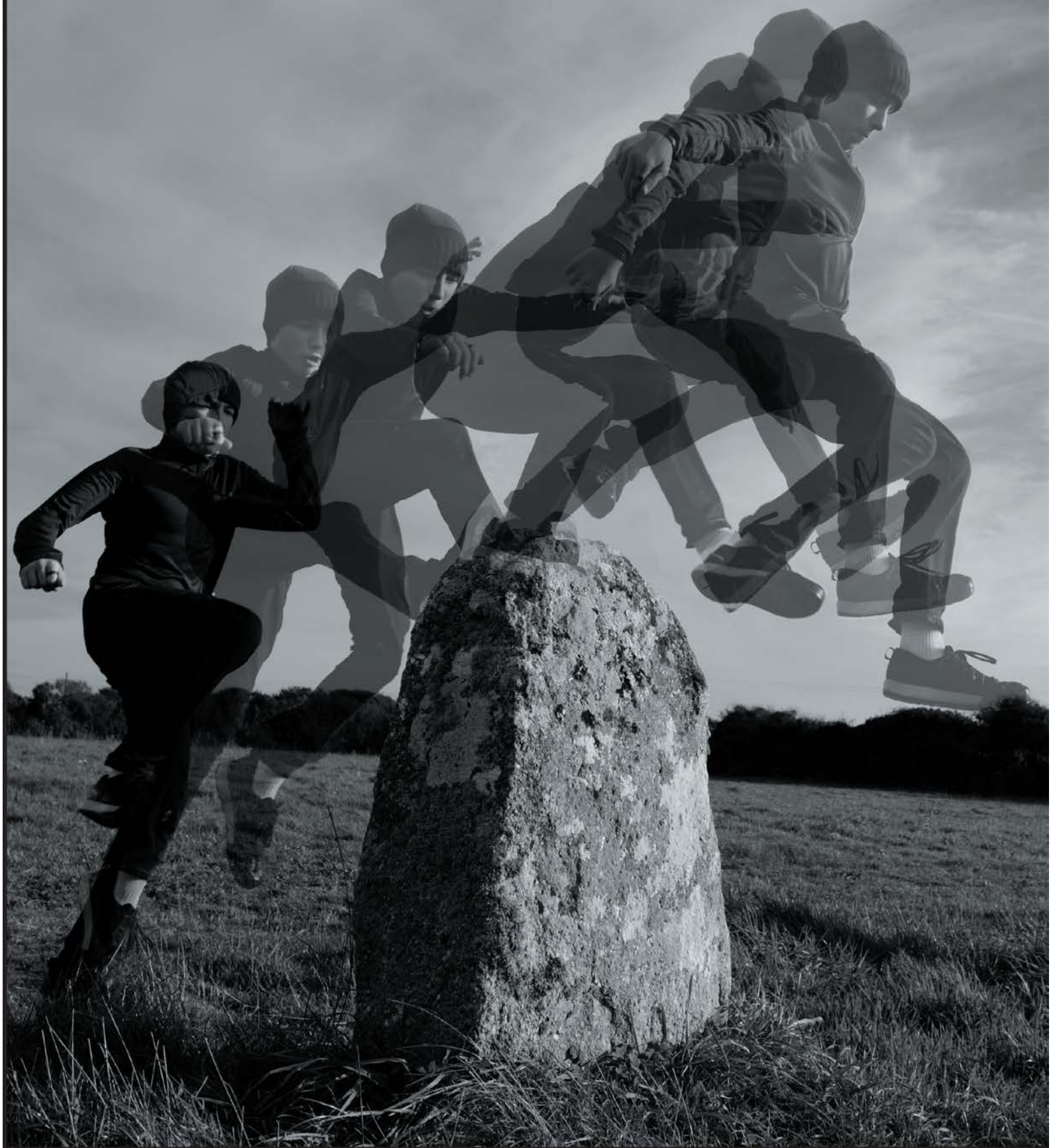


The Abingdonian

2022





The Abingdonian

2021 – 2022

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Editorial



Looking through *The Abingdonian* is an opportunity to look back through the year past and also to appreciate the individual and collective achievements which define the school year. It is perhaps, then, reassuring that this issue is so full of spectacular displays of talent from across the school community, from drama productions to sporting successes and academic brilliance.

The much-anticipated return of school trips has not disappointed, with various excursions to museums, ancient ruins, and scientific sites amongst many others.

Though this is only my second issue working on *The Abingdonian*, it is sadly my last. However, I have every faith that I leave the magazine in capable hands. Mr Taylor, in his first year with the magazine, has been an invaluable source of guidance, and I'm sure he has many exciting plans for the magazine's future. I must also thank my fellow student-editors for their tireless work this issue: Harry Dewar, Ainesh Jamuar, Dylan Kaeuper, Alden Lo, Pranit Narain, Archie Prendergast, and Henry Roseff.

Finally, we all are very grateful to the countless students and members of staff who have given up their time to contribute to the magazine, without whom our work would not be possible.

Freddy Chelsom, 7BS

Our cover image for this edition, courtesy of Leon Harris (3TJD), appealed to us as an illustration of overcoming obstacles, as students at Abingdon do every day. This edition of *The Abingdonian* has faced its share of obstacles too, and so my heartfelt thanks go to everyone on the editorial team who has helped me in taking over from Mr Jenkins, and delivering this celebration of a year's endeavours.

Jason Taylor

Head's Foreword



I hope everyone who picks up this edition of *The Abingdonian* will enjoy reading it and the opportunity to reflect upon a busy and successful year in the life of the School.

It was a year when we started to put the more onerous restrictions of Covid behind us and moved back to a greater sense of normality. Although levels of illness remained high at times, staff worked tirelessly to ensure that students could benefit from all the opportunities that come with an Abingdon education, from rites of passage like the Griffen Ball to the recommencement of school trips.

We clicked back into a full sporting programme and it was great to see students making the most of this with some superb performances, including the U15A cricket XI who came away with the title of national champions after a thrilling run in the National T20 Cup.

2021–22 represented a significant step forward in our Partnerships programme with the formal launch of the OX14 Learning Partnership, which brings together six independent and maintained senior schools across the town of Abingdon. Many pupils have benefited from the experiences offered by the partnership and it's great to see students grasping the opportunity to lead and shape its work too.

I am fortunate that my role allows me to witness so much inspiring and committed activity in and around school every day. The *Abingdonian* captures that activity so successfully and I'm therefore grateful to Mr Taylor and his editorial team who have worked so hard to put this magazine together.

Michael Windsor

Michaelmas 2021



Life in the Sixth Form

When entering the Sixth Form I wasn't entirely sure what to expect. I'd made a vague calculation that "10 subjects to four" meant a 60 per cent reduction in workload; however, I also remembered my entire family using words like "painful", "harrowing" and "nasty" to describe the step-up from GCSEs, and as usual, mother knows best (just don't tell her I admitted it).

Four subjects quickly became three – I dropped Chemistry when I realised no substances were reacting in my brain. However, numbers can be deceptive. Every one of my subject choices comes attached to a syllabus

of dizzying breadth and intensity. It's no longer sufficient to memorise a tanker-full of information. Now it's necessary to internalise, understand, assess evidence, evaluate options, and reach judgements. And don't think you can rely on generous marking to save the day. A Level examiners are notoriously intolerant of bluster and evasions.

On the other hand... there is the joy of free time. When you receive your first 6th form timetable, your immediate assumption might be that the computer made an error. What are all these time slots labelled 'private study'? Is that a hitherto unknown rank in the CCF? I can dispel the fog of confusion – these periods are exactly as described. It is a period in the school day in which you spend your time studying (by studying I mean completing your homework, research, consolidation) in a classroom

with a teacher.

When it comes to the academic side of being a 6th former, it's important to be aware of the dazzling array of subject choices available. For me, the most welcome change is that a foreign language is no longer mandated - this has been my kryptonite for many years. New subjects worth a second look include psychology, business, economics, politics, and philosophy.

The fabled Sixth Form centre might be the stuff of legends, but I can reveal – exclusively to readers of *The Abingdonian* – that it exists in this very realm, as tangible as the Griffin Ball dodgems. There is a wide range of places to sit with your friends: the hugely popular chairs, in which people can talk privately; sofas; cubicle chairs with desks; and the private study room, which is perfect



for tasks such as revision, homework or subject consolidation.

It's worth noting the unrivalled sense of consequence from sauntering around the school grounds in a suit, as if you've just left a board meeting at the Institute of Directors, when in reality you have just come from a psychology lesson. With this authority also comes a burden; the burden that all teachers and members of staff expect us to display a high level of responsibility.

So, what can one conclude from my stream of consciousness? For those curious about the Sixth Form, but unsure whether it's the right match have nothing to worry about. It is a load of fun with all the activities and free time you have, and when you smash it in exams or tests, the feeling can be both rewarding and satisfying. Most importantly, the opportunity to study subjects for which one actually has a passion. All I can say is that, for me, the Sixth Form has already provided some fantastic opportunities. I cannot wait for the rest of the journey.

Benjamin Wallis-Smith, 6TASC



OX14 Partnership

After a traumatic few years fraught with Covid, there is a light at the end of the tunnel. Abingdon, John Mason, Fitzharrys, Larkmead, St Helen and St Katharine, and Radley have united to form a formal partnership of independent and state schools that they have called the OX14 Learning Partnership. The OX14 Learning Partnership was launched on the 19th November with the heads of each school, as well as Mr Southwell-Sander, Director of Partnerships, signing a Memorandum of Understanding. This was in the presence of the illustrious Layla Moran, Liberal Democrat MP for Oxford West and Abingdon, and the magnificent Mayor of Abingdon, Cheryl Briggs, to ensure the formation of an impactful partnership and thus a prosperous future for the schools of Abingdon.

In the past, these schools have worked together on programmes such as the Peer Support Lead scheme and Academic coaching, providing support to younger students across the schools. In the future, more programmes like this are to



be expected with greater interaction as a result of the partnership. This is enabled by the positioning of a Partnership Champion at each school whose role is to ensure the smooth running of the activity at their school. Moreover, the creation of a student voice council with representatives from each school means that everyone can get their voice heard and can contribute ideas as to what can be improved and implemented so that

everyone benefits. Recently, the Student Voice council have turned their focus to diversity, inclusivity and well-being and so will be implementing numerous initiatives to promote these in each school, as well as other measures to improve our environmental impact.

Edward Saunders 7TJG



PSL Training

The Abingdon School Peer Support Lead programme, headed by Mr Southwell-Sander, Mrs Kaye and Mrs Preiss Chapman is a town-wide initiative which aims to provide pastoral support for the middle school. After having undergone a selection process and online training in Lower 6th, the PSL team were ready to start their new role at the beginning of the Michaelmas term. The year started off with an in person training session at Abingdon school with St Helen & St Katherine and John Mason, involving role play and the development of situational skills to help improve our expertise. We also learnt how to progress our 'creative loitering' skills and how to become more empathetic in conversations, both of which help hugely in the role. It was fantastic to mix with students of other schools in the OX14 learning partnership and learn a bit about them, and also the challenges they face as PSLs in their own school environment.

The skills we have learned throughout the year are not just applicable to this role in school, however can be utilised in



wider society such as in the workplace or any future profession. Teamwork with other PSLs, attentive listening and appropriate responses are all pivotal in the functioning of later life, and the

training we have received has set us up for future success.

Cosmo Gooch 7PDW and Tom Kent 7OTL





Investigations in Geography

Within the first few weeks of term the A-Level Geographers were given two opportunities to hone their fieldwork skills before embarking on their own individual projects.

First up on the block was a field trip to Wytham Woods, a semi-ancient woodland owned and maintained by Oxford University. From this picturesque base, A-Level Geographers conducted a variety of data collection methods, from watching how long it takes for water to infiltrate into the ground, to measuring the carbon content of trees with some measuring tape and a bit of elbow grease. Actually being able to immerse ourselves into the natural environments which so much of geography relates to not only sparked many great ideas for coursework topics, but also proved to

be a relatively grounding experience. Given the natural beauty of the woods (and the excuse to be off school for a day) many were very sorry to leave Wytham that day.

The trip to Birmingham some two weeks later was a far cry from our experience in Wytham. As we drove deeper and deeper into the city towards the centre the nature of Birmingham hit like a ton of bricks. Driving on a motorway, flanked by these vast behemoths of Victorian architecture, hurtling towards the city centre gave everyone pause for thought (and a few pictures). Arrival in the city centre, however, did little to quench the sense of awe that many of us felt; the trip briefing under the shadow of Birmingham Council's headquarters, a vast Victorian complex, was an almost intimidating city. From thereon, however, it was time to quit being impressed with the city and start assessing it. We walked between the Convention Centre,

Bullring, Mailbox and Snow Hill Station, we straddled canals and weaved between construction sites, all the time once more using ArcGIS to take Environmental Quality surveys. These involved taking a qualitative opinion of various traits of an area (such as noise or parking) and giving these an overall score which added up to one value, after this we took a photo, geolocated and moved on. A further tool in our geographical arsenal was the tried and true interview; we were each tasked with asking at least 5 people questions about the development of Birmingham and their ease of access in visiting, working and living there. Though there were definitely a few awkward exchanges and rude rejections, overall the Abingdon cohort got many good responses and the people of Birmingham went about their days relatively unmolested.

Charles Maddison 7MTJ

Field Studies in the Gower

The Biology field trip lasted three days, from the 24th to the 27th of September at the Field Studies Council (FSC), located at the Margam Discovery Centre. The building was composed of eco-friendly materials, and as a result, had to have hyper-sensitive fire alarms installed (causing an eventful false



alarm on the first evening). Our stay at the centre was fruitful; on the first day, we drove down to the neighbouring beach to practice sampling techniques, such as random sampling, systematic and stratified. We conducted analyses of the different species of crustaceans and invertebrates which made the beach their homes, starting with null hypotheses before collecting different samples across the beach (to get a feel of what we were dealing with), returning them to their previous locations and finally conducting random sampling across a few quadrats, counting the number of individual snails and limpets across randomly decided areas within the quadrats.

The second day of our stay, we went to the sand dunes at the nearby university. We learned about the conditions and factors for the formation of the dunes, their environmental roles and how they can be used to demonstrate the principle of succession in ecology. We again utilised sampling techniques to conduct analyses, this time, stratified sampling. We started at the shore, and then moved further inland, counting the number of different plant species at each marker, identifying each using laminated key sheets, and entering data into shared Google Sheets via iPads. We also measured light intensity and wind speed at each location. The goal of this experiment was to determine whether the distribution

of plant species had anything to do with the conditions they faced at each section of the sand dunes. After returning to the Margam centre, we used the Student's T-test to compare the means of our data, in order to make our conclusions.

We then finished the day off with a highly-anticipated activity: mammal trapping. Unlike expectations, it was a very humane experiment: each of the mammal traps were designed to prevent harm to the willing participants (rodents), and contained a variety of snacks and bedding to make the one-night stay as comfortable as possible. The morning of the following day, we inspected the catches.

On our final day at the centre, we went to the nearby river. Our goal was to conduct experiments on the effects of conditions on the population distribution of different aquatic species, such as dragonfly larvae in the area. We measured different factors such as water speed, depth and light intensity in order to determine whether or not to follow our null hypotheses, and our results of this investigation were used for our core practical upon our return to school. Much was learned on this trip, and our thanks go to the teachers and staff at the FSC for their help and knowledge.

Jonathan Cai 7ACW



Sponsored Walk

The Abingdon sponsored walk occurs every other year. It is an opportunity for students of different years to bond and get to know each other while experiencing the local terrain. It is a beloved event by students and teachers alike, and it allows everyone to feel the same sense of achievement once we have all finished.

Last year's sponsored walk event at Abingdon was one of our most successful yet. We had the most participants and the least dropouts of any year, meaning that more people finished than ever before. I believe that this shows the determination that we



have as a school, but also that the encouragement we show each other has a big effect.

Although some pupils at Abingdon may dislike the idea, I am almost certain that nobody regrets doing it. As a pupil myself, I got to experience the sponsored walk to the fullest, including the moans and constant pleas for rest breaks from my friends; but we still banded together and pushed through.

Not only was last year's walk so successful for the pupils, but it was also very successful for our charities. As a school we managed to raise £25,867.49 for our charities.

Kate Ley



I Can and I Am

What do a bright blue and yellow bus, pizza making, and confidence building have in common? The charity I Can and I Am! A charity set up by James Shone.

James Shone is a former teacher who was unfortunately diagnosed with a brain tumour that almost killed him and impaired his vision meaning he lost the majority of his sight. After this traumatic experience Shone could not be a teacher anymore. But did he let this stop him? No way. He set up the previously mentioned charity and now travels around the country giving speeches about confidence building to schools. Oh and I forgot, he does this in a bright blue and yellow bus he was gifted by a friend!

The second years were lucky enough to have the bus visit them in November of this year and had a great time. The day started off with James giving a speech about his analogy for confidence building, "balloons of self-belief". He explained how each person has one of these balloons and positive relationships, exercise and other enjoyable activities are likely to blow the balloon up. However, mean comments and other forms of bullying will deflate the balloon. He also talked about his own balloon



during his recovery period after surviving the tumour and coming to terms with losing most of his vision.

After this emotional and thought-provoking talk second years visited the bus in groups throughout the day. In the double-decker bus, the bottom layer is actually a kitchen and half the session was spent making pizzas. They were absolutely delicious and a fun addition to the bus. The upstairs section of the bus is an area with comfortable seating where the other half of the session was

spent talking about our balloons and what activities and people inflated them. It was a very nice opportunity to talk about what mattered most in our daily lives.

In conclusion, James Shone and the I Can and I Am charity are very inspirational, and the second years definitely enjoyed their visit.

Bertie Smith, 2SHS



Jack Wills founder

The founder of Jack Wills, Peter Williams, gave a talk to the scholars, and those who were interested, on 16 November 2021.

Williams started his career in management consultancy after leaving university. He enjoyed the fast-paced lifestyle and interesting clients and had a steep learning curve, but after a few years, he looked at the work his bosses were doing and didn't feel inspired to follow them. His journey into retail started through his fascination with the retail experience and, at the age of only 22, he started his own clothing brand, Jack Wills, named after his grandfather, in Salcombe, Devon. But Jack Wills' rise to fame was not an easy one. He moved from his highly paid London job

to live in a small flat above the shop surrounded by packing boxes and clothing stock.

Jack Wills' familiarity with its customer base led it to fame. The brand focused on a young, affluent target market who came to Salcombe on holiday. Williams explained that they were constantly refining the offer, to get it just right. He said that he wasn't especially interested in clothes before starting Jack Wills, or known as a stylish dresser, but he thought that he could still make the business a success by clever marketing and really understanding the target market. The company employed many innovative PR schemes, such as the 'seasonaires' programme where young people were flown to Nantucket, USA to go on a once in a life-time summer camp to promote the company's way of life.

In 2019, Williams sold his business and is now building a new premium clothing

brand called Aubin and Wills alongside Next. He says the collaboration with Next means all the logistics and fulfilment is covered and he can focus on branding and design, the things he enjoys. He is enthusiastic about this and is refreshed by the simplicity.

Peter's advice was that it has never been easier to grow a business and to just go for it when you are young. Moreover, he says you should dream big, that is the key to success. Peter's story shows the importance of perseverance, hard work and overcoming the inevitable setbacks.

After his talk, those attending had the opportunity to ask him questions. Sustainability, ethics and business strategy all came up in a very interesting and insightful end to the seminar.

George Crosthwaite 3TEA



Fifth Year Scholars' Trip to Oxford

The sky was a scintillating, vibrant blue on the 9th of November and graciously clear. It was undoubtedly fine weather for a day out, let alone one approaching the British winter. With our spirits reflected in the splendid day, we arrived at our first destination: St Hilda's College, Oxford. After being greeted by an old Abingdonian studying Latin there, we enjoyed a brief tour of the college. St Hilda's was founded in 1893 as a hall for women, giving them the right to continue their education. It consequently has a substantial list of notable alumni, including Katherine Parkinson, Kate Millet and Bettany Hughes.

Once our tour had finished, we marched to the entrance of the Bodleian Library, a stone-panelled quad speckled with stained glass windows and time-worn doors. We were given a similar tour of the library that explored the rich history of Oxford University. Most notably, we were guided through two rooms that had hosted Parliament on four occasions in the 17th century and once in the 21st. For instance, in 1681, the Commons wanted to exclude King Charles' brother, the Duke of York (later James II), from the succession because he was Roman Catholic. Charles was strongly opposed to this, so he summoned the third



'exclusion' party to Oxford as he felt that he could rely on the loyalty of the University. Charles therefore took the Commons by surprise, dissolving the Parliament before it could pass another exclusion bill. Subsequently, we visited Duke Humphrey's Library. If King Louis XVI and Olivander from Harry Potter had shared a library, it would have looked like this. Lofty rows of dark-oak bookshelves

lined the walls, laden with hardbacks flaunting gilded covers. The ceiling itself was an opulent tapestry of crests, oozing with old money. However, despite this display of wealth, the library still felt like a place of learning. After all, the benefactors of the Bodleian did aim to support the pursuit of knowledge.

After lunch, we drove to Wytham Woods, an estate that has been owned and maintained by Oxford University since 1942. The site is exceptionally plentiful in flora and fauna, with over 500 species of plants and 800 species of butterflies and moths. We were directed through the woods by three conservationists and we learnt about some of the methods used to observe and research wildlife. We further studied the effects of climate change on the forest and the role of trees in maintaining ecological balance. The trip came to a contented conclusion as we toasted marshmallows around a campfire. Indeed, if there's a better way to end a day out, I'm not sure I know it. .

Sammy Jarvis 5NJAB



British Museum Trip

The British Museum is one of the largest repositories of cultural artefacts from all around the world and lower and upper 6th cohorts journeyed there to view the Nero exhibition there. The trip was particularly special for the Lower Sixth pupils as it brought to life and made the historical sources of Tacitus, Suetonius and Pliny which they had been studying into something real and tangible. The salacious and intricate story of the Roman emperor Nero is one of the highlights of the course, but instead of the traditional depiction of Nero as a deranged sexual maniac who routinely committed incest and murder, the Nero exhibition sought to look beyond the stories told by the ancient historians and examine the “real man” underneath. This triggered an interesting discussion among the ancient historians as to whether it is ever possible to discover the “man beneath the mystery” or whether the nature of history simply means that it is lost to us, or even whether “the true character” is even worth searching for.

In reframing their narrative over Nero, the exhibition displayed a vast number of busts, artefacts, statues and arguably most importantly: coins. Through our exploration of the museum



we soon realised the importance of Roman coins in informing later generations of the politics, economy, society and beliefs of the Roman people. For example, certain coins early onto Nero's reign would often feature both himself and his mother, Agrippina of similar stature on the coins, emphasising her role in the administration of the empire and her influence over him; the minting itself of such a coin also gave us evidence of this fact. The salacious nature of the ancient world was on full display as

well, from Nero's tutor Seneca's faeces-filled slander of Nero's predecessor of Claudius to artefacts that hinted at the purported relationship between Nero and Agrippina. The busts and statues of Roman emperors was also particularly interesting, as many of us pointed out that the Julio-Claudians often sought to improve their image, by reusing the same muscular body but inserting their own head when the former emperor died, even though it was unlikely that many of them were as physically fit as presented, with Nero being morbidly obese and emperors Augustus and Tiberius being middle-aged when they took power. Overall, it was a thoroughly entertaining trip with huge amounts of academic information gleaned that added a significant amount of context and brought to reality a vivid and compelling period history rife with politics, intrigue and for us: mystery. huge amounts of academic information gleaned that added a significant amount of context and brought to reality a vivid and compelling period history rife with politics, intrigue and for us: mystery.

Nicholas Chan 6BDS



National Poetry Day

National Poetry Day is always an important date in the Abingdon School calendar, giving us a chance to celebrate and share the joys of the written and spoken word. This year has been no exception with a poetry writing competition across the school, as well as a video featuring students, staff and tutor groups reading some of their favourite poems.

This year's theme for National Poetry Day was 'Choice' and this theme was well represented in the 'Virtual Open Mic' video featuring students, tutor groups and teachers from across the school reading their favourite poems on this topic. A sixth form tutor group read a poem entitled 'Choose a Poem' by James Carter, while Bertie Smith in the Lower School gave an excellent recitation of Wires by Philip Larkin. Pygott's fourth year tutor group gave a highly effective shared reading of Robert Frost's 'The Road Not Taken', while Lucas Earnshaw in the third year gave an engaging reading of 'Thirteen' by Caleb Femi. 'Homage to a Government' by Philip Larkin was read expertly by Mr Pygott and seemed highly appropriate given the news headlines at the time. 'Give' by Simon Armitage was read by a lower sixth English class, and its sentiments of generosity and selflessness seemed to chime with the national mood as we came out of lockdown. Kajan Sivakumar gave an astounding version of Dylan Thomas' 'Do Not Go Gentle into that Good Night, and Hao Zhen's 'Easter 1916' by W.B. Yeats was equally captivating. O'Doherty's fourth year tutor group ended the readings with a light-hearted and satirical poem about our fixation with screens entitled 'For We Shall Stare at Mobile Phones' by Brian Bilston.

The competition attracted some excellent entries. In the Upper School category two of David Haar's masterful sonnets scooped the top prize, with Alex Heffernan's 'Birdsong and a Cool Pink Sunrise' conjuring an otherworldly atmosphere with great craft and linguistic dexterity and taking home the top prize in the Middle School category.



Oliver Clark's 'Hemlock' came a close second in this section, with its gothic imagination and impressive technical control. Jonathan Watcham's 'Choices' came first in the Lower School section, followed by Yiannis Black's excellently titled 'In Through the Menacing Gates I Dreaded...' It was an excellent year for entries and I thank all those who submitted a poem.

While we weren't quite able to celebrate National Poetry in a room together this year, it was great to see that so many wanted to participate in the event. We look forward to next year's National Poetry Day and hope that even more of the student body want to get involved, in what is one of the national cultural highlights of the year.

Andrew Jamison

3rd Year Service & Citizenship

All pupils in the 3rd year who aren't members of the CCF take part in the 3rd year Service & Citizenship every Tuesday in period 8 instead. The Scheme consists of a very wide range of activities, aimed at helping Abingdon pupils become the citizens of tomorrow.

Sarah Jane Poole

In expedition skills the students learn basic navigation, map reading, cooking outdoors and setting up tents. Expedition skills gives an advantage for those wanting to do their DofE Qualification, Which includes an expedition. At bronze level this expedition consists of a minimum of 2 days, 1 night and 6 hours planned activity each day. This expedition requires the core expertise of Expedition skills. Overall this is a really enjoyable activity and we would recommend it to future Abingdon pupils as it will be very helpful in preparing you for Duke of Edinburgh and future expeditions.

Justin Sheriff, 4PRB and Oscar Burn, 3JTT

Language Leaders is aimed at introducing young people to more languages; this is an outreach program with 3rd year students teaching a language of their choice at a primary school. Languages taught include Malaysian, Portuguese and Swedish. The languages chosen are often spoken by the 3rd year students themselves, or studied in school. The 3rd year students design and create a 30-40 minute lesson for the primary school pupils on the basics of the language in question. This program helps other students at other schools have the opportunity to learn about other languages that are not commonly taught.

Alden Lo, 4RAJ

Financial citizenship with Mr Grills has been an undeniably spectacular experience for me personally. Every session has been engaging; Mr. Grills' ability to deliver extensive scenarios and examples has helped us understand



and to think wisely about our financial decisions. From learning about saving and spending money to more obscure topics taught like dealing with interest, I can confidently say that I have increased my knowledge of financial citizenship immensely, and have achieved a strong grasp of the fundamentals.

Gustav Andrian, 3ACT

First Aid is that skill you never think you will need until you are in an emergency situation. That is why every 3rd Year Pupil in the school taking part in the Service and Citizenship Scheme has to take this course. On the course you learn respective First Aid skills which you can take and use in later life, such as how to use a defibrillator, and how to do good quality CPR. The sessions are currently run by a trainer paramedic, who gives her professional views and advice on everything we do. First Aid is such an important part of life, and it is brilliant that most 3rd Years will be trained and able to help people who need it.

Nathan Shestopal, 3JTT

Bushcraft is unpredictable! Every week we learn something new. I like how Mr Cook puts trust in us to do the activities

independently which helps us learn faster. In Bushcraft you learn about knives, fires and many interesting things about the outdoors. In fact, I have just received my knife permit. Some of the activities we do in Bushcraft link with CCF activities. We have learnt useful life skills from Bushcraft like how to build an efficient fire and how to cook food on it which has helped me become more knowledgeable about survival skills.

Callum Alderman, 3KJM

Stress management has been very fun and very interesting and has allowed not only me but the whole group to learn lots about our minds and how stress affects our daily life. We have tried and done all sorts of activities to try and reduce our stress levels and also try to work as a group to accomplish tasks; one of the activities was trying to throw and catch tennis balls and get it all the way through the group without dropping it. This was quite a challenge because some of the group weren't great at catching a ball but we persevered and got through as a team. We also tried different ways to try and reduce our stress and then we ranked them as a group and concluded that laughing and listening to some

comedy was the most stress relieving activity we tried.

Jamie Ross, 3CEH

A fun and fascinating journey through what goes on behind the scenes of the theatre, the Amey Theatre Tech Crew teaches you the basics of working in a theatre, and how much effort goes into productions behind the scenes. Whilst working in the Tech Crew, you learn the mechanics of theatre: how to set up sound systems; how to rig and operate lights; and how to program the equipment for a show. A wonderful experience, this activity prepares you for helping out with productions in the future, and even going further and taking a job in theatre.

James Longworth, 3TEA

Every fortnight, the Baking in the Community group goes to one of the boarding house kitchens to bake a cake for the elderly in care homes. On top of that, thanks to Mrs Sabah, we even get to make a cake that we can eat ourselves. We also prepare a quiz as a fun activity to do whilst in the care home. The following week we visit the care homes, present the quiz and offer tea or coffee to the elderly. I really enjoy it and found Baking in the Community useful because the people in the care homes are extremely kind, we have learned how to bake cakes and make drinks such as tea and coffee and overall, it is a great experience.

Can Tugcecin, 5OLH

The Polyglot is a languages magazine which features articles in both English and other languages on a wide range of topics. As part of Third Year Service you are able to learn new and enjoyable things like how to find good photos that are relevant to the articles, and it has also given me an insight into the development process of writing a magazine as well as how challenging it is. I have also gained experience in how to lay out articles with photos in a way that looks very professional, and have learnt about different cultures too.

Dan Gurney, 3RMF

This Michaelmas term I have had the joy of being a part of the very elite Music in the Community group. We have been

playing very advanced pieces from "Ain't no mountain high enough" to "Sleigh Ride", as well as many lovely pieces in between. We plan to perform for the Service & Citizenship tea party at the end of term, to which the residents from local old people's homes are invited. We have a sizeable ensemble of instruments

and players: 3 clarinets, 2 saxophones, a trumpet, a bassoon and even a tuba! Of course we would be nothing without our conductor; Dr Preece and Mr Crisp have been the glue that keep our group together and sounding excellent!

Henry Roseff, 3ACT



Portrait in Disguise



Casper Whitfield, 2PCWM



Edward Griffin, 3JRE



Fin Bennet, 4VP



Max Chan, 3TEA



Ru Evans, 4KEML



Oliver Wardle, 2HFCP



Jack Taylor, 1RHH



James Warwick, 2SHS



Edward Harris 2SHS

Chapel Choir

In the second week of the Michaelmas term Chapel Choir travelled to London, to sing in the Mercers company on our first big trip after Lockdown. On the way there we also went to visit the foundling hospital and learnt about their history, and of a particular sponsor, George Frederic Handel. It was very interesting, and a nice experience to be able to travel somewhere as a school again.

At first I didn't know we were actually going to stop off at a museum, so when we got to the Foundling Museum, I was quite confused, because I had a totally different picture in my head of what the Mercer's looked like, having gone there on a chapel choir trip two years prior. Then when I found out that this wasn't Mercer's company, I thought that we were somehow singing in the museum as well. But no - we were only here to have a nice time and to learn some interesting things about something I'd never really thought about. We learnt what the foundling hospital was - a place for parents to leave their children if they have trouble keeping them. The child would get erased from the parent's ID, but the parents would be able to leave a belonging there in case they would ever want to reclaim it (which not many parents did). These children were given different, some quite crazy, names. Some would be named after famous people, like William Shakespeare, and others would be named very common names, like John Smith. In the room above we looked at some paintings by artists, some of whom worked in the foundling museum. We got to see just how beloved the foundling museum had been, with various sponsors and gifts. There was a particular picture which they had got from winning a raffle, and it took up a whole wall! Then we went upstairs and it was about one of the primary sponsors of the foundling hospital: Handel, the well-known musician. I found this part the most interesting, because I didn't actually know a lot about Handel and we looked at some really old music he had written and given to the hospital in his will. There were a lot of performances of his music in the hospital to raise money, and they would have given a lot of money to the children



and the staff. Handel was a great supporter of the hospital in his own way. At the end, there were also choirs that performed some music composed by Handel, which I found very comfortable and relaxing after the walk through the museum.

We then began our walk from the Foundling museum and arrived at Mercers, we were led into a room, where we waited for a while. We saw men in long-tailed cloaks as they led us to the room. I was looking around in wonder at the spectacular architecture inside. There were chandeliers everywhere and red carpets. On the two-way stairs with polished wooden bannisters and another staircase leading further up in the middle, between the bannister and the bottom, there was a very decorative pattern in the frame. As we were led up the stairs, there were stained glass windows, and a large chandelier hanging over us. We were led into the room, with a set (three, arranged like a 'U' shape) of highly polished wooden tables. The hall seemed quite tall, with glass chandeliers

hanging from the ceiling. However, what was most astonishing was the chapel where we sang. The walls and the ceiling were decorated with many ornaments, as well as the paint being a brilliant blue sky colour. There were features which would be included in Greek architecture, such as a few pillar-like and arch-like designs of the chapel, which were painted white, and were also very clean. The chapel pews were well polished, which shone as the light dazzled and reflected off them. After our rehearsal, which went quite well, we had a snack, which the Mercers Company had supplied us. There were small salmon, egg mayonnaise, and other delicious sandwiches, along with some juice. In the chapel service, we sang our hymns and pieces, which included some like the Magnificat. We then listened to the chaplain give his sermon, and senior members read their bible passages. We had a great time there.

Samuel Price 3BJLP and Enoch Wang 3KEML

Inter-house Public Speaking

Some people say that oratory is a dead skill. That nobody needs to give speeches any more. That we don't fight them on the beaches these days, and nobody has a dream. That public speaking doesn't matter.

I say that they are wrong. Public speaking is very much a vital, living skill. Even in the age of Zoom — perhaps *especially* in the age of Zoom — how can we expect to be taken seriously if we cannot speak with clarity and confidence?

The finalists who gathered in the Amey Theatre on the penultimate day of Michaelmas term each presented the words of another from history or fiction, but the messages they communicated felt as current and relevant as any tweet or reel.

Bertie Smith of the Lower School started proceedings with Theodore Roosevelt's 'The Man In The Arena', and set the bar high with his measured use of pace and his expressive tone.

The Austin's champion Eric Liu offered Nelson Mandela's 'I'm Prepared to Die' speech in an emotionally charged performance that framed the words within an impassioned, almost outraged frustration. Harnessing such passion without compromising the moral authority of the text is no mean feat.

Edward Zhan from Border's used the St Crispin's Day address from Shakespeare's Henry V to bring a dose of righteous zeal to the Amey Theatre stage, and to showcase his control of tone and volume.

Donnelly's house champion was William Walters, who used Ghandi's words on the eve of the Salt March to demonstrate the power of clear, deliberate annunciation and well-calculated pauses to reach and inspire an entire audience.

Ted Smethurst from James' delivered Fidel Castro's trial defence in a master-class of intensity and vitriol. His penetrating tone and unquestionable



ownership of the lectern led him to victory in this closely-contested final.

Previous winner Harold Lethaby, now of O'Doherty's, delivered J F Kennedy's inaugural address, and from the very first syllable made clear once again his finely-tuned ability to inhabit a character with overdramatising. To pause in silence on a stage where seconds feel like hours takes great confidence and skill.

Robin Collins brought his trademark flair to proceedings with Queen Elizabeth II's first televised address from Christmas 1957, complete with appropriate headgear. Few others could inject such a note of whimsy into the otherwise weighty proceedings without it falling flat, and his performance spoke volumes of the enjoyment to be had in public speaking.

Henry Roseff of School House continued the royal theme with Queen Elizabeth

I's speech to the troops ahead of their successful defence against the Spanish Armada in 1588, pivoting adeptly from humility to full-throated passion and bringing the audience along with him.

The Franklin's house entry was Johnnie Willis-Bund, who highlighted the celebratory atmosphere of the end of term with the Winter of Discontent soliloquy from Shakespeare's Richard III. His almost musical elocution effortlessly danced over the words and drew out the meaning, a notoriously difficult challenge with such text.

Finally, Jack Thornton of Crescent proved that no public speaking competition is complete without Churchill (whose proud bust forms our coveted trophy), with a sensitive and measured recounting of the great orator's words marking the death of King George VI.

Jason Taylor

Lent 2022



Classics Trip to Greece

On Saturday 2nd April, at 3am, a mere thirteen hours after the end of the Lent term, a party of forty pupils and 5 members of staff boarded the coach at the bus park for the school's week-long Classic trip to Greece. It was an exciting moment when, after leaving behind Heathrow security and the various Covid paperwork still required, we first sighted Greece from the plane, its glistening water and rocky hilltops. Our afternoon arrival in Athens allowed time for us to visit the sleekly designed New Acropolis Museum, which exhibited, and to encounter some of Athens' city-life, with street sellers eagerly trying to sell flowers and other wares.

First thing after breakfast on the following day, we set off to climb the Acropolis, past the scenic Theatre of Dionysus, before the sun scattered the remnants of cloud and the tourists arrived in their hordes. There was still scaffolding, but the majestic front of the Parthenon was in full view; in the other direction, the remains of Long Walls stretching to the port, the Piraeus, were visible. Following tradition, sixth formers gave informative introductions to this and the other sites we visited. Back at the foot of the hill, we walked around the agora, the ancient market-place, and split into groups to find places for lunch - souvlaki was an authentic option. Amid the tombs of the Kerameikos (potters' district), a couple of tortoises could be seen seeking refuge from the sun. We continued up the olive-lined path to the Pnyx, a flat hill of natural rock where the

assembly (ekklesia) once met, to hear Mr Price read the passage in the Acts of the Apostles where St Paul addresses a crowd of Athenians.

Our journey west from Athens to Delphi was broken up by a stop at the Soros, a funeral mound for the fallen of the Battle of Marathon of 490 BC, in front of which Mr Jenkins took a photograph of the whole group ("one for twitter and one with the proper camera"). At the plain of Marathon, where we could look out to the beach where the invading Persian fleet landed, Jacob Lamsdale gave a lively account of the Greek defence, led by Athenians and their allies the Plataeans.

Stepping off the coach at Delphi, overlooked by Mount Parnassus, we were met by view down into a dramatic valley. Mr Franklin pointed out an eagle

soaring overhead, a reminder of the myth in which Zeus dispatched two eagles from the ends of the earth, which met here, establishing Delphi as the centre of the world. Hence the statue of the ophthalmos (belly-button), a replica of which still marks the spot, with the original in the museum nearby.

Olympia, where we could see a handful of enthusiasts at work on the ongoing excavations, was a site of - almost literally - Arcadian charm, with the faded columns lying prostrate among the pine trees. It was once host to the greatest of the all-Greek games: in our recreation of the stade-race (192m), fifth-year Rupert Matthews emerged, a dark horse, from the swirling dust cloud of contestants. But no olive wreath awaited him at the finish - only a mouthful of dust as he stumbled victorious across the line in the time-honoured fashion of the heroes at Troy. My own efforts met with less glory, but the less said about that the better.... We arrived at our final hotel of the trip in the evening, in Tollo, a small town, where we engaged in bartering for souvenirs with the local shopkeepers.

On Thursday, our exploration of the ruins of the once-great kingdom of Mycenae provided a highlight of the trip, the atmosphere heightened by the dense white cloud that enveloped us. The Treasury of Atreus, in fact a "beehive" tomb (so called for its impressive early dome structure) provided a powerful acoustic for some singing. In the museum attached to the site we saw



original Linear B tablets, which played a part in allowing scholars to decipher this early form of Greek writing. Tiryns, with its gigantic walls, furthered our picture of the palatial Mycenaean age. Nafplio, where we had lunch, proved slightly disappointing, as the museum staff denied our group entry ("the negotiations were short" - some trivia for any Star Wars fans among us), but this was quickly remedied by a visit to "the best ice-cream shop in Greece.". The day was rounded off by a trip to the well-preserved fourth-century BC theatre at Epidauros. A group of Americans were timorously endeavouring to read some Greek tragedy, then Mark Taylor was swiftly reprimanded by site attendants for his attempts at "throat-singing," before Mr Franklin stepped up to declaim some verses of Prometheus

Bound from memory, in true Johnsonian style. The traditional classical quiz back at the hotel was won comprehensively by "Euripides nuts".

Our final visit, on the last morning, was to Corinth and its acropolis Acrocorinth, later an Ottoman fortress, which provided a challenging ascent for some, but rewarded with a view over the Isthmus, which separates the Aegean from the Ionian Sea. After lunch, we returned to Athens, where we boarded the plane back to England, with two weeks of holiday ahead. Many thanks to all the teachers who came and made it such an enjoyable trip: Mr Hird, Mr Jenkins, Mr Franklin, Dr Burnand, and especially Mr Price, for organizing such a comprehensive overview of Greece.

Matthew Rolfe 6RLR



Telemachus' Revelation

The waves lapped gently against the tranquil sand. As I gazed over the shore and out towards the open sea, I couldn't believe anything could be more beautiful. I just couldn't understand it. This was everything that anyone would want, and yet...I wanted more. It wasn't that I didn't like this peace, but I felt, against my will, that I needed something more. I realised that it was time to make a decision. I could stay here with my lover, her son and my mother on this incredible island, or I could go and find adventure in the wide expanse of the known (and unknown) world.

'Are you alright?' It was dinner, and I was staring at the wall, lost in thought. Circe, my lover, repeated the question and finally kicked me back into reality. 'Yes, it's fine, I'm just thinking,' I replied finally. 'Telegonus,' I asked suddenly, speaking to Circe's son, 'Do you ever feel like you wish that you could see more of the world?' Telegonus thought about it for a moment, and then said, 'I would, if I wasn't living this life on this island.' I said nothing, but I must have shown a look of disappointment because Circe looked at me in a sort of appraising way, and then grinned into her bowl. I finished dinner quickly, and made my way swiftly into my bedchamber, and changed into my nightclothes. I leant on the balcony outside. Circe wandered into the room, got changed into her nightdress, and spent a while mulling around inside. She then walked over to me, and leant into me, smelling strongly of honeysuckle. She observed me for a moment, and then whispered in a soothing tone, 'You want to go into the world, don't you?'

She took me down to a shallow cove on the beach, where a simple fishing boat lay. She then handed me a pouch, and when I checked inside, I saw a handful of various herbs, and even a bottle labelled Κράτος. I got on the boat and she said her final farewells as I sailed away. I felt amazed and I waved my hand in the air as I gave a cry of delight. This was it, finally! It was a beautiful morning, with a rosy sunrise. Sitting up, I realised just how uncomfortable this



voyage was going to be. I had spent the night sleeping on a blanket, which didn't protect my backside from the hard wood underneath. I rummaged in my bag, and pulled out a loaf of bread, which I ate half of. It was then that I realised that I didn't know what I was doing, I had no plan or knowledge of where to go, and I was completely unprepared for everything. As these thoughts crossed my mind, a massive wave struck my boat! Thrown off guard, I fell onto the deck, and my sword tumbled out of my bag onto the deck. Another wave struck the boat; what was happening? Was this normal weather outside of Aeaea? No, surely not, I thought, as another wave almost capsized the boat. I fell forwards, but this time, I rolled onto the deck and grabbed my sword.

'Show yourself, whichever god or spirit is causing this!' I cried, leaping up and brandishing the blade of bronze. At this, another wave hit the boat. A second later, a wave larger than a trireme drove itself straight into the hull of the ship at top speed, causing it to break into several large pieces, and the last thing I heard was hysterical laughter before I blacked out. 'I promise to return soon, my little Telemachus...' I was an infant, and my father was leaving to fight in the Trojan war... 'Good job son!' I had just defeated the suitors with my father... 'So

you have betrayed me...' I was trying to defend my mother from my father's moments of madness...

'You are no son of mine!' My father had found out that I had helped a shepherd flee my father's wrath... 'Telemachus, I'm sorry...' Telegonus had just killed my father... 'I'M DONE!' I screamed, jolting me from the dream. I hit my head on a plank of wood, and passed out again. I awoke to a strange humming sound, almost like the one from a wasp. I was laying on one of the larger pieces of wood, bobbing through the waves. It was then that I decided. I was done. If this was what was going to happen everyday in this crazy world, then I didn't want it anymore; I would just go home and live a peaceful life. After what seemed like an age, I finally could see Aeaea. I had used another plank of wood as an oar, and directed the boat in the island's direction. As the makeshift raft drifted to the shore, I checked my bag, and found that I still had my sword, though it had rusted in the water, a few soggy loaves of bread, and the herb-filled bundle that Circe had given me. As my 'boat' hit the sandy beach, I looked up and saw a peculiar sight. There was a purple storm cloud, almost like a tornado, over the mountain on the island. Something was amiss.



his hands. Without thinking, white with rage, I stepped out from behind the rock. 'Stop!' I said in a voice that didn't sound like mine, more deep and heroic. Odysseus turned and looked at me in surprise, which quickly turned to hatred as he recognised me.

'You!' he spat, 'you ungrateful little boy, you will fall as Aeaea and Ithaca soon will.' He held out his hand, and a spectral blade appeared out of nowhere. I just had time to grasp my sword, when he struck. He fought with a style I had never seen before, and within a few minutes, had disarmed me. I scrambled back behind the rock. I grabbed the bundle that

Circe had given me, pulled out the bottle and drank deeply. Suddenly, I felt a weird sensation that made me feel so much stronger than normal. I ran at Odysseus and pushed him into the water, where he started to scream. 'YOU FOOL!' he rasped as I stared. My father's spirit was dissolving in front of me. He finally sank under the water, and almost immediately, the purple storm cloud disappeared. I dashed back to the shore. I pushed his servant into the water, where he too disappeared. I slashed the chains of Circe and Telegonus.

'You saved us!' Circe cried as she flung her arms around me.

Freddie Farrell 1SJC

The air did no longer smell softly of mint, but instead of metal and rust. I swiftly pulled my near-useless sword out of my bag, and cautiously moved up the hill. As I walked, I felt a strange sense of impending doom. No sooner than I had reached the top of the hill, I heard the same hysterical laughter that sent shivers up my spine. I peered towards a strange amber light. With a jolt, I realised that it was Circe's lodge, burning in the evening light! Without thinking, I dashed down the hill as fast as I hurried towards the flames. Skidding to a halt about two hundred metres away, I crouched behind a boulder, and peered over, as I could hear voices. 'Is it ready yet?' snapped a cold, hard voice that I recognised as the voice of the laughter. 'Yes, my lord,' came from the bent over figure that I could see. 'Good,' rasped the voice, 'then bring in the prisoners so they can witness this.' I heard the clinking of chains being dragged against the floor and saw with a pang, the shapes of Circe and Telegonus being kicked into view. 'I thought that there were three?' asked the voice, and I could sense a tone of impatience. 'Yes, my lord, there were,' mumbled the bent figure, 'but one, the old woman, died of shock after we took them to the cells. 'Very well, let's get started, then? 'You are here so that I can punish you by showing you what I will do. You see, I have a few plans. Destroy this disgusting place, for one. Or perhaps punish the ungrateful souls on

Ithaca?' 'What do you have against us and Ithaca?,' questioned Circe.

'So you don't recognise me?' The voice leaned into the light and I almost cried out loud as I saw my father's face. It was a spitting image of Odysseus, the day he died. It seemed to be translucent, however, like a ghost. He sneered at Circe, who was at a loss for words. 'Execute the plan; I didn't get enough of a reaction.' ordered my father. A beam of blue lightning flew into the sky from a box that the worker was holding in



Moldova Project Update

The continued uncertainty over international travel caused by the pandemic made it impossible to plan the usual sixth form trip to Moldova this academic year but, thanks to the amazing efforts of Agape, our long-term charity partner, we have still been able to have a significant impact on the lives of young people there over the course of the year. The Charities Committee had agreed that Agape was to be one of the main beneficiaries of school fundraising last academic year to mark the twentieth anniversary of the start of The Moldova Project but, since many planned charity events had to be cancelled or slimmed down due to lockdown, it was decided that money should continue to be raised for Agape by whole school fundraising until the end of the Michaelmas Term 2021, which meant that they received some of the money raised by the whole school charity walk in September. This period of focussed support led to over £15,500 being sent to Agape to mark the anniversary. This in turn meant that the grand total raised by Abingdon for Agape since the start of the Moldova Project in 2000 has now surpassed £100,000, an achievement that we can all be very proud of.

In September, some of these funds were used by Agape to buy much-needed school equipment for children from 50 families from the town of Ialoveni and the local area so that they could start the new academic year in style. One of the parents from a family who received these donations sent this message: "You can't imagine what a help you offered to our family. I am extremely grateful. God bless you and your generosity." Then in December, Agape organised the delivery of beautifully decorated Christmas presents containing gifts of books, school supplies and sweets to 100 children in Ialoveni and the nearby villages of Vasieni, Ulmu and Floreni, where they were very happily received.

In February, life in Moldova was turned upside down by the sudden invasion of Ukraine by Russia. Moldova, which has a border with Ukraine, was very quick to



offer support to refugees and, at the time of writing, nearly half a million Ukrainians have crossed the border into Moldova since the start of the conflict. Although many of them have then moved on to other countries, over 100,000 have stayed which means Moldova, with its population of 2.7 million and very limited resources, has taken in more refugees per capita than any other country. The amazing hospitality of the Moldovan people has been well known to Abingdon pupils for many years as we have always stayed with families as part of our regular trips, so it was no surprise to us that they stepped up in this way, but it was gratifying to see Moldova being recognised for its efforts in the UK press. One particularly moving BBC News item saw a Moldovan mother who had taken some Ukrainian refugees into her home saying in an interview: "Children see everything and I want my children to see that you must offer help when people are in need".

Agape was quick to offer support to the refugees and the Moldovan families who were hosting them, using Abingdon's financial support to make donations of food, clothes, and other supplies, while

also setting up projects in the local communities. One of these projects saw the distribution of two tons of apples that could no longer be exported out of the country due to the conflict. Agape bought up the apples from the local producer and then distributed them to over 1,800 children in four different schools for ten days. In addition, teams of pupils from Grigore Vieru and Petre Stefanuca schools in Ialoveni created parcels of apples and delivered them to over 230 elderly people in the community.

Despite the ongoing conflict on their border, Moldova did open up as 2022 went on and the threat of coronavirus subsided, so it was possible for me to carry out a solo visit in the summer half-term to reconnect with our friends from Agape in person. This coincided with the start of their major project for the summer, the organisation of four day camps for young Moldovan children at Grigore Vieru, Andrei Vartic and Petre Stefanuca schools in Ialoveni and Mihai Iminescu School in the nearby village of Ulmu. I visited all four camps to see the children enjoying arts and craft, sport, and English lessons – it was

particularly pleasing to note that many of the volunteers running the activities were older Moldovan students who had themselves attended summer camps run in previous years by Abingdon pupils and were now keen to give something back.

A highlight of the visit was having the chance to attend "The Last Bell" ceremony at Petre Stefanuca School which saw the graduation of the oldest students marked with dancing and the final ringing of the school bell. I was asked to give a short speech and used this opportunity to tell the students that their country was being an example to the world of how to make a difference to others through the welcome they have been giving to the refugees from Ukraine.

Later in the visit, I had the chance to see this welcome at first hand when I met 18 year old Mihaela, who, with a group of friends, had set up a refugee centre in Chisinau which has been offering food and accommodation for up to 70 refugees at a time. Mihaela also told me about how she had been crossing the border to deliver food packages to the Ukrainian city of Odessa. She really was an amazing example of the Moldovan spirit.

It was clear during my visit that both Coronavirus and the ongoing war have had a big impact on Moldova, but that Agape has managed to do amazing work during this time and that, although we have not been able to visit in the usual way for several years, our partnership is still very strong. Nicu Bocaneala, the Director of Agape, is certainly clear on the importance of our link: "The partnership between Abingdon School and Agape is of incredible value as, especially in these current very difficult times, it means so much to those who benefit from the donations that someone is thinking of them. It is truly transformational, creating experiences that have changed the destiny of many young people and teachers here."

We very hope that 2023 will see Abingdon sixth formers once again be able to return to Moldova, giving us the chance to celebrate the 20th anniversary of our first trip there in 2003 in style.

Adam Jenkins



Amey Theatre Tech Crew

This year, the Amey Theatre Tech Crew have been working hard to put productions back on stage after two years of disruption from the pandemic. With students ranging from the Fourth year to the Upper Sixth, the crew helped put on a total of four productions this year.

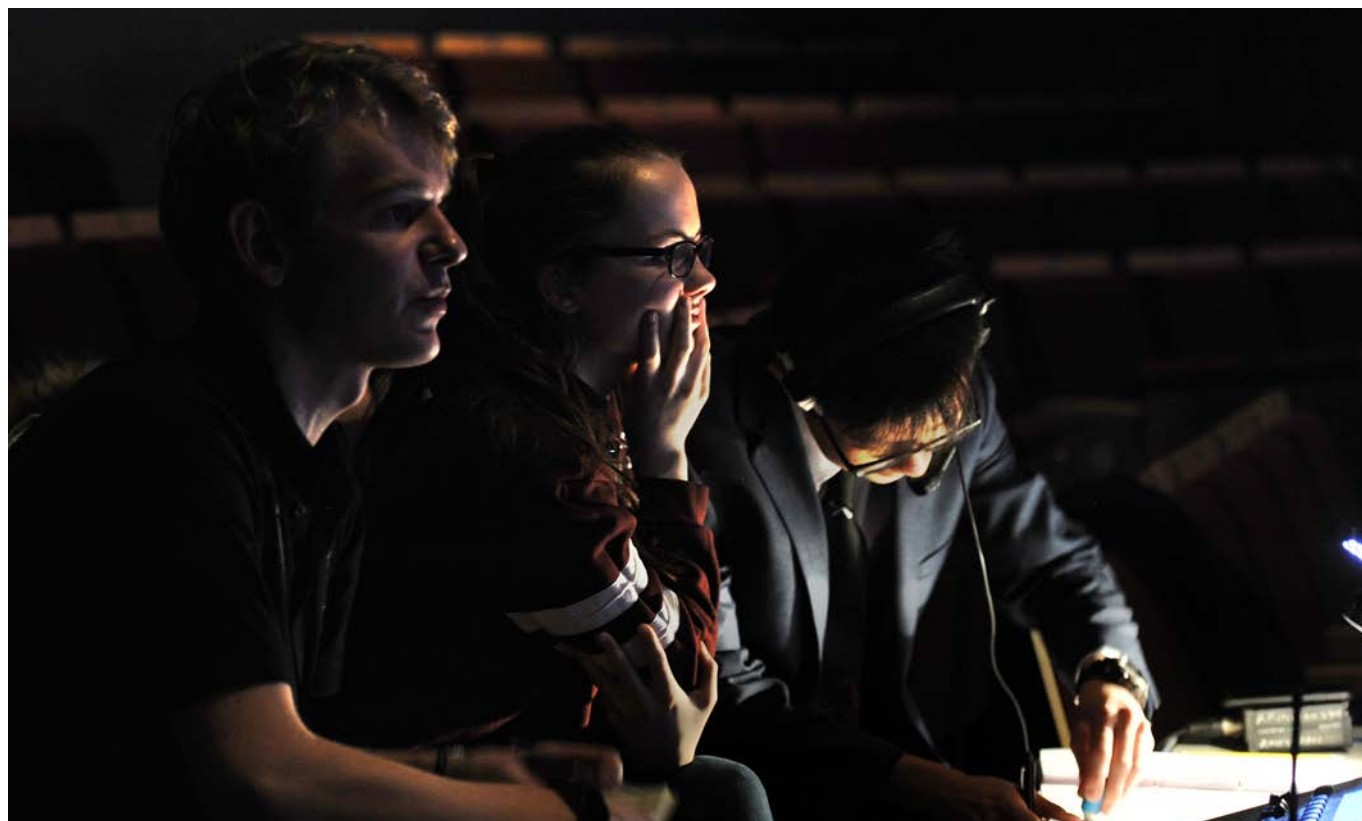
The year began with a small number of the crew helping out with the 5th Year Production, *Chaos*, an original play written by Laura Lomas, with Ms Hutton taking on her directing debut and leading a strong cast of Abingdon and SHSK pupils to start the year off for joint productions. Laura Lomas' play was written for a flexible cast size where all characters are suggestions and often are assigned numbers within scenes instead of character names. The set was creatively designed to allow for an LED border to surround the stage, which was set up in the upstairs Drama studio, allowing for an effective and creative visual representation of time shifts and poignant emotional points to become emphasised. The show ran for two

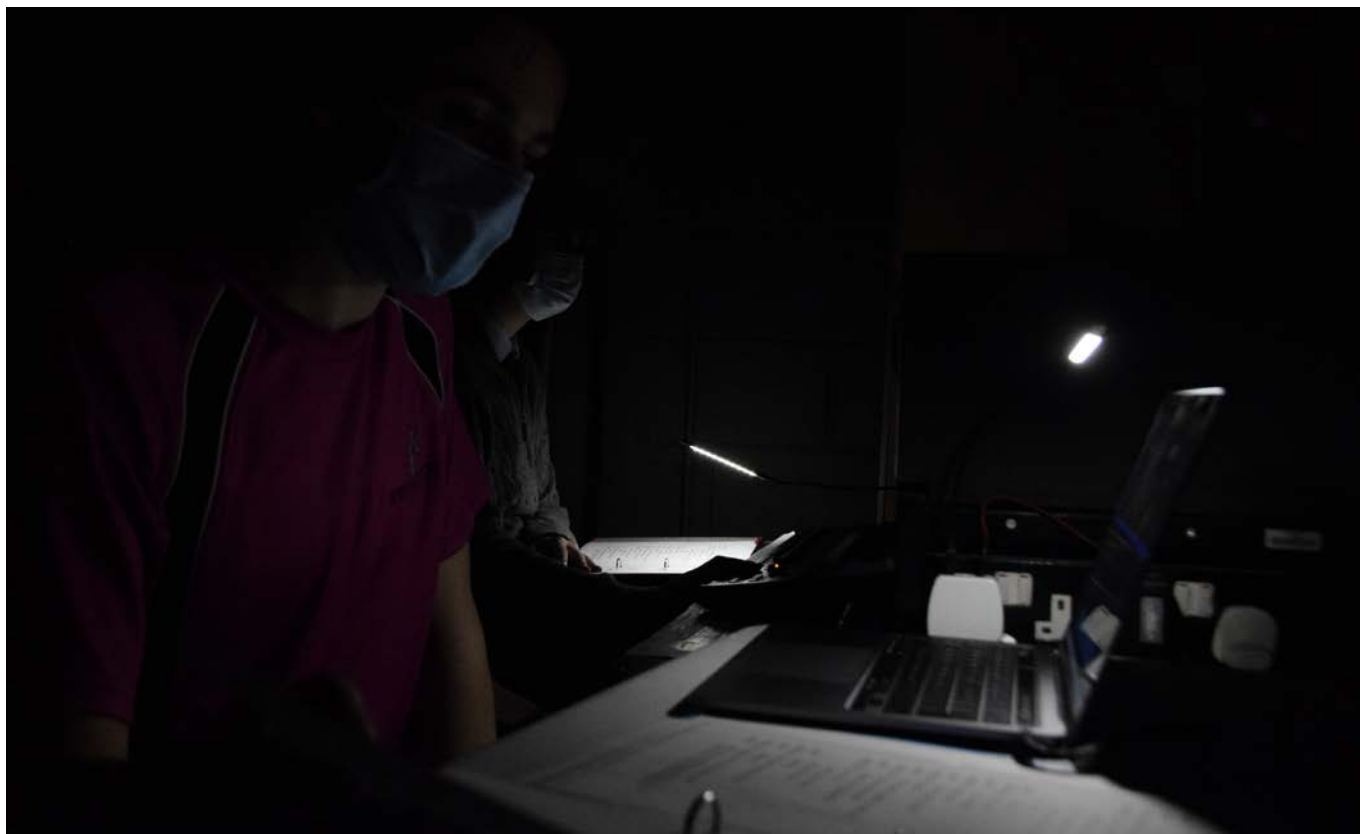
nights and was a massive success for both the cast and the crew and allowed some of our novices within the ATTC to have a go at some sound and light programming for our first performance of the year.

The highlight of drama productions every year at Abingdon and at SHSK is the joint Senior Production; in previous years, the joint casts have put on shows such as *Les Misérables*, *Loserville* and *My Fair Lady*, to name a few. This year was the first Senior Production since *My Fair Lady* in 2020, with Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, adapted for the stage by Rona Munro, being this year's production. Directed by Mr Phillips, the small cast prepared early in the academic year to ensure we hit the ground running before implementing the more technical side of the show within the mainframe. The ATTC was notified in November of *Frankenstein* being this year's production, with many of us excited to have a Senior Production back on our stage. The set consisted of a two-level set-up, with flats on the exterior to simulate the shapes of doors and windows, as well as having two balconies and a ladder for the cast to climb up and down. This meant a lot of painting was in store for the Tech

Crew, with two different types of grey paints being used as a base colour and stippling on top of the wood to create a textural effect. The production also allowed those in the younger years to see how a show of such scale runs within the Abingdon community. From hanging chains to dry ice, the tech crew certainly felt excited about the show. This year's production was DSM'd by Luc Tucker, with Sound and AV operated by James Clarke and Lights operated by Joshua Braich, alongside with other members of the Tech Crew helping out with set changes, makeup and costume. The tech-heavy show *Frankenstein* played out for three nights in early February 2022, with audience members loving that a darker show was being put on stage. From pyrotechnics to LED strips on the monster's body, this year's Tech Crew certainly was the strongest we have seen in the last few years at Abingdon School.

Drawing nearer to the end of the year, the ATTC helped out with two productions, the 3rd and 4th Year Production *A Series of Public Apologies* and the Lower School Production *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*. As both productions were at the back end of the year, older crew members were





on study leave, which meant that the younger years could draw upon their existing experience this year to help with the tech side of both of these shows. From our Tech Crew sessions on Wednesday's P7 & P8, the ATTC came together to help build sets for both of these productions. The 3rd and 4th Year production saw the Tech Crew making speech plinths to comedically reflect those seen in the briefing rooms during the lockdowns. Although minimalistic, the set allowed the audience to interact more closely with what was performed on stage. In an almost nostalgic way, the Lower School Production saw the ATTC paint over the grey flats used in *Frankenstein* with a candy colour purple and a neon yellow to make the relatively large set for the production. In addition, the production saw the ATTC having to spray paint Lower Schoolers' hair, Mr Lloyd having to order in a giant blow-up purple suit to reflect Violet Beauregarde turning into a blueberry, as well as implementing some cool AV tricks on stage through the implementation of a TV for the shrinking scene for Mike TV! The production saw the Tech Crew having a lot of pleasure implementing new aspects of tech which we have not used in a while.

In August this summer, a cast and crew of 11 leavers from St Helen's and Abingdon School travelled to Edinburgh to perform a new, dark comedy, absurdist original play *Antiques*, written by Old Abingdonian Ted Smethurst, as part of the 75th Fringe Festival Anniversary 2022. The play follows a new couple travelling from the big city to the countryside in a bid to start a new life in a new setting. However, all is not that it seems, with elements of *Little Britain*, *Monty Python* and *Hot Fuzz* being implemented within the script cleverly written by Ted. Travelling up in minibuses due to this year's train strikes, the cast and crew were all buzzed to finally get up to Edinburgh to perform to the public after previewing two performances to audiences the day before. We were lucky enough to perform in a venue provided by Greenside Venues, of which our studio, called Lime Studio, was a temporary stage set up for the Edinburgh Fringe Festival and part of a church. The 60-seat theatre allowed for a large enough audience to bounce off the cast's brilliantly performed comedy, with the show having nearly four sold-out shows out of our six-day run! It was such a fantastic opportunity to be a part of such a professional production

and also to have the opportunity to see other fantastic shows at the Fringe this year. This experience was a perfect way to end a time of joint productions for many of us leavers. The cast and crew all worked since last year in planning for this sort of trip, with many of us helping with set design, prop building and costume designing all together. It was such a great experience for those wishing to do acting or for those who enjoy working behind the scenes on building up a show, and I hope it inspires many more to either join the ATTC community or wish to act within the Drama Department.

Being part of the ATTC for nearly five years of my time at Abingdon, I hope that experiences like these and opportunities will inspire many more to come down the route of working within, or having a passion for technical theatre. The Upper Sixth leavers want to thank the fantastic team within the theatre, and I would also like to extend my thanks to Mr Lloyd, Mr McDonnell and Ms McNally-Cross for helping the cast and crew at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival this year.

Luc Tucker 7PDW

Frankenstein

Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* is a gothic, suspenseful tale that the joint cast from Abingdon and St Helens were able to transform into a captivating performance in February. This was the first production in two years with a full Amey Theatre and it was fantastic to see students and families alike enjoying the production. Mr Phillips chose Scottish playwright Rona Munro's version of the famous novel which places Shelley herself amongst the action as she wrestles with her creation and with the stark realities facing revolutionary young women, then and now. This was the first amateur production of this play and the cast greatly benefited from the workshop given by Eilidh Loan, who played Mary Shelley in the original touring production, as well as a pre-performance message from some of the other members of that cast.

The process began back in September 2021 when auditions took place and rehearsals soon followed, which led to some discoveries for some that *Frankenstein* is the doctor not the monster, unlike modern culture may portray. Mr Phillips led the whole cast brilliantly and had some highly innovative ideas to bring this 'monster' of a play to life. He was greatly helped by the design team, led by Mr Lloyd, who built a very impressive set that allowed the actors to move on different levels on

stage and helped create the mystic, supernatural feeling that the story has. Many of the audience members also commented on the shock they got when the pyrotechnics went off at the monster's reveal. The costume was equally impressive and Maths teacher Mr Cook revealed his hidden talent for body painting as he made sure we had a suitably terrifying monster. Much of the success of the play must also be attributed to the actors who worked tirelessly to learn lines and blocking and spent many late nights perfecting things. One of the things worked on heavily with Eilidh was the idea of Mary's control over everything taking place and her ability to dictate to the other characters what takes place in the scene. The cast had great chemistry to achieve this and were able to show how a young aspiring author put her dreams to life in this dramatic tale.

It was absolutely brilliant to see theatre returning to its usual entertaining itself this year and *Frankenstein* was the perfect way to do this. The play was directed and designed in a way to draw the audience and make them try and anticipate what Mary Shelley would do next despite how well they may know the play. Lastly, many thanks to Mr Phillips and the tech crew, who this production would not have been possible without.

Ben Lisemore 7MAS



Chaos

Chaos, written by Laura Lomas is a symphony of dislocated and interconnected scenes. A series of characters search for meaning in a complicated and unstable world. Bouncing through physics, the cosmos, love and violence, they find order in the disorder of each other. Laura Lomas described her intentions behind the play as having a 'strange unpredictable energy.' I thoroughly enjoyed being part of the cast of Chaos in 2021 due to the innovative complexion of lighting, set design and props, which made the play exciting to be a part of. Katrina Hutton, the director of the play, used small, coloured LED lights as a stylised choice to represent the butterfly motif that occurs throughout the play. The play had many scenes in which ranged from confusing short ten-second movement sequences of a dance, a cartwheel and someone spinning on the stage to complex scenes dealing with themes of isolation, bullying and sadness. The costumes were designed in order to represent the emotion of our character. Each person had a character and was then additionally assigned to be part of ensemble in various scenes. Every character had a unique personality, such as anger, happiness or sadness which was reflected through the red, yellow and blue coloured T-Shirts that we wore. My favourite item of set in the play was



the large whiteboard at the back of the stage. At the start of each scene, a different cast member would walk onto the stage and write the name of the scene in their unique style on the black board with coloured chalk. This led to a random mess of colourful words at the end of the play. This represented the Chaos and disorder of the play through the way all the words were jumbled up on the board. The rehearsals for "Chaos" started three months before the first show, and allowed us to work in detail on each scene, however short or long. The cast would be split up into two and given a scene to work on each, which we would then present to the other half

of the cast at the end of the rehearsal. The reason for this was because the play was based and aimed around the lives of teenagers. The director wanted the play to be as authentic to a teenagers life as possible. On the last night of the play, an audience member commented that the play was 'engaging' and 'had the perfect balance between funny and brutal.' All of the cast from both St Helen and St Katherine and Abingdon boys all enjoyed the experience and are looking forward to the next upcoming plays at both schools.

Alexander Lees 5HCGM



A Series of Public Apologies

When the cast of 26 sat down together in September of 2021 at the start of rehearsals, none of us expected that the play for which we'd auditioned would take six months to reach the stage.

Taking part in a drama production was a new experience for some of the actors after Covid had wiped out most school drama productions in the previous two years, so it's fair to say all of us were looking forward to getting back to this enjoyable part of school life.

Our play was to be *A Series Of Public Apologies*...by John Donnelly – a short, comic satire written in 2020 about the way those in power interact with the public. One of its unusual features was dialogue without any indications of who the characters were, or which actor says each line. This offers great freedom to those producing the play. Originally, we'd planned to perform at the end of the Michaelmas term, but due to the large number of Covid-related absences in the second half of term, we had to postpone until the end of the Lent term. Sadly, this meant we lost one or two of the cast



who had other commitments then.

As the time of the performances came closer, we began to wonder how they would go. With limited rehearsal time, it's fair to say all of us felt rather nervous, but also keen to deliver the best performances we possibly could. The weekend before the show saw significant progress, especially once we saw the amazing set created by the Amey Theatre Technical Team.

Eventually, the day of the dress rehearsal dawned, but then Covid struck again,

this time felling both Mr Taylor and one of our cast members, and proving itself yet again to be the bane of our drama-related existence. This meant that only two days before zero hour, we had to do some large scale line reassignment with the additional challenge of our director instructing us over zoom. Being directed via zoom was a strange experience, but one that turned out to be more effective than any of us imagined, largely because of the wonderful work as intermediaries of Mr Cook, Mr Lloyd and the other members of the technical staff who helped to pass on Mr Taylor's prompts.

Finally, it was time to perform. We all felt the two performances went well, and everyone managed to carry them off without a hitch. Our audiences responded well, and seemed to thoroughly enjoy the script's razor sharp contemporary comic barbs.

On behalf of all the cast, I'd like to thank Mr Lloyd, Mr Ramli-Davies, Ms Hutton, Ms Jackson and Mr Cook, as well as the student technical crew for their huge effort in helping deliver this play in what were certainly strange circumstances. Our director, Mr Taylor, was incredibly helpful throughout and it was a shame he could not be there for the performances. All of us enjoyed being part of the production, and I certainly cannot wait for what the years to come will bring.

Rupert Mathieson 4RFM



Cross Country

The 2021/22 cross country season was a stellar season for the club with numerous successes and representative honours as well as a record number of pupils taking part in either competitive or recreational running.

The senior squad kick-started the season by attending the Longworth 10km; a scenic route along the Thames path with a killer hill in the final kilometre. Rowan Miell-Ingram showed his early season form by taking the win and setting a new course record of 33.22, closely followed by Quinn Miell-Ingram, Will D'Arcy, Roy Schumacher (OA) and Alex Pennington (OA) to round out an all-Abingdon top 5.

2021 saw the return of the sponsored walk. It was fantastic to see so many pupils embracing the challenge of either walking or running the 18km route through the Oxfordshire countryside and along the Thames path. Special mention must go to Hugh Clarke, who kept pace with the senior squad, an impressive feat for someone so young.

Teams across the club from junior to senior age groups continued to string together impressive performances throughout the season both individually and as a team, recording victories at St Albans, Harrow, Radley, Marlborough



and the County Championships. These consistently high performances on a regional level started to turn the team's attention to what could be achieved on the national stage.

The ESAA (English Schools Athletic Association) XC Cup competition is an event that provides the opportunity to be crowned the National School Champions. Teams of 6 compete to

score the lowest number of points (a point is awarded for your place, e.g. 1st = 1 point and so on). All three teams (junior, inter and senior) qualified for the regional round with the inter and senior teams advancing to the national final, held at Tretherras School in Cornwall. All eyes were on the senior squad who had managed to record the lowest possible scores at both the county and regional rounds of the competition. On a blustery and rain-soaked day in December the Judd School (known for having a very strong cross country pedigree) were victorious with Abingdon placing 2nd. A tremendous achievement and testament to the team spirit and commitment the team had shown to training and racing in the first half of the season.

Post-Christmas, attention turned towards the prestigious Knole Run in Sevenoaks and the unofficial national team relays at King Henry VIII School in Coventry. Fresh off of a GB winter Biathlon camp in Norway, Will D'Arcy dominated the hills and took the individual win, closely followed by Rowan Miell-Ingram to make it an Abingdon 1-2; an incredibly rare thing to do at such a high-calibre race.

At this point in the season the Abingdon team were well known and had a target



on their back. Expectations were high going into the 6 man relay race at the War Memorial Park in Coventry. A race steeped in history with many of its past runners having gone on to represent the country in endurance sport. This includes the likes of the Brownlee brothers, Seb Coe and Ricky Nerurkar to name a few. It is safe to say Abingdon produced one of the most accomplished performances seen at school level, breaking the record that had stood for 50 years by 28 seconds. Rowan Miell-Ingram also became the 7th fastest athlete ever around the 2.3 mile course. Unfortunately, unknown to the team before the race, one of the Abingdon pupils was outside of the age bracket eligible to compete and the team were disqualified from the team result. With 4 out of the 6 runners returning next year the desire for redemption will be high.

The season was rounded out at the National Championships with 6 pupils from Abingdon running for the Oxfordshire team. The junior team placed 8th and the senior team placed 7th, an incredible achievement for such a small county.

Special mention must go to club captain Rowan Miell-Ingram for his contribution and commitment to club over his time at Abingdon. Whether competing for England in Belgium or completing reps around War Memorial field he has been a constant role model and has left a lasting legacy, demonstrating what can be achieved through hard work and humility.

Representative Honours

England U20 – Rowan Miell-Ingram

GB Triathlon pathway – Johnny James

GB Winter Biathlon pathway – Will D'Arcy

Oxfordshire – Rowan Miell-Ingram, Will D'Arcy, Johnny James, Quinn Miell-Ingram, Jacob Charity- Williams, Oliver Sherratt, Monty Salmon

Well done and thank you to all involved in cross country this year. It's a privilege to lead such a great group of students and staff.

Elliot Birkbeck



Badminton

As another year of Abingdon Badminton goes by, the school team sees a number of their valuable players bid farewell, signalling the end of a generation of talented players. As captains, David and I are very satisfied with the performance of the team, especially since many players came out of the pandemic with little preparation, which is not reflected in the high standard and quality of badminton that the school plays at.

As the years went by, Abingdon badminton has seen an array of great talents, namely Perry Tsai, Jate, Brian Ho (the list goes on), until all that was left were two veterans - David and Greg. Ever since fourth year, the two, who were then just middle school students, showed limitless devotion to the team, participating in all matches with great vigour and valour. Under the guidance of Mr Allen and Scott Sankey, the two had blossomed into the players they are today, who lead the Abingdon badminton team to a successful 6-1-1 season (the defeat against Sankey Academy doesn't count technically).

The upper sixth roster was particularly strong compared to previous years, with fresh and gifted players such as Isaac Boyce Parr, Tanguy Wache and Will Meng in particular who are core players in many fixtures. However, the



badminton team's successes were not only owed to the senior players. In fact, this year saw a number of young and promising players enter the team such as Nikhil, Archie, Will Sue and Thierry. These players proved their worth as 1st team players, earning countless victories against Abingdon's top rivals such as Winchester and Harrow (just to name a few). Lastly, the badminton team would not be complete without the dynamic lower sixth pair - Leon Guan and Tom Walters both whom are likely favoured candidates for the captancy next year.

To conclude, David and I congratulate all members of the team for an enjoyable

last season of badminton, and we turn to the young, up and coming players, hoping that one day, a new dynasty of Abingdon badminton will rise even higher than the era of Perry. We would also like to thank Mr Allen and Scott for their dedication and guidance to the team during training sessions. As for Leon and Tom, we wish you all the best for the next seasons. Hopefully you will be able to emulate the same if not, even better degree of success as we had this academic year .

Gregory Fung 7MTJ



Kayaking

Last term when I told people that I was doing white water kayaking with school on a Wednesday afternoon, they often seemed surprised and asked where the white water is on the Thames; a group of six pupils kayaked (with Mr Simmons instructing) on the white water coming from the weir at Abingdon Lock. We would launch ourselves in our kayaks from the bank near Abingdon Bridge (a one metre vertical jump into the river!) and paddle to the weir, waiting in the eddy (the calm bit of water away from the current) to the side of the weir while Mr Simmons explained what we would be doing in the session. In the first session, Mr Simmons told us how dangerous the weir is and that we must never go to there if we were on the river by ourselves (special training is needed to keep safe near the weir). We practised techniques like leaning to the direction opposite of the flow when paddling across each of the fast-flowing areas of water going through the weir so we would not capsize. In fact, we frequently capsized, but as we were wearing wetsuits we didn't mind.

The highlight of the term was a visit to the River Nene Whitewater Centre in Northampton. The centre has a 300m long track of rapids and jumps, with the biggest jump being about 1.5 metres; it was fast and exciting, and we did about 5 or 6 runs of the course. At the very



end I capsized after the final bit of white water, however, I really enjoyed it and would recommend going.

This term I have been doing Paddlesport Instructor training, which leads to a qualification from British Canoeing allowing you to teach others different paddle sports and to work for water sport companies. The training sessions are twice a week: on a Wednesday afternoon on the river, and a session after school in the swimming pool. I have been on the water in kayaks, canoes and on standup paddleboards and learnt many skills, like how to rescue people from a wide variety of crafts. My biggest achievement was emptying a canoe of water on my kayak in the

middle of the pool by myself. Although canoes are heavy, especially when they are full of water and have a seal with the water making them even more difficult to empty, with the correct technique it is not too difficult. I have learnt how to rescue myself and other people, how to coach people doing paddle sports, and how to run games and activity sessions.

In previous years I have chosen to do river kayaking; this involved setting off from the boat house to explore the tributaries as well as main part of the river. Kayaking is an excellent Other Half Choice – it is fun, enjoyable and teaches you many skills - I would recommend it.

Philip Ashton 4WTS



Fencing

After last year's hiatus from school fixtures, the Abingdon fencing team resumed with a successful season this year, highlighted by both collective and individual achievements.

The season started off with 2 draws against Harrow and Winchester, in which we delivered strong performances in both epee matches, but unfortunately fell short in foil. Since then, the team impressed with 5 convincing wins against highly competitive schools including Eton, RGS and Radley. A very close overall draw away in Eton marked a strong return to competitive fixtures for the club.

On 12th Feb, the club had the honour of inviting the 3-time Olympian John Llewellyn for an epee masterclass. The 3-hour training session was dedicated to polishing our footwork and blade controlling techniques, in preparation for the Public Schools' Competition in March. This was a fantastic opportunity for the senior team members to build

upon their repertoire of skills and receive advice from the world-class fencer, as well as for younger boys to develop for higher levels of competition and prepare for greater roles in the team in the upcoming seasons. A lot of concentration and hard work were put into the session by everyone that attended.

The Public Schools' Competition, which took place at the Lee Valley Athletics Centre between 14th and 16th Mar, became the final stage for a superb team performance. Nine members of our club competed and displayed some great character against more than 620 entries from 90 schools. The team went on to win the Hilary Hammond Trophy for most points awarded to a team of fewer than twenty entries. Individually, Ben MacLennan secured a Bronze medal in the senior epee category, after an intense semi-final bout against the country's top-ranked fencer; Nicholas Chan achieved fifth place and Jacob Drew came 11th eventually, after two unfortunate encounters between Abingdon fencers in the final Tableau of 8 and 16. All three junior boys (Luke,

Finley and Harrison) impressed in the epee event and ended in top 30 among 122 entries in that category. The Mount-Haes entries, Sacha Borg and Edward Richards, also showed great promise in both weapons despite this being their first competition.

On top of the excellent team performances at school, two members of the club were selected to make their international debuts - Ben MacLennan representing GBR in Cadet Circuit in Belgrade and Poland, and Nicholas Chan representing Hong Kong in Cadets World Championship in Dubai. Such high levels of individual achievements are reflective of their incredible commitment and enthusiasm throughout the year.

The success of the club is undoubtedly owed to both Herman and Alan for coaching and supporting all members of the team, as well as to Mr Jackson for organising our school fixtures and the Public Schools' trip. Thank you to everyone for all the effort and hard work put into this season.

Ethan Chen 7NJSK



Squash

Abingdon Squash had its most successful year ever, resuming competition with a vengeance after the Covid break. Our senior squad consisted of Alex Smith, Felix Loeffen, Max Struthers, Joe Betts, Jai Biswas-Gladwin, Max Sheppard, Miguel Ferreira, Sam Dominic and Marc Sheriff. They achieved outstanding victories against St Edward's, RGS High Wycombe, Radley, Stowe, Berhamsted, and Tring.

In the National Schools competition, the seniors competed with distinction, and our juniors did even better; in regional qualifying they defeated three of the best squash schools in the country in Eton, Aylesbury and Wycliffe. We qualified for the National Finals and travelled to the Squash Centre in Nottingham. Our team, consisting of Alex Smith, Felix Loeffen, Alex Kleinknecht, Will Simpson, Luke Remington and Wilf Barter, played some superb squash on the biggest stage, and ultimately ended up as the 8th best team in country.

The sport is thriving at Abingdon, thanks in large part to our brilliant coach Ben Rosec, and we are also indebted to tremendous support from parents.

David Franklin



Language Leaders Trip

At the start of the Lent term five 3rd-year and one 4th-year began to prepare a lesson for some younger pupils in year 3 and year 5, ages 8-9 and 10-11. The lessons included: French (prepared by Luke Glazer, 3rd year and Ainesh Jamuar, 4th year), Latin (prepared by Charlie Haynes, 3rd year and Jacob Fannon, 3rd year) and Mandarin (prepared by Gustav Andarian, 3rd year and Ares Lam, 3rd year) with the leading teacher of this operation being Sophie Payne.

We started to work on our slideshows each week adding and improving to them however sometimes this was hard because of other things getting in the way. These powerpoints continued to improve until we thought we had finished but then the school that was originally intended cancelled. Jacob Fannon then suggested his old school Brockhurst and Marlston House schools and gave Mrs Payne the relevant teachers emails. This was arranged by Mrs Payne and a date was set for the beginning of the Summer term.

On the day Ainesh was in exams as this was the start of fourth year exams and Ares Lam was off sick so we went to Brockhurst two members down, meaning that Luke Glazer and Gustav



Andarian had to give the lessons by themselves which was much more nerve-racking than doing it in a two-man group. We drove down to Brockhurst and were taken to the classrooms we were going to be giving the lessons in. There were a few last minute issues with Luke Glazer's slideshow as some printed words had come out too light to be readable and this became a stress point but it was sorted out quickly. Jacob and Charlie presented their Latin slideshow to year 5 boys who were just about to start Latin in year 6. Luke Glazer presented his French slideshow to some pupils

in year 3 and Gustav his Mandarin presentation to some more year 3 pupils. All pupils were engaged and learnt a good amount about the subject they were being taught. The Latin pupils were starting to gather the general rules of Latin sentence order and the uses of the verb *esse* - to be and could comfortably translate some basic Latin sentences from Latin to English and back again. After the journey home all of the pupils involved in teaching said that they really enjoyed it and now realise how hard it is for teachers to plan lessons and teach them.

Jacob Fannon 3EPB



Entomology Club and Use of Animals in Biology

A tea towel hanging in the Yang Science Centre kitchen states 'if it smells it's Chemistry, if it moves it's Biology and, if it doesn't work, it's Physics'. Whilst I cannot comment on the other sciences, it seems obvious to try and include as many living organisms into Biology. At Abingdon we are fortunate to have both the space and the technical support to look after a range of living organisms and use them to learn about life. Whilst Chroma the chameleon is on the tour route in the school, and is used in as many demonstrations as we can think of, there are more ways to learn from nature than just seeing undeniably cool animals.

I am sure you will remember using potato chips to understand osmosis, geraniums to do starch testing on and bits of liver to understand enzyme rates, but one of the most used organisms in the lab is spinach. Being very green and very cheap, it is excellent for extracting chloroplasts and chlorophyll from. The Lower and Upper Sixth use this green juice to investigate the remarkable stages of photosynthesis,



where carbon dioxide, water and light is used to make the energy-dense and life sustaining molecule glucose: if you consider that plants do this whenever the sun shines, in silence and make no harmful waste products, the current obsession with fossil fuels seems even more concerning. We can then look how to optimise photosynthesis through our own hydroponics station, kindly bought for the department by ASPA, that uses LED lights and a mineral enriched solution to grow plants 24/7, 365 days a year. The promise of vertical farming to maximise yield and minimise transport costs is already embedded in GCSE and

A level courses.

Anyone who has watched any Attenborough will know that life is all about trying to eat, avoid being eaten, and reproducing. We focus on the latter throughout Lower, Middle and Upper School and so use a range of organisms to demonstrate this unique biological process. Our colony of asexually reproducing stick insects has been going for as long as anyone can remember (they reproduce via parthenogenesis - laying viable, but unfertilised eggs) and by their nature, they are hard to spot and count in the vivarium, so we don't really



know how many there are! In the Upper Sixth we breed *Drosophila melanogaster* to look at sex-linked mutations that cause white eyed mutants, allowing us to see Mendelian genetics in this well studied model organism. This great extended practical takes weeks to run and involves the students growing, selecting and cultivating colonies themselves. Another hero in the department is the humble locust who, not only gets fed to various

Finally there is one animal we try to study as much as we can - us. Covid has caused us to be more cautious than we might have been otherwise, but at various times we still look at and measure students' vital lung capacity, skin sensitivity, the distribution of rods and cones in their retina and, amusingly, what happens to their reactions when chill a limb by plunging their arms into an sink of ice. We consider how our genes make us who we are and what the role of GM and gene editing will be. Going forward, we are considering doing our own genetic testing; not on anything too serious, but it is now possible to test individuals using PCR and inspect their genetic makeup and see if they are a 'night owl' or a 'morning lark' based on their genotype of the *per3* gene. In a time when PCR and antigen tests have become a boring part of life, it is good to try and use them to investigate and learn about how we, as organisms, work.

Ben Whitworth

In entomology club, we buy and look after a large number of insects, as well as a few other invertebrates, with each student choosing an insect to personally look after until it dies or is pinned, and are responsible for keeping them fed and healthy. We have had a plethora of invertebrates over the years, including praying mantids, stick insects, whip scorpions and even an atlas moth. The best and greatest of these specimens go on the club's 'wall of fame', where they are preserved for years to come. No two insects are alike, and I have had the pleasure of looking after four different praying mantids during my time at this club, with each one being a new experience.

During the course of the insect's lifetime, you will be able to watch it hunt and

feed, and see first-hand the ways in which the insect has adapted to its environment, and the methods it uses to stay alive. Students with no prior knowledge of insects are welcome to join and learn about how these creatures thrive, and under the guidance of Mr Dempsey, can learn how to look after one.

The most common insect in the entomology club is the *Hierodula membranacea*, commonly referred to as the 'Giant Asian Mantis'. They can grow up to 8cm in length and are commonly found throughout south Asia, living in relatively hot conditions of around 22 to 30°C. This allows them to be looked after easily, as no heat pads are required and they need little space to live in. The *Hierodula membranacea* can range from an orange-yellow colour to a vibrant green, and commonly interact with their carers, often feeding from their hand or

trying to climb up into them. Another common species is the *Deroplatys lobata*, also known as a dead leaf mantis, originating from southeastern Asia. While slightly smaller than the *Hierodula membranacea*, the *Deroplatys lobata* are true to their namesake and mimic the appearance of a dead leaf, even going so far as to gently sway as a leaf would when a gust of wind blows over them. Each mantis moults multiple times throughout their lifespan, and grows noticeably bigger with each passing moult. A mantis takes around six months to reach maturity, and then can live for up to another three to eight months upon reaching maturity, allowing plenty of time for a student to look after a full-grown mantis.

Marcus Bainbridge



The JEDI

The Jedi (Junior Equality, Diversity and Inclusion) Committee was launched in September 2021. It has made some very good progress this year as we have successfully completed lots of projects.

Firstly in the Michlemas term we did a world map to celebrate the diversity in Lower school, students who wanted to share their diverse heritages wrote on postcards and we stuck them on the map. This was a successful project and hopefully next year we can do the same to celebrate the new first years' heritage. We had an International Men's Day celebration which was a great success. We had various activities like a photo booth with moustaches and hats, and

a 'thank your role model teacher'. This activity was very successful and a big hit to fellow pupils. For Black History Month towards the end of term we conducted some research about inspirational black people such as Mansu Musa and Rosa Parks and sent out a daily mail drops celebrating these often forgotten heroes.

The Second term was also a success through activities like a World Religion Day quiz that was a hit with almost 75 % of lower school pupils entering. Class 1C emerged the winners.

After this we prepared a red Chinese New Year packet for each lower school student to celebrate Chinese New Year and this was also very successful as it was a hit through our community. It allowed us to showcase the heritage of

our Chinese students. Lastly we made a 'Dare to be yourself' display in the library that celebrated the inclusivity of our school.

In the month of Ramadan, we made a podcast with Yahya, where he talked about his faith. Summer term has been a little disrupted, but our focus will be on an event to celebrate Pride Month in June.

Overall this has been a joy-filled year in which we have completed lots of inspiring tasks and learned about how to plan events. Any lower school student is welcome to join us.

Ishaq Atiteb 2M, Alex Drake 2M, Max Sheriff 2M, and Bradley Olatunde 2M



First Year Adventure Trip

On Monday 18 April, 59 first years travelled down to Liddington near Swindon for an action-packed five days of adventurous activities.

We were split into 10 dorms and 5 activity groups. After being woken up by a very familiar Star Wars theme tune, our day consisted of breakfast, a couple of activities, then lunch, then a couple of activities, then dinner and then a fun evening activity organised by our leaders. We enjoyed our busy schedule and the activities that filled it. These included zip line, raft building, buggy building, sensory trail, giant swing, survivor, canoeing, vertical challenge, challenge course, crate challenge, trapeze, climbing, abseiling, Jacob's ladder and problem solving. In addition to this, our fantastic group leaders, Ben and Elisha, came up with hilarious, fun activities for the evening including wacky races, passport to the world, capture the flag, and a sports night.

My favourite activity was canoeing, which we did in pairs. PGL Liddington has three beautiful lakes which can be used for canoeing and raft building. We played some games like canoe tag and at the end we all jumped in for the sake of it. One group even capsized their boat (which ended up being a lot of trouble for our activity leader!). I also enjoyed vertical challenge, which was like a big climbing frame but with different obstacles like tyres, ladders and ropes. We did races up to the top. Of course we all enjoyed the notorious giant swing, as the moment when



we pulled the string and just dropped toward the ground was both terrifying and unforgettable, not least because our instructor had tricked us into thinking it was the string to adjust the tightness!

Another interesting activity was problem solving. It taught me a lot about communication. One of our puzzles was to get a balance beam perfectly balanced with all of us on it. Interestingly, when we were all allowed to talk, we didn't get anywhere but when our instructor assigned one person to talk we were instantly more effective. This showed that communication can not only be more effective when there is no disagreement, but also that non-oral communication is very important.

The activities I found most challenging were Jacob's ladder and trapeze. PGL taught me that challenges can sometimes be the most fun activities. Jacob's ladder required us to work

together to pull each other up as the ladder rungs got farther and farther apart. My group of three made it to the eighth rung out of ten. Trapeze was very challenging as we had to take the plunge, jump from a platform, and try to grab the metal trapeze bar.

Our dorms were tight friendship groups which we had picked, and try as Mr Jenkins might, the war of pranks between dorms and circulation of sweets within dorms was inevitable. Our dorm even attempted to pull an all-nighter on the last night but we all fell asleep after half an hour! The sense of community in our dorms was really strong, and we put away past quarrels to have some fun on the residential.

The food was fantastic, with full English breakfast and cereal and toast. Lunches and dinners were plentiful and the range of options was staggering, as were the puddings. And of course there was the familiar sight of the rush for the tuck shop after dinner to stock up on sweets for our dorms.

I feel I got to know a lot of people better as a result of the trip. Our instructors were all really friendly and had interesting personalities. And, of course, the activities themselves were really exciting. It's fair to say that by the end of the trip, as we got out of the coach and all went back home, we felt a bit empty and wished we could have stayed longer.

Felix Price, 1RHH



Summer 2022



Henley Regatta

This was it. After a challenging but rewarding season, we were here. On the start line of Henley Royal Regatta, the biggest regatta in the world. Sir Matthew Pinsent's hand went down, and we were off. This was a crucial event, our chance to prove everything to ourselves. We knew we had to execute our best race.

The season had been a challenging one. We achieved our goal of finishing in 8th place at Schools' Head of the River in March, a brutal 4.5 mile race along the Championship course in London. Numerous challenges, including injuries and eligibility issues, had faced the squad, resulting in a completely different lineup for summer

regatta season. We learnt valuable lessons from disappointing results in the summer including a 12th place finish at the National Schools Regatta in May. This time, we were determined not to repeat past mistakes and agreed that regardless of the result, we would give the best performance that we could.

We trained every day from Friday to Monday at Henley, getting used to the course. We were generously hosted by the Wood family, with meals prepared by the parents of the First VIII. Once the draw was released on Saturday we knew we were in for a tough race. We were racing the King's School Parramatta, Sydney, the quickest Australian schoolboy eight for the last two years. Despite this less than ideal opposition, the crew remained positive.

We were excited to put together the best race that we could muster. On Sunday night we had a team talk from James 'Steve-o' Stephenson, a former GB lightweight and current coach. He started a conversation about race mentality and managing post-race emotions. This was incredibly useful for the team, as it helped to counter some of the pre-race nerves that we were all feeling.

Before we knew it, it was Tuesday, race day. A 10.05 race time meant that we had an early 6am start. There was a palpable tension in the air during breakfast. We were picked up by Mr Copus in the minibus for one last time and made our way to the famous blue and white boat tents. Here, we changed into our brand new First Eight zephyrs,



and did a ten minute warm up on the ergos. Mr Copus gave us some final words of wisdom, reminding us of our targets and race plan. Carrying the boat out of the tent was an unforgettable experience. Crowds of parents, supporters and OA's created a wall of sound, shouting and clapping. The Australians, instead of boating from their own stage, decided to employ psychological warfare by coming onto ours. This was an interesting tactic, which we later learnt was against their coach's wishes.

As one of the first races of the day, there was very little traffic on the river. This allowed us to carry out our full warmup drill. Despite the nerves this was the best it had ever been. It surprised us how quick the start was, there was very little waiting around. The Sydney boys were big, so we tried to keep contact with them for as long as possible. This

meant our start had to be perfect, and it was. Despite the strong headwind, we held our length and our finishes. Unfortunately, the crew from King's Parramatta were a lot quicker than us. They shot out of the blocks and held a convincing lead for the whole course.

Racing through the enclosures was another unforgettable experience. The Abingdon cerise is instantly recognisable in your peripheral vision, and the noise from the enclosures, even for the losing crew, is dramatic. Despite a valiant effort from the boys in putting together the best executed race we have done, King's Parramatta were a lot faster. They went on to be knocked out to St Paul's, the eventual winners in the semi finals.

Even though the result was not what we wanted, we were all thrilled to have raced at such a special regatta that had provided us with such a unique and

unforgettable experience.

This project wouldn't have been possible without the kindness and support of FASBC throughout the season. Many thanks also to Adrian and Ali Wood, for hosting us during the regatta. Finally, Rory Copus. Through a trying yet rewarding season, he transformed the squad from a ragtag bunch of oarsmen into a capable first eight. Without his excellent leadership, determination and decision making, none of this would have been possible. His various mantras and acronyms always inspired us to commit to the excellence. Overall, Henley has culminated a long season of squad development. Despite the unfortunate draw and result, we came away from the experience having enjoyed it and learnt a lot for next time.

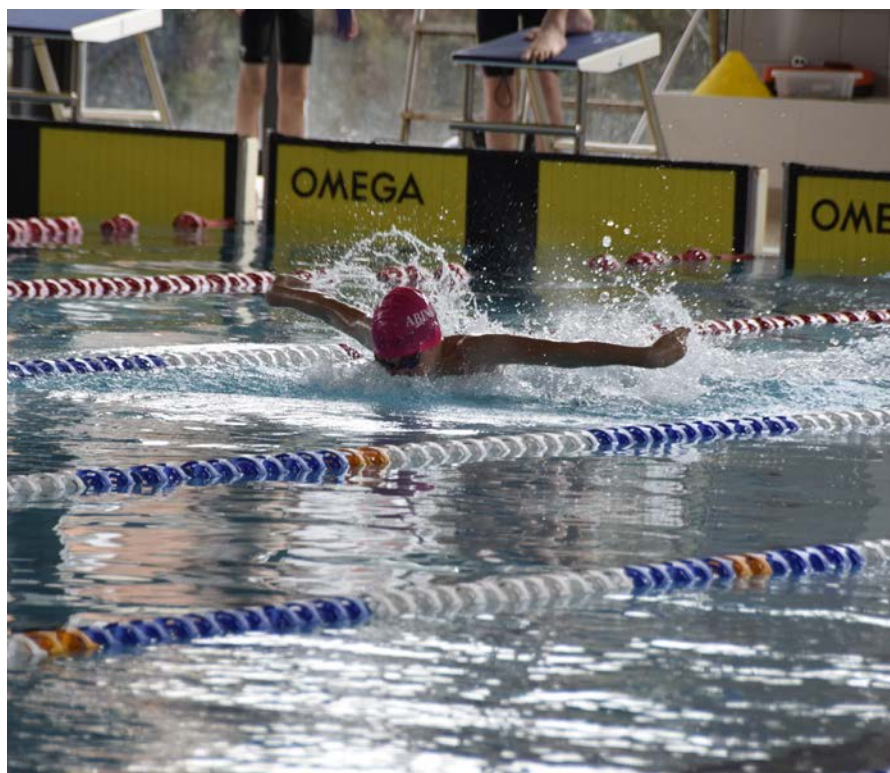
Finn Wilson 7ACW

Swimming Galas

London Aquatic Centre

On Friday 11th March Abingdon journeyed to the London Aquatic Centre to compete in the Bath and Otter relays. Joining us on our travels was the St Helens squad and Miss Pettipher who kept spirits high with additional navigational advice, to compliment the on board sat nav. Leaving at 6am was always going to be a big ask but after a bit of a nap, an exploding banana and dodging some over excited moped riders we finally arrived just after 9am. The girls were up first for their 4x50 Freestyle relay, so the Abingdon team popped over to the Westfield shopping centre to splash the cash on some food for the day. The team returned to the LAC with their new bag for life heaving with snacks and Amanda even had some time to pop into Boots - an early win that we should have clocked as a sign for a successful day ahead.

The first event was the 4x100 FS relay, tough at the best of times but extremely hard to manage in a long course pool. Our opening time was sub 4 minutes and the team were pleased to have swum well, with everyone going well under the minute barrier. Even Can, who was adamant he was going to struggle dropped a healthy 58 second time. Relieved that the qualifier had gone well, but 'not too well' the team went back to their nest in the upper gallery. At this point results started to drop in from the other teams. With squads from Harrow, Whitgift, Warwick, Reeds, Dulwich, Ardingly and more - it was always going to be a laser fast meet. As the team begun to relax, it became apparent we might have snuck into the final. As more results appeared, the squad become more and more nervous - not wanting to swim the 4x100 twice in under 2 hours! Once the dust settled we had qualified for the final in 7th place! Abingdon rarely qualify for this final so this was a huge achievement for the team. However, getting them focused to repeat their success was a task best left to Amanda and she delivered a motivational speech from the heavens, it went something along the lines of "Get back down



there, get ready, do it again" but I'm paraphrasing as you really had to be there to experience it.

The final rolled around and the team, albeit nervous and reluctant to suffer the pain of the 100 again, dived in, swam their hearts out and finished 7th in a time of 3:53.26. Somewhere off in the distance Harrow and Ardingly battled it out for first, having several top British National swimmers in their teams clearly making the difference. Abingdon punched well above their weight in this event and should be proud of their swim. We won't mention the ropey take over on the final leg, Chris used his charm to defuse the situation admirably.

The medley event in the afternoon played to our strengths as at 4x50 it was more manageable and we felt confident about making the final. The team of Chris Skelton (backstroke), Can Tugcetin (breaststroke), Ethan Richards-Knight (butterfly) and Alex Cooper Marcos (frontcrawl) landed a new school record. The previous record held by Esnouf, Teh, Law and Eccleston was set at the same event back in 2014 - so had been clogging up the record board for a while.

Going into the final we were placed 6th, and duly finished 6th with a time of 1:54.70 - breaking the record broken only an hour before.

On the day, notable swims included Chris swam a blazing opening leg of 57.83 on the 100 FS and Can notched a 58 second on his 100 FS. In the Medley, Ethan blew the competition out of the water with a 26.97 in his Fly, which pulled us back to 3rd place in the final, before the big guns in the other teams pulled away on the final leg. Can swam 30.25 in the breaststroke leg, close to breaking the 30 second barrier in long course swimming - which would place him among the top breaststroke swimmers in the country at his age. Alex Cooper Marcos flew down the anchor leg with a 25.57 front crawl, considering he's not been training as much of late, Amanda was hugely impressed.

The bus journey back to school took forever and many of our swimmers then had to travel to Wycombe to compete in the National qualifiers over the weekend. Thanks to all the students who gave up their time on Friday to represent the school in our most successful Bath and Otter championships ever. Thanks to SHSK for accompanying us, helping with timing and monitoring in our races. Thanks to Miss Pettipher for coming too, even if you did fall asleep on the bus once the sun set. Thanks as always to the mercurial Amanda Ford, even if you did hijack some crisps.

English Schools Swimming Association

On Thursday 29th September, Abingdon School hosted the English Schools Swimming Association qualification event for Oxfordshire secondary schools. Schools in attendance included: Abingdon, King Alfred's, Radley, Eton, St Birinus, Didcot Girls, Didcot Sixth Form, Oxford High, Headington, St Helens and St Katherine, St John's, Dragon, Sibford.

Races were 4x50 Medley and 4x50 Freestyle relays. The top teams in the country are then invited to attend the finals at the London Aquatic Centre in 2023. Last year Abingdon narrowly missed out on the finals, qualifying just outside the top 20 in several events.

Abingdon's U14 squad were made up of Lower School swimmers who had not trained together and were untested going into their races. They swam a respectable 2:46.41 in the Medley and a 2:30.19 in the freestyle, finishing 4th in both races. St Johns dominated the competition winning both U14 races.

Abingdon's U16 squad were made up of Henry Purcell, Ralph Allen, Ethan Richards Knight and Jose Lau for the Medley. Swapping for Henry Purcell was Monty Salmon to form the freestyle relay. The medley team won their race in a time of 1:58.18, breaking the school record of 1:59.50 set in 2020. The



freestyle team also won their race, in an impressive time of 1:47.08.

The U18 squad of Joe Watkiss, Can Tugcetin, Alex Cooper Marcos and Chris Skelton swam both their medley and freestyle relay together. Their time in the medley race was 1:52.57, enough to demolish the previous record of 1:53.50 set in 2019. Their freestyle time was 1:43.60, not far off the school record. The team won both their races comfortably with the freestyle Eton and

St Birinus battling it out for the remaining podium places.

Both U16 and U18 teams will probably go on to qualify for the final for both events, although we won't know for sure until all schools have completed their qualifying rounds from around the country.

Virtual Swimming Gala

Last term, the Abingdon swim team took part in a virtual swimming gala. The team had to find time to meet up, in their bubbles and record times for certain events before submitting them online. Considering the disruption to their regular training due to restrictions and lockdown their coaches were worried when the times starting appearing. The squad put in a fine effort and managed to place first in every single event for both the U16 and U18 categories. Whilst there might still be some room for improvement, all those involved should be incredibly proud of their achievements considering the restrictions surrounding swimming last term. We would also like to thank the staff involved at King's High School and Warwick Prep School for helping put the event together. The team look forward to hopefully competing against other schools in person later this year.

Daniel Mason



Water Polo

The Water Polo team's first season has demonstrated a huge amount of commitment, competitiveness and camaraderie across the squad, along with a growing capability and skill set. After a 21-1 defeat in our first match against Charterhouse, it seemed unlikely that we would go on to record our first win and even reach the ESSA National Finals.

As well as Charterhouse, we enjoyed matches against Harrow and Stowe, which gave us a great opportunity to improve our skills and develop a better tactical understanding. They also resulted in fantastic moments such as our first goals and an increasing team spirit.

After just two of these games, we were given the opportunity to enter the ESSA qualifying tournament – a very testing tournament but a chance to showcase the skills we had learned over the first term of water polo. We were drawn against Northampton Boys, Queen Elizabeth's Barnet, Bedford and Warwick all of whom had trained and played water polo for several years and boasted a number of national level players. Therefore all the matches were going to be very tough and challenging. Despite this a series of committed performances showed Abingdon's progression and gave us confidence going into the last game against Warwick. Early goals from Johnny James and Christopher Skelton gave us a strong start but we could not defend against an impressive Warwick outfit, who then scored three consecutive goals. However, with seconds of the game remaining, Alex Cooper Marcos scored, resulting in our first ever non-loss, delirium all round and, as it turned out, progression to the National ESSA Finals!

Just before we headed off to Northampton boys for the national competition, we hosted Stowe school for our second home game of the season and a home crowd watching. Stowe had also just started their water polo team so it was a matchup of two teams who had very little water polo history and a chance for both of us to practice our skills. This match ended with a massive



first ever Abingdon victory with a score of 21-5

This morale booster put us in a great place as we headed to the national ESSA bowl, but we knew we were up against it as we were in the same pool as Queen Elizabeth's Grammar and London Oratory. Our first game against QEG was outstanding, with Abingdon showcasing our sublime defence and marvellous attacking flow, creating opportunities galore for the team. This led to Abingdon's second ever win - as well as the team's first ever national competition victory with a score of 5-1. We then moved on to play the favourites to win the tournament overall - London Oratory – again playing well but succumbing to a 4-0 defeat against a very tough and skilful opponent. Immediately after we had to play our semi final against St Paul's who were well rested and a very experienced team. Though this culminated in a 3-0 defeat, the team was pleased with our performance on the day and ultimately an epic first season for water polo at Abingdon.

We may have only won two games but the standard of play has skyrocketed and the team are confident about next year and looking forward to building on the foundations that we have created. It was pleasing to get positive feedback from both Charterhouse and the ESSA officials who remarked on the tremendous progress we had made through the season and this can only

bode well for the future

We are sad to see Ianto Brewer and Zac Cooper leave us in the Upper Sixth but look forward to an influx of young talent from our academy players in third and fourth year.

Many thanks to Mr Mason and Aaron (our Water Polo Coach) who have helped improve the team massively over the first year, resulting in our two victories and tremendous team spirit, as well as being able to build loads of young talent in the third and fourth years. This is going to lead to a very bright future for Water Polo at Abingdon as we move into our second season.

Chris Skelton 6RCB



Basketball

The 2021-2022 season was a great one for Abingdon basketball. After a year-long break due to the pandemic, the team made a return. With barely a single session of practice together, we went straight into games against the likes of Radley, Stowe and MCS. We saw some early success, winning emphatically and only losing by narrow margins in our first term playing. This raw start also meant that we had plenty of space and time to improve throughout the season. By the end of the season, we were beating teams by as many as 45 points, leading overall to one of the best win-loss records in recent Abingdon history. We even stepped out of our area of expertise and beat St. Helens at netball, their own sport.

Our success can be partly attributed to our great coaches, namely specialist 3-point shooter Rev. Gooding, Dr. Frampton on substitutions and Mr Triff on the scoring table. The coaches have filled us with confidence in close games, which has been an important factor in our wins.

As always, we must say a goodbye to

our Upper Sixth leavers. It's been an honour captaining the team, and as a leaver myself, it's safe to say that this was a memorable group.

First mention goes to Cam Khoo, who has earned the title of 'hype-man' by cheering the team up and lifting us up with his energy. His smart defensive plays and ability to draw charging fouls have also helped in tipping the scale in close games. Impressively, he has received technical fouls for celebrating too hard: I dare say they were worth it.

Tor Hormbrey is also leaving us this year. He has been the defensive anchor of the team. His effort in full-court pressing is unmatched, and has somehow exceeded his point total in steals. His resolve to play hard to the point of collapse every game is admirable.

Jeffrey Lau is another leaver this year. As our primary ball-handler, Jeffrey has not only orchestrated some impressive plays, but also intimidated opponents with his swift handles - no place is safer for the ball than in his hands. Playing one-on-one against him is always a humbling experience, but also some of the most fun I've had playing basketball.

Our Upper Sixth reserves are not to

be forgotten: Caspar Mannix's clinical free throws, Tom Jackson's rugby playstyle and Ollie Yau's clutch points all undoubtedly contributed to our wins.

But enough about the leavers: the next few years of the team look just as promising. With some dominant forces in the Lower Sixth and some bright talents in the 5th Year, the club is destined for success. They have been playing against players two years older than them, so us Upper Sixth are confident in leaving the team in good hands. Most importantly, they all have passion for the sport and always have fun on the court.

It is great to see many year groups playing the game together, both in training sessions and on the outdoor hoop. Interest for basketball at the school is growing, and the future is bright for the sport at Abingdon.

I would like to thank the coaching staff for their dedication, and the players for their commitment to the team. Good luck to the team next year: I'm sure the team will be even better.

John Bonchristiano 7JMA



U15s Cricket Success

Having had a very good and unbeaten start to the term, the U15s first game of the County T20 cup was against Burford, an opposition that we underestimated deeply. A low-scoring thriller ensued on a very challenging Burford pitch. Having restricted Burford to a measly 79 in their 20 overs, with Oliver Matthews the pick of the bowlers, we were confident of getting through with no problems. Soon after, we were 40/5 and in some serious trouble. However, a mature knock from skipper Jack Veal supported well by Matt Stone ensured we crept over the line by 2 wickets. Bloxham were then dispatched on their own turf two weeks later, leading us to the county final against the Oratory. The performance in that final was one of our best of the season, pushing aside the Oratory by 138 runs, bowling them out for 37 in the process. Major contributions came from Charlie Hunt with 73 and Connor Lamsdale with 4/3.

First up in the regional rounds were Stowe, a team that we had comfortably beat in the regular season. Complacency was not going to trip us up this time as

we comfortably chased 89, with Charlie making his 3rd 50 of the competition to date, and Sam Siriwardene delivering a great spell of bowling in the middle overs. Both were ably supported on War Mem by the army of 4th years missing their core sport! Bradfield was the next school lucky enough to visit "the Fortress". Another solid batting performance followed, with 50 from Ethan laying the foundations for 159. A disciplined bowling performance led by Alfie Smethurst followed after a quick Bradfield start, leaving them 25 runs short. Regional Finals day would take place in Somerset 2 days later but would be rained off, meaning King Edward VI School Southampton (KES) would travel to War Mem on the last day of term. We got off to our usual fast start with the bat, with Charlie making yet another 50, this time well supported by Conor Rogan at the back end of the innings. After a strong start from KES, we hauled them back and in the end, they only got to 86 all out, meaning we were in the regional final.

Nearly 60 days later, we took to Oxford Cricket Club to face the sporting giants that are Millfield, who had won this competition 4 times in recent years. After winning the toss and batting, we got off to an ok start, with Ethan Barksfield



leading the way with a well-constructed 30. The middle order wobbled but some crucial late runs from both Veals and called-up U14 Sam Grocutt (30) meant Abingdon got to 131 in their 20 overs. The bowlers then bowled excellently throughout Millfield's innings, with no batsman ever looking like they would make a big score. After a great 19th over from Ollie Veal, Millfield fell 6 runs short. Abingdon were through to finals day at the picturesque Arundel





Castle Ground, where we would face Forest, who dumped us out of the 40 over competition. Skipper Veal won yet another toss to put us in to bat. And it didn't start well... At 24-4 after 6 overs against the national champions, the situation was far from ideal. However, yet again Sam G (25) stepped up, playing a crucial role alongside Ollie (30), who propelled us to 126. Bowling and fielding well was a must if we were to win this game. Connor bowled beautifully up top, picking up 3 of Forest's best batters, and the rest of the spin attack followed suit, with Charlie and Ethan ripping through their middle order. At 92-8, Forest looked out of it, only for some huge hitting from their number ten to take it to the wire, before Tom Hughes got the dangerman in the penultimate over. Needing 9 from one over, Will Simpson held his nerve incredibly well, conceding only 5 from the last and taking us through to the final against Cheadle Hulme School where we would field first. The goal was to restrict and yet again led by Will, Tom and the spin attack, we kept Cheadle Hulme to 126, a top effort considering most were out on their feet by the end. Soon after, Ethan and Charlie set about the chase. Another good start followed but Charlie fell before the end

of the powerplay, bringing Connor to the crease with Ethan. A beautiful partnership of 80 followed before Ethan fell, struggling with cramp, bringing the skipper to the middle with 27 required from 5 and a bit overs. Connor continued in the same fashion, bringing up his fifty in the 19th. Up the other end, Jack was dealing in boundaries as 8 to win became four, before a clip behind square for four sealed a remarkable cup run. Abingdon were national champions for the first time!! An incredible achievement!

Thanks must go to Mr Axon and Mr Bates for their coaching efforts throughout the season as well as Rupert Evans and Mr Golding and finally, a big thank you to all the parents and grandparents who came and supported us throughout our run.

What a special run it was...

Team (min. 2 appearances): Charlie Hunt, Ethan Barksfield, Connor Lamsdale, Jack Veal (c), Thomas Hughes, Conor Rogan (wk), Sam Siriwardene, Sam Grocutt, Oliver Veal, Arlo Hyman, Will Simpson, Jack Watson, Alfie Smethurst and Jacob Eaton.

Jack Veal 4CR and Oliver Veal 4EPB



CCF

This year in the CCF has been a challenging one in a multitude of different ways. This was, like with most activities, the first time we could have a full years worth of training, teaching, and trips in 2 years. The challenge this presented the staff and students was immense. The CCF saw a huge influx of students join the Recruit section meaning the strength of the contingent only grew over the year.

The beginning of the school year saw the recruit section travel to Bicester for a weekend away learning the basic skills taught within the CCF. With the help the staff and senior members of the contingent, all the recruits gained a basic insight into the various elements of the CCF, from the opportunities within the RAF section, to fieldcraft with the Army section.

After Christmas we built up towards Easter Camp, the culmination of the entire year, finishing with an exercise, 24 hours for the Recruits and RAF, and 48 hours for the Army. Before that, however, 72 cadets had the enormous privilege of being flown in a Chinook helicopter, which landed on Upper Field, and took 3 flights of cadets, ranging from the 4th Year to the Upper Sixth. The Chinook was flown by an Old Abingdonian, Sqn Ldr Tim Andrews, as well as a parent of one of our Lower Sixth students, Sqn Ldr Jon Turner.



This was a superb experience for all of the school, many of whom came to watch the Chinook take off and land between lessons; getting to see a Chinook so close is not something that happens every day, let alone getting to fly in one. All 72 cadets saw the school, the town and the county in a different way to usual, and based on the reactions of all of the cadets, it was thoroughly enjoyed.

Just one day later in a week of good and bad weather, Easter Camp was challenging to say the least. In what was our first Easter Camp for 3 years, after Covid-19 cancelled the previous two, the cadets were presented with an incredible

challenge to remember the skills that had been taught throughout the year up to that point. For the more senior cadets and staff members, it was a huge challenge to get back into the groove again after two years off.

Having quickly settled in, all of us began our training in earnest, which included lessons on using radios in the field, section attacks, using drones in the field as well firing blank and live rounds. Towards the end of the week, we began to build up towards a 24 hour (for the RAF and recruits) and a 48 hour (for the Army) exercise. In changing weather conditions, all 3 sections worked together, led by their NCOs, to give an



enjoyable experience, culminating in one final contingent attack using blank rounds in the mock village at Longmoor.

Immediately after Easter Camp, preparations were made for two big events in the CCF calendar: the Biennial inspection (the first for 4 years) and Her Majesty the Queen's Platinum Jubilee Parade.

The former was a resounding success, with the inspecting officer being thoroughly impressed with the dress and turnout of us all.

The Jubilee Parade was an opportunity to celebrate for the whole school, but was, once again, a busy period for the CCF. The parade, which for the first time in my time at the CCF included the use of a band, was also a success. We were inspected by Colonel Moore, as well as being joined by the High Sheriff of Oxford, both of whom were impressed by the parade. All those involved should be congratulated for their performance on what was an incredibly warm day in front of the whole school.

Finally we said goodbye to the oldest student members of the contingent, who handed over the reigns to the new Upper Sixth. They did a fine job bringing the contingent back from Covid-19 and have set a high standard for us new Upper Sixth to follow.

Overall, the year has been a resounding success, with the contingent moving from strength to strength. Difficulties were inevitable, especially after a 2 year gap of full training, but we as a contingent are now back in full flow, and embracing the challenges ahead of us. The contingent is continuing to grow, with another large influx of Recruits joining in 3rd year, and I and the rest

of the new senior cadets are looking forward to the new year. A special thanks must go to all the staff that have helped the CCF over the last year, especially Squadron Leader Cottam and Captain Edwards who have, as always, provided us with an incredible experience all year.

Sam Turner 6RCB



DofE Silver Expedition

When beginning Silver DofE, we were often told “it will look good on your CV” and “to be prepared to commit a large amount of time to it” these were certainly true, for the three sections of volunteering, skills and physical you must commit a minimum of 3 hours of work for a period of at least 6 months. The nature of this challenge would obviously make it valuable to employers as it shows that you are willing to persevere through hardships and be willing to work hard for extended periods of times. However, it is not the external benefits of DofE that I found the most beneficial, in fact the skills and experiences I had along the way through the sections and the expeditions that were the most valuable to me.

Starting Silver DofE was probably the hardest part, apart from my delayed response to the Google Form choosing what I was going to do for the different sections was rather difficult. The physical and skills were fine as they allowed me to carry on with something that I was already doing already which is one of the great benefits of DofE so starting something new isn't always necessary. However, being someone who is extremely introverted finding



and choosing an activity for the volunteering section was particularly difficult, especially as this was all happening during the middle of the Covid Pandemic. Eventually coming to the conclusion of taking part in research online. I soon discovered that this was a regrettable choice as the things I was doing were extremely boring and repetitive, thankfully for Gold I am coaching at my swimming club. Throughout the 6 months of work that takes place on the sections I learnt valuable skills and improved my abilities.

Seemingly the main draw to DofE was the expeditions, or at least that was certainly what brought me in. We did two

expeditions as practice to the Gower peninsula and then the main expedition to the Brecon Beacons. Both locations were spectacular. After an awful expedition for Bronze my group and I had learned the importance of planning and bringing the correct amount of food and so we placed a key focus on that and making sure we were bringing food that everyone liked. Under unfortunate circumstances we were left 1 man down for both expeditions, however realistically that made it easier for all of us as it meant we didn't have to have one person carrying a whole tent and could instead split it between multiple people stopping anyone's rucksacks from being too heavy increasing our enjoyment of the expedition. For both expeditions considering it was Wales and especially for the practise which took place in September there was a large worry about rain we luckily managed to escape any major downpours and so could experience the true beauty of these places under sunny skies, granting an amazing experience.

The Silver DofE was an extremely valuable experience that allowed me to commit myself to new things while also being able to improve at what I already do, it gave access to valuable expeditions to the Gower and to the Brecon Beacons with such beauty that it will be an experience that is hard to forget.

Nick Gurney, 5MP



MUN

With the past two years cut short or interrupted due to COVID lockdowns, and with that online conference, all delegates, new and old, arrived at the start of this academic year with a sense of optimism, and a willingness to rebound after a tough couple of years for the club. Under the expert tutelage of Secretary General Owen Henney, and his deputy Johnny Stavropoulos, skills were vastly improved and new delegates got to grips with the, at points confusing lingo of Model United Nations.

Debates and chaos ensued, as was common in the Abingdon Model United Nations sphere, with each delegate representing their countries views with passion and belligerence. A highlight of these feisty internal debates was the issue of child slavery, in which Sudan (Hamish Bloom), Uganda (Pranit Narain), and Turkey (Alex van Doren) performed excellently.

Unfortunately, due to the Omicron variant of COVID hanging over us, no Abingdon Conference was organised. This did little to deter the delegates nor the leadership committee, as a hugely successful joint debate was organised with students from SHSK and Larkmead attending, all to answer the prominent question of the safety of Afghanistan women under the then-new regime. Eric Liu performed admirably, and the entire debate was a great success; it was wonderful to hear the wings of Greening Court filled with inter-school debate once more.

The focus then swiftly turned to the next event on the horizon, namely the annual MCS MUN conference. Before the



debate kicked off, it was enlightening to listen to Miss Sveto Muhammed Ishoq, the guest speaker, a women's rights activist in Afghanistan.

Handed the unlikely trio of China, Israel, and Italy, our delegates went about with quality and kindness. Toby Pinnington was successful in outlining China's policy on the Uigurs in Xinjiang in the Human Rights 2 committee, passing a resolution on that topic and winning Best Young Delegate. Jasper Furniss in the Historical Committee also performed admirably, proposing that the easiest way to curb violence in the 1979 Iranian revolution was simply to put all world leaders in a "love island" style villa, and winning Best Delegate for that committee in the process. Not to be outshone, Louis Bhatia won best delegate in the Health and Environment Committee, debating issues such as Vaccine Distribution and Genetic Engineering. Rudolph Flossmann also performed aptly in

that committee. Johnny Stavropoulos excelled in the Security Council, taking Best Delegate there and, by extension, the Best Delegate overall. China performed well in the General Assembly, and despite not passing anything (in true MUN fashion), forcefully expressed its view. To make up for the bitter disappointment of losing our winning streak, Owen Henney performed an epic poem reciting the debate and drama of the Committee he chaired, and we left in (relatively) high spirits.

The year ended on a sombre note, with Mrs Yarker leaving. Her skill and humour will be sorely missed, and we would like to extend our thanks to her for her organisation and leadership.

Jasper Furniss 5RSS



Charities Committee

The charities committee have had a very successful year, seeing around 50 different students attend various meetings on a Monday period 8, and have managed to successfully raise money to support our chosen charities in many different innovative ways in which they managed to get the whole school involved.

For the Michaelmas term as always we continue to donate our money raised to our two charities from last year. These charities were Agape and SSNAP which were elected last year by the whole school. Agape is a charity that the school has been partnered with for twenty years. Abingdon began its partnership with Agape in 2000 and raised money for it, it is a small Christian charity that supports underprivileged children in Moldova. Over the years Abingdon has helped set up a staff library, (restocking it with books and other supplies), and sports stores, buy science equipment and link the School to the internet as well as helping provide lifestyle education. Agape is a small charity, however it is steadily growing and with our continued support it will be able to help many more children living in poverty. In addition to Agape, Abingdon supported SSNAP (Supporting Sick Newborns And their Parents) which is an Oxford based charity that works very closely with the John Radcliffe Hospital. They fundraise to support the neonatal care unit, and students were keen to vote when they heard first hand of the emotional support provided to the Parents of sick children, through a member of Staff's personal experience. However, in the other two terms (Lent and Summer) the charity committee decided to support DEC Ukraine. DEC charities in general look to support people who have had to flee their homes due to a conflict; and in this case was the war between Russia and Ukraine.

The grand total for the year was £38,203.05. This fantastic sum was accomplished across numerous home clothes days, a christmas jumper day, the sponsored walk and a charity football



tournament. Also collections from drama productions and music concerts. Last year also saw the introduction of a toy collection at Christmas which was highly successful and we are looking to do it again this school year. We are also starting quickly with the first home clothes day on Thursday 14th October and we are working to get the tuck shop up and running again as soon as possible. Moreover we are looking to

re-run the esports tournament from last year and hoping to see a great increase in the number of students participating.

On the whole we have accomplished a lot and if what we do interests you and you would like to join you are always welcome to come to a session on Monday Period 8 in S301

Thomas Mennie 5JHT



Eco-Committee

Over the past year, the Eco-Committee has gone from strength to strength, with a number of high-profile campaigns being successfully completed. We have taken input from staff and students, which we then act upon directly, or pass on to either the Senior Leadership Team or the Estates team.

One of the things we've achieved is the planning and arrangements for our annual Eco-Week. This year, we produced a range of resources, shown to pupils during their morning tutor time sessions. These were produced by small groups of students from the committee, and covered topics such as Food waste, Sustainable Eating, Wild Places, Plastics, and Transport, with an aim to educate people, and raise awareness of some of the biggest issues facing our planet today, whilst providing actionable solutions for individuals.

We hosted a series of events during the week, including an Eco Forum on Tuesday 3rd May. Organised by Abingdon School in Partnership, students from John Mason School, Radley, St Helen and St Katharine and Abingdon came together to brainstorm ideas which their own schools could adopt in order to ensure environmental excellence in the following areas: education and student experience; engagement and leadership; biodiversity and the built environment; marine and water; energy; waste; healthy living; and



transport. The theme of 'Think Big-Act Local' resulted in the creation of a manifesto which was presented to David Johnston OBE MP and Marcus Gover CEO WRAP, at an Eco debate hosted in Abingdon's Amey Theatre on the following Friday.

Another initiative that was introduced this year is the plant-rich Future 50 meal options, served to pupils in the dining hall, which was developed by our caterers following an extensive period of research by the Eco-committee. Plant-rich meals contain 50% less meat, with it being substituted for high-protein alternatives such as lentils and beans, which are often 'Future 50' highly sustainable foods. This research

culminated in a survey sent out to the entire school, which highlighted that over 25% of people who don't currently eat the vegetarian option regularly would do so if it was more accessible and better signposted, and over 60% would support a fully meat-free day once every two weeks.

Our third main project this year has been setting up a system for the collection and recycling of empty pill packets within the school, since they're made from a foil-coated plastic that cannot be recycled, except at certain pharmacies. As part of this, members of the Eco-committee have produced a series of video assemblies and posters advertising it, as well as getting hands-on distributing collection points around the school. The pill packets collected will then be taken in a bulk load each term or so to a local pharmacy for recycling.

Looking towards the future, planning for this year's Eco Week is well underway, with the aim to include the OX14 Learning Partnership schools as much as possible. We are also looking to run initiatives on turning off lights and energy saving, which has been raised as an issue by some students. Overall, it has been a highly successful year, and we are looking forward to what the future holds.

Aspen Chamberlin 4VEM



Charlie and the Chocolate Factory

Working on Charlie and the Chocolate Factory was an experience like no other. It was the first time that any of the Lower School cast had ever put on a play in front of a live audience on the Arney Theatre stage. This article will take you behind the scenes of the Lower School Production of Charlie and the Chocolate Factory, and what it was like to perform in front of an audience for the first time in years.

There were two sessions a week, on Monday and Thursday, where work on the play was done. The play was split into two acts, with the group on Monday working on the first half and the Thursday group shaping the second, the group of which I was in. We started on the play moments after our parts were assigned, just a few weeks before half term. The play was about a young boy named Charlie, born into a family struggling to survive, with not enough money to buy food and other necessities. When Charlie finds one of world-renowned chocolate-maker Willy Wonka's Golden Tickets, he finds that his fortune will change forever.

I was assigned the part of Mike Teavee for the second half of the play, and one of my favourite scenes to perform was in the TV room, when Mike decides to recklessly try Willy Wonka's method of what was called Television Chocolate



on himself, resulting in him being shrunk dramatically, and leaving Charlie as the last of the five that was not covered in chocolate, a human blueberry, in need of a thorough bath or shrunk to the size of a pea. This scene, in fact the whole play, was one of the many riddled with lot of difficult staging challenges. Our Director's use of lighting and blackout made the aesthetic of the room and the disappearance of Mike into the Television screen incredibly convincing to the audience's eye.

It's really hard to describe the feeling of being back on stage. It made me feel free to the extent that I felt I could conquer any challenge and face every obstacle with determination, strength and a smile on my face. I'm sure that

many others in the cast felt the same and we all really enjoyed performing in front of a live audience. The pandemic wasn't easy, and I'm certain that many of us struggled during each Nation-wide Lockdown, but performing up there, on stage, to me it felt like a jolt back to normality: to life before the outbreak of Covid-19. This play reserves a special place in my mind as one of the best I've ever done. The credit, however, doesn't just belong to the cast, but to our fantastic director, Mr McDonnell, and the fabulous Tech crew working their magic behind the scenes, making everything that you saw on the stage possible.

Ashwin Chandrasekaran 2PCWM



4th Year Scholars Trip to London

On Monday 13th June, the fourth year academic and art scholars travelled to London for a visit to the Wallace Collection, before a research project at the British Museum.

After an hour-long train journey, we arrived at Marylebone and then walked to our first stop, which was the Wallace Collection, a museum containing 15th to 19th century paintings and other art forms. Here, we took part in a workshop which focused on the history behind certain paintings and why they were painted in certain ways, and we got the chance to draw sketches out ourselves, focusing on certain aspects of the painting such as the colour scheme and why the artist used them. Some, I think it's safe to say, were better than others!

After lunch we then walked to the British Museum, where we were set a research project in small groups to research some artefacts within your own specific theme by Mr Jamison and Dr Burnand. We then spent roughly 3 hours venturing through the more than 90 galleries all spread across 6 floors that the museum had to offer, with a vast amount of sections including on ancient Greece and Rome, Europe from the medieval age to the



present day, and themed sections such as on enlightenment, money and clocks. Our choices of artefacts and themes were very varied, from archaeological findings such as the Gebelein Man (an Egyptian predynastic mummy), to a statue of the Bodhisattva Guanyin (the Buddhist goddess of mercy), to an example of an orrery (an early model of the solar system). We then left the museum to bask in the warm weather

for some time, before then heading back home.

Overall, it was a great day out and we would like to thank Mr Jamison and Dr Burnand for organising a fantastic trip.

Pranit Narain 4RAJ



Silverstone Trip

Abingdon Science Partnership's collaboration with GKN Automotive enabled 30 pupils from Fitzharrys and Caldecott Primary Schools to visit the Formula Student championships at Silverstone on Friday 8 July. The pupils were hosted by a team of STEM Ambassadors from GKN, many of whom work at the Innovation Centre in Abingdon, as well as the event organisers from the Institute of Engineering and Technology (IET). After welcome snacks in the Champion Suite overlooking Silverstone's starting grid, the pupils were extremely excited to see the electric go karts they have been building on display on GKN's exhibitor stand. Many visiting undergraduate and professional engineers were astounded that these have been built by Year 6s and Year 9s. The pupils were also given access to team garages and competition areas that even GKN STEM Ambassadors had not accessed before, giving them a chance to get ideas for their own cars from experts at the next level up. There was even a promising offer of further sponsorship from a large manufacturer exhibiting at the event. The ongoing success of this project is a real testimony to the growing power of partnerships across



Abingdon, this time supported through generous sponsorship and technical support by GKN Automotive as well as the schools involved. Sixth form mentors from Abingdon School, Hank He and Henry Dearden, as well as Andy Obeng from Fitzharrys have also helped as have teachers Mr. Lawrence McCook

at Fitzharrys and Ms. Holly Irving at Caldecott. Everyone is very excited for the next step, which is to get the cars from Fitzharrys and Caldecott racing in competitions of their own next year

Jeremy Thomas



Celebration of the Arts

On 29th June 2022 Abingdon School Celebrated the achievements of our Art, Literature and Music students.

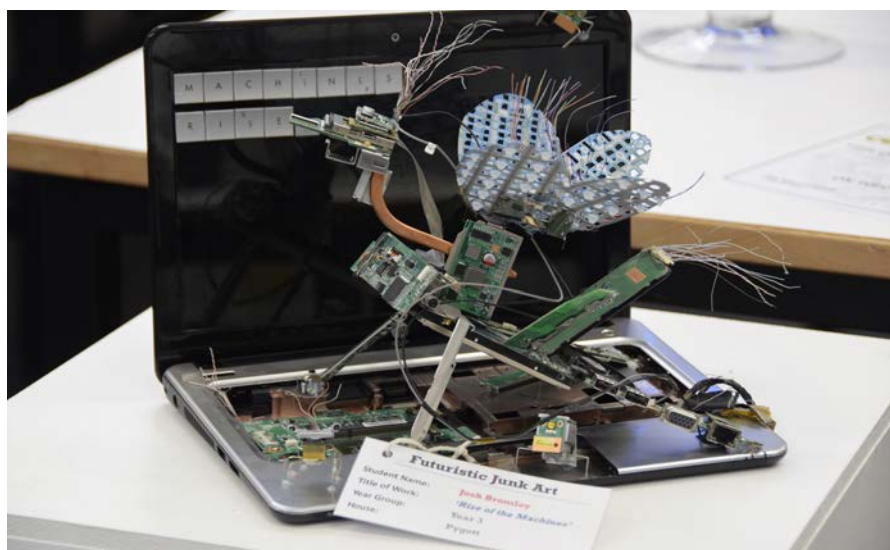
Beech Court came alive with hundreds of amazing artistic creations with a futuristic theme. Spaceships flew across the classroom skies while aliens invaded our space. Students responded to contemporary issues and problems facing the world in their artworks constructed from everyday objects. Their work was often large and very ambitious. Importantly they independently created this work at home.

We had fifteen winners - thank you to everyone that took part and put much effort into their work.

The winners were:

Arran Bell Yr 1
Casper Whitfield Yr 2
Jasper Bromage Yr 1
Felix Price Yr 1
Russell Cespedes Yr 2
Joshua Bromley Yr 3
Jack Watson Yr 3
Guy Vivian Yr 2
Thomas House Yr 3
Harry C Wood Yr 3
Calvin Seymore Yr 1
Harry Owens Yr 3
Sam Wormald Yr 3
Jamie Williams Yr 3
Jack Watson Yr 3

We also held a competition where students created supersized stamps to celebrate Her Majesty the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. We were delighted with all of the student's entries. The winners were chosen for depicting her majesty in such a kind and endearing way. All outcomes were very graphic and professional with a great sense of surface pattern and decorative design. The winners were Jeetu Raj and Josh



Bromley, both from the 3rd Year.

In the courtyard a festival atmosphere was created with students performing Jazz, rock and pop, show tunes and spoken words. It was great to see these students provided with an outlet to show their hidden talents. The volume was

cranked up and many students and staff (including Mr Windsor) jammed together, celebrating another successful year at Abingdon School.

Thank you to everyone that took part. Your creativity all shone like stars.

Paul Williamson

Summer Concert

After a gap of two years, it was wonderful to be able to arrange, once again, a live and full end of year Summer Concert. The large audience that attended our concert at the Amey Theatre suggested that there was a great appetite for this amongst our parents and friends, too.

The first half started with our First Orchestra in a performance of Haydn's Trumpet Concerto in Eb. The performance was given by three soloists, who each took a movement in turn – Laurence Peverall, Lachlan Keene and Oliver Hobbs. Each soloist played with accuracy and artistry of a high order and each played on a different Eb trumpet which had been kindly purchased over the years by the School's Music Society.

Our Chamber Orchestra played next – first a pair of arias from Handel's Messiah sung by upper sixth bass soloist, Jamie Robson, who sang with great conviction and musicianship. He was soon followed by Oliver Glover who played Gabriel's Oboe, a famous melody by Ennio Morricone from the film, The Mission. We marvelled at the beautiful quality of Oliver's sound and phrasing.

Concert Band, next up, gave us the opportunity to hear a group of rousing marches that had previously been played in the open air when we celebrated



HM The Queen's Platinum Jubilee just before half term. The band, under Mr Townsend's direction, were in cracking form in The British Grenadiers, Scipio, Slaidburn and Rule Britannia.

Under Simon Currie's inimitable leadership, the Big Band presented three tunes – Splanky (Count Basie), Blue Bossa (Henderson) and Feeling Good. It was great to hear some new soloists stepping up to improvise and, in the last item, to hear Upper Sixth vocalist, Aidan Chan, who was very much in his element and gave a fine performance.

After the interval we heard a mixed staff and jazz quintet who go by the name

of Jazz Inc. The players included Josef O'Connor (sax), Felix Kind (trombone), Laurence Peverall (piano), Mr Barnes (drums) and Mr Windsor (bass). They played two numbers: Nostalgia in Times Square (Charles Mingus) and The Theme from Monsters Inc (Randy Newman).

Gospel Choir, under Dr Jason Preece's direction, performed a couple of songs; Mr Blue Sky, and Time after Time. Accompanied by the staff ensemble, the choir sang with their normal palpable sense of enjoyment and, this time, touched with a tinge of nostalgia, it being for the Upper Sixth the last singing opportunity of their school career.





Unlike last year, there was no Year Group Bubble Orchestra as of the covid era. This time, Second Orchestra, as full an ensemble as ever, played Music from Harry Potter, Elgar's Pomp and Circumstance March No 1 and Rimsky-Korsakov's Dance of the Tumblers. Ably led by Wyatt Ip, the orchestra played with confidence and panache

First Orchestra concluded the concert. First, we heard Weber's Bassoon Concerto (first movement) with soloist, Josef O'Connor. Josef stunned us with both his technical authority in this virtuosic piece and the rich quality of his sound.

Before the last performance we said farewell to a great group of Leaving Musicians and their parents, together with teacher and Chapel Choir Director, Mr Treadaway, who leaves us at the end of term for a new and senior post at Milton Abbey School in Dorset.

The final work was the first movement of Dvorak's great Symphony No 8 in G. Joined by Mr Windsor in the double bass section and a couple of extra players in the horns, this was a triumphant conclusion to a really successful concert. We have an exciting plan to reward our musicians with an exciting European tour to Abingdon's twin towns in July 2023. Congratulations to all involved!

Michael Stinton



Lower School Gala Concert

On Thursday 16th June the annual Lower School Gala concert took place in the Amey Theatre. From bassoons and bagpipes to violins and voice, the audience were treated to a vast array of outstanding musical performances. To start off the concert Lower School Band played Shake, Rattle and Roll. This was a nice lively piece to warm things up for the rest of the evening. Next up came the first year soloists; Harish Sivakumar on the piano, Felix Price on the trumpet, Justin Mi on the piano, me on the bassoon, Ajeet Nagi on the drums and Leo Minns, George Lethaby, Ajeet and Kwame Abayateye making up a rock quartet, performing Viva la Vida. Everyone performed very well and with no signs of any nerves, though I have to admit that I did feel slightly nervous! I have been given such a lot of amazing opportunities in the Music Department this year and it was a privilege to be able to perform a solo on my bassoon. My fellow soloists were followed by the Inter-Tutor Group Music Competition winners, 2M, with their most excellent performance of Waka Waka by Shakira – the bongo drums being particularly brilliant. Open Mic Group followed and then Junior Strings, expertly directed by Ms Stulting, performing Handel's March and Jazzy Beat by Helen Butterworth.

Halfway through, and up next were



the second year Junior Blues Society, blowing the roof off with some AC/DC and then Pompeii by Bastille. Not to be outdone, the first year Junior Blues Society amazed the audience with some fun pop and garage rock and roll in the form of 7 Nation Army by White Stripes and Don't Look Back in Anger by Oasis! The second year soloists, Irfan on the piano, Harrison on the cello, Nikhil on guitar, Casper on the bagpipes and Ge Wei on the violin, then performed brilliantly - and how amazing to have a bagpipe player in Lower School! The penultimate performance came from the Lower School Brass Ensemble with a fabulous rendition of Tequila, involving

audience participation - everyone shout Tequila!

Finally, the Lower School Choir finished the concert with a resounding performance from everyone of Hallelujah by Cohen and Buckley. Brilliantly conducted by Adam Treadaway, the whole of Lower School sang with enthusiasm and emotion. This was to be the last Lower School Concert for Mr Treadaway, who will be very much missed by everyone. Rapturous applause followed; the audience had clearly been blown away and astounded by the musical talents of Lower School!

Louis de Chazal 1SJC



Edinburgh Fringe

I was lucky enough to be a small part of an intrepid collection of departing drama students from Abingdon and St Helen's and St Katherine's, who joined together under the banner of 'The Griffen Collective', to somehow attempt to take a play of our own devising to the Edinburgh Fringe Festival in August of this year. Led by the incredible efforts of Mr McDonnell, Mr Lloyd and Ms McNally-Cross from SHSK, the process was certainly long and stressful, but culminated in one of the greatest weeks of our lives and an experience none of us will soon forget.

The idea that would go on to become our show was first conceived early in 2021, when it was nothing more than a pipe dream, spouting wild fantasies about a far-off, mythical place called Edinburgh, where the streets are paved with theatrical gold and you're guaranteed to have the greatest time of your life. Enter Mr McDonnell, a veritable veteran of this magical place, to tell us that all of the rumours are in fact true. The Edinburgh Fringe Festival is everything you could ever imagine and so much more. He asked us if we wanted to go, if we wanted to put on



a show. None of us could quite believe what we were hearing, but of course instantly said yes. Mr McDonnell seemed excited, we were thrilled, and then nobody thought anymore about it for quite a few months.

The actual rehearsal process didn't start until the summer of this year, after the minor inconvenience of A-Levels was in the rear view mirror. This, some two months before the scheduled start of our week-long run in Edinburgh, felt far too late to be starting a task of this magnitude. Indeed, Mr McDonnell

had pencilled in a mere two weeks of rehearsal before he went on holiday. This was surely not enough time to create anything remotely resembling a play, let alone a play that Abingdon School might be willing to put their name to. However, it turns out that anything is possible with some self-belief, Mr McDonnell's increasingly desperate exasperation at the futility of his project and with our haplessness, and a generous work-life balance (the refrain "break 'till four" quickly became a universal catchphrase). Despite our many tribulations, including varying levels of commitment to Mr McDonnell's carefully constructed schedule and competing creative visions over the use of cardboard boxes in the play, the end of the two weeks was somehow greeted with a vaguely finished play that all involved could be vaguely proud of.

We reconvened in mid-August for a couple of intense days of rehearsal trying to remember exactly what it was we'd made earlier in the summer and whether or not we could still do it. After deciding that it would probably be fine, we ended the Abingdon leg of the process with two performances in the Arney Theatre studio. Many familiar faces kindly came to support, and dutifully lied about what they thought of our monstrous creation. With that, dawn the next morning saw us embark on the ten-hour minibus journey to Edinburgh, and the beginning of the dream.





audience is just two, we learnt early on in the process), of which the tragic tale of veteran troubadour Noel Howard, on before us in the theatre, became the most potent example. Indeed, the thoughts of some audience members, kindly transmitted to us in the form of reviews on our website, ensured that our feet stayed firmly on the ground.

Far beyond our meagre success, the greatest joy of the Fringe experience was undoubtedly the free time. The Fringe is an embarrassment of riches, with far more shows than any mortal could ever hope to see in a week, but we were determined to try and experience some of the enormous range on offer (though if I had my time again, I might have missed the free jazz and interpretive dance collective). We saw some incredible things, we saw some less incredible things, but they all combined to create a fantastic week with the fantastic company. Friendships that had been tested in the gladiatorial arena of the rehearsal room were forged into unbreakable bonds in the heat of the Edinburgh furnace, with so many memories to boot.

Ted Smethurst 7NDB

For those who have never been to Edinburgh, it's a bit like Oxford, if the Westgate Centre was a majestic castle and everything just had a greater sense of wonderment about it. However, this magical impression was soon shattered on our first full day, when we were confronted with the harsh reality of flying on the Royal Mile: a fine line between accosting and grovelling before indifferent Scotsmen, and the

horrors that that entails. Clearly, though, a few people must have taken pity on us, as we managed to nearly pack our 60-seat theatre in the side room of a Methodist church on each of our six nights. This was far beyond any of our wildest dreams and certainly beyond Mr McDonnell's expectations for us. He and Mr Lloyd had taken great care in tempering our hopes with countless cautionary tales (the average Fringe





House Reports

Austin House



We started the year with great optimism and excitement, welcoming the return to some sort of normality in the boarding house in particular and the opportunity to welcome a new cohort as well as those who had spent much of the previous year in their year group bubbles. Hugo Hewetson-Smith and Cameron Khoo assumed the roles of Head of House and proved very good leaders in their roles within the House and I am very thankful for everything that they contributed over a tricky year.

Once again, we were highly confident of our chances to finally take home the House Singing crown before it was

cancelled for a second year running, scuppering an inevitable victory. In the Inter House Sports Competitions, we ranged considerably in levels of success over the course of the year, with hockey, pool and shooting being our most successful showings across various year groups. Special mention should go to Will Canter for representing GB over the course of the year in the latter.

Chinese New Year is always one of the highlights of the year for the House and boarding community. This year, with Covid still rumbling in the background, we made a change to our normal and celebrated the occasion 'in house',

decorating the Sports Centre Hospitality Suite with Chinese lanterns and wall decorations before ordering one of the biggest takeaways you will ever see. Suffice to say, the food was polished off and it was lovely to be able to celebrate the occasion properly as a house once again.

Next year will be a year of great change as building and renovation work starts. We will see the demolition of part of the building to make way for a new, modern development which will allow the House much greater social space as well as single bedrooms for all 6th form and most 5th year boarders in the House.



There will inevitably be some upheaval in the process, but we will benefit from a wonderful, new and renovated space in the 2023/24 academic year.

Sadly, we say goodbye to a number of staff this year. Miss Stringer and Poppy leave to pursue other interests and we wish Miss Stringer all the very best

with her move. Mr Richards has been a resident boarding tutor and 3rd year tutor this year; he moves to a new position in London and we wish him and his partner, Courtney, all the very best with this next chapter. We also said goodbye to Helen Whitworth, who was House Matron in what was Davies and is now Austin House for 7 years as she relocates, and we wish her well with her move and

retirement in the north of England. Mr Thomas will also be stepping down from his 6th form tutoring role in the House after six years as a wonderful colleague and outstanding mentor to many students in the Austin House 6th form.

Hannah Taylor joined as our new House Matron in January and the students have enjoyed getting to know her better since her start. In the academic year to come, we also welcome Dr Frampton as a 6th form tutor, Mr Gold as a 5th year tutor, Mr Davies as a 3rd year tutor, Mr Appleton and Miss Benbow as 4th year tutors, with many also joining the boarding team. We look forward to the year ahead with great optimism...

James Golding



Crescent House



After the trials and tribulations of the previous two academic years, 2021/22 was somewhat of a return to normality for the pupils of Crescent House. I say 'somewhat', as the various challenges posed by Covid, particularly with regards to travelling overseas, continued to rear their heads throughout the year. Quarantine periods and omicron spikes caused issues for our international boarders, but as in previous years they dealt with these with grace and forbearance. The positive spirit that was so evident throughout the Covid pandemic was again very much on display, while at the same time it was pleasing to see the whole House - boarding and day - come together again after the necessity of 'bubbles' the year before. Best of all, every Crescent pupil was able to spend the vast majority of the academic year physically in school, with remote learning only used in exceptional circumstances.

There were still some precautions in place throughout the school, and no House Singing for the second year running meant that we have to look

ahead to October 2022 for its much anticipated return. Inter-House Games and Athletics was back to normal, however, which gave a number of Crescent pupils their opportunity to shine in a variety of events. The chess team of Oliver Yau, Nikita Rodin and Stephen Lin got things off and running in the Michaelmas term, with a superb win in the competition.

In the Lent Term, Crescent students had great success in badminton, with Thierry Tsai winning the U16 singles competition, and Oscar Chan and Humphrey Lee coming second in the U16 doubles competition, meaning the U16 Crescent team won their event. Able contributions from William Echevarria, Archie Trietline and Joshua Chang in the U14 badminton competition meant that the Crescent badminton team finished 1st overall. Jimmy Ip continued the success in racket sports, with a win in the U15 table tennis competition. Special mention must go to Dan Keeble who, in his swansong year, won the U18 pool competition to cap off five years of

domination in the event.

Ralph Allen achieved the fastest 3rd Year time in the Road Relay in March, and went on to win the 800m event in the Inter-House Athletics in the Summer Term.

Other achievements of note this year included Nikita Rodin and Walter Liu being part of the winning team in the 2022 Náboj International Maths Competition, and Jacob Drew and Ethan Chen representing the School at the Public Schools' Fencing Competition 2022, for which the team was awarded the Hillary Hammond Trophy.

A number of Crescent House pupils achieved some excellent public examination results over the summer. Blessing Oge-Evans, Charles Kum, Isaac Yu, Rayn Li, Sammy Jarvis, and Timmy Wong all achieved over 8.5 average in their grades, with Boco To and Oscar Chan scoring the maximum possible 9.0. At A-Level, an impressive 11 Crescent pupils achieved a complete set of As or A*s, with Dan Keeble getting 3 A*s, Nikita Rodin getting 3 A*s



and a A, James Healey getting 2 A*s and 2 D1s, and Ethan Chen getting an incredible 5 A*s.

Over the course of the year, the house was ably led by Heads of House Isaac Tan and Oliver Kirk, with Noah Chakravarti, Jacob Drew and Finn Wilson, representing Crescent as school prefects. I thank them and the other senior members of the House for all of their support and hard work.

We said goodbye to Miss Pottie, as a boarding tutor, and Miss Dutton will join the house in September. Mr Chase moved out of the tutor flat in Cobban to move into School House, but will remain a Crescent tutor next year. My thanks go to all the tutors for everything they do, as well as to Miss Poole in her role of Assistant Housemaster and Mrs Deaves-Small as Matron.

The Heads of House for 2022/23 will be Chester Shen and Angus Carle, while Chester, Oscar l'Anson and Xander Orchard will be school prefects. I am confident that they and the rest of the Upper Sixth will lead the house ably, in what I am sure will be another very successful year for the House.

Looking forward to next year, it will be a year of transition. Work on the new Crescent House is already well underway, and the plan is for it to be open in September 2023. Next academic year therefore, will be the last in which Crescent boarders live across the three buildings before moving into the new purpose built house connected to the existing Crescent building. There will be a tinge of sadness to saying goodbye to Cobban, Glyndwr and fifty years of history, but a great deal of excitement about what the better

facilities that the new Crescent House will offer.

Matthew Kendry



School House

What a year it's been for the pupils of School House. We have had dazzling success on the sports fields, spectacular performances in drama and music and to top it off we managed the impressive feat of getting through over 100 loaves of bread each half-term. Now this was no easy task but this year's School House cohort are not ones that shy away from challenges. We hope to demonstrate this to you while explaining the many successes we have had this year.

In September we welcomed Mr Hird and Miss Whiteman to the School House crew as tutor and boarding tutor respectively. They have been excellent additions to the team and Miss Whiteman's chocolate fountain was greatly enjoyed by all the boarders. During a normal school year the Michaelmas term would be the time for House Singing which in previous years School House has excelled at but alas we had to settle this year for House Public Speaking. We thought having the head adjudicator, Mr Jackson, as a house tutor would prove beneficial but unfortunately we didn't walk away with the win. Having said that, Henry Roseff wrote and performed an inspirational 'Churchillian' speech, which was highly

commended by the judges.

As the term wore on the 3rd-years' table tennis skills increased greatly as did the number of friends that they brought into the house to try and sneak into lunch. The key word in that sentence being 'try' as the ever omniscient Mr Dawswell managed to quell these attempts with relative ease. The build up to Christmas brought the usual end-of-term seasonal festivities. House Review which this year was a satirical play performed by the 6th form boarders went down well with staff and students in attendance. The boarders then started returning home for Christmas while the rest of the day boys, along with the boarders who hadn't left yet, tackled house sport.

The 6th form rugby team backed up their impressive win from the previous year by championing an intense drop goal penalty shoot out finale. A highlight of this win for me has to be Josh Rodrigues who when in clear space about to score a try decided to go full american football mode and slam the ball to the floor instead of placing it down gently. We had an impressive performance in Badminton as we took victory in both the U18 doubles (Greg Fung and Leon Guan) and U15 singles (Will Sue) which added up to us taking

the overall winners trophy home.

Ollie Glover (cor anglais solo) and Yubo Gao (cello) both performed impressively along with a number of other students in a range of bands and orchestras in the Christmas Concert.

We returned in January to a little warmer weather which brought along with it a wider range of sports than the rugby filled Michaelmas term as well as some notable music and drama performances. Several members of School House rowed this term, contributing to admiral performances at the Schools Head of the River in March resulting in a 4th place finish in the U15 category and a 6th place finish in the U16 category.

During the Lent term we had a couple of house events - firstly an online quiz which involved groups of 10 answering questions posed by the Upper Sixth - as well as the annual School House work review.

The Lent term sadly ended with the passing of one of the U6th students but the house came together as a community to offer support to the family and students affected. Both of us would again like to say thank you to all the teachers who during this time provided help and support to us whilst grieving





themselves.

The summer term meant one thing for the 5th years and U6th... exams. As demonstrated throughout the year all students rose to the task spectacularly with determination and as much enthusiasm as one can give during exam time. Candidates in School House achieved exceptional results with the likes of Joshua Rodrigues receiving 4A* and Luca Cherriman an incredible 5A*. All candidates should be extremely proud of how they did in the exams and the results are a true depiction of all the hard work and effort everyone has put in throughout their time at Abingdon. After the U6th left, the last few weeks of school meant the annual House Athletics competition. Finn Walsh won the 200m sprint while

Caspar Mannix was captain of the cricket team and led them with passion

and lots of runs; Caspar claims to have represented the school at five sports in his time at Abingdon, although the fifth (croquet) is very much a niche sport.

A highlight in the summer term was Aidan Chan's vocal performance of Nina Simone's Feeling Good at the Summer Concert.

As Ianto and I say goodbye to School House there are a few thanks that we would like to give. The first being to all the tutors and teachers who are a part of School House, life would simply not run as smoothly as it does without you guiding us. We are also extremely grateful for all the cleaning staff especially Caroline, Wendy and Kim who without which School House would be a complete mess. Storm, the glue that holds all of us together, we are beyond thankful for all that you do in the house. Then there's the teachers leaving

school: Mr Treadaway - we are really grateful for the easy and comfortable environment you created in the house. Mrs Yarker - thank you for being such a long standing member of School House and the 6th form will miss your guidance. We wish both of you the best of luck at your new schools.

We would finally like to say a thank you to someone who without which life in School House would not be the same - Mr Litchfield. The wise and consistent figure at the helm of all we do and a role model for us all.

It has been a pleasure for both of us to be Heads of House for this year and we wish the best of luck to Isaac and Leo with their head of house endeavours this year.

Matt Jarvis 7DE and Ianto Brewer 7DE

Border's House

This year in Border's has been one of great success. We started strong in the Michaelmas term even though at half term we lost Mr Border to paternity leave. However, this was but a temporary setback as Miss Poole took the helm and led us to victory in the U14s swimming coming 2nd overall in both the swimming and the chess. One of the core pillars of being a Border's house member is that you participate. Results and wins are fantastic; however the most important thing is that we field a team in every sport in every year group. Sadly the best event of the Michaelmas term, House Singing, was cancelled due to the hangover effects of the global pandemic; this was devastating to the house who usually excel in the choral competition. The guys were especially disappointed due to their immensely popular rendition of Bohemian Rhapsody the previous year.

After a relaxing Christmas break, Border's returned equally determined to make their mark. And they certainly did, coming a mighty 2nd in the U18s hockey, 3rd in the U15s and 3rd overall. They were also successful in the football competition, where we came 2nd in the U14s. Yet again the house fielded teams in all competitions. Success in the U14 Badminton with Enoch Wang and Seth Stokes, representing the house, demonstrated the variety of talent Border's possesses. We came 2nd overall.

The sporting highlight of the Lent term came in the much anticipated return of the road relay, where the Miell-Ingram brothers excelled with Rowan breaking the overall course record by 20 seconds whilst winning the U18 individual title, and Quinn similarly dominating the 5th year competition with another course record. The 5th year team were particularly impressive, placing 2nd in the year and 5th overall.

The Easter break saw many Border's house members take part in Easter Camp with CCF from 3rd year all the way to the U6, and the rest of the house got a well-earned break. Coming into the summer term, the house's spirits were high, the sun was shining, and victory was in the air. The summer inter-house

competition is the largest of the year, with dozens of competitions in each year group. Border's saw success all over the board again, showcasing the vast array of sporting prowess that the boys in maroon possess. Croquet was uncharacteristically thrilling, with a close third place gained by Adam Andrews

and Xavi McGuire. In the U15 rowing, we came a close 2nd and later on in the day, another brilliant silver medal came from Kit Rice in the 3rd year Squash.

The greatest successes, however, were in Cricket and Tennis. In the U15 Cricket Border's bagged the first win





of the year. Tennis is one of the most popular inter-house competitions and one in which Border's excels; this year was no exception. Our 3rd year came second in the singles, as did the L6 in the doubles, 4th year came third, and our second win of the year came from the U15 singles. Special shoutouts to Ed Draper, Paul Fowler, John Cains, Falkie Brocklebank, Will Grice and our victor Hayato Frellesvig. This resulted in an overall tennis win. Border's also saw great success in the inter-house athletics competition, with the 4th year winning both A and B 200m races; well done to Xavi McGuire and Felix Diamond. Off the track, saw great success with Both A and B high jumps won by Ali Gray and Jacob Lamsdale, respectively, the shot A in the L6 being won by Josh Mensah and the discus B by Luke Prior. The last event of the day, the 4x100 relay, was won in the 4th year and Lower 6th by our A teams. Again though, through all sports and age groups, Border's fielded teams, and it was great to see the guys trying new things and having fun.

The summer term is also however exam season and success in both GCSEs and A-Levels is testament to the immensely impressive all-round talent we have in Border's in and out of the classroom.

With the summer term come many

goodbyes. We said goodbye to the U6, who had been a stellar example of our house values and had made positive impressions on many of the younger years who look up to the sixth form as role models. We also said goodbye to Mr Taylor and Dr Frampton who left the tutor team and we give thanks for their service to the house.

Luke Prior 7DB



Donnelly's House



How quickly the 2021-22 academic year has come and gone, and with some outstanding performances at both sports-day and inter-House in recent weeks, it is great to look back and reflect on what has been another successful year.

William Walters got the years inter-House competitions underway with a superb speech in the public speaking competition, again the replacement for House singing this year. This was followed by inter-house sport in which Felix Loeffen and Alex Darishire ensured the squash trophy stayed with Donnelly's, securing first place in the U16 competition, whilst the U16 rugby team also came second; the third year finishing fourth. Some inspired performances in the swimming pool saw the House finish second, with a third-place finish in chess. The end of term assembly saw the Renaissance Person Of Term Award awarded to upper sixth Freddy Selby Lowndes for his continued portrayal of the House values.

The Lent Term started with the news that Oscar Bennett, school Rifle Club Captain had been selected to represent

England B Rifle Team – a fantastic achievement. The pace of last terms inter-House sport continued on the buzzers as the third-year team of William Walters, Sam Wood, Jeetu Raj, Lucas Earnshaw and Sam Wormald won the third year House Challenge competition. The fifth-year team of Alex Mapplebeck, Edward Bennet, Sam Corbett and Charlie Leyland also demonstrated a fantastic array of facts and knowledge as they fought their way to second place.

After a number of fiercely competitive contests, Charlie Adams got the better of Oliver Hobbs in winning the 2021-22 House Pool title, whilst it was fantastic to see a number of pupils from the House take the stage in both the Middle School production, and Senior School production.

Next up came the House debating competition and great credit must go to Peter Harris, Harry Litchfield and Oliver Hewes for their concise, detailed and superbly presented speeches and questioning, working well as a team and making it through to the semi-final stage of the competition.

The Lent term also saw the return of the Road Relay – a first for many after a number of cancellations in recent years. With a huge proportion of the House out running it was fantastic to see everyone giving it their all and competing with positive spirit. The third year team of Saw Wood, Jack Badham and Monty Salmon really set the tone with the fastest third year time, and seventh fastest time overall! Fifth years Archie Leishman, Jacob Charity-Williams, Alex Darbshire and Fergus Chettleburgh won the fifth year competition, finishing a very respectable third overall. Charlie Adams ran the quickest leg in all of fourth year whilst the Donnelly's staff team where the third staff team to finish.

Road Relay was quickly followed by inter-House sport. There was a great deal of success on the football pitch, both the fourth year and fifth year finishing second whilst the sixth form finished third; there was a win in the waterpolo and second place in the shooting. More importantly however was how great it was to see so many pupils out representing the House – many in events they may not have favoured. As the term came to close it was a



pleasure to present Edward Bennet with the Renaissance Person Of The Term award.

The summer term as always came and went in a flash. The third years enjoyed a football and pizza social, whilst the intra House table football competition was won by Sion Actur who blew away anyone that crossed his path. The doubles competition went to Sion Actur and Fab Dal Ben. Sports Day was early this year, and there were a number of fine performances. Will Lyon, Harvey Vinton, Charlie Adams, Monty Salmon and Arthur Warwick all secured event wins on the track, whilst Lachlan Keene, James Wilson, Oliver Hobbs and Killian McKay to name only a few secured victories in the field events. The

third years won there year group with the House finishing a very credible third overall.

Inter-House sport followed, with the 6th form volleyball players coming away with a victory alongside the third and fourth year tennis doubles teams.

Over the course of the year the House was brilliantly led by Alasdair Emmett and Andrei Roberts, ably supported by Oscar Bennett and Joshua Jackson. We were also fortunate to have three school prefects, Callum Ryall Freddy Selby-Lowndes and Rory King, all of whom where a real credit to the House. The departure of the Upper Sixth was an emotional one as they are a fantastic group of young men that it has been

a pleasure to watch grow and develop over the past five or seven years. It was enjoyable to share a drink with them at our House leavers BBQ, and I look forward to hearing the paths they have trodden when they return for events in the future.

Looking ahead to 2022-23 I was delighted to congratulate Tom Whetter, Theo Shorrocks, Dylan Kaeuper and Sam Daly on their appointment as Upper Sixth House Prefects for the coming year, but first up for all after another busy year, a well-deserved break!

Tom Donnelly



Franklin's House

Heads of House for the year were Sam Hayes-Newington and Luc Tucker, and with Deputy Head Owen Henney they led the house with commitment, humour and panache. They were ably supported by the prefect team of Cosmo Gooch, Theo Hinnells, Johnny Stavropoulos, Jack Tilley, Luis Vasconcelos, Johnnie Willis-Bund and Dominic Wood. This was an outstanding year group in the house. Apart from their academic, musical, sporting and dramatic talents, they were superbly resilient, friendly and cooperative throughout, despite all the extraordinary circumstances of covid and lockdown.

The first inter-house sports competition brought us great success. Our U18 swimmers, all still in the Lower 6th, emerged as champions once again, and Franklin's were 3rd overall in the pool. Our U16 rugby team were also champions, helping us to win a superb 2nd place in rugby, our best placing ever. We went on to win outright the competitions in the Bike Challenge, U16 squash, and U16 table tennis (once again), to make this our best day of house competition yet.

Franklin's has a great history in the Road Relay competition, and this went well again. Our 3rd year team clinched 3rd place, and our L6 team went one better

with 2nd. Special honour went to Johnny James who ran an astonishing 7 minutes 42, the fastest time ever recorded by a L6 runner.

The Lent sports competition was a day of even greater glory for the house. Our U15 footballers were champions of their competition. In the ergo contest we were 2nd at U18 and U14, and our U15 team were the champions. In the U14 badminton we came first overall, and we won the U15 table tennis. We won the cross-year pool competition, we were school champions in U18 fencing, and finally we were top in the U18 squash. We have never had so many wins on a single day, and it was the most marvellous team effort by the whole house.

In the final sports competitions of the year we again had many great performances. The highlights were earning 2nd place in the U15 basketball, 2nd in the U18 volleyball, and coming out house champions in the water polo in a dramatic final. The house athletics was also a great day; apart from some great individual wins, and a rousing finish with 2nd position in the Golden Mile relay, there was a real sense that everyone in the house was competing for the team. It was a great way to round out the year.

We said goodbye to Mr Jenkins, who was a supportive and kind Middle School tutor for two years; and to Mr Phillips, who was a brilliant Third Year tutor for so many years. His enthusiasm, warmth and sense of humour improved the days of his tutees, and he was a thoughtful and positive member of the house team. We wish him well taking on the challenge of a different year group in a new house, and he will always be welcome in Franklin's.

I would like to thank all my tutors for their hard work, resilience and cheerfulness. I very much appreciate their time and effort on behalf of Franklin's boys, ensuring that the year was in so many ways a great one for us. Well done, last but not least, to the Franklin's boys themselves for their amazing good humour and determination to pursue their progress in academic work and their other half.

David Franklin





James's House

One of the oddities of Abingdon School, one of many some might say, is the fact that the Day Houses alter their names with each change of Housemaster. Though there is the stress of where to place one's apostrophe (James's? No, James'? Wait, something about it being a biblical name. Oh to hell with it, what does DJD think?), I can't deny that there's a certain ego-trip which comes with having a House named after oneself. I can see too that there's an element of practicality about being able to look at a student's tie and know immediately which Housemaster to send a complaint to about their attention seeking haircut! That said, there's a danger that with each new housemaster, continuity and a Day House's sense of identity is lost. This is something you don't get with the Boarding Houses. It's a bit like that Ancient Greek thought experiment, Theseus' ship. After centuries of maintenance, if every part of the ship has been replaced, one at a time, is it still the same ship? I'm very much in the yes camp. The captain at the helm might change, the material make-

up may change, but fundamentally constitution is not identity. I think the same goes for the Day Houses at Abingdon.

Mindful of this and that I would be moving on from being Housemaster of James's at the end of the year, I picked up some research into the History of 'the House which wears the Navy tie' which I'd started a couple of years earlier whilst putting together a House assembly. The result is the timeline which you can see below. I hope very much that this helps give a sense of belonging to something bigger and more enduring. Maybe too it'll help enable people across generations to make connections which span decades. With Mr Stockdale taking over from me, I feel the House in exceptionally strong hands for years to come.

As I have mentioned, 2021-22 was to be my final year as Housemaster of James's, and I'm delighted to say that I had a particularly vintage crop of students right across the House, achieving significant success academically and across the full gamut

of the Other Half (including the U6th taking a play written by Ted Smethurst to the Edinburgh Fringe!). After a fallow couple of years, we were extremely competitive too in the arena of Inter House sports, with lots of strong team performances.

Michaelmas term saw the EDI committee go from strength to strength, with James's own peter Leeson being a strong leader in the area, helping to put together an assembly and tutor period about equality and diversity. Our strong tradition in the more cerebral areas of IH competition continued, with Ted Smethurst winning the Public Speaking Competition. We rounded off the term with a healthy set of performances in IH sports. We won U14 Squash and U15 Badminton, finishing 2nd overall in the latter. To cap off the term brilliantly we also managed to win the overall IH swimming, without winning any individual age group out-right! A great team performance If ever I saw one.

The lent term started well, with James's U6th and L6th both winning their respective House challenge quiz



competitions, building on a very strong tradition in that competition. Matty Rolfe, Ramli Al-Akiti, Jamie Kilroy competed valiantly in the IH Debating competition, and have the makings of a winning side next year. In the Road relay we once again put out as many teams as any other house, with great success and even some dubious fancy-dress costumes! Our U6th team of George Owen, Alfie Blake, Ted Woodfin and David Haar won their age category in 39m13s, whilst our 4th year team (Thomas Hughes, Roddy McVie, Angus Gore and Oliver Sherratt) won in 39m 18seconds. Mr Poon, Mr Fisher, Mr Hack and Mr James were also the fastest staff team around the course. Time undisclosed!

Lent term Inter House sport saw us finish 3rd overall in Badminton, and 2nd overall in Ergo (where we came 2nd in all 3 age categories). We were also 2nd overall in Table Tennis. To top it all off we managed another victory in a competition where no individual year group won, finishing 1st in IH football (U18 2nd, U16 2nd, U15 3rd & U14 3rd). Those team efforts really are what makes you most pleased as a housemaster.



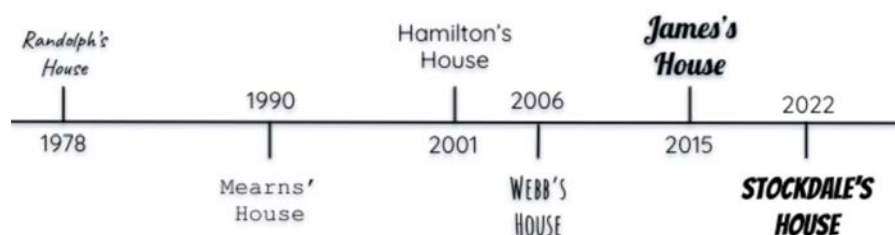
shot with a huge distance of 11.50m. In the 6th form Ben Anker won the B string long jump, whilst Henry Beer won the B string shot.

We ended the term with some strong performances on the sports pitch finishing 3rd in IH Cricket, 3rd in Golf and Waterpolo and 1st in Tug Of War

21 terms later, something like 160 house assemblies, 4000 housemaster reports, 1850352 ping pong balls and one pandemic later, and it's certainly clear to me that resilience has been a quality that has been required in that time. The other attribute which I think I have come to appreciate as extremely important in recent years is that of trust.

I am always constantly amazed at what Abingdonians are able to achieve when you place trust in them and give them some responsibility. Something I have seen year on year with my House Prefects, and in particular my Heads of House. Isaac and Alfie were no different this year. Equally, I am fully aware that the success of a House cannot rest solely on the shoulders of the Housemaster. The pandemic forced me to place even further trust, faith and reliance in my tutor team and I think we ('The House which wears the navy tie') became stronger for it. I am enormously grateful to every single tutor I have worked with over the past 7 years. It has been an incredible privilege to be Housemaster to such a talented, thoughtful and generous group of individuals. Thank you for all you have taught me.

Simon James



And so to the summer term. IH Athletics went very well with our 3rd and 4th year both finishing 3rd

which coupled with a victory in the Golden mile meant that we finished 2nd overall for the entire event. Individual winners of events in 3rd year were: Thomas De Kauwe (100m B), William Beer (300m), Alfonso Aquitania (Long Jump), Sam Grocutt (Javelin), and our 4x100m Relay team. In the 4th form Oliver Sherratt won the 800m in the impressive time of 2min 11 seconds, Luke Thompson was victorious in the high Jump B, Jacob Wilkins won the

(a basket into which we had put quite a few eggs!). My favourite moment however was when Denis Pym put his hand up to volunteer as a 4th former to compete in the U18 category for tennis because we were short of 6th formers. Not only did he do so, he only went and won the competition, thus making him my final ever House Hero of the Week. A fitting way to earn the accolade if you ask me.

7 years ago I took over the House, and we collectively set out to uphold 5 core values. Namely: positivity, loyalty, determination, respect and resilience.

O'Doherty's House



The start of the year saw us welcoming a new set of Third Years into the house, along with Mrs Phillips-Grey, who started tutoring the Fourth Year. It was wonderful to be able to bring back our annual five aside football and pizza event at the beginning of term to enable the new Third Years to mix and meet all the rest of the house. It was well attended and we were blessed with sunshine and lots of pizza! There were still some repercussions from Covid which meant that the House Singing Competition was cancelled and the Inter House Debating Competition was paired down again. This did not stop us from being extremely successful in this competition though and we made it through to the

final, achieving a close second place. Throughout the year we had notable successes in the sports and it was amazing to see the involvement of all the students across various activities.

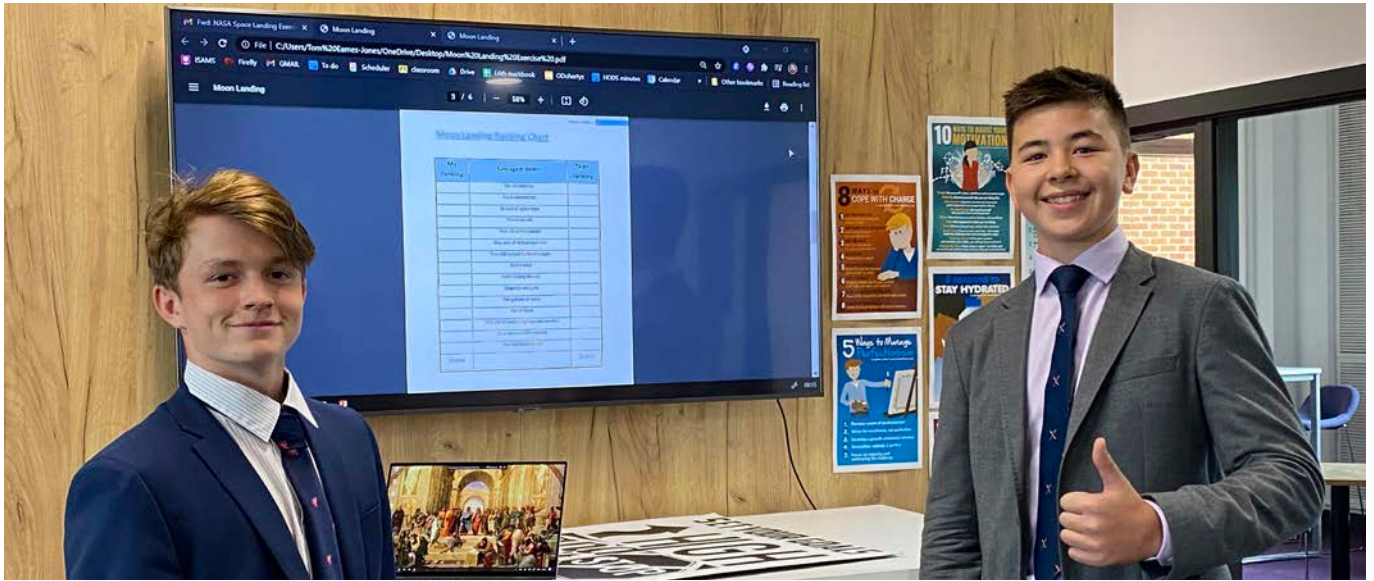
The house prefects did a grand job in helping the house run smoothly. They enjoyed christening the new house prefect kitchen and learnt valuable lessons in sharing spaces and keeping things clean! It was a bittersweet goodbye to all the Upper Sixth and they will be greatly missed. We will miss Grant Rogan's curiosity, Dan Burger's loyalty, Josh Broabent's drive, Josh Giles-Friend's bouncebackability, Seb's chattiness, Tom M's kindness, Jay's honesty, Cam's openness, Eoin's

positivity, Tom Kent's determination, Max's humour, Zac's friendliness, Nat's dedication, Charlie L's calmness, Charlie P's emotional strength, Matthew's empathy and Alex's consistency. I have written a longer piece for our leavers' dinner and I look forward to sharing this with you and all the other things I remember about our 5 years together.

As always there is little room with much to write. I wish I could mention everybody my name but I know that they know how much they are valued in the house. I do want to publicly thank the tutors for their hard work and support over the year.

Emily O'Doherty





Pygott's House

At the beginning of the year I told the whole assembled house that everyone in the room would likely be dead by 2100. Morbid thought perhaps, but also true. We talked about how the amount of time we have on the planet is finite and we should therefore be compelled to make the most of. We took inspiration from the Roman senator Seneca who said that it is not that we have too little time, but that we waste most of it. The onus was on us as a house then to make this most of the year! Well, I can happily report that this has been one of our most successful! As you will know, our (ironic) house motto is all about seeking obscurity through mediocrity. While we generally don't embody that academically, it is a great pleasure to climb no further than 5th out of 9 in house events. I'm sorry to say that we put this tradition well and truly in jeopardy this year. Sid and Michele (the house sloths) were most displeased!

Michaelmas term largely fit the standard pattern. As a house we topped the commendation rankings for the fourth straight term in a row (835) and there was a three way tie at the top (Jack Doherty, Nathan Shestopal and Tom Saunders (all with 36)). It looked like Philip Kimber's all time house record of 84 in a year might be in Jeopardy. There were also 47 Head of Department's praises for exemplary work (3 from Philip Kimber alone) and the prizes for the best reports in the house went to Tom Saunders, Joe O'Sullivan, Philip Kimber, Oliver Simpson and Tom Wormell. There were some notable achievements outside the norm as well, with Henry Channon winning the schools cross country championship, Oliver Simpson performing Haydn's Cello Concerto and Ed Saunders organised a medical conference with Imperial College. In house events we it was a classically mediocre story. Robin Collins won the house final for public speaking against stiff opposition (Nathan Shestopal, Tristan Clark Lam, Luca Zurek and Tom Harding) and then proceeded to go seriously off-piste (again) in the final by pretending to be a young

Queen Elizabeth complete with tiara. We were robbed again. As I said in my report to the house at the time – it was a disgrace! Interhouse Sports were extremely mediocre apart from the house pool, which we won (well done Harrison Cruikshank and Finnian Leigh), and the doubles table tennis, which we also won (Nick Owen and Flynn Walker). Chess was a particular lowlight with last place (Dr Burnand will never get over the shame). Special mention to those who stepped in at the last second – Alex Lees competed in the squash wearing my wife's sports kit and Michael Winstanley cycled 5 km in the bike challenge wearing his school uniform. That is the house spirit right there.

Now, I signposted at the start that this was a particularly successful year. Well, it was Lent that was our 'termus mirabilis'. We started the term by thinking about Schopenhauer and his theory about the 'Will' and how we needed to liberate ourselves from earthly suffering through aesthetic experience. I'm not going to claim that this was responsible for our successes this term... There were several house events this term. House Challenge is one of the highlights and I'm very happy to report that we won both the fourth year and fifth year competitions – convincingly. My thanks to the winning teams who were: Aspen Chamberlin, James Clarke, Joe O'Sullivan, Louie

Leung (4th yr), Ruairi Tilley, Luca Zurek, Matthew Lawrence and Philip Kimber (5th yr). We moved onto House Debating, an event in which we are usually undermined by the biased judging. This year, however, I am pleased to say that we won the entire competition. Well done to Thomas Harding, Philip Kimber and Harry Boumphrey. From them we moved onto the road race. This was, again hugely successful and we have a remarkable 68 members of the house competing. Special mention has to go to our L6th team of Will D'Arcy, Tommy Harris, Marc Sheriff and Henry Channon. They smashed the all time L6th record by a minute (!) and came 1st out of 179 teams with a time of 35 minutes 29 seconds. As part of this time, Henry Channon smashed the all time L6th personal record as well with a time of 7 minutes 42. Interhouse sports this term were not a vintage performance, but we nevertheless won the U18 football and doubled badminton. There were many other notable achievements in this term such as Will Simpson qualifying for the National Squash Championships, Alex Lees, Ruairi Tilley, and Rory Kind taking leading roles in school productions and Will D'Arcy winning the prestigious Knowle Run. Murray Langley, Rex Langley and Jai Biswas Gladwin also showed great leadership in running multiple science partnership events.





We started the summer term by thinking about why Ernest Shackleton was such a good leader, how he was always optimistic and never let himself be overwhelmed by negativity. This advice would prove helpful in the weeks to come as we gently trundled down the slope of success back to mediocrity (at least from a sporting perspective). Successes were somewhat limited in house sports in this term, but we did do very well indeed to row ourselves to a very hard fought victory in house rowing. Well done indeed to the team of Alex Van Doren, Sammy Kleinknecht, Jack Jenkinson, Justin Sheriff, and Ben Knight. There was also a notable second place for James Clarke and Joe O'Sullivan in the 4th year tennis doubles. House Athletics was a similar story: the third year came 6th, the fourth year 7th and the L6th 2nd (well done). There were, however, some great 1st place performances. Ollie Tozer won the 1500 A, Ed O'Callaghan the 800 B, Rory Kind the 800 A, Robin Hambidge the 800 B, Henry Channon the 200 A in 22.67, and Toby Broadbent the Javelin B.

One of our collective biggest successes was in the house sunflower growing drive to show solidarity with Ukraine. There were many photos submitted and the best sunflowers were grown by Tamay Arnison, Robin Hambidge, Sammy Kleinknecht, Mrs Middleton and James Clarke.

Academically, I'm happy to say we prevailed against all opposition. As a house, we topped the commendation charts for the 6th straight term and there were many winners of the coveted 'green' commendation certificate (50 commendations. Had Philip Kimber's all time house record been broken though? Yes, for the first time in my tenure, someone reached 100 commendations and received the extremely rare 'cerise' commendation certificate signed by the head master. Well done Nathan Shestopal! The prizes for the best exam results in the summer exams went to James Henderson (3rd yr), Joseph O'Sullivan (4th yr), James Oldham (L6th) and Tom Wormell (L6th). Well done! From a wider perspective there were also some notable achievements: Henry Channon broke the Achilles relays 4x800m record and also qualified for the 400m at the national finals, Ross Tselos got a silver in the Linguistics Olympiad and James Clarke stage managed the middle school production.

It has been a jam packed year and I'd like to end by saying thank you to all of Pygott's brilliant tutors and also the departing U6th who, to a man, have been brilliant. They have truly embodied the house spirit of participation and doing your best and they have inspired similar devotion to this ethos in others. They have worked so hard for their A levels as well and

I wish them all the best at university. Well done particularly to Ross Tselos and Joe Turner who go to Oxford and Cambridge to read maths and natural sciences respectively. From a personal perspective, my thanks especially go to the heads of house Naoki Parker and Ben Dray. To all of them, remember the wise words of Brock Kelly "god has gifted you with ability – don't waste it."

Richard Pygott



Lower School



After a year of Covid disruption and far too much time on Zoom, it was refreshing to start the new academic year with a sense that life was going to be more “normal” - or at least as normal as things can ever be in Lower School! It was great to be able to roll out our full induction programme to the new first years and their parents, while second years, having been constrained by bubbles for much of their first year, finally had the chance to explore the full school site and access all areas.

September’s sponsored walk allowed some bonding away from school with the newly appointed Lower School Assistants joining the Lower School boys for much of the distance, giving them time to get to know the boys they would spend the rest of the year working with. Inspirational speakers in the form of paralympic skier Talan Skeels Piggins and adventurer James Ketchell provided powerful illustrations of the values that we hope to instil through Be More Griffen lessons, while a visit from James Shone and his “I can and I am” bus encouraged second year boys to open up about their feelings, while also teaching them how to make a great pizza.

The main sporting focus of the term was rugby and there was considerable

success on the pitch, especially for the U12 As who had an unbeaten season. There was also evidence of plenty of musical talent in the various concerts that took place. Covid unfortunately started to rear its head towards the end of term which meant that the first year choir did have to sing Chicka-Hanka and Jazz Gloria while wearing face masks at the Christmas Concerts, but they still managed to produce a very warm and pleasant tone. The instrumentalists then stepped up to the plate a couple of days later to provide more festive merriment for Lower School parents with a spirited medley of Christmas carols.

The Lent Term provided the opportunity for the boys to really get down to business in the classroom and many of them worked hard on the goals that they had set themselves, thinking carefully about the changes they needed to make to meet their targets. 1C and 2M were crowned champions in the annual chess tournament and it was possible to hold the first joint social event with St Helen’s since the start of the pandemic. The joint dinner debate held on World Book Day was a great success, although the selection of Snowie from the TinTin novels as the character from literature who should be

saved in the balloon debate did raise a few eyebrows, not least because he beat both Jesus and Yoda!

It was a particularly good year for Lower School in the various scholarship processes with no fewer than 12 boys being successful. Congratulations go to Billy Brooks (design technology), Ashwin Chandrasekaran (academic and drama), James Darbishire (drama), Henry Golding (sport), Shrish Gupta (academic), Nikhil Harie (academic), Finley Hoy (sport), Edmund Kimber (music exhibition), Henry Pinnington (art), Balraj Purewal (academic), Toby Stone (academic) and Jonathan Watcham (academic).

A real highlight of the term was the return of the annual Road Relay, one of the few sporting events in which Lower School pupils can compete side by side with all the older boys. Joe Campbell and Oliver Wardle set the pace with the fastest times in their respective year groups and 1H and 2P were the winning teams. Other tutor groups then got in on the act in the final days of term with 2M winning the second year hockey tournament and 1B and 2S demonstrating their oratorical might in the public speaking competition. The charity football tournament was won by 6 Guys (Alex



Talan Skeels Piggins returned for the Be More Griffen Celebration when we marked the achievements of the second years during their time in Lower School, not the least of which was the amazing effort of 2M which saw them complete 21 marathons in 12 hours by walking 2215 laps round War Memorial Field over night to raise funds for the DEC Ukraine Humanitarian Appeal. Special congratulations went to Charles Nelmes, Louis de Chazal, Felix Price, Guy Vivian, James Thistlethwaite and Jonathan Watcham (tutor group academic prizes), Joe Campbell (The Broadbent Cup for sporting excellence), Toby Stone (The Cooper Cup for excellence in reading), Edmund Kimber (The Dillon Cup for service) and George Slater (The Woodgett Cup).

By any measure, 2021/2 was a highly successful and busy year for Lower School and it couldn't have happened without the hard work and dedication of all the tutors, and the willingness of the boys to throw themselves fully into every challenge. The second years can move into Middle School secure in the knowledge that they have very secure foundations upon which to build, and the first years will doubtless look forward to the greater responsibility that life in the second year will bring.

Adam Jenkins

Drake, Riad Kapetanovic, Bradley Olatunde, Finley Hoy, Tommy Lane and Theo Payne), successfully retaining the trophy that they had won in the first year, and raised a pleasing sum of £240 for Meningitis Research, with 2P netting an additional £140 for Barnado's through a cake sale.

The Easter holidays saw the return of the annual Adventure Trips with the second years going to Plas Pencelli and the first years to PGL Liddington. As the full reports elsewhere in this publication make clear, the trips provided an opportunity for friendships to be strengthened, fears overcome, and memories made. One memory that the Lower School Housemaster will try to wipe from his mind is the moment when he fell over backwards into a deep muddy bog, the strong suction of which meant he could not extract himself unaided – it was one of his less dignified moments!

As ever, the longer days and brighter sunshine of the summer meant that there was no shortage of sporting opportunity whether on the cricket pitch, tennis court or croquet lawn, but the final term of the year also saw Lower School thespians flexing their muscles with a superb performance of Charlie and the Chocolate Factory. In other creative endeavours, there were some excellent Lower School contributions to the Celebration of the Arts sci-fi model making competition

(with a very pleasing number of Star Wars inspired entries!) and the annual Gala Concert contained a particularly wide range of musical genres on display, with several of the student-led bands then making a reappearance at the "Anything but Classical" concert

Inter-tutor group competitions came thick and fast with highlights including 2M's excellent performance of Waka Waka, 1C snatching victory in a very tense cricket tournament, 2S showing total dominance in the pool with victories in both water polo and swimming, and 2P and 1H combining good technique with brute strength to win the tug of war. 2M were the overall second year champions and 1B the first year, the latter beating 1H by a mere two points.



Staff Farewells

Abimaer Arias

Abbi joined the MFL department three years ago as Spanish Assistant. He has a degree in English Language and Literature from the University of Salamanca (Spain) and vast experience teaching English as a Foreign language in Barcelona. He has also successfully completed his PGCE in his last year at Abingdon.

Abbi brought a new lease of life (and style!) into the department and he became a valued member of the team right from the start. He has brought a love for Spanish and Hispanic culture to the pupils energetically and professionally. Over the previous three years, Abbi has worked tirelessly preparing the IGCSE and Pre-U students for their oral exams. The students have thoroughly enjoyed each lesson and his positive influence will be sorely missed. He enthusiastically took on any task we threw at him and was particularly impressive at motivating the students to attend his lessons with the right mix of strictness and engagement. The pupils knew how valuable his lessons were and that Abbi would give up his time liberally to help and support them.

In his free time, Abbi enjoys cycling, reading, walking with friends, and above all, dancing - something London will provide in abundance. He will be missed by pupils and staff alike and we wish him all the happiness for the future in London, and hope to see him soon.

Alexandra von Widdern

Lucy Moonen

Lucy joined the History department at the same time as me, in September 2018. She left the bright lights of London, where she had been the Deputy Head Academic at Radnor House School in Twickenham for the mean streets of Jericho, Oxford. She



moved with her husband, Tim, and daughter Chloe and was able to live a little closer to her extended family as well.

I will always be grateful to have had Lucy in the History Department – talented and industrious, she always sought to push herself to the limit and she expected the very highest standards from her pupils as well. She brought intellectual vigour and balance to the History Department and held cerebral and considered positions on all things historical and academic.

Lucy has always been a supportive presence both to me personally and the department but, first and foremost, the interests of her pupils came first. Undoubtedly, Lucy has been the most rigorous of teachers when seeking to

support pupils with SEND and EAL. I have lost track of the number of times she gave up her own lunchtimes, free periods or break times to sit with a pupil on a one to one basis to revisit work they may not have understood.

Lucy has also been at the forefront of some of the more jazzy teaching methods adopted by the History Department (who says we are obsessed only by the past!). From Quizziz to Mote, Loom or recording videos and lectures of herself to playback to pupils, there has been a plethora of new methods that most (!) of us have incorporated into our own practice.

I must add a few comments about Lucy's passion for niche areas of history and previously unexplored

avenues. Never before has a history teacher become so fascinated with the state Dumas of Russia between 1905 and 1917. Lucy developed a particular passion for the Third Duma of November 1907 to June 1912, nicknamed the Duma of the 'Lords and Lackeys'. Lucy developed an intricate understanding of its mechanisms, at times to the mirth of department. However, Lucy had the last laugh for, in 2022, one of the IGCSE exam questions featured the Dumas. Suffice to say, in future we shall spend a number of months covering the Third Duma, including Duma role plays, Duma top trumps and Duma re-enactments on Lower Field.

As I said to Lucy towards the end of the summer term, she will be missed and she is leaving far earlier than I would have wished. I do hope that she will genuinely take some 'time out' before her next adventure or venture. And, it goes without saying, she is welcome back in a history classroom at Abingdon any time in the future (preferably when I take a sabbatical in 2028).

Nick Knowland

Sarah Gibbard

This year the Biology department says goodbye to Sarah Gibbard who leaves us for new adventures after 12 years at Abingdon. It is difficult to explain how much of a central and supportive role she has played in school over the years, however she may be best seen as the person who has started off hordes of young Abingdonians in their various careers, both in school and afterwards. Over this time she has also started a family, enviably managing to fit the demands of childcare around her time at school.

Sarah Carey, as she was back then, joined Abingdon's Biology department in September 2010. It was already clear that she was keen to get fully involved with all aspects of school life, and was recruited into Crescent House as a 6th Form tutor. She taught alongside such greats as Dr Jeffries and Mrs McRae, delivering engaging and challenging lessons that inspired

her classes. She particularly enjoyed delivering genetics and biochemistry topics, and has seen these areas become an ever greater part of the school's syllabus. She has often taught Lower School Biology, and occasionally the other sciences too when needed, and more recently supported the 2nd Year scholars in their preparation for their exam, nurturing their interest in the subject.

Sarah has always been involved at the boathouse with the J14, teaching 3rd Years the basics of sculling both on the water and often in a boat suspended in the car park. Her patience comes through time and again, as these young athletes try and grasp the surprisingly tricky sequence of 'hand-body-slide', and many of those are now successful oarsmen. An interesting fact was that there are National Schools Regatta t-shirts still owned by the staff with the names of her, Mr Morgan and Mr Whitworth on; rowing really is a small world! She will be missed by all the coaches at the club for her contributions, and we thank her enormously for all those afternoons she has put in.

Most Abingdonians, however, may know her for her role in careers, and then in the UCAS applications process. This, at times, can feel like a thankless task in trying to distil an ever changing landscape into a format to help 6th formers with their choices, not to mention the checking of personal statements and references; I shudder to think how many times she has read that someone has found a certain subject 'fascinating', or that a student has a 'passion' for some hitherto unheard of area of Geography. She ran the important public facing UCAS 360, OA Careers Conventions and the (somewhat dystopian sounding) Career Profiling Scheme with a calm and unfussed can-do attitude that became her trademark. There are many students and staff who have been helped by Sarah over the years, and we all thank her for her time, patience, sense of humour and, on a personal note, as someone who would always be ready to have a cup of tea with and to think through a problem. We will miss her enormously, but wish her the very best for her next exciting adventures as a CBT practitioner.

Ben Whitworth

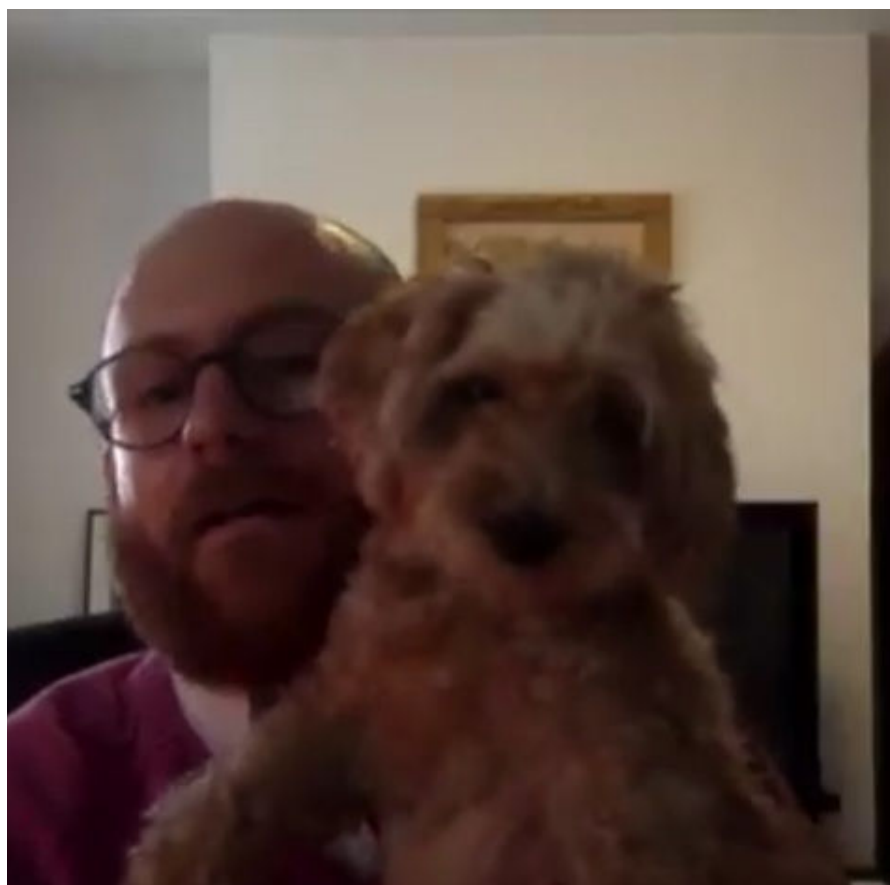


Adam Treadaway

Mr Treadaway was one of the most valued members of the School House boarding community. Of course he was also one of the music teachers for our GCSE and A level students.

He had been a boarding tutor for 4 years, serving as the deputy housemaster. He did Friday night boarding times and I'm sure that everyone who was around then would agree that he made Friday night an enjoyable and relaxing time for all borders in the school house. His boarding activity would often be some vegan gyoza (dumplings) as he himself was a vegan. Whilst they were cooking he would constantly be asking you questions to make sure that you were ok and that everything was alright. I found this particularly amazing about his character as I was always able to talk to him about anything and everything.

These qualities existed outside of the boarding house as well making him one of the favourite music teachers in the school. His sense of humour was valued by all of his students.



As I entered the school I found his calm and relaxed tone during my morning tutor periods to be a great way to start the day.

He was a unique tutor and we are sad to see him go.

Henry Roseff 3ACT





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