympic and double World Champion rower, was our guest speaker at the start of the year and told the story of how much work he had to put in to succeed in his chosen field. Under his guidance all the boys (and some of their tutors!) had fun working together on a partnered squats trust exercise and Jim Allen and Samuel Dominic got to take each other on in a triathlon changeover, complete with wetsuit and goggles, against the clock

on stage. The next day saw the new first years bonding and listening well during a morning of team-building activities.

There were plenty of early opportunities for Lower School boys to perform on stage this year in the musical and dramatic arenas. A joint production with Fitzharry's School of *Romeo and Juliet* was a great success, while *Black River Bridge*, a specially commissioned piece about child soldiers during the American Civil War, allowed the boys to get stuck in to some loud action sequences set in the midst of battle, but also sensitively display the great cost of war. The Lower School musical ensembles went from strength to strength as the year went on and the boys were always in good voice when given the chance to sing at various

concerts. The choral highlight of the year was undoubtedly the House Singing Competition – our rendition of *I Just Can't Wait To Be King* from *The Lion King* was awarded joint third place by the judge, our best result for several years. The final moment when a stuffed cuddly Simba was lifted to the skies was carried off to perfection – and possibly helped lead to the judge's charge that we were "almost too cute"!

On the sporting front a successful rugby season saw plenty of victories for Lower School teams and a trip to Twickenham to watch England take on Samoa. It was particularly pleasing to welcome back Theo Brophy Clews OA to present the trophies at the annual rugby awards dinner. Theo is now a full-time professional at London Irish, having played rugby for Abingdon throughout his time here, starting in Lower School, and went on to captain England at U18 and U20 level. He had plenty of words of wisdom for the boys on how to make the most of their time playing together.

Hearing from speakers like Toby and Theo really gave the boys the chance to see the ideal of "be the best you can be" being put into practice and a highlight of the Lent Term was having the opportunity to hear from another inspirational speaker in the shape of James Ketchell. In 2014, James





became the first person to have rowed across the Atlantic Ocean, successfully summited Mount Everest and cycled 18,000 miles around the world, a feat that was dubbed “The Ultimate Triathlon”. James made it very clear to the boys that you have to work hard if you want to achieve, saying “there are no shortcuts to the top of the world”.

Many of the second years took James’ words to heart and worked very hard preparing for the various scholarships over the course of the term, and it was really encouraging that Lower School boys were successful in all the different disciplines. Congratulations go to Daniel Barratt (Music Exhibition), Oliver Glover (Art and Music), Philip Grotjahn (Academic), Thomas Harding (Music Exhibition), Felix Kind (Music Exhibition), Rory Kind (Drama and Music Exhibition), Benjamin MacLennan (Design & Technology), Ollie Northwood (Music Exhibition), Jonathan Pannett Smith (Music), Max Siriwardene (sport), Fran Trotter (Academic) and Tom Walters (Academic).

The boys also showed their community spirit throughout the year, thinking of others less fortunate than themselves. A charity collection in December saw many boxes of food donated to the Abingdon Emergency Foodbank, sales of homemade cakes were organised by 2C and 2P, and the annual charity football tournament, which saw victory go to the somewhat ironically named

Hockey FC after a penalty shootout, led to a donation of over £350 to the Meningitis Research Foundation.

In the summer Lower School athletes had a particularly successful season, qualifying for the regional round of the ESAA Track and Field Cup and then just missing out on making it to the national final by the narrowest of margins. Benjamin MacLennan proved victorious in the Lower School Fencing Tournament and Felix Loeffen was named the 2018 pool champion. A flurry of inter-tutor group events in the last few weeks of term saw the overall lead change hands several times, but 1J and 2M were the eventual winners.

The annual Be the Best You Can Be Celebration was held in the last week of term and provided an opportunity to celebrate the achievements of the second years as they prepared to leave Lower School. Each tutor group gave a presentation, with 2C showing a suitably idiosyncratic film they had made about their values, 2M talking about their recent 12 hour night walk which saw them walk the equivalent of 20 marathons around the track of Tilsley Park and raise £2,500 for The Cure Parkinson’s Trust, and 2P performing “Price tag” (as an affectionate tribute to their tutor, Mr Price) as a tutor group orchestra with every member, even those not very acquainted with an instrument, talking a role. The fact that these presentations

were so different sums up the range of talents and abilities in this year group and it’s clear that they are going on to do very well in all areas of school life as they move up the school.

The end of year prizes were awarded as follows:

Academic Prizes: Sam Houldsworth-Bianek (2C), Tom Walters (2M), Fran Trotter (2P), Toby Pinnington (1J), Philip Kimber (1L), and Harrison Blumfield (1W)

Baker Award: Felix Kind, Thomas Harding and Thomas Wilson

Broadbent Cup for Sporting Excellence: Timothy Fowler

Cooper Cup for Excellence in Reading: Ben Simons

Dillon Cup for Service: Max Struthers

Woodgett Cup: Archie Wood

My thanks go to the excellent team of tutors that have guided the boys over the course of the year, in particular Mrs Lord who leaves us to take up a post at Wychwood School, and Mrs Wigmore who, after 19 years as a Lower School tutor, is retiring. She has helped countless Lower School boys be the best they can be over the years and so thoroughly deserved to be awarded her Lower School colours tie for service in her final Lower School assembly.

Adam Jenkins

Staff Farewells

Dorsaphe Ben Hassine

Dorsaphe joined the Modern Languages Department from the University of Reims as a French assistant. She had successfully completed a degree in English language, literature and civilisation and was keen to make the most of the opportunity to spend a year in this country. Dorsaphe was most efficient in her preparation and planning of lessons and soon built up a good working relationship with her students. She has been very enthusiastic and her work has been much appreciated by boys and staff alike. Dorsaphe has very much enjoyed her time at Abingdon. She is going back to France to start a Master's degree in education and is even considering coming back to the UK to teach French. We wish her all the very best for the future.

Maud Cottrell

Marisa Dröse

Marisa, a trained teacher of History and English, joined the German Department in September and did an excellent job from the start. She was always keen to support the students as best she could in their preparation for exams, which may also have included sweets along the way. She showed patience with confusion over slots and rooms and the never-ending rescheduling of lessons.

When the opportunity arose to help out with the teaching of a second and third year class, she threw herself into this new venture. As a competent teacher, she led these groups through a term of teaching before also taking on a third year tutor group.

She enjoyed her time at Abingdon and was glad to have had the opportunities given to her. We are certainly very sorry

to see her go but wish her the best of luck in her teaching career in Berlin.

Alexandra Widdern

Belén Sánchez Alonso

Belén is a philologist and a qualified Spanish teacher. Her passion for Spanish and English language and literature led her to read languages at the University of Salamanca, where she had the opportunity to learn Catalan, Galician and Basque. She holds a degree in both Spanish Philology and English Studies as well as a PGCE in Spanish. She is also currently collaborating with the Royal Academy of Spanish (RAE) on their latest corpus.

In 2016, after several years living between the UK and Spain, she finally decided to move to England, which she considers to be not only her host country but also her new home. She previously worked at St. Edward's School in Oxford and joined Abingdon as Spanish assistant last September.

Belén has thoroughly enjoyed her time at Abingdon and had excellent relationships with staff and pupils alike. During her time as the Spanish assistant she has worked preparing the fourth year, fifth year and Pre-U boys for their oral exams, ensuring they could get the best possible grades. She has been a great help not only for the students, but also for the Spanish Department and her support has been invaluable. She worked exceptionally well as part of a team and forged strong friendships, especially with the other assistants.

As an avid reader interested in a wide range of topics, Belén keeps herself up to date on different contemporary issues and she very much enjoys writing articles, to the extent that she became an editor in the Bulletin of Advanced Spanish during her free time. She also thoroughly enjoys socialising with other members of staff, particularly in Zumba lessons, and

travelling.

Belén has proved to be a hard-working and energetic teacher and, although it is sad to say goodbye to her, we are really pleased she is going to be working just 60 miles away at Rugby School. We wish her all the best for the future.

Victoria Pradas

Nétha Samarasinghe

Nétha joined the Modern Languages Department in September 2016 from the University of Reims as a French assistant after having successfully completed a degree in English language, literature and civilisation. It took very little time for Nétha to settle into the department and she planned and delivered lessons effectively, building a good rapport with the pupils and the MFL members of staff. Having enjoyed her year at Abingdon School, Nétha decided to stay for a second year. Nétha played a great part in helping the sixth form pupils prepare for various debating competitions; they always performed with eloquence and panache. Nétha also continued her studies, and completed a very successful year studying French literature. We wish her all the very best for the future, whatever she decides to do next.

Maud Cottrell

Mary Lord

Mary joined us as a new teacher this year, having completed her PGCE at Oxford last year. She has taught Mathematics across the school passing on her enthusiasm for the subject and her historical insights and links beyond the curriculum. She has enjoyed encouraging her students to think through problems and has often used geogebra to demonstrate visually the mathematical concepts she is teaching. She has fully embraced the new curriculum in the

sixth form and has guided her classes through the pure maths syllabus. Mary had a first year tutor group and went to PGL at Easter as well as having an all-1L final in the first year inter-tutor group public speaking competition. She has fully supported her tutees as they started Lower School and throughout their first year, always finding time to talk to them about their experiences. She also took part in the tutors' race at Lower School sports day! Mary has run Lower School debating in the Summer Term and has taken boys sailing throughout the year. Mary leaves us to take up a teaching post at Wychwood School and we wish her luck with this new role.

Samantha Coull



Mary Lord

Amy Downer

Amy Downer came to us from Millfield where she had had specific responsibility for GCSE art and joined at a very exciting time for art at Abingdon as plans for Beech Court were nearing their final version. She threw herself into that planning and the splendid facility we now have was clearly influenced by the artistic flair and sense of style that she was able to bring to the project, even in its late stages. Alongside this came a good deal of planning for the move and the need to keep fully on top of the detail. We could sense her excitement as the Art Department began to see the possibilities for development that were to come with the move and it was therefore much to her regret (and ours) that family circumstances led to her leaving us much earlier than planned. I can't say that things haven't worked out for her though, as a chance meeting during the summer led very quickly and unexpectedly to

her appointment as House Parent in a school in Switzerland, from where she has occasionally sent me very happy emails. I wish her and her family well.

Graeme May



Amy Downer

Charlotte McCutcheon

Charlotte really has made a valuable contribution to the school in the three years that she has been with us as a teacher of biology. She joined us from Latymer Upper School and quickly settled into life in the Biology Department establishing herself as a competent and popular teacher. Organised and thorough in her preparation and marking, she was popular with all her classes from Lower School to the Upper Sixth. Charlotte also got involved with other activities in the department: revision sessions, field trips, Operation Wallacea and the departmental road relay B-team. Kahoot has now been introduced to the department and has even wormed its way into the Middle



Charlotte McCutcheon

School scheme of work - that's real progress.

Of course, to really judge Charlotte's contribution to the School I thought I'd go for "student voice". Here are some comments from her current tutor group:

"Miss McCutcheon, as my tutor, has been extremely helpful and I think I can speak for all her tutees, by saying that she has really helped us warm to life in fourth year. She always looks for the best in people and is honest to you when it is clear you need to change."

"Miss McCutcheon is probably one of the nicest people I have ever met. She is always worried about the wellbeing of her students and tutees and is always very open and helpful. She is very kind and polite. She teaches in a very relaxed, yet concentrated way, with a "ready-to-get-down-to-business" atmosphere."

"Miss McCutcheon is patient, considerate, affable and kind."

Charlotte will be greatly missed at Abingdon. I wish her every success with her move to Highgate School.

Simon Bliss

Nicky King

Nicky joined Abingdon as a teacher of economics and geography in 2015. She immediately impressed Abingdonians with her subject knowledge and wide array of online resources, which supplemented her expert classroom teaching. In addition, she took on the role of UCAS assistant, which requires dedication and attention to detail. Nicky was always keen to innovate and to arm students with the most up to date data and guidance on graduate careers and alternative pathways to undergraduate degrees, as well as university entrance in general. Quickly, Nicky took over as Head of Economics, and oversaw the introduction of co-educational lessons at Abingdon. Typically, Nicky managed the increased workload, including teaching additional lessons at lunchtimes and after school, because she knew that young people's education would be compromised if she

didn't make sacrifices. During her time at Abingdon, she has also led the sixth form, covering for a sabbatical absence. In this role, as well as her tutoring, Nicky gained great satisfaction from mentoring students in their ambitions outside of economics. In her final year, Nicky took on the lead role in University Admissions.

Nick O'Doherty



Dan Mason

Dan Mason joined the Physics Department in January 2015 bringing with him great enthusiasm and a catalogue of inspiring teaching ideas. The most prominent of these is "The Table Game" combining the tactics of "Risk" with competitive physics questions - many a class of students have left Abingdon School remembering this along with the care and commitment he showed to their education. In his final year at the school he held the role of second in physics, pushing initiatives to further develop the teaching and learning in the department and encourage others to be innovative.

Outside the classroom Dan contributed to the running of the Masters' Common Room as President of the MCR where he has represented the views of all members of teaching and support staff. He has also dedicated a huge amount of time to the Other Half throughout his time here. He coached swimming sessions several times per week but perhaps will be remembered more for his management of the 4th XI football team. He took the running of this almost as seriously as a professional manager, taking video



analysis, producing videos and photos of the highlights of each game, and even forming a management committee. Dan moves back to Cokethorpe School as Director of Digital Learning. He will be sorely missed as a member of the Physics Department where he has been an excellent colleague, mentor and friend to those who have worked with him.

Ben Simmons

Claire Vickers

Claire Vickers joined the English Department in 2014 having previously taught English at Godolphin and Latymer School.

Claire was a super asset to the English Department, with boys' academic achievement always at the forefront of her mind. Her lessons were engaging and highly intellectual, displaying her passion, enthusiasm for, and impressive knowledge of the subject, particularly at A level. Her willingness to support the English Department on a wider scale by running additional classes for boys was extremely well-received and she was highly thought of by staff and students alike. During her time here, Claire also took on the role of second in the English Department, where she assisted the team through the A level syllabus change.

In December 2017, Claire left Abingdon to move to Canada with her husband, who was taking a sabbatical. Since

then, Claire has returned to the UK and is now undertaking a Master's degree in Psychology to complement her commitment to wider educational research and reading. We wish her all the very best for the future.

Joanna Bridgeworth

Ben Ponniah

Ben Ponniah arrived at Abingdon to teach Economics and Maths in September 2013, having previously taught at Stowe and Ibstock Place. He quickly established himself as a dedicated teacher who had a gift for explaining concepts, and who was able to combine seriousness of purpose with a keen, but gentle, sense of humour. His desire to do his best by his students lay at the heart of his teaching practice: his high expectations meant that he always sought to 'do things better' and, for Ben, 'good enough' was simply never an option. Indeed, his industry was such that he could often be found in the common room marking his students' scripts late into the evening and first thing in the morning (one wondered if he ever went home). He also spent hours editing the school's Economics magazine Griffenomics, with each publication always being produced to a highly professional standard. This commitment to his students, his innate kindness and his strong subject knowledge were the hallmarks of his pedagogy; it commanded the respect of his pupils.

Outside the classroom, Ben was heavily



John Cotton

involved in the musical and sporting life of Abingdon School. He coached the 3rd XI hockey team and was master in charge of Abingdon's highly successful tennis teams. He organised the tennis with tireless efficiency (his colour-coded spreadsheets were a sight to behold) and he was continually aspirational for his players. He was no mean shot himself, and the tennis court was one of the few arenas where a competitive streak could be teased out of this man of unparalleled modesty. His contribution to the school's music programme was fulsome too: he started a Gospel Choir, helped to run the 'Music in the Community' activity, organised concerts for charity, temporarily ran the Abingdon Academicals (writing an arrangement of 'Postman Pat' for one of his concerts) and instituted three music

competitions for soloists.

As a tutor, Ben guided his charges with skill and care, giving thought to the topics that would be discussed in tutor period each week. Given that he was a polymath himself, he could easily engage with his tutees' wide-ranging interests. Indeed, the young Ponniah was something of a wunderkind: he had starred on ITV's Countdown which, to the student mind, catapulted him to the hinterland of semi-celebrity status. That status was further enhanced by burnishing his entrepreneurial credentials with the launch of his app 'Spidey's Piano: a musical memory app' whilst still at Abingdon. However, it was as a composer (in the

English choral tradition) that Ben's true

brilliance became most evident. In his short time at Abingdon, his works slowly emerged on the national stage. Selwyn College, Cambridge recorded a full CD of his compositions: 'Marvellous Light' (available from Regent records and on iTunes), and both Radio 3 and ClassicFM broadcast his works. Reviewers described him as "one to watch" and his music as "timeless, spacious and rapturous". Typical of Ben, he reacted to such acclamations with humility, such was his unassuming demeanour.

Whilst we were delighted for Ben when we heard that he had been appointed to teach Economics at Winchester, we were sad to lose a colleague who was held in such high regard. In an era where individuals often trumpet their achievements loudly, Ben was a wonderful tonic to the zeitgeist: a person of immense modesty. Wykehamists will now have the good fortune to be taught by a man of thoughtfulness, integrity and ability. We wish Ben every happiness in his new role.

Simon Grills

John Cotton

John Cotton leaves us to take up a parallel position as Assistant Director of Music at Portsmouth Grammar School where his wife, Anne, has been appointed the new Head.

John joined Abingdon in September 2011 from Wychwood School, where he had been promoted from visiting singing teacher to the role of Director of Music.



Ben Ponniah

Previously he had been a freelance singer and a singing teacher following his membership of Magdalen College Choir, where he had been an undergraduate student of Theology, and of Christ Church Choir, where he had been a professional Lay Clerk.

As the director of the Chapel Choir, John has done sterling work and the choir has gone from strength to strength. John also formed the Joint Chamber Choir with St Helen's School and they have performed with distinction at a number of concerts both at Abingdon and St Helen's. He also took over the close harmony ensemble, The Abingdon Academicals, which has also been highly successful.

Singing has been the area that John has made his own here. John has had a knack of finding ways of encouraging singers. Greg Davies was one such pupil whom John picked up as a young chorister and encouraged to enjoy his singing through all his seven years at the school. John has also been active as the musical director of a number of theatrical performances, most notably, the production of *Les Misérables*. John gave up a lot of his free time to make this production work, with the result that it was hugely successful and a highpoint of many boys' careers at the school.

John has been a popular member of the music staff and many boys and colleagues will miss his bubbly and often mischievous sense of humour. He's been an effective teacher of GCSE and A Level music - and he has also excelled in his class singing lessons with the first and second years. He has chosen repertoire carefully and has made things fun for the pupils as well as expecting high standards of both behaviour and singing.

John has always had a very clear idea of how things should and shouldn't be done and he was never afraid to share his thoughts about this with people. John enjoyed his role as a Dayboy Housemaster and was highly regarded by parents, pupils and colleagues.

We thank him for all he has done for Abingdon music and much else - and we wish him well for his forthcoming move to the south coast.

Michael Stinton

James Hallinan

Writing James Hallinan's valette makes me feel quite old as he was in fact my first appointment as Head of Department. His appointment was a bit of a gamble as his interview lesson was only the second one he had taught. This was apparent as in preparing his lesson he certainly had some bold ambitions for our second years. His final powerpoint slide alone would have normally kept an

undergraduate busy for a week. He also went the most incredible shade of scarlet during the lesson. One of the students in fact commented on his glowing head. Despite the madness of the lesson I felt we could detect star quality and Mark Turner (Headmaster at the time) was

happy to support my decision so James started at the school as a very fresh-faced youngster in September 2009.

Luckily, I wasn't just relying on intuition when I appointed James as I also had the good fortune of being the recipient of James's Radley School reference. James had attended the school for some years.

This reference contained a number of inexplicable attributes and achievements that James had garnered in his time at school but the most arresting and intriguing, and the most important as far as Radley were concerned, was the fact that James had been a 'pup' whilst at school. No mention was made of A level grades or musical achievements (of which I had seen on his CV there were many) but instead this solitary but stellar insistence that being a 'pup' in some way meant that we could rest easy in Abingdon. James had been a pup - we were safe to employ him.

To this day I have never learnt what a pup was and I don't think anyone outside Radley ever did. But James is a master at mastering the indecipherable. This was a man who had learnt Syriac, specialised in the Byzantine empire (which as we know is not called Byzantine for nothing) for his MSt and started teaching Arabic to our sixth formers very soon after arrival.

Once employed at Abingdon James soon established himself as a popular and effective teacher. Whilst his classroom persona would not be described as authoritarian, it was effective and the





Jane Mansfield

boys here worked hard for him. He was also soon immersed in a variety of other endeavours - he was master in charge of badminton, a sport that seemed to have an unusually large number of fixtures at the time. He also ended up subbing in for various musical ventures with a memorable tour of Barcelona being the highlight. In fact, he constantly seemed to be helping out on trips and visits. He had inherited the hemlock cup that was the annual history trip to Berlin from a very relieved Ed Davies and it was typical of James that it was so well organised despite its complexity and various stresses. James also helped out in the boarding house and would often have the whole house he was tutoring in round for dinner and a film. He was always generous to a fault, going far beyond what was expected of him. A particular highlight for James from this time would be a languages trip to the Rhineland with the second years who were allowed no mobile devices but expected to behave on a 19 hours coach journey. I think this trip tested his normal stoic resolve but he still went on it again the following year.

James now heads off to another public school with language and customs similarly impenetrable to his Alma Mater - Winchester College is after all a school that calls its teachers dons, drawing an entirely spurious parallel between being a teacher in a public school and being a

professor at one of the best universities in the world. We wish him well.

David McGill

Jane Mansfield

Jane bought her house on Bath Street before she knew Abingdon School even existed, long before she came to cover a maternity absence here 12 years ago, decided to stay at the school, and became Head of French.

How Jane has maintained her energy over those 12 years is a mystery. She may be the only person who can actually multitask effectively. Her flexibility and willingness to adapt continued to show after meeting Mr Mansfield, at the time a Design and Technology teacher at Abingdon: she left her comfort zone to go on hikes, motor-bikes and ski slopes. Whatever Jane starts, she does with full commitment, and her recent taking-up of running is only one example. She has not only turned into a very good runner, but is also willing to give up her time to marshal smaller and larger races within the community. She was also keen to encourage the boys to give back to the community, running the third year services scheme at Abingdon for many years. All third years not involved in CCF will, no doubt, fondly remember

their Tuesday afternoons.

Jane's influence on the Modern Languages Department cannot be overestimated either. After many years of teaching, you would still never find her entering a classroom without a meticulously planned and resourced lesson or thoroughly marked books. Her energy in lessons would stir even the most lethargic third year boy into action - even post-sport! There was no question that she put the boys and their achievements first. Old Abingdonians praise her unwavering support, commitment and enthusiasm for her subject.

When she handed over the French Department in 2017, it was obvious how fastidiously she had organised and run the department. As a long-standing examiner and moderator, she is a treasure trove of knowledge on everything IGCSE related, which the exam board recognised by sending her jet-setting round the world to train other teachers.

As a colleague, the Modern Languages Department will miss her the most as she leaves us for a well-earned retirement. This is not only because of her teaching expertise, her outstanding resources, her willingness to listen and give advice, her offer of a shoulder to cry on or a room for stranded colleagues, but mainly for her hilarious sense of humour.

Alexandra Widdern

George Moody

George Moody joined the school in 2003 and has been Head of Religious Studies ever since. He has overseen the development of a strong and creative department and played an important role in the introduction of philosophy A level, an increasingly popular choice among sixth formers. George has also strengthened the philosophical component in the religious studies curriculum lower down the school. George is appreciated by his students for the clarity, conviction and creativity of his teaching while his colleagues have valued his collaborative, caring and compassionate leadership. George served for a number of years

as master in charge of athletics and also coached hockey. More recently, George started a mountain bike club for the boys and has even helped out with the gardening club. George will also be remembered for his challenging, occasionally provocative, chapel talks and for serving the spiritual life of the school in other ways.

George was ordained priest in the Church Of England in 2014, after completing the Oxford ministry course at Ripon College, Cuddesdon. In August, George became the vicar of several parishes in the Three Valleys benefice in Dorset. We are grateful to George for the great contribution he has made to Abingdon over 15 years and wish him and the family much joy and fulfilment.

Simon Steer

Andrew Swarbrick

Boys are not naturally generous in their praise, with one epithet in particular

reserved for the very few, but the words of a fifth former still echo when I think of Andrew: "Mr Swarbrick? He's a legend." And Andrew is indeed an Abingdon colossus, straddling as he has considerable cornerstones of life here during his career.

Andrew came to us in 1998 after a spell as Head of English at RGS Worcester, and time at a minor public school on the outskirts of Abingdon. He quickly proved himself a fine and inspiring teacher, an approachable and supportive colleague, and a much-cherished "still small voice of calm" at those meetings in which the wheel was always energetically being reinvented, after which Andrew would cheer us up by quoting Beckett's line, "It's never the same pus from one second to the next".

Not that Andrew sought to preserve the status quo - far from it. As Head of English, he founded the joint Abingdon/St Helen's Literary Society, initiated reciprocal Oxbridge interviewing for pupils at both schools and generally kick-started the highly valued collaboration between the two departments, always leading from the

front, giving talks at St Helen's on Eliot and Larkin. At the same time, he managed a stable of departmental thoroughbreds who had been in post long before he arrived, and skilfully guided them through the introduction of the AS and A2, the new GCSE courses and a host of other reforms to assessment that came in their wake. When he gave up the Head of English role after more than a decade, it was to take up the challenge of running the University Admissions Department at a time of great change in the higher education sector. As application and admissions procedures became more and more demanding, Andrew helped sixth formers to navigate them with tremendous patience and expertise, encouraging them to match their aspirations with the right course. There are now countless Abingdonians who have cause to be grateful to Andrew for his help in getting them to their preferred destination.

Yet Andrew is by nature a modest and at times self-effacing man. He would never be the first to tell you about his published work on Philip Larkin, for example, but the range and depth of the subject knowledge that emanated in his teaching



Andrew Swarbrick with his 3 OA sons

impressed colleagues and boys alike. English is a subject quite unlike others, dealing as it does with very personal and emotional responses to the highs and lows of life, not always through the lens of literature, of course, and I have enormous respect for a man whose instinct was to see his pupils' writing as a private communication between teacher and boy. Modern teaching practice tells us that classroom walls are showcases for pupils' work but B11 with Andrew at the helm was adorned with no more than enigmatic Hopper and Magritte prints. For a man who taught me the importance of developing an ironic detachment towards the grinding wheels of power, it seemed fitting somehow.

Away from the classroom and all things literary, Andrew's enthusiasms range from cricket - summer saw him in whites on Upper Field - to football - winter saw him scouring newspapers in the MCR for the latest on Preston North End, and holidays at any time saw him heading to France for time with family and friends, where rumour has it he developed a taste for Haute Medoc and even more of the finer things in life.

Long may this continue, Andrew. The whole Abingdon community salutes you in your retirement, and no doubt those who haven't quite reached this stage in their careers do so with a touch of envy.

Sue Wigmore and Jeremy Taylor

Carolyn May

Writing valet articles for colleagues is never easy but writing one for Carolyn is particularly hard. How best do I sum up Carolyn's long career at Abingdon?

The best place to start would be to state how grateful I will always be for how Carolyn welcomed me into the department when I first started at the school. Before teaching at Abingdon I had been teaching in London, which I had left in order to do an MA and go travelling. At the interview for Abingdon School I got on with Carolyn straightaway and was pleased to start working with her in the History Department here in 2004. Looking back, I thought I was a fairly experienced teacher but in reality, I still had a lot to

learn and it was my good fortune that Carolyn was my Head of Department at this stage of my career.

Carolyn had just taken over the department after what was generally seen as a slightly chaotic period and had soon sorted it out. Shared resources were created at a fearsome rate, commendations and stickers were flying around, A3 worksheets were being pumped off the printing presses, glue sticks were being parachuted into the department and there was a real buzz about the place. I realised quickly both that I was going to have to up my game but also that I was going to learn a lot and enjoy my new job.

Carolyn in fact combines a number of different and sometimes contradictory qualities that ensures that she is a great teacher. Firstly, she has a forensic ability to cut to the heart of the question, whatever question that may be. Whilst I might spend hours pondering how to summarise some alarming new marksheet from OCR, Carolyn will get on with the job, produce a summary document outlining exactly what needs to be done, and get on with teaching it to the pupils. Secondly, she is always generous with her time with her colleagues but more importantly with the pupils. Many university candidates were lucky enough to have her support throughout their application process and her tutees clearly benefitted from her willingness to always spend time with them. Carolyn is also a serious intellectual heavyweight. She has a PhD from Cambridge and was always able to teach to the upper ability range of the pupils at Abingdon, pushing the students to think for themselves and avoid lazy assumptions and easy but facile generalisations in their essays. She has also worked in both the maintained and private sectors and has a wealth of experience to draw on as a teacher. Lastly she is actually a bit of a rebel at heart with a strong iconoclastic tendency. She was never afraid to say what she thought and I valued her sage wisdom on many occasions.

After becoming Head of Department in 2008 I was lucky to have her support for the decade that I ran the department. She was always ready to help out and I always enjoyed working with her. She was ever ready to laugh and I often found

myself giggling alongside her during History Society talks, inset training, and school trips. I also always enjoyed hearing her setting the world to rights in department meetings or in the office and was able to take advantage of her vast range of teaching and life experience. As we moved to a new Edexcel IGCSE the handy revision guides that Carolyn had produced were rebranded, reissued and cloned by myself as were OCR syllabus outlines, guidance documents and mark schemes. It would be fair to say I leaned on Carolyn for guidance heavily in the first years and she was always more than ready to help me. I really couldn't have done the job without her. I know plenty of other teachers working in the department felt the same way.

Carolyn always had a wide range of interests. She is an active member of the Methodist Church, helping out with youth groups, and is also a keen musician and has helped run the Thames Valley Youth Orchestra. She is fiercely loyal to and proud of her family and it is no surprise that once her husband David decided to give up being a GP she too decided to retire.

Summing up Carolyn's massive contribution to Abingdon and the History Department in a short article like this is basically impossible but hopefully I have given you a sense of the huge amount she has done for me and the rest of my colleagues in the department and the pupils she has taught. As the presents accompanied by long letters from pupils stating their undying appreciation for how amazing her teaching had been stacked up at the end of each academic year I could have been forgiven for feeling slightly jealous. However, if I am going to be jealous of another teacher than I think it is right that I am jealous of Carolyn. We wish her and her husband and family all the best as she retires.

David McGill

Sue Wigmore

Twenty six years ago Sue Wigmore began teaching EFL one-to-one part-time at Abingdon. She then went on to lead the department, making a huge difference to the overseas boys she taught. She not only helped them get to grips with

the challenges of dealing with lessons that were being delivered in a language that was not their own, but also provided them with considerable guidance and emotional support as they got used to being in a country far from home with often inexplicably different customs and ideas. In 1999, at the suggestion of the then Head of English and through a desire to be more fully involved in the day to day life of the school, Sue became a Lower School tutor. Seeing English as a subject that was really beneficial in helping her get to know the boys under her care better, she requested to teach it to her tutor group, taking on her first 1W English class in 2001, and then gradually transferred to teach English full-time at all levels of the school.

As an English teacher, Sue always made it clear to the boys that she had a very real love of reading and writing and was determined to pass this love on to them. She was a natural story teller and could effortlessly keep a Lower School group completely enthralled as she read to them from a well-chosen novel, that would often have a moral message that just happened to tie in with the various social issues that might be bubbling away between the boys. She was meticulous in her preparation, often working late in to the night to ensure that every lesson had a clear and easy to follow structure that would help the boys understand exactly what they had to do to meet the examiners' requirements. Every single piece of prep that her classes produced was marked to within an inch of its life,

with lots of detailed but concise advice on what was needed to take things to the next level, while apostrophes, semi-colons, and the dreaded comma splice were all effectively explained, explained again, and explained yet again until every boy, even the most punctuation-adverse in the room, could deploy them correctly.

In her penultimate year at the school, Sue embraced the challenge of teaching A-level for the first time. As with everything else she did, Sue threw herself into the task, quickly becoming expert in American Literature and its historical context. Her passion for the topic was infectious and inspired many boys to go on to read more by Fitzgerald, Hemingway and Steinbeck. The outstanding marks her students scored on their final exam papers were testament to her rigorous, academic approach. The Department will miss her passionate advocacy of the importance of English to the Abingdon curriculum, and remember her fondly as a kind and generous colleague who always put the interests of the boys first.

Sue saw her role as a Lower School tutor as incredibly important, believing strongly in getting the youngest boys in to good routines from the very start of their time at Abingdon and instilling in them the values that would help them to be the best that they could be in school and, perhaps more importantly, in life in general. She was not afraid to discuss difficult ideas with them and was always ready to hold them to account when necessary, but she did so with such a light touch, often using

literature as a medium, that the boys were quick to respond and reflect on where they had gone wrong. Sue was a highly regarded member of the Lower School tutor team, who was always happy to step in to help out with a supervised prep session or act as a sounding board for the latest crazy scheme of the Lower School Housemaster, and many of the younger tutors who have worked in Lower School over the years have benefitted greatly from her wisdom and experience.

Every so often Sue's very competitive side became apparent, be it when in a dragon boat on a PGL trip or when cheering her boys on in a tug of war competition, and the annual inter-tutor group public speaking competition was always an event that she particularly looked forward to, relishing the chance to watch the boys develop their ability to use the power of words effectively. Having helped out with a wide range of Other Half activities during her time at Abingdon, it was public speaking that became Sue's main focus in the last few years as she took charge of the Lower School Debating Society and really made it her own, encouraging the boys to structure their arguments properly, with just the right level of subversive wit (something which Sue herself was somewhat expert at demonstrating, especially when faced with the latest technological fad!) and leading several successful trips to the Winston Churchill Public Speaking Competition at Blenheim Palace.

No fewer than 10 Lower School tutor groups have had the good fortune to be known as 1W and it is clear from the number of times that Sue has been fondly mentioned to me at OA events in recent years that those generations that have now left the school and gone on to university and beyond still feel that they owe her a great debt for looking after them so well in their first two years at Abingdon.

Sue leaves Abingdon for a very well-earned retirement, during which she plans to pursue her love of words through studying for a creative writing qualification in Oxford. We wish her every success and look forward to reading the fruits of her labour in due course.

Adam Jenkins and Emma Williamson



Sue Wigmore





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