

THE
ABINGDONIAN



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Michaelmas 1990



The Masters' Common Room 1996



THE ABINGDONIAN

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CONTENTS

Editorial	2-20	Music	51-58
including		including	
Editor's Comment		Orchestral concerts - various	
Headmaster's Message		Choral concerts - various	
School Notes		Jazz concerts - various	
Individual achievements		Jazz Band Tour to Europe	
MCR farewells		A "Pop" concert	
Obituaries			
Cultural Reflections	21-27	Clubs and Societies	59-70
including		including	
Creative Writing		Old societies reborn	
Lectures		A new Expeditionary Club	
Correspondence		Minor sports	
		Discussion groups	
Beyond Abingdon	28-43	Sports	71-93
including		including	
Study Tours		Rugby, Hockey, Cricket	
Adventure Trips		Rowing	
Expeditions		Cross-Country	
Language Exchanges		Badminton	
The Charities' Mission to Romania		Lacrosse	
		Basketball	
Drama	44-50	Football	
including		Golf	
School play reviews - various		Sailing	
Theatre trips - various		Tennis	
An Actor explains			
A Director explains		Leaving Thoughts	94

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Editorial

At Prizegiving this year, Mr. T. A. Libby, a Governor of the school and Old Abingdonian, underlined the importance to any school of its motto and even suggested a competition to extend Abingdon's second one - "Enter that you may progress" (roughly translated) into something more meaningful. If a motto had to be found to sum up this year in the school's history, what would it be, I wonder idly as I write this foreword to a record of Abingdon School's year? "I shall sing the mercies of the Lord for ever"? (Our present motto, again roughly translated). Rather too traditional, I feel. To the other extreme, then. What about "Sing unto the Lord a new song?" (Psalm 33, verse 3). No, that reeks too much of ephemeral novelty value. The motto of another school I recently visited bears consideration: "Et Nova et Vetera" (Both the New and the Old).

For from an editorial viewpoint, this phrase encapsulates what you will find within the pages of this magazine. Throughout it there is mention of this year's new ventures, new ideas, even new perceptions, but all, miraculously, squeezed into the framework of the Old, the Traditions handed down the hundred and more years of The Abingdonian's existence. The new Charles Maude Room, for instance, transmogrified from the old Lower Sixth Common Room, has meant a resurgence in Drama, particularly; the new flowering of Abingdon's musicians in France excelling themselves as ever, playing *traditional Jazz*; the new lease of life for the school's traditional Christian Union; a new face even "at the helm" this summer, that of Mr. T. Ayling, upholding valiantly its traditions during the Headmaster's sabbatical term.

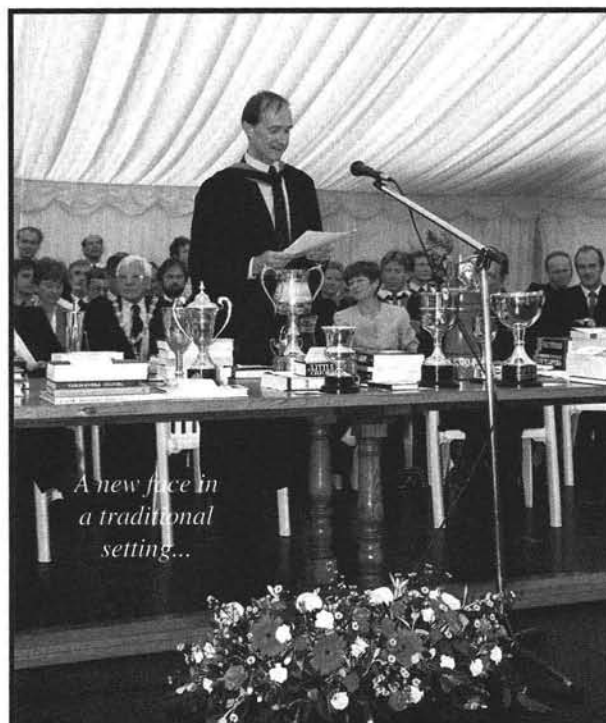
And what of the magazine, I hear you ask? Is it old or new? Traditional or modern? Both, I hope. We have a new cover design (courtesy of the editorial committee) but did you realise that it is based on that most traditional element in all our lives, the old School Tie? The format of the magazine follows the traditional house style, but as ever there are new touches here and there for the observant to descry, and I am pleased to welcome the new written input of each of my pupil editors, as they introduce "their" section - one hopes that pupil input will become ever more of a tradition in The Abingdonian's next hundred years!

Following the spirit of tradition, I must renew, publicly, my thanks to each of my editors, for the tremendous efforts they have put into commissioning good writing and editing it into readable copy. Through their efforts, this magazine has become ever more "interactive", so thank you to all who have heard their call and contributed, or indeed have offered magazine-related suggestions in the electronic suggestions box on the school network. Thank you to those who have visited us on the Internet and corresponded directly with us. All your views and copy have been a tremendous help in putting together this issue, so please keep those contributions coming! The addresses are published below: we look forward to receiving your submissions for the next issue...

D. J. POPE

The Abingdonian can be contacted on the World Wide Web at:

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100265.100@CompuServe.com*



A new face in a traditional setting...

IDENTITY PARADED.

We are about to acquire a History! That is to say, the Governors, in their wisdom, have decided that the history of the School should be properly written up, and presented for the admiration of the world, in concise but elegant form, and at a suitably modest price. The business of publication will be undertaken by Messrs. James and James, who have already produced a well-regarded series of books about leading independent schools, including such as Westminster, King Edward's, Birmingham, Shrewsbury, Highgate, and KCS, Wimbledon. The Headmaster has been asked to undertake the writing of the early chapters, and the delicate business of summarising the last hundred and thirty years or so has been entrusted to the safe hands of Thomas Hinde, who is a professional author with a well established reputation for work in this genre. Publication date, all being well, will fall in the summer of 1997.

It is a book which should have been written long before now. The story of Abingdon goes back a very long way, to a date much earlier than most schools can claim for their foundation, and although the line of continuity and development has been sketchy at times, there is plenty of material, and plenty of interest in it. Most of the early documents were, in fact, exhaustively researched and analysed by the learned Arthur Preston, OA, during the first decades of the present century, but his published essays were written in an antiquarian, rather than a popular style, and did not achieve a very wide circulation. Other would-be historians, both before and after Preston, have been still less successful: we must hope for better luck this time!

Perhaps there is more behind this relative neglect of our history, though, than the accident of an over-learned author or unwise publishing policies. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the School was successful, held in high repute, well-connected. Boys from all classes of society attended it, and many who went on to do well in church and state seem to have remembered their schooling at Abingdon, if we are to judge from the records, with real gratitude and even affection. But everything went disastrously wrong in the early nineteenth century: poor management and poor leadership of the School combined with a decline in the fortunes of the town and adverse develop-

ments in national educational policy, to throw everything aback. So deep was the depression that, when revival eventually came, many years later, it seemed almost like a fresh start, and there may even have been a certain tendency to write off what had gone before, in relief at the prospect of new achievement.

In this, Abingdon may be seen to have traced a path which is now being followed, in a different way and for different reasons, by the nation at large. A period of decline following one of glory places severe strains on the loyalties and emotions of all concerned, both groups and individuals, and a changed attitude towards one's history is among the commonest reactions. Remembrance of past triumphs, noble achievements or heroic endeavours, which inspire and fortify us in periods of confident success, become unbearable when they only remind us of worlds that we have lost. So a post-imperial, post-industrial, almost post-nation-state Britain is conspicuously abandoning the study of its history, just as Abingdon School can be seen to have largely lost its own past in the dreary years of the nineteenth century.

It is not just professional historians who need to know about the past. Each one of us, and every institution, stands to benefit from the affirmation of identity that comes from a full and proper understanding of our origins. So the Abingdonian of tomorrow will be richer, stronger, potentially better if the promised history of the School comes to fruition as the Governors intend - and, by the same token, a demoralised nation may need to rethink the position of history in the curriculum of its schools. Which is not quite the same as saying that a study of the Napoleonic Wars could be an antidote to ecstasy pills and baseball caps - but it would probably help!

M. ST. JOHN PARKER



Prizegiving a century ago...

The Charles Maude Room...



The Opening...



SCHOOL HOUSE

We began the year full of optimism created by the excellent A level results of the sixth form leavers. **David Lindgren**, **David Lourie**, **Jody Collins** and **Jeremy Grinsted** all gained four A Levels, all the boys trying for university places were accepted including **Takeshi Yoshida**, in Japan. **James Dolleymore** was off to Zimbabwe and **Tom Day** to the Australian Conservation Volunteers for six months. Our A Level average score was 30 points, equivalent to 3 A grades per person! Let us hope that this year's group will be as successful; in any case it is noticeable how well our boarders do at A Level. One academic success this year has been **Timothy Mak** who won a UK Mathematics Foundation Scholarship to attend a four day Summer School course at University College, Oxford. Prizewinners this term were **Robert Rothkopf** who collected the Third Form Boarders' prize, **Aldrin Adeni**, winning the Wheeler Cup for Outstanding Academic Effort and **Robert Bryniarski** the Dr. James Molloy prize for Design. **Oliver Guy** won a Tappins travel award and he is at this moment in Nepal, and he also earned one of the Headmaster's prizes for Service.

The highlight of the Michaelmas term was undoubtedly the boarders' play, "The Royal Hunt of the Sun", directed with great expertise, enthusiasm and a firmness not seen in the boarding houses before, by **Mr. Pettitt**. Its success was due to the widespread participation of nearly all the boarding community, on stage, back stage, front of house and behind the scenes. **James Montague** starred as Atahualpa, the Inca King and **Robert Rothkopf** delighted us with his portrayal of Young Martin, Pizarro's boy assistant. There were other notable actors portraying Indians and Conquistadors, including **Alex Smith** and **Crinan Campbell**. Crinan was seen on stage again with a part in "The Visit" during the summer term along with **Jamie Kingsley**. One hard working person whose contribution is noticed whilst he is seldom seen is **George Whittaker**, whose exploits with lighting backstage have been invaluable in school productions.

Sport always has a high profile in a boarding establishment. **Matthew Thomas** was selected for an Oxfordshire XV, **Philipp Heiermann**, here for two terms, played in all the 1st XI hockey matches and more recently **Edward Ryder**, newly appointed Head of House, has been scoring half centuries for the 1st XI cricket. We hope to hear soon of **David Kingsley**'s selection for the G. B. rowing squad. School House had medal winners in **Matthew Thomas**, gold, **Ian Priest** and **George Whittaker**, sil-

ver, at the National Schools' Rowing Championships held at Nottingham. These boys were in Abingdon eights at Henley this year with the 2nd. eight ably coxed by **George Whittaker**.

This year we have **Edward Ryder**, **Ian Priest** and **Ee-Lu Hew**, one of our Malaysian Scholars, selected as School Prefects and Ian has also been made Deputy Head of House. We sadly say goodbye to a very hard-working upper sixth showing much academic promise and determination, three of whom hope for places at Medical School and another at Dental School. It is also with regret that **Kay Ruff** and **Philipp Kupper** leave us after a year, to continue their schooling in Germany. These are two boys who have contributed much and would certainly have been given more responsibilities next year.

The School House Concert was one of the highlights of the Spring Term. It followed our success in winning the House Singing Competition in the Michaelmas term with an enthusiastic rendering of "Consider Yourself", from Oliver. This was directed by **Mr. Slatford** with much verve added at the last moment by **Mr. Pettitt**. We now have a number of very professional musicians in the House. **Kelvin Cheung** accompanies sensitively and plays Chopin beautifully. He is also learning the oboe, but we were thrilled by the oboe playing of **Robert Bryniarski**. **Timothy Mak** exudes music from his fingertips and played a Beethoven violin sonata and joined **Wilbur Lau** and **Victor Lee** to perform a Haydn piano trio. Many more boys played pieces to a high standard and the evening was enjoyed by many parents and boys.

As I write the next phase in updating School House accommodation is taking place with the conversion of New Dorm. into two double rooms and a triple room. At the start of the year the Lower Corridor was finished by our Works Department. This now boasts modernised single rooms redecorated and fitted to a high standard, planned and designed by the School's own works staff under **Mr. Nick Barnard**. There is also a spacious double room and a four man room for fifth form, no longer dungeon-like.

Since January we have been well cared for by **Anna Guyatt**, Matron on exchange from Scots College, Sydney. She has made many friends during her short stay here and is earning a reputation for mas-termining parties for all ages in her tiny flat. She has been particularly thoughtful and caring towards our third year. At this moment she is planning a trip to Siberia for her holiday, we hope she returns safely! Meanwhile, **Annabel Casey** sends greetings from a trip sailing round the Whitsunday islands on her way to the Barrier Reef during her exchange to Australia.

F. BURROW

CRESCENT HOUSE

Communal showers may be a thing of the past but communal singing certainly isn't and the boarders used the evenings in the first part of the Michaelmas term to good effect by preparing for the House Singing Competition. Crescent shared the honours with School House by winning the partsong cup, due to the silvery talents of **Peter Rutland**, **Oliver Smith**, **Edward Allen**, **Tim Andrews** and a promising new recruit, **Adam Hunter**. But further highlights were in store later in the term with the majority of the house playing some sort of role in 'The Royal Hunt of the Sun'. This was a masterly composition of all the talent on the boarding side and it was remarkable that so many took part, whether spending hours painting costumes at the weekend, constructing scenery or as a leading light on the stage. It is invidious to mention any, but **Patrick Wells'** explosive and passionate portrayal of Francisco Pizarro, the Commander of the expedition, was a tour de force and will be remembered by many of us for some considerable time. He was ably supported on stage by **Mark** and **Tristan Evans**, **Simon Rutland**, **Oliver Smith**, **Tim Betteridge**, **Rupert Janisch**, **James Horton**, **Shahid Karim** and many other soldiers and 'Incas' to provide a most colourful and spectacular finish to the term. We were indebted to the creative skills of **Mr. Pettitt** who held the production together with his infectious enthusiasm, tolerance and determination.

We were delighted to hear in the Christmas holiday that **David Pinniger** and **Lim Jin Choon** had secured conditional places at Oxford and Cambridge respectively. All the upper sixth were subsequently set the target of 100% A and B grades at A level in the summer and as this is written the examiners are determining whether the upper sixth or **Mr. Hunter** will be footing the bill for the gastronomic delights of the Prince of India restaurant in Ock Street. **Winnoc Lui** managed to 'take away' three titles at the Oxfordshire Badminton Championships, winning at the tender age of 14 the Under 16 boys title, the Under 18 boys and mixed doubles titles with his partners, confirming him as the most exciting player in his age group at the moment. Needless to say he was also a mainstay of the school team. As the winter evenings drew in, **Lanre Sagaya's** passion for basketball brought a seriously competitive edge to workouts in fading light using the newly sited mobile basket on the tennis courts to the rear of Cobban, and **Martin Kom** surely should have a prize for his unmatched 'standing slam-dunks'.

The Lent term is, however, traditionally a time for the house to look outwards and we were very

pleased to be able to lend support to **Mrs. Horton's** adventure cycling throughout the length of Cuba in aid of the "Journey of a Lifetime" Trust, which takes disadvantaged young people on confidence building journeys. **Lim**, **Hafiz** and **Imran** joined **Mr. Hunter** to observe Commonwealth Day in Westminster Cathedral and the fifth year spent time carefully writing intercessions for boarders' services with **Mrs. Manship**. Having previously welcomed **Mr. Sharp** to be resident tutor in Glyndwr we were sorry to say goodbye to **Annitta Bold**, our matron, at Easter. She moved to Prestfelde School to be nearer her family and her native Wales, and will be missed for her jollity and unfailing care. She has been replaced by the aptly named **Carol Basham**, an immediate hit with the boys.

Given that every single bed in the house is filled and space now at a premium, the summer term came as something of a relief providing an opportunity to swim and play tennis between the inevitable showers. **Mr. Broadbent** exercised his customary influence on the pool of talented cricketers and with **James Horton**, **Alex Pike**, **Tristan Evans**, **John Church**, **Rupert Janisch** and **Robin Smith** all representing the First XI at some stage, Crescent could surely put together an outstanding side of its own. **Tom Burton** and **Tom Crawford** also played very successfully for the school golf team. Not to forget the oarsmen, with **Richard Pinckney**, **Piers Hemsley**, **Adam Benson** and **Howard Watkinson** excelling at their various levels, this was an exceptional term for the sportsmen.

We were also thrilled to hear that **Peter Rutland** had been awarded a coveted Arthur Andersen Scholarship. **Roger Franklin** (5th year) and **Adam Benson** (4th year) won academic prizes at prize giving and Crescent was very well represented in all the school orchestras and bands. **Kai Tsang's** development as a pianist in the two years he was here was quite outstanding, the fruit of daily excursions to the music school and literally hours of dedicated practice. The new third year are particularly talented musically with **Tom Murray** (piano), **Adam Hunter** (guitar), **Sam Balch** (saxophone), **Tim Betteridge** (clarinet) and **Ben Wells** (percussion) the nucleus of a potential house band. Rumour has it that **Edward de Bosdari** is being heralded as a possible lead vocalist. All the music practice that has taken place in Crescent 'quiet room' before breakfast will surely pay dividends but now it is time for Hopkins' 'elected silence' and for the forbearing housemaster and his family to be 'piped to pastures still'.

N. HUNTER.

WASTE COURT

Boarders have enjoyed a generally productive year with **James Oliver**, the Head of House, ending it by winning very properly the Ellis prize for character. He has been an exemplary leader - modest and unassuming, but also efficient and reliable. The other Upper Sixth boys were all pleasant and should maintain the recent record of high A-level grades from our senior boys. We wish **Winston Wei** well as he pursues university studies at M.I.T. in America. To **Azli Bakar** and **Taufik Mokhtar** who will do degrees in England we wish all success. They have all made a good contribution to life at Waste Court and will be missed. Sadly we lose **Josiah Lau** from the Lower Sixth to John Hopkins University in America and **Markus von Dellingshausen** to resume his Abitur in Germany. Josiah has been hyperactive at Abingdon, being a good scholar, a brilliant violinist and a successful sportsman. Markus has improved his English, studied hard and made many friends in his year here. We shall miss them both.

From amongst the other Lower Sixth boys **Mr. Waters** has appointed **Josafri Johari** as the new Head of House. He will be ably assisted by his colleagues, **Roshidi Ismail**, **Nik Kadir**, **Stephen Yue** and **Vadim Chukanin**. Roshidi and Stephen are outstanding academics with a brilliant future, while Nik and Josafri also did well in their qualifying exams. They both made a fine contribution to the badminton and soccer teams and were at the forefront of Young Enterprise ventures. Vadim spent his first year here successfully improving his English and playing his saxophone, but he will begin his A-level courses in September 1996. This nucleus of house prefects will be a great support to Mr. Waters as housemaster.

Among the junior boarders we will be losing **Jonathan Herbert** to Crescent House in September and **Kenneth Ma**, **Ahilan Rabindran** and **Robert Syfret** to School House. They have formed a cohesive unit within the house and lightened its atmosphere with their hilarity and liveliness. They are all promising academics and I wish them success. Similarly the first years performed with credit in their exams with **Matthew Hylla**, **Shamsur Rahman** and **John Howe** showing distinct promise. Rahman in addition was the best all-round sportsman in his year and a popular boy with his peers. He has a bright future. **Nick Andrews** was an impressive captain of the cricket team and an important member of the Chapel Choir. **Tom Blackshaw** showed great promise as a mathematician and became an enthusiastic cox to some of the senior crews in the summer term. **Depesh Desai** worked hard and was highly success-

ful in the cricket team. His good humour was matched by that of **Mike Yeung** who gained superb exam results as our only third year boarder. Mike will go to Crescent House next year and will be missed.

Mr. Elliott's dayboy tutor group have been lively almost to the point of indiscipline. I congratulate **Ian Macdonald** on being awarded the house prize for results in the summer exams, but he was almost matched by **Michael Ambler**, **Tom Brown**, **Daniel Cole**, **Chris Rose** and **Mike Yeung**. Congratulations are also due to **David Alexander**, **Chris Browne**, **Alex Ings**, **Alex Morton**, **Mark Pajak** and **Robert Tattersall**, who all performed very well. **Edward Mason** showed flair in Music and notable originality in various Arts subjects. **Tom Bracher** and **Andrew Coxall** were active in various sports and performed soundly in their work, while **Edward Pajak** and **Andrew Wilson** were universally popular for their enthusiasm and geniality. **David Cox** showed promise in several areas, but inconsistent effort prevented him from fulfilling his potential: this weakness was a frequent complaint for several boys and they need to respond positively to this lament.

As usual there was a plethora of expeditions throughout the year, including a trip for boarders every weekend. The annual dinner for sixth formers at a local restaurant was convivial and the local McDonald's was visited by the junior boys far too often for the peace of mind of any sensible nutritionist. Parents of dayboys came to an interesting evening discussion about issues relating to the middle school. This was attended by **Mr. Ayling** and provoked much soul-searching about how greater stimulus could be given to dayboys manifesting all the signs of cultural indifference. The summer barbecue was popular and enabled the senior boys to present **Mr. Elliott** with a splendid gift for an outstanding five years of dedicated and professional service to the boys of Waste Court as resident Tutor. We wish him all success in his new post as Master i/c Scholars and welcome his continuing association with the house as visiting tutor. We thank **Miss Lupton** for her quiet industry as Matron and we offer best wishes to **Mr. and Mrs. Waters** as they come to take over the reins from **Mr. and Mrs. Mitra** as the new 'bosses'. They will be ably assisted by **Mr. Sean Hullis**, a new Classicist, who will take over the Coach House. The end of an era was suitably marked when the lower sixth boys cooked a splendid Malaysian meal for the departing housemaster and his wife and presented them with a water colour of the house painted by **Mark Simmonds** of the upper sixth. May the new incumbents have as enjoyable a time as the Mitra family in the friendliest and most charming of houses.

A.MITRA.

DAYBOY HOUSES

This year, the round of inter-house sporting and cultural events has been enjoyed in a relaxing and competitive spirit. During the Michaelmas term, in spite of keen opposition from the dayboy houses, School House and Crescent shared the honours in the inter-house singing competition. The inter-house road relay attracted its usual mixture of keen athletes and enthusiastic part-timers! The event was won by **Francis Malone-Lee** (School House) with **Richard Ellis**, from Drummond-Hay's, one second behind. Henderson's house won the 5th and 4th year team events and Drummond Hay's the 3rd year.

We were able to play all the A division house hockey matches on the Astroturf at Tilsley Park. Unfortunately a small number of individuals decided not to support the competition and it was somewhat devalued. Nevertheless the majority of boys got stuck in and played some competitive matches. The B division match between Henderson's and Drummond-Hay's was a splendid example of how such games should be played - with skill, team spirit and determination. Drummond-Hay's won both divisions and therefore the cup. The A team won all its matches, whilst the unbeaten B side did not concede a goal.

Three other competitions climaxed a sunny end to the year. In the Cricket final, Drummond-Hay's beat Wilmore's by 69 runs. Wilmore's House won the 3rd year Swimming Gala with Henderson's runners-up, and Drummond Hay's House won the 4th year with Wilmore's in second place. The inter-house Athletics Competition was closely fought at the very end of the year with the following results:

	4TH YEAR	3RD YEAR
80m Hurdles	Holland	Wilson
100m	Yip	Barry
200m	Holland	Terry
400m	Watson	Barry
800m	Bourne-Taylor	Betteridge
1500m	Bourne-Taylor	Given
High Jump	Watson	Batchelor
Triple Jump	Baxter	Judd
Long Jump	Watson	Hambridge
Shot Put	Papps	Curran
Discus	Papps	Grady
Javelin	King	Hewett
4 x 100m relay	Henderson's	D-Hay's
Victor Ludorum	Watson	Hambridge
Overall Winners	Henderson's	D-Hay's

Many thanks to everyone who competed, officiated or supported in all these events.

**J. DRUMMOND-HAY, P. WILMORE
& R. MILNER**

LOWER SCHOOL

This was our second year in our new quarters. The house is now so much better integrated, more friendly and more manageable that it is already difficult to imagine how we ever survived in the old days in what is now Little School! Having our own space has enabled us to take many new initiatives as a house. One of these has been the highly popular lunchtime soccer league, run by **Mr. Mansfield**. This year has also seen a revival of Lower School chess, thanks to the efforts of our prefects, **N. Matheson** and **D. Jenkins**. Another innovation has been the Lower School tuck shop, run this year as a pilot scheme and managed entirely by a syndicate of Lower School boys. Space for this has been a problem, but at the time of writing the conversion of the old laundry room, for use as a Lower School recreational area, is almost complete and we are looking forward to making good use of this extra space from September onwards.

In the Michaelmas term we were active in raising money to help rebuild a Ugandan hospital damaged by fire. In March we had trip to London to see "Wind in the Willows". In the Easter holidays over forty First year boys went to Hyde House on an adventure holiday while a group from the second year went to Rydal Hall in the Lake District for what proved to be perhaps the worst week for weather in the history of this expedition; but spirits remained high in spite of the rain. It was good to have **Mr. Baker** with us again for this trip. A large number of first year boys were involved in a delightful production, "Good Clown and Bad Clown," presented in the Charles Maude Room just before the summer half term. Our Field Day saw us engaged in pursuits as diverse as caving in the Mendips, canoeing down the Wye, and visiting various places of interest in London and Bristol. In an enjoyable round of inter-tutor group competitions at the end of the year, the cricket was won by 2B and 1W, the athletics by 2B and 1S and the swimming by 2A and 1S.

We enjoyed having **Mr. Rawlinson** with us for the better part of the year, deputising first for **Mr. Barrett** in the Michaelmas term and then for **Mr. Macdonald** in the Summer term. We wish **Mr. Waters** well as he takes over Waste Court in September.

M. DILLON

FAME

Fame is a disease,
Spreading wildly among us,
Some get it, some don't.

A.FERGUSON 6JPW

THE ABINGDON SCHOOL SOCIETY

TASS includes all members of the school community : existing and former pupils and their parents, Governors, members of staff and friends of the School. The Society's stated objectives are positive contributions to the School, socially, by raising funds for appropriate projects, and by organising practical events.

This year TASS provided some of the funding for a number of activities. These included support for the Big Band's tour of southwest France, the Charities trip, organised by a group of Abingdon pupils, to the Black Sea for a party of Romanian orphans and the incidental costs of a Georgian student at Abingdon. TASS also funds the travel awards to senior boys who have plans for worthwhile travel projects, normally, though not exclusively, for a gap year between school and university. The traveller is required to raise most of the travel costs himself but the TASS award constitutes a useful contribution. This year we had a wide range of exciting projects to consider and made 12 awards, totalling £3,300 towards projects estimated to cost £15-18,000 in total. Plans for 1996 include teaching English to Tibetan refugees in India, driving a Land-Rover to Islamabad and teaching music and sport in Australia.

TASS arranges a number of fund-raising events throughout the school year that also fill an important social function. During this year these included a wine tasting evening, the Charity Christmas Card Sale and the Summer Fair. The wine tasting evening combined an evening of fine wines, excellent food and good company - the popularity of this event has assured it a regular place in the School calendar. The Charity Christmas Card sale is held in the Abbey Hall in Abingdon and the 1995 sale raised £4,700 for charities ranging from Oxfam and Mencap to local group such as Friends of Sobell House and the Home Farm Trust. (A date for your diary - this year's sale is on November 9). The Summer Fair held in early May was another great success. Not only was there a high degree of involvement by boys, staff and parents but also well in excess of £4,000 was raised.

TASS also provides a number of practical services in support of the School community. Most well known is the School Uniform Service which holds regular sales of second hand school uniform throughout the school year. TASS volunteers serve refreshments at parents' evenings as well as issuing a regular newsletter. On the sporting front TASS organises a "masters versus parents" cricket match as well as golf and tennis tournaments.

All these events rely on a willing band of vol-

unteers, though in many cases the individual commitments do not turn out to be too burdensome. Indeed TASS supporters find helping with activities an excellent way of getting to know parents and staff in an informal setting. TASS always welcomes new support and if you are interested in becoming involved please contact any of the following:

Niall Campbell, Chairman	01235 522982
Sarah Wearne, Vice Chairman	01993 850295
Pam Champion, Events Cttee	01869 343284
Janet Brown, Social Cttee	01865 862498

N. CAMPBELL

THE TASS SUMMER FAIR

In past years the summer fair has sometimes seemed dull and hollow, but this year, TASS seemed to have found the winning formula. There was a captivating variety of stalls and entertainments, as there has been on past occasions, but



From the Sublime...

this time the event benefited from a real community atmosphere. The dull grey Saturday seemed to have deterred none of the steady stream of visitors flowing onto Waste Court field, towards the smell of barbecue cooking and the shouting of the more eager stall-holders. The sports hall was already filled with a milling crowd by the time Nick Higham, from the BBC, announced the official opening of the fair.

Thus loosed, the crowd made for the stalls, their contents ranging from professional arts and crafts,

such as ceramic and glassware, and the school's very own Young Enterprise companies, to some rather forlorn looking items from lost property, finally finding new homes. Numerous raffles touted for business and an auction was held, drawing a great and enthusiastic crowd with enticing offers such as hot air balloon rides and free ironing. If shopping was tiring then amusement was abundant, featuring spirited performances from the Big Band, the Abingdon Academicals and the little publicised Fencing Club.

Business was looking rosy for the entrepreneur who convinced certain members of staff to take a turn in the stocks and suffer a barrage of sponges and even buckets of water. The climax of the day for some was the drenching of **Mr. Hunter** in a cascade of green slime. The Abingdon spirit is patently alive and well.

The success of the event was largely due to the inventive enterprises of the Lower School who provided a plethora of games and activities, inviting you to splat a rat, dunk a ball or beat a goalie. Thanks must undoubtedly head in their direction for their unfaltering enthusiasm. Once the ear-splittingly bad P.A. system was silenced and the dull grey sky be-



... to the Ridiculous?

came bespeckled with colourful helium balloons, nobody could deny that the Summer Fair was a resounding success, and that it will have raised a lot of money for travel bursaries and for projects such as the proposed biology greenhouse. Well done TASS!

J. TERRY 6RVS-S

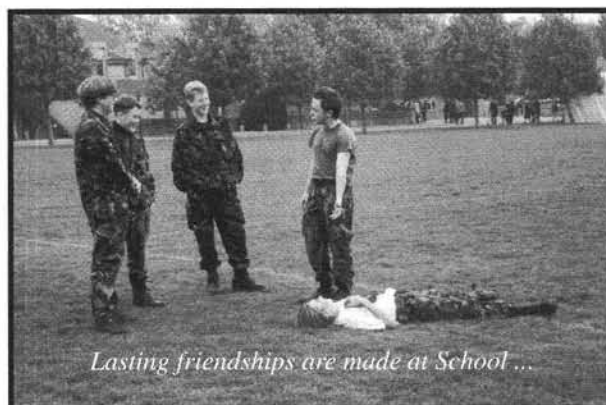
MATTHEW HARDING, O. A. A Careers' talk

As most of the school, and the general public know, **Matthew Harding** is one of Britain's most prominent businessmen. He is landlord of Stamford Bridge, Chelsea Football Club's home territory but was banned from the directors' box as a result of the well documented disagreement with Chelsea's chairman Ken Bates. Today, Mr. Harding was visiting Abingdon School in order to give careers advice to members of the Lower Sixth. We did not know quite what to expect - we had heard about the man who had generously donated to the Mercers' Court project, and we had read about the same man responsible for exciting the interest of the media.

So, several interested parties gathered in the "Matthew Harding Careers' Room". Mr. Harding was already there, sipping a bottle of "Evian" mineral water. He was dressed in a smart grey suit, which is what we had expected. He began the session with a discussion about events in his life and how we could learn from them. He left school with only Economics A level, and through pure hard work and one auspicious opportunity, managed to turn himself into the multi-millionaire who was addressing us. Mr. Harding was an interesting man, obviously very intelligent, and provided a helpful pool of information for us to savour.

Throughout the talk, we learned of his passion for Chelsea Football Club, the most important factors contributing to his success: "relationships, relationships and relationships", and his most valuable piece of advice about careers, namely: "For God's sake, do something you enjoy". All in all, I think that we spent an enjoyable afternoon with a friendly and entertaining man.

T. WILSON-NORTH 6SCW



Lasting friendships are made at School ...

MUNNA MITRA

“We have no prima donnas in the Classics Department”, boomed the man whose mantle I had been appointed to take on. “We all teach everybody. You’ve just got to make sure you’re dynamic and enthusiastic and keep the numbers up.”

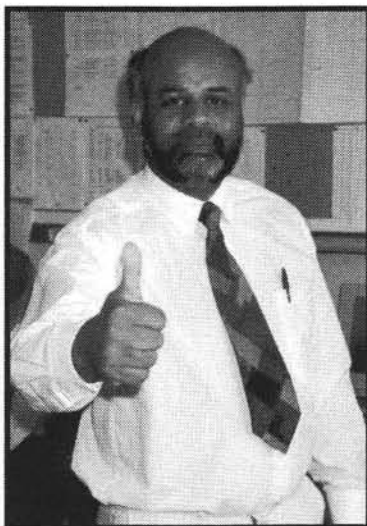
Munna Mitra, retiring as Head of Classics to take up the housemastership of Waste Court, was obviously anxious that the superb department he had built up should not be allowed to wither in the hands of someone who looked, and was, nervous at the prospect of having to follow such a stylish act as his. The fact that the numbers have kept up is to a large degree due to Munna’s continued and vigorous presence in the department. He arrived at Abingdon in January 1985 as head of department. In his three and a half years in the post, his love of classics, together with his huge personality and energetic teaching methods, attracted large numbers of boys to study his subject. It was Munna who revived the tradition of classics trips abroad. Never one to do things by halves, he took a party of fifty-eight to Italy in October 1988, following the success of his trip to Greece the year before.

It is difficult adequately to describe Munna’s teaching methods, though having taught in the room next to him for eight years I should have a pretty clear idea! His stentorian voice was ever to be heard thundering through the party wall and beyond, as he castigated a boy - usually in detailed anatomical terms - for not remembering some basic fact of Latin or Greek grammar. Not for Munna the gadgets and gimmicks available to teachers [even of classics!] in the technological age: without the use of videos, slides, CD ROMs, or OHPs, he imparted information in the most entertaining and memorable way, with dry wit, humour and sheer infectious enjoyment of his subject. He had the highest expectations of his pupils, and they seldom failed him.

An alumnus of Keble College, Oxford, and a distinguished classical scholar with a gift for stylish Latin and Greek composition, he was happiest when teaching bottom sets and boys who found Latin difficult.

On his arrival at the school in 1985, Munna became tutor in Randolph’s House, which responsibility he discharged in a characteristically caring and efficient manner. His pastoral skills went with him

to Waste Court in April 1988. Unstinting of their time, he and **Nicola** pursued a welcoming, open-house policy towards the boys, who were encouraged to feel that there was a sympathetic ear available when needed. Many of us remember with pleasure those delightful Waste Court social occasions, especially the annual barbecue, genially presided over by Munna and Nicola.



Sport has always played an important part in Munna’s life. A magnificent cricketer himself, he ran the cricket at Abingdon for two years and devoted endless hours to coaching and encouraging lower school teams. He played for the Oxford Diocese [and became captain] in the years when Oxford won the Church Times Cup repeatedly. In the 1990 final he was named Man of the Match, and his photograph appeared in the Daily Telegraph

with the caption, “The Rector of Abingdon School” - much to his amusement. His playing career [and Oxford’s run of successes] ended in 1994, when in the final he aggravated a knee injury he had suffered on the squash court a few months earlier.

Munna’s ordination as deacon in 1988 and priest in 1989 deepened a close and fruitful connection with St. Nicolas’ Church and with the Christian life of the school. It is as Chaplain that he goes to Christ’s Hospital, where he and Nicola will undoubtedly touch the lives of many, as they have here, by the example of their deep faith. There are many of us at Abingdon, boys, O.A.s and staff, who owe Munna a huge debt of gratitude. It is with our best wishes that he leaves, and our hopes that he, Nicola, **Eleanor**, **James**, and **Emily** will find happiness and fulfilment in their new lives at Horsham.

J. FISHPOOL

RUPERT MILNER

Rupert Milner joined the staff in September 1987 from the department of Education at Oxford University where he had gone from the city to complete a postgraduate certificate in education. A man of many parts, Rupert taught French and Latin, accompanied exchanges and visits abroad, taught and then also ran General Studies, ran debating and public speaking, coached hockey and athletics (and which in a moment of inexplicable but typical generosity he agreed to run for his final season); he was also Master of Scholars, a sixth

form and then a scholars' tutor. This bald list does, though, little to sum up the man for whom no enterprise was ever too routine to be devoid of interest: Rupert was interested in everything: always hungry for knowledge, he was the perpetual student and as such would both inspire and exasperate his charges. 'It's not a question of "either/or"', he would jest, "but



both". Abingdon was the richer for his omnidirectional energies and selfless commitment.

Visitor after visitor from France had to be convinced that Rupert was not French, and his command of the language was enviable. He wore this learning lightly and was, much to the bemusement of his pupils, more interested in the difference of men, manners and mentality than in the acquisition of the language. Still, he taught the latter patiently, seeking sometimes desperately for the evasive, perfect formulae for the imperfect and perfect tenses. He would coach the very brightest for 'Oxbridge' entrance exams and the slowest for GCSE where his equable, tolerant if quizzical manner nearly always won through and would always win affection. He was unstinting in his efforts to awaken boys' curiosity by getting them to want to learn for themselves. Rare to anger, rarer still to show impatience or frustration, Rupert's rhythms were upbeat as he prodded those around him out of intellectual inactivity.

Rupert was the first to admit that the most rewarding aspect of his job was the pastoral work with his tutees. Both as sixth form and scholars' tutor, he bombarded his boys with often useless information and unanswerable questions to stir them into life, but he also had a keen but sensitive interest in his tutees' well-being and at the heart of all his work was the most genuinely inspired concern for his fellow men. His touch with pupils and tutees was always light, at best deft, at worst indulgent, and his impeccable, cheerful good manners were an example to grumpier, less gracious colleagues and boys alike.

Schoolmasters' names and reputations are, of course, 'writ in water', and so Abingdon will find

replacements for Rupert, but somehow it is difficult to imagine mixing that particular and intoxicating cocktail that was Rupert's qualities, and Abingdon will seem a duller place without him. We wish him every happiness and success as he casts off his temporary bachelor existence to rejoin his family in Kent where he takes up the post of head of French at Holmwood House.

A. PETTITT

JOHN OXLADE

John Oxlade must be the most enigmatic person in the Common Room. Self-effacing to a fault, the real man only emerges with and through his music. A keyboard player of rare distinction, as an accompanist he is wholly supportive, utterly reliable and sensitive to both the music and the person or group he is accompanying. We have



seen this as he led the Junior Choir, accompanied the Choral Society or encouraged many nervous Associated Board candidates through their examinations. In all this his expertise and musicianship shone through, but perhaps most of all in his role of school Organist, which he loved and to which he contributed so much, playing for services and giving recitals, and not least being the prime mover in the School obtaining the splendid organ which now graces the Chapel. Imagine his delight when one of his recent pupils gained an organ scholarship to Magdalene College, Cambridge.

The more recent revival of interest in Gilbert and Sullivan at Abingdon is also due to John's energy and enthusiasm for light operetta, and many

members of Common Room have been persuaded onto the stage or concert platform as a result. His talents as a choir trainer were made very clear in his preparation and performance of J. S. Bach's St. John Passion with the school Choral Society, quite one of the best performances heard in the Amey Hall during the last five years and much enjoyed by everyone who took part.

John has a wide and varied musical taste, but if there is one period above others with which he has special affinity it is probably the Victorian and Edwardian era in the music of Parry, Sullivan and Elgar, to name a few. Opera is another passion, particularly the opera of Donizetti, and through it has grown John's admiration for singers of excellence, notably for Dame Joan Sutherland, even to the extent of bidding for and acquiring some of her operatic stage costumes and jewellery in a recent auction. Kathleen Ferrier is another singer that he rated very highly indeed. He has corresponded with her sister Winifred Ferrier and he has even tracked down a distant relative of her family who is at present in Abingdon School. His record, tape and CD collection must be second only to that of the Oxford library and he has a prodigious amount of knowledge about music in its widest and fullest sense.

John read Music and History at Corpus Christi College, Cambridge after which he spent a short time in the Foreign Office. Fourteen years ago he came to Abingdon first as a peripatetic teacher of keyboard and since then he has taught class music, history and geography as well as piano and organ. He was well respected as a tutor in Mearns' House, being caring and thoughtful of a diverse group of personalities. At Cambridge he took part in Athletics and this interest continued here with his overseeing the Cross Country Running Club. And did you know that he is a model railway enthusiast, boasting of a Hornby Double 0, still in working order?

We wish him and Susie well in the future as he plays a larger part in music in Oxford and Abingdon, thank him for his inspirational work here and hope that he will always feel he has many friends at Abingdon School following his musical achievements.

F. BURROW

ROBERT SHAW-SMITH

Robert joined us in September 1994 from Mill Hill to teach Ancient History, Greek and Latin. He settled in quickly and was able to relate easily to those he taught with his dry, ready wit and seemingly relaxed manner. He faced the challenging task of taking over a Lower Sixth tutor group

in mid-flow but he took this in his stride and his unconventional, forthright tutor reports soon showed he had got to know his group well.

In the short time he was here Robert made a



considerable impact on the school's drama scene. His first role was as Lord Shaftesbury in **Mr. Taylor's** production of 'The Ragged Child' followed by an imaginative direction of Pinter's 'The Birthday Party'. His final and probably best remembered role was as a most convincing Rochester in 'Jane Eyre'.

We shall miss Robert as he goes with Geraldine to the USA where she has an Assistant Professorship at the Emory University in Atlanta. He says he will miss us and takes happy memories as he starts a part-time post teaching Latin at the Holy Innocence Episcopal School in Atlanta. He is quite sanguine about this but I don't think it will be long before he is running a small theatre company in Atlanta: whatever happens we all wish him the best of luck.

J. TOWNSEND

NATHALIE HERNANDEZ

Nathalie Hernandez's application as an assistant was not particularly auspicious: sitting opposite her best friend at the university library in Aix-en-Provence, she was idly asked whether she had thought of spending a year in England. Why? Because a friend was just writing to the Headmaster to inform him that she had chosen to go to Westminster College rather than to Abingdon School. Perhaps Nathalie should apply? Thank goodness that she did!

Nothing if not 'exigeante', her first move was

to book a flight to Gatwick and play on the Headmaster's chivalry such that a member of the Modern Languages department was despatched to collect her. Smartly dressed in a pin-striped suit (soon to be abandoned in favour of more cheerful garb), unsmiling



and nervous, she arrived to be met by an enormous sign BIENVENUE NATHALIE, written in coloured letters, attached most elegantly to a broomstick. Her first, uncertain smiles soon gave way to the infectious if piercing peals of laughter which were to dominate the airwaves of top corridor and the MCR.

Nathalie taught boys from the Second Year to the Upper Sixth, concentrating on the exam years. It is the lot of the assistant to tolerate a good deal of repetitive work on aspects of teaching which many pupils find less than congenial, but Nathalie injected enthusiasm, verve and fun into her lessons which were carefully prepared and intelligently integrated into the mainstream teaching. She was an enormously flexible team teacher, endlessly sensitive and patient with staff and pupils. She understood how to occupy that grey area which is the assistant's territory, no longer student but not quite teacher, and her rapport with pupils was excellent: fizzy, funny but totally professional - one had the impression that boys looked forward to their lessons, even those falling in private study periods. She was punctual, after 9.30 a.m., totally reliable and willing to put in much more than the statutory twelve hours of teaching stipulated in her contract. As such she was also able to take a lot more from Abingdon and, by the time she left us, she had established herself as a much liked and respected member of staff, leaving behind many friends who will wish her well and who look forward to hearing news of what will be a very bright and successful career.

A. PETTITT

SONJA SCHOENMAKERS

The German department, not always noted for its sartorial elegance, ruthless efficiency and good looks, was not prepared for Sonja, but her arrival in September 1995 as the new German assistant primed to inject some Teuton-



ic rigour into our proceedings was quickly appreciated. Sonja was devastatingly well organised and soon developed a series of intelligent, intriguing lessons. An historian by training, Sonja sought to widen pupils' understanding of German culture and history beyond the inevitable Third Reich, and then to analyse more critically and closely such knowledge and prejudices as her pupils had. Yet Sonja proved to be equally at home with the more mundane preparation for GCSE exams and she withstood the treadmill of set questions and answers with good grace and patience, insisting on important detail but creating a sense of pride in the boys so that they strove to achieve their best.

Sonja's conscientiousness in carrying out her duties as an assistant was complemented by her generous help in providing and cataloguing materials and in writing model answers for hard-pressed teachers. She went way beyond what was required of her, always volunteering to invigilate examinations or stand in for colleagues in an emergency. From German declamation prizes to German cafés on Open Day, Sonja could be relied upon to organise and to participate. This marked her out as one of the best assistants in a long line of distinguished students from Germany.

What did Sonja gain from us? Certainly admiration, attentiveness and some proper affection from the boys (never has German seemed so popular). And possibly, in a year away from the stress of public examinations, the freedom to relax a little, the (frequent) opportunities to appreciate British wit and,

some might say, to develop and show her own sense of humour. The German department will be less distinguished in her absence and we shall miss her as she leaves to take up her studies at Münster. We hope that her threats to visit us will be carried out!

A. PETTIT

OLGA AFANASOVA

Dr. G. Rolfe writes:

In her short time as Russian assistant at the school she came to love it and was impressed by the coordination of all the various departments. It made her aware of how important it is to have a well selected staff. She pays tribute to the boys and to the staff under whom she was working most directly and expresses her thanks:



Несмотря на очень короткое пребывание в этой школе, я успела её любить. Не перестаю восхищаться чёткой скоординированностью работы всех отделений школы. На пример Абингдон Сццоол видишь, какую важную роль играет умело подобранный педагогический коллектив. Приятно

удивили ученики — серьёзные и воспитанные мальчики. Особенно хочется отметить работу отделения русского языка — это преподаватели, прекрасно знающие свой предмет и просто добрые, понимающие люди.

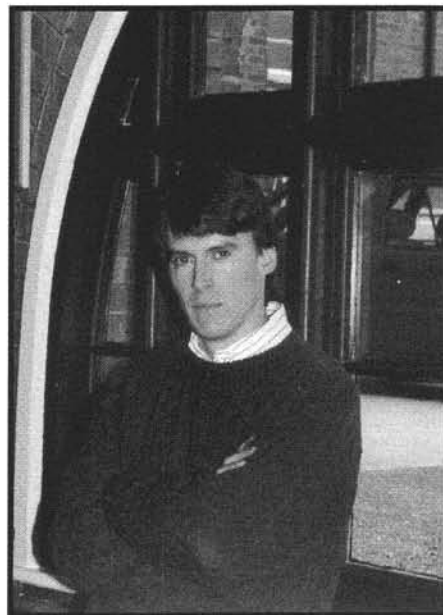
Спасибо!

Ольга Афанасова

NICK RAWLINSON

Somewhere back in early 1995 while debating with myself where to go on my sabbatical in the Michaelmas term and as **Mr. Macdonald** debated with himself about how best to organise his Summer term sabbatical, it slowly dawned on us that Someone would have to be found

to take our lessons. This Someone would, of course, have to be unbelievably versatile and not mind being unemployed between January and April... An international trawl yielded some possibilities but eventually vague stirrings of memory rediscovered the long-



lost name of **Nick Rawlinson** - OA, actor, academic and friend. Contact was re-established, various possibilities fell into place and Someone was found.

Nick Rawlinson dropped straight into place in September and taught the full age range with great initiative and enthusiasm despite having had no previous teaching experience. He did all the interesting teaching bits while **Mr. Evans** and **Mr. Macdonald** did all the boring bits of my job. The right sort of happy chuckles and indiscipline came from Room 11, everybody had a welcome change from its resident bore and everything went very well.

Nick helped with Drama teaching, took boys to the theatre and to university open days, helped with rowing and wholeheartedly entered into school life. Best of all he reduced the average age of the English Department by a significant margin. On my return he spent four months writing a play, producing and starring in an excellent performance of 'Hamlet' in Oxford and gathering his strength for another term, pretending to be Mr. Macdonald.

The Summer term was just as successful, except that the funny noises came from Room 12, but had the added spice of a mysterious disappearance before half term that turned out to be a trip to the USA where he got married and had a brief honeymoon. Apparently quite unaffected by this slight change of lifestyle, he finished the term with his usual unflappable, good-humoured style and only the very observant noticed that his car seemed to have acquired

a driver.

Nick Rawlinson has now moved on to make a start at the Bristol Old Vic Theatre School, which is what he has always wanted to do. We all enjoyed his time here and he deserves heartfelt congratulations and our warmest thanks. We also wish him good luck in his theatrical career and hope that he and Tania have a long and happy married life.

G. BARRETT

On the retirement of the School Gardener, Mr. Keeble, the Headmaster delivered this appreciation:

When **David Keeble** joined us at Abingdon in 1982, the school gardens were not, it must be said, distinguished by what the Victorians used to call "high keeping". In fact, to put it bluntly, they were in a sad way. Apart from one or two areas which had been fortunate in receiving the detailed attentions of devoted individuals, most of the school's gardens were treated to a regime which could be summed up in the advice "if it waves chop it down - and then drown it in paraquat!"

This was a pity since the land on which the School now stands has been more or less devotedly tilled, it would appear, since Roman times - and, certainly, since the later Middle Ages. Famous names have paid attention to our grounds in the past, and the remains of their work can still be seen in places such as the Jekyll Garden, wrongly so called. David Keeble moved swiftly to bring about a more civilised and sophisticated approach to the care of our garden grounds and found ready sympathy for his efforts among staff and parents alike. The appearance of the school grounds as a whole has been transformed by his kindly hand, and certain areas in particular have taken on a whole new life. David has been responsible for the creation of the bog garden beside the Lodge, the dining hall garden, and, of course, the new courtyard garden at Mercers' Court - and, on a much larger scale, for the total re-modelling of the area known as the Jekyll garden and the yew garden in the grounds of Lacies Court, as well as for the progressive re-shaping of the grounds of Waste Court and the Crescent houses. All of these are now stocked with plants and shrubs of exceptional quality and beauty, some of them unusual and a few, indeed, rare - all combined in shapes, forms and patterns of colour which give delight throughout the year.

David's achievement has been all the more remarkable because a garden is by its nature a fragile thing and a school is not by any means the easiest place in which to establish one. I have mentioned

the appreciation for David's work among staff and parents, and indeed this has been widespread and unstinted: I know, however, that David has often wished, ruefully, that the boys had shown a quarter as much consideration for his efforts as their elders! However, in this most important battle of all, David has come out the winner in the end - I have no doubt that the boys who have been lucky enough to have their schooling at Abingdon in recent years have actually been affected, strongly, and for the better, by the experience of moving and working among the beautiful evidences of David's handiwork. To grow up in a fine garden is one of the rarest privileges and David has contributed, far more than his modesty would allow, to the quality of our total achievement at Abingdon.

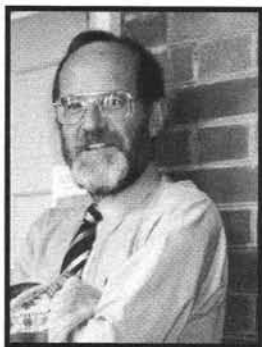
David is a horticultural scholar, a plantsman of formidable learning, as well as a natural grower and tender of living things. He has brought originality and thoughtfulness to his work as well as unlimited quantities of good, honest effort - all spiced with a lively liking for conversation! We shall miss him, grievously, for all of these qualities, and will remember him with the affectionate respect suggested by Kipling in his poem, "The Glory of the Garden":

"Our England is a garden, and such gardens are not
made
By singing 'Oh how beautiful!' and sitting in the shade,
While better men than we go out and spend their
working lives
At grubbing weeds from gravel paths with broken
dinner knives.
Old Adam was a gardener, and God who made him sees
That half a proper gardener's work is done upon his
knees,
So that when your work is finished, you can wash your
hands and pray
For the glory of the garden, that it may not pass away!"
M. ST. JOHN PARKER.

RON COCKERILL

Many boys at Abingdon will not have heard of Ron: but they will all have used the many items of equipment he made and repaired during his fourteen years at the school. He came to us after being Head of Science at Larkmead School, as workshop technician. He used his wide variety of skills in the science workshop; but kept up his hobby as an expert silver and goldsmith. He has also made several working steam models and is at the moment constructing a large model engine. He has thrived on the challenges of turning the science department's rough ideas into effective equipment. He leaves us with our very best wishes.

R. STRAWSON



RUSSELL SMITH

Russell has been a member of the Mathematics teaching staff for only one year, but has succeeded in making a big impression on many, both pupils and staff, by his tremendously cheerful and positive approach to all he has done; teaching, certainly, but even more so in his extra curricular activities.

His work with the Ten Tors expedition, particularly exciting as it was this year, proved invaluable. It stemmed from his personal experience of Dartmoor and of the event's organisation; and in similar vein his knowledge of navigation and expedition planning has been of real value to those groups preparing the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme.

C. BIGGS



JOHN CLARE

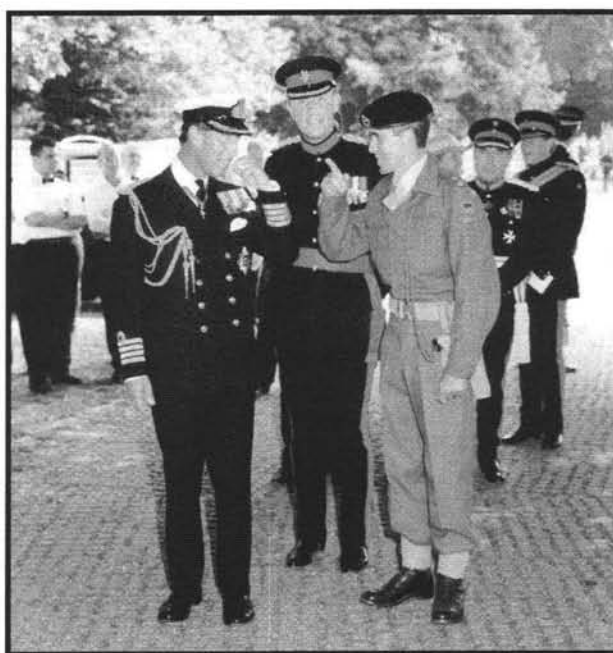
John came to Abingdon to run the History department and in that rôle and many others has drawn on his particularly impressive intellect. His sheer breadth of historical knowledge and his phenomenal memory ensured that he was seldom caught out by the searching questions of his pupils or his colleagues. His knowledge in wider spheres, of Politics, the History of Art, Hymnology and Church history has been a wonder to many, and will have inspired successive generations of Abingdonians. John has also thrown himself into many "other-half" activities: be it speaking in Debates, singing in the Choral Society or encouraging the resurgence of Fencing in the school.

C. BIGGS

INDIVIDUAL ACHIEVEMENTS:



Matthew Lloyd at The Royal Society, where he received a Gold Medal in the Physics Challenge.



Mr. David Carson, Buildings and Grounds Manager, doubtless discussing Abingdon School's architecture.

Mr. Griffin, who was a master at the school from 1947 until 1991, died on 18th December 1995. An appreciation of him, and his own reminiscences, appear in The Abingdonian for 1991. We therefore print below the address given at his funeral on what would have been his seventy-fifth birthday.

MR. L. C. J. GRIFFIN



The greatest weakness of John Griffin, as well as his most engaging characteristic, was self-effacing modesty. When I reminded him, two days before his death, of the deep love and respect in which he was universally held, his slow smile betokened both incredulity and embarrassment. And yet John exercised the widest influence for good on pupils and colleagues alike of any schoolmaster that I have known. That this should be said of a man so wholly devoid of worldly ambition is an irony that would have appealed to the wry humour of a truly GENTLE-MAN. To have known him as a colleague has been an education in itself and to have enjoyed his friendship has been a privilege that I have shared with many of you.

None of you will be surprised that in his last days John showed the same dignity, restraint and grace that had marked the whole of his long and distinguished career. Although the physical energy that had animated the most vital of lives for more than seven decades had at the last ebbed away, John's spirit remained indomitable and his consideration for the feelings of others was undimmed. For all the evident

relish with which he had embraced life, he was concerned that his beloved family and friends should be reassured that he was reconciled even to the last enemy, death.

John was in every particular the model schoolmaster. For forty-four years of ceaseless change and dynamic growth he dedicated himself to the service of Abingdon School alone, until his retirement in 1991. Sir James Cobban, who had appointed him in 1947, called John the ideal "continuity man", wholly reliable, supremely professional and unerringly supportive. When as a fourteen-year-old he had visited the school to play in a cricket match, he had even then taken a shine to both the place and the boys. As a master he found fulfilment there in a bewildering variety of roles. Not only a fine Classicist with a gift for enthusing bright pupils with a lasting love for Latin and Greek literature, John also showed infinite patience with unpromising boys and nursed them to hard-earned success. In his early years he also taught A-level English, he revived drama at the school in 1948 and for twenty-five years thereafter he produced the then annual school play. He ran the popular stamp club, he organised the Founder's Day celebrations each year and he was heavily involved with sports. Having been captain of cricket at Jesus College as an undergraduate, for years he coached schoolboys and played for the excellent Common Room team. Even more remarkably he ran the school hockey for a prodigious thirty-two years until 1980. Early on he had been involved with Scouts, but subsequently he derived much pleasure and pride in establishing the Naval Section of the Combined Cadet Force and he went on to lead the whole corps with distinction as Commander, R.N.R.. He was a natural to help prepare the fittest boys for the arduous Ten Tors event and in 1954 he and Diana revived the pre-War tradition of taking boys on European expeditions. For ten years they delighted in opening the eyes of pupils to the cultural riches of Italy, Greece, France, Switzerland and Austria, dealing with the alarms of boys mislaid in Milan cathedral and of missed train connections with the admirable sang-froid of seasoned and inveterate travellers.

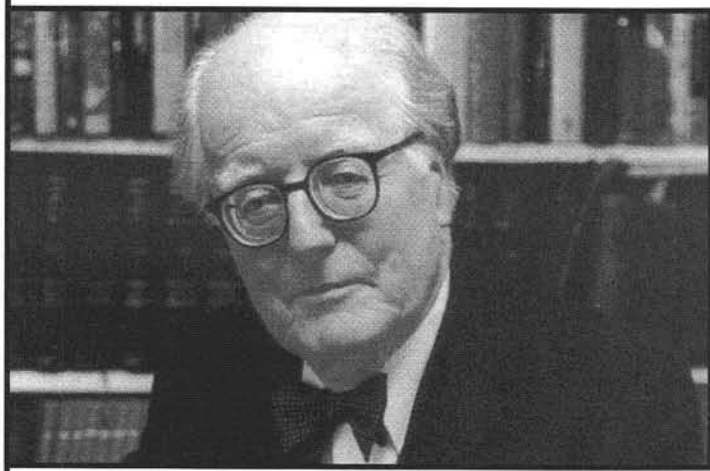
For fifteen years until 1965 Lacies Court was the happy home of the Griffin family. The garden there was John's especial delight and was sorely missed when they moved to Wootton. Only after the move did he cease to be a member of the Chapel Choir and the lesson reader at Sunday services most admired for the clarity of his diction and the sensitivity of his interpretation. When the dayboy houses were established in 1978 his great pastoral gifts and universal popularity made John an ideal tutor. Those needing the gentlest handling and greatest patience

were fortunate if they found themselves in his tutor group and his end-of-term reports were justly famous for their perceptiveness and elegant economy. Even as the doyen of Common Room John continued to sparkle in the classroom and to serve his head of department and his housemaster with unswerving loyalty. And yet his friendship was as unobtrusive as it was generous. He remained essentially private in spite of his genial and urbane manner. Like many versatile, creative and intelligent men he was also sensitive and vulnerable. He could feel indignant if he thought that he had been wronged, but he was too big a man to let his discomfiture show. Very little ever ruffled the habitual exterior calm. He would rather seek solace in the delicate craft of the silversmith or in the pursuit of rare stamps. And all the time his family was the invariable source of moral support and unaffected pride.

John's success as a man and as a teacher cannot be gauged in terms of tangible and ostentatious monuments. He was unusually free of egotism. Rather his authority and influence resided in the warmth of affection and esteem in which he was held by all who knew him because of his outstanding integrity. Whether pupil or peer, one could not help using him as the benchmark of one's own striving, for his sincerity and simplicity were artless and disarming. Therefore his contribution to the development and formation of generations of schoolboys and his influence upon colleagues of all ages were immense. His humanity and warmth will be greatly missed, but we can take some comfort that he died as he had lived - with Stoical restraint and absence of fuss. We commend him to his Maker with gratitude for a life that was well lived. May he rest in peace and rise in glory.

A. MITRA

JUDGE PATRICK MEDD,
26 May 1919 -15 October 1995



Patrick Medd's formal connection with Abingdon School began in 1964, when he was appointed Recorder of Abingdon and so became *ex officio* a Governor of the School. But he could be said to have begun his life as a close neighbour, since he was born at No.64 Bath Street, in the house which stands between the Warehouse and Mercers' Court - a fact which afforded him some wry amusement when, in the early nineteen nineties, the property in question came to feature prominently in the business of Abingdon Governors' meetings. He might be said to have been born to the law, since his father was a solicitor and the great Sir Samuel Romilly was an ancestor, but there were family connections to a range of professions, and his own interests in life were always notably catholic; he was particularly attached to his roots in the Abingdon district, however.

After Abberley Hall, Patrick Medd went on to Uppingham School, where he showed marked mathematical and scientific aptitude, and developed a consuming interest in steam engines and ships which led him to seek a career as a naval architect, beginning with an apprenticeship in the Clyde shipyards. But the din of the primitive riveting processes then in use caused him to recoil from this early ambition with impaired hearing, and he turned instead to the law, at Selwyn College, Cambridge. 1938 was an inauspicious time at which to commence a university course, however, and he was shortly snatched away to serve in the army, first with the South Staffordshire regiment and then as an artillery officer with the East African Brigade, in Madagascar and Burma, where he saw bitter fighting. His wartime experiences marked him deeply, though they did not apparently scar him; perhaps as much as anything they served to enhance his instinctive feeling for humane values.

After the war, he returned to Cambridge and to the law, being called to the Bar from the Middle Temple in 1947. He built a practice on the Midland and Oxford circuit, and also nourished political ambitions, which seemed likely to prosper when he made a good showing as Conservative candidate for Swindon at the General Election of May 1955. To his disappointment, however, he was never adopted as candidate for a winnable constituency, although he was not without influence over the reshaping of Conservative party policy during the 1950s, and was appointed OBE in 1962 for his services in that connection. It is arguable that he was too modest, reasonable, and essentially nice to succeed in the political rat-race. Fortunately, these qualities were less of a bar to his progress in the legal profession. He was appointed Junior Counsel to the Inland Rev-

enue in 1968, a position which has normally been the prelude to high distinction; he became a QC in 1973, and a circuit judge in 1981. Recognised as an authority in legal matters concerning Income Tax and the Trade Unions, he served as Presiding Special Commissioner of Income Tax from 1990-1992, and as President of the VAT Tribunals from 1988-1992, when he formally retired from the law.

For most of his later life, Patrick lived in Abingdon - in East St. Helen Street, opposite the church - or at Little Place, Clifton Hampden. Here he was able to develop his deep love of history and architecture, and, most especially, for gardening - in short, his instinctive feeling of place. Equally at home in town or country, he alternated happily between the formality of black coat with bowler hat and rustic tweeds with battered Panama, but his heart was in the Thames Valley, and his favourite view, against which he chose to be painted in due course, looked out from the windows of his beautiful Jacobean home to the slopes of Wittenham Clumps.

Abingdon was extraordinarily fortunate to enjoy the services of a man of such calibre as Patrick Medd throughout the time of his busy and ever-expanding career. He served as a Governor continuously from 1964 until 1990, for the last seven years as Chairman. To begin with, his connection was perhaps more formal than substantial, but the shrewdness and weight of his legal skill came to give him a more and more commanding place in the councils of the Board. His carefully crafted opinions now rest in the archives, alongside similar documents written for the School by his forebear Sir Samuel Romilly - a coincidence much to Patrick's liking. Meanwhile his own concern for the business of education, particularly of the meritocratic sort, grew and developed *pari passu* with the progress of the School itself. His tastes and interests gave him ample common ground with the staff, who, for their part, came to value him more and more as a judicious and kindly promoter of their professional status. He had an unaffected liking for young people, whom he always treated with a kindly courtesy that set them at their ease far better than misplaced attempts at joky fraternisation; it was at the invitation of two senior boys, **Benan Omar** and **Stephen Turner**, that he agreed to preside, in full judicial robes, over a very seriously conducted mock trial, staged for educational purposes in the Lower Library in 1993, an occasion which plainly afforded him as much satisfaction as it did the other participants. On the larger scale, he had a clear sense of the School's position both in the locality and more widely, and patiently supported and promoted a long term strategy of development and growth. He believed passionately in the importance of providing

opportunity for talent, but felt equally strongly about the sense of duty and obligation which opportunity should evoke. It was characteristic, therefore, that he should endow, on a handsome scale, a prize to be awarded annually for the most promising boy leaving the school to embark on a career in the law or public service.

In fact, Patrick's gifts to the School were legion, many of them made so discreetly that they were almost anonymous, particularly those which benefited the gardens or the social life of the place. He delighted in entertaining the members of the Masters' Common Room in his own beautiful gardens at Clifton Hampden, was unfailingly assiduous in his attendance at School events and functions, and vastly enjoyed presiding, with unassertive benignity, over such stately ceremonials as the Foundation Dinner or the annual Prize Giving. He took a keen and informed interest in the programme of building works - not for nothing had one of his relatives helped in the design of the New Delhi - and it seemed a particularly appropriate tribute to his multi-faceted involvement with the School that the Headmaster's new study in Mercers' Court should be named in his honour the Medd Room. This room now houses the collection of biographical works which he bequeathed to the School in his will, as an annexe to the Grundy Library - a collection which includes his own elegant and scholarly biography of Sir Samuel Romilly. Patrick's portrait, painted by Muriel Goddard, hangs on the stairs of the School office, outside "his" room. It is an unusual exercise in water colour, which in its delicacy and wealth of detail catches the unusual, even quirky, but always humane and ultimately serene character of this lovable man.

Patrick Medd died of cancer, after putting his affairs in order with meticulous thoroughness and writing his memoirs. There was something Roman about his fortitude during those last months, but more still of the eighteenth century in his calmly humorous benevolence - he was, perhaps, a Georgian born out of time. He maintained his interest in, and care for the School to the very end, and it was fitting that members of the Foundation should have made significant contributions to the memorial service which was held for him in Dorchester Abbey on Saturday, 2 December: musicians played and sang, and prefects acted as ushers for a crowded congregation, in which the Lord Chancellor, Lord Mackay of Clashfern led a galaxy of the great and good in mourning one who would have repudiated both those epithets for himself, with a laugh, but who nonetheless deserved them more than most.

M. ST. JOHN PARKER

Cultural Reflections

EDITORIAL

The focus of this year's literary work was poetry, not only because of work produced by pupils, but also due to visiting lecturers and the library's poetry poll. Many boys have written poems over the course of the year, most notably **William Burn**, who was so prolific that we have not been able to include a number of his submissions in this issue, due to the lack of

space. The poet, Oxford don and father of one of Abingdon's pupils, Craig Raine, gave a talk to the sixth form, who had seen his play '1953' the week before. The poetry poll proved successful, with "The World of Mules" by Ogden Nash gaining the most votes, with the notable runners-up being Zach de la Rocha's "Freedom" and Simon Armitage's "Very Simply Topping Up The Brake Fluid". Wilfred Owen, Norman Silver and Seamus Heaney also appeared - all contributing to an impressive selection of the school's taste in poetry.

S. PAVLOVICH 6RVS-S



CHINA EYE

A perfect mirror.
 Oil on water becomes
 Water on oil.
 The jet-black pitch of
 Cloud and night is
 Lit by a reflection of a distant fire.
 The iris,
 Floating on a depth
 Unimaginable, and
 The pupil,
 Set at a
 Point unknown, somewhere,
 Between here and far.
 But the stillness of an eye,
 Played over by light,
 Is not here; for
 Water rises and adores
 The morning glory of another place.

W. BURN 6DLS

HAIKU

Just a few lines is
 All it takes to make a good
 And clever haiku!

B. CULLUM 6DE

DEATH OF A POET

Cynicism and whisky.
 Romanticism, drugs and bed bugs,
 Next the big jump.

W. ROLLIN 6JPW

AN OBLIGATION

I might have stepped off the boat,
 Into a New
 World,
 Existence, leaving it all
 Behind me.
 Across the room, out of the door,
 Across the beach, littered, the bay and then
 The sea. I too
 Am split, littered, memories drown
 And devour me.
 Fodder to thatched cattle.
 I cannot loose the past from the present
 Else I would be lost.
 Yet I cannot visualise that
 Which I have left. If spiritual,
 It haunts me: I have to explain, I have to plead
 "I did not wish to leave,
 I did not."
 A judge and jury sit,
 They are those I have known:
 Callum from the village,
 Alex of the butcher's (he stayed nearby),
 Queen Mary,
 A Pict from a history book with pictures I never
 read,
 Macbeth.
 They all exist, but do not need
 To judge.
 Condemned, I simply am
 Ill at ease,
 Never reconciled,
 Never home.

N. MUNRO 6SAE

TWO SEA POEMS

The sea, a crushing uneasy distracted young boy.
 Mixing his emotions, taking it out on the sea,
 playing, toying with it.
 His anger creating fierce strong waves,
 His happiness creating sweet calm seas, and
 beautiful sunsets.
 The boy is the influence of the sea.
 The influence to capsize fishing trawlers.
 And the influence to flood the tabletop beaches, flat
 and innocent.

G. STALCUP 1RJS

As it moves quietly, and slowly up and up it
 pounces over on to its prey.
 It moves like a dying animal, trying to escape,
 It roars and it clashes against its enemy,
 But fails, all is calm,
 Then as it is quiet it pounces back gaining all its
 strength and clashes,
 Finally the fight is over,
 They both disappear.

T. DIXON 1IAM

*Both these poems won prizes in the National Poetry
 competition - Ed.*

NORMAN SILVER

Norman Silver is an author and poet who originates from South Africa. He has written three novels and many poems, the majority of his work being about and for teenagers. He was due to visit Abingdon and to talk about his work and so, the day before, our English set read through some of his poems.

They were about wildly different things, from breakfast to racism, from animals to electronic brains and perhaps it was because of this that I was unable to build up a picture of this man in my mind. I liked most of his work, yet it was so varied that I couldn't hear the voice of the author behind it. However, I decided that his work was interesting and needed attention, so I looked forward to the talk the next day.

As I entered the Charles Maude Room, where the talk was to be held, I saw Norman Silver for the first time. He was a middle-aged man, standing quietly in the corner of the room, waiting for the seats to be filled. This was a complete contrast from the last author I had met, Michael Morpugo, who was almost manic in his enthusiasm for his work. However, we were interested in what he was saying, not how he was saying it. He started off by telling us about his background, how he had grown up in South Africa during the Apartheid and then moved to England where he had started to write. He was obviously strongly against the Apartheid and all the cruelty it caused and he was also ashamed of his family and how they treated their black servant. His background is therefore very important to him and so, understandably, his first three novels have an Apartheid setting. He also pointed out that he didn't see his books as having an upper age limit and that he didn't like them being confined to the 'teen-drama' section of a book shop.

After explaining his motivation in his writing, he read a series of short poems to us. It occurred to me how amazing these poems must be that they got a group of sceptical fourteen year olds to laugh and enjoy them. Some witty, some serious, but all were brilliantly written. Perhaps the reason people laughed was because the poems were so accurate concerning the thoughts of teenagers. He then read a short story. It was set in South Africa and it started with a man telling of an incident where a white man was fishing and he got his hook caught in a black man's neck. It demonstrated prejudice in more than one way: the prejudice of the white man against the black man and the prejudice of the man against the priest he was telling the story to. It had comedy and wit but an underlying message which got through very effectively.

There was very little time for questions at the end but one such was particularly interesting. When asked whether he wrote the stories as a protest against the Apartheid, he said that he didn't, he was just writing about the people affected by the Apartheid. My overall impression was of a man who has opinions and beliefs that he expresses the best way he can, through his writing.

M. BARTLETT 4RSH

CRAIG RAINE

In March, A-Level English students went to the Almeida Theatre to see the play "1953", by poet, dramatist and Oxford don, Craig Raine. Subsequently, Mr. Raine explained this his unique reworking of Racine's "Andromaque" in a talk to the Sixth Form and was interviewed about his writing by S. Pavlovich:

Originally asked to write a clean, modern English version of Racine's play he found it impossible, partly due to the difficulty of the text being translated, and partly to the boredom provoked by the repetitive use of rhyming octo-syllabics. He wanted a loophole for his linguistic skills and therefore updated "Andromaque" to "1953". In his programme notes, Raine comments that Racine himself was updating "Andromache" by Euripides. Why then, does Raine's version differ so much - even to the extent of the title?

This was the first question put to Craig Raine when he gave a talk to the Sixth Form. As with most things in life, money was his principal reason for writing the play and so a relevant title was chosen: the PIN of his bank deposit account. As it happens, his memory failed him - 1953 was not actually his PIN, but the title stuck.

The play is concerned with power and its results, and many of its characters end up dead. So could "1953" be termed a tragedy?

"I've never really known what a tragedy is", Craig Raine replied. "The main constituent is that you should care about the people, and being moved by their fate is all [that] I think is required of tragedy ... Aristotle was many, many moons ago...he was extracting a general theory from the drama of his time...there's no reason why Aristotle should be an absolute formula now, when the game has changed - isn't Greek drama the biggest snooze ever? It bores me because I have no classical Greek in me."

Craig Raine became famous not for his re-interpretations of classical texts, but for his poetry. It was his second book, "A Martian Sends A Postcard Home", that brought him great critical acclaim. In the poem of the same name, he uses a Martian narra-

tor to defamiliarise a personal and private world. The telephone, for example, is seen as a baby:

*"a haunted apparatus sleeps,
that snores when you pick it up.
If the ghost cries, they carry it
to their lips and soothe it to sleep
with sounds. And yet, they wake it up
deliberately, by tickling with a finger."*

This defamiliarisation of the telephone is not designed to correct our knowledge, but affords an unfamiliar perception of using the item.

The collection gave Craig Raine the label of "Martian Poet" due to the metaphors used. However, he is not too keen that the "completely inaccurate" label is still in use, seventeen years after the poem's publication: "There are other poems like it in my earlier collections...something is being described, but you can't tell what it is..you have to infer it from the information given."

The main influence on Craig Raine's poetry is Ted Hughes: "It doesn't show - at least I don't think it shows - but he was the writer I read when I was at school. I thought: 'Wow! This is what you do.'" The other notable influence is the novelist James Joyce. "Ulysses was a great book. I did my shoulder a lot of damage by carrying it in my handbag. There's a wonderful bit in Ulysses where Bloom buys a kidney. Anything is interesting if you write about it intelligently enough and observantly enough - there's never been a better kidney buying in the whole of literature."

Craig Raine often shows his acknowledgement of Joyce's genius. When a review he had written was attacked for not praising the novel in question, he wrote back, rebuking the attacker with help from Joyce: "In Ulysses, one unsentimental character recommends that a certain dog should be trained with 'a rousing kick every now and then where it won't blind him.' I'd suggest this humane treatment [for the attacker]...were it not clear from his report that his eyesight must already be damaged beyond remedy."

This reveals the other side of Craig Raine. When asked what he was trying to achieve in his literature he quoted Vladimir Nabokov: "Style, structure and detail are the essence of the novel. Great ideas are hogwash." He went on: "I absolutely don't believe in ideas at all - they're the kind of thing Jeffrey Archer has. I just want you to believe everything I'm telling you, because you know I'm not telling you any ideas. I have no ideas."

S. PAVLOVICH RVS-S

ROBERT SWAN OBE.

Polar explorer, environmentalist.

I am sure that I do not speak for myself alone, when I say that Robert Swan's striking address has affected and influenced my thinking. Often, these lectures capture attention for only a moment and people leave the hall with no greater an understanding of the topic. Pupils will not be awed by the sight of a famous person simply getting up onto the stage of the Amey Hall and droning for an hour-and-a-half; they have better things to do. It is only when a speaker such as Robert Swan shows that he has an objective which is current and easy for this generation to respect and relate to that we really listen. Such people do not, sad to say, come around too often.

Earlier in this decade, it was "trendy" to be "environmentally friendly"; everything was green and we were all rushing off to collect our aluminium cans and waste paper and cast them into specially provided recycling bins and banks. As with most trends though, it seems this one has been submerged by other issues seemingly more important at the moment.

"One Step Beyond - the Antarctic Challenge" is a grand title, but it has a message: "we do not inherit the world from our parents but borrow it from our children." Consequently, Robert Swan's next expedition is directly aimed at highlighting "the need for responsible action in the way we treat our planet as we look to the future". It will promote the 50th anniversary of UNESCO, with an emphasis on global contribution to conserve the environment.

Too often, explained Mr. Swan, a giant pessimistic picture is painted by environmentalists, giving us little or no hope of survival. But he was keen to stress the good that has been done, particularly by the young people of today. Their expedition is a globally significant one, a hope for international cooperation, and a celebration of the successes to this point. Although action on a global scale is critical, conservation of the environment can also be a very personal quest and can make a significant difference to others' lives as well as our own. Of course, we cannot compare our efforts and plans with those involved in the One Step Beyond trek, but we can compare our ideas. Our care and appreciation for the environment can influence and encourage others.

In 1989, Robert Swan organised and led the Icewalk International Student Expedition. The 22 students who took part in it issued a statement: "Let's live more simply". If we do not become more aware of people like Robert Swan who can demonstrate where our responsibilities lie, and how to respond to them, we may not be able to live at all.

N. MUNRO 6SAE

Few pupils get the chance to teach at their old school. Few would want to try. In an odd way, I'm very glad I have. Not just for the teaching experience and the CV and the sheer fun of doing so, but also because very few people get the chance to revisit important parts of their lives and get a new perspective on them, round out the one-sided picture. Not many of us think about our school days objectively; they just happen. And yet from the First to the Upper Sixth you change totally; height, looks, knowledge, views, hopes; and the only constants are the fabric of the buildings, the personalities of masters and the dread of Saturday mornings. So it has been fascinating to come back to the scene of all that change, even though it has occasionally been daunting.

Would I be able to suppress that instinctive urge to call masters by their nicknames? (I did, as soon as I heard one of mine). Would I be able to stand up in a class and teach, when I knew just what the class thought of me, remembering how I'd thought about my teachers? (Yes, when I remembered I must have been just as odd as a pupil as I am as a teacher). Would I get over the trauma if I suddenly turned a corner, saw myself aged twelve and gave me a copy on the spot? (Probably).

So what's changed? Well, the school was smaller in 1975 - fewer pupils, no Amey Hall or Music School, no Gymnasium (we used the CMR) but the pool was there, an assault course, but no Mercers' Court - we spent much of our School life making sponsored walks to raise money for buildings that only came into use after we'd left. School was a similar round of lessons, games, prep, more lessons, more prep although the school seems even more "professional" now, with a far greater range of opportunities. Looking back on photos of that time is painful - it was the 70's after all. Even **Mr. Barrett** (who, in our eyes, was the height of cool), had flairs. Indeed many of the masters here now were here then, particularly from the English, History and Modern Language departments, (indeed, scarily, one or two seem not to have aged at all) and one of the joys of joining the Common Room has been discovering how nice they are as people: something you suspected as a pupil but didn't really allow yourself to consider too closely. 'He has a home?! He makes jokes?!

Then as now the masters were even-handed and often very amusingly quirky. Of those masters who have now left us, I remember a Classics master who could throw a board rubber "with unerring aim and appalling velocity" and another who told us to "SHUT UP - with the greatest of respect"; a biology master who would tell us to copy out huge chunks of textbooks which he would read aloud and then add

"well, that's not strictly true" and a super Maths master who, on hot and sluggish days, would explain to us how he helped Barnes Wallis invent the bouncing bomb: a delicate operation that would involve sending ping-pong balls whistling around the Physics labs. And we had a Chemistry teacher who would, under pressure, make vast amounts of explosives. Once, he made a great amount of it, then had to hide it in the gas cupboard as the **Headmaster** came in to lecture us on the dangers of - making explosives. HM finished on a severe note, left sternly, slammed the door, and the vibration was enough to trigger all of the explosive, which blew the gas cupboard door in. When HM stormed back our teacher smiled weakly and pointing to a window said "Sorry, HM. Wind."

What else? School discipline seemed stricter then - but we made the same attempts to thwart it by improper dress, casual behaviour and routine demands for soccer as a school sport. Now of course I realise that the school is a surprisingly humanitarian one, and many of the rules, if not for safety, are there to instil a sense of self-pride that is invaluable in getting on in the outside world. But we still tried our best, spending hours squeezing ourselves into those forgotten corners of attics and cellars that were "out of bounds" and raiding Albert Park. Mind you, it was dangerous - the school was regularly invaded by other schools, in gangs of several hundred, and, sadly, to be threatened in town was routine. However, by 1982 the fad for school raids was dying out, and my last experience of it was rather ludicrous - a friend and I, walking back from Whitefields, were surrounded by 3 tall girls all shouting "we're tougher than you are!". We agreed, of course, and they were so perplexed, they left us alone.

So what was I like? A hopeless case, actually, good at English and nothing else except taking minor roles in School plays. I used to be good at rugby until the day my eyesight got so bad that I picked up the ball on our 22, raced for a try, outstripped everyone including the pack and wingers and even my own team, ran right past the try line and the dead ball line and got 15 yards down the road before my team-mates called me back. So instead I became Secretary of Fives; a cunning move, as the Captain and I rigged it so we always played each other - which meant going for a hot chocolate and talking about medicine (he went to Pembroke; I would have gone to Corpus Christi if I hadn't flunked the exam). I was also a prefect of little distinction and yes, did get put in DT once - for talking about a difficult prep in the library. The master who put me there is still at the school. Last week he beat me to the last of the coffee in the Common Room. Some things never change.

N. RAWLINSON

Dear Reader,
In the Lent term, a Questionnaire born from editorial discussions for this magazine was circulated to a selection of the readership. The Questionnaire was originally designed to publicise The Abingdonian and to stimulate written discussion. Judging by the response (70 returned from 108 sent out) many thought the Questionnaire a useful way of airing their views. In fact, the Questionnaire became a way for people to voice their opinions on wider issues as well as on the make up of their school magazine. Many of these opinions are reflected within this issue of The Abingdonian, (a larger sports section, for example) some were mentioned last year, and all the comments were taken into account before this magazine was published. Some sample results are printed below:

"Q1 Which section [of the 1995 magazine] did you turn to first?"

Sport: 59%

Editorial: 27%

Clubs and Societies: 5%...

Q6 Is attendance at school clubs and societies as important as playing sport?

Yes: 80%

No: 20%"

Essentially then, our magazine has a dual function; it is a record of school events on the one hand while it allows everyone to have their say on the other. It is easy to just dismiss an idea or view without reason, it is harder, more challenging and much more rewarding to argue with one that has been printed and exposed to many. Why not write in and tell us your views, rather than consigning them merely to a Questionnaire? Here are some letters we received earlier...

THE EDITORIAL TEAM 1996.

THE (EVER-GROWING) FOOTBALL DEBATE ...

Dear Sir,

I recently received my copy of The Abingdonian through the post as I believe all recent OAs do, an excellent scheme and one which I hope continues, and was initially amused but subsequently angered by a letter from an N. Munro regarding the superiority of football over the game of basketball. During my time at Abingdon I grew used to people constantly extolling the virtues of the so called "beautiful game", and even had to put up with people making the mistake of belittling basketball. As Abingdon's first basketball captain, and one of the first to be awarded colours for my exploits I feel it is my duty to put the record straight where basketball is concerned.

The truly beautiful game was invented by Dr. James Naismith in the University of Massachusetts in the early 1890's and the UK's first national championship took place in the same year that basketball became an Olympic sport in 1936. The league of the highest quality in the world is indeed the American NBA, but does this make the game an "alien" sport, as virtually every country in the world has its own league system, with the EBBA covering England? Is it N. Munro's opinion that because the game was invented abroad it is thus alien and not worth pursuing? This notion did not stop the Argentinians, Germans and Brazilians waltzing off with the World Cup on the last three (*four now - Ed.*) occasions, a competition in which England has not had a whiff of success since we won it in 1966. Would it not be better for England if we set about embracing the sports such as basketball that other nations have invented and broadened ourselves as a sporting nation instead of suffering repeated embarrassment in sports "we taught the others to play"? For instance why has England taken it upon themselves to cheer up all Australia by losing The Ashes so convincingly?

As for the issue of awarding colours for basketball, I am relieved that Abingdon has finally recognised the game as worthy of this distinction. The players who received their colours for the 1994/5 season were ones who gave consistent attendance in training and contributed the most in games against other schools. Any sport in which we can give Radley a beating twice in the space of a month is surely deserving of this distinction...

I long for the day when England's national pastime is no longer sitting in front of the television listening to two moronic cockneys tell one another that "what this game needs is a goal Trev..." and we can drop this "white men can't jump" attitude to some of the world's most entertaining sports such as basketball.

Yours, etc.,

GARY ARMSTRONG OA.

Dear Sir,

I, as a thinking member of this community would like to stem the current trend of this school towards football. It is indubitably a sport which brings great physical benefits, but I feel that it would be an act of great irresponsibility to allow football to invade the hallowed rugby pitches of our school. It is much to my regret that football today has been hijacked by yobs and the antisocial element. Cantona kicks, match fixing and corruption are the parlance of modern sports journalists. I do not pretend that other sports are controversy-free but I feel that this sport is rotten to the core.

I would rue the day when this great school be-

gins to churn out soccer hooligans. Please consider this point of view and plug your ears to the siren-call of Football.

Yours etc.,

W. ROLLIN 6JPW

Dear Sir,

I feel compelled to respond to both of these outrageous letters. In the first case, it seems that Mr. Armstrong was particularly offended by my description of the American game of basketball as "an alien sport". Of course, I would never be so pretentious as to refer him to a dictionary to analyse the word exactly. I would much rather give him the definition here:

alien, adj. foreign, from elsewhere.

Therefore, I believe I am justified in using the term: the last time I looked, America was not exactly on my doorstep. Mr. Armstrong appears as something of a desperate patriot: his plea for discontinued English embarrassment on the world stage of sport confirms this. I am a patriotic Scot, but nevertheless, was among the first to bring myself out of the fits of hysterical laughter and congratulate England on the team's performances during the recent Euro '96 tournament. I dislike bringing statistics into a debate, but I think both your previous correspondents should be made aware of one: in a recent survey, 81% of pupils chose football as the official sport for the Lent Term. After England's "success", no doubt this figure will have risen.

To turn to the second letter, it is unfortunate that people such as Mr. Rollin still harbour such views as they do, especially as they seem to have been made after only dipping a cautious toe in the water. If Mr. Rollin were immersed in the footballing community, he would no doubt either be petrified or begin to comprehend the depth of passionate emotion that is created within it. It is ironic that as he condemns the "yobs and the anti-social element" - a definite minority - he is appealing to a group almost as small.

If Mr. Rollin feels so strongly about the issue and its impact on "this great school", he would do well to examine the feeling within it. Football, indeed sport, is universal; it brings group identity and a feeling of belonging. It is a spirit, which once enlivened in a sensible way, is only beneficial to its possessors. If, as Mr. Armstrong suggests, we experience other sports, be they basketball or shinty, we can dismiss the perception that others, rightly or not, have of us - that of exclusivity.

Football, a game for the world, is anything but exclusive.

Yours, etc.,

N. MUNRO 6SAE

DRUG EDUCATION...

Dear Sir,

At the end of the Summer term, the Fourth Year and the Lower Sixth attended a lecture on drugs, given by Mr. Phil Cooper, a street-poet and now informal lecturer. His inimitable style, whilst often verging on the offensive, was undoubtedly involving and direct. I spoke to several people after the lecture, and many seemed thoroughly convinced by what was indeed startling information.

However, I think it is important that both schools and pupils are wary of this outspoken and individual brand of education, especially over topics as evasive, as sensitive and as unexplored as drugs. Just as Mr. Cooper stressed the importance of never blindly accepting the word of a drug-pusher, it is also vitally important that pupils are not led blindly to accept the judgements and conclusions of lecturers such as Mr. Cooper. For example, whether his intention was such or not, Mr. Cooper implied a link between drug convictions and unemployment, which I thought was unfounded. Perhaps he meant that once a user has a conviction, it is difficult to get a job; nonetheless, the implication was otherwise.

I am not attempting to undermine or even to disagree with Mr. Cooper, but would merely stress the importance of seeing beyond the style and the emotional anecdotes, and considering the real issues.

Yours etc.,

J. TERRY 6RVS-S

Sound advice, particularly for the next correspondent, perhaps - Ed.

SCHOOL UNIFORM?...

Dear Sir,

I was wondering why the Abingdon sixth form has to wear a school uniform whilst many of the other sixth forms from local schools do not. St. Helen's seems to have better results than us much of the time, and they don't have to wear a uniform. Is there a connection here, or are they just much cleverer than us? Similarly, Oxford High don't wear a uniform and their results are even better still.

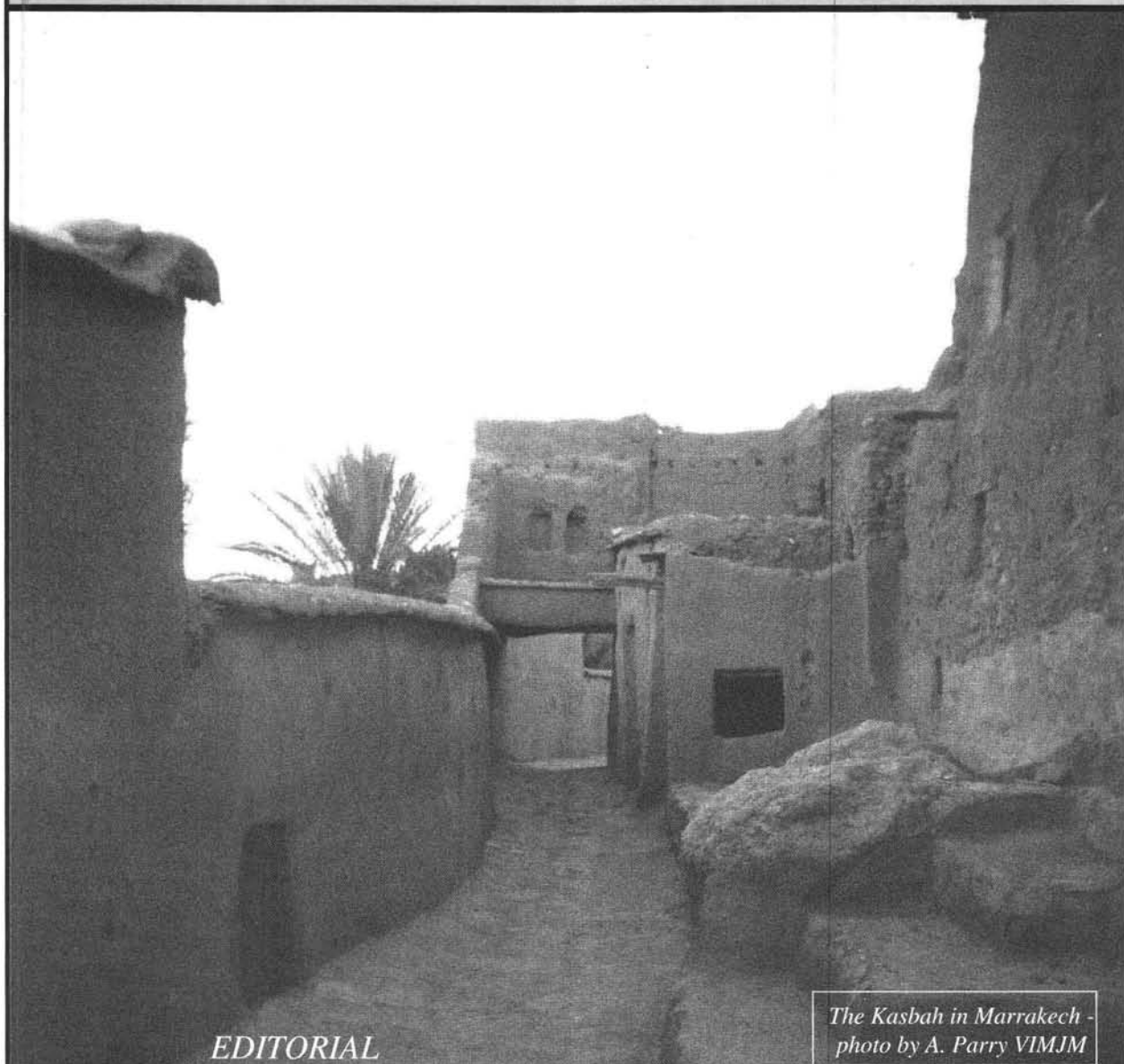
Would the higher authorities consider this, and perhaps experiment with the ruling?

Yours, etc.,

S. COATES 6JPW

No two schools are uniform in results, outlook or anything else. Nor, it would appear, are any two (Old) Abingdonians' opinions. Thank you for all your letters. Don't hesitate to write in and give yours! - Ed.

Beyond Abingdon



EDITORIAL

*The Kasbah in Marrakech -
photo by A. Parry VIMJM*

“Beyond Abingdon” has always been a section of this magazine which attracts many readers, but is one of the most challenging to compile as contributors are so often curiously shy of writing up the details of their exploits and activities in the far flung corners of the globe. Why? (Answers on a postcard please!)

This last year saw some unusual trips in addition to the regular but by no means mundane exchange visits to our French, German and Russian partner schools. Read on to discover details of sailing across the Channel in an historic yacht; of the most dangerous school expedition yet; of a fascinating and legendary country very few of us are privi-

leged to know, although the schoolboy writer has extensive personal experience of it. But we feel most proud of the charity trip to Romania, an undertaking which is unique in that every pupil raised the funds for an enterprise realised by but a lucky few. An entire Romanian orphanage was “couriered” to the Black Sea coast where the orphans spent the first holiday of their underprivileged lives. The report of this momentous exploit is well worth reading; all those involved, whether by raising money at pop concerts in the Amey Hall, by donating to the charity box appeals, or by actually travelling to Romania deserve our wholehearted congratulations and thanks ...

W. ROLLIN 6JPW

CHANNEL CRUISING ON THE 'JOLIE BRISE'

On Thursday 18th April, seven Lower Sixth formers and a Fourth former assembled on the gravel in front of the school to embark on a week's sailing holiday aboard the Jolie Brise, a 72 foot 1913 Le Havre Pilot Cutter, and under the able control of **Mr. Townsend**, we travelled down to Hamble where the boat was berthed. Our first glimpse of the Jolie Brise in the marina at Hamble told us she was special. She looked small compared to the expensive, modern yachts on either side but her character and graceful lines made her a welcome and friendly home for the next five days. We boarded, met Toby the Skipper and Mike the mate, stowed our gear and after the safety briefing and introduction to chartwork had a meal and looked forward to the voyage ahead. The weather forecast was not good and with the possibility

of a four a.m. start to catch the tide we turned in early with mixed feelings of excitement and anxiety.

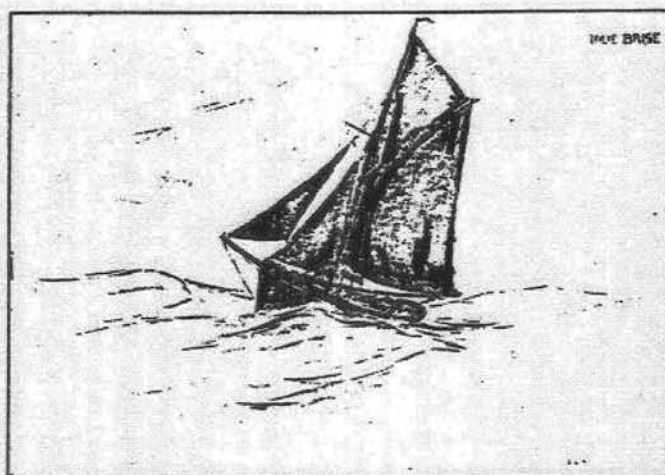
The next morning the wind had abated and we waited until midday to slip out of the Hamble River. We set the main and two foresails and headed west towards the Needles and then made the decision to go south to Cherbourg. Divided into port and starboard watches we worked four hours on and four off. It always seemed that changing the sails happened during starboard watch but it was an exhilarating sail and as darkness fell we kept a special eye on the compass bearings of the lights of passing commercial shipping to avoid a collision. We entered Cherbourg at 4 in the morning with all hands needed to stow the sails and come alongside. We had earned a lie-in the next morning and after a few hours cleaning the boat we went into the town to shop and enjoy time ashore in France.

In any harbour the JB attracts admirers but few know her interesting history. Built in Le Havre in 1913 as a pilot cutter she raced as far out as the Scilly Islands to put pilots aboard incoming vessels from America. Despite her speed she was soon superseded by steam so spent several years tunny fishing out of Concarneau until being bought by the founders of

the Royal Ocean Yacht Club. She competed in the early Fastnet Races and is the only yacht to have won three times. She twice crossed the Atlantic to compete in the Bermuda Race and while there staged a dramatic rescue of the crew of a burning ship. On the way home she became the last sailing ship to carry the Royal Mail. The JB spent twenty happy years in Portugal in private ownership before returning to Britain in 1975 after the threat of confiscation by the newly formed Communist government. Since then she has been refitted several times under the ownership of the Exeter Maritime Museum and management

of the Dauntsey's School Sailing Club, which is how we came to be sailing on her.

Our return voyage from Cherbourg was a 12 hour day sail to Weymouth in hot sun but with little wind so we motored part of the way: this did not seem to disturb the gannets bobbing on the sea as we passed close by. From Weymouth next day along a



A sketch of Jolie Brise in 1923 by E. G. Martin

misty, rainy Dorset coast to Yarmouth IOW where an early docking gave time for everyone to take their 'Competent Crew' award, and pass. The highlight was the two watches competing against each other and the swirling tide in a rowing relay race around the harbour in the yacht's dinghies. On the final day the wind was perfect, a westerly force 5. We set all 2500 square feet of sail for the first time, the Yankee, jib, staysail, topsail and main to cruise down the Solent at over 11 knots: it must have looked a magnificent spectacle. Once in Southampton water we practised our man overboard drill and then headed reluctantly back to our berth on the Hamble.

In five days we had begun to master the mass of ropes and sails that seemed so daunting at the start. We now confidently climbed the swaying ratlines to the crosstrees 45 feet above the water and changed the sails at the end of the 20 foot bowsprit - all part of the day's work.

It took several days after returning to school for the floor of the classroom to stop pitching and rolling but we all agreed we would sign up again for a voyage on this magnificent vessel.

J. TOWNSEND

TEN TORS EXPEDITION 1996

Training began in earnest this year once teams had been selected in November. By January we were on the moor, experiencing its moods and its challenges. Navigation and teamwork always the key - even in a pea souper.

By event week each team member had seen the moor some three times and each had walked at least 45 miles upon its welcoming turf and boggy bogs.

Event day came, both 45 and 55 mile teams set off into the sunshine and my camera whirled. But that was to be the last time before the lens got wet.



By 3 pm the 2000 brave had been consumed by the moor and it was raining. By 8 pm it rained and wailed. Enter stage right and left, snow. During the night temperatures dropped to -5 degrees and the winds gusted to 40 m.p.h. **Tim Jones** caught a free ride in a Sea King and was returned to base at around midnight, exhausted.

For the whole of the next day the rain poured. Due to a massive lack of communication there was confusion at base camp in Okehampton, and confusion on the moor. By 2 pm the Brigadier had decided 'for safety's sake' to pull all teams off the sodden moor, unless, that is, they had reached their 9th Tor. Both our teams were approaching their 9th Tor, incomplete but approaching. Exasperation added to the confusion and it rained all the more. In the worst weather for 20 years only 15 teams made it back to camp unaided, to be greeted by Sky TV and the BBC. As the rest, the tired, the blistered, the starving and the totally lost were dragged 'kicking and screaming' (JRS) from the moor, anxious parents and puce team managers gathered to collect their soggy charges.

I may make light - in all seriousness it could have been a disastrous weekend. I am immensely proud of the boys' achievements and they thoroughly deserve their medals. See you next year?

D. HAWORTH



Selected thoughts on Ten Tors from N. Austin VIDH:

"As we began climbing another hill, I passed out. My fingernails had gone blue, I began feeling dizzy and then I just fell to the ground."

ooooo

"Our tent had leaked during the night as the wind had opened up a hole so we woke up in two inches of freezing cold water. It took a hell of a lot of willpower to get up."

ooooo

"...the snow was about a foot deep and the winds were gusting at 70 mph. It was unreal."

ooooo

"Ten Tors is one of the hardest, most arduous walks in the UK. You want to see if you can actually do it. This time, no-one was prepared for the conditions. Snow in mid-May?"

DUKE OF EDINBURGH'S AWARD: GOLD PRACTICE EXPEDITION

During the Summer half-term four members of the Lower Sixth, **Matthew Jones, Oliver Swadling, Tom Jeffries** and **Philip Bradley**, travelled to Dartmoor to undertake their Gold Practice Expedition under the able supervision of **Mr. J.R. Smith**. After several weeks of meetings and planning it we were all set and eager to go.

On a bright Tuesday morning the team met and set off for Dartmoor with high hopes for the week ahead. We set out on the moor with strong winds and a clear sky but after about an hour and with the first Tor checkpoint conquered, the mist set in. However, the group stormed on and hit the first letterbox on our route dead on. Later in the day we were forced to miss the Stone Circles due to the bad weather conditions and so headed straight for the night's camp, Sandy Hole Pass.

The second day followed much the same pat-

tern, but covering 30km despite continuing poor visibility, spoiling the potentially beautiful views from the top of several tors along our route. On arriving at the second night's camp we crashed out after a tiring day.

We awoke to a sunny third day which boosted low morale, as we could at last see more than 30 metres! We walked to Child's Tomb, discovering that marshes aren't always marked on maps! Later, after hearing an impressive display of firing from a nearby range, we were given the privilege of an aerial display by two low level fighter planes. But the day was not to be without a bit of fog, and so on top of Fur Tor, the mist set in again.

The last day finally came and brought a bit of good weather with it, giving a beautiful view from Widgery Cross, and after a couple of hours' walking we made it to the end of our expedition.

The expedition was a great success and put into practice the skills which will be monitored in the assessed expedition. Many thanks must go to **Mr. Smith** for his expertise and time.

P. BRADLEY 6DLS

Sean Zaloumis 6NMR lived in Saudi Arabia for 13 years. Here he describes the differences he encountered on moving to the Sultanate of Oman elsewhere in Arabia.

OMAN.... THE REAL ARABIA

After living in and being associated with the 'dry' and lifeless Saudi Arabia, I was not too impressed by the Arab people and their world. This all changed in October 1994 when my father moved to carry out his flying profession in the Sultanate of Oman partly due to the more civilised atmosphere of the country. I was to experience a different type of Arabia here.

Before 1970, Oman was a very isolated, mediæval country showing little potential, until there was a bloodless coup when Oman's present leader Sultan Qaboos bin Said, overthrew his father and directed the country towards modernisation.

Muscat, the capital of Oman, means 'the place of falling', as it was the gateway to Arabia. This is where all of the Arab traders and sailors set sail from, including the legendary Sinbad. For thousands of years, Oman was the link between the trade routes of Asia and Africa. Between the 7th and 15th centuries the country's empire included much of present day Zanzibar, Pakistan, Iran, the United Arab Emirates, and much of the east coast of Africa. These territories were either given up, or sold by the previous

Sultans.

Today, Oman is a modernised country with highways, shopping centres, decent hospitals, schools, and even a University. Oman has also one of the world's 20 finest hotels: the Al Bustan Palace. It truly is astonishing. Despite this, the country is not as modernised as the U.A.E. or Saudi Arabia, since it is not as rich. It is improving but is still keeping a sense of tradition and culture important to the Omani people. In Oman, expatriates can go to church, discos, and can even consume alcohol and pork without trouble. This is completely different from Saudi Arabia.

Tourism is increasing in Oman due to its natural wonders such as waterfalls, wadis (Arabic for dry river beds which fill up during rainy seasons), unspoilt beaches, lush green pastures, exciting wildlife, rugged mountains, oases, and vast areas of dry desert. To see the best of these, camping is a good option because these places are located far away from the main towns.

The country's attractions also include Oman's traditional features: ancient forts in the town of Nizwa and the port of Muscat, the remains of the castle of the legendary Queen of Sheba located in the town of Salalah, and the traditional souks in Muscat and Nizwa, where goods such as traditional Omani frankincense (myrrh), pottery, antiques, jewellery, material, and many things from other parts of the world are sold. The souk, (market) in Muscat is located by the sea in a bay, quite an amazing thing to see.

Oman is definitely the real Arabia.

S. ZALOU MIS 6NMR

BIELEFELD EXCHANGE 1996

A trip to remember!

The coach quietened down as it drove up the snow-covered winding hill towards Johannisberg, Bielefeld. Everyone inside started asking stupid, nervous questions "How do you say, 'how do you say', in German?" and "What's 'can you say that again' again?" As **Mr. Pettitt** concluded his final try-not-to-get-too-drunk speech, the coach came to a stop.

Outside it was colder, but it was good to stretch our legs after the three hour coach drive. There was some snow on the ground, but we were hardly knee deep. In fact, the whole scene was a bit disappointing. I had somehow expected something grander. We just huddled together, waiting for the luggage to be unloaded, and talking to each other and to our host families.

The first night was, we knew, going to be by

far the hardest. And it was. We had to reacquaint ourselves with our exchange partners, meet their parents, see their house, have our first meal, and interact normally in a polite manner - and all in German. Add to this the fact that we had been travelling for thirteen hours and you can begin to see what we were up against. None of our German lessons had prepared us for this. It became easier later on as we improved and got used to it, but the first night was a bit like a five-hour long oral exam, without the option of failing. The German parents, in trying to be polite, actually made things worse by asking complex questions. It was very lucky that the partners knew English, but some refused to speak it to us, and some of us refused to speak it to them, with the result that it really did start off as a German exchange. The German used even on the first night was not easy either. I had a conversation over supper on everything from Cambridge University to the history of cucumbers! So when we met up at school the next morning it was good to speak proper English.

We then went home (at one o'clock!) with our partners and then spent the afternoon with them. Then it was back to school the next day, for a trip and so our routine was defined.

We didn't go to many lessons at school, but I got to know the class I was attached to quite well. There were many contrasts. It was hard to believe that Ben, at 19 stone and 1.95m at 15, definitely a German Jonah Lomu, and Martin, about 1.45m, very thin and the most intelligent boy in his year, were in the same class. Harder still to believe that they were best friends. They took their work a bit more seriously than in England, I think; they didn't work harder or better, just cared about the results more.

We went on three trips, to Munster, Hameln and Koln. Munster had nothing outstanding about it, (other than two cathedrals and an awe inspiring "Hall of Peace") but was more a taste of what was to come. Hameln, despite its rat connections, was the least enjoyable of the outings, mainly because the journey to it was too long and not enough time was spent

there. Having said that, there was plenty to see there, although it snowed all the time. Koln was most impressive - it had a massive cathedral (with a climbable spire of 590 steps), and plenty of shops.

Monday was the day of the Karneval. This started early - people came to school with clown head-dresses on, and many of us had our hair dyed for that evening. The nightlife centred around the bar Papillion, into which, despite the crowd of two hundred outside on Karnevalnacht, **Iain Smith** and his exchange partner always managed to insinuate themselves.

The major exchange party was on Wednesday night, which was eased along with two crates of beer - some of it alcohol free! When we came to leave on Friday, all in the bus again and just driving off, a small cheer broke out. At first I thought it just meant that we hadn't enjoyed ourselves and were glad to be rid of Bielefeld. But now, as we are pounding down an autobahn towards Dusseldorf airport with Oasis playing on the speakers, I think I was wrong. We had had a good stay, a fun time, an interesting time, perhaps even an educational one. We had learned a lot of German, anyway. It was just that we were glad to be coming home.

**S. NOWOTNY 4ASP
& T. SMITH 4PKHR**

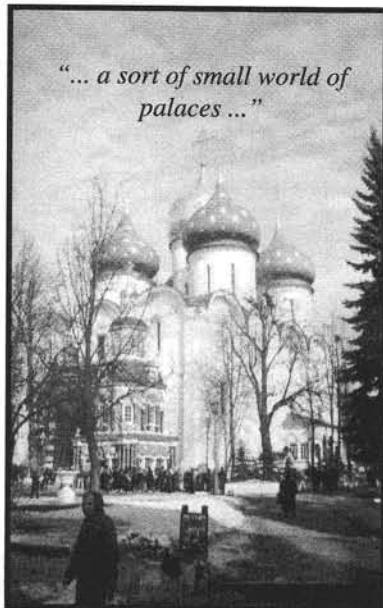
RUSSIAN EXCHANGE

During the Easter holidays a party of 11 pupils from Abingdon and Oxford High School set off for Moscow accompanied by **Mrs. Bradshaw** and Mrs. Earley. Everyone was looking forward to seeing Russia first hand and experiencing a different culture and a way of life from our own. On arrival in Moscow we were met by **Tatyana Nikolaevna** and two of the exchanges and were driven back in two buses whose drivers, I think, were having a race. This consisted of one driver putting his foot to the floor, pulling away, then proceeding to 'cruise' in neutral till the other one caught up. Our first impressions were of a huge, grey city with modern advertising everywhere (a great change from five years ago). The whole idea of trying to battle against the cold and the language seemed very daunting indeed. As soon as we had arrived at the school we were taken home to our respective exchanges' flats and we were offered plenty of food.

During the next eleven days we felt the temperature gradually rise from -10 degrees to 10 degrees. The snow melted and by the time we left there wasn't a cloud in the sky. Among the many places we visited were the usuals: Red Square and the Kremlin but also Kyskova, a sort of small world of



palaces, the newly restored Tretykov Gallery and an amazing brand new monument out in the west of the city commemorating the part played by the Russian people during the Second World War. On two of the evenings we were taken to the ballet and a folk concert, both of which were very spectacular. With our exchange families we visited many other wonderful sights where foreigners and the general public could not have got into before.



"... a sort of small world of palaces ..."

On the fourth day we had to perform our presentation in front of many of the Russian pupils: some Shakespeare, some piano and flute music and some Scottish Highland dancing! This was the first time that the English exchanges had properly prepared a concert and our teachers were really impressed by what we had managed to get together. I think most people found the flats extremely comfortable and the families very

welcoming. On a few occasions we had to pretend that we were Russians so we could get into places like the Kremlin for less. Our overall impression was that Russia was an amazing country and we all want to return sometime. The Abingdonians on the exchange were **Jamie Adams, Matthew Cooper, Neil Gray, Oliver Marshall, Dickon Millet and Niall Munro.**



"On a few occasions we ... were Russians..."

N. GRAY 4GCR

GRENOBLE EXCHANGE

This year only the main body of boys on the trip were lodged in French families. There was also a party lodged in a Youth Hostel, which took part in a cultural and rowing exchange.

Morland's Brewery, keen to be involved with supporting local sport and youth organisations, provided generous backing to the trip and donated a quantity of beer which was sold to raise funds for this exciting new venture. The objectives of the trip were to give boys the opportunity to practise their French in a realistic setting and in an area where they would be motivated to communicate with people of similar interests. It also gave them the opportunity to investigate a foreign country in a relatively independent way in a controlled environment.

The trip was an obvious success and the boys involved have reaped the benefits in their exams. Here are a few extracts from the diaries of the boys involved:

P. WEIR

mercredi le dix Avril par Rob Hutchins

A onze heures du matin nous nous sommes réunis à l'école, afin de monter dans le bus pour aller à l'aéroport. Nous nous sommes réunis avec quelques filles de l'école de Headington. Elles sont montées dans le bus aussi.

jeudi le onze Avril par Adam White.

A 06h30 nous nous sommes levés (oui, c'est trop tôt) et nous avons pris le petit déjeuner. Après avoir mangé, nous sommes allés à la rivière pour faire de l'aviron. Nous avons ramé dans un quatre de couple (B. Watts, A. White, G. Kitto, W. Pank) et un double de couple (M. Weir, R. Hutchins)

Puis, à 12.00, nous avons pris l'autobus à l'école, le Lycée de Grésivaudan. Nous avons assisté aux cours. Nous avons lu aussi un livre au sujet du rugby dans la bibliothèque du lycée, c'était fantastique.

A 17.30, nous sommes partis pour le club d'aviron où nous avons emmené nos bateaux aux pontons. Après, nous avons ramé dans le huit (B. Watts, D. Hancock, R. Hutchins, A. White, M. Jobling, G. Kitto, N. Lefèvre, W. Pank.)

vendredi 12 avril par William Pank

Nous nous sommes levés à 8 heures. C'était très amusant. Nous sommes arrivés au club d'aviron à 9h15, après avoir pris le petit déjeuner. D'abord nous avons fait de l'aviron en couple: R. Hutchins et D. Hancock en le deux de couple, et B. Watts, A. White, G. Kitto, et W. Pank en le quatre de couple. Il faisait très beau, et nous nous sommes beaucoup améliorés,

(au moins c'était ce que **M. Weir** avait dit.) Après avoir ramé dans les couples, nous avons ramé en huit de pointe. Le soleil brillait encore.

Ensuite, nous avons fait une chasse à trésor à Grenoble. Nous avons visité beaucoup de bâtiments, et nous avons essayé de trouver des objets, qui ont commencé par les lettres de l'alphabet. Après cela, nous sommes retournés à l'auberge de jeunesse, pour retourner en ville afin de nager, mais quand nous sommes arrivés à l'auberge de jeunesse, nous étions trop fatigués, et nous nous sommes endormis!

dimanche le 14 avril par Adam White

Nous sommes arrivés au lac du Bourguet près de Chambéry. Il faisait beau et le lac était peu agité pendant le matin, mais l'après-midi il a fait du vent et le lac devenait très agité. Pendant le matin nous avons ramé dans le huit (**A. Garrod, B. Watts, D. Hancock, R. Hutchins, A. White, M. Jobling, G. Kitto, N. Lefèvre, et W. Pank**) Nous avons bien couru et nous étions quatre sur cinq. Pas mal parce que nous n'avons eu que trois jours pour nous entraîner.

Après avoir mangé et après être restés un peu nous sommes sortis pour la course dans le quatre de couple (**B. Watts, A. White, G. Kitto, W. Pank**) et encore avons-nous fini quatre sur cinq. Ce n'était pas mal. Le double de couple (**R. Hutchins, D. Hancock**) n'a pas fait si bien. Ils venaient de compléter la moitié de la course quand il y avait une catastrophe. Ils ont chaviré et ils sont tombés dans le lac et en plus ils étaient en tête: quelle catastrophe! Je pense que c'était une bonne journée; nous avons bien ramé et nous avons parlé aussi beaucoup de français en rentrant.

lundi le 15 avril

... Plus tard, très fatigués, nous avons monté une grande montagne afin de voir Grenoble tout entière. Nous y avons mangé le déjeuner. Ensuite, nous sommes allés au bar. Nous avons tous pris de la bière sauf George. Le repas était le riz et le poulet. Après cela nous ne pouvions que jouer aux cartes ou au babyfoot. Nous restions là jusqu'à onze heures, trop tard pour moi!



"la première course a été gagnée par M. Weir..."

mardi le 16 avril par B. Watts

...Aujourd'hui il y avait une séance anglo-française et c'était une bonne expérience pour nous parce que deux des rameurs français étaient les champions nationaux. Pendant la séance il y avait deux courses; la première course a été gagnée par **M. Weir** et son frère: la deuxième, celle qui a été la plus importante, a été gagnée par un quatre de couple dont moi, Hervé, Georges et Amendine. Hervé et



"moi, Hervé, Mattieu et Amendine"

moi avons fini deuxième dans la première course et donc on nous a couronnés champions pour la journée.

Pour le reste de l'après-midi nous n'avons rien fait afin de conserver notre énergie pour la fête furieuse qui allait venir ce soir-là. Mais quel horreur! Il n'y avait que deux filles et elles n'étaient pas très bavardes. La boum a commencé lentement, mais à la fin ce n'était pas mal parce que nous avons parlé avec les français. C'était une bonne fin de la dernière soirée des vacances.

OXFORD GREEK PLAYS

On the 31st of January a group of 20 classicists attended the Oxford Greek Plays at the Oxford Playhouse. Of the two plays the first was a production in the original Greek of Euripides' "Hecuba", while the second was in English and very loosely based on "Thesmophoriazousae" by Aristophanes.

The tragedy, "Hecuba", was very much as I had expected. The director of the play was David Raeburn, who had been my tutor at the Greek summer school I had attended the previous summer. I was a bit disappointed with this performance. I thought the actors were a bit wooden. The actress who played Hecuba kept looking up and staring at the back of the theatre, which made me wonder where her autocue was. On a more frivolous note, one of the girls in the chorus seemed to be unable to click her fingers. But the performance was interesting and

enjoyable. It was mostly well acted and well choreographed.

The comedy, "Thesmophoriazousae", is a story about a festival for women, where all the women meet and air their grievances. The women are angry with Euripides, the playwright, because he is such a misogynist in his plays. Euripides sends his elderly relation by marriage, Mnesilochus, dressed as a woman to the meeting to find out what they intend to do to him. But, Mnesilochus is found out and is captured, so Euripides comes to save him. This story gave Aristophanes the opportunity for some of his rudest jokes.

The play was cleverly worked. There were eight women at the festival, each one had the name and characteristics of a famous woman from history. There was Sappho, poet and first known lesbian, Cassandra, the prophetess whom no one believes, Joan of Arc, Jackie Onassis, Juliet from "Romeo and Juliet", Eve, Mary Queen of Scots, and Wonder Woman. The play was very rude, very immature and absolutely hilarious. The interplay between Sappho and Mnesilochus, whom she thought was a woman, was hilarious. I would recommend that you go and see this play, but unfortunately it has finished. Nonetheless, it was so amusing that if it is on again, you should go and see it.

G. WINDOW VIJEF

CLASSICS TRIP TO SICILY

Few places in Europe evoke as many historical associations as Sicily: Greek, Roman, Byzantine, Arab and Norman civilizations; the ill-fated Athenian expedition of 415-413 B.C.; the glorious reigns of King Roger II and of Emperor Frederick II (the "Stupor Mundi"); and more recently Garibaldi and his 1,000 Redshirts. And for those who have seen "The Godfather" there are other associations... It was therefore not only a pleasure but a real privilege to participate in our own Sicilian expedition, organized by the Classics Department and led so effectively by **Mrs. J. Fishpool** and **Mr I. Fishpool**, that duo of intrepid travellers. Accompanying them were **Mr. R.S. Elliott**, **Dr. W.H. Zawadzki**, **Mr. and Mrs. P. Fleming**, **Mr. I. Donald**, and twenty-one boys, representing most years at the school. Our ever present mascot was the young **Robert "Augustus" Fishpool**.

Our intensive programme included visiting some of the most important sites of the island. From our first base in Giardini Naxos, the first Greek colony in Sicily (c.725 B.C.) and the springboard for Garibaldi's momentous invasion of the Italian mainland in 1860, we had very easy access to Taormina.

Favoured before the First World War by the great and famous of Europe for its temperate climate, Taormina is also the site of an impressive Greek theatre. We were disappointed however to find Mount Etna, usually visible from Taormina, shrouded in thick cloud, but we made up for it by ascending its peak. The dense mist, drizzle, cold air, and the smell of volcanic ash created an eerie, sinister atmosphere.

Our next target was Syracuse. Of particular interest was its cathedral, a place of continuous worship for 2,500 years, with a baroque façade but including within its structure the unmistakable core of the original Doric temple to Athena. The ancient quarry where Athenian prisoners languished and died in their hundreds, and the Great Harbour which witnessed one of the great naval battles of the Ancient World brought vividly to mind Thucydides' account of these grim events. The decaying parts of the old town on the island of Ortygia possess a melancholic charm of their own.

The next stage of our expedition took us into the interior of the island with its desolate sun-parched grey-brown mountains and isolated oasis-like vineyards. In Piazza Armerina we saw the beautiful and surprisingly well-preserved floor mosaics of a 3-4th century B.C. country residence of some Roman "big shot" or even an emperor. We reached the S.W. coast at Agrigento with its impressive Valley of the Temples which we were able to admire in the glow of the setting sun. Agrigento's catacombs attracted many boys; to our relief there was no labyrinth....

The most imposing monuments with the most enchanting atmosphere - at least in the author's opinion - were the Doric temples and the ruins of Selinunte, once a great Hellenic coastal city. It is a



*most imposing monuments with
the most enchanting atmosphere ...*

vast site around which we were free to roam for some time to our hearts' delight.

We returned into the interior and then travelled west (giving Corleone a miss) to Segesta, where a proud city once stood on the slopes of Mount Barbaro. Only two major monuments survive: the well pre-

served but never completed temple at the foot of the mountain and the theatre on its summit, where **Chris McGarry** practised his oratorical skills. The theatre is reached by a long, steep and winding track which even taxed the fittest among us; it was an amazing sight to see **Mrs. Fishpool** move with extraordinary agility and speed almost in a straight line to the top.

Accustomed now to heights we were next able to appreciate the location of Erice, a town with Arab-Norman buildings on the peak of an isolated limestone mountain rising 750 metres from the sea. On a very clear day one can see the coast of Tunisia from Erice: a perfect observation post for anyone in the past wishing to control the movement of ships between the western and the eastern Mediterranean.

After several days of rural idyll we were not quite prepared for Palermo whose historical centre has to be reached by battling through many miles of noisy traffic. Palermo's grandiose cathedral with its royal and imperial tombs is like an island in a sea of motorized anarchy. The presence of armed police and military units all over the city, and especially near the Palace of Justice where Giulio Andreotti was standing trial, reminded us of some of the less pleasant realities of Sicily today. It was a relief to escape from Palermo to Monreale where a special architectural feast awaited us: the Norman cathedral into which are blended Arab, Byzantine and Classical elements. The interior was truly majestic with its marble decorations and golden background. Among the many saints portrayed near the main altar we found St. Thomas à Becket whose veneration clearly reached Sicily very early via the Norman connection.

The long haul eastwards on the north coast took us to Milazzo and then by hydrofoil to the volcanic islands of Lipari and Vulcano. Vulcano possesses muddy sulphur springs into which many of our adventurous sixth-formers plunged - only to emerge looking like cavemen and reeking foully! On our last evening (in Milazzo) we held a quiz covering all aspects of our journey. It was reassuring to see so many boys remember what they had seen and heard. Congratulations to **Mark Greaney** who got 99% (or thereabouts) of the answers. It was good to observe the boys enjoy themselves and to show good humour and sensible behaviour throughout the trip. It was a happy occasion and no doubt will have left lasting impressions on all of us.

Our virtual circumnavigation of the island was completed via Messina and our return to the airport at Catania. On this occasion Etna deigned to reveal herself to us, and we were able to wave goodbye to her from the air.

H. ZAWADZKI

BIOLOGY FIELD COURSE

In mid-August, most of the Lower sixth biologists set off to Abergavenny, steaming metropolis in the heart of industrial Wales, under the watchful eye of **Mr. Davies** and **Mr. Waters**. 'You are not here for fun,' quoth Herr Davies, 'you are here to work,' and this was the philosophy throughout. Jestings apart, we all found the trip very useful, and it was possible to complete a fair whack of practical assessment if sleep was not your top priority. The food and accommodation were also pretty good, even if the catering staff did turn down **Adam Porter's** request for a flask of warm milk, fifteen sugars. Despite the obvious work ethic, the atmosphere and staff were congenial throughout, summed up by Mr. Waters' compassionate loan of his kettle to brew late-night mugs of coffee (which were definitely the order of the day). The weather was staggeringly good, for Wales, and we spent a reasonable amount of time soaking up the sun on top of various of the area's abundant slag heaps. Naturally, our behaviour was exemplary throughout.

After initial suicidal urges, we all felt grateful to the said teachers for taking us, and most would accept that the intense atmosphere was conducive to work; it was an experience not to be missed.

N. J. MATHESON VIJEF

BLENCATHRA FIELD STUDY COURSE

Thirty-five geography A-Level students departed for the land of Wordsworth (the Lake District) on a trip that many people had been calling "the adventure of a lifetime". In fact what we were doing was an intensive geography



course covering topics from glaciation at Easedale to urbanisation at Carlisle. The course lasted five days and promised to be "hard work but fun". This did not bode well for the week but I was pleasantly surprised and my fears were not substantiated. The

course was challenging and I'd be lying if I said there wasn't one occasion when I thought I'd rather be at home, but on the whole it was enjoyable and useful - especially for ideas for our projects and also as general revision.

Thanks must go to **Mr. Henderson** and **Mr. Slatford** who accompanied us on the trip and also to all the teachers at the centre.

O. SEARES 6SAE

BUSINESS STUDIES IN BERLIN

The trip to Berlin, consisting of twenty-eight sixth formers, a handful of London language students and a group of gallant teachers, was not as we first expected: rather there were many laughs and some fine educational experience.

The first day was free: everyone was given a map and a railcard and then deposited in the middle of this impressive capital of the richest nation in Europe. We were unable to recognise anything but the blizzard-like weather: which made us instantly think of home. It was here that we were to spend the best part of a week learning about BERLIN.



Die B rse - The Berlin Stock Exchange

This was the first stop on our tour which was interesting in its own way. Many of us had expected a frantic room full of intellectuals shouting and screaming at each other, waving papers and generally looking stressed and worn out, but the only time this really occurred was when the bell was rung for lunch! Having struggled through a German video about the in and outs of Die B rse we then went through to the viewing gallery above the 'place where it all happens' and were amazed. The system in Germany is much more organised than in Britain: one can only buy shares through a bank (merchant bank), situated around the 'market place' which faces a huge screen with all the share prices at that time. The other difference in Germany is that the buying and selling prices for the shares are exactly the same: instead of

selling for more than you bought there is a 0.04% commission per share. The Berlin stock exchange only makes up 3% of the total German Stock Exchange (Frankfurt S.E. has 75%) which seems quite surprising considering it is in the capital: but as we were to realise this capital was very much a different one from London because of its unique history.

City Tour of Berlin

This tour was, to my mind, extremely interesting having studied history at GCSE because it enabled us to put an image to famous places we had learned about for so long. The Reichstag building (Parliament), the Brandenburg gates, and the large state house in which the president lives were only a few of the important places we saw on the trip. The biggest disappointment is that there was so much information I cannot remember very much of it. We visited the last remaining 200 metres of the Berlin Wall: which ran as two walls parallel to each other about 30 foot apart. We saw the River Spree, which often acted as the 30 foot gap in between the two walls, and since it was so important to make sure no-one swam across it there were wire meshes with spikes below the surface of the water - some of which are still there today.

Olympic Stadium

I found this my favourite visit of the trip, having studied the history of Nazi Germany and the importance of the 1933 Olympics in Berlin. Thanks to swift and successful negotiations we were permitted to go into the stadium and here we relived the moment when Jesse Owens, the African-American sprinter embarrassed Hitler by winning the 100, 200 and 400 metres even though under Nazi principles African-Americans were inferior to the Aryan race. The Stadium, which incidentally is still in use today, was magnificently built, sporting a large centre piece at the far end where the Olympic flame once burned, and further on, another field with a large stand and two statues of centurions attending their horses. This Stadium hosted the last Olympics before the Second World War.



Axel Springer Verlag Ag: 'The Publishers'

As the holiday reached its conclusion, so the tours came to a fitting climax with a very enjoyable morning at Axel Springer Publishers. Here we started by listening, in boardroom fashion, to a well informed lady who proceeded to tell us about the company. It is Germany's largest newspaper publishing house, producing its own newspapers, magazines and free sheets as well as many other activities connected with the media in general. She told us of the deep tradition in the company, and thus Axel Springer's Credo for journalists and management...

1. To uphold liberty and law in Germany and further the unification of Europe.
2. To promote the reconciliation of the Jews and Germans, supporting the rights of the state of Israel.
3. To reject all forms of political extremism.
4. To uphold the principals of a free social market economy.

These were all very impressive, but I couldn't help wondering whether the company would really stick by its morals and resist publishing a lead story involving extreme political behaviour? After a reasonable discussion we then split into two groups and were shown around the marvellous new building which had been equipped in 1993 with the most up to date machinery in Europe. The factory was totally mechanised once a model copy of the newspaper had been done. The guide said, in response to my question, that if the machines ever needed to be repaired or cleaned they would only need about a dozen people! The building was absolutely enormous and although the presses were not in operation (which is unusual as they often go for 24 hours) we could imagine how noisy it would have been. Famous publishing that comes out of Axel Springer AG daily includes DIE WELT and BILT, a national broadsheet and a national tabloid respectively. The company representative was very informative and generous with reports and handouts, rounding the whole Germany trip off to a happy end.

I think I would be correct in saying the Economics and Business Studies trip to Berlin was a success: everyone enjoyed it. The hotel we stayed in was superb and was matched with the evening entertainment, which often consisted of experiencing a flavour of traditional German life, whether it be in the famous Beer Halls or at the Würstbude restaurants. I have to thank **Mr. Townsend** for organising it, ably assisted by **Mr. D. Evans** and **Mr. C. Parker**, and would recommend the trip to anyone who enjoys travelling.

J. HOWE-DAVIES 6NMR

MOROCCO - A Geography Fieldtrip

As a leaver I had had two weeks to prepare for the fieldtrip to Morocco. I had studied our itinerary, scoured maps for the places we were to visit, read about the country in the 'Lonely Planet Guide' and attempted (and failed) to learn a few elementary words of Arabic. In speaking to some well-travelled friends and through my own travels I have realised that travel is more rewarding for those who know a little about where they are going and make an attempt to understand its people, their culture and customs. Moreover, the aim of the trip was to gain general knowledge and understanding of a less developed country.

Day 1 We embarked on five horse-drawn carriages (a mode of transport by no means exclusive to tourists but we still felt conspicuous). Our first visit was to the "Thursday Market" (despite the fact it was only Tuesday). This is a general market used by the citizens of Marrakech. We pass through a bustling maze of covered stalls selling food very different from what we were used to seeing in Abingdon Market. Tatty carpets with baskets of imperfect vegetables, long-dead fish and soon-to-be-dead chickens - we began to realise what a sanitised and privileged life we lead. Suddenly we were out of the market and confronted by a shanty town on wasteland below us. The corrugated tin sheets, plastic, cardboard and wood that are home to hundreds of people, a huge area of rotting rubbish which is a source of food and wealth for the scavengers who pick through it to survive. Most of us took a picture - I think we all felt ashamed as soon as we had done so - we justify it in the name of our studies. We walk back quietly through the market and back to the carriages. Few, if any of us have seen such deprivation and poverty - what plays on my mind the most is that what we have seen is in no way unique to this country. Our next visit is to a Jewish Tannery. Many Moroccan settlements, large and small, have a Jewish Quarter (Mellah). The Jews were, until fifty years ago, the more skilled craftsmen and had black apprentices. When almost all the Jews left for Israel in 1948 the blacks who had come north to escape slavery became the craftsmen. The tannery is surrounded by a stench of flesh...and pigeons? The animal skins are stripped of their hair in the alleys as we approach the main area. We arrive in an open space with hundreds of pits, the smell is intense and we are grateful for the sprigs of mint thrust into our palms as we arrived. It is explained to us that the skins are placed first into limed-water, then into pigeon dung (ah!), and then into chaff from winnowed cereal crops before it is dyed using natural colours such as poppy petals and saffron....

We pass many shops selling large water vessels made from reshaped tyres. Recycling is a major part of the Moroccan way of life, but not in the western sense. In the UK we expect our rubbish to be collected and know that our recycling boxes will be emptied and put to good use. In Morocco little is wasted by the natives, it is the tourists who require the packaged goods that create litter. Moroccans will feed their food scraps to their animals, almost all old containers become water vessels, bottles are made into cups and funnels; they have little to waste.

Day 2 We cross the Marrakech plain with the spectacular shadow of the High Atlas Mountains looming out of the haze. Amongst the parched arable land is a luscious green golf course which looks very out of place. Tourism is Morocco's main industry but for every £15 spent by a tourist, a golfer spends £150. The Atlas Mountains are beautiful and completely unlike the European Alps. The views are stunning. We have a picnic lunch in a Wadi under some date palms ... we climb a few hundred feet up to the summit of Mount Zagora where we watch the sun set over the Draa Valley.

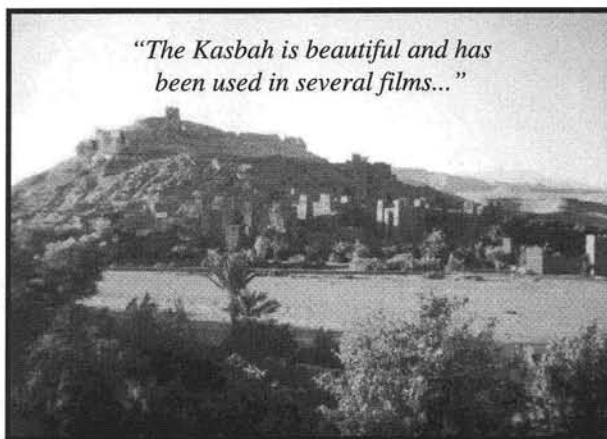
Day 3 After breakfast we set off first for Tamerout, a settlement in the pre-Sahara where we visit a refuge for the poor and sick. A good Muslim, we had been told in Marrakech, gives to the poor. Morocco has no social security, being poor in Morocco means you have nothing. We were told by Andy that as tourists we will be pestered by kids asking for 1 Dirham (8p) and he advises they are not true beggars. Outside the refuge we see an old man, head bowed, palm outstretched as we pass and give him money. We then go on to a Koranic Library where the old man who looks after the 4,600 ancient texts gives us a guided tour in French. There are Koranic commentaries, histories of ancient cities and civilisations, astronomy, mathematics, algebra, poetry and astrology. I ask a question about the astrological text in French but he does not answer. Instead he just says "Scorpion". This was the intuition of a wise man: he had correctly chosen my star sign, I was speechless.

At six in the evening we set off on our twenty camels for the three hour trek into the pre-Sahara. We arrived at our camp in Oued el Farrh at dusk. The camels are unsaddled and released to graze in the sparsely vegetated semi-desert. We sit down to a wonderful supper and watch bread being baked in the sand. A fire was lit and the coals spread out over the sand. A large ball of moist dough was spread over the hot coals and the top was seared with a fire of palm fronds. The flat loaf was then covered by sand and another fire lit on top. The rest of the evening was spent lying on a dune gazing at stars. Some slept in the tent and others on the dunes.

Day 4 I awoke at about 4:30am and made my way to the highest dune I could find to watch the infamous desert sunrise. We ate the bread baked the previous night and it was delicious - remarkably little sand in it too. We left the desert and trek back to Zagora - one of the camels is rabid and bites its leader - **Ed Ryder** does very well to stay on as it bucks and staggers before it is brought under control... In the evening we drive to a nearby village where we see silversmiths in action. The fire is fanned to a tremendous heat. The edges of the moulds are sealed with mud and then the molten silver is poured in. We are then taken into a selling area where most people again practice their haggling skills.

Day 5 We set off and stop in Zagora to buy the food for our lunch. As we drive through the Draa Valley we see spectacular views with the people around winnowing corn, maintaining irrigation channels and herding goats - almost all agriculture here is subsistence. Driving back along the same route as we came I notice the irrigation channels are lower than two days ago. The El Mansoor Dam has been shut off again for another week - it is used to regulate the flow of the Draa to ensure a constant supply of water throughout the year... An hour later we arrive at Ait Benhaddou and the Auberge Al Baraka. As we arrive I read in my guide book, "Auberge Al Baraka has extremely primitive rooms for 100 Dirhams whether there's one or two of you. Skip it if you can." ...Great! In the outside eating area we see large black beetles with bodies the size of golf balls. Some also see a scorpion which is promptly stamped on by the owner. We make a visit to the Kasbah (walled settlement) on the other side of the river. The bridge was washed away in the spring floods so we have to wade across the shallow river. Andy assures us that although all the other rivers in Morocco can give you river blindness, this one can't - somehow I don't quite believe him. The Kasbah is beautiful and has been used in several films including "Laurence of Arabia" and "The Jewel of the Nile". We climb to the top of the Kasbah's keep to watch the sunset and

"The Kasbah is beautiful and has been used in several films..."



have to fight to stand still in the strong, warm wind.

Day 7 We leave at 7:15 for Imlil - our home for the next two nights. We arrive at Asni after a long drive and transfer our bags onto two old Ford Transits which take us up the track to Imlil. Some of the road was washed away in the flashflood of August 1995. In ten minutes the depth of the river rose from about 2 inches to five metres. Boulders the size of our bus had been moved down the river as if they were corks floating on water. Many cars, walnut trees, mules, terraces and people were washed away. Cars were beaten as thin as tin foil, bodies were torn apart and never found. The official death toll given by the government was 155 people from the five valleys affected - King Hassan II did not want the tourist industry to be affected so those missing were not counted as dead. The real number is more like 5,000; the equivalent to almost seven Abingdon School populations washed away.

The Kasbah sits in the shadow of Jebel Toubkal, North Africa's highest mountain. It has a wonderful view of the whole valley with its waterfalls, terraces, groups of houses and wonderful people. We go for a walk up the mountain side to get a better view of the valley and the sunset and then head back to the Kasbah for supper. Many of us slept on the roof that night and the night sky here is even better than in the desert.

Day 8 This day was to be spent studying settlement patterns in the Ait Mizane Valley but a stomach upset forced me to turn back after a half hour of walking. I returned to the Kasbah and am treated to true Berber hospitality. They consider a guest as a gift from Allah. Despite my stomach and the advice not to eat I cannot refuse the omelette, loaf of bread and glass of mint tea that are presented to me as I do not wish to offend our hosts. Another thing I learn about the Islamic culture is their belief that madness in a person means they have been touched by God. Such people are worshipped and respected - I feel I could learn a lot from Islam. Until now my views of the Islamic faith have been based on the images of fundamentalism in Israel and other Middle Eastern states; now I know otherwise.

Morocco has been a wonderful experience. All of us have gained first hand experience of a different religion, culture and general way of life. We have seen many different physical environments which I hope the new Upper Sixth will remember and use in their A-levels. The Moroccan people can be very friendly and hospitable - many of us who came on this fieldtrip should by now realise that our at times arrogant attitudes to the apparently more "simple" way of life should not blind us to the good that can be learned from this and other cultures. We have

hopefully realised that despite five years of learning French to GCSE level the effort made to communicate in the Moroccan's second language was at the very least discourteous to our hosts. Travel truly is



an education. On behalf of the seventeen of us who participated in the fieldtrip I would particularly like to thank **Mr. Maughan** and **Mr. Fishpool** without whose effort and company this adventure would not have been nearly as successful or enjoyable.

A. PARRY VIMJM

CHARITIES -TO ROMANIA

It is fitting that this is merely a foreword to the report on the Lower Sixth's Romania trip which leaves in a few days' time. Good luck to the brave **Mr. Weir** and his intrepid band!

I have just completed my tenure as master responsible for charities and wish my successor well. The total raised by the boys will come to about £10,000 and they will have supported more than fifteen different causes. Some of this money has been raised by individuals who have worked on their own for a cause that particularly appealed to them. **William Scott**, for instance, raised more than £500 for cancer research by running in the London Marathon. Boys have sent money to Cameroon (ARCH) and Uganda (to help rebuild a hospital damaged by fire), to Tibet and India and to a host of charities throughout the UK: to be used to fund medical research, to help care for new born babies (SSNAP), and to help vulnerable, sick and less privileged children (Children in Need and NSPCC). Under the supervision of **Mr. Hunter**, boys have painted a screen at the John Radcliffe Adolescent Unit - a scheme boys helped fund with money from the 1994 sponsored walk.

This is how it should be: the master responsible for charities introducing the work of boys who have shown initiative and generosity in raising money

for others. Sadly, the inspiration behind fund-raising schemes, such as the Romania Appeal, and the effort needed to see them through have come, almost exclusively, from Common Room. Excepting those boys in the Lower Sixth who volunteered to raise money by selling doughnuts at breaktime, and those who have involved themselves in events outside of school, and the embryo rock stars, Mecca and ZZZ (of which more later), there is a lack of initiative amongst so many of our boys; they do little that might be called self-sacrificing and show little inclination to find out about those they could help, let alone think of ways to offer those people help. Our boys can run successful Young Enterprise companies while still in the fourth form – why don't they show the same entrepreneurial flair elsewhere?

There is also a lack of generosity to be found amongst many who have so much, in comparison with those needing help. Boys who have over £200 worth of cricket equipment, sunglasses which cost more than £100 and who consume more than a can of cola each day, are often reluctant to give freely of their time and from their pockets. Nevertheless, I am amazed by the colossal generosity of the relative few who have contributed a great deal to, for instance, the 'small change makes big change' box appeal which raised more than £3,000. If every boy had bought the box, placed it in a prominent place at home and persuaded his family to put in all its coppers and 5p pieces, then the money raised would have been tremendous. In the 40 weeks that this scheme ran, 7p a day per family would have netted more than £15,000. So many boys cannot be bothered to be bothered: they may not be mean, but many are forgetful and thoughtless.

I am concerned, too, about the need amongst Abingdonians to get something in return for giving to a charity: they will buy cakes with the profit going to charity, but are unlikely to bake the cake themselves or give a tenth of the money for nothing; they like a 'day off school' for a sponsored walk and will take money from their sponsors, but how much do they give from their own pocket?

And then there was Mecca and ZZZ and their end of Summer term concert. To the cynic, this too could be seen as self-rewarding – two bands wanted a gig; more than 200 people paid money 'to charity' in exchange for a rock concert. But it was very different from this. This was initiated, planned and executed by boys (with help from **Mr. Weir**, **Mr. Biggs** and **Mr. Strawson** and permission from **Mr. Ayling**). Hours and hours of rehearsal went into producing **John Terry's** studiously nonchalant but compelling presence and into the arrangement of the music – you might not have liked the noise, but you could

not have faulted the technical expertise and cohesion of all who played in the bands. There was a real feeling among the boys, girls and staff who came to that evening that they had come to support the event rather than to get something for themselves. The concert raised £250 for the Romania trip.

In the future, I would like to see more trips like the latter, combining practical and financial help and exposing Abingdonians to new people and experiences. I would like to see Abingdon School foster ever closer links with a small number of charities which it could support frequently and with meaningful amounts of money: closer links with ARCH in Cameroon, with the Mathieson Trust in Calcutta and with school children in Tibet, so that our boys might visit these places in their GAP years and give something more than money and support – friendship and fellowship – and learn from the experience. I would like to see more generosity of spirit amongst our boys and more initiative about expressing that generosity both financially and by giving practical help. My last wish is that those boys who are going to Romania will come back with something to say about their experiences and a real wish to show leadership and enterprise in motivating their fellow Abingdonians to do more for those less fortunate than they are.

My thanks to **Mr. Townsend** and **Mr. Tim Hewes** (father of **Tom Hewes**) for launching and organising the Romania trip, and to **Mr. Weir** for taking it; to **Gaynor Cooper** (school librarian), **Mr. Stinton**, **Mr. Watkins** and **Mr. White** and to the many other colleagues who offered support and help. Special thanks to **David Strainge et al.** who organised the doughnut sales and to **Ash Verjee** for initiating and organising the Mecca concert. My thanks, too, to all those boys who have raised money, given money or given time to help collect, sell or count.

I hope, in time, the efforts of our boys in raising money for others will become a point of pride for every boy and for the school as a whole, and that people will come to know Abingdon School as much for its inventive acts of charity as for its high league-table position, strong sports, music and arts.

S. DAVIES

MISSION TO ROMANIA

Travelling in a foreign country can always guarantee a certain degree of unpredictability, as can working with children, so a project to take more than fifty Romanian orphans for a holiday on the Black Sea was bound to be exciting.

We only fully began to realise the trip's importance to the children once we started to understand

the nature of the country and the society in which they live. In Romania nothing flows in a consistent pattern; there is nothing that the first-time traveller can rely upon. In everything from card games to bus fares it seems that "local rules apply". Some of us got used to this, and to the slower pace of life, whilst others just didn't have the patience.

The Romanians' attitude towards the group was extremely varied: we experienced both an open and helpful acceptance of us as visitors, and a bitter and hostile resentment of our western affluence. The economic divide between us and the Romanians seemed vast and the material value of our money greatly increased - someone bought 45 ice-creams for the equivalent of £2! We all became constantly wary of becoming easy targets for over-zealous fines and cheating, opportunistic shopkeepers. Indeed we seemed to be fined for an awful lot of things; some of them completely fictional, others so greatly exaggerated that we could easily barter them down to a quarter of the original fine.

The traditions that we hoped would still be alive in Romania were undoubtedly present and active; yet the country still managed to surprise us pleasantly with limitless foibles and eccentricities. In our brief moments of tourism (having escaped from the children) we witnessed scenes probably unchanged for hundreds of years - carpet washing in streams and ancient wooden Orthodox churches, bedecked with lace and sacred imagery, where segregation according to sex and age still exists. Once the aluminium mines and blackened chemical plants were left behind, we began to explore the winding roads that struggled up through the densely afforested mountains of northern Romania.

A sense of timelessness came from these moments, but we were soon brought back to the present by the gritty social problems surrounding the orphans. We travelled through the flat yellow plains of Wallachia, the dark peaks of Transylvania and the beautiful Maramures area, where the orphanage and the town of Baia-Mare are situated. It seemed amazing that this area was so ugly and so beautiful at the same time.

The journeys themselves were often exciting, as Romanian roads were another area of lawlessness: they drive anywhere on the road and form as many lanes as they like, depending on the traffic, even if this means driving in the fields. If the Romanians have adopted Western attributes such as Pepsi and the occasional McDonalds restaurant, nevertheless **James Winearls**, medic for the trip, found the hospital he visited archaic and hopelessly ill-equipped.

The bulk of the population still lived a quiet existence with one small plot of land and a cow (with

which they proudly strutted about at the roadside). It seems unsurprising that this was the society which so eagerly fostered Communism, when one realises the importance of the community for the survival of Romania's harsh winter. But unlike the whole country, the orphanage retains this communal society.

Although there were many siblings among the children, a sense of group equality thrived, tending towards a vision of one large family on which the individual could rely, rather than the numerous smaller groups more common in

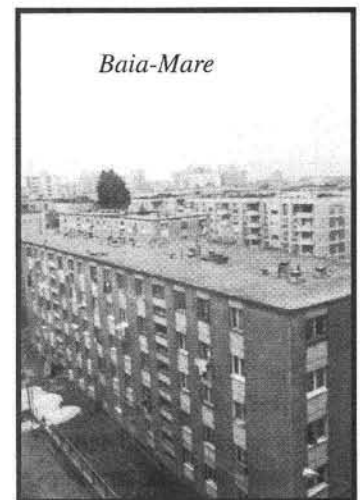
schools. Their rooms are quite bare with but a few of their own possessions (in one case, just some plastic figures hidden beneath a pillow). All clothes are shared and the children rarely fight over toys or games. Their loyalty to each other and their patience showed their ability to survive and function as a group. This was particularly apparent during the 20 hour train journey in packed, sweltering carriages. There was not a single argument - even over who would be sleeping in the luggage racks!

The orphanage itself was crumbling and dilapidated, but the children were clean and happy in their surroundings. Although the town of Baia-Mare, the third most polluted city in Europe, was the stereotypical Communist block-housing nightmare, usually obscured by its own smoke, the orphanage was in beautiful foothills on the outskirts of the town.

It was from this environment that the children came to an area and to activities which most had never experienced. The first



Alex and Rada - two Romanian orphans



Baia-Mare

meeting was a worrying time for everybody; confused expectations are not easily reconciled. Fortunately, the universal language of music helped to bridge the gap as the orphans sang for us, and we valiantly (but less tunefully) attempted to do the same in return. Although it understandably took longer to become close to the older orphans, many of the younger children became strongly attached to individuals in our team. By the end of the first day, few of our group had a hand or a shirt-tail not occupied by a clinging child ("Klingons" as they became known!) It was amazing how strong the relationships were, despite the brief time we had been there, and how successful communication was, despite the language barrier.

Most of the holiday was spent on the beach playing ball games and teaching the children to swim. By Western standards the beach was heavily polluted (it was overshadowed by towering chimneys), rowdy and crowded, but we soon learned to see things through the orphans' eyes. A dolphin is more impressive, even in a shabby pool, if those you are with have never seen one, and a boat trip more exciting if it is a first for most of the passengers. Some excursions resulted in unbounded enthusiasm mingled with outright confusion: at the fairground, when the uses of candy-floss was discussed by some of the small girls, one thought it was a wig, another, cotton wool for her ears! As our Romanian haltingly and sluggishly improved, **Mr. Weir** kicked off a series of loud

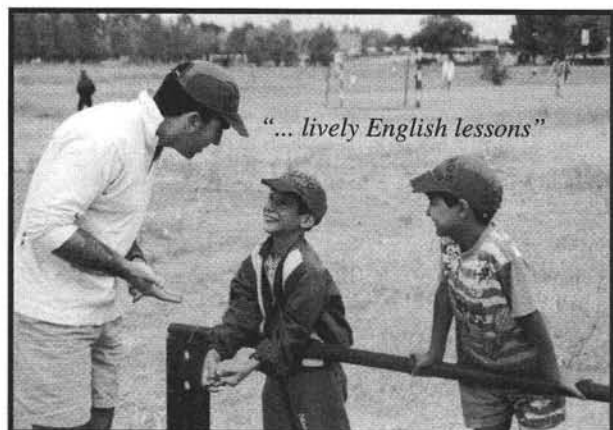
though a few chose to spend some time in their rooms, everyone had something vital to add to the composition of the holiday. By the end of the trip there were many unbreakably close relationships, and the final goodbyes were intensely emotional. To say more would not do those moments justice.

We have now left the street-traders and the donkey-carts behind, and despite some disillusionment at having to relinquish the children, many of the group have come to realise the results of our visit. Before arriving, our intentions lay only in the present - to give the orphans a break from their normal lives. Now we realise that the past and the future are more important. We grew to accept the orphans without a past - none of them liked to talk about it - but the scars that many of them bore and the distressing stories others told us showed us that they can look back on nothing pleasant. We trust that this trip will have given them a lifetime of pleasant memories - as it will for many of us. As for the future, most of the orphans will have to leave at the age of eighteen with few optimistic prospects and little comprehension of the world outside Baia-Mare and the orphanage walls. Perhaps this trip will help to show them some wider horizons.

Each member of the team is now left with his own impressions and images of the trip, for it was undoubtedly a personal experience. One that I know I share with others is that of our final departure, as the children waved their goodbyes through the iron bars surrounding the orphanage...

The trip was organised by "Aid to Eastern Europe" and involved boys from the school and girls from St. Helen's. The group members were:

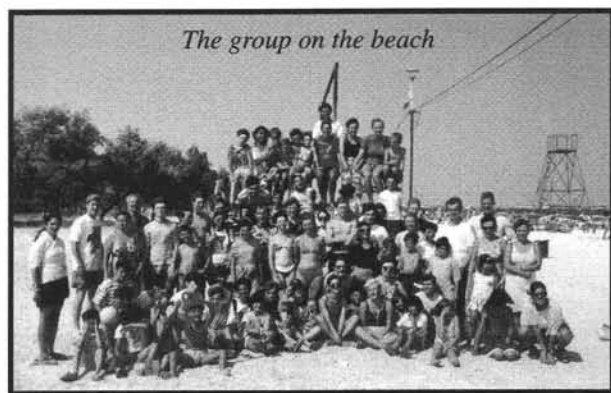
Peter Ewing, Sam West, Tom Sapsford, Daniel Evans, James Winearls, Tom Hewes, Alexa Hewes, Faye Samuels, Alison Nutter, John Terry, Adrian Howkins, Tom Jefferies, Patrick Morse, Patrick Wells, Julian Easton, Mr. P. Weir and Mr. J. Townsend.



"... lively English lessons"

and lively English lessons which would have shocked his head of department. A day of playing, swimming, painting and singing, usually with numerous children attached to various limbs was an intense and tiring experience, so every evening heralded a visit to one of the local clubs with some of the older orphans, where we enjoyed the opportunity to sample the local beer and infamous spirits.

It is without doubt that every member of the English group became committed to the trip, and al-



The group on the beach

J. TERRY 6RVS-S

DRAMA



EDITORIAL

The most important event this year for drama in the School was the opening of the Charles Maude room. Although not solely for theatrical use, its "personality" as a venue for school drama was soon proven with a number of successful productions. The Amey hall meanwhile has been transformed from Aztec palace to suburban sitting-room, funeral-parlour to German station, and has hosted characters as diverse as Scrooge and Atahualpa. We continue to mourn the absence of decent sized audiences in either venue, however.

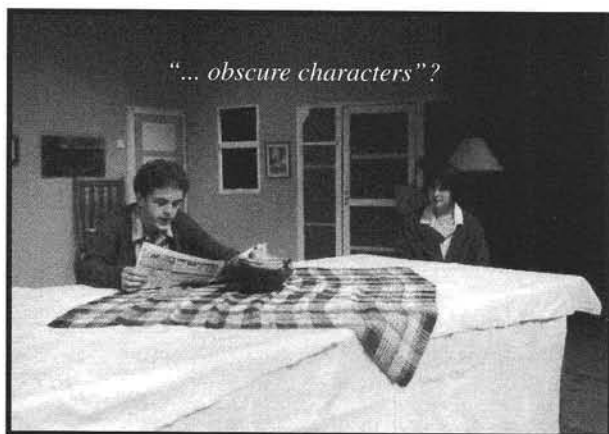
In fact the opening of the Charles Maude room happily coincided with what seems to have been a boom year for drama, with the introduction of Theatre Studies to both the GCSE and A-level timetable. There have been a record number of theatre trips, too, and it has been an inspiration to all schoolboy actors to follow the professional dramatic careers of two members of the MCR, **Mr. Shaw-Smith** and **Mr. Rawlinson**, outside the School.

J. TERRY 6RVS-S

THE BIRTHDAY PARTY

By Harold Pinter

Towards the end of the Christmas term, two girls and four boys set out to perform one of the most difficult pieces of theatre around. Rehearsals were lively as the cast grappled with obscure characters, a questionable plot and inconsistent emotions under the watchful and enthusiastic guidance of **Mr. Shaw-Smith**. After four



weeks we had conquered the first act, but we had less time for the second and third, and with time so short rehearsals became long and concentrated.

Standards were still only mediocre in the final run-throughs, but determination and careful discussions with the director rocketed quality making the performances highly successful. Audiences were often small, as is the Abingdon School tradition, with only ten people (yes, ten people!) turning up for the preview.

This production was the first performance to offer a preview in quite some time, and it proved essential, giving us all the opportunity to get used to working in front of an audience and working under performance conditions.

Other nights received more attention, attracting good audiences for the final evening performances. Overall the production was a highly enjoyable experience for all involved - hard work, but hard play at the same time. Thanks from the cast to the technical crew, director and audience.

M. LLOYD 5ASP

THE RELAPSE

About thirty boys - a mixture of Lower and Upper sixth formers - went to the magnificent Swan theatre in Stratford-upon-Avon on the 2nd of October to see Sir John Vanbrugh's classic comedy 'The Relapse'.

The theatre itself is a grand affair with the apron stage extending right into the throng of the audience. More than anything else, this had the effect of bringing the audience closer to the actors than normal.

The story has two separate plots which run parallel to each other, and then, in classic fashion, come together at the end. The play begins with two lovers, the perhaps aptly named Loveless, and his partner, Amanda. They travel to London at the same time as Young Fashion who seeks to borrow money from his elder brother - the extravagant and narcissistic Sir Novelty Fashion. This again is an example of the wonderful use of names that colour the plot. All the classic aspects of the comedy of the time are here.

Everyone played their parts with the utmost finesse especially the brilliant Victor Spinetti, who was so uncannily cast that his character, Sir Novelty Fashion, came across in a weird and wonderful mix of comedy and terror. Equally impressive was the stunning acting of Jennifer Ehle of *Pride and Prejudice* fame, whose portrait of the gentle Amanda was perfect.

The play was a delight, and a thorough understanding of the issues of the day was never required to enjoy its marvellously simple comic style, and it was a truly invigorating outing.

A. VERJEE 6RVS-S

HITLER'S CHILDHOOD

“Hitler's childhood” was one in a series of plays entitled “Making the Future”, which was intended to provide good quality theatre for the young. As John Retallack, the Director, wrote in the programme: “‘Making the Future’ is a whole hearted attempt to improve the quality of theatre available to young people’. Considering the number of children in the audience and the excellent performances on the stage, the director has no problem in achieving his goal.

Hitler's childhood is a one-act play written by Niklaus Radstrom and performed by the Oxford Stage Company. It tells the story of the brutal childhood of Hitler up to the age of eleven, suffering vicious beatings at the hand of his tyrannical father. These punishments were expressed candidly and emotionally, and his mother's affected ignorance of them was shocking. From this we get an insight into the young Hitler, and more disturbingly, we see the ironic parallels with his later life.

The acting was impressive and realistic, and in places disturbing and uncomfortable for the audience. Malcolm Scates was effective as the cruel father, as was Gareth Corke who, surprisingly, played the mad Aunt Johanna. The metallic set heightened the dra-

matic mood, as did the stark lighting and haunting music.

Hitler's Childhood provokes uncomfortable feelings of sympathy for Adolf as a child. Simply empathising with his situation however, shouldn't, and isn't the same as excusing his later behaviour. 'Making the Future' is a pertinent name, because in order to make the future, we must learn from our mistakes. The principles shown in Hitler's Childhood clearly show some of these mistakes.

Hitler's Childhood was a very impressive production of a difficult and thought provoking subject - much credit is due to the director and his cast.

O. SEARES 6SAE

THE ROYAL HUNT OF THE SUN

This production, directed by **Mr. Pettitt**, was an epic and colourful account of Spain's attempts to steal the great wealth of the South-American Incas. The play, which was a West End hit, despite being often boring and repetitive, was written by Peter Schaffer. It follows Francisco Pizarro, a Spanish explorer, and his band of gold hunters, as they travel through Peru. The land is under the contented rule of a living God, Atahualpa - the Sun God. These two powerful warriors come to blows but end up as friends, both deserted by their countrymen.

The huge cast was made up almost entirely of boarders, many of whom had not been on stage before. However, thanks to a great team spirit and many hours of hard work by cast and director alike, the performances were of a remarkably high standard. The production owed its success to the large and unified cast, headed by talented, dedicated frontmen.

The tormented Spanish commander, Pizarro, was played, with impressive diversity, by **Patrick Wells**, who received his well-earned private round of applause at the end. He was matched by the imposing and dignified Atahualpa, played by **James Montague**. **Peter Tompkins** was engaging as the narrator - Old Martin, and was aided by the lively **Robert Rothkopf**. There were numerous other strong performances providing invaluable support for the leading roles, all of whom deserve mention for their undoubted hard work.

The stage was one of the most impressive to have graced the Amey Hall, and the lights and sound (provided by the cast and a percussion section) added to the atmosphere. The most memorable moments were scenes which involved many of the cast, which were brilliantly directed and carried the audience's interest through an often dull script.

J. TERRY 6RVS-S

CHRISTMAS SPIRIT

From the team that brought you "Red Dwarf" came another big-budget, lavish production. Wunderschreiber **Michael Bartlett** teamed up with **Oliver Horton**, to produce the musical "Christmas Spirit", a modern adaptation of Dickens' "A Christmas Carol".

After last year's sleeper success of "Red Dwarf", it was believed that Michael had more experience in producing a play single-handedly, and this proved true when he managed to get the entire thing off the ground with no help from a single adult.

As far as stage and lighting went, there was virtually no problem: sound however, was more of a problem. I was faced with the age-old problem of having to amplify the singers on stage without picking up the accompanying band as well. This problem was still being mulled over at 7:00pm on the first night. But in true fashion, it was all sorted by half past. Just.

Highlights of the evening included **John Terry** as an extremely dodgy two-metre tall Ghost of Christmas Future, Oliver Horton's sampler spouting ghostly noises at certain choice moments, the Ghost of Christmas Past's "Showgirls" style performance, just teetering on the brink of exploitation: lots of smoke, flashing coloured lights, smoke, laser effects, smoke and more smoke.

The admirable thing is that Mike managed to get the band, the actors, and the Technical Crew to work in total co-operation with each other, which bode straight away for an enjoyable and creative partnership.

The runaway success of "Christmas Spirit" on both nights can only mean one thing: Mike and Oli will be back....

A. VERJEE 6RVS-S

VOLPONE

Writing in the middle of this century, Kenneth Tynan commented that: "only the Americans still write comedies of humours in Jonson's sense..." Considering the number of feeble sitcoms from across the Atlantic, I doubt whether this would apply today. Furthermore, present-day writers could never rival Jonson's intelligence in character depiction. Whereas today's actual comedy revolves around strong individuals, Volpone is a collection of "qualities" personified.

The play as Matthew Warchus directs it is a triumph in observation: he takes into account all the critical appreciation of these qualities within, and whilst giving the players leniency in displaying them, does not emphasise great exaggeration. However,

certain eccentricities in the cast's performance are tinted, bringing out Bisto-like the full flavour of each character. I think particularly of Trevor Peacock's portrayal of Corbaccio, whose appearance and behaviour suggested his destiny is to play Great Uncle Bulgaria in any film about The Wombles. Corbaccio is perhaps the most eccentric of the characters, although Lady Would-Be runs him close. If Cheryl Campbell's part had not already determined her as the most prominent female in the performance, her imposing, non-conformist (and therefore thoroughly enjoyable) playing would have.

Yet, it was the two lead figures who commanded greatest stage presence. Michael Gambon's Volpone, feigner of illness, seemed to have an infinite wealth of ailing expressions to ally with his fine portrayal of a 17th century con-man, (at one point alternating between three different accents).

Nonetheless, it was Simon Russell Beale's approach to Mosca, Volpone's parasitic knave I considered most effective. Although Jonson's character traits and Warchus' direction combined to make it easier for him, he still needed to make the character by balancing Russell Beale-ness with true Jonsonian feel. His success was a tribute to precise comic timing.

As the stage revolved for the final time, I was left reflecting upon how infrequent it must be to see a true depiction of vintage 400 year-old Jonsonian humour, and how hard pushed I would be to find something better.

N. MUNRO 6SAE

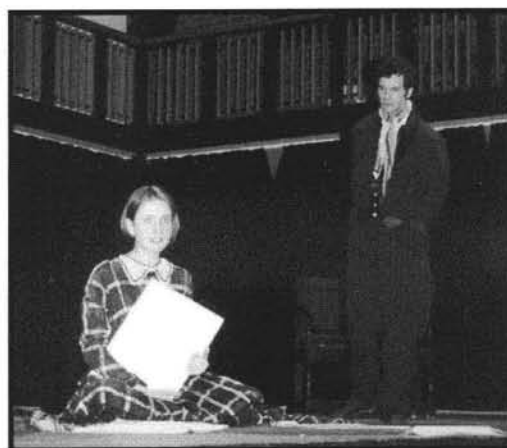
JANE EYRE

St. Helen's school hosted a great performance of an adaptation of the famous novel. We saw performances by Catriona Duff and Sally Aston as Jane herself, and **Mr. Shaw-Smith**



as Mr. Rochester, all three displaying remarkable performance skills. I was particularly impressed by Catriona's sensitivity, clarity of expression and sense of history, since Jane is an formidable part to play, and Sally Aston cleverly matched the elder Jane's character. Mr. Shaw-Smith precisely handled the character of Jane's lover, his diverse talents creeping into all aspects of the performance. The four narrators were controlled and timed very precisely creating an impression of unity throughout a difficult play.

The atmosphere of the whole production was astounding; the insane laughing and panting of Mr. Rochester's former wife was so disturbingly realistic that the audience was not sure initially whether to accept it as part of the play itself or a mistake on the



part of the technical crew! Suspense was well sustained throughout, and the potential of the powerful love scenes was explored in a beautifully free and unrestrained manner.

Congratulations must go to all members of the production, and to the technical crew, who created a swift, realistic and dynamic environment into which the action of the play was injected.

M. LLOYD 5ASP

PLAYING THE DANE

There are only two types of actors: those who have played Hamlet, and those whose careers, however glittering, are completely meaningless. It is the actor's "Holy Grail". As Withnail's Uncle Mont says, when an actor realises he "will never play the Dane", then his artistic ambition ceases. So what is it like to play one of the greatest parts in the history of theatre?

To start with, very lonely. You are under extreme scrutiny, both on stage and off. Even from the

first rehearsal the other actors treat you as "a thing apart". (You are a bit like a groom at a wedding: everyone wants your attention but assumes you are too busy or too important to talk to them.) On stage, too, you are often on your own, even in the court scenes. The other characters drift on and off; you play with them awhile, but to you they are like chess pieces, or ghosts, and they all soon disappear. You become very reliant on Horatio, as he is the only one who is constant in his support.

To a certain extent you have to keep yourself apart. You are not only faced with a phenomenal act of stamina (on stage for nearly three hours, and finishing on a dramatic swordfish) and of memory (it is the largest part in Shakespeare) but also a tremendous sense of responsibility. Hamlet occupies a remarkable place in Western consciousness. He must be all things to all audiences: tragic hero, tortured Jacobean soul, study in Freudian psychology, matinee idol, raving madman, philosopher on life and death, and even Shakespeare himself. Not only do you have to learn all those words, you have to get them right. For an actor, the part is both a gift and virtually impossible.

Everybody loves Hamlet. He gets the wittiest lines, the most sympathy, the best poetry. Normally learning lines is an endlessly slow process of reading and repetition, but many of Hamlet's lines are so striking that they come easily to the mind and smoothly to the tongue. And yet as an actor it is up to you to make Hamlet a rounded, believable character, which is extremely difficult as the play takes you on an incredibly emotional roller coaster.

Until you leave the part you don't realise that these changes - from Prince to Fool, scholar to suicide, bereaved son to jealous lover - happen in the space of just a few lines. But it would be a mistake not to play these changes as accurately and sympathetically as possible. Only an inexperienced or a thoughtless actor takes the easy way out and "goes mad". You also have to say some of the most famous lines in English literature, indeed in the world. When you say "To be or not to be" the audience reacts in a most extraordinary way. They rustle, change position, make an almost tangible effort to listen and yet all they seem to be thinking about is "How will he do this bit?" and "Will he get it right?"

So why do actors crave to play him? Simple. You get to show off. You get to hog the stage. And you get to participate in magic; the magic of Shakespeare's complete, comprehensive, and forgiving vision of human life to be or not to be. Now that's the question.

N. RAWLINSON

THE RIVALS

The Director's View

A new theatre, in the shape of the Charles Maude Room, and a new opportunity for Drama. What type of play does the room call for? The décor is very strong - uncomfortably so for Drama. Only a certain type of play is really suitable for performance in it. Sophisticated? Yes. Stylish? Yes. Small-scale? Yes. Modern? Difficult unless you mean a light comedy. No, a period piece is best. The period almost picks itself. Late 18th century. So, I pick my favourite Sheridan play - witty, dotty in places, and with more than a touch of social satire.

We don't have very long - 10 weeks from the first day of term to the 2nd Dress Rehearsal. We audition straight away. Nine male parts - eleven applicants, of whom two fade away almost immediately! Not much choice, but luckily the parts seem to fit remarkably well. Then, the girls. Four female parts - thirty-five contenders! I don't know any of the girls from Eve, but luckily the Head of Drama at the Convent, Miss Maggie Hemmingway, is a tremendous help. We have to spend a precious few days seeing them all, then recalling the ones we think are serious contenders, then we choose the four we think most suitable - three Sixth Formers, and one Fourth Former, and we choose her to play the best-known part in the play - the middle-aged Mrs. Malaprop.

Rehearsals don't start in earnest until the end of January: just eight weeks, including Half-Term. I produce a hectic rehearsal schedule, and present it to the cast, half expecting several people to quit on the spot. But I begin to realise that I have a cast in a thousand. No-one complains; no-one withdraws.

I'm not at all sure about how I want the stage. We have the whole room to play with, and I want to experiment - but there's no time, and so very quickly, and with my heart in my mouth I decide on a rather strange-shaped stage - wide and shallow. The audience is going to see the action rather as if in Cinemascope, or a tennis match, turning their heads from right to left to follow the action. The audience will be very close indeed. Someone in the front row with long legs, and a habit of sticking his legs out in front of him, could pose a real problem.

As the first few rehearsals proceed, it's clear that the cast is finding the lines very difficult to learn. The language is not all that different from modern "literary" English, and yet they are finding it more difficult to learn than Shakespeare. But it is noticeable how much more confident those who do learn their parts early are than the others. Suddenly, a cou-

ple of them emerge, like butterflies, from the chrysalis of their books, and their movements, their speech, everything comes together.

There is still the problem of inhibition. There should be a lot of laughter (by the cast) in the play. At first the laughs come out as a sort of sigh, then a kind of gasp, and then a sharp quack. I tell them to relax, but the more I tell them, the more uptight they become. And then the embarrassment of the kiss. There are several of these, to be done with style. As far as decorum will allow, I try to demonstrate how it should be done, but I have to admit that the first attempts are pretty lamentable. Bodies remain awkwardly separated, boys and girls collapse in embarrassed giggles, and so on. We spend an inordinate amount of time on the mechanics of embracing. In the end I settle for what I think is second best, and then to my surprise, the embraces get better of their own accord.

While all this is going on, we are assembling furniture and props, and ordering costumes. **Miss Lupton** fits the girls from our own wardrobe. Since we don't have any late 18th century male costumes, we go to our old and highly valued friends, Betty and Sheila Robbins, who hire costumes from Oxford. When they come to fit the boys' costumes, they are sensational.

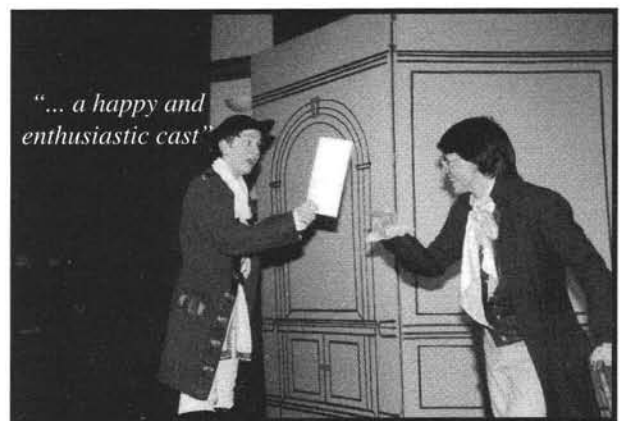
Furniture is another problem. Luckily, we find four quite elegant chairs in an auction, and put two together instead of a sofa. A battered, but stylish occasional table comes out of the Amey Hall props cupboard, and a very heavy, solid table is borrowed from the MCR, courtesy of the President, **Mr. Biggs**. Assorted flowers, ornaments, tea-sets and lamps help to give the stage a style of sorts, and the whole is rounded off by a small pillar and two very large flats, cunningly designed by Mr. Biggs. Needless to say, Mr Biggs also painted and decorated the flats, thus adding materially to the ambience. Swords come from **Mr. Ley**, the school fencing coach, and duelling pistols come from the boys themselves. Fans are supplied by Miss Lupton and by Betty and Sheila Robbins, and books come from anywhere we can find them...

...The Dress Rehearsals come and go, and then the first performance, which is a matinee, and billed as a preview. Two large school parties come, from the Convent and John Mason (including a small group from Latvia - I hope they made something of it), and a fairly small group from school. As a first performance it is fair, though we are still plagued with prompts, and the audience laughs respectfully. The main thing is that it is off the ground. Then come the two evening performances, and things go from strength to strength. There are still a couple of

prompts on the Friday, but they are unimportant, and by the Saturday there are none. Several roles have grown by quite a few notches in the course of the three performances, and I am left wishing that we could have done at least another one.

The Stage Crew consisted of two boys, and two girls who were nominally in charge of props, but helped in every way they could. The Lighting Crew, too, worked very efficiently. Everything went as clockwork. The Orchestra, which materialised during one Dress Rehearsal, and whose composition disconcertingly changed during the run, produced some quite ravishing music, and gave the evening a real touch of class.

So there it is - an enjoyable, and not unsuccessful show, with a happy and enthusiastic cast. It was a



"... a happy and enthusiastic cast"

very nice experience for me, and I hope, for all who were involved in the show. It was a novel experience to have sold out on all three performances. The sense of occasion this generated made the whole operation worthwhile, and revealed that the Charles Maude Room makes an excellent theatre.

D. TAYLOR

THE VISIT by Friedrich Dürrenmatt

A fabulously rich billionaire returns to her dilapidated, ramshackle native town of Guellen with her strange retinue including husband (soon to be ex-husband), servants and henchmen. She announces that she is prepared to donate an enormous sum of money, not only to the town, but to every member of the community. There is, however, one condition, which she makes clear at a banquet given in her honour - that the man who seduced her and then hounded her out of town many years ago should be killed. The whole community

expresses horror and revulsion at her request. They reject her offer and assure her intended victim - the aptly named Ill - that he is safe from her threats. But slowly and by degrees, their greed gets the better of their consciences, and finally they agree. Ill is killed, and the little town get its money.

A grim subject, and a disturbing one which forces an audience to examine their own consciences - to ask whether, faced with the same choice, they would do the "right", or the "wrong" thing. And the playwright doesn't make the decision an easy one. There is no doubt that Ill behaved atrociously to the lady, using bribery and corruption to avoid the consequences of his action, and forcing her out of the town and into prostitution. There are no "nice" characters, no-one who in the end stands up for the "Right". The picture of mankind that emerges is a very bleak one, and since it was written in the 1950's, not long after the destruction of the Nazi regime in Germany, it has strong memories of the way a whole community was inveigled into acquiescence in the most horrific and inhuman acts.

However, the play is also a comedy. The weakness and absurdity displayed by ordinary people faced with an extraordinary event gives rise to a rich fund of humour. The Mayor, the Schoolmaster, the Priest, the Policeman, and not least the ordinary, unnamed citizens all amuse us at the same time as they disgust us by their disgraceful and foolish self-seeking. The humour is black, and never for an instant softens the starkness of the message.

This is not an easy play for a school to perform, although it is an extremely satisfying one. Something striking, dramatic and/or funny is happening all the time. The danger is that it will be seen as nothing more than a memorable dramatic tour de force, and that the serious message buried in the play will be overlooked in the pyrotechnics. It says a great deal for the Director and her cast that this did not happen.

It also says much for the interpretation of the central figure, the billionaireess, Claire Zachanassian, played in drag by **John Terry**. The fact that he was in drag added a dimension of strangeness and horror to the character, and through her, to the play. John's performance was beautifully judged - paced just right to suggest the lady's sinister self-confidence - her knowledge that in the end the town would come round to her way of thinking. His voice and his movements (the lady after all did have an artificial leg and arm!), suggesting age and a kind of painful determination, never faltered, and once we had accepted the unusual situation, we almost forgot that here was a boy playing an elderly woman.

The success of the production as a whole relied very much on John's performance, and he is to be congratulated very warmly. Almost, if not quite, in the same league, was **Michael Bartlett** as the unfortunate Ill. Michael captured a lot of the character - his ingratiating oiliness, and then his fear and hopelessness as the truth dawned that he would be killed. Michael's tendency to be a bit wooden on stage, to mask or underplay emotion rather than exhibit it, actually worked in his favour, since it fitted the character he played very well, and he attained at the end a measure of heroic acceptance of his fate, that helped to reduce the pessimism of the rest of the play.

Other characters added much to the richness of the experience. **Matthew Terry**, playing all his brother's numerous husbands with a suitable degree of bemused passivity; **Daniel Logan** as the pompous, self-seeking Mayor, **Jo Evans**, interpreting with much aplomb the aged Butler-cum-ex-Chief Justice, **Ash Verjee**, horribly convincing as the venal, hypocritical, drunken Schoolmaster (where did he get his model from??), **Chad Mason**, the rather sinister, brutish Policeman; a delightfully dotty performance by **Jack Mansfield** as the Stationmaster, **Daniel Wilberforce** and **Oliver Horton**, first mysterious, then frighteningly repulsive as the two eunuchs, and several others, but unfortunately we lack space to do justice to everyone.

The set, designed by **Mr. Biggs**, greatly helped the atmosphere of the play. From the beginning we received a strong sense of the town's broken-down, hopeless condition, and then, aided by imaginatively designed lighting, we experienced the malign presence of the billionaireess. This imagination was particularly evident in the use of the Scaffold Tower to denote the Lady's lodgings (far back and removed from the action, but an ever-present force dominating events in the foreground), and in details like the cut-out car and the minimalist railway station (lighting and sound helped enormously here).

There was a commendable willingness to use the resources available - to realise, for example, that a "romantic woodland bower" can be achieved amusingly and effectively by four boys holding scrawny branches and making their own sound effects.

Altogether, apart from a rather slow pace, and a tentative quality to some of the acting on the night that I saw the play, "The Visit" was a very successful event, appreciated by the audience on several levels. It was a real credit to the cast, and to all those involved behind the scenes, and especially to the Director, **Mrs. Retallack**.

D. TAYLOR

MUSIC

EDITORIAL

The year started optimistically in the aftermath of the triumphantly successful orchestra tour round Central Europe during the summer holidays. Having bid **Mr. Oxlade** a sad farewell from the music department there was an addition to the full time music staff in the form of **Mr. Millard** who soon settled in and took charge of the newly formed School Choir. The Grand Christmas concert at the end of the first term was an effective showcase for the various orchestras, bands and other ensembles that operate within the School.

Variety has always been a watchword for music at Abingdon School and as always many different types of music have been represented this year. It is the view of many, however, that this has been the year for jazz at Abingdon School and the busy concert and touring schedule of the Big Band in particular shows what can be achieved by such determined and talented musicians.

Several more unusual events have punctuated the music calendar including a concert by Indian orphans, a jazz concert with performances from various members of the visiting music staff and a charity "pop" concert to raise money for Romania.

Music at Abingdon has grown and diversified to reflect the enthusiasm of the pupils and staff involved and this will surely continue as long as such enthusiasm is alive.

G. CLAYTON 6NMR



GRAND ORCHESTRAL CONCERT

This year's Grand Orchestral Concert was a great success, despite the fact that at the rehearsal on the day we all seemed to be scraping through in a pinch. Things weren't looking brilliant at the rehearsal, and it seemed as though it would be another of those 'just OK' concerts. Everything came together on the night, however, and despite the missing Mozart trio, it all went down very well.

The concert began with a stunning performance by the First orchestra of Malcolm Arnold's 'Little Suite', which offered an exciting start. The Chamber orchestra came next with **Simon Capper** and **Josiah Lau** and their breathtakingly beautiful rendition of Bach's oboe and violin concerto. We then heard Mozart's 25th symphony, minus trio, which rounded off the first half well.

The Second orchestra's performance began the second half, with four A level musicians conducting: **Oliver Swadling**, **Dominic Aitchison**, **Paul Soulsby** and **William Burn**. Then the First orchestra returned to the stage with Elgar's Cello concerto, including brilliant performances from the soloists **Mark Pritchard** and **Daniel Hammersley**. The concert closed with a rousing rendition of Sibelius' 'Finlandia'.

As always thanks must go to **Mr. Stinton**, at whose hands the whole concert came together, and to all the teachers who contributed, especially **Mr. Davies** and **Mr. Millard** who rehearsed sections of the orchestra, and to **Mr. Elliot**, who has helped out with the Second orchestra as well as playing in the First orchestra.

M. O'DONOVAN 4RSH

CHORAL SOCIETY CONCERT

This refreshingly short concert was a first for Abingdon school in that it was the first time that the school's own First orchestra was used to accompany the choir instead of hiring a professional orchestra. This time, only a harp-player was hired. The chorus was made up of several separate units; the main body was the adult choral society and there were also the Abingdon School choir and a group of girls from St. Helen's school.

Despite the large number of people in the chorus the sound was rather disappointing in the two Vaughan Williams pieces, but this was probably due to the fact that they were positioned right at the back of the stage. The first piece was 'Fantasia on Greensleeves' with **Joss Dear** on solo flute and

Emma Grainger on harp. The music was played subtly and with sensitivity and there were some marvellous moments when sweeping string passages provided a worthy accompaniment for the soloist.

To close the first half of the concert the large ensemble of musicians and singers performed an unashamedly rousing rendition of Vaughan-Williams' Five Mystical songs. Throughout the five songs **Mr. David Salmon**'s voice managed to gloss over the slight inadequacies in the chorus while the orchestra came into its own in the exciting climax of the fifth song.

The second half began with a small group of Shakespeare Songs performed by the chorus on its own. These difficult pieces were sung with a subtle finesse despite the slightly unclear words. A fitting close to the concert was Vaughan Williams' famous Serenade to Music. For most of the time it was performed with the appropriate sensitivity but at times the orchestra did become slightly self-indulgent. The four soloists performed admirably, in particular the soprano who finished the concert beautifully. The others also turned in commendable performances.

G. CLAYTON 6NMR

AN OXFORDSHIRE CONCERT

On Friday 13th October the Abingdon Academics, the Senior Quartet (strings) and the Junior Jazz Ensemble played in Clifton Hampden for the Friends of St. Michael's Church. The chairman of this society was the late **Judge Patrick Medd**, who was also Chairman of the School Governors. The concert was held after the inaugural annual general meeting of the Friends of St. Michael's. Its purpose was to make the local people aware of the church as repairs on the roof and fabric were needed. Unfortunately Judge Medd became ill on the day so his role was carried out by Mr. Neil Ashley of Amey plc.

The Abingdon Academics performed first with four vocal pieces. The singers were **Mr. Pope**, **Edward Allen**, **Mark Pritchard**, **Oliver Smith**, **Simon Capper** and **Mr. Salmon**. Playing second was the Senior Quartet which consisted of **Edward Smith** and **Supraj Rajagopalan** on violin, **Ben Rowe** on viola and **Daniel Hammersley** on cello. They played the Allegro from Quartet in C (K157) by Mozart. To round the evening off, the Junior Jazz Ensemble played four modern jazz/funk 'tunes'. The group consisted of **Thomas Richards** and **William Bartlett** on saxophones (alto and tenor respectively), **Thomas Bartlett** on bass guitar, **Michael Bartlett** on

drums and **Oliver Horton** on piano.

The evening went well and many people came up afterwards to say how good all the music was and how much they enjoyed it. In all a successful event.

O. HORTON 4MDM

A VIOLIN RECITAL

Looking back on the concert, it was not the music played which remains in my mind, but the musicians; they were both of quite an extraordinary standard. Priya Mitchell began playing the violin at four and has given recitals all over Europe. Andrew West has won various national and international awards and was selected for representation by the Young Concert Artists' Trust in 1990.

But of course it is the sound that they produced which mattered most. The concentration on Priya Mitchell's face was incredible. It was quite clear that she was analysing every note; she gave each note its own personality and status in the music. I do feel, though, that so much displayed concentration detracted from the whole experience, because the audience was more interested in her than the sound she was producing. Andrew West however took the part of accompanist perfectly. He played very accurately, without trying to take the limelight by playing in a very virtuoso manner. The overall balance between the two and their attitude towards the music was perfect and really pleasing to listen to.

They played a good selection of music. To start the concert there was a Beethoven sonata. This offered a good contrast between the energetic sections and the more light-hearted parts. This was followed by a sonata by Schumann which has a very wide variety of texture and rhythm: it was played very well, but I thought it was not nearly as impressive as the Franck which came after the interval. This was perfectly played and was met with a huge round of applause at the end, and was so good that it led to two encores.

I think that the enthusiastic applause given by the audience was testament to the excellence of this performance.

P. SOULSBY 6DLS

NOYE'S FLUDDE

As part of the millennium celebrations at St. Helen's church, a production of Britten's opera was staged in October. The cast and orchestra were drawn from schools in Abingdon with the principal roles provided by St. Helen's and

Abingdon Schools. The music was organised by Andrew Tillet, Head of Music at St. Helen's and directed by Keith Durham, from the same school.

The opera is based on a Chester mystery play and tells the story of Noah's adventures in the Ark. The music suggested that much credit should go to the string quintet and piano duet whose support of the soloists was consistently excellent. One to be singled out for particular praise is **Daniel Hammersley**, whose 'cello brought a special grace to the Raven's waltz. Noye was played by **William Burn** who coped well with the oddities of the text and score. Victoria Barbary played Mrs. Noye excellently and was wonderful as a scolding wife. **Tristan Webb**, **Michael Spencer-Chapman** and **Ben Hancock** played Noye's sons and sang very well.

The whole production was put together in under half a term and the full run-through was on the first night: despite this, everything went very well. Perhaps the most impressive feat was getting the ninety-eight children who played the animals on and off stage in the right order at the right time! The lighting was atmospheric and put together well and helped make the night a good one for cast, orchestra and audience.

W. BURN 6DLS

JOINT COMPOSERS CONCERT

On Wednesday 8th of May a joint composers' concert including work from pupils of both St. Helen's and Abingdon Schools took place in the Amey Hall. It consisted of a large number of compositions of a very high standard. The music ranged from pastiche baroque pieces to blues and rock numbers for instruments and voice. Many of the pieces were performed by their composers although some of the St. Helen's entries were performed by the resident string quartet.

The music was of a very high standard, in particular Genevieve Pearson's 'Slow Tears' which was an original and highly expressive piece for voices. **Daniel Hammersley's** two dances for solo 'cello in a pastiche Bach style was also notable as well as **Matthew Hodgson's** 'String Partita' for two violins.

G. WHITTAKER 4RSS

CHAPEL CHOIR

This has been a very successful year for the chapel choir. **Mr. Elliot** took charge of the choir at the beginning of the year, and right from the word go we sang regularly at many different events, a habit which has continued through-

out the year. The first item on the calendar was the service for the Mercers' Company in London. Only about half of the choir sang at this event, which was extremely successful, and included a delicious lunch laid on by the company in one of the rooms in their huge building.

Since then, the choir has sung Evensong at various places, not least the royal chapel of St. George in Windsor Castle, the chapel of Balliol College in Oxford, and Dorchester Abbey (at the memorial service for the late Judge Medd). We have made our way through a repertoire ranging from the famous Ave Verum Corpus by William Byrd to a very challenging movement from the Chichester Psalms by Leonard Bernstein; we hope to continue to widen the repertoire next year, and continue to be successful, especially in the summer when the choir is planning to go on tour with the Chamber orchestra.

M. O'DONOVAN 4RSH

JAZZ AT ABINGDON

How things can grow from such small seeds! Jazz at Abingdon has been alive for some eight or nine years since jazz guitarist **Paul**



*Paul Reynolds
lets the Good Times Roll*

Reynolds was appointed to the instrumental staff. Some five years ago, a tenor layclerk from Christ Church, **Matthew Vine** was also brought in to do some jazz ensemble work with several able boys, **Dominic Franks**, **Ian Cotterill** and others, partly as a move to divert them from the horrors of Heavy Rock! About the same time, **John J. Daniels**, then our long-serving saxophone teacher was invited to

start up a Big Band. John was forced, through ill-health, to retire some years ago, but since then the Band has gone from strength to strength under the leadership of a string of visiting musicians, including **Derek Jones**, **Steve Cadd** and, for the last year, **Simon Currie**. Both of the latter have made careers as freelance saxophonists in the Cabaret and Jazz scene, so were eminently qualified and experienced in this field. Several other visiting teachers have joined Abingdon's "Jazz Faculty" in recent years. Most importantly, these have included **Andy Bush**, a freelance trumpeter from London, heavily involved in backing band and session work. Andy has done great work in bringing on Abingdon's trumpeters, particularly in his rôle as Big Band coach. **Alex L'Estrange**, to whom the school said farewell at the end of the summer term after two years of service, has done marvels in encouraging the work of smaller jazz ensembles and this has fed the work of the larger Big Band. Alex is a most versatile musician: his achievements have included chorister- and clerkships in two world famous Oxford choirs; a First in Music from Oxford University, mastery of the countertenor voice, the piano, the 'cello, the electric and string bass and a burgeoning career as a conductor. He has left to pursue his professional career in London and to get married - however we will welcome **Frank Toms** (jazz piano) and **Tim Dawes** (electric/string bass) to replace him next year.

M. STINTON

In support of Big Band's
Tour to S.W. France

**A SPECIAL JAZZ CONCERT
GIVEN BY ABINGDON'S JAZZ
MUSICIANS**

including "Summertime"
and "On Green Dolphin Street"

Trumpet: Andy Bush
Sax: Simon Currie
Piano: Frank Toms
Guitar: Paul Reynolds
Bass: Alex L'Estrange
Drums: Wichard v. Hauenschild

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Amey Hall
Abingdon School
Friday 14th June 7.30 p.m.

Tickets/Programmes
£5.00, £2.50 (concessions)
Available at the Box Office before the
concert

A JAZZ CONCERT

You should have been there. It's as simple as that. This concert was undoubtedly something to write home about. It has to be said that this style and quality of small-group jazz music is rare and certainly hasn't been heard in the school since Humphrey Lyttleton's visit a few years ago. The money raised on this hot summer's evening was to go towards Big Band's forthcoming trip to South-West France. The concert however did have a touch of regret, as it included the farewell performance of the jazz piano teacher, **Kevin Wooding**.

The evening was kick-started confidently by the middle-school jazz group whose talented saxophones and glittering guitar were held firmly in place by **Oliver Horton**'s catchy piano, **Thomas Bartlett**'s bass and **Michael Bartlett**'s pounding backbeat.

They were well-received and the infectious atmosphere of a successful concert began to set in, aided by the moody 'sunset' lighting courtesy of the ever-ready technical crew.

Later the senior jazz group, fronted by the con-torting and evidently pained **William Burn** on saxophone played a couple of songs despite only having had two rehearsals. The staff group was informal and light-hearted on stage, and soon attracted the undivided attention of the audience, especially with the original arrangement of the Gershwin classic, *Summertime*, featuring the mellow flugel-horn of **Andy Bush**. The Big Band leader, **Simon Currie**, often counteracted this with the bassy honk of his baritone saxophone, or dueted on the alto or the tenor. **Paul Reynolds**, our previous guitar teacher returned to the school with a new bearded look and a "summery", relaxed contribution to the band. Also adding to the sound was the double bass of the ever-smiling **Alex L'Estrange**, and the skitting swing rhythms of the drum teacher **Wichard von Hauenschild**. Completing the ensemble was the new jazz piano teacher, **Frank Toms**.

The band had perfectly professional co-ordination, slipping easily into new beats and keys, filling the sweltering hall with their bossa-nova and funk melodies. The atmosphere on the balcony was particularly vibrant; clapping, whistles and enthusiastic shouting was abundant. The evening came to a climax when the Middle school group joined their teachers for a final number, which was very impressive.

J. TERRY 6RVS-S

MOZART'S REQUIEM

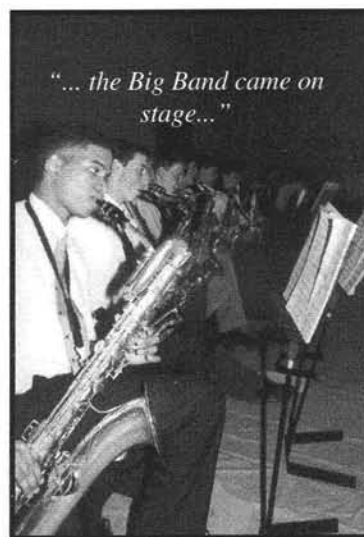
Mozart's Requiem Mass, his most famous and perhaps most beautiful piece, is a profound musical work. Listening to a recording of the Mass is an undeniable experience. Singing in the choir can be hair-raising, if approached in the right manner. The summer term heralded **Mr. Millard**'s superb interpretation of the work, the end product of a term's dedicated labour. Musicians of varying ages, sexes, talents and organizations were brought together to produce a very venerable rendition of this masterpiece.

Singing in any vocal group is rather like playing team sport. Listening to classical music may not give the same thrill or sensation of novelty as heralding the latest pop single: but listening to and singing pieces such as the Requiem does give an immense sensation of team spirit, accomplishment and satisfaction. We should all support such activities, at least in spirit, if not in presence. Thanks must go to St. Helen's for the provision of the female choir, to the Abingdon Choral Society for adult voices, and to the superb soloists who were the star performers of the concert. Congratulations to all involved!

M. LLOYD 5ASP

THE SCHOOL BANDS' CONCERT

On the tenth of May the school once again excelled itself with the first of a series of summer band concerts. There was a fair sized audience (although, as ever, it could have been larger) made up of all ages. With performances from the Second Wind Band, Brass Band, Senior Brass Quintet, First Wind Band, a French Horn ensemble, and Big Band, the evening was thoroughly enjoyable for both audience and performers.



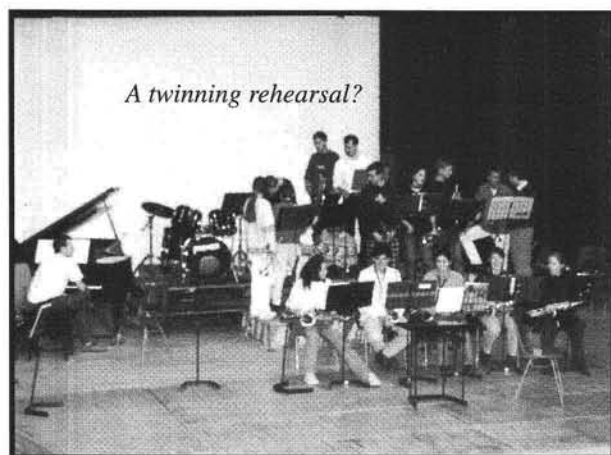
At first, the concert looked to be a little short; three-quarters of an hour into the programme and it was already half-time. However, the first half had already proved a success - the Senior Brass Quintet performed excellently in their first public performance - and after a longer-than-average break, the First Wind Band opened the second half (which did prove to be considerably longer than the first) with a superb rendition of the Light Cavalry Overture. Shortly after ten o'clock, the Big Band came on stage to finish the concert with a bang, playing out with a memorable rendition of Chuck Rio's 'Tequila' complete with whoops, screams, whistles, a host of solos, etc.

All the bands were on top form, and, judging by the faces of the audience as they left the hall, the concert was undoubtedly a success.

T. INMAN 6RVS-S

BIG BANDS' CONCERT: Abingdon -Argentan - Schongau

On Friday 17th May big bands from Argentan (France), Schongau (Bavaria) and Abingdon School got together and performed a superb concert as part of the twin towns' anniversary celebrations. A large number of tickets were sold and people from all over Abingdon came to listen.



The concert included a number of different styles of big band music, varying from the quieter numbers (such as 'Li'l Darlin'... by Neal Hefti) to the more modern ones like 'Funk 1', by our own saxophone teacher, **Simon Currie**.

The big bands varied considerably in size: the saxophone section of the French band was considerably bigger than its brass section, whereas the Schongau band had a much larger brass section including nine trumpets and flugel-horns. They also seemed to have different repertoires, with the French band tending towards the more traditional styles and our own

band going for pieces like 'I feel good' (James Brown) and the ever-popular 'Tequila' (Chuck Rio).

Throughout the evening a large number of soloists came to the front of the stage and performed their own improvised solos. In particular, the trombonist of the Argentan big band will always be remembered for his momentous solo in which he dropped to his knees and still continued to play!

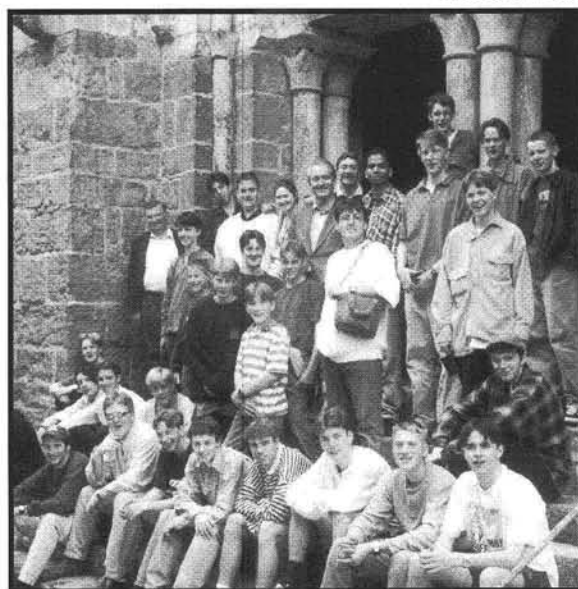
Overall, the evening went very well and was a new experience for all concerned, providing us with an insight into the types of big band music currently being played abroad.

D. AITCHISON 6DLS

THE BIG BAND TOUR to S.W.France, Normandy and the Lot

The impetus and enthusiasm for jazz which has been generated in recent years has been quite unstoppable and it seemed clear, last September, that 1996 should be the year for a Jazz Tour; details of which appear in the article which follows. And why the Département of the Lot? There is a tremendous enthusiasm for Jazz there, with festivals in Assier and Souillac to name but two, and a thriving café life which lends itself to *al fresco* performance in the modern idiom. The **Director of Music**, too, through his personal connections in that area, brought about the establishment of early contacts and venues. This was indeed a wonderfully successful tour which made a big impact; not least the offer to take part in the International Jazz Festival at Souillac in future years. Our particular thanks go to all those who offered us vital financial help: to **TASS**, to **The Music Society**, to Abingdon Town Council and the Rutherford Appleton Laboratory at Harwell.

M. STINTON

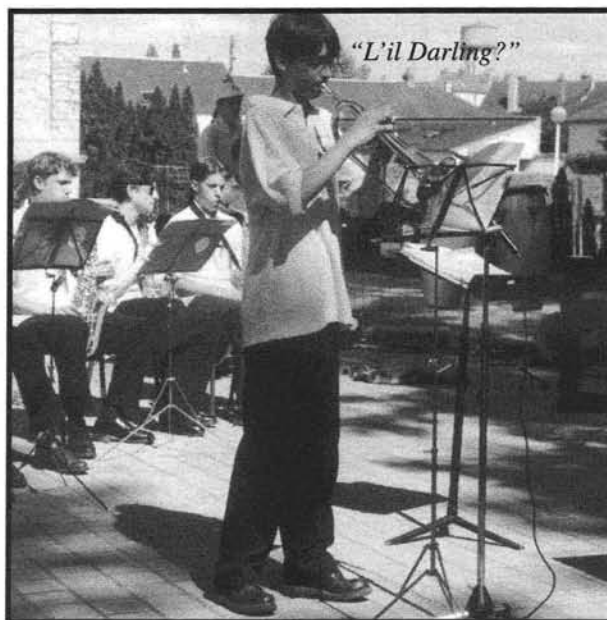


The big band's tour to France in July was not only a great success in itself, but also a venture which brought out elements in the band which proved integral to its music and performances. It was not an easy tour, with two overnight road trips and concerts on every evening but one, but where an opportunity came for the whole lot to fall flat on its face the band responded by working harder and making sure that everything went as well as it could.

The choice of venues for the tour was fairly unusual, but ultimately very successful. We played in all sorts of towns, from the "tiny" village of Rueyres to the large Normandy town of Argentan. Each concert came with new difficulties and opportunities, be they decidedly unnerving stages or a Jazz festival in the next week with some of the most famous players on the scene.

Our first concert was not the best musically, but the hall was filled to capacity with more standing outside. This was to be our only indoor concert, the weather improving as the tour progressed. In St. Céré we overcame an electrical hitch in the afternoon to give a performance against which we could measure all the others. Souillac was voted our best performance, and saw every member of the band play a solo. That afternoon we had split into small groups to play in restaurants around the town. Here we had mixed success, but with no rehearsal time and groups lacking the essentials for a jazz ensemble there can be no blame for any mistakes made. The only concert with a paying audience was in the beautiful, and very steep, Cordes-sur-Ciel. The closest contender for best concert came in Lacapelle-Marival. In the grounds of the wonderful 14th century chateau and on the best stage of the tour we concluded our stay in the region with excellent playing. Argentan was more of a challenge, following a soul-destroying overnight trip, but by the evening show we had summoned up enough energy to give Abingdon's twin town a good performance.

The programme for the concerts remained the same throughout the tour. The winner of the "Best Soloist" vote was **E. Mason**, whose solos in "Funk I" were among the musical highlights. His was not the only success, though. The rhythm section provided consistently powerful improvisation with **C. Isaac**, **A. Savage** and **H. Dorling** all giving excellent solos. New soloists from the band were to be found in every section: **R. Janisch**, **C. Rose** and **B. Aston** in the trombones, **L. Dickinson** and **N. Aston** on trumpet, **J. McNeil** and **T. Inman** on alto, and **M. Bartlett** on bongos. There were more solos from **S. Zaloumis**, **D. Aitchison**, **T. Judd** and **R. Hutchins**. Features were given to several players - **M. Spence**



cer-Chapman in "Li'l Darling", **O. Swadling** in "Sunflower", **T. Sapsford** in "A Foggy Day", **W. Burn** in "Funk I" and **R. Field** in "Just the Way You Are". The Middle School Jazz Ensemble, with **O. Horton**, **M. Bartlett**, **W. Bartlett** and brother **Tom**, **E. Mason** and **T. Richards** was, as usual, very good. Notable sitters-in included **S. Currie** and **T. Judd**.

Terrou, our base for the first week was very peaceful, and it did have a nice pool. Once we became accustomed to the flies and the occasional odd smell it was not bad, but not quite what we were expecting. Argentan was much the same, but it could be said that the Lycée Gabrielle was a touch bland. However, what can never be taken away from these places are the people. Wherever we were people worked their hardest to make us welcome and to help us. In St. Céré the local music shop offered to lend us amps. and a keyboard for the rest of the tour if ours had been damaged by the power troubles. Whenever we needed something somebody found it for us. The welcomes that we received were always warm and the farewell bade us by the owner of the Relais in Terrou was a wonderful end to that part of the tour. Credits go to the bandleader **Simon Currie** who got great performances out of us every night and was a source of encouragement and inspiration for every musician. To **Mr. Elliot**, who was ever reliable and a recourse to sanity when the need arose. To **Mr. Millard** and to **Michelle Brachet**, whose senses of humour were ever present, and Michelle's baritone was a great addition to the band. To **Bill Dorling**, always a helpful presence in the party. The last vote of thanks, though, must go to our Director of Music, who made the whole trip possible: **Mr. Stinton**.

W. BURN 6DLS

A "POP" CONCERT

It was not, as many people thought, a new experience for the Amey Hall. Nonetheless, the two school bands were in élite company: the last one to play here was the now internationally famous Radiohead. The bands themselves may have felt the great weight of comparison on them, but if so did not show it. Nonetheless, one rendition of the familiar Radiohead song "Just" from Mecca seemed to stir the audience more than the others.

The primary aim of the concert was to raise money for the Romanian charity appeal, but the tickets were very reasonably priced. Thus it was disappointing that there were few Abingdon pupils present. In fact, the largest contingent seemed to come from outside the school: Oxford High as well as Our Lady's Convent and St. Helen's schools were well represented. Apart from the charitable one, there was no doubt another aim - to make the bands better known. **Sebastian Barwell's** ZZZ band is a recently formed group, whilst Mecca, although its principal characters may be well-known together, has changed its name several times. To a wet-behind-the-ears popular music listener like myself, it is difficult to appreciate and gauge the depth of talent that this concert exhibited. However, if crowd reaction is anything to go by, I would suggest that it was considerable. Important social anthropological study could have been conducted here, in an atmosphere that was stimulating. For one young lady it was sadly all too much. Boldly, she raced down the steps, joyfully encouraged by the crowd. On reaching the stage and the distinguished figure of **John Terry**, seated and in tails, she was overcome with emotion. She thrust herself upon him, embraced him two or three times then took her leave out of the fire exit.

John Terry, though, did not seem to require any inspiration. His energetic and passionate singing was impressive and appeared to be well complemented by his fellow musicians, particularly in the choreography attempted. There was a real sense of theatre in the movements around the stage, in the poses exhibited by John and in group co-ordination. At one point, **Ash Verjee**, rising from his keyboard, traversed the stage simply to adjust a piece of equipment. The action kept

interest, and focused it onto another band member. ZZZ had its own ideas: one song intriguingly involved the use of a typewriter, which Sebastian Barwell bashed away at throughout.

The evening was more of a performance than a bland rendition of a few songs, and the originality and creativity were instrumental (no pun intended) in giving life to intelligent lyrics. Should an opportunity to view these groups come round again, as it surely will, you would be wise to seize it.

The Bands:

ZZZ:

Sebastian Barwell	(vocals and typewriter)
Sam West	(guitar)
Robin Field	(keyboard)
Henry Dorling	(drums)

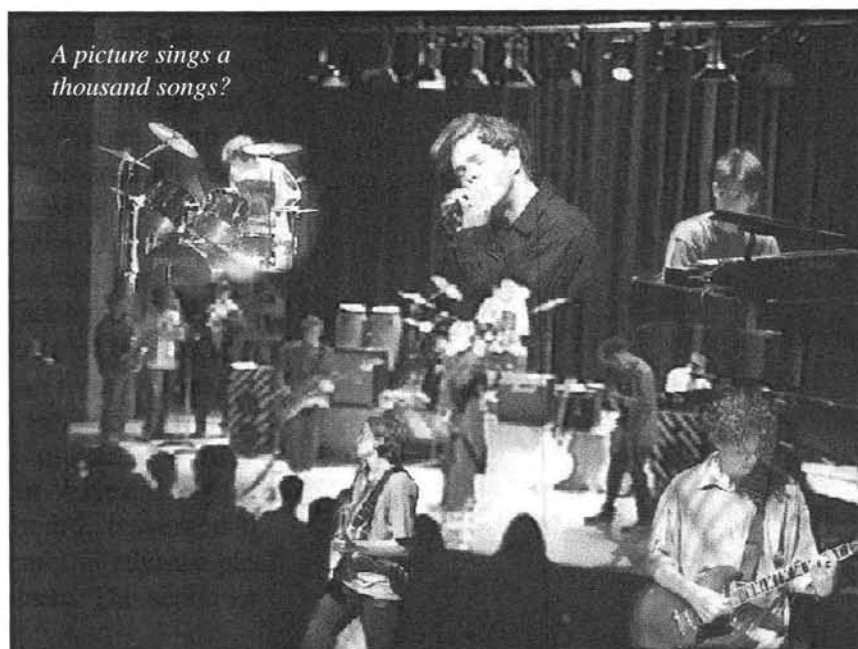
MECCA:

John Terry	(vocals)
Steven Dawson	(guitar)
Ash Verjee	(piano)
Geoffrey Clayton	(guitar)
Michael Bartlett	(drums)

Backing for MECCA:

Thomas Richards	(saxophone)
Dominic Aitchison	(trombone)
Lee Dickinson	(trumpet)

N. MUNRO 6SAE



CLUBS & SOCIETIES



EDITORIAL

This year members of the School have been participating in a wide range of Clubs and Societies. The reincarnation of the Brewing Society and Christian Union were partly inspired by the **Headmaster's** encouragement at the start of the year. Two new societies were formed: Geography and Politics. We have also seen the more established Societies continue with the Bridge Club and the Shooting Club both having a good year's work. The members of this year's Ten Tors team deserve a special mention for battling against the elements on Dartmoor in the May half-term; luckily all of those involved came back alive (albeit cold). Clubs and Societies has been a thoroughly entertaining, although challenging section to compile. Keep your articles coming!

**T. WILSON-NORTH 6SCW
& O. SEARES 6SAE**

CHRISTIAN UNION - A RESURRECTION

At the beginning of the Lent term the Abingdon School Christian Union began again. It had been in hibernation since its glorious days under the leadership of Philip Allan and Richard Haynes. For the last two terms, we met on a Monday at 1:10 pm. We would like to thank **Mr. Mitra** for the loan of his Little School room, 31. Usually we meet to look at St. Matthew's Gospel and other aspects of the Bible. Occasionally, we are privileged enough to have visits from guest speakers. National organisations such as the Scripture Union have been heavily involved with this side of the Union. Later in the year, during the summer holidays **Mr. Dillon** is taking us on a study camp to which we are all looking forward.

J. GRADY 6JT

THE BRIDGE CLUB

This was a relatively quiet year for the Bridge Club and early interest in the Michaelmas Term 'petered out' somewhat as the weather improved. Nevertheless many pupils improved their bidding and playing skills significantly. It is also satisfying to hear that many sixth formers, in particular, are continuing with bridge on an informal basis in their own leisure time. The highlight of the year was undoubtedly the EBU Schools' Simultaneous Pairs Challenge which took place in March. This was a national event and out of the 132 pairs taking part Abingdon sixth formers took the 12th, 30th, 39th and 51st places (**S. Burchett** and **C. Pelling** leading the Abingdon field). The highest third year pair (**S. Campbell** and **R. Lewis-Crosby**) came 68th, which was an excellent performance considering the high standard of entry. We hope to develop the club further next year and to invite beginners and experienced players alike to the regular lunchtime sessions. We also intend to initiate internal duplicate competitions on Wednesday afternoons, so all non-sporty, card playing intellectuals should take note! For your amusement, the following bidding test asks you to find the best East/West contract on each hand, and how you come by it ...

Bidding Test

June 1996

WEST HANDS

(IMP scoring on every deal)

Game All ♠ A Q 8 7 6 5 4
Dealer West ♥ Q
♦ K J 7
♣ A J

Bidding Test

June 1996

EAST HANDS

(IMP scoring on every deal)

Game All ♠ K
Dealer West ♥ 10 8 3
♦ A Q 4 2
♣ 10 9 8 7 3

N. PRITCHARD & P. RAFFELL

LIFE IN THE BREWING SOCIETY

This year, the Abingdon School Brewing Society was re-established by five members of the Lower sixth form. The aim of the society is to educate its members regarding the processes involved in fermentation of beer and wine, including some practical involvement, and also to visit breweries to see how the same basic procedures are used on a much larger, industrial scale. **G. Baxter** and **T. Inman**, two founding members, were "very enthusiastic" about the opportunity to brew and consume their own beer, claiming that it gave them an immense satisfaction when finally tasting the end

product. Having approached the **Headmaster** for permission and also a very kind loan, and under the watchful and all-knowing eye of **Mr. Raffell**, the Society's Director, brewing began. Everyone was very pleased with the initial results, and would like to thank all those who have helped resurrect the society, and to reassure them that they're our "Besht mates...."

A. AITCHISON 6DE

THE CCF - JUST ANOTHER YEAR?

A year in the life of the Combined Cadet Force is never dull - and this year has been no exception. Boys have been involved in new activities, a fun packed Adventure Training camp with a promising Summer camp at RAF Leeming to follow.

In October, a 3rd year intake of 26 boys began preliminary training in earnest, concentrating mainly on weapons and safety. Once in uniform they began to enjoy some of the experiences which the CCF has in store for them. None more so than trying to erect a cumbersome and unfamiliar tent in the wind and rain at Cwm Llych in late October. A night walk followed by a trek across the Beacons, a taste of GS rations and perhaps a dip? Pen-y-Fan and Bryn Teg the next day, made navigation come to life.

In February, 4th and 5th year cadets ventured into the Brecon Beacons in near arctic conditions to



...Concentrating on weapons or safety?

scale Pen-y-Fan and Bryn Teg. Wading in the river at 5 am is not to be recommended. Attempts at tent origami, and freezing fingers were the order of the

day, and onlookers viewing our helter-skelter return from the hills would have been confronted with several drenched bodies, snow in every nook and cranny, wearing little more than a poncho to keep out the cold. A second night under the stars was abandoned due to lack of clothes! Operation Brown would wait



for finer weather!

Throughout the year boys in all years have successfully completed elements of both academic and adventure training cadre and 16 boys have flown Bulldogs at RAF Benson. 6 boys competed in the Assegai shooting trophy and 2 adventurous NCOs made the 3000 foot descent from an aeroplane attached to an outsize kite at RAF Weston-on-the-Green.

During the Summer we have cadets taking part in leadership courses and in Basic Glider Training.

Perhaps the highlight of the year so far has been the Easter Adventure Training Camp. 25 cadets accompanied **Mr. Fishpool** and myself to Fremington, North Devon with 3 members of the Cadet Training Team and a little help from the guards AT wing. During the week boys tackled many activities including surf-canoeing, climbing, clay pigeon shooting and mountain biking. A whole day spent at HMS Drake, Plymouth, allowed boys to dive into the depths of type 21 minesweeper frigate, HMS Battleaxe and peer at Polaris from the sea. Meanwhile preparations were underway for a full military exercise in Branton Burrows. In platoon formation, boys practised reconnaissance and patrol techniques, planned manoeuvres and an ambush. Flashes, bangs and blank fire from every cadet armed with a rifle, scared the Marines out of their trees, and heralded the dawn attack on the enemy position. The enemy and I were successfully slaughtered or held hostage, but not without a fight.

FLT. LT. D. HAWORTH.
CONTINGENT COMMANDER

WARGAMING

The Wargaming Society meets on Wednesdays at 2.00pm. Ever since I joined the school in September I have been a regular member because it's fun and you meet new people from different years. It appeals to those who like modelling and painting the miniatures as well as those who like the challenge of playing the games.

I particularly like converting the miniatures from the standard kit by adding arms, legs and weapons. It can take about a day to convert a model properly.

When we meet on a Wednesday there are several types of both board and card game to choose from.

I really enjoy all the different aspects of Wargaming so I would recommend it to anyone.

D. OWERS 1S



COMPUTER PROGRAMMING

The computer programming club has had a productive year with a wide variety of programs being written in PASCAL and 'C'. These include a first rate "break-out" game, an adventure game set in the school, a "city bomber" and a program to generate pi!

Two programmers entered the nationwide Informatics Olympiad and **Matthew Lloyd** was awarded a merit.

The computer programming club runs throughout the year and is an opportunity for anyone to try their hand at this rewarding and educational pastime. No specialist knowledge is required, so why not give it a try?

D. SALMON

DEBATING SOCIETY

This year's debating society has seen a wealth of activity both at home and away. The weekly debates have continued to pull in crowds, as have the dinner debates, so successfully in fact, that people have even been turned away because of their popularity.

The Michaelmas term's weekly debates showed the usual mixture of politics, sport and current affairs. 'This House laments the fact that Prince William did not come to Abingdon' was the first debate of the term and served as a taster of the year to come for all the new Lower and Middle school boys who had not had experienced a debate before, let alone an Abingdon School debate. **Christopher McGarry** gave a humorous speech that still managed to be from the heart, despite the laid-back manner in which it was delivered. When the debaters' attention turned to the competence of the government, all façades fell down, and a heated debate between the two political wings ensued. By the end of the afternoon, it seemed as though the participants had been pushed further towards an extreme position than before entering the Charles Maude Room.

There were similar controversial debates, such as the one discussing whether boys are better than girls. In an unsurprisingly one-sided debate, there were strong arguments in favour of the fairer sex proposed by **Christopher McGarry** and **William Rollin**. However, the strength of **Stephen Clarke** and **Jamie Peterson** eventually defeated all political correctness.

Teachers were in force when the society was debating whether we needed lessons in what is right and wrong. **Mr. Milner**, backed up by **Oliver Seares**, fought against **Mr. Hunter** and **James Horton**. The latter couple defended Abingdon School pupils' intelligence, arguing that we are educated well enough to be able to distinguish between what is right and

what is wrong.

The two balloon debates of the year marked the end of each term's debating activity, with the traditional lapse into slanderous abuse. The Christmas balloon debate - in which there were chocolates for all who spoke, no matter how poor the speech - saw a number of well-known characters impersonated by pupils. In the ensuing fight for survival, James Bond (**Matthew Smith**), William Rollin (**William Rollin**), King Uffe of Angel (**Charles Schmidt**), Cain-as-in-Abel (**James Howard**) and Michael Barrymore (**Jamie Peterson**) all defended their reputations and attacked each other's. In the end, however, Michael

Barrymore's declaration of innocence was not believed and so he, as well as four other characters, fell out of the balloon, leaving only James Bond floating down to safety, despite allegations that he would be able to jump into a nearby aeroplane and steer it safely down to the ground.

S. PAVLOVICH
6RVS-S

DR. ZAWADZKI
ADDS:



We have had an unprecedented number of dinner debates, on subjects ranging from the sublime to the ridiculous. Pride of place must be awarded to Wycombe Abbey with whose young ladies we have a well established and eminently successful tradition of debating.

At a more local level, it was also a pleasure to entertain debating teams from, among others, St. Helen's, the Oxford High, and Rye St. Antony's - all highly memorable occasions, initiated to a large extent by our energetic secretary **Matthew Smith**.

The school was also represented at the Abingdon Rotary Club "Youth Speaks" public speaking competition, and our senior debaters acquitted themselves well in the debating competition organised by the Oxford Union Society.

We look forward to a no less exciting season next year.

H. ZAWADZKI

PUBLIC SPEAKING COMPETITION

The annual school Public Speaking Competition takes place during the summer term. Tutor groups throughout the Middle and Upper schools are encouraged to enter as many three man teams as possible.

The Chairman, Main Speaker and Vote of Thanks speak respectively for one, five and two minutes. The main speech is assessed upon its audibility, fluency, quality of argument, structure and use or not of notes. The Vote of Thanks, arguably harder, with only minutes for preparation, is a tough test for any speaker.

6JPW was the winning tutor group in the Senior Section with **A. Ferguson, W. Rollin** and **S. Walker**. In the Junior Section, **W. Pank, I. Smith** and **H. Watkinson** brought similar fame and glory to 4ASP.

I very much enjoyed the competition and the valuable practice it afforded me; and would like to thank in particular **Dr. Zawadzki** who helped by both organising the event and judging it.

W. ROLLIN 6JPW



LOWER SIXTH CHALLENGE

This well established general knowledge competition provided the Lower Sixth with an enjoyable, and at times exciting, attraction during the grey and windy mornings in the second half of the Summer term.

In the final, held on July 1st in the Amey Hall in the presence of the entire Lower Sixth with their tutors, 6JPW (**James Peterson, Corin Walford, Mark Walter-Swan, William Rollin**) beat 6DE (**James Bolle, Gwyn Jones, Alastair Aitchison, Harry Wearne**) 520 points to 280 points. Although 6DE was a strong team, its contestants were not on their best form on the day and were not able to match the speed of 6JPW in answering the individual starter questions. 6JPW was also able to win maximum points in four rounds which alone provided it with 200 points.

Looking back at the whole competition, it was good to see that all the participants (32 boys, that is over 21% of the entire year group) were able to contribute to their teams' efforts and to tackle a wide range of questions. Current affairs were well answered, as well as sport, the arts today, and even classical mythology. A few of the contestants were on less sure ground when dealing with literary, historical, and musical topics. But the overall standard was good and reflected well the eclectic knowledge of our sixth-formers. The strongest individual performers will be invited in the Michaelmas term 1996, after some very rigorous and demanding tests, to represent the School in the Schools Challenge competition, which is played nationwide.

H. ZAWADZKI

HISTORY SOCIETY

The History Society's first meeting of the year saw the visit of world famous Dr. Felipe Fernandez-Armesto. He is an Oxford Don, an internationally renowned author and a former teacher at this school! After a meal the Society gathered in the Lower Library to hear

him speak about his latest book, "Millennium". Dr. Felipe wrote the book from the perspective of a person wandering through a Galactic Museum ten thousand years into the future and looking back at our millennium.

The book has been greatly criticised and the first ten minutes were spent attacking the critics. Then he explained the content of his book. After his speech a number of clever questions were put to Dr. Felipe. He dodged, weaved and counter-questioned his way through these like an expert politician.

The overall impression received was that this was an intellectual game Dr. Felipe was playing by going against the prevailing tide of thought and then attacking critics who try to take him seriously. Dr. Felipe was however a fascinating man to listen to and everyone had a good time.

At the second meeting, Dr. Paul Langford ad-

addressed the History Society on the subject of continental perceptions of the English between the years 1700-1850. Dr. Langford charted European attitudes to us and how they had changed over the years, by referring to books and letters of the time. He also offered reasons for these attitude changes. Although this subject was not strictly syllabus-based it provided an interesting complement to A-Level history.

**A. HOWKINS 6DLS
& P. VLITOS 6JT**

YOUNG ENTERPRISE

"QUINTEX"

The school year started in September and with it came the initial Young Enterprise meeting. **Mr. Evans** explained the concept to a group of about 40 boys in the Lower Sixth. At this stage about 10 of the boys dropped out leaving two groups of approximately 15 each. The first meeting was a productive affair with a number of ingenious ideas put forward. We decided that we should vote for the various company positions as soon as possible so that people knew where they stood. The idea of a CD clock was mentioned and this met with near universal approval. Our initial investi-



gations into the price of blank CDs put a dampener on things, as members of the company came back with figures ranging from £5 to £20. Eventually EMI in Swindon said we could have unrecorded CDs for 25p each...the problem was solved.

After various other trials, Open Day saw 77 orders for clocks which took us pleasantly by surprise. Subsequently, though, not everything went quite as we had planned. The first Young Enterprise Trade Fair that we attended was something of a blunder. Although we had prepared a fine stand with plenty of advertising material and willing sales people we had forgotten two important details. Firstly

we had no clocks due to our supplier taking an inordinately long time to deliver, and more importantly, no-one had thought to ask permission for us to go and so we never did get there!

Later came a Business Studies and Economics trip to Berlin, and it was decided that trying to branch out onto the European market would be a challenging and worthwhile experience. We made stands in the German colours, printed logos of the hotel the group was staying at on CDs and generally made quite an attractive display. However those who went found the Germans very unwilling to help or even make an effort to understand. They tended to be quite patronising, and therefore after several attempts our representatives gave up.

Our final sales push was to go to the Stratford-upon-Avon Trade Fair. This was slightly more successful, at least in a monetary sense. We sold about 14 clocks and made a profit on a tombola we ran. We were slightly embarrassed when we arrived and realised that not only were six other companies selling better CD clocks for less money but that other people had made slightly more of an effort on their stands than we had. That is not to say we hadn't tried a bit. Just that other schools had tried a lot. Still in the end we had actually sold more clocks than most other schools there.

In the final review the year wasn't all that bad really. We had a few bad spots and a few good ones and the whole experience was quite interesting. Just don't show me another CD clock again - ever.

H. WEARNE 6DE

"RAGGED"

In short, 1995-6 was not a fantastic year. Our firm was not really a success compared to previous Young Enterprise companies. There's no difficulty in being negative or perhaps even cynical about the whole affair after the high expectations at the start of the year, and it may seem preten-



tious to say how invaluable the "Young Enterprise Experience" was, yet through the problems we experienced, we did grasp something vital about the "real" business world. Every single person learnt something about themselves, other people and essential business concepts.

Another chapter in the continuing Young Enterprise saga began to unfold in September 1995. A successful brainstorming session and the anticipation of embarking on a new exciting project got us off to a good start. Commendable performances were seen through all domains within the firm. Riding a wave of enthusiasm and with a genuine sense of belief from every member of the company, we approached our first major selling opportunity with the utmost confidence.

Sales did not go as well as expected, however, especially in comparison to our "sister" company Quintex. The fallibility of our product became increasingly obvious and the voice of skepticism grew louder. We began an advertising campaign. Sales increased around Christmas period, but we still hadn't reached our full potential. The Christmas holidays gave us a well-needed chance to collect our thoughts.

We returned to school, with the intention of developing a new product. After a somewhat difficult start, with interrupted meetings and the like, we eventually decided on making a "Quotes Book", which was unveiled at the start of the summer term. After compiling a report for the Y.E. competition, four members of the team—**P. Ewing, P. Vlitos, A. Aitchison** and **T. Wilson-North** then went on to make a highly successful presentation at the "Presentation Evening" to clinch a respectable third place in the South East Oxfordshire region.

Overall, the Young Enterprise Experience has been highly beneficial. Nearly every aspect of the scheme is challenging, but eventually rewarding. The Ragged team were: **P. Ewing, D. Dearlove, M. Bowerman, A. Aitchison, T. Wilson-North, P. Vlitos, T. Heel, R. Buxton, O. Moore, E. Hew** and **J. Johari**.

P. EWING 6JPW

RIFLE CLUB

The Rifle Club is one of the less well publicised clubs in the school. We go down to the firing range on Lower Field usually three times a week, which means that your choice of day is very flexible. We are lucky enough to have good shooting facilities at our disposal, including six 0.22 calibre rifles and can therefore cater for all interested from the Middle and Upper Schools. We are happy to coach beginners who have the time to shoot.



This year, there were two Senior teams and one Junior team taking part in BSSRA league competitions. In the Lent term, the Senior A team consisting of **Paul Harper** (Captain 1995-96), **Jonathan Shock, Azli Bakar, Oliver King** and **Richard King** won their division of the league. The Senior Cup was won by **Richard King** and the Junior Cup by **Tim Betteridge**. **Roshidi Ismail** is the winner of the Beginners cup with **Ben Gancz** and **Alex Hutchinson** coming a close second. Next year's Captain will be **Oliver King** and Secretary will be **Daniel Dearlove**.

O. KING 6SAE

POLITICS SOCIETY

“The Abingdon School Politics Society was formed at the start of the 1995 academic year by the current chairmen of the society, **Peter Rutland** and **Matthew Smith**. The idea was to have a society where those studying A-Level Politics, as well as those with a keen political awareness, could further their interest in an enjoyable atmosphere” (extract from programme of Lent Term Dinner).

The Society's inaugural dinner fell in the Michaelmas term, and took place in the Charles Maude Room. Upper and Lower sixth form boys were joined by girls from Our Lady's Convent, and several members of the Masters' Common Room. The guest speaker was Mr. Ward, former MP for Swindon, who addressed the subject, 'What's wrong with the Conservative Party?' As Matthew Smith pointed out in his vote of thanks, we could have been in for a long evening! The speech was, however, concise and laconic. His crucial assertion was that rapid technological change always goes hand in hand with rapid social change, and it is this which recent Conservative governments have failed to control. He highlighted the necessary differences between the demands of government and opposition - where he

who shouts loudest tends to win - and recognised the increasing importance of single-issue politics and the media. Questions were fielded with the aplomb expected of a politician (who, as he suggested, says only what his audience will believe).

The Lent Dinner was an altogether larger affair, necessarily taking place in the dining hall, with girls from as far afield as The Abbey Girls' School, Reading. Having recovered from Matthew Smith's impressions of various politicians in his introductory speech, Sir Geoffrey Whalen C.B.E., former Deputy Chairman and Managing Director of the Peugeot Talbot Motor Company, asked 'Will the pendulum swing next time?'. The most important factor, he suggested, was the Conservatives' accumulation of seventeen years of enemies - whatever the disaster, the government can by implication be blamed, and the allocation of blame lies behind political swings. Having established this, he went on to discuss the importance of Europe, and to query the importance of the 'feel-good factor'. Questions were abundant and enthusiastic, and received forthright responses.

On behalf of all those present at the Michaelmas and Lent dinners, I should recognise the efforts made by Peter and Matthew in the organisation of both events, and thank **Mr. M. St. John Parker** (Headmaster) for his enthusiastic presidency.

N. J. MATHESON VIJEF

VOLUNTARY SERVICE

I suppose that the main reason I began doing Voluntary Service was for my UCAS form - I had taken up the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme, and Voluntary Service was a requirement to fulfil the "service" section. I began by introducing myself to the Carswell Primary School teacher, Mrs. Haydn. She told me to go round and meet her class for the remainder of the afternoon. I didn't know quite what to expect; I had been told that the introduction of Dalton Barracks had brought a large number of infantrymen's infants to the area. Was I to expect roughnecks or well-disciplined youngsters? As I should have realised, there was inevitably a mix of the two groups.

Having spoken to approximately half of the 24 7-year olds in the time I had, I managed to remember two or three names. I can now appreciate how difficult it is for new teachers anywhere. I remembered most strongly the stronger characters, and as the time progressed, I picked up more idiosyncrasies; Russell with his gold earring (he was seven years old), curly-haired Joseph and peroxide-blond Emma. I tended to prefer the approach of a friendly introduction, being none too personal - I have already

discovered the danger that friendship is inversely proportional to the respect received. I left after listening to the first chapter of 'Erik and the Vikings'.

After a few weeks of hearing readers, I "graduated" to helping two children on the computer which had been bought by the pupils (with assistance from the Tesco 'Computers in Schools' scheme). Surprisingly, the pupils seemed far more computer-literate than their neophyte teacher. We were writing poems on the theme of "The Sea" and, although the pupils made snail-slow progress with the typing, after correcting them with the on-board spell checker these grammatical nightmares turned into respectable madrigals. Having seen the quality of the class's handwriting, I think that the incorporation of IT into primary schools is an incredibly good idea and merits far more government assistance.

On one afternoon, I was told that I would have to supervise the class while they were painting. I initially had a terrible flashback to MY primary school days, when I would wait until the teacher had turned her back to launch an entire bucket of blue paint over another boy. Now, I walked trembling into the classroom to see 24 quiet children sitting in front of a selection of small fruits, drawing with charcoals. I was amazed by the silence hanging in the room; nothing but an occasional cough for five whole minutes. I had always stereotyped children as much-screaming brats. By the end of the afternoon, some of the children had grasped the principle of rubbing the charcoal in circular motions - you could distinguish exactly where they had been as there were small black footprints scattered around the room. Of course, completely serendipitously, I happened to turn out a Da Vinci pear at which everybody stared in awe.

Although I began "Voluntary Service" solely for the purposes of my UCAS form, I am really pleased that I did it - I feel that it has helped to develop me more as a person.

T. WILSON-NORTH 6SCW

CHESS CLUB

Although **Steven Bough** won the Oxfordshire U15 and U13 championships, and represented the England U12 team in their tour of Latvia, the 1st VI had a disappointing season. We brushed aside Oratory, Meadway and Henry Box in our imperious progress to the zone final, but lost narrowly to an MCS side. In fact, though clearly the more talented team, we were to suffer two more defeats at the hands of their better match players - hence the surrender of the Oxfordshire U18 title. To compound our disappointment, we were eliminated from the Times plate at the hands of King Edward's, Bir-

mingham.

Throughout the season, **Nicholas Matheson** led the 1st VI from the front, his adventurous King's Gambits reminiscent of the dynamic tactics of David Bronstein. **James Arthur**, on the other hand, repeatedly ground opponents down, his games echoing the remorseless strategy of Petrosian. 'How we play measures our own nature' (Larkin, adapted), however, and James wasn't very swashbuckling. The team will be weakened next year by their departures to pastures new - having been stalwarts for seven years. **Michael Pagett** also had another enterprising, and highly promising, season.

The U13 team lost a high proportion of their matches, but improved rapidly to beat Josca's 5-1. **Thomas Matheson** played well from time to time.

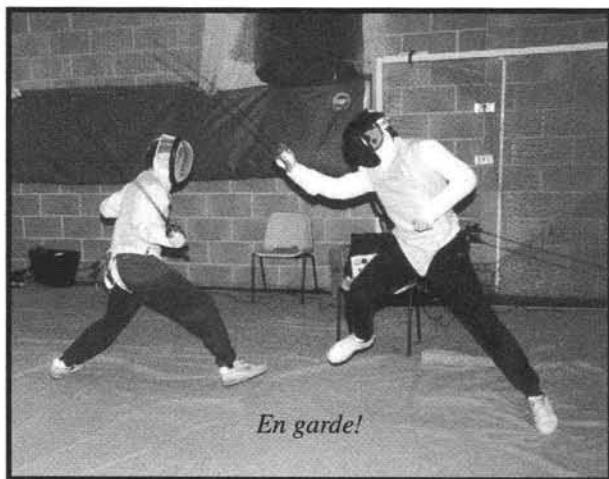
This was a season, however, with more to recommend it than mediocre results. 1996 saw **Mr. Davies** earn his first full cap for a staff team. Nicholas Matheson redeemed himself in part for his losses against MCS, with an accomplished defensive performance in his defeat of **Dr. King**. Thomas Matheson, for his part, won a school lightning tournament. The year's highlight, however, was a simultaneous display by **Nick Jakubovics**, O.A. (Cambridge half-blue) who played 16 opponents and won 15.5. The chess club looks forward to a return match!

1st VI	Won 5	Lost 4
U13	Won 1	Lost 5

The 1st VI: N. Matheson (Capt.), M. Pagett, S. Bough, J. Arthur (Capt. vice), J. Church, M. Simmonds

N. J. MATHESON VIJEF

FENCING



En garde!

In the last year, the fencing club has grown greatly. From a disparaging three at the end of last summer we now number fifteen. Thanks to this increase in interest and the efforts of our new fenc-

ing coach **Alan Ley**, we have taken part in several local competitions. We did well in all, but our main achievement was in the National Schools' Championships at Crystal Palace. This four day event attracts the best fencers from all over England, and, already feeling heavily outclassed, our confidence was further depleted when we were drawn to fence against members of the British Junior Fencing team. However, with nothing to lose we did not bow under the pressure and all fenced quite well. **Owen Moore**, **James Towe**, and **Sam Walker** were particularly proficient; James Towe got into the final sixty in the Foil event, and Sam Walker made it through to the last fifty in the Sabre competition.

With these successes behind us we are looking forward to another good year, hopefully returning to the schools' championships with more experience and leaving with better results.

S. WALKER 6JPW

FANTASY FOOTBALL

Started by **Rikesh Patel** to occupy his spare time, about a sixth of the Lower Sixth form became involved in this diverting activity this year and 20 teams were founded. Each manager would select a team of real-life professionals and receive various points for how they played for their FA Carling Premiership team; for example, a manager would receive 3 points if his player scored a goal.

The season got underway with various managers swapping the lead in the league and cup competitions. In a shock development, Rikesh Patel resigned his chairmanship after allegations of match-rigging, bribery and extortion, all too familiar to those of us who follow the "real thing". **Alex Carter** took over and the season sped along in a new pattern. In the next few weeks **Mark Edwards** opened up an unsailable lead in the Fantasy Cup competition, and the league became a six-horse race.

At the end of the season **Andrew James'**, Alex Carter's and Rikesh Patel's respective challenges fell away, leaving **Adrian Howkins**, Mark Edwards and **James Bolle** to fight for top position. Adrian Howkins finished a nail-biting final week in first place, three points ahead of Mark Edwards, with a gap of just eight points to James Bolle in third.

The relevance of the result was evident when merely weeks later Adrian became Head of School, Mark Edwards languished as sports editor on the Abingdonian staff and James Bolle disappeared for a "holiday", only to emerge again for the challenge of being vice-chairman next season.

J. BOLLE 6DE

SCIENCE PROJECTS

This has been a busy year with all members of last year's L6 continuing their projects into the VI year and with four members of the new L6 starting long term projects.

Jin-Choon Lim continued his work on the rate of reaction of iodine with propanone until Christmas. He showed that when the solvent was changed from water to propanone the reaction mechanism was altered from zero to first order in iodine.

Tim Winchcomb and **Jacob Doran** both continued their projects right through until study leave in May. Tim, having rebuilt the temperature control for the hot stage, made a meticulous study on the colour changes of liquid crystals. Towards the end of this study he noticed that some solvents did not evaporate completely from liquid crystals even over a period of 24 hours. It is speculated that these solvent molecules become trapped in the semi-structured liquid crystal.

Jacob's objective was to continue the development of a device which would automatically search for and locate the source of a sound. He ran into many problems, both with the BBC computer and the motor control of the meccano platform on which the microphone was attached, but persevered with great determination (and a few muttered comments) to complete the task. These two very different projects were both worthy of the Mervyn Gray prize but the decision finally went to Jacob as being the most technology based.

There are three current projects in the L6 which will be continued into next year. **David Champion** is looking at methods for identifying plastics, which would be essential for any re-cycling process. One technique he is exploring is infrared spectroscopy. **Jonathan Shock** and **Adam Cherry** are trying to identify the chemical components of a liquid board cleaner using chemical analysis and gas-liquid chromatography. **James Wilson** is using a pH probe linked to a Macintosh computer to look at rates of reaction. I hope to report further progress on all three next year.

K. BINGHAM

THE EXPEDITIONARY CLUB

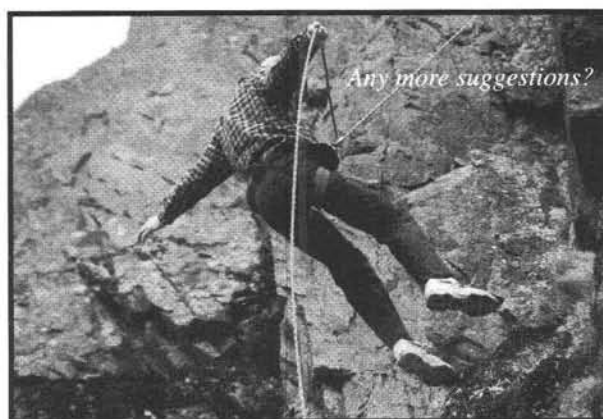
Easter Expedition to the Langdales and Wastdale Valley

On the morning of 31st April, six intrepid adventurers gathered on the gravel in front of main school. Rucksacks and their owners were quickly bundled into the back of the

minibus - this year's first trip had begun.

Many hours and several stops later, we arrived at Little Langdale. After checking out a possible spot to camp for the night, the local pub was investigated. Tents were set up, the meal to end all meals was eaten and in the dark we all sat around the proverbial camp-fire and sang songs to each other.

Breakfast the next morning was a civilised affair - fried eggs, fried bread (with grass of course) and coffee - What a way to start! And then it SNOWED! It couldn't have been better really. Today was climbing day, and after breakfast we donned our helmets and ran off to find the steepest, scariest cliff face in the Lake District. Well, we found something, and before we noticed, **Mr. Haworth** had climbed to the very top, and he had everything set up. Everybody had a go at the climbing, some more successfully than others. Just when we thought we had been very brave, someone suggested abseiling down, so we did.



That evening, we drove to Wasdale Head. The water in the lake was as flat as a mirror and that, combined with the evening light produced one of the most beautiful sights I have ever seen. We refused to pay for the privilege of setting our tents up in a field with a sign saying "campsite" on it in the corner, so we moved up the valley, and set up our tents in a small wood. The site was good, the ground wasn't quite flat, but we were beside good clean running water. Supper was great. I can't actually remember what it was - but it definitely was great.

We woke up to a gorgeous morning. The sky was blue, the sun was out, and for those who washed, the water was absolutely freezing. Splendid! Today we were going to go for a walk - up Great Gable. The map made it look easy. We took it very gently on the way up, so that we could admire the view. The trouble was, there wasn't one - a rolling bank of fog engulfed us on one side of the mountain, and as we made our way to the top, we couldn't see a thing.

But O joy! O rapture! As we neared the summit, the fog rolled away to reveal the beautiful peaks of the Lake District for miles around us. We had been walking for almost six hours and we were all tired, but we made a new campsite further up the valley, this time right out in the open on much flatter ground. Again we sang but after half an hour we decided the sound of trickling water of a nearby stream was more appropriate to our situation.

Just how much fun had we had? Obviously not enough, because the next day we went climbing again. The chosen cliff-face for this day was even meaner than its predecessor. But sure enough, like a mountain goat on steroids, Mr. Howarth had climbed his way to the top and now we could see his face peering over the edge, some one hundred feet above our heads. All the required ropes were duly attached to the right places, and several hours' worth of climbing ensued. Towards the end of the afternoon we had all had enough, and we made our way back down to the edge of the lake (Wastwater). It was definitely time for a plunge, and plunged we did into the near-freezing water. We were out as soon as we were in - variations on "gosh - it's rather cold - isn't it?" were in abundance. We made camp towards dusk, at the same spot as the night before.

Thursday morning brought the best weather of the entire week - warm glorious sunshine - perfect conditions for our assault on Scafell and Scafell Pike. We chose the longer, not quite so steep route up Scafell. It was hard going, the bottom slopes were very soft underfoot and the last two hundred metres or so were in frozen snow. The wind had also picked up considerably, and even though the sun was out and the skies blue, it was bitterly cold. The view was fabulous. And now onto Scafell Pike, which, we could see from the top, was going to be a challenge.

We picked and clawed our way down very slowly - it was very steep and very icy. Slipping here didn't warrant thinking about. Heart rates went up and adrenaline kicked in. We came to a ledge - we couldn't go any further. There was no way down from here. There was no safe way back up either, the ice had become too slushy as a result of our journey down. We were stuck. We had foolishly brought no rope with us - we hadn't anticipated such conditions, and now we called out to some climbers below us. They found it impossible to get to where we were stuck, so they went for help. Meanwhile, it was getting very cold on the ledge, for we were on the dark side of the mountain, and the wind continued to howl...

Almost three hours had passed since the climbers went for help, another hour and the sun would be setting. We were all very cold indeed - fingers, feet

and legs were numb. We didn't know whether help would find us, and we faced the prospect of an extremely cold night on the ledge if it didn't. Should we stay put (we weren't in that much danger), or should we make a move?

The more we thought about it, the more appealing trying to get down ourselves became. There was obviously no way down, otherwise the climbers we had shouted to some three hours earlier would not have needed to go for help. The only way was up. Mr. Howarth led, kicking stepping-holes in the iced snow. We followed. This was no time for faint hearts or minds. The ice had frozen almost rock-hard, we were in a very dangerous situation.

After twenty minutes, we were safe at the top of Scafell. The sun was setting, and the partially clouded sky was red, orange and golden and reflecting in the snow. This was even more beautiful than the mirrored lake a few days previously. We paused for breath - for that moment it felt absolutely incredible to be alive. We virtually ran down the other side of Scafell, and almost into the arms of the mountain rescue crew at the bottom. We explained everything to them, and they were almost as relieved as we were.

That evening we spent unwinding in the pub. We looked back on the day and laughed in relief. Back at our tents we ate our fill of cold steak and kidney pie because we couldn't be bothered to cook it. No-one minded.

On Friday morning (which was even nicer than the day before), we packed up quietly, ate a quick breakfast, and left. We arrived back in Abingdon in the early evening to worried parents who didn't know the half of it, though I'm sure they do now!

I'd like to say thank you to Mr. Haworth for taking us and for putting up with us. The Expedition members were **D. Payne, I. Silverwood, T. Burton, P. Bradley, M. Jones and D. Pinniger.**

D. PINNIGER VI WHZ

SUMMER EXPEDITION to Snowdonia National Park

Seven days of freedom in the Snowdonia National Park brought beautiful weather. Imagine five tents perched carefully on a spit leading out into a glassy, cool lake, nestling 650 metres up in the Carnedd range. An idyllic spot, two miles from civilisation, beneath a scorching sun. This was the setting for our first two nights' camp! From there we walked the 15 miles of the Carnedd range, Carnedd Llewelyn, Carnedd Dafydd and Pen yr Ole Wen and set a 20 metre climb and abseil on the Idwal Slabs - within arms' reach of a shop which sold the best fruit slice this side of Mr. Kipling's kitchen.

On the evening of the second day we moved camp to an equally picturesque setting at the foot of the Snowdon range. Another lake provided entertainment in the evenings - the ultimate in private swimming pools, and no fee! Y Llewyydd, Snowdon itself and an exciting climb across Crib Goch formed our trek across the 'Snowdon Horseshoe' the next day - Yet again we were blessed by stunning weather and as we prepared for our 6.30 start we watched the sun rise over the horizon. At the peak we mused over the carriages of tourists who arrived by cog railway, took their summit photos and, twenty minutes later, dieselled their way back down to Llanberis, most of them quite fit enough to have made the climb themselves - how unfulfilling! We felt virtuous, I suppose.

Crib Goch provides a ridge walk without compare, but which is not for the faint-hearted. We descended into the valley again in the heat of the day to watch the stream of Karrimor-clad ants making their way up onto the ridge in the heat, and chuckled as we ate!

Whilst the local hostelry mistook us for a group of 'lesser' public school hikers that evening, and very nearly blessed us with their evening meal (nothing to compare with our delicious meal *al fresco*!) I puzzled over the next day's activity - and the fact that the man sitting opposite me was extremely familiar, although I couldn't put a name to the face.

The following day, equally hot, saw ten Abingdonians less enthusiastic to rise before the dawn, so we set off along the track out of the valley for a day on the river. We found the two sheep asleep under

the minibus less than willing to move, and the car park attendant insisted on charging us for the pleasure. A little smooth manoeuvring to avoid a German car parked as Germans can (well equipped with a 'keep left' sticker attached to the steering wheel!) and we reached Plas y Brenin outward bound centre where the boys spent a very



successful afternoon canoeing and kayaking, as I drifted in the sun and dreamed of Cadair.

On the Friday we climbed again, although this time it was more of challenge. We visited Porthmadog on our way to our final peak. After a full half hour of running up into the foothills of Cadair Idris I decided

that my proposed third campsite was perhaps a little too ambitious for tired trekkers with packs, and returned to the boys who had, quite unexpectedly, bought my liquid refreshment already! **Stow** and **Scott** decided (in training for potential SAS officer selection no doubt) that they would not be beaten in the fitness stakes by a mere teacher, and had to repeat my run up to the lake, and do it in under half an hour. One hour later I went to rescue them, and neither of them had found water!

We pitched camp locally, and made another early start for Cadair the next day. More stunning views and weather welcomed us into mid-Wales as we conquered our eighth peak.

Sunday came and it was time to leave. A quick stop in Dollgellau gave me an opportunity to drool pathetically over one or two vintage cars in a rally there. Thankfully the week went entirely without problem and we returned home tired, tanned and enthused. I am forever surprised by the boys' enthusiasm, attitude and maturity - and I shall have to put some serious thought into an expedition to beat this one.

D. HAWORTH

TABLE TENNIS

This year, while the regular players have continued enthusiastically, there has been lack of interest (or was it talent?) from the third form. However, I am pleased that a number of the second form have already shown their ability by playing during the summer term and look forward to them continuing during Michaelmas.

After missing the Oxfordshire Schools Team Championship last year, both the U16 and U19 teams entered and met with old adversaries, Banbury and Blessed George Napier (BGN) Schools. The U19 team of **Albert Chan**, **Adam Cherry**, **Victor Lee** and **Corin Walford** were not on top form and, while beating BGN, 5-3, succumbed to Banbury, 7-1, **Corin Walford** winning the only set. The U16 team of **Joseph Yau**, **Mark Munro**, **Victor Lee** and **Michael Stocks** played very well. They gained a convincing victory over BGN, 6-2, but were then narrowly defeated by Banbury, 3-5, a vital game having been lost at deuce. **Joseph Yau** was in excellent form winning all his eight games while **Mark Munro** won six out of eight.

For the last two terms we have been fortunate to have another member of staff who is a table tennis player. **Mr. Russell Smith's** cheerful enthusiasm and expertise will be missed next year and we wish him every success in his Plymouth league next season.

K. BINGHAM

SPORTS



EDITORIAL

This year has seen a large number of matches taking place in a wide range of sports.

During the Michaelmas term, the rugby teams were as busy as usual, with lots of wins and points to their names. The first fifteen had a very good season, just losing two of their matches. The badminton teams had their best results for a long time. The U19 and U16 teams did not lose a match all season and the only match that they did lose was when they fielded a very young side to play Bradfield's U19 team.

During the Lent term, the hockey players had to adapt to Tilsey Park's new artificial pitch, and had very creditable results for their first season on the 'alien' surface. The rowers had their by now customary excellent season, with several crews picking up trophies in one form or another. The school football team had three matches this season, losing them all, 4-0 against Marlborough and 3-2 against St. Edward's, and 4-1 against Cheney.

The Summer term saw the cricketers perform very well with the first eleven witnessing several outstanding performances. Throughout the school there were

some very good results and performances, notably the only century scored this year by **Rupert Janisch** against Cokethorpe. The athletes had a successful season with more wins than losses and younger members were prepared for the change in age groups by being given chances in higher aged teams.

All in all, this was a very successful year of sport, with many more matches being won than lost. Congratulations to everybody who played in a team throughout the year and contributed to a great year of sport...

M. EDWARDS 6SAE

Abingdon Success!



1ST XV RUGBY

A great marathon runner once said: 'The will to win is important, but the will to prepare is everything'. If there is one sentence that could sum up this year's 1st XV, then this would be it: we trained hard, we played hard. After the relative disappointment of last year's highly rated 1st XV, many doubted that we would have much success this year. Finishing with only two regular season games lost, this was one of the most successful teams ever. Admittedly, with some notable exceptions, the rugby was not pretty (no total rugby here I'm afraid), but I believe we have given future sides an example of what can be achieved and a decent record to aim at.

The team was blessed with a very talented 'spine', which was consistently outstanding throughout the season. **Mark Pajak**, **Henry Whalen** and **Henry Dorling** formed a county standard front row. Both props showed great dynamism, and willingness to work for the team (both played important roles in the line-out, which was widely unrecognised outside the team), and actually outscored our wingers; Henry W. possessed an international standard throw (so he told us) and according to the Headmaster 'talked a good game'. **Luke Clements**, at fly-half, made sure his ef-

forts were rewarded with either yardage or points; his eventual total points haul was over 160. **David Gooch**, at fullback, was unflappable under the high ball and made countless try-saving tackles, most notably against Pangbourne and Sedbergh. Both backs also showed that, given the chance, they could run, although opportunities for this were limited. **Daniel Higazi**, at openside, scored tries, made many great cover tackles, and gave the term 'dump tackle' a new meaning. In his performance against St. Joseph's at Ipswich he made 6'3, 18 stone (so they say), later to be voted 'player of the tournament', 'I've had an article in The Telegraph and am signed up for Harlequins', James Bull look, well, ordinary. Despite his magnificent season Higazi was still not voted 'players' forward of the year", this accolade went to 'Legend' Richard 'Gi' Binning. Playing finally, after three years in the firsts, in his favoured position of No.8, he made big hits, scored tries and won a lot of line-out ball. Richard led from the front and was inspirational, particularly at Oratory and Pangbourne and a colossus for us in the middle of the park. He must receive substantial credit for making the team considerably better than the sum of its parts would have suggested. He and Higazi combined well with **Oliver Greasby**, and later **Jonathan Dunbar**, to give us one of the most mobile and effective back rows on the circuit. Higazi, Binning and Dorling were all offered trials by the London Broncos.

Around this base of players, others proved their worth. Two are particularly worthy of mention. **Paul Woodward** was superb until injury ended his season after only five games. He gave very quick ball, worked the touchlines well, and if he had played more would have been worthy of inclusion in the above list of distinguished players. **Adrian Howkins**, whose tackling of No.8s, centres, locks and anything else you might find on a rugby pitch was fearless and always hard, was perhaps a surprise choice at the start of the season, but soon made the centre position his own.

Our first outing of the season, at the Douai Festival was pleasantly

surprising. We'd had little contact practice because of hard pitches, so our narrow defeat by one try (the only one we conceded in six matches) to Harrow in the final gave us great confidence. Our first full game, against Bloxham, was, eventually, a good performance. We turned around at 6-6 and after a rather inspiring polite 'chat' with Binning, the team moved up about three gears and blew the opposition away. As was to become a regular event, all the tries came from the forwards. Next followed a close game at Stowe, which ultimately we won: there were chances to score but we were held up on the line several times by fair means or foul. The Marlborough match, our first home game of the season and played in front of a considerable crowd consisting of many Old Abingdonians, was perhaps our finest hour. Their side boasted two or three internationals and other players on scholarships. The domination of line-outs, through Henry's superb throwing and Richard's jumping, and second phase ball made the half-backs' jobs rather simple. Woodward made telling breaks and worked the touchlines well, Clements gave their fullback a terrible afternoon with destructive up-and-unders and by the end of the afternoon had amassed 17 points by way of 3 penalties, a conversion and two drop-goals (which were to become his trademark). Next was the big one: Radley. Full of confidence, we probably had the better of the first half, but overlaps were not used and kicks at goal were missed. We turned around trailing 6-3. In the second half some poor coverage on their full-back (a problem that would re-emerge against Warwick) allowed them to gain a lot of ground quite easily. The two tries conceded were soft: the first running through several lacklustre tackles; the second, although it was debatable whether the ball was grounded, came off our own line-out, so we only had ourselves to blame (for the try and the match). Three victories followed against MCS, Shiplake and Oratory: Gooch scored a try, created by Luke Clements, and the dinosaurs put on a show against Shiplake, and eventually did the same against Oratory. The MCS game was played with a poor

referee, against a poor side, on a pitch likened to Brazilian rain forest. Consequently the game was scrappy and unsatisfying. But, as they say, a win's a win. After half-term we played RGS High Wycombe who, despite boasting some impressive results, were a side we really should have beaten. We lacked penetration and a few kicks were squandered, in the end we were lucky not to lose, as Henry Dorling made a great tackle off a tap penalty on our line, Richard Binning twice caught the ball under our own posts, and they missed four successive kicks at goal. We played St. Edward's with half the team suffering illnesses of various descriptions, a problem which was exacerbated by the costly loss of Mark Pajak in the opening minutes, and played most of the game a yard off the pace. However, we showed great resilience to reply to their try with a splendid one of our own by H. Whalen, who celebrated by running back to the halfway line, arms aloft

shouting "I've scored! I've scored!" We kept in touch with two penalties, one a real 'boomer' and for a while threatened to take control, but were put under immense pressure as the wind picked up. Great character was shown, holding them out on our own line for sustained periods and eventually forcing them to go for the drop-goal. This fantastic, prolonged defence on our own line was to become a regular event, and played a vital role in the victory over Pangbourne. I believe that on another day we could have won this game, as well as the one at Pangbourne. Reading was traditionally disposed of with consummate ease, all six tries coming from the forwards, as we ran up over forty points. Pangbourne was, as always, a very physical side and became increasingly frustrated as their players were unable to get out of their half.

This can be attributed to our increasingly unstoppable line-out (credit here must go, once more, to Richard Binning and Henry W.), regularly pushing their scrum back, and Daniel Higazi flying round the pitch turning over their ball and securing our own. Their indiscipline was punished by two well-struck penalties, and our pressure rewarded by two drop-goals. They did threaten to score for a while, but we were able to hold out and then clear our lines after intense pressure. In the second half Luke Clements was forced to go off with an injury which ended his season. Soon after this incident Pangbourne scored, and a nail-

lose. Higazi scored a very nice try in the first half, the assist going to Funnell, and at the death Henry Dorling dived in the corner, Rory Underwood style, to save the game. Henry's try count for the season suggests his natural position is on the wing, but then again....

All in all a successful season, but still the feeling it could have been better: St. Edward's played us when few of us were fit; against RGS and Radley chances were missed and mistakes made; and we drew with Warwick by playing for about a quarter of the match. Nevertheless, I can't say it was disappointing. Many thanks to

Mr. Hamilton and Mr. Watkins, who could always take positive points from games. Special thanks must be given to all those people who gave up their time to support us. It was noticed and greatly appreciated by us all. Highlights of the season: Woodward's drop-goal attempt against Marlborough;



Scrum action

biting finale was set up. David Gooch made a try-saving tackle and Binning took over the touch kicking (which he apparently did rather well), and after a hard match we achieved one of the most pleasing wins of the season. Scrappy games against Douai Abbey and St. Bartholomew's were both won. Incredibly three backs scored against Douai (most incredible of all was the fact that both wingers got the ball and both scored), Tony Funnell's was a particularly good effort; and Greasby scored a brace against St. Bart.'s. On a freezing afternoon our South African visitors, St. Stithians, Johannesburg, were narrowly defeated by yet another try from Binning, which followed a good first drive by Higazi. Against Warwick we seemed to cruise too much and only really woke up in the last twenty minutes when it looked as if we might

Binning dropping the ball just short of the line; Higazi doing the same thing about ten metres further back; and Mr. Watkins' face when his son curiously asked him in front of most of the players, "I thought you said this team was rubbish?" No, we weren't rubbish; as everyone soon found out, we were pretty useful. I would like to give my particular thanks to Mr. Watkins for his inexhaustible supply of knowledge and advice on the art of fly-half play, and to Mr. Hamilton, for spending countless hours helping to improve my kicking.

Forward of the season:

R. Binning (No.8)

Back of the season:

L. Clements (fly-half)

Representative Honours:

R. Binning (regional),
H. Dorling (area),
D. Higazi (regional),
H. Whalen (county)

Top points scorer:

L. Clements 118 (2 tries, 15 conversions, 19 penalties, 7 drop-goals)

Top try scorer:

R. Binning 14

L. CLEMENTS VI JEF

1ST XV RUGBY v. RADLEY

For a match that Abingdon pupils look forward to every season, this game was a big disappointment. Hordes of supporters turned up hoping to see Abingdon beat their local rivals and there was a buzz around the pitch when **Luke Clements** kicked off. Radley started well, partly due to mistakes on our behalf, and their fly-half kicked a penalty to put Radley 3-0 ahead. Although Luke Clements levelled the scores with a penalty, Radley went into half-time 6-3 up with their second penalty of the game. You could hear **Richard Binning** telling the team at half time that they could and they must win this match, and when Abingdon came out ready for the second half, they all had a determined look on their faces. Radley started the second half better than Abingdon and they scored a decisive try when their giant forward ran through three tackles to score under the posts. Abingdon looked a bit downhearted but their hopes were raised when Radley missed the easiest conversion they were likely to get. Although when Radley kicked a penalty to make the score 11-3, Abingdon came back strongly, and looked for a try which would have made the scores very close. Abingdon dominated for a period and then in the last few seconds Radley scored another try which killed off any hopes that Abingdon may have had.

M. EDWARDS 6SAE

1ST XV RUGBY v. MARLBOROUGH

The key feature of this match was great forward play: superb driving in the rucks and mauls, a solid scrum and good line-out ball, especially from **Richard Binning**. The half-backs played well with outstanding kicking from **Luke Clements** at fly-half. The defence was very thorough with aggressive tackling in the three-quarters. During the second half Abingdon dominated all areas of the game. Luke Clements added a penalty to make the score 15-6. In the final ten minutes, Marlborough tried desperately to salvage the game, running with the ball from everywhere. **Adrian Howkins** intercepted one such move in the centre, dodging the full back and going on to score under the posts. Luke Clements kicked the conversion. Abingdon completely outplayed Marlborough, and thoroughly deserved to win 22-8. This result and this performance clearly impressed the many O.A.s there.

A. SMITH 6 RVS-S

Abingdon came back strongly...



U.15 B RUGBY UNION

The season began with a most surprising 67 point victory at Stowe, the pattern of open rugby and sound defence being firmly established and remaining for the rest of the season. A hard fought 17 point

victory at Marlborough was followed by a rather easier 62 point win against Bloxham. At this stage in the season no points had been conceded, although this record soon disappeared at Radley as they ran out victors by 44 points to nil. Two further comfortable victories against MCS and Ship-lake took us up to half term. At this stage in the season Radley remained the only side to have scored against us. A bruising encounter against a strong Oratory side continued the pattern of success after half term. The next game against RGS High Wycombe proved to be the best game, and result, of the season as we ran out victors by 24 points to 14 in a match that could have gone either way up until the last 10 minutes. This result was even more satisfying as the Wycombe U15 A team subsequently went on to become National champions. A local derby and an eight points victory against an old Cokethorpe side was characterised by the battle of the Swifts and some of the more physically aggressive rugby of the season. The bruises and knocks appeared to have taken their toll, in another soon to follow local encounter, against St. Edward's. In a game that could have been won we lacked imagination and the ability to change our style of play and lost by two tries to nil. However showing resolve and determination the last two games against Warwick and Pangbourne were comfortably won, the last of these taking us past 300 points for the season. The achievement of only having conceded points to Radley and St. Edward's throughout the season remained.

Overall this was a most satisfying season as leadership qualities and a strong sense of collective purpose remained throughout with the players conducting themselves in a way that did credit to themselves and their school.

Overall Record:

Played 12
Won 10
Lost 2
For 305
Against 73

D. EVANS

3RD AND 4TH XV's RUGBY

The Game 2 squad this year was potentially one of the strongest ever with competition for places in the 4th XV and even a threat of an extra 4th fixture or two. Both teams could field good packs of forwards and backs willing to run.

As often happens, injuries, especially to 1st and 2nd XV squad players meant that the teams were frequently disrupted and rarely reached their true potential.

After a straightforward win against Bloxham, the 3rds had close, hard fought encounters with Stowe and Marlborough before succumbing to Radley. The team's only other loss was at Pangbourne when losses of players to senior teams did not help the cause. The win against St. Edward's (a **Michael Morris** penalty goal) was the first for Abingdon at this level in recent memory.

The true potential was shown against Cokethorpe with an outstanding first half display. In some of the other games, even those won, the scoring was limited and frustration with colleagues and the referee were too evident.

Several players deserve mention, but particularly **Richard Wyatt** for his team leadership, **Ben Baldwin** for his tackling, **Tom Sapsford** for leading the pack, **David Wrigley** for his combative hooking, **Andrew James** for sound work in the second row, **David Roycroft** and **Lanre Sagaya** for their speed on the wings and **Michael Morris** for steadying the backs. An extra mention is due to **Tim Jones** who spent the whole term trying to obtain a set of shirts to improve the sartorial appearance of the 'red and black army'. For the last match the team appeared in pink and black quartered shirts!

The play in the 4th XV was often of a standard which gave the 3rd team plenty to think about in practice sessions. Having lost to a good Marlborough team, the Radley match proved the quality of the team, losing to a dramatic long-range drop goal in the last minute. Shiplake and Oratory were swept aside with strong running

rugby before a loss to St. Edward's and a close encounter at Pangbourne.

The senior players - **Alex Moss** (Captain), **James Arthur**, **Peter Rutland**, **David Pinniger**, **Daniel Rayner** and **Iain Brownlee** - were well supported by **Daniel Evans**, **James Dowling**, **Ian Priest**, **Sam West**, **James Grady** and **Mark Bailey**. Special mention should be made of **Oliver Moss**, **Sam Walker** and **Neil Fisher** who, though they did not command regular places, were always willing reserves.

Finally, thanks are also due to those parents who enjoyed the sunshine of September and braved the ice of December to support the teams both home and away.

3rd XV 1995 - 96

Bloxham	Won	31 - 0
Stowe	Drew	0 - 0
Marlborough	Lost	3 - 5
Radley	Lost	0 - 32
Shiplake	Won	17 - 9
Oratory	Drew	0 - 0
High Wycombe	Won	7 - 5
Cokethorpe	Won	39 - 0
St. Edwards	Won	3 - 0
Pangbourne	Lost	0 - 9
Warwick	Won	13 - 7

Scorers

Tries: Roycroft (4), Grady (2), Sapsford (2), Morse, Ashton, Sagaya, Finch, Mackay, Arthur, Moss A, Ryder, Porter
Cons: Arthur (4), Moss A (3), Gilley
Pens: Morris (2), Arthur, Moss A
Played 11, Won 6, Drawn 2, Lost 3
Points for 113; against 67

4th XV 1995 - 96

Stowe	Won	37 - 5
Marlborough	Lost	0 - 28
Radley	Lost	0 - 3
Shiplake	Won	36 - 5
Oratory	Won	63 - 0
St. Edward's	Lost	0 - 12
Pangbourne	Drew	10 - 10

Scorers

Tries: Walford (4), Dowling (4), Rutland (4), Bailey (3), Sagaya (2), Baldwin, Talbot, Porter, Brownlee, Jones, Arthur, Grady
Cons: Arthur (4), Moss A (4), Brownlee
Pen: Moss A
Played 7, Won 3, Lost 3, Drawn 1
Points for 146; against 63

P. RICHARDSON

COLTS' RUGBY

This was a tough season for both sides, but one from which they each came out with credit. With the exception of the St. Edward's game (when 6 of the

regular team were missing for various reasons!), the A XV battled hard and was always in contention, losing several games by the narrowest of margins, whilst the B XV grew in stature as the season progressed.

Things started in the most cruel way for the A XV at Bloxham where the side had played so well only to lose to a hotly disputed try in the third minute of injury time. It then beat Stowe in rather scrappy and unconvincing fashion but defeats by Marlborough, Radley and MCS followed, the latter proving to be a classic case of over-confidence and lack of teamwork. The side bounced back though with an enthralling victory over Oratory. The highlights of the second half of the season were three hard fought and evenly balanced games against RGS High Wycombe, Pangbourne and Warwick. Unfortunately only the latter was won, but it really showed the ability of our players when they put their minds to work, dug deep and played as a collective unit.

There was a great deal of size and potential within the side, but they struggled to put all their skills and efforts together when it mattered, namely in the final third of the pitch. All too often they did not make territorial advantage count, resorting to individual drives at crucial times when good teamwork had established them in a strong position. This technique results from discipline, patience and organisation and is something they will hopefully have grasped from the season, for if they are to develop into a redoubtable force, they must work on their attitude and approach to training.

The B XV lacked any real size and confidence initially, but more than made up for it with effort, determination and a willingness to listen and learn. Consequently they developed into a very good team and although they only won half their games, some of the handling and ball continuity they showed was excellent, particularly in their victories over Stowe, Oratory and Warwick.

We would like to thank **Andrew Stewart** and **Jonathan Dunbar** in the A XV and **Jack Wearne** and **Jamie Adams** in the B XV for all their hard work and leadership in their respective teams. Theirs was not an easy

job and was rather frustrating at times but all four showed tremendous enthusiasm and dedication and certainly always led by their example.

RESULTS:

A XV	Opposition	B XV
L 19-20	Bloxham	
W 21-18	Stowe	W 17-5
L 11-17	Marlborough	L 9-27
L 9-22	Radley	L 0-30
L 7-16	MCS	W 62-3
W 33-19	Oratory	W 45-5
L 3-8	Wycombe	L 0-62
	St. Edward's	L 5-22
W 53-0	Reading	L 16-22
	Pangbourne	L 0-17
W 18-15	Warwick	W 17-10

Overall Record:

A XV Played 11 Won 4 Lost 7
Points for 190 Points against 219

B XV Played 8 Won 4 Lost 4
Points for 155 Points against 119

**A. BROADBENT
& S. SHARP**

JUNIOR COLTS' A RUGBY

The final results would seem to show an average season. It was not quite that clear cut but a handful of important points would have transformed it immensely.

The Bloxham defeat was an appalling start, with overconfidence being the main cause. Morale wasn't sky-high in the next few matches, resulting in slow starts, but once the team got going the defence was sound and team spirit infallible. Mid-season changes in the backs hindered their continuity and we weren't sure of our ball handling abilities.

This was a frustrating time for the forwards, but eventually the backs clicked and the team rediscovered faith in itself. As the season drew to a close, everyone gave 100% every minute of the game. During this period we played some impressive rugby - committed, stylish but most of all successful.

The enjoyable season ended on a very fine note. The team faced an aggressive Warwick side and played exceptionally well. A fine example of

tackling was shown by **J. Otterburn**, giving us a 5-0 lead at half time.

Overall, it was highly enjoyable. Thanks go to **Mr. Davies** and **Mr. D. Evans** for persevering with the team throughout difficult periods and **Mr. Watkins, Mr. Hamilton** and **Mr. Broadbent** also deserve thanks for help with coaching.

THE JUNIOR COLTS A XV:

B. Watts, D. Pearson, A. Holland, W. Pank, P. Watson, J. Montague, C. Howard, C. Hockley, S. Laurie, S. Tompkins, A. Benson, M. Armstrong, H. Watkinson, D. Baxter, J. Otterburn, L. Butler, A. White, H. Ronaldson, S. Hughes, M. Jones, T. Smith, A. Papps.

B. WATTS 4RGH

JUNIOR COLTS' B RUGBY

The Junior Colts A and B trained as a squad and there was very little to choose between most of the regular members of both teams. Many of those who played for the B team also had at least one outing in the A team and there was more than a handful of first team players who needed a spell in the second team to help them rediscover their form! In time, too, one or two second team players established themselves in the first team: most notably **C. Hockley** at centre and **A. Benson** at second row/number eight. It was a measure of the character of this squad that there was not a murmur of dissent when players were moved between teams and between positions - one and all got on with performing to their best ability. This year group has real strength in depth and I am sure that many of the current B team will go on to play first XV rugby either at Abingdon or at university or club level. It may, however, lack for one or two truly outstanding players at this age; although they may well develop later. It was, therefore, not surprising that whilst the A team fell short of an excellent season (by dint of a few of disappointing results amongst many fine performances) the B team enjoyed a highly successful season and finished with the school's joint best playing record of only two defeats

(Radley and St. Edward's) in their twelve matches.

Only good things will remain in my memory about the Junior Colts Squad of 1995: the B team, particularly, scored a lot of points (even **P. Neville** lost count of the number of tries he scored!) and both teams showed real grit when under pressure (the A team's performances against St. Edward's, Pangbourne and Warwick were huge and so too was the B team's grinding victory over RGS High Wycombe); and the good-humoured willingness of all to train hard and take responsibility for their own improvement as individuals and as a squad. I shall choose to forget, although those that played in the A team would do well to remember, the ignominy of the defeat by Bloxham (after leading by 21 points at half time), the first half of the A team's match against Radley (the storming performance in the second half showed that Radley can be beaten) and that A team match against RGS High Wycombe (0-84)...

It would be wrong to single out boys from a squad which showed such corporate purpose but one or two images do stick in the mind: **R. Bourne-Taylor** tackling, tackling, tackling; **S. Tompkins'** box kick and darting runs; **M. Shaikh** bursting through a maul to run ten metres and score; **B. Watts** covering at fullback (how can anyone look so slow and be so fast?); the return of **C. Howard** from injury and **W. Ranscombe** clearing to touch.

The squad received vital support from **Mr. Weir's** C team and I'm sure we'll hear more about **A. Heather, M. Cooper** and **A. Garrod** who were all promoted to B team service and became established in their own right. My thanks to **Mr. Weir** for all his efforts and for his patience as his teams were asset-stripped to cover for injuries to A and B team players.

Both **Mr. Evans** and I thoroughly enjoyed working with this year group and wish them many, many successes at Colts level and beyond.

Results
A XV: P 12 W5 D2 L5
(For 129 Against 204)
B XV: P12 W10 L2
(For 305 Against 73)

S. DAVIES

JUNIOR COLTS' C RUGBY

The C team had an eventful season, with a range of matches far greater than those of previous years. Our first match was against a very strong team from Marlborough. We had a very good match after scoring early, and we looked set to win. Slowly as the game drew on, we tired, the match slipped out of our hands and we lost by a comparatively small margin.

Our next and possibly most important match was against Radley. Although we had a hard fought match we were unlucky to lose. A week later we played a rematch and had a marvellous game, in which we were the only side to beat Radley throughout the year.

We continued to play well, beating Shiplake 28 to 7. Unfortunately we were forced to play a very strong side from St. Edward's, and although we played well, we lost dismally. We had a rematch against a weaker side and a fairer match was played. Our last match of the season was against Pangbourne, where we won 27 to 0.

Marlborough:	17: 7
Radley:	7: 5
Radley:	26: 5
Shiplake:	28 : 7
St. Edward's:	63 : 0
St. Edward's:	26: 17
Pangbourne:	27: 0

G. KITTO 4MDM

JUNIORS' A XV RUGBY

This has been a successful season for the Juniors A XV, who just come out ahead in the wins and losses account, but whose fixture list this year included very strong opposition (e.g. the world-conquering High Wycombe team). The best feature of the season was the way it ended, with three good wins in a row, including two traditionally tough fixtures, Pangbourne and Warwick (away). We finished the season as we began it, with an away win and an identical scoreline: 22-0. However that just reinforces the sense of improvement which this team showed during the course of the term. Warwick was a much, much better side

than Bloxham! Certainly, by the end of the season the team had developed its strengths and improved its weaknesses and we had found the best arrangement in terms of personnel. So who were they?

J. Gardner moved to full back from wing during the course of the season. He was sound defensively and was a speedy and effective attacking force. **P. Barry** and **N. Hambridge** ended up securing the wing slots. They both have plenty of natural pace and they grew in confidence during the term. **R. Fabes** moved from full back to outside centre (to fill the gap left by the luckless **M. Terry** who played very well in the early season games, but was then flattened by a virus with the impact of a Western Samoan tackle.) Roland is a skilful, natural ball player who is also a hundred per cent reliable in defence - and it was good to see him taking on the opposition more in the latter games. **S. Balch** moved from wing forward in the B team to inside centre. He too improved tremendously, in his handling, running, tackling - and in his general vision of the game (though I suspect that may have had something to do with the new contact lenses!). With **T. Fleming** at fly-half this team was always going to have a good chance of success. His kicking out of hand was excellent, his handling secure (he did not drop a single Whibley pass all season) and he distributed and ran better with each game, culminating in a fine display against Warwick. However, any fly-half is only as good as his half-back partner allows him to be, and **L. Whibley** (team captain) provided the other half of a very talented and effective pairing. Luke produced a very crisp service all season and he really led by example, both in attack and defence, linking effectively between forwards and backs.

T. Coe had an excellent season as number 8; he was always in the thick of the action, launching rucks, tackling ferociously, and attacking around the fringes. **J. Wood** made up for lack of size and weight in courage, determination and rugby brain. Woody always did just what was needed - and often a bit more besides. **M. Shields** and **J. Kingsley** adopted similar roles, and they competed well for the other wing-forward spot. Both

are enthusiastic players, good at setting up and tidying up, and both enjoyed supporting the backs. We lacked height in the second row, which limited our options - but in **S. Curran** and **R. Holman** we had plenty of strength and, at times, real aggression. Both held their own in the set pieces and worked hard in the rucks and mauls. We were lucky enough to have a very strong front row in the form of **G. Wilson-North** and **J. Wilson** as props. Our pack rarely shifted (unless it went forwards) and both Giles and Joe were outstanding players in the loose. **P. Batchelor** and **P. Mather** shared the hooking berth between them; Paul was the more effective player in the loose, but Peter was recalled for the later matches because of the accuracy of his throwing in to the line-out.

The Warwick match was probably the highlight of the season; the Oratory game was the low point, a lacklustre performance ignited too late by Luke Whibley's nasty injury. Generally, though, it has been a cheerful, positive season in which I have been aware, as usual, of the considerable talent and potential available in both A and B teams. The challenges through the term were ones that all teams face, especially the vital aspect of recycling possession. We didn't always get it right, but quite often we did and that brought the necessary sense of achievement. This team improved significantly, both individually and collectively, and there is no doubt that they could go on to become very successful indeed.

Thank you to the boys for all their efforts this season (and it has been a long one, beginning as it did with 'pre-season' training for the first time on sun-baked ground at the end of August). Thanks also to **Mr. Burrow** for his general help and support - and for once again producing a very successful B team; to **Mr. Hamilton** for boosting the skill levels so effectively during the Monday games session, and to **Mr. Broadbent**, **Mr. White** and **Mr. Waters** for keeping the C team squad and others going. Thanks also to our referees: **Mr. Drummond-Hay**, **Mr. Townsend**, **Rev. Lewis** and **Shane Widmer**. Finally, sincere thanks to all the loyal parents who supported us through

thick and thin, especially **Mr. Fleming** who became our unofficial "sponge-man" - and lastly to everyone who produced such splendid items for the tea-party, particularly **Mrs. Holman** who baked that wonderful Christmas tree cake!

RESULTS:

Bloxham	22-0
Marlborough	10-17
Radley	3-34
MCS	8-3
Shiplake	41-0
Oratory	5-28
RGS Wycombe	0-64
St. Edward's	0-19
Reading	20-12
Pangbourne	20-12
Warwick	22-0

Played 11 Won 6 Lost 5
Points for: 151 Points against: 189

The Juniors' A XV:

J. Gardner, P. Barry, R. Fabes, S. Balch, N. Hambridge, T. Fleming, L. Whibley (Capt.), M. Terry, C. Fotopoulos, T. Coe, J. Kingsley, M. Shields, J. Wood, S. Curran, O. Norman-Longstaff, R. Holman, G. Wilson-North, P. Mather, P. Batchelor, J. Wilson.

The Scorers:

Tries: Barry 4, Coe 3, Fotopoulos 2, Gardner 7, Wilson-North 3, Whibley 1, Hambridge 3, Curran 1, Fleming 1

Conversions: Whibley 1, Fleming 5

Penalties: Fleming 3

S. EVANS

JUNIORS' B XV RUGBY

The term started well with an exciting win against Marlborough College. Good teamwork and excellent backing-up produced two good tries but a lack of tackling, and in some cases fitness, almost let the home team in during the second half. We were unnecessarily overawed by a Radley team who deserved their win, but not by such a large margin.

During the term a large number of players improved their skills considerably and the standard of rucking and supportive forward play greatly improved. The team has been ably led by scrum-half and captain **B. Wells** who has set a high standard in commitment and example. We benefited enormously from some very accurate kicking by **C. Rose** at fly-half. He converted a large number of tries and his drop goal was the difference at Marlborough. Towards the end of the

season he had gained enough confidence to take the opposition on and score tries. Without the tenacious qualities of the back row forwards: **J. Kingsley, M. Amber, M. Shields** and **T. Butler**, much line-out and second phase ball would have been wasted, instead the ball was often won and recycled. Once the fitness of the man mountain **Nye Brewer** and his namesake **Matthew** had been established, this pair were formidable in the front and second row. However, it must be said that opposition did not always approve of the style of Nye's line-out play!

This was not just a team of maul-raiders. Their handling skills had continued to improve throughout the term. We must thank **Mr. Hamilton** for his imaginative skills on Monday afternoons which were both enjoyable and challenging. It was therefore pleasing to see **Messrs. Hambridge, Humi, Judd, Bracher, Tolley** and storming **Norman-Longstaff** gain a fair share of the ball in most matches from which they scored many tries. If there is a criticism of their play, it is in defence. Poor tackling and unthinking positional play enabled the opposition to score far too easily; hopefully this is an area of the team's play which can be improved during the next season.

There is a considerable amount of talent in this year group. During the term many boys have represented the School, many have improved their skills and will be able to hold down a place in one of the three teams next season. The success of the teams comes from good spirit in squad training and willingness to practise and support each other. A most successful and enjoyable season. Well done everybody.

This enthusiastic year group provided over thirty boys to represent the School in the B XV, they were: **B. Wells** (Capt.), **A. Hunter, C. Fotopoulos, M. Ambler, N. Brewer, M. Brewer, O. Norman-Longstaff, P. Batchelor, W. Bond, T. Butler, S. Dexter, H. Duff, M. Freeman, N. Hambridge, R. Holman, T. Humi, T. Judd, J. Kingsley, I. MacDonald, J. Mansfield, T. Marsh, P. Mather, L. Moss, S. Nickson, E. Pajak, M. Pajak, C. Rose, M. Shields, P. Tolley, A. Trill, B. Ashworth.**

B XV RESULTS

Marlborough College	15 - 12
Radley College	0 - 40
MCS	46 - 0
Douai School	25 - 5
Oratory School	37 - 0
RGS, High Wycombe	0 - 73
Cokethorpe School	48 - 12
St. Edward's School	10 - 0
Reading School	50 - 0
Pangbourne College	32 - 0
Warwick School	29 - 0

F. BURROW

MINORS' RUGBY

This season has been one of mixed fortunes, but all the players have improved dramatically, especially towards its end. Our season was split into two parts, beginning under the coaching of **Mr. Drummond-Hay**. We brought in new players from the first year and the team players didn't really know how each other played. We played seven matches in this part and we ended up winning three, losing three and drawing one. This was a good result as the teams which we lost against were the best teams we were going to come across: Oratory, Dragon and RGS High Wycombe.

We moved players around and at this point were learning about how to work together as a team. This really showed towards the end of the first half of the season. We drew with Reading, who had beaten even RGS High Wycombe, to whom we had lost in one of our first matches.

In the second part of the season we were coached by **Mr. Hamilton** who had coached the 1st XV. He showed us new moves and techniques, which improved our game, especially in the backs who worked together exceptionally well. The forwards also worked together, and we won a fair amount of our ball because of this. We played just three games in this last part of the season and we won all three. They weren't easy teams, and we did extremely well in beating them.

We have had an excellent season. Everyone has improved his skill and teamwork, which was shown especially well in our last few games.

Overall Record:

Won 6, Lost 3, Drawn 1.

W. BAKER 2GGB

1ST. XI HOCKEY

This is the first year that we have not been disadvantaged by not having an artificial surface on which to practice. The opening of Tilsley Park has enabled boys at all levels to have productive training sessions and to develop skills. It may well be a few years before we 'catch up' with some of our rivals, but the potential to do just that is now there. It has been good to see the improvement in the skills and tactical awareness of some of the players.

We began the season with a victory against Leighton Park. Not surprisingly this was a scrappy game, both sides lacking coherence. Basic skills had not been developed and possession was repeatedly lost. Nevertheless it was good to see **Daniel Higazi** scoring twice and the defence limiting the opposition to a single goal. Southampton was altogether a different kettle of fish, with many of the team playing hockey outside the school, they gave us a lesson in sharp passing and the full use of the pitch.

We next played Pangbourne and for the first 25 minutes matched them in every way. In fact we looked more likely to make the breakthrough. Unfortunately we then gave away a soft goal and became rather exposed as both **Alex Moss** and **Philip Heiermann** abandoned their defensive roles in order to push forwards. Unable to book Tilsley we took on Reading on the grass of War Memorial field and achieved an excellent victory. **James Thomson**, playing his first game for the first eleven opened the scoring and **Ian Gray** followed it with a fine solo effort. **Andrew Ashurst** replaced an ailing **David Gooch** in goal and had a superb game, keeping a clean sheet.

Back to Tilsley and an encounter with MCS. At the heart of the MCS side was a young man from Germany who soon made his mark on the game. An international at the under 18 level and used to playing strong club hockey he controlled the game and we suffered a big defeat. Nevertheless the team deserves credit for not becoming demoralised. A narrow defeat at Bloxham was followed by a heartening performance at Stowe. Stowe in

fact produced two stick stops on the line to deny us a deserved victory. Full of hope we then travelled to Berkhamsted, but found ourselves on a very poor, slippery grass surface. With players unable to keep their footing, we suffered a demoralising defeat.

The next port of call was St. George's College, Weybridge where a squad of eight took part in a six-a-side tournament on one of the few sunny days of the term. This was a most enjoyable venture and we played six matches winning two, drawing two and losing two. One of the draws was against the eventual winners of the tournament RGS High Wycombe.

Back to the full game we then played St. Edward's. They were as usual a direct, strong running side and gave us a lesson in efficient, even devastating use of short corners. That apart there was little difference between the sides. With our record slipping it was with some trepidation that we moved on to the Oxford hockey festival. At last we combined some skilful hockey with the run of the green. Three victories could easily have been four and every member of the squad of thirteen played a part. The final match against the Old Abingdonians was a happy affair with plenty of parents to enjoy the hockey. **David Gooch** chose this match to produce his best performance of the season and it was much needed. The O.A.s fielded a strong side and quickly got themselves together. **Chris Keith** made some penetrating runs and **Rob Finch** was as assured as ever at the back of their defence. We still need to improve in a number of areas. At times, especially in key areas, we rush things and skills break down. We need to be calm and efficient on the ball. We do not open the game up by channelling down the right. The ball needs to be moved to the back of the stance and the feet moved around the ball. That said we are already beginning to see improved skills at all levels.

Iain Gray proved to be an effective captain, who led by example. My thanks to him and to **Tom Sapsford** who checked all my administration for mistakes.

RESULTS

Leighton Park	Won	2 - 1	<i>Higazi 2</i>
Southampton	Lost	0 - 5	
Pangbourne	Lost	0 - 3	
Reading	Won	5 - 0	<i>Thomson, Gray, Heiermann, Oldham, Funnell</i>
MCS	Lost	0 - 7	
Bloxham	Lost	1 - 2	<i>Gray (p.f)</i>
Stowe	Drew	1 - 1	<i>Funnell</i>
Berkhamsted	Lost	1 - 6	<i>Higazi</i>
St. Edward's	Lost	2 - 4	<i>Funnell, Higazi</i>

Oxford Festival:

Wisbech	Won	4 - 0	<i>Higazi 2, Woodward, Gray</i>
Yarm	Won	1 - 0	<i>Higazi</i>
Worksop	Lost	2 - 4	<i>Higazi 2</i>
Aldenharn	Won	3 - 0	<i>Heiermann, Woodward, Funnell</i>
Elizabeth Coll.	Lost	2 - 3	<i>Higazi, Funnell</i>
O. A.s	Won	2 - 1	<i>Funnell, Gray</i>

P. WILMORE

2ND. XI HOCKEY

This was a mixed season which started and finished well. A 2-0 victory over Leighton Park was followed by defeats at the hands of Southampton, Pangbourne and Bloxham and a 2-2 draw at Reading. We had problems converting the half chances and penalty corners but there were some impressive individual performances. **Patrick Wells**, **Douglas Lloyd** and **Oliver Greasby** scored some scorching individual goals, and **Andrew Ashurst** in goal pulled off some amazing saves.

We improved in the last three matches with an excellent display on grass against Stowe (1-1), a victory over Berkhamsted (1-0) and a very close contest at St. Edward's (1-2). Berkhamsted was beaten by a last minute penalty kick by **Edward Ryder** which was "efficiently converted" in **Mr. Payne's** words. But St. Edward's snatched a last minute decider in our final fixture, again played on grass. Finally, our thanks go to **Dr. Wilmore** and to **Mr. Payne** for coaching and organising us.

The team was: A. Ashurst, D. Wrigley, O. Moss, J. McKenzie, A. Freeman, M. Simmons, P. Wells, E. Ryder, T. Sapsford, D. Lloyd, O. Greasby, H. Norris, B. Porter.

E. RYDER 6DLS

3RD. XI HOCKEY

1996 was a season of two halves, with **Mr. Townsend** supremo for the first three matches and **Mr. Evans** polishing off the rest. Some would attribute the upturn in results to the change of coaches; others would put it down to improving fitness and teamwork. Either way, we were hampered throughout the season by an inability to field our strongest side, through injury and so on.

Two glorious unbeaten years came to an end, sadly, in the first match of the season. This was largely, however, down to the 2nds, who turned up at Pangbourne a player short. Needless to say, **Gwyn Jones** was poached, and we were forced to play with ten men. We hung on until the last five minutes but the rest is history. Our game plan, as ever, was based on relentless tackling by the halves and backs; the 3rd XI invented the term 'collective responsibility'. Similar tactics were employed against MCS and Bloxham. We stole the first with a smartly taken goal from **Edward Smith**, but were unlucky to lose the second: a match notable for the cautioning of both captain and vice captain! It was here that **Steven Watts** made his debut, and **Paul** became an impressive presence in midfield. The results of the closing matches speak for themselves, with **Gwyn Jones** and **Edward Smith** filling their boots.

All in all, a pretty good season. **Robert Gilley** was outstanding in goal, and everyone else pulled his weight. The end of '96 does see the sad departure of VIth stalwarts **Antony Ashton**, **Peter Hatt**, **Mark Pritchard**, **Edward Smith** and **Nicholas Matheson**. Everyone would like to thank Mr. Townsend and Mr. Evans for their time.

RESULTS:

Pangbourne	Lost	0-1
MCS	Won	1-0
Bloxham	Lost	1-2
Stowe	Won	3-0
Berkhamsted	Won	6-0
Abingdon 2nd XI	Won	4-1

The following played for the team:

R. Gilley (GK), A. Ashton, N. Matheson (Capt.), E. Smith, P. Hatt (Capt. vice), J. Easton, S. Walker, M. Pritchard, J. Towe, J. Cook, S. Rajagopalan, P. Talbot, S. Watts, G. Jones, D. Roycroft.

NJ. MATHESON VIJEF

3RD. XI v. MCS

If you want to destroy the morale of the opposition totally, then ensure you score the only goal of the match two minutes before injury time in the second half. It worked last Wednesday in a hotly contested game between fairly evenly matched teams.

The defence worked extremely hard once again; **Robert Gilley** saw plenty of action in goal, ably supported by **Mark Pritchard** and especially the ubiquitous **Peter Hatt**. Midfield play was better this week. **Anthony Ashton** always looked dangerous and with **Edward Smith** controlled the midfield well, especially when using the through ball to the wings. During the last quarter, despite a few half-hearted shots past our goal, we looked more dangerous and might well have had been allowed another goal, but the one in the 58th minute was indisputable: a **Roycroft** cross to Smith was smacked crisply past their goalkeeper to thud against the backboard.

Truly this was a team effort: the quality of MCS's play meant we all had to pull our weight and the game was exciting and entertaining from the start. There might have been a range of skill levels but there was no shortage of commitment and enthusiasm. Well done!

MCS 0 ABINGDON 1 (E. Smith 58)

J. TERRY 6RVS-S

THE COLTS' XI HOCKEY

This season was marked by the amount of enthusiasm and dedication shown by all. Each match was treated with the same high level of effort, and subsequently we ended up with a most successful record, losing only one match, and that by a single goal, to an unbeaten St. Edward's XI.

Much of the team's success was due to the captain, **James Thomson**, who was a great asset at centre half. He is a hard hitting player who has the confidence to wait for players to come to him before making his move.

Toby Jones was the spearhead of most attacks, and his speed and quick thinking accounted for nine goals during the season, including two hat-tricks! The midfield duo of **Adam Molyneux** and **Andrew Stewart** regularly gave good ball to both wingers, and the side benefited enormously from their skill. On the wings, **Robert Jones**, **Thomas Allen** (when fit), **Adam Brown** and **Jonathan Smethurst** were efficient and fast, consistently giving opposing wing-halves much to think about. Up front, **Samuel Potter** improved in every game and the team's defenders; **Michael Howe-Davies**, **John Church** and **Tristan Evans** were extremely reliable and uncompromising. Last, but by no means least, **Ian Lashford** proved in a number of matches that he is a fine goal-keeper with courage and determination.

The 'B' team had several enjoyable encounters (one resulting in a memorable win!) and thanks are due to all members of the XI who fought so hard for 'A' XI places. I know that the 'B' XI will want me to give special mention to their coach, **Mr. Milner**, for his good humoured training throughout the term.

RESULTS:

P7	W4	D2	L1
Goals for 17	Goals against 7		
Southampton	W	5	1
Pangbourne	D	1	1
MCS.	W	2	1
Bloxham	W	5	0
Stowe	D	1	1
Berkhamsted	W	2	1
St. Edward's	L	1	2

J. DRUMMOND-HAY

JUNIOR COLTS' HOCKEY

The first match of the season was against Oxford School at home. It was a somewhat easy match with an easy 4-0 victory. **Paul Edwards** got a hat-trick and **Anthony Hulse**'s superb first time shot finished them off.

Pangbourne were our second opponents, and this was to be our first match on the astroturf at Tilsley Park.

After conceding a goal we drew level, using a new short corner routine, which resulted in **Ben Hunt** setting up a good goal for **Liam Butler**. Paul scored the other two, making the total 3-1; another good win.

The Reading match at home was very scrappy, but after conceding a goal in the first ten minutes, it took us until the last five minutes for Paul to equalise 1-1. We were still unbeaten!

We next played MCS on the astroturf. After holding out and creating few chances of our own it was 0-0 at half time but late in the second half a free hit was given for a perfectly good tackle from Paul on the edge of the D and they put it away. This was one of the two bad decisions: a penalty was given for another average challenge but poetic justice was acquired and the goal was saved. The final score was 1-0 and we lost our unbeaten record which had stretched over a season and three games.

Stowe was played at home on a bad grass pitch in another close game and after slipping up due to the absence of studs we won 1-0. Liam provided the winning goal.

Against St. Edward's we played probably the best we had all season, but failed to put the chances away, losing 3-0. Southampton away was a difficult game and after a tight first half, (0-0) we lost it in the second half (4-0), despite a very good A team debut performance from **Peter Norbury**.

Overall Record:

<i>Played</i>	9
<i>Won</i>	3
<i>Lost</i>	4
<i>Drew</i>	2
<i>For</i>	10
<i>Against</i>	12

Top goal scorers:

Paul Edwards	6
Liam Butler	3
Anthony Hulse	1

Top Assists:

Dan Pearson	5
Ben Hunt	3
Jonathan Tarasewicz	1
Liam Butler	1

B. HUNT 4JC

THE MINORS' HOCKEY

This was a tremendously successful season for the Minors' A XI. To finish the season with 5 victories and only 1 defeat (to an outstanding Dragon 1st XI) is a great achievement and one of which the team should rightly be very proud.

Victories over MCS, Priors' Court and Southampton are extremely rare, especially at this level, yet in all three, the team comprehensively outplayed their opponents and thoroughly deserved to win. There is a great deal of potential throughout the side and as their basic skill levels improved, especially the ability to receive and pass the ball quickly, and their confidence to allow the ball to do the work grew, they really began to play some very attractive, fast flowing hockey, both on astro and grass.

With the exception of the Dragon game, where the side defended superbly, but eventually succumbed to the relentless pressure, the team held the upper hand and dominated proceedings for large periods of each game. I thought the 3-0 victory over St. Edward's on a miserably wet afternoon on War Memorial field was an outstanding team performance, but they managed to upstage that with a magnificent display in the 6-2 destruction of King Edward's, Southampton, which was a fitting way to end a thoroughly enjoyable season.

Scoring goals is often a problem at this age, but not this year. **Iain Downie** top scored with 10 goals, several of which showed tremendous close control and vision in the D, and he was the catalyst for most of the team's attacks. **Philip Timberlake** dominated the middle of the field, and together with **Matthew Armitage** (both only First years) was highly influential in the structure of the team. Both showed tremendous skill and composure on the ball, as well as scoring several vital goals. The other halves were **Oliver Thomas** and **James Eighteen**, both of whom displayed a tremendous work rate and determination to win the 50-50 challenges.

At the back, **Peter Thomas** was the general, displaying great aware-

ness and positional sense, which made him extremely difficult to get past, and he linked well with his ever improving backs **Ahilan Rabindran** and **Greg Stalcup**. On those occasions when the defence was breached, **David Europe-Finner** was the man behind the mask entrusted with the goalkeeping job. He grew in stature with every game and made several excellent saves, often at vital times in a match.

The front line of **George Unsworth**, **Tom Matheson** and either **James Drury** or **John Rowley**, with Iain Downie playing just behind them, linked well and always looked threatening as they attacked with real pace and purpose, especially down the right wing with George.

There is some real talent amongst this side and the use of Tilsley Park this year has undoubtedly helped to develop and enhance this. All the team worked hard on their basic skills during the season and were a very responsive and thoroughly enjoyable group to coach and I would like to take this opportunity to wish them every success in the future.

Lower School Colours were awarded to: Iain Downie (Capt.), Peter Thomas, Philip Timberlake, Matthew Armitage, Oliver Thomas, Tom Matheson, George Unsworth, James Eighteen, Ahilan Rabindran, David Europe-Finner, James Drury and John Rowley.

A XI results:

v. MCS	Won 3-1
	(Timberlake, Downie, Armitage)
v Dragon	Lost 0-6
v Millbrook house	Won 4-0
	(Armitage (2), Downie, Matheson)
v Radley	Drew 2-2
	(Drury, Downie)
v MCS	Drew 0-0
v St. Edward's	Won 3-0
	(Downie (2), Unsworth)
v Prior's Court	Won 3-2
	(Matheson, Downie, Unsworth)
v Southampton	Won 6-2
	(Timberlake, Downie (4), Unsworth)

Overall Record:

Played : 8 *Won* : 5 *Drew* : 2 *Lost* : 1
Goals for : 21 *Goals against* : 13

A. BROADBENT

IST XI CRICKET

On the whole, this was a promising season of development, although there were a few disappointing performances which were reflected in the rather average overall record. The majority of the side is back again next year and hopefully they will have learnt a lot from their experiences this year.

The season started badly with defeats by MCS and Oratory, both self-inflicted by poor batting displays. However, the side recovered well to record victories over Reading, the Berkshire Gents and a touring team from Launceston Grammar School in Tasmania before half term. The win over the BG's will be remembered for the unbroken partnership of 202 between **James Horton** and **Gwyn Jones**, whilst the one over our Aussie counterparts saw **Alex Pike** at his most hostile, claiming 5 victims early on including **Henry Dorling** at first slip!

The second half started as the first with a dismal defeat at Bloxham, this time caused by some rather wayward bowling. Once again though, the side bounced back and had by far the better of the drawn games against St. Edward's and Pangbourne before regaining the winning feeling in an enthralling encounter at High Wycombe, where the balance ebbed and flowed all day before we eventually ran out victors by 19 runs. The final flurry of games saw the side lose to a strong OAs team, beat the SOAs comfortably, lose to UCS in a tight finish and get demolished by Highgate, the final game proving to be a most disappointing way to finish what had otherwise been a productive season.

The batting was dominated by the first three batsmen. **Edward Ryder** (425 runs) showed plenty of grit and determination, whilst his opening partner **Henry Whalen** (462 runs) recovered from a disastrous start to bat with real confidence and consistency. The number three was **James Horton** (559 runs), technically the most correct batsman in the side, who displayed great temperament and patience throughout and is a most elegant stroke maker. Of the others, **Gwyn Jones** had two outstanding in-

nings but otherwise struggled to get going, whilst **Henry Dorling**, **Paul Woodward** and **James Howe-Davies** all scored valuable fifties.

The bowling was rather inconsistent through the season. **Alex Pike** (32 wickets) showed plenty of pace and hostility at times but was rather wayward on occasions and was easily frustrated - however he is still young and will hopefully appear as the senior strike bowler next season. **Steven Watts** (34 wickets) struggled to find his form during the earlier part of the season, but began to show just what he is capable of in the last few matches. **Toby Jones** started well, but suffered an arm injury midway through the year and **Henry Dorling** bowled well and picked up some vital wickets, but was rather too costly on occasions. Of the others **John Church** and **Tom Allen** showed promise, although were under bowled on the whole, but they are both young and hopefully their time will come over the next two seasons.

Fielding is an integral part of cricket at any level, especially if you want to win games, and this is the area where I felt we let ourselves down most this year. It is vital that all the fielders back their bowlers up with enthusiasm and alertness in the field, because otherwise it is very difficult to exert any real pressure on the opposing batsmen.

I would like to thank Gwyn for all his hard work as captain, it has not been easy but he has improved as the season has gone on and I hope he has enjoyed the experience. I would also like to thank **Mr. Hamilton** for his assistance as coach and last but certainly not least, I would like to thank all the parents who have helped with the teas throughout the season.

Full Colours were awarded to: James Horton, Edward Ryder, Steve Watts, Henry Whalen and Alex Pike.

Half colours were awarded to: Henry Dorling, Gwyn Jones, Toby Jones, Tristan Evans and John Church.

RESULTS

MCS	MCS	242-5 dec.
Lost by 66	Ab	176 all out (Horton 40, Jones 40)
Oratory	Ab	78 all out (Ryder 37)
Lost by 6 wks	Or	84-4
Reading	Ab	240-7 dec. (Dorling 72*, Ryder 69, Woodward 52)
Won by 41 rs	Re	199 all out (T. Jones 6-37)
Radley	Ra	178-6 (Pike 3-40, Watts 3-58)
Drew	Ab	128-9 (Horton, 42)
Berkshire Gents BG's		229-6 dec. (T. Jones 3-61)
Won by 8 wks	Ab	230-2 (G. Jones 102*, Horton 89*)
Lord William's LW		168-5 dec.
Drew	Ab	135-5 (Whalen 54)
Launceston G.S.	Ab	191-6 (Whalen 88*, Horton 57)
Won by 47 runs		LGS 144 a.o. (Pike 4-20)
Bloxham	Bl	213-7 (T. Jones 4-30)
Lost by 90 rs	Ab	123 a. o. (Whalen 37)
St. Edward's	Ab	222-4 dec. (Whalen 87, Ryder 50)
Drew	St. E	191-6
Pangbourne	Ab	187-1 dec. (Horton 76*, Ryder 68*)
Drew	Pang	132-5
MCC	MCC	233-4 dec.
Drew	Ab	190-9 (Howe-Davies 58)
AMB's XI	AMB's	183-3 dec.
Drew	Ab	137-5 (Horton 38)
Wycombe	Ab	166 a.o. (Horton 78)
Won by 19 rs	HW	147 a.o. (Pike 6-63, Watts 3-47)
O.A.s	O.A.s	206 a. o. (Watts 7-64)
Lost by 46 rs	Ab	160 a.o. (Pike 37)
S.Oxon. Amateurs	SOA	147 a.o. (Pike 4-38, Dorling 3-26)
Won by 6 wks	Ab	151-4 (G. Jones 72)
U.C.S.	Ab	185-6 dec. (Whalen 54, Horton 46)
Lost by 3 wks	Ab	186-7 (Watts 4-46)
Highgate	Ab	107 a.o. (Dorling 37)
Lost by 8 wickets		108-2

A. BROADBENT

2ND XI CRICKET

Because there was so much talent within a large squad, 23 pupils represented the School at 2nd XI level. Those who played 5 or more matches included **Philip Makings** (the only person to play all 8), **Tom Allen**, **Alex Brown**, **Mark Edwards**, **Richard Ellis**, **Ian Grant**, **Iain Gray**, **Michael Howe-Davies**, **Rupert Janisch** as Wicket Keeper and **John Oldham** as Captain. The others included **John Church**, **Ben Cullum**, **Paul Edwards**, **Robert Gilley**, **James Howe-Davies**, **David Jenkins**, **Matthew Jones**, **James Prior**, **Toby Shellard**, **Andrew Smith**, **Oliver Smith**, **James Thomson** and **Paul Woodward**. Particularly notable were the contributions of John as Captain (bowling 34 overs, 13 for 145), Iain (bowling 46 overs, 11 for 109) and Rupert, averaging 40.5 with a best of 117 not out and so batting his way into the 1st XI, despite being a loss to the team behind the stumps.

It was an enjoyable season with a lively and friendly squad, led in a calm and considered manner by John. There were two thrilling matches: beating St. Edward's by 10 runs after setting a modest total of 152 and losing to RGS High Wycombe by just 2 runs chasing a target of 109. Many younger players were involved and have continued to develop, which bodes well for next year's team and the 1st XI. For those leaving, this is a good level of cricket and I wish them all the best.

Played 8	Won 3	Lost 2	Drew 3
Cokethorpe (h)		Ab	221 - 6
		C	58 a.o.
Radley (h)		R	185 - 6
		Ab	142 - 7
MCS (h)		M	210 a.o.
		Ab	145 - 8
Thame (a)		Ab	162 - 5
		T	107 - 7
Bloxham (h)		B	157 - 6
		Ab	152 a.o.
St. Edward's (a)		Ab	121 a.o.
		SE	143 a.o.
Pangbourne (h)		P	77 a.o.
		Ab	78 - 3
RGS (h)		R	109 a.o.
		Ab	107 a.o.

S. SHARP

2ND XI V.
COKETHORPE

A cracking performance from everyone against relatively weak opposition, with the highlight being **Rupert's** chanceless knock. To start at the beginning, the tossing ceremony went extremely well and we chose to bat. The two openers got off to a splendid start, for two overs, until **Philip Makings** was well caught by their 'excellent ginger-haired spinner', and **Richard Ellis** followed him back to the pavilion after being bowled. In came **Ian Grant** and **Rupert Janisch**. Ian looked superb on his way to a quick 39, whereas Rupert took a bit longer to get going. **Michael Howe-Davies** was unlucky to be run out and **Toby Shellard** played an exquisite cover-drive straight to a fielder and was caught out for 0. With all this activity going on, Rupert was piling on the runs and with great support from **Mark Edwards** he reached his fifty, and then his hundred. The only low point was Mark getting out on the last ball of our innings to dent his average!

Iain Gray and **Ian Grant** bowled brilliantly at the start of the innings but it was only after an inspired bowling change by the captain, bringing on the leg spinners that the wickets tumbled. They mopped up the last seven wickets in five overs to seal a great day all round for most concerned.

Abingdon 221 - 6 dec.
Cokethorpe 56 all out

R. Janisch	117 n.o.
J. Oldham	4 - 14
I. Grant	39
A. Brown	3 - 10
M. Edwards	28

J. OLDHAM VIAMS

UNDER 14 CRICKET

We began the season with a good positive performance against Cokethorpe. **Paul Batchelor**, **Tom Murray** and **William Ferguson** all took three wickets and the opposition was restricted to 98 runs. We soon set about the task of reaching that total. **Peter**

Mather and **Ben Wells** kept the score ticking along with some good running between the wickets. Ben finished with a well constructed 42 not out and **Ben Ashworth** was also undefeated on 23 as we passed the Cokethorpe score.

Following a frustrating spell of bad weather we next played MCS. Our bowling was a real mixture and we conceded 20 wides! Three MCS batsmen were run out and John Hawarth took three wickets. With a total of 101 to chase, it all seemed too easy. Our batting, however, was awful and only **Stephen Campbell**, with 38, reached double figures in a disappointing total of 88.

Strengthened by the addition of **Sam Balch** and **Adam Hunter** we then played Cothill, but they proved to be far too strong and this clearly is an A/B fixture. Only 48 runs were mustered and it did not take long for Cothill to reach that total for the loss of 1 wicket.

At St. Edward's next we bowled really well and at one stage had the opposition in terrible trouble. They were four wickets down with only forty runs on the board, when one of the new batsmen spooned a catch. Sadly it wasn't taken and they were able to rebuild. Their final total of 151 for 9 was always going to be daunting, but it was pleasing to see some positive batting, rather than blocking out for a draw.

It was nice to finish the season in the way that it had begun, with a resounding victory. On the Waste Court all-weather strip **Peter Mather** and **Ben Wells** took the Pangbourne bowling apart and we were able to declare on 151 for 2 wickets. **Andrew Apps** timed the declaration well, enabling us to force a victory. At first that seemed unlikely because our bowling was wayward, but the introduction of **John Hawarth's** leg breaks soon made inroads into the Pangbourne batting. John finished with 5 wickets, one of which was a brilliant catch taken by Andrew.

The final record of two victories and three defeats did not really do the side justice, but it has to be said that we let ourselves down with poor ground fielding and catching and, at times, wayward bowling. All three cost us the match against MCS. A

number of individuals performed well without reaching the sort of figures that gain prominence in assemblies. Both **Toby Coe** and **Jonathan Wood** produced excellent spells of bowling and in a weaker year would have made A XI selection.

P. WILMORE

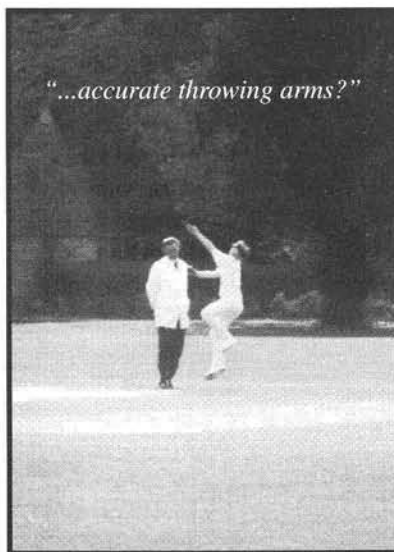
U.12 CRICKET

As usual the results of competitive matches have been frankly poor, but still marked improvement in the three disciplines of batting, bowling and fielding has been achieved and most of the players who played regularly both learned a lot and enjoyed the experiences of the summer. We began the term with both the A and B sides being comprehensively beaten by impressive Reading teams who were far superior to us in technique and talent. Only half the A side had had any serious playing experience, so concentration on the basics was imperative. Already by the second match, which was narrowly lost to MCS, our bowlers were bowling straighter, outfielders were looking sharper, but alas ! no one even looked like scoring heavily with the bat. The captain, **Nick Andrews**, did a good job shepherding limited resources through the season and I am sorry that he was not rewarded with more victories. Nevertheless, there was a more convincing display in the comfortable draw against Berkhamsted. The fourth match against Thame was also drawn, but we were lucky to hang on batting second. In monsoon conditions we were narrowly defeated by Prior's Court, before playing well to hold Hampshire U.11s to an exciting draw.

After half term we played well against Milbrook House on a treacherous pitch, but still lost by one wicket in spite of an eight wicket haul from the excellent **Matthew Armitage**. Against Steventon **Alex White** bowled particularly well to secure our only victory of the season. **Shamsur Rahman** bowled very fast against Josca's, but our batsmen again failed to score enough runs to prevent a narrow defeat. The final match against C.C.C.S. was also lost, but at least we were looking competitive and mak-

ing the opposition work hard.

Our seam bowling is fine with **Shamsur Rahman** bowling fast and straight, **Matthew Armitage** troubling all batsmen with his outswingers and **Ben Garner**, **Nick Andrews** and **Alex White** all lending useful support at medium pace. No batsman was reliable, but at times **Ben Garner**, **Shamsur Rahman**, **Depesh Desai**, **George Stratton** and **Nick Andrews** turned in useful performances. The fielding was keen all term with **Armitage**, **E. Keeling**, **White** and **S. Osborn-King** showing unusual skill



and pace round the park allied to accurate throwing arms. In my opinion prospects for this year group are far better than their results suggest. The lack of consistent batting will be made good when some of those prep. school players who scored heavily against us come to Abingdon to continue their education. The present side has bags of enthusiasm and a pleasant esprit de corps. Everyone will improve and the results will get better in time. Colours were awarded to **Andrews**, **Armitage**, **Rahman**, **Garner** and **Desai**. I offer good wishes in the future to the players who gave their all this season. Well done.

A. MITRA

JUNIOR COLTS' CRICKET

This was a rather disappointing season for us, only managing to win 2 out of our 10 games. There were few good performances

in the matches, those we did have were mainly with the bat. **P. Edwards** made two half-centuries but his performances behind the stumps were what earned him a call up into the 1st XI. **R. Smith** batted with great style and confidence as our most consistent batsman through the season. This earned him a place in the 1st XI at the end of the season. **B. Hunt** batted consistently through the season but failed to make a big score that counted.

Our bowlers lacked any pace or fire without much consistency in their bowling. **A. Choudhuri** bowled well in stages and was rewarded with excellent figures against Reading, claiming a five-wicket haul. Our most consistent bowler was **T. Bartlett**, but he did not pick up as many wickets as we would have hoped. **W. Smith** and **B. Hunt** both bowled occasional spin well, but not picking up a great deal of wickets.

The A team regulars were: **P. Edwards** (Capt.), **B. Hunt**, **N. Gray**, **W. Smith**, **R. Smith**, **T. Smith**, **J. Otterburn**, **L. Butler**, **T. Bartlett**, **T. Andrews** and **A. Choudhuri**. Occasional appearances came from: **A. McTier**, **E. Campbell**, **S. Tompkins**, **S. Laurie**, **A. Benson** and **C. Watney**.

Finally I would like to thank on behalf of the team **Mr. Henderson**, **Mr. Millard** and **Rob** for training us this season.

P. EDWARDS 4RGH

JUNIORS CRICKET

For a reasonably talented side, this was a rather disappointing season. The strength of the team lay in the all round potential of most of its members, with virtually everyone capable of 'holding a bat' and 'turning an arm'. However, against the better teams the lack of really class batting was revealed. Our four victories were obtained against rather weak opposition and we suffered crushing defeats in the Radley Festival when our frailties were cruelly exposed.

Stephen Dexter looked the pick of the batsmen with a good range of shots and time to play them, but he did not score as heavily as he should have done. **Edward Webber** showed great concentration and patience but

lost his way at times with inadequate footwork. Of the rest, **Tom Bracher** made the most significant progress with **Daniel Mitchell** having the soundest technique, but as yet, insufficient strength to turn this into high scoring. **Sam Balch** finished the season with something of a flourish although he must learn to play straighter and develop his offside shots. **Tom Fleming** and **Johnny Gardner** are exciting strikers of the ball but the latter needs to be more selective and less headstrong in his stroke play and running! **Stephen Campbell** was at his best when told to hit out.

Oliver Norman-Longstaff was the most penetrative and consistent of the bowlers with his medium-fast out swing. **Tom Fleming** struggled to find his rhythm at times and Sam his direction. Stephen moved the ball around well occasionally as did **William Ferguson**, when given the chance. The off spin of **Adam Hunter** has a lot of potential if he can be more positive and confident. Daniel and **Spencer Martin** also should develop as effective leg spinners.

Stephen Dexter handled the bowlers well but some of his field placing left something to be desired. The bowlers must also accept responsibility in this area. The quality of the fielding varied from good to appalling with the two Toms the most impressive. Johnny kept pretty well for much of the time, although he had the tendency to become over excited if a chance came his way. As ever, my thanks go to **Dr. Wilmore** for his continuing support and help.

Team from: S. Dexter (capt), S. Balch, P. Batchelor, T. Bracher, S. Campbell, T. Coe, W. Ferguson, T. Fleming, J. Gardner (wkt), A. Hunter, S. Martin, D. Mitchell, O. Norman-Longstaff, E. Webber, B. Wells, J. Wood.

R. FINCH

MINORS CRICKET

The year group consisted of only a few natural cricketers and the fortunes of the A team depended very much on the success of two or three batsmen. **Iain Downie**

was the outstanding player with both bat and ball- his 55 v. MCS and 42 v. St. Edward's were fine innings but he will have been disappointed by some failures of application and concentration. **Peter Thomas** missed the early part of the season and, like Iain, did not always do himself justice, but his 36 n.o. v. Thame and 30 v. New College reflected his good potential. Apart from his 42 in a limited overs game against a weak John Mason side, **Oliver Thomas** struggled to make decent scores in the A team fixtures, but his day, or year, will also hopefully come! **David Europe-Finner** made some useful contributions, for example with his 30 n.o. v. King Alfred's and 20 v. St. Hugh's, while **James Walker**, **James Powell**, **Thomas Matheson** and **Alex Hutchinson** showed promise without ever making large scores. In all cases the basics of stopping the good ball and hitting the bad ball were too often forgotten!

Iain Downie's 7 for 8 gave us a welcome victory over Berkhamsted and was the outstanding bowling performance of the season. **James Drury's** 4 for 30 was almost enough to beat Reading in a nail biting finish. But, as with the batting, the basic virtues, this time of "line and length", proved too much to achieve with any real consistency.

More matches in 1996 were lost than won, and next year's eleven will doubtless be strengthened by the prep. school intake. Perhaps it was not surprising that we did not retain the County Knock-out Cup we had won in 1995, but the 20-over 'League' games did give a large amount of the 2nd year a chance to play cricket in a 'representative' match in one form or another.

They were, mostly in the A team.- I. Downie, P. Thomas, O. Thomas, M. Walker, A. Hutchinson, J. Drury, J. Powell, P. Matheson, D. Europe-Finner, J. Eighteen, S. Khan; and, mostly for the B team: G. Tompkin, J. O'Byrne, E. Lewington, A. Brodie, C. Gibbins, J. McCullough, B. Jack, J. Buxton, G. Unsworth, M. Sanderson, M. Bungey and M. Legg.

**P. RAFFELL
& N. PAYNE**

1ST VIII ROWING

The year started with encouraging signs of the quality of rowing to come in 1996 at the October training camp in Massachusetts. 16 boys travelled to America spending a week training on Lake Quinsigamond near Boston. The improvement in our rowing under the coaching of **Mr. Martin** and **Mr. Slatford** was dramatic and was reflected with two very convincing wins at the Head of the Fish race, in which the Abingdon crews easily beat the best of the American school crews.

Back on the home front the 1st VIII started with a victory over Westminster School at Henley Schools' Head. The crew then went on to perform well at the Schools' Head but felt that there was a lot more boat speed to come. This we hoped to prove at the Eights' Head two weeks later, and so we went into the race confident that we could demonstrate just how good we were. It was not to be, though, disaster struck with a mechanical fault just a few strokes into the race. The crew then had to complete the majority of the race with only seven men able to row. Despite this we still managed to finish in the middle of the 400 crews entered.

Easter saw five boys selected to attend GB junior trials in Nottingham, where they performed extremely well, resulting in **E. Russell**, **S. Morris** and **C. Pank** being chosen to represent GB at the Munich Regatta. This training camp was swiftly followed by our own camp at Hazewinkel in Belgium. Here the selection for the 1st VIII for the regatta season took place. At the same time we scored notable victories over St. Edward's in 'friendly' races. The Spring Ghent regatta marked the end of this camp. On the Saturday both us and St. Edward's were entered in the same event. This was seen as a direct head to head with both crews only concerned with beating each other. We rowed excellently in a thrilling race, leading from the start, and pushed all the way to beat St. Edward's by a length and a half and win the event outright. On the second day the same crew went on to get a silver medal losing to a Portuguese national crew.

We returned home after Easter to face Radley and Bedford at Notts. City regatta. This was seen as the hardest race of the season, with both these crews having taken the scalps of favoured crews such as St. Paul's, Hampton and Kingston the week before. We again rowed excellently leading from the start, but returned home with only a moral victory. This was because with 600m to go the Bedford crew hit a Goose and was forced to stop. Having finished the race with Radley we were called to re-row but declined, happy with our performance. Ghent International Regatta saw a composite 1st/2nd VIII finishing second in Junior VIIIs' beating Emmanuel 1st VIII and Hampton 2nd VIII easily.

National Schools' regatta was the next big race with all the best crews competing in Championship Eights. Having made the final through a tough heat we went into the race ready for an even tougher battle. We led for the first 500m but were outpowered through the middle by the bigger crews of Eton and Hampton. We were left to fight it out with St. Paul's for 3rd place. The race finished with us in 4th place by 0.3 seconds. The top four of the eight also finished 4th on Sunday in one even closer race in Championship coxed fours.

Marlow regatta came in the build-up to Henley and we were drawn against Bristol university and Newcastle university, two very strong crews. Nevertheless we rowed well but were unable to beat them. However, in the 500m sprints we beat Eton in a terrific race, the Eton 1st VIII having been unbeaten for over a year and a half.

So came the end of the season and Henley. We were one of 4 crews who were selected (seeded) but knew that no race at Henley is easy. Having beaten Emmanuel on the first day, we went out, losing to an exceptionally strong Canford crew who had hidden from everyone all season, and went on to surprise other good first eights.

After term finished the same 5 boys as before went away to final trials for Great Britain and were all selected to row for the National squad. **E. Russell** and **C. Pank** at the World

Championships; **D. Kingsley**, **M. Pajak** and **S. Morris** at the Coupe de la Jeunesse (European Championships). This marked the end of an enjoyable and very successful season. All the crew would like to thank **Mr. Martin** and **Mr. Slatford** for coaching us, and all the parents and friends of the Boat Club for their kind support.

D. KINGSLEY 6SCW

2ND VIII ROWING

This year's 2nd VIII has arguably been one of, if not the fastest 2nd VIII the school has ever produced.

During the Lent term there were no spectacular results, as a number of crew changes prevented us from really finding our true form, although a second position to Hampton School by a large margin at Henley Schools' Head showed great promise for later in the season. Two event wins at Gloucester Head were pleasing but nothing special. At the big events though we failed to make any impact, and 9th in the 2nd VIII's event at Schools' Head was disappointing.

Over the Easter holidays the whole squad went on the annual training camp in Hazewinkel, Belgium. After a week of non-stop training and racing for places, two crews were selected to race for the rest of the year. Two weeks after leaving Belgium, a composite VIII returned, for Ghent International Regatta. On the Sunday of the event we put in a very fast race in the VIII to get the silver medal behind a French international crew. Then a scratch IV beat all the other English crews there to win the Junior IV's event.

Pleased with these results we returned to home soil/water to compete at The National Schools Regatta. Wanting to prove our pedigree to everyone, not least our demanding and sometimes pessimistic coach **Mr. Slatford**, the crew became very focused for the big event of the calendar. In our early morning heat we came a close second to Radley to qualify for the final that evening. Then after a day relaxing at our hotel, we returned to the course. Halfway down the course after our notoriously fast

start, it was clear that there were only three boats in the race. These were Hampton, Shrewsbury and ourselves. We lay in third place until the last 300 metres where we put in our final push to row through the Hampton VIII, but narrowly missed overhauling Shrewsbury.

Hoping to pick up a pot or two we raced at Peterborough, Reading Amateur, Marlow and Reading town. Unfortunately we seemed to come close second to every University crew we raced, and so we concentrated on our last major hurdle - qualifying for Henley. I think I am correct in saying that only one previous 2nd VIII from the school has accomplished this. On a wet Friday evening we rowed very well in the circumstances to be one of the top 7 crews to qualify, beating all our major local rivals. The draw for the main event was not kind though, and on the following Wednesday we went out to a very strong Shrewsbury 1st VIII.

Overall we have had a very successful and enjoyable season, and we are all very grateful to the inspirational **Mr. Slatford** and **Mr. Martin**. As most of the crew are here next year it all bodes well for future success.

Ghent International Crew

Cox: G. Whittaker, Str.: D. Kingsley, 7: R. Pinkney, 6: J. Whibley, 5: M. Pajak, 4: I. Priest, 3: J. Strong, 2: T. Frankum, Bow: G. Harrington.

National Schools + Henley crew:

Cox: G. Whittaker, Str.: J. Whibley, 7: J. Strong, 6: I. Priest, 5: S. French, 4: T. Frankum, 3: P. Hemsley, 2: O. Watkins, Bow: J. Lyall

Others in the 2nd VIII:

D. Pinniger, W. Scott, D. Hancock, W. Bourne-Taylor, M. Thomas, D. Livingstone

**J. WHIBLEY VIJT
& I. PRIEST VINMR**

J16 ROWING

At the beginning of the Lent Term the squad consisted of 20 oarsmen and coxes, only just enough to run two eights. The first half of the term was spent in unselected crews, moving everyone around so that they could get used to each other. The first competition was Hampton Head, to which we took two matched crews. The matching proved to be perfect, with both crews finishing with almost the same time,

but unfortunately at the bottom of the results list!

Henley Schools' Head was a few weeks later, by which time something like an 'A' crew had been chosen. Radley was predictably strong, as was Eton, but we rowed well to record 5th place in a boat which was built for men 20kg heavier! A slightly different line up was chosen for the Schools' Head on the Tideway and we went there optimistic about our chances. Unfortunately Radley, Eton and Shrewsbury were in a class of their own and our 9th place was disappointing.

On returning to school it was decided to merge the Senior and J16 squads in order to beef up the underpowered 2nd eight. Instead of running a J16A crew, which was not thought to be good enough to challenge the big guns, it was hoped that we would have a strong 3rd eight and a reasonable J16B crew.

The Summer Term brought the regatta season and we began at Wallingford. The 3rd eight and the Novice four rowed well but did not win. In the J16 coxed fours event, things were more promising. Shiplake was beaten by more than ten lengths and the final was against St. Edward's School. There was nothing between the two crews for most of the race, but a final push brought victory by half a length for the opposition.

Bedford Regatta followed a week later, to which we took the 3rd eight. It was a very successful day's racing and we reached the final of each event, but not without some struggles. The Novice four of **Ben Mather, Matthew Thomas, David Livingstone** and **William Bourne-Taylor**, coxed by **Adam White**, won their final convincingly. They then had to jump straight into the eight and row two more finals, one in Novice eights and the other in 3rd eights. Seven previous races had taken their toll and tired legs were unable to respond to Newcastle University and Bedford School.

National Schools' Regatta was next on the agenda. The third eight survived a tough heat and reached the final. This was an agonisingly close race. We did not expect to beat Bedford or Radley but, in the end, they were only able to squeeze half a length

on us. The crew rowed superbly and at the end was clawing back the slender lead. To most people's surprise St. Edward's School had also entered a 3rd eight (was that a 1st eight oarsman from last year at stroke....?) and they were able to clinch gold. We had to make do with 4th place, but a very honourable one. The following day it was the turn of the J16 coxless four. On only two practice outings we were realistic about our chances. **Tom Frankum, Piers Hemsley, David Livingstone** and **Matthew Thomas** rowed well enough to get to the final, but Shrewsbury and Radley looked hard to beat. A different boat for the final and a collision with a girls' crew on the way to the start did the trick! The start was excellent and got us a half length lead and then it was just a question of hanging on. Scenting victory, all four oarsmen pulled hard throughout the race for once and the opposition was unable to catch up. **GOLD!**

The exam season caused massive disruptions to our training but we entered some fours at Reading Amateur, Thames Valley Park and Reading Town Regattas. Reading brought the Novice-winning four from Bedford Regatta up against Radley, looking for revenge after Nottingham and we were outgunned. Hampton were just too strong for us in the J16B fours' event at Thames Valley Park, but the gold-medal-winning four were also in action again and we were able to exact our piece of revenge against St. Edward's School. The following week, with **William Bourne-Taylor** rowing instead of **David Livingstone**, they notched up another win, surviving a broken foot plate, to complete their unbeaten season.

In retrospect, merging the two squads before Easter was a mixed blessing. On the positive side, there was a noticeable improvement in technique as a result of rowing with more experienced oarsmen. However, the disappearance of the stronger members of our squad into the 2nd eight left some of the rest feeling a little disillusioned and also reduced the strength of the J16B eight considerably. Nevertheless it was a successful and enjoyable season. Thank you to **Mr. Davies** for his help and to all who took part.

The Squad: J. Adams, M. Armstrong, D. Baxter, W. Bourne-Taylor, R. Bryniarski, T. Frankum, A. Grady, A. Hambridge, D. Hancock, P. Hemsley, D. Livingstone, O. Marshall, B. Mather, N. McConnell, A. McNeillie, N. Morrell, S. Rowe, M. Thomas, E. Knowles, N. Kennedy, A. White

T. GARNIER

J15 ROWING

“A prudent man will think more important what fate has conceded to him than what it has denied him.”
Gratian

In a season where hard work was somewhat marred by misfortune the J15s have developed into a formidable group of rowers. There were many new converts to the squad and the squad is actually bigger now. Many of the new converts did so well that they found themselves representing the school after just a few months rowing. Notably **A. Benson, S. Fabes, T. Hester, A. Garrod, and T. Blackshaw.**

Henley Schools' Head saw the first four emerging from the eights, which was made up of **S. Rutland, R. Hutchins, R. Bourne-Taylor** and **B. Watts** who at that stage of the season was the only one who could set up a comfortable rhythm at 35. This four went on to perform very well at the Henley Schools' Head where they were the fastest in their category and beat many older fours. They next won the Schools' Head of the River race at a blistering pace a full seventeen seconds ahead of Westminster, a highly commendable performance since Westminster went on to win the National Schools' Regatta in May in the same event. The rest of the squad was also making ground fast and the novice eight came third in its category at the Schools' Head.

From here the squad departed for foreign waters and took part in the inaugural Grenoble-Abingdon rowing and cultural exchange. Nine boys made up an eight, a quad and a double and trained for ten days at *Aviron Grenoblois*. This involved meeting and rowing with French boys and girls, learning French and competing in a French regatta. At the regatta the boys made a good account of themselves not only by speaking French to some of the local French girls, but



by finishing well in a strong field of crews a year older than them.

At Wallingford the first eight did well although a slow start left it with too much to do at the end of the race. In the last 500m it began to draw level with the Radley eight, which with the advantage of the bend over the last 200m was able to keep the margin at half a length. The second eight, well stroked by **Matthew Jobling** was unlucky to be drawn against a J15A eight.

At Bedford the second eight did very well to reach the final and beat Shiplake "B" and Bedford Modern on the way there. This was a credit to them and it was a well deserved place in the final, after the hard work of the winter. Abingdon "A" was again fated to row a very tight race.

By the day of the National Schools' the first eight was ready to take on anything thrown at them. In the first round the "A" eight was told to win but to conserve its energy. The eight left Winchester, Tiffin, Latymer and RGS Worcester in their wake, and recorded the second fastest time out of all the crews in the first heats. Three hours later the crews were lined up for the start of what promised to be a rewarding race for Abingdon; and sure enough little more than 200m had gone and the St. Helen of Abingdon was surging ahead of the rest of the field half a length up. But suddenly the rhythm faltered and progress was seriously arrested. Stroke's seat had become stuck and rowing had stopped so as to balance the boat. The crew did very well to stick with the rest of the field and was only overtaken by Eton in the last 300m. At the end of the race **Watkinson** had to be carried out of the boat and this was a typical instance of his dedication to the rest

of the team. The second eight, severely weakened by the absence of their key man **Jobling** was not able to maintain the pressure on a strong field in its heat. At this Regatta everyone had rowed well, and **Simon Rutland** was looking

particularly sharp at bow.

It was the character of the squad to demonstrate a determination to overcome any misfortune and come back fighting. They manifested this at Tewkesbury for the second eight and Reading Amateur for the first eight. At Tewkesbury the second eight were drawn against some first eights and excelled themselves by recording the second fastest time of the regatta. At Reading the eight drew Radley again and with **Kitto** at stroke and **Pank** replacing the injured Rutland fought hard in the middle of the race to push Radley to the finish. In the first four the three fastest crews met in the first round and acquitted themselves adequately as all three crews finished within a length of each other.

Marlow Regatta saw a turnaround for the eight as they won their first heat and progressed through to the final. Here they were outpaced by a very fast St. Edward's crew and a crew from Kingston Grammar.

The following day the squad rowed at Thames Valley Park Regatta. The first eight was severely weakened by the absence of **Bourne-Taylor**, undoubtedly the strongest rower in the squad. **Kitto** demonstrated great versatility and switched to bow side. **Watts** went back to stroke and **Horner** stepped in at two. They rowed well but were beaten by King's Canterbury. But the four of **Kitto**, **Watkinson**, **Hutchins** and **White** impressively looked to be pushing away from Radley and St. Paul's in the final when disaster struck for the second time of the season and victory was cruelly denied us: the crew had just stormed out of the blocks and settled into an effective race rate, when suddenly the boat was interrupted. **White** seemed to be moving up and

down the slide with the handle in his hands, but the blade remained on the same plane. A double take revealed the unbelievable **Adam** had managed to snap it; a herculean feat which was doubtlessly caused by a combination of fatigue in the material and his considerable strength.

The final pitstop was on the same course a week later. There were two fours. It was this race which showed that Abingdon is a redoubtable force as the "B" four won their event by a large margin and the "A" four recorded a time which would have put them only four seconds behind the fastest crew for their age. **Robert Hutchins** and **Robin Bourne-Taylor** provided a very solid platform.

A final word of thanks should be given to **Mr. Haworth**, to **Mr. Mearns** and to **Mr. Rawlinson** for giving up so much of their valuable time; and indeed to my brother **Dr. R. Weir** for helping out on the training camp.

1st eight	2nd eight
cox: Hutchins	Garrod/Blackshaw
str: Kitto	Jobling/Morse
7: Bourne-Taylor	Anderson
6: Hutchins	Croft
5: White	Cox
4: Benson	Lefèvre
3: Watkinson	Fabes
2: Watts	Hester/Cooper
1: Pank/Rutland	Allen
Development Squad:	Campbell, Duckworth, Bowden, Betteridge
Coaches: Mr. P.J. Weir Mr. D. Haworth	
Mr. R. Mearns Mr. N. Rawlinson	
P. WEIR	

J14 ROWING

Sixty young inexperienced rowers started the year but only forty survived. Enthusiasm, however, was running high as we ventured onto the river at Radley for our first head. The octos and quads finished a pleasing fourth and sixth out of eight crews.

At a cold Bedford head in the middle of the Lent term nine Abingdon J14 quads raced Bedford. They all finished with very respectable times and one quad came second behind a J15 crew and came home with a medal. The first of many, we hoped.

There were at least sixteen rowers with a chance to get into the Na-

tional Schools' Regatta but on a wet and windy Wednesday in May the final crew was selected.

At an overcast Nottingham the A octo crew was waiting for its first proper regatta. In the first round we came third behind KCS Wimbledon which eventually won the Cherwell Cup. We thought we had a good draw for the semi-final but it turned out to be the other way around. We narrowly lost to Hampton in the battle for third place but we had a faster time than St. Edward's and Radley which both qualified in the other semi-final.

Tewkesbury regatta was very eventful. We arrived one hour late and had to rig the quads in ten minutes. Unluckily they all lost in the first round. The B octo reached the semi-final after some convincing wins over Cheltenham A and St. Edward's B. We were on the water for over four hours non-stop.

Reading was short and successful. We won the quads' and the doubles' races after the number 3 seat in B and C quads' (same boat) had come off, making both crews lose after good starts. Many thanks to **Mr. Waters** and **Mrs. Richards** for their coaching and encouragement through out the year.

"A" octo crew

J Mascaro, L Whibley, S Curran, T Marsh
J Wilson, H Mackenzie, S Woodcock, J
Kingsley, T Jonckheer

"B" octo crew

N Hambridge, P Given, N Moffat, A Gates
G Wilson-North, R Pugh, M Terry, M
Brewer, B Noon

N. HAMBRIDGE 3JC
& L. WHIBLEY 3KDB

CROSS COUNTRY

We have had a good season with a significant improvement made over last year's results. The season commenced in November with a match at Radley where we finished second, beating Bradfield and Harrow with **F. Malone-Lee** finishing second in the race. The Juniors ran in a match at Abingdon against Fitzharry's with **C. Hughes** coming second and **W. Baker** fifth. At the end of term in the Oxfordshire County Championships in Banbury, **F. Malone-Lee**, **R. Ellis** and **J. Dowling** gained selection for the County.

In the Lent Term we again competed in the relays at King Henry VIII School in Coventry: an event which is the biggest in the country and draws teams from all over England. We improved from last year and finished in the top half of the race. Following this **F. Malone-Lee** and **J. Dowling** were selected for the County School team to represent Oxfordshire in the English Schools Race. We then competed in many more matches (including Merchant Taylors' where the trophy won by **F. Malone-Lee** was presented by **Mr. Gabitass**) where the team showed real determination to beat schools like Shrewsbury where cross-country is a major sport. The team finished in the top half of the relays at Haberdashers Aske's School, Elstree and also at Worcester Royal Grammar School. In the one actual team straight race, despite putting out an understrength side, we still finished high up the field with particularly good times by **R. Janisch** and **D. Lacy**.

The highlight of the season, however, undoubtedly came at RGS High Wycombe in their Friendly Relays where each individual runs with three others from different schools. Both **F. Malone-Lee's** and **L. St. John Mosse's** teams were first (both winning medals) and Francis also won the trophy for fastest leg with **R. Ellis** fourth. We were also joined in this race by a promising new runner **D. Silver**. After Francis and Richard had finished first and second against the Old Abingdonians (**M. Woodward**, **G. Armstrong**, **P. Moloney**, **P. Shrimpton** and **D. Sloan**) on Sunday 24th March all eyes were turned to the Road Relay. Despite a valiant attempt by the rowers, the first three places all went to cross-country runners, **F. Malone-Lee** (first), **R. Ellis** (one second behind) with **J. Dowling** third.

Overall it has been a successful and enjoyable season. The Club should like to thank **Mr. Pettitt** for his invaluable contributions throughout the term, but most especially **Mr. Oxlade** for his continued excellent efforts in organising the matches and in making this cross-country season an unforgettable one. With a county schools' champion in **F. Malone-Lee** and a young team with no school leav-

ers, we look forward to another successful season next year.

Full colours were awarded to **J. Dowling** and re-awarded to **F. Malone-Lee** and **R. Ellis**. Half colours were awarded to **R. Janisch**, **C. Pearson** and **D. Lacy**. The Junior Cross Country Cup was awarded to **C. Hughes**, the cup for "the most improved runner" to **L. St. John Mosse**, the cup for the second fastest lap times to **J. Dowling** and for the fastest lap times to **F. Malone-Lee**. The Baker Cup for outstanding service to the Cross Country Club was awarded to **R. Ellis**.

R. ELLIS 5RCRM

BADMINTON

Again we had to wait until the Lent Term to play any Oxford Schools' League fixtures and even then time pressure forced a couple of concessions (by the opposition!) The Michaelmas 'friendly' fixtures were mostly won - the U19s beat Stowe, Radley, Bradfield, Rugby and Bloxham.

The U16s were equally successful against Stowe, Rugby and Bloxham. The U14s specialise in Oxford League matches but the U13s had an intense learning experience in the Top Schools' Championship at Kington versus schools from Warwickshire, Liverpool and Bedford. 'A' team fixtures were played against Bloxham, RGS High Wycombe, Cheltenham College and Marlborough: Abingdon won all of these.

In the Lent term all the Oxford League matches had to be fitted in as well as friendly fixtures. The U19s beat John Mason School and Wantage but lost to Henley College.

The U16s only lost to Larkmead A and beat Larkmead B, Cheney, Wantage, Bicester and Rugby Schools. In the Top Schools' championship they reached round 3 and narrowly lost to Thurston School at Bury St. Edmund's after an energy-sapping long journey.

The U14s play only Oxford Schools' League matches but beat Cheney, John Mason and Marlborough Schools. They lost to Wantage by only a handful of points.

'A' team 'friendly' fixtures were played against Eton, Cheltenham,

Wellington College and Bradfield. The nearest to a loss was a draw in the singles v. Bradfield.

The U19s were much as last year - **D. Jenkins** (captain) **M. Edwards** (secretary) **J. Ch.Lim**, **K. Lo**, **A. Marvin Lamit**, **P. Ewing**, **Imran**, **N. Kadir**.

The U16s were **W. Lui**, **P. Edwards**, **V. Lee**, **T. Shellard**, **J. Tarasewicz** and **J. Earley**.

The U14s were **A. Bitmead**, **M. Yeung**, **D. Cole**, **J. Mendelsohn-Malik**, **J. Ma**, **N. Page** and **P. Timberlake**.

Colours are held by **D. Jenkins**, **M. Edwards**, **K. Lo** and **A. Marvin Lamit**.

Half Colours are held by **T. Frankum**, **J. Ch.Lim**, **P. Ewing**, **P. Edwards**, **V. Lee**, **W. Lui**, **E. Wagner**, **T. Shellard**, **A. White** and **A. Brown**.

This year we lose four long term members : **D. Jenkins** has been playing since the first year, he's a thinking competitor, seldom an unthinking hard-hitter. Maybe his dispute with the master in charge at Wellington will prove to be the thing that legends are made of: David plays the man as much as the shuttle...

K. Lo seemed to have become a fixture, but he, too, will leave this July. Even as a lightweight third-year he made deft and stylish shots; as the years have passed he has developed weight of shot, mobility and a memorable chuckle both on beating his man and on being well beaten!

Partnering Kelvin in the sixth form has been **A. Marvin Lamit** - and a formidable duo they have made with Marvin's jump smashes from the back of the court supporting Kelvin's ingenious angles at the front.

J. Ch. Lim has quietly made himself an appreciated member of the first team. He's a fluent player with one of the most carefully thought out services we have seen for some time.

Secretary for 1996/7 will be **V. Lee**, and Captain will be **M. Edwards**.

I.A. MACDONALD

LACROSSE

v. St. Helen's

In the first half, the Abingdon defence, consisting of **Simon Morris**, **Henry Whalen** and **Michael Pajak** (wearing a yellow wig), struggled to keep the St. Helen's attack at

bay and although they tried hard, conceded two goals which took us to half-time trailing 2-0.

When the second half began, the Abingdon defence had learnt how to pick the ball up and throw it as far as they could. This tactic was used well, and it gave **Anthony Funnell** and **Anthony Ashton** space into which they could run. After St. Helen's had a player sent off for "shirt tugging" or



"cheating", Abingdon had a lot of possession but could not score. The only goal came from **Luke Clements** who ran the ball into the goal in injury time but it appeared that St. Helen's by then had stopped play.

Abingdon's second half dominance was not fairly reflected by the 2-1 scoreline in St. Helen's favour. St. Helen's was of course the far better team but didn't seem to be able to get the ball past an inspired **Michael Conway** in the Abingdon goal. **Melanie Hayes**, for instance, had a good chance but it was saved by the goalkeeper. **Richard Binning** was the player who looked most likely to score for us, but he blasted the ball over the crossbar from eight yards out in the first half, and was perhaps unlucky actually to hit the crossbar in the second.

This was a good quality match but hampered by **Richard Binning** kicking the ball around the pitch and **Simon Morris** forgetting to take the ball with him when he ran. He had just about worked it out by the end of the game though! Well played St. Helen's, better luck next time Abingdon.

M. EDWARDS 6SAE

BASKETBALL

Last season was a great challenge for the basketball club. We had several matches in the Michaelmas and Easter terms after our opponents had finally given in to Mr.

Hamilton's powers of persuasion. We had lost **Gary Armstrong** at the end of the previous year; he helped the team with his excellent point guard skills and motivation. However, **Jamie Mackay** seemed more than able to replace this lost talent and proved this with some skilful assists and easy looking lay-ups.

Probably our best match was against Fitzharry's. They boasted a 6' 5" power forward to whom **Dominic Bacon** faced up and broke with vigour. This match ended in a series of convincing points from Fitzharry's and this unfortunately made it unrecoverable.

Our other fixtures were against Henley, Radley, King Alfred's, and Lord William's at Thame. Everybody felt that each match provided a learning experience and we were playing far better as the season progressed. We had several training sessions in screening, a difficult technique that allows players to obstruct members of the opposite side without being penalised. Players in the NBA employ this method and Abingdon players were doing it with just as much skill.

Despite criticisms from those who consider the sport to be excessively "Americanised", (see letters to the Editor in *The Abingdonian* Vol. 21 No.1 for Michaelmas 1995, and in this issue - Ed.) I think that everybody in the Basketball club had a fun and productive season.

T. WILSON-NORTH 6SCW

FIVES

About 30 boys played Fives in each of the Michaelmas and Lent terms. At Christmas two boys entered the West of England Championships at Clifton College in Bristol. **John Oldham** won one match but then met the top seed from Bradfield and lost. **Ben Griffiths** had a bye in the first round but then lost. Both were surprised how their opponents kept retrieving their best placed and hardest hit shots. We tried to arrange fixtures against Radley and Oundle but, sadly, on the day could not raise strong enough teams.

N. PRITCHARD

FOOTBALL

The Lower Sixth rejoiced when it found out that a football competition was to be held during lunchtimes in the Lent Term. All eight tutor groups were preparing themselves for what was to become a battle of skill in the games ahead. The first round was divided into two groups of four teams in a league basis, and this produced gradually more and more exciting games as the league progressed...

Then it was time for the final. A huge crowd turned out to watch the encounter between 6JT and 6SAE. As they walked out onto the hallowed turf of Lower field, they were greeted by the Guest of Honour, **A. Parry**. 6JT was aware that it was facing an uphill battle, having only scored 2 goals in previous games as opposed to the 15 by 6SAE. In **J. Whibley** however, they had a striker who could win a match almost single-handedly.

The final was delayed due to a minor pitch invasion, but as soon as it began, **M. Edwards**, the tournament's leading goalscorer, put 6SAE ahead. 6JT replied almost instantaneously with a run and shot from the lethal Whibley. The teams went into the interval equal with all to play, but as soon as they re-emerged for the second half, Edwards scored again,



"The game then got a bit rough...."

shooting low and hard past the hapless **J. Grady** in the 6JT goal. The game then "got a bit rough", as **Mr. Townsend** encouraged on his troops. It was only in a dramatic finale, when a ball was cleared from a cross, **J. Whibley** struck a volley into the top corner through a crowded penalty area - a goal to grace any Lower Sixth inter tutor-group final. As the huge crowd cheered and the 6SAE faithful

held their heads in their hands, the final whistle blew for full-time. A penalty shoot-out followed, and again the accuracy of the 6JT shooters was decisive. 6SAE was absolutely distraught but took the defeat well, and congratulated the victorious 6JT.

The infamous Lower Sixth Inter-Tutor Group trophy was presented to the captain of 6JT, **D. Strange**, at the presentation ceremony in a school assembly. The golden boot went to **M. Edwards** of 6SAE with his amazing tally of seven goals in the tournament. The intense competition will be repeated next year, and if it provides half the excitement of this year's tournament, then it will be well worth watching.

R. PATEL 6DLS

GOLF

There are a pleasing number of talented young golfers in the school at present, and we are hoping for a good run in the Public Schools' Foursomes event for 1996-7. During the 1995-6 season matches have been played against Radley, when **J. Willats** and **J. Howe-Davies** had a particularly good win over their strong first pair, St. Edward's (a 3-0 victory), both played at Frilford Heath, and against Pangbourne, at Huntercombe. The 'friendly' fourballs against the Staff ended with an honour-even 2 matches all, and the annual Staff v TASS was as enjoyable as ever. Any parents who would like to play next time? Please contact Mr. Payne!

From the Lower Sixth **J. Willats**, **J. Howe-Davies**, **A. Ferguson** were awarded full colours, **T. Burton**, **L. Altmann** and **E. Russell** half-colours, and from the fifth year **J. Weeks** and **J. Crawford** were awarded half-colours. All have played impressive golf and represented the school on many occasions. Among others, **M. Howe-Davies**, **T. Fleming** and **A. Wilson** are promising young golfers for the future.

It is good to see the junior club and 'school' members enjoying the three Frilford Heath courses both during the term, when opportunities for regular play are more limited, and in the holidays when they can make the very best use of their membership.

N. PAYNE

SAILING

The Sailing club is going from strength to strength under the guidance of **Mr. Townsend** and **Mr. Mearns**, with the captain **N. Dando** also playing a major role. This season many new sailors took part and it was particularly notable how popular it was with the Lower Sixth as fifteen different people took part at some stage throughout the season.

The skill level was also very high with the most impressive sailor being **W. Burdall**, who was particularly outstanding against MCS, despite taking the wrong course!! In the fixtures we had, we did manage some wins. The victory over MCS was really due to the skill and committed



Victory over MCS!

sailing of **N. Dando** and **J. Easton** who won the first race and were very close to winning the second too.

When we raced MCS again, although we had a seriously depleted team, and were very short of experience, we managed to pull off a convincing victory which was brilliant under the circumstances.

Towards the end of term **T. Sapsford**, **J. Easton** and **A. Ashurst** travelled to Queen Mary's Sailing Club for a practice session in heel boats, before returning to compete in the National Youth Match Racing competition. This turned out to be a great experience for everybody concerned and much was learnt.

Some sailors have come on in leaps and bounds especially **T. Sapsford** and **P. Morse**. Tom has changed boats from 50 foot yachts to much smaller ones, while Patrick is

now competent enough to sail, despite the fact that he is prone to falling in!

All in all, this has been a very enjoyable and worthwhile season, to which everybody has contributed.

A. ASHURST 6SAE

SAILING

- The Trip to The Team

In the class I sail in there is a ranking system. A sailor's rank is based on three main events, the Inland Championships (held at Rutland Sailing Club), the National Championships (at Plymouth) and the End of Session (at Draycot Sailing Club).

I arrived at Rutland ready to do battle and to do it well. At that time I had no idea I would end up sailing abroad in a 36 strong team. In fact I had only a reasonable start to the session. The next event was much more important and as the end of the week came, despite some bad results I still finished quite high in the rankings: 22nd overall and the 13th British boat.

At the end of the session I went to Draycot. However, the event didn't take place and so a day off school was wasted. On the next day we completed the three races required to make the event count.

Later I found that I was 40th in the country so I joined a squad reserved for the top 64 in the country. I received a jacket and attended 4 training events. It was at the second that I discovered lots of people for various reasons could not go abroad, so I was invited. At that moment I felt really happy because I had wanted to go to another country to sail in a team.

This year I am looking forward to an even better season, as I am a lot fitter, have both a faster boat, and many more ambitions.

W. BURDALL 1M

SENIORS' TENNIS

The 1st VI must be congratulated on another excellent season, easily extending their unbeaten run of school fixtures, which now goes back to May 1994. They have won all their matches comfortably; in fact the first and second pairs have lost only one set between them. There have been some particularly convincing performances: **Tom**

Greenland and **Supraj Rajagopalan** lost just one game in four sets against Oratory, then **Simon Greenland** and **Peter Hatt** went one better, not losing a single game against Shiplake - probably a unique achievement. This very strong and experienced quartet of players provided the cornerstone of the team, and has done for three years now; their collective departure at the end of this year will be a major blow to the fortunes of tennis at Abingdon - but the presence of **Simon Hughes** (still in the fourth year) who played second or third pair, partnered either by **Peter Ewing** or **James Howe-Davies**, gives us something to build on next year.

The following played for the 1st VI: **P. Hatt** (Club Captain), **S. Greenland** (Team Captain), **S. Rajagopalan**, **T. Greenland**, **S. Hughes**, **P. Ewing**, **J. Howe-Davies**, **M. Simmons**, **A. Simmons**.

The 2nd VI has also been successful, losing just two games: very narrowly against Shiplake and then, rather lacking match sharpness, against Radley. They drew usefully on all their experience and were always a determined and enthusiastic team. One of the most pleasing aspects of this season was the large number of players available and willing to play for the 2nd VI. One or two Lower sixth formers, like **Luc Altmann** and **Jonathan Day**, showed real improvement through the term, whilst the old stalwarts in the upper sixth like **Oliver Greasby**, **Adam Twinn** and the Simmons brothers were joined by the very useful **George Richards** and the talent-spot of the year, **Andreas Paleit**. Several other Lower sixth formers will have gained useful experience for next year.

The following played for the 2nd VI: **O. Greasby** (captain), **A. Twinn**, **A. Simmons**, **M. Simmons**, **S. Yue**, **S. Williams**, **T. Hewes**, **L. Altmann**, **J. Day**, **G. Richards**, **H. Norris**, **P. Galichon**, **A. Paleit**

During the course of the season, Full Colours were awarded to **Tom Greenland** - and Half Colours to **Peter Ewing**, **Simon Hughes**, **Mark Simmons**, **Oliver Greasby**, **Adam Twinn**, **Andrew Simmons**

BUCKLEY CUP

This year the trophy has been won by Simon Hughes, who defeated

Peter Ewing in the final.

PUBLIC SCHOOLS CHAMPIONSHIPS AT ETON

In the YOUILL CUP - the senior part of the competition at Eton the Senior IV were seeded 4, and were given a bye straight through to Round 3; there they beat RGS High Wycombe 2/1 (T. Greenland winning the deciding singles match 2 sets to 1).

In the next round, the quarter-finals, we played a very strong team from Colston's School in Bristol. Peter Hatt and Simon Greenland won their doubles match 2 sets to 1, but Tom Greenland and Supraj Rajagopalan were defeated 2 sets to



1 by the Colston's first pair. So once again Tom Greenland was faced with a deciding singles match - having played 8 sets of tennis already that day, in the three previous matches. Tom's opponent had the same official LTA ranking as him, but was three years older, stronger and more experienced, and at the end of a long hard day of tennis that was the significant difference. However, once again the team gave a very good account of itself in this fiercely competitive tournament.

MIDLAND BANK OPEN COMPETITION

for the Glanvill Cup

Once again we qualified for the national finals of this competition, by gaining victories over Gillots school, Windsor Boys, RGS High Wycombe and RGS Aylesbury. The toughest match was played away against Windsor, when the rain teemed down but the boys went out and did a very professional job against very strong opposition. It was an impressive result, and it revealed much about both the ability and the character in this team. In the regional final we demolished a reputedly powerful team from RGS Aylesbury 6-0, and the prospects for the finals looked encouraging.

NATIONAL FINALS:
QUEENSWOOD SCHOOL,
HERTS:

In the first round we defeated Hills Road Sixth Form College, Cambridge, in a tight match that was decided in the end on sets (7/6). Peter Hatt won his final (singles) match for the school, 6-3, 6-0 and then hopped on a plane to Turkey, disappointed not to be involved in the quarter-final draw against Millfield. Peter Ewing stepped in to replace him, and by way of inspiration, the team drove in to Hatfield the evening before to see 'Mission Impossible'. But the onscreen miracles were not to be repeated the next day on court. Millfield, even without one or two of their top players, proved very tough opposition, but we went down fighting all the way, the newly-formed pairing of Simon and Tom Greenland playing some outstanding tennis and reaching set point against the Millfield 1st pair.

It brought a very enjoyable tennis sojourn to an end, and also the end of a tennis era at Abingdon School. **Mr. Revill** came to lend his support to the team on the Monday, and **Mr. Ayling** came on the Tuesday - sensing that it might be a while before we are back at Queenswood again. Perhaps that should be the challenge for next year, rather than a forecast of doom for the future. On a personal note, it has been a pleasure (and a privilege) looking after this team through the season. They have all played some excellent tennis and have always been very positive and 'professional' in their approach. On court they have been unfailingly competitive, but also courteous and sporting, rarely missing an opportunity to congratulate an opponent on his play. They played their hearts out, especially when it really mattered, in the rain at Windsor or in the heat of Eton or Queenswood. They just seemed to find the right balance between enthusiasm and enjoyment. It's been very good to be part of it all this year: many thanks.

Results

	1st VI	2nd VI
Radley	Won 8/4	
MCS	Won 8-1	Draw 4.5-4.5
Pangbourne	Won 9-0	Won 6-3

Oratory	Won 7-2	Won 6-3
Shiplake	Won 6-3	Lost 4-5
Bloxham	Won 8-1	Won 7-2
Radley	Won 6.5-2.5	Lost 1-8

S. EVANS

JUNIOR TENNIS

The two junior teams have certainly not been as successful as the senior ones, the only victories in regular school matches coming against Bloxham. The U16 team suffered from lack of regular practice (and matches) and the unavailability of certain players meant team changes and thus it was difficult for pairings to develop. However, the team was always positive in its approach - and played with plenty of enthusiasm and enjoyment. There is certainly potential for the future. The following players represented the U16 team: **W. Lau, H. Robson, R. Franklin, F. Dutton, C. Bowler, A. Stewart, A. Molyneux, J. Wearne, S. Potter.**

The U15 VI also found it hard to register a win - and in the first three matches they came up against strong opposition. The victory against Bloxham was pleasing, as was the performance against Radley, in the final match. Quite a large number of boys was involved in the various matches, including several under 14 players, which gives real hope for next year's results.

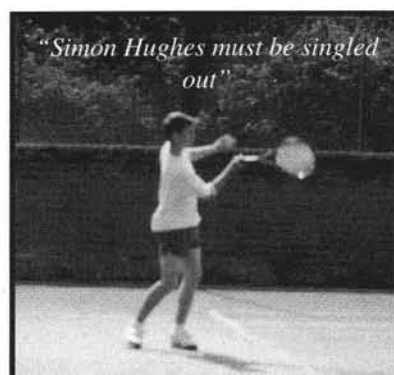
The following played for the U15 team: **A. Heather, C. Howard, W. Starkie, G. Roycroft, R. Tattersall, R. Fabes, R. Davy, W. Ranscombe, P. Barry, N. Hawker, J. Dando, J. Spearing, A. Perry, P. Langton**

MIDLAND BANK

U15 COMPETITION:

The U15 IV had a much more successful run in the Midland Bank competition. It won the South West Oxfordshire region after victories over Matthew Arnold School, Fitzharry's School and King Alfred's School. It then defeated Gillot's School (winners of the South region) and Cheney School, winners of the City and North regions, to reach the Oxfordshire final against Faringdon School. The result couldn't have been closer: three rubbers all, three sets all - and so the result was decided on the number of

games won: Faringdon 21, Abingdon 20! The team of **Simon Hughes** (on



loan from the 1st VI) **Paul Edwards** (on loan from the cricket club), **Alistair Heather** and **George Roycroft** (and in other rounds **Ronan Fabes** and **Robert Tattersall**) are to be congratulated on their efforts. **Simon Hughes** must be singled out for his personal contribution, losing just two games in six singles matches, and with **Paul Edwards** especially, ensuring a powerful doubles pairing.

This pair of **Simon Hughes** and **Paul Edwards** was entered for the THOMAS BOWL (U15 competition) in the Public Schools' tournament at Eton College. Seeded 7, they had a bye in the first round and defeated Malvern in the second round. They then met local rivals MCS in the third round and hit form at the right time to beat them in straight sets, and so returned the following day to play a very strong Oratory School pair in the fourth round. Even so Simon and Paul got off to a good start, managing to win the first set before the Oratory pair began to exert more pressure, eventually winning the next two. So they bowed out gracefully, and lent their support to the senior team who had reached the quarter finals of the Youll Cup.

RESULTS:

	U16 VI	U15 VI
MCS	Lost 1-8	Cancelled
Pangbourne		Lost 3-6
Oratory	Lost 1.5-7.5	Lost 1-8
Shiplake		Lost 1-8
Bloxham	Won 5.5-3.5	Won 6.5-2.5
Radley		Lost 3.5-5.5

S. EVANS

AN ADDRESS TO LEAVERS:

1 996 is an important, nay climactic, year in the life of the north American cicada. Cicadas are like grasshoppers, but bigger and much noisier. The north American variety, in order to confound its voracious predators and thereby preserve the species, has evolved so that its grubs survive under the ground for seventeen whole years and only emerge into the upper world at that point to metamorphose into their adult splendour. For a short, but energetic and no doubt enjoyable summer of courtship and mating they lay down the prototypes of the next generation. These will endure their subterranean ordeal for a further seventeen years before the cycle is repeated. That great span of years under the earth for the baby cicada is vital preparation, but obscure, hidden and anonymous - an inglorious existence perhaps, but one with a purpose and essential for survival and long-term success.

There is a similar subterranean quality, a positive and necessary anonymity about your long years of schooling here at Abingdon, before YOU burst out of the narrow and obscure confines of the classroom into the more public glare of the wider world, with all its responsibilities and challenges, its temptations and dangers. A school is a nurturing and protective institution in essence, and therefore necessarily in one sense private. It tries to cultivate young minds and to enthuse young hearts undistracted by the pressures to be found in modern living within the wider world. The problems of the world are of course acknowledged, but they are deliberately kept at arms' length, in order that pupils may concentrate on the task of acquiring fundamental knowledge and developing core skills.

At this point no one knows which of you, if any, is going to make an enormous noise in the big, wide world, and become as it were the sexiest cicada. Who is going to be the Radiohead of 2005? the Matthew Harding of 2010? the Francis Maude of 2015? You probably have a better idea than I do. All I know is that it is time for you to MOVE ON. It's time to LET GO of the familiar securities and the well-rehearsed routines that have given shape and some coherence to your school lives. If you are a cautious person, a creature of habit like me, then MOVING ON and LETTING GO can be very hard. The imagined pitfalls of an unknown future can be daunting. The impulse and the instinct are to cling for dear life to the security of the familiar raft instead of plunging into the foaming waters and striking out for the distant shore of the New World with all its limitless and unimagined possibilities.

Of course today is a formal and dignified ending to an important chapter in your life-story. The prologue has ended. The scene is set for you to write the next chapter, develop the plot, add conviction and substance to the character that you are forming. The best reason for stepping boldly forward to meet the future full-face, rather than skulking in the shadows in a paralysis of anxiety and self-doubt, is that you take the past with you as you confront what lies ahead. Everything that you have learned or experienced here, both good and bad, needs to be positively employed to help you cope and flourish at the next stage. It is the right moment to take stock of all that has happened, absolutely everything without exception, and turn it to good and constructive use.

To arm you for what is to come, often the negative features of the past are your strongest assets. The failures, disappointments, misunderstandings, resentments and sorrows supply our wisdom for the future. If we are to be strong, we have to affirm the past in its totality. We learn from our mistakes by transcending them, not by being angry nor by feeling guilty. We must make the PAST our ALLY. This is the only way in which we can look to the FUTURE with HOPE. We have the experience that tells us that whatever may block our way, we have enough mental and spiritual resources to come through. Our

track-record proves our resilience. We have nothing to fear. So our attitude is not unrealistically Panglossian "everything is for the best in the best of all possible worlds" but rather based upon the assurance that comes from knowing that we have a host of inner resources that have helped us to get through our past trials and will do so in the future: and that is REAL hope.

If our education has been a success, we will be properly adapted, like the adult cicada, to survive and prosper in the next phase of our lives. However, if it is only our intellects that have been stimulated and developed properly by school, then school will have failed us. Was our time here merely to qualify for the passport to higher education in the form of GCSE or A-level pass grades? Is not the development of the WHOLE person the aim of every school? For how else can character be truly formed? How else can you as a person be fitted for the challenges ahead?

This is the time to ask yourself whether your schooling has developed your moral consciousness, refined your aesthetic judgments and nurtured your spiritual resources as well as honed your intellectual powers. All those facets of our humanity and our personhood need to work together and be properly integrated, if we are to fulfil our human purpose and become the people that we have the potential to be. Without such integrity our contribution to society will be sadly limited.

If all you learned at Abingdon School is the ruthless pursuit of your private agenda, if your ambition refuses to recognise your duties and obligations to your neighbours, if your heart is closed for ever to the ideal of service to the community in which you find yourself, if cynicism and selfishness are all that you can offer to the world, then you have not been EDUCATED at all. Your time here was wasted. Education must always be about values, about communicating to the young what will enable them to become responsible, mature, committed, humane, generous and creative persons.

A school that behaves as a factory churning out academics who yet do not possess the capacity for reflection and for self-criticism, who have not yet discovered how to liberate themselves from the tyranny of the self and to be open to the myriad wonders of a complex world, such a school has addressed the mind, but not the heart of its pupils: and of what lasting value is a mind without a heart? a will without generosity of spirit and the capacity to affirm others?

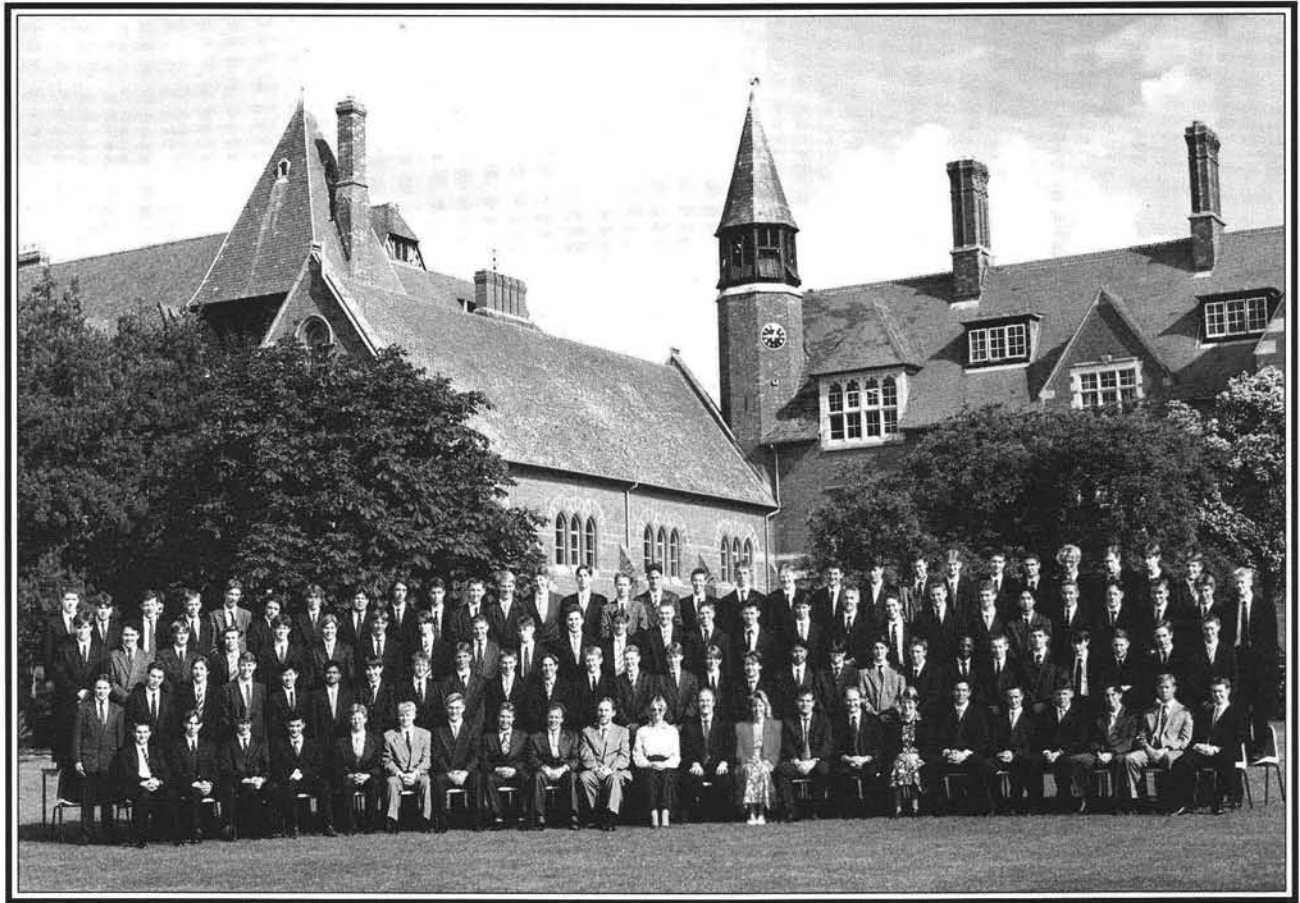
In the quest for rationality and intellectual rigour, which are important aspects of education, do not neglect the claims of the heart, the insights of the emotions and the gifts of the spirit. For to integrate these areas within one's life means that one has recognised the human dimension and made space for compassion to flower.

As you leave this school to begin a new chapter in your life and career, take with you in your heart the people whom you knew here. In the relationships that formed between pupils and pupils, between boys and their teachers, was sown the seed of growth and personal development. That treasure, intangible and invisible, was what made possible the whole educational process and enabled learning of permanent value to be achieved, for your good and for the good of those with whom you will live and work.

Learn to forgive what went wrong in your relationships and cherish the memory of what was right, and good, and creative, and productive. Learn also to nurture in others what has been nurtured in you by many at Abingdon. Then that seed of wisdom and experience that was sown by us in hope will produce a rich harvest of human gifts and graces expressed in you, and realised in your character and conduct in the years to come.

I pray that you have been a fertile soil and that your future lives will manifest all the gifts of the Spirit in Love, and Joy, and Peace. Amen.

A. MITRA



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