

THE ABINGDONIAN



1997 Summer
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VALETE - Class of '97



THE ABINGDONIAN

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Editorial

A Message from the Editor ...

*The experiment seems to have worked. In your hands you are holding the final issue of this magazine's triptych for 1996-7; a venture which was not undertaken painlessly, but clearly has borne fruit. What is that fruit? It seems that *The Abingdonian's* increased frequency and circulation has stimulated the buzz of general interest in the School as well as in the worlds of media and journalism, and, I would argue, has helped foster our overall sense of community. Until last Michaelmas a reader could always bask in his individual reported glory, once a year, at increasingly irregular intervals, but how*

much more can he do so now, while being regularly reminded of the achievements of others, too? Moreover, Abingdonians always do respond to a challenge, and the pupil editors and the entire management structure of this magazine have had to scale new heights of devotion and hard labour over the past 12 months to produce three issues. My thanks go particularly to them for another challenge surmounted; another job well done. But they also go to all the contributors, not just to the last three issues, but to the issues of the last three years, as well. For this is my final issue as Editor, and I cannot remember a more enjoyable job or a more absorbing challenge than regularly reporting your myriad achievements, exploits, ideas, thoughts. Thank you! I trust you will enjoy reading them...



SCHOOL HOUSE

The term has been particularly disrupted with examinations at all levels and at various times, commencing with GCSE Art in the first full week of term. Bearing this in mind the achievements of the boys of School House are all the more remarkable. The first half term was dominated by the Boarders' play "The Lord of the Flies", professionally produced by **Mr. Pettitt** and **Mr. Figgis** with frightening results. There were three performances, all of which were received most enthusiastically by very full audiences due to excellent publicity. Most convincing performances were given by **J. Kingsley** as "Jack" and **R. Rothkopf** as "Ralph", and they were well supported by **D. Benoliel**, **N. Brewer** and **I. Hardingham**. Numerous others helped backstage and front of House and **G. Whittaker** worked magic with the lighting.

There is much to report about a wide range of activities. A number of boys have contributed significantly to Chapel and Boarders' Choirs this term. The House Communion on July 19th. was led most sensitively by the Chaplain and was well supported; such times of quiet contemplation are to be encouraged.

The musicians of School House continue to set very high standards and contribute to the various School Orchestras and Choirs. **T. Mak** accompanied by **K. Cheung** played Schon Rosmarin by Kriesler and Meditation from "Thais" by Massenet, at a Charity Concert in the Charles Maude Room this term when over £750 was raised for the Kidney Patients Association in Oxford.

The House has made its greatest contribution to charity this term. **A. Stewart**, who incidentally has been made Head of School for next year, has worked extremely hard raising money for Romanian Orphans. He, **Mr. Slatford** and a joint team from Abingdon School and St. Helen's will soon be on their way to Romania to build a children's playground and to transport all manner of toys and useful items for children. A sponsored walk from

Dorchester to Abingdon, attended by boys and parents one Sunday afternoon in June together with an energetic Football Marathon and Andrew's great persuasive powers, have raised hundreds of pounds for the project.

Members of School House continue to achieve much in sporting activities. **D. Kingsley** continues to train with the GB under 18 rowing squad and won a gold medal at the National Schools' Championships in a coxed four. He with **M. Thomas** and **I. Priest** were members of the School's eights which were at Henley this year. **E. Ryder** has been playing for the first XI cricket team and will tour with them in Barbados. **M. Jobling** has been the stroke of the successful J16 VIII, and **N. Williams** looks promising in a junior VIII. **F. Malone-Lee** has been the inspirational athlete this term coming second in the Radley Challenge and second again in the 1500m. race in the County Championships. **J. Kingsley** went one better by winning the Radley Challenge for his age group aided by an exceptional triple jump of over 11.50 m. and a storming 1500m run. The third form Boarders were involved in a triple tie, by virtue of some stylish swimming by **A. Harsono** and a little inventive scoring, in the House Swimming Competition. The versatility of the present generation is epitomised by **R. Bryniarski** who led a successful Ten Tors team this term. His enthusiasm for walking, Mountain Biking and Wind Surfing is gaining many followers.

Many of the third form visited the Oasis on our rather unusually timed "May Day". We have had our annual leavers' outing bowling at Didcot and a barbecue at School. Various presentations were made to **E. Ryder** and **I. Priest** who are succeeded by **F. Malone-Lee** and **A. Donald** as Head and Deputy Head of House. We sadly bid farewell to **W. Lau**, **M. Rafalski** and **A. Hoppenstedt** and thanked the latter two for their contribution to aluminium recycling, or was it lager consumption!

F. C. BURROW

CRESCENT HOUSE

This has been another successful year for Crescent both academically and sportingly. We have also had many other achievements to our credit. **P. Wells**, outgoing Head of House, is looking after orphans in Romania for his Gap year and raised money for this with a wonderful concert. **T. Evans** won a prestigious Young Scientist of the Year Award, and is going to Tanzania to spot some birds! In drama, Lord of the Flies starred **B. Wells** as Piggy, with **E. de Bosdari** and **T. Betteridge** also involved. **T. Hester** worked backstage. As usual it was a great success, and a tribute to all involved.

The summer also saw the lower sixth assume prefectorial responsibility. **A. Pike** replaces **P. Wells** as Head of House for 1997-8, and we all wish him well. Patrick did an excellent job, and we hope he has a good time at university. The summer term is a crucial one for the fifth year as they take their GCSE exams. We will all be thinking of them on results day I'm sure! Congratulations also go to **M. Yeung** for winning the Boarders Academic Prize in the fourth year.

In the House Cricket we played well against Wilmore's, our first round opponents, the match was very close with a notable performance by **B. Perkins** with the bat! **A. Hunter** collected four wickets, and just missed out on a hat-trick. This year again Crescent managed to get five people into the first eleven and two into the seconds. All seven are part of the Barbados cricket tour this summer. As a house, the third year won in style the Swimming Gala beating Drummond-Hay's house to the great delight of **Mr. Hunter**! They also performed well in the House Athletics, where **B. Perkins** won the Victor Ludorum.

Other notable sporting successes were **F. Dutton** and **R. Franklin** in the Senior Tennis six, and **O. Smith** in the school's golf team. **A. Benson** and **H. Watkinson** achieved rowing success both being in the 2nd VIII, even though only in the fifth year! **P. Hemsley** picked up rowing honours in the 2nd VIII at Henley. **M. Watkinson** excelled in rowing also winning the Single Sculls Challenge event at the Boat Club's Open Day.

It has also been a successful year for the musicians, now with **O. Smith**, **E. Allen** and **T. Andrews** in the First Orchestra, Chapel Choir, Boarders Choir and particularly impressively in 'The Abingdon Academicals'.

The term was capped off on the 20th of June when we had a wonderful barbecue in **Mr. Hunter**'s garden, which was enjoyed by all despite the typical English weather! All associated with the house were invited, including **Mr. Hamilton** and **Mr. Broadbent**. **Mr. Payne** also came along, and we hope he enjoyed one of his last barbecues at Abingdon! **P. Wells** gave his traditional speech as Head of House in which some interesting awards were presented including 'the Sam Balch Award' for the most charming third year! **M. Watkinson** won it intriguingly with **P. Makings** rather unconvincingly receiving an award for his haircut! Our thanks go to **Mr. Hunter** and family for a very enjoyable and amusing evening!

R. FRANKLIN 6JEF

WASTE COURT TO BRECON BEACONS



For a boarding house a Thursday holiday presents a problem - few boys can go home to take advantage of it. When the May 1st "election special" was declared, the Waste Court house staff decided that only one thing was possible; taking the whole house into the Celtic twilight of Cymru : Wales. Being a hairy celt myself, I decided to take everyone to the Usk valley and Brecon Beacons, as it is my "home patch" and therefore know some good places to visit. The peaks we tackled, Pen y fan and Cribyn, were ambitious targets, given that they are just short of 3,000 feet high and that we were to tackle them from the most difficult (and exciting) route. In the end we did not need to use any of our alternative routes which was a great credit to the boys. My thanks go to **Mr. Hullis** for accompanying the party and particularly to **Mr. Elliot** and **Mr. Haworth** for driving us there.

Before I hand you to **A. Donald** for the "boy's eye view", one final point. Knowing these peaks, the forecast for the valley of "possible broken cloud and showers" probably meant "Typhoon, whirlwind and the occasional monsoon" on the tops. Our party was therefore prepared for everything, except sunshine. Do not forget your sunblock - even in Wales!

T. WATERS

Pen y Fan is the highest point in South Wales. The group, consisting of about 20 people, left Waste Court grounds at half past six. After three hours in the minibus with squealing first years and a dog, we were very thankful when we arrived at the resthouse for a very pleasing dinner. Then we went up a hill to look at stars. I managed to spot the "Big-Dipper" and others looked at shooting stars and, of all things, aeroplanes.

The next morning we left after breakfast with our own packed lunch. The weather was heavenly. It was sunny with a temperature of around 25°C. One third of the way was quite easy. It was basically walking along an old Roman road and up a hill. Then we reached our first obstacle, Cribyn. The ascent was very tough as in some parts it was almost 45°. Some were on all-fours in order to get up. Furthermore, if you looked to your side, you would see a 500 metre drop. At the summit, we began our lunch as we basked in the sunlight.

To get to Pen y Fan, first we had to descend from

Cribyn. The descent was difficult because of the constant fear that your next step would leave you rolling down the mountainside. The ascent though was quite relaxing as it was not as steep. At the summit we finished our lunch with four sheep. After twenty minutes, we started our descent as it was getting a bit crowded on the summit. We stopped halfway at a river and some of the younger ones took this opportunity to have a dip in freezing water. Overall it was a very nice climb, thanks to **Mr. Waters**. His kit list was a very useful reminder to bring waterproof jacket, two pairs of underwear and much more but unfortunately not a bottle of sun-lotion. Due to this most of us were sunburned. At least the sheep were fine!

A. S. DONALD 6CMM

WASTE COURT

Having spent the past few weeks writing reports for the boys in the house, I feel very happy that this has been a good year, both academically and culturally. The final judgement is yet to come, however and we are all hoping that when the A level results come out in August, our leavers will have got the results that they need for university entrance. Certainly, they looked to be on target!

Outside the classroom, there has been a great deal of activity, most boys being sportingly active on the cricket field, down the river, in the gym and even windsurfing on Farmoor reservoir. Some of the junior boys performed superbly in the boarders' play, *Lord of the Flies* and many others have been involved in music within the school, choral and instrumental.

The main house event of the term was the trip to the Brecon Beacons on May 1st. This was a great success and it is intended to mount a similar expedition early next term, to help bind the house together at the beginning of the new year. This was followed after half term by a "Welsh night" dinner, with food from the Principality, allowing us to bid farewell to our upper sixth formers.

So much for the present. My main concerns at the moment lie both in the future and also the past. With the reorganisation of the dayboy houses, it is almost certain that we will be taking on board many more dayboys in the house as of September 1998. As well as this, boarder numbers are growing such that the extra room-space created last term will be filled next year, the house probably nearing 30 boarders. This means that the coming eighteen months will be very exciting for the house, but also very challenging as we undergo considerable changes. It will be interesting to see how we cope.

As for the past, there are two areas of development. Firstly, 1998 is the seventieth anniversary of the school's acquisition of Waste Court and I am hoping that we may be able to trace as many of our house old boys as possible in order to celebrate the fact. Secondly, following the unearthing of a number of artefacts on the site, stretching back to Romano-British times, it is probable that we will be host to a team of archaeologists in the first few weeks of next term, in order to establish more about the history of Waste Court and its grounds. Plague house? Rubbish dump? All will be revealed!

It only remains for me to thank our leavers for all they have done for the house, particularly **J. Johari**, our Head of House and to announce that he will be succeeded by **M. Jones** for the coming year.

T. WATERS.

FISHPOOL'S

The refurbished houseroom has survived its first year; there are signs of wear and tear, but with a potential 78 residents at any one time, this is fair depreciation. I wish the same could be said for pool equipment and ping pong balls!

This has been a successful year for the house - following our disqualification from the House singing competition earlier in the year, so ably conducted by **W. Pank** and **D. Pearson**, things could only improve. The summer term divided into two distinct phases: the first half was dominated by revision and the build up to both public and school exams for the whole house, and the second half turned into a whirlwind of sporting activity.

In this term's Prize Giving the house prizes were awarded to **J. Rowley** and **J. Persaud** for the high standard of their report cards throughout the year. In addition, the Turner Science Prize, for creative writing, was awarded to **P. Taylor**, a tremendous achievement for a Third year. Members of Fishpool's made strong contributions to music at Abingdon this term. **R. Hutchins** and **N. Aston** should be congratulated for their part in the quite outstanding recent CD release - 'Abingdon School Plays Jazz'. Numerous members of the house have appeared in a variety of concerts this term, reflecting the range of talents and tastes in music that exists. Early in the term **D. Pearson** (violin), **C. Hockley** (bassoon) and **B. Hunt** (piano) gave performances during a GCSE Performers concert. **B. Hunt** went on to play his 'cello in a joint concert with St. Helen's school. The house was well represented in the School Bands Concert in early May; performers in the First Wind Band included **M. Creffield** (clarinet) and **J. Tarasewicz**, **M. Walker** (saxophone) and **J. Persaud** (Bassoon) are members of the second Wind band. The house is ably represented by **Mr. Finch** in the Brass band (we need to find some house recruits for this!) and **N. Aston** (Trumpet) along with **A. Hutchinson** and **M. Walker** (both saxophonists) who are members of the Big Band. In the Grand Orchestral Concert on the 20th June there were no fewer than eleven members of the house involved, these included **C. Dugan**, **A. Apps**, **I. Smith**, **J. Dear** along with others already mentioned. Also of note was **M. Priest**'s appearance in a recent informal concert when he played both the piano and his cello.

In the House cricket competition we beat Mearns' by 30 runs to qualify for the semi-final only to lose to Drummond-Hay's by 40 runs. **S. Campbell**, our highest scorer was also a most effective bowler, taking 6 wickets against Mearns' house. Sadly an additional friendly match arranged against a strong Boarders' team had to be cancelled due to the rain (predictably enough in the wettest June for 137 years!)

The third year won this year's Athletics competition with a final score of 191 points beating Drummond-Hay's 151 points by an impressive margin. In the A string, we came first in no less than 6 events - **C. Hughes** had an outstanding afternoon winning the 800 m (2.30 min.) and the 1500m (5.04 min.). **G. Bailey** won the high jump (1.45m) along with the 400m (61 sec), **A. Hutchinson** leapt to glory with a 10.31 m jump in the triple jump. The B string performed well, winning 3 events and coming second in no less than 6 of their events. **J. Mather** won the 800m (2.33 min), **G. Bailey** the 1500m with an impressive time of 5.46 min and **J. Hamand** won the long jump with a jump of 4.45 m. **S. Sargant** narrowly missed first place with his javelin throw of 19.5 m.

The fourth year were placed overall in 4th place with 133 points - however, **N. Hambridge** won the Victor Ludorum Trophy having come first in both the 100 m (11.62 sec) and the 200 m (24.94 sec); he came second in the long jump with 5.27 m. Other notable achievements during the afternoon included **S. Nickson's** long jump and **M. Shields** in second place in the 400 m.

Our record at this year's Swimming Galas could only be described as modest. However, I am sure that the inhospitable nature of the elements had as much to do with this as anything; being corralled into the changing rooms, called by a tannoy to the pool edge and greeted by **Mr. Drummond-Hay** clad in full arctic clothing must have sapped our morale!

At the Boat Club a sculling ladder has been operating for the third year. **C. Hughes, T. Davies** and **J. Hamand** have all had a successful term on the river.

Finally I would like to thank **Mr. Dawswell** for all his help and support this year within the house as he moves to tutor a scholars' tutor group next year.

I. C. FISHPOOL

DRUMMOND-HAY'S

The fifth year left before half term after a successful period in the house. We wish them the best of luck for the future whatever they are doing. Because of this a new batch of acting house prefects was appointed, they were: **J. Wood, J. Mansfield, M. Terry, T. Butler, G. Wilson-North, A. Bitmead, P. Tolley** and **M. Spencer-Chapman**.

Leaving us this term is **Mr. Willerton** who has been a tutor for seven years. We hope he is successful in his new role, and we welcome **Mr. Spencer** who will fill his shoes and become the new Head of Geography.

Sport has gone well this term with the third year coming joint first with the Boarders and Mearns in the swimming gala and second in the athletics with an excellent team effort. The house cricket was won against Wilmore's, again it was a good team match led by **S. Dexter**.

Our fourth year came second in the swimming gala which went ahead despite near monsoon conditions. We also had an impressive win in the athletics, building a lead of more than sixty points over the rest of the field. There were impressive runs, throws and jumps by everybody and **P. Barry** came third in the Victor Ludorum.

There were also several people from the house in both junior and junior colts rowing teams who have had an excellent season. There were a couple of athletes from each year, with **R. Fabes** running for county and a lot of cricketers, including **P. Thomas** as captain, for the junior first team. **T. Fleming** visited a golf championship in Scotland and competed against people from all over the country. He is also going on a cricket tour to Barbados along with **S. Dexter** and **O. Norman-Longstaff** this summer. Members of the house have also succeeded in many other fields. **J. Mansfield, N. Hayes, M. Terry** and **A. Gates** all passed their Young Enterprise exam. **R. Fabes, J. Mansfield, M. Terry, J. Wilson, D. Boswood** and **A. Morris** took part in an evening of extracts from this century's drama which was a great success. **M. Spencer-Chapman, J. Mendelson-Malik, P. Barry, J. Mearns, J. Ma, O. Norman-Longstaff** and **A. Bitmead** were all involved with the Grand Orchestral Concert with **J. Mendelson-Malik** playing an incredible piano solo with the chamber orchestra. **S. Smith** won the Griffin Prize for craftsmanship and **B. Longworth** won the William Turner prize for personality. The 3rd, 4th and 5th year academic prizes were won by **M. Stockwell, P. Tolley** and **A. Hulse** respectively.

J. DRUMMOND-HAY

MEARNS'

There has been much lively activity this term carried on at whirlwind pace.

A number of boys managed to play music in between taking some early GCSEs: **B. Teh, J. Haworth, P. Gardner** and **S. Atkinson**, who featured in the Grand Orchestral concert at the end of term. But there were other important contributions too, including those from **H. Richards** and **M. Hawksworth**.

We looked forward to a strong start in the inter-house cricket, but were sadly caught on the day when stars such as **D. Mitchell** and **S. Khan** were required to play elsewhere in more representative matches.

In the swimming gala we came a very creditable third, and such was the team effort that it would be invidious to pick out any individual. It was a fine across-the-board effort which paid handsome dividends and was a pleasure to see. In athletics we were not able to duplicate this success, though there were some fine individual efforts. Thanks go to **P. Batchelor**, who was helped by **M. Hawksworth**, and to **J. Powell** for organising the respective year groups.

P. Given was elected the House Captain after a well run election in which 100% exercised the right of franchise - all the third and fourth year members of the House. Peter is now helped by a team made up of his former rivals for the post: **P. Batchelor**, singing and sporting events; **M. Hawksworth**, charities; **O. Varney**, food committee. A number of helpful suggestions have already been forthcoming from the floor.

Our strong representation in the Boat Club were a little disappointed not to get a longer run in the National Schools' Regatta, but went on to win in a number of open events, including Bedford Star and Reading.

Congratulations to **D. Mitchell** and **J. Marshall** who won the House academic prizes.

Finally, I would like to note the positive and constructive way in which by far the greater part of the House's activity was carried out this term.

R.S.K.MEARNES

WILMORE'S

At the beginning of the summer term, we began to ready ourselves for the 'change over'. As the fifth year completed revision courses and prepared themselves for the G.C.S.E. programme, new prefects were appointed from the fourth year and repairs made to house-room facilities. One pool table was recovered and new posters mounted.

On the sports fields the cricketers were being frustrated by wet weekends, but **E. Webber** was soon amongst the runs with 48 for the Junior Colts AX1 against Oratory and 32 against Thame. **A. Holland** won the hurdles event in the Vale of the White Horse Championships at Tilsley Park and **S. Hughes** gained full colours for his contribution to the tennis club. Although plagued by a back injury, **P. Watson** returned to athletic competition in the McDonalds' Young Athletes league match for Oxford City, with a win in the 100 metres and two seconds. Meanwhile **S. Laurie** added success on the water to his county rugby selection, with a 9th place in the 'Laser' class (and 19th overall) at the National Schools' Sailing Association Championships.

Also on the water, **S. Woodcock**, **N. Moffatt**, **S. Curran** and **H. Mackenzie** were unbeaten in the J15 coxed fours, with wins at two regattas. **B. Grady** joined them in the A eight crew, which had a slow start to the season, but which improved beyond recognition, following half-term, beating St. Edward's, St. Paul's, King's Canterbury and, at the Reading town regatta, Radley. **M. Brewer** and **O. Lever** both rowed for the J15 B crew.

In the swimming galas the third year team found the opposition too strong, but the fourth year team stormed to victory. There were wins for **R. Holman** (B-division backstroke), **B. Grady** (A-division breaststroke), **N. Moffatt** (A division butterfly), **S. Curran** (A-division free-style), and **S. Woodcock** (A division medley). We also won three of the relays.

At Tilsley Park the third year athletics competition heralded some brave performances, most notably from **C. Davis** in the B-division 1500m and **S. Allen** in the A-division 1500m. Sebastian's race with the eventual winner, **C. Hughes**, was a titanic struggle that left both runners and the crowd breathless. In the field events Sebastian won the B-division high jump and triple jump, whilst on the track, **K. Shaikh** won the B-division 100 metres. Sensible tactics and some determined running enabled us to win the 'parlauf'.

The fourth year also won their parlauf and finished in third place overall. In the A-division **B. Grady** won the discus and **S. Curran** won the shot. In the B division **M. Parker** won both the discus and the javelin. There was another brave run, this time from **H. Mackenzie** in the 1500m. Hugh led the field for three quarters of the race,

succumbing to a final burst from **J. Kingsley**.

In the house cricket competition, Wilmore's dismissed the boarders for 100 and then, in a nail-biting finish, **E. Webber** cracked a six off the third ball of the final over to win the match. That meant a place in the final against the powerful team from Drummond-Hay's. This was always going to be an uphill climb. Put into bat we struggled to score runs, but a dogged performance from **E. Webber** enabled Wilmore's to reach 73 for 8. **A. Beck** and **E. Webber** took excellent catches to put Drummond-Hay's under pressure, but a fine innings from **I. Downie** saw them home.

Inside the classroom performances were also mostly very pleasing. Ten members of the fourth year and seven members of the third year achieved summer examination score averages of over 70%! **M. Brown**, **T. Coe**, **T. Judd** and **A. Wilson** broke the 80% barrier!

As always Wilmore's made a strong contribution to the orchestras and bands. **W. Bartlett** was awarded an honorary music scholarship for his excellent work with the bands and **E. Webber** was awarded an exhibition. **B. Warner**, **T. Coe**, **A. Thomas**, **E. Webber**, **C. Smith**, **N. Moffatt**, **A. Choudhuri**, **B. Griffiths** and **D. Hancock** all performed for the first orchestra.

Finally congratulations to **P. Ball** for winning the Junior shooting cup and to 'ex Wilmorean' **J. Dunbar** for being elected captain of rugby.

P.J.WILMORE

TASS MAY FAIR

It is akin to natural law that the day of the May Fair will bring rain. Certainly on the morning of May 10th the omens for the outdoor barbecue were not good, with heavy showers and steady drizzle all morning. Potential disaster was averted when the sun began to shine around 12:30 just as people were beginning to arrive in their cars (though it remained cold enough to cause discomfort to the teachers volunteering for the wet-a-teacher event). There was a respectable turn-out for the Fair; there was definitely no shortage of events, which included target shooting, woodlouse racing and an auction. There was also a multitude of stalls, mostly in the sports hall, which were peddling everything from pot-pourri to CD-ROMs. Music was provided by a stonkin' assortment of electrical instrumentalists. Quite apart from this, there were numerous stands selling breads, cakes, and pies, plus of course the barbecue, which went ahead after all.

Enquiring around, I found people were pleased in general with the Fair. The favourite event was the throwing sponges at the teacher attraction. People gathered in droves to sponge the likes of **Mr. Barratt** and **Mr. Broadbent**. The main mercy was the lack of rain in the afternoon. The Fair was a success, and we are grateful to TASS for laying on, and the volunteers on the stands and at the events for participating in, this collection for the School.

C. SCHMIDT 6AMS

The Common Room bids Farewell to:

DAVID TAYLOR

David came to Abingdon in 1966 with already considerable experience of the world at large; he had been a fighter controller in the RAF before going up to Clare College to read French and Russian, unusually starting the latter language from scratch. He left to join Lloyds Bank, but six months there convinced him that banking was not for him, and he went to the RIBA as secretary of their overseas committee, organising the 1961 Congress of Architects and taking visiting groups on tours of Britain's architectural achievements, culminating in the congress of 2,000 architects on the South Bank; plenty of opportunity to use his languages! After this there was naturally a sense of anticlimax and he felt it was time to move on - to teaching!



way, mastering the ideas himself and showing the other members of the department how it should be done. He set up and led exchanges with France, and took parties to Russia before exchanges were possible there, all of which added to the growing attractions of modern languages as a subject. Then came what he regards as the most important step in his life: he married Janet; I can vouch for her qualities as matron in Waste Court, and she became a great support to David in all his work, but in

particular as he became more and more involved in school drama.

In 1987 he gave up the languages department to become head of drama and administrator of the Amey Hall; he had already produced plays in the Unicorn Theatre with success, and could now give greater time to his love for all aspects of dramatic activity - too many plays to mention here, but *La Machine Infernale*, *Kean*, *Richard II*, *Trial By Jury* and *The Cherry Orchard* are some that he picks out as having been particularly happy experiences. Nevertheless, he was - and is - still the dedicated teacher; He gave as much time and effort to encouraging boys who were having problems in school to come and join stage crew or electricians as to bringing out the talents of a future actor. He can be confident that he has established drama in the school curriculum, both at GCSE and A level. David - and Janet - have my heartfelt wishes for a happy and active retirement; he was always an easy and dependable colleague, both as head of department and as a member of it. Hardly ever moved to anger and only rarely ruffled, his quiet manner and good humour will be missed by boys and colleagues, and I am sure he and Janet will want to keep in touch with both, not least as their son Ben has further cemented links with Abingdon.

KEITH HASNIP

CHARLES PARKER

Charles arrived at Abingdon in 1974 to be Head of Mathematics, one of a series of key appointments made by Eric Anderson to enable the school to move forward more rapidly. With rapid transport in mind Charles lost no time in founding the Railway Society which he ran until 1993. Early beginnings were not too promising. On a trip to York a boy was lost in the railway station and Charles had to use the public address system to find him - "Will the Abingdonian now standing on Platform Five" etc...



to gold. Only a year after his arrival Eric Anderson paid him a fine tribute during his last address at Prizegiving as Headmaster: "Charles Parker has revitalised the Mathematics Department and is always to be found around the school wherever there is work to be done." Anderson probably did not realise how prophetic this statement was to prove. Charles ran the Department until 1979 and in just a few years effectively set up the situation from which the modern success has grown. His

Happily most of what Charles put his hand to turned legendary thoroughness in teaching, coupled with the

CR Farewells

ability to make his subject accessible and comprehensible to all has remained an inspiration to the Department throughout his time .

In 1979 Charles took over as Housemaster of Crescent House and with Janet and their family created a safe, stable and welcoming environment for its boarders. This was not an easy time to be a boarding Housemaster. In the difficult years following the withdrawal of the Direct Grant and through the economic recession, Abingdon's boarding facilities had little to recommend them, save the people and the quality of the care. Charles always managed to provide a good balance between discipline and deep concern. Boys always knew where they were with him and so they thrived.

Charles has always been concerned with the wider world of Mathematics teaching, throughout his time at Abingdon and before. An Examiner since 1967, he became a GCSE Principal Examiner in 1987. The Board knew how to spot an "authority" on the subject, for Charles had a long-standing link writing S.M.P. textbooks since 1976 and went on special secondment to S.M.P. during 1985/86 while editing and writing new textbooks for eleven and twelve year olds. The School has been a major beneficiary of this breadth and depth of knowledge.

Leaving Crescent in 1986 allowed Charles to widen his involvement in education but the needs of Abingdonians were always in the front of his mind. He quickly joined the Careers team and in 1987 introduced Work Experience to boys at Abingdon. Following much difficult organisation and detailed negotiation the scheme grew rapidly thanks to Charles' determination not to take no as an answer. Year after year many fifth year boys gained new insights into the world of work and have him to thank for it. Charles took over as Head of Careers in 1991 and his last years at the school have seen the quality of service to boys and parents rise and rise.

There hardly seems to be any aspect of school life which has not benefited from his sure touch. For ten years from 1975 he ran the 3rd XI cricket team and in the past few years helped the Rifle Club rise to new prominence. Nor has Common Room been neglected. Charles represented staff views to the Governors and was all but a founder member of the Common Room Salaries Committee. We all have much to thank him for. Throughout a distinguished career at Abingdon Charles has always been ready to step in wherever work was to be done. He is a thoroughgoing schoolmaster in the traditional mould whom we shall greatly miss.

C. J. BIGGS

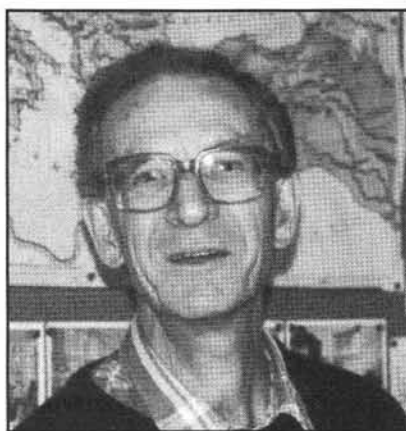
NIGEL PAYNE

What images immediately spring to mind?

Characteristically, being the first to welcome a new recruit to the Common Room; bicycling, overcoat flapping, books grasped in one hand, to reach the outposts of the history department's empire; stepping into a staff tennis team to play against the boys, and straightaway wielding a deadly racquet without having hit a tennis ball in years; patiently talking through with Governors on behalf of Common Room the practicalities of fee concessions for children; and cheering up anyone - boys or colleagues equally - who had suffered a reverse, and encouraging them to maintain a sense of proportion.

It was of course to the history department that Nigel was appointed in 1965, but James Cobban must have known that he was securing the services of a versatile all-round schoolmaster - and one with some experience outside the academic world which would always lend balance to his judgment of the sometimes overwrought atmosphere within it. As an historian, Nigel would never claim for himself exceptional erudition, but throughout his 96 terms he has been a pillar of the department, teaching from the first form to the upper sixth, and developing a specialist interest in the French Revolution such that he could make the characters of that time come alive, even to the most unimaginative of middle school boys. The teaching style to which his pupils warmed was calm, fair and positive, with a penchant for enlivening anecdote.

Nigel's contribution to sport at Abingdon has been immense and arguably more significant than that of any-



one else in the last 30 years. Himself an accomplished cricketer who played in the 2nd XI at Cambridge, he was master in charge of the School's 1st XI for 18 years, nurturing some who went on to become distinguished cricketers, and gaining especial satisfaction in seeing his XI defeat Radley on their home ground - the first major sport to achieve this distinction. His good eye for a moving hard ball took him naturally also to hockey, something of a Cinderella sport at Abingdon, but he helped to build it

up and for 14 years ran the 1st XI. And throughout his time at Abingdon there was golf. Nigel first arranged the Frilford Heath connection, with coaching and school matches there, and saw the school team in the 1980s achieve second place in the Public Schools' foursomes. Nigel's own claim to golfing fame, not unfortunately recorded in the Guinness Book of Records, resulted from a prodigious drive at Prestwick on the Ayrshire coast when his ball sailed beyond the perimeter of the club, landing in the guard's van of a goods train bound for London: the longest drive in golfing history?

In his early years at Abingdon Nigel ran a junior historical society, a table tennis club, a jazz club, and organised a lower sixth debating society with St Helen's as well as regularly playing the organ in chapel; and for three years he was resident tutor in School House, latterly forging a partnership with the housemaster Tony Hillary, a fellow Jesus College man and cricketer, which was to continue when Tony became head of history. But Nigel's eyes in those early years were also directed towards another

boarding house, Larkhill, where Donald Willis was housemaster. Nigel was married to Donald and Muriel's daughter Judith in 1968. This brought Nigel not only great happiness but in due course four children, including twins. His son Anthony enjoyed a successful career at Abingdon School and eventually followed his father and grandfather into the teaching profession. Judith provided a strong sense of continuity through the long association that the Willis family had had with the School, when the character of the place, partly by virtue of its smaller size, allowed for a more intimate sense of community, not least among the generation of children who grew up within its radius during those years. She and Nigel, both very sociable, enjoyed the company of a wide variety of people both within the School and beyond it and were core members

of the Common Room where Judith's natural charm and elegance graced many social occasions. It seemed somehow appropriate that they should move closer to the heart of the School when they left Steventon for Park Crescent.

It came as no surprise to hear Nigel being celebrated on his final day at the School by two speakers who quite independently focused on his personal integrity, for that indeed shines through in all he does. Nigel has not been driven by a quest for advancement at all costs in his chosen profession. Instead he has shown the relaxed virtues of the relatively unambitious, and also of the optimist who believes the best of people until there is incontrovertible proof to the contrary; a glass at its mid-point is seen by him as half-full, not half empty. In his well-earned retirement may his cup overflow!

T.R.AYLING

ESTELLE DUCHESNE



After a year of provençal high spirits, we wondered what the colder, damper Norman climate would bring us as French Assistante and Estelle Duchesne certainly provided a contrast with her predecessor: quiet, serious, an observer rather than a participator. However,

like all intelligent observers, Estelle learnt quickly: just as her spoken English improved, her confidence in the classroom grew steadily throughout the year.

Estelle set new standards for conscientiousness and efficiency, showing an admirable ability to fend for herself in a busy department. In particular, boys in the sixth-form are in her debt for the painstaking efforts Estelle made to dig up materials for their oral exams. Her successor will find a well-stocked set of resources ready for the plundering and we shall miss Estelle for her helpfulness and kindness as much as for her diligence as she sets off on her teaching career.

A.S. PETTITT

MICHAEL MAUGHAN



Michael joined us in 1991, from Lomond School, where he had been a housemaster and renowned rugby coach. Over the past six years, in an efficient, cheerful, courteous and self-effacing manner, he has presided over the expansion of geography in the school, and in particular, a resurgence in the numbers reading A level geography. Michael has vigor-

JÖRN STRUBER

Jörn broke off his studies at the university of Frankfurt to spend a year as assistant in Abingdon and will return - with a brief interlude to get married - to his books, intent on qualifying as an English teacher. His commitment to English and to teaching was apparent throughout the



year: he managed to find the time to tackle a demanding TEFL course at Abingdon College, enjoying some of the more abstruse elements of English grammar and etymology. And Jörn never stinted his time when it came to his pupils: he showed great patience and diligence in unearthing materials for sixth-formers on the most obscure topics. His dedication and his ability to work independently were much appreciated. Jörn also became an expert on the Internet, doing much of the time-consuming surfing for his pupils as well as putting the arrangements for his wedding in place by E-Mail. A strong-minded enthusiast by nature, Jörn will succeed by enthusing and challenging his future pupils and we wish him every success.

A.S. PETTITT

ously championed improvements to the fabric, resources and facilities of the geography department, and put considerable energy into the two field trips a year which are now de rigeur. He introduced field courses - abroad - Morocco was a particular success, and one of our haunting memories will be his relish in describing sixth formers transported to a field site by camels! He has been firm in the classroom, active on the rugby field and quietly efficient as a sixth form tutor. We wish him and Janine well on his return to his family roots in the north-east, as deputy head of Newcastle Preparatory School.

T. J. KING

RENATA

RETALLACK

Renata came to Abingdon as a secondary Drama teacher in David Taylor's fledgling Department. She soon became an indispensable fixture, though, both in her department and in the Common Room. She was well liked by the boys, and her tireless work with them, teaching dramatic techniques in the bowels of Big School paved the way to the increasingly professional standards seen on the stage in recent theatrical performances. More than one Director, both among Masters and pupils, has paid tribute to her effective teaching. She will be sorely missed, but we wish her well in her new post.



D.J. POPE

COVENTRY CATHEDRAL

The advent of the fourth-year visit to Coventry Cathedral on 30 June was enough to make even the most culturally-minded student feel gloomy. Even those who were missing double Geography that afternoon didn't seem too happy about it. The daunting-looking coursework assignments and necessity for extensive and complex notes did nothing to help matters, and, as the coaches puffed out on their way to the so-called "concrete city", the prospect of trudging around a cathedral for hours with an over-enthusiastic guide spouting on about the spiritual symbolism of a brick was enough to fill anyone with a sense of impending boredom.

However, any stereotyped ideas that the cathedral was either all cold carved stone and dusty wooden pews or something that would pass for a concert hall were quickly dispelled. The simple, aesthetically pleasing design of the building, the pale red bricks and the striking statue of St. Michael beating the devil at the entrance gave the building an unexpected appeal and the feeling that this cathedral was going to be more than just a place to keep the rain off during prayer.

The visit began with an audiovisual presentation on the history of Coventry cathedrals, old and new, and continued with a guided tour, where we were shown the new cathedral, the artworks and the three adjoining chapels. This was followed by a tour round the old cathedral. Lunch preceded an organ recital and then free time to wander around the cathedral ourselves. One might question the sanity of unleashing 120 fourth-years in a public building, but, it went off without a hitch, partly because

DAVID SALMON

Abingdon School has a great deal to thank David for. He began here as a boarder and by all accounts an excellent pupil. After Cambridge he returned to teach Physics, and quickly made his mark as a thorough yet talented teacher, who would stand no childish nonsense from the most unruly schoolboy. He commanded ever more respect in the classroom as his confidence grew and as he began to display his abilities, this time as a member of staff, in his other-half adventures. Whether on the Amey Hall platform as an (unpaid) professional soloist in numerous school concerts; explaining the mysteries of the microchip to denizens of the Electronics Club he founded; a quietly efficient Internal Examinations Master; or an effective Work Experience co-ordinator in the Careers Department, he clearly put back into the School more than he had taken out as a pupil, and his shoes will be difficult to fill. We wish him well in his new post as Head of Physics at Reading Blue Coat and are grateful for all he has contributed to life at Abingdon.

D.J. POPE

people were actually interested in getting more information about the cathedral.

As our tours showed us, it was a fascinating place, quite unlike any cathedral I had seen before. At the front end lay the ruins of the old cathedral - bombed in 1940 by the Luftwaffe, but from there, the steps led down to the entrance of the new cathedral, a huge pane of glass, -symbolizing an openness- death and darkness can pass into new life and light. The cathedral is unique in that it actually faces North as opposed to East, symbolic of a change in directions: to one of reconciliation and peace.

The views towards the altar and then back to the entrance were also very striking. Due to the rugged construction of the walls, when you look towards the altar, all you can see to the sides is grey. This focuses your attention on the enormous tap-



stry of Jesus on the far wall. However, after walking towards the other end and looking back down towards the entrance, you are faced with a kaleidoscope of colourful windows, depicting the story of the Bible and the journey of life. The cathedral was filled with symbols like this, which really captured the imagination in a surprising and pleasant way.

All in all, I think everyone quietly found the visit much more interesting than it promised to be, and I for one certainly got a lot out of it. Through its striking and effective symbolism, Coventry cathedral presents Christianity in a modern and accessible way, which was easily felt, and gave much stimulation for our coursework, which apparently, the examiner is looking forward to marking. I think we can safely say that this is one case when the "Hope-from-despair" line of Christianity doesn't apply.

T. JUDD 4PKHR

ANCIENT ABINGDON

The forthcoming publication of a history of the school will serve to fill some of the gaps in our knowledge about its past but there is one area which it will, almost certainly, overlook. Little is currently known about the history of the present site prior to the construction of the school buildings. It is inevitable that such a site, close to the centre of Britain's oldest town, will have seen much use, but, at present, we cannot say what form this took. A group of volunteers are working to help rectify this by carrying out excavations immediately next to the school grounds, in the privately owned garden which lies between Mercers' Court and the Warehouse.

Unfortunately on this particular site all the top layers of soil have been mixed up, probably by people digging the garden and turning it over. This has destroyed the stratigraphy and means that little can be told about the site from these layers. Finds spanning over 1500 years have been found at random

locations. These finds include modern rubble, Victorian clay pipes, Georgian porcelain and glass, a coin and a musket ball from the Civil War, medieval pottery and a Roman bronze coin. To date, many hundreds of pieces of pottery and about 10 coins have been found. As a result we can only say that people were in the area during these periods but not what they were doing there.

It is hoped that once the trench gets deeper the soil will have been less disturbed and so it will be possible to find items 'in situ'. A previous, smaller, trench in the same garden revealed a Roman cremation and if any more are found in this trench then it may be that there was a cemetery on the site. At the same time evidence may emerge for other uses, no-one really knows for certain. At the time of writing it is too soon for any conclusions to be made but work should be finished by September when it will be possible to say with more certainty what the history of the site is.

J. WALFORD 5GCR

THE SCHOOL ARCHIVES

Work proceeds on the promised History of the School, which is due to be published by James and James in the autumn of this year. All being well, it will fill a gap which has become almost a source of embarrassment - it is anomalous that one of the most ancient schools in the country should have had no regular account of its history written until now. Even more important, perhaps, the book may do something to consolidate Abingdon's awareness of its own identity - an awareness which, it may be thought, is somewhat tenuous at present, and too often expressed in such terms as a preoccupation with neckties, or anxiety about the league tables!

The writing of history is an act of interpretation - interpretation of the meaning of facts. You cannot begin this business of interpretation until you have a stock of appropriate facts, relevant to the purpose. In the case of the School, a good proportion of the evidence is to be found in our own archives.

The earliest records relating to Abingdon School have not been in our possession for a long time - if, indeed, they ever were. References to the monastic school are to be found, for the most part, in the records of Abingdon Abbey itself, which were largely destroyed and dispersed at the Dissolution. A good many of those which survived were acquired in the sixteenth century by the Blacknall family, who purchased the site of the Abbey itself; in 1629 they passed by marriage to the Verney family, one of the great county dynasties of Oxfordshire, who, in due course, transferred them to public ownership. From the early post-Reformation period, almost all the important material is to be found in the records either of Christ's Hospital of Abingdon, or of the Borough of Abingdon; the two bodies which were chiefly responsible for the management of the School until the late nineteenth century. The two earliest documents held by the School itself are an Indenture of the reign of Edward VI, relating to property owned by John Roysse in London, and Roysse's own Will of 1563, together with the Ordinances which he laid down at the same time for the conduct of the School. The former is displayed over the fireplace in the Grundy Library, and the latter are in the Medd Room. Thereafter, there is little of any significance in the way of documents (as opposed to books) until we reach the eighteenth century.

It seems painfully likely that there was a considerable loss of material at the time when the School moved from the centre of the town to its present site, in 1870; even thereafter, however, the absence of any systematic provision for the care of the archives meant that the collection was slow to grow, and liable to suffer loss or damage. Only in very recent years has it been possible

to give it a regular home, in the former servants' wing of Lacies Court, and to make significant progress with ordering, conserving and cataloguing.

Those who care about the relics of the past invariably find themselves doomed to lament losses and destruction, the ravages of time, and it is sometimes necessary to remind oneself that, for the most part, one's ancestors simply did not perceive any value in the papers which they used as firelighters. The first person connected with Abingdon School who appears to have taken any interest in its records was an eighteenth-century Usher, or Second Master, the Reverend John Stevenson, who held office from 1762 to 1783. He was a substantial figure in his own right - a Governor and, in due course Master, of Christ's Hospital, Rector of St. Nicolas' in Abingdon and Vicar of Sutton Courtenay. He ran a boarding house for the School at his home in East St. Helen Street, charging £20 per boy per annum - for comparison, the Headmaster's salary at the same time was £35 per annum. Stevenson collected a quantity of historical material about the School, and recorded a good deal about his own former pupils; these papers are now in the Bodleian Library in Oxford. He showed a keen sense of history when he presented a portrait of Thomas Tesdale to the School, to mark the bicentenary in 1763 of the re-foundation. (He would have had a personal motive for this gift, also - Tesdale it was who had endowed the Ushership.)

The next notable figure in the story of the Abingdon archives was William Richardson, F.S.A., an Old Boy of the School who was born in 1835. Brought up in the old school yard down by the Abbey ruins, he observed with pride the 1870 move to new and handsome premises on what had been the Lacies Court estate, and took pleasure throughout his life in accumulating materials relating to the School's history, writing about his discoveries, and generally attempting to raise awareness in the School and the town of the neglected heritage of the past. He was a prolific writer in the *Abingdonian*, an active member of the Old Abingdonian Club, and generous with gifts to the School such as documents, prints and books. Among other activities evidently designed to arouse corporate pride, he wrote a school song - not a very good one, it must be said, but then how many good school songs are there? His efforts seem to have met with less appreciation and understanding than we might think they deserved, and a tetchy tone creeps into some of his later writings, when he complains about the apparent reluctance of Abingdonians to value their past and its products. More sadly still, many of his gifts were very casually treated in later years, and some - significantly including the most valuable of all, a volume

of the *Relectiones Hyemales* by Degorie Wheare, Headmaster from 1605 to 1606 - are completely missing. His historical perspective stopped at John Roysse, and he should probably bear responsibility for much of the cult of Roysse, which became so overblown in the latter part of the nineteenth century. He deserves much credit, none the less, for his efforts to awaken Abingdonians to pride in their past, and a sense of obligation to their benefactors. He died, rather suddenly, at Blewbury, in 1909.

The torch that Richardson dropped was taken up by Arthur Preston, F.S.A., who was born in 1852 and was among the boys who migrated from the old school to the new in 1870. He was a notable figure in the locality - a County Councillor, Mayor of Abingdon, Alderman, Master of Christ's Hospital, Chairman of the School Governors, a Magistrate, and prominent in practically every official and voluntary body in both town and county. But in his leisure time he managed to make himself a real authority on the history, not only of the School, but of the whole town and neighbourhood. Where Richardson had been an antiquarian, a collector of old things and interesting items, Preston was a serious scholar. His scope was wide, and his vision penetrating, and he saw clearly that the history of the School stretched back well beyond the events of 1563, into the remoter Middle Ages. Unfortunately, the depth of his learning was only rivalled by the impenetrability of his writing - the learned papers which tumbled from his pen, though frequently lively, are almost indigestible, and his great collection entitled *St. Nicholas and Other Papers* sadly lacks shape and coherence. However, if he failed to create the definitive legend which he aimed at, for public consumption, he bestowed huge benefits on the School archives in terms of the materials which he donated and the perceptions which he set in place for use by subsequent generations. He died in 1942. (Preston's house, Whitefield in Park Crescent, is now a staff residence of the School.)

A series of twentieth-century masters have done sterling service in their turn, in safeguarding, sorting, and sometimes adding to the heap of documents which Richardson and Preston

had begun to accumulate. J.B. Alston, George Duxbury, Nigel Hammond, and, most recently, John Oxlade, have all worked at cataloguing and conserving, and Nigel Hammond, in particular, has made good use of school archive material in his own published works.

The collection is now larger than ever, chiefly because the rapid growth of the School over the last fifty years has generated a considerable mass of record material, which is being scrupulously preserved, but partly also because we continue to look for, and find, items of interest and special significance. Recent acquisitions have included both manuscript and printed copies of speeches by Sir Simon Harcourt, M.P. for Abingdon and later first Viscount Harcourt, and printed works by Peter Heylyn of Lacies Court and the Old Abingdonian poet Richard Graves.

The catalogues are still not complete, or in a condition to be fully useful - it is only by dint of years of detailed grubbing around that the present writer can say with certainty what is in the archives and what is not! - but given a little more effort, the end should come soon. Pictures have been restored and framed, and the collection of books, which constitutes perhaps the most interesting part of the entire archives, having been rescued from the radiators of the Grundy Library, is being overhauled as fast as Messrs. Maltby of Oxford can work through it. The core of this collection is the group of books purchased by subscription in 1743, for the School Library; taken in conjunction with the extant letters of Dr. Johnson, the great lexicographer, who advised a young friend at the School about the progress of his work, they give a remarkably complete view of the standards and methods of an eighteenth-century grammar school. The most disorderly remaining part of the archive at present is probably the collection of photographs - but this will be attended to next. So we have an archive collection worthy of the School's name and long history. What is lacking is any real provision for its display. What a marvellous Millennium project that would be!

M.St. JOHN PARKER.

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Abingdon School Fours at Nuneham, 1870.



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Waste Court: D. Cole		

UK JUNIOR MATHEMATICAL CHALLENGE

Congratulations to boys who took part in this paper, taken by over 120,000 pupils in Britain.

The following Second Year boys won gold medals:

T. Adams, A. Addis, M. Armitage, D. Brown, M. Browne, N. Evans, J. Farrant, O. Flanagan, S. Higazi, J. Howe, J. Mak, R. Mitchell, J. Rowe, T. Spearing, M. Stalker, T. Stockford, G. Stratton, J. Szurko, P. Vasudev, A. White.

The following First Year boys also won gold medals:

T. Bandy, P. Brazier, B. Carter, M. Coleman, B. Crundwell, M. Cullen, C. Johnson, J. Paul, R. Myers, R. Wood, N. Yeung

J. Mak came top in the school, for which he receives a special certificate. He was one of twenty boys out of 120,000 who scored full marks.

INTERNATIONAL MATHEMATICS AWARD:

Congratulations to S. Brookes 2RGH on winning the 1997 Mathematics European Kangaroo. This competition, set by representatives from all participating countries, represents a continental view of the level students of this age can reach.

PHYSICS AWARDS

Further congratulations to S. Brookes, who claimed a Gold Medal in the 1997 Physics Challenge. Our congratulations also go to M. Pagett, who took the Silver and to M. Kom, J. Tarasewicz and B. Griffiths who were awarded Bronze Medals.

M. Lloyd and C. Walford both deserve congratulation for acquiring Gold Medals in the 1997 British Physics Olympiad, as does A. Cairns for his Bronze Medal. J. Towe was commended in the competition.

T.E. UTLEY YOUNG JOURNALIST AWARD

Congratulations to W. Rollin, who won a prestigious second prize of £250 for his witty essay about the Internet.

HIGHER EDUCATION AWARD

Congratulations to J. Winearls who won a Medical Scholarship to St. Mary's of £1200 a year

CRICKET HONOURS

Congratulations to A. Janisch OA, currently playing cricket for Cambridge University against Oxford, having thereby gained his second blue for the sport. He has also recently played for Cambridge's 1st XI.

SWIMMING HONOURS

Congratulations to N. Evans (2RJS), who having won, on behalf of the School, all three events in the Oxfordshire Schools Swimming Championship, will now represent all Oxfordshire schools at the English Schools Championships in September. Having recently been awarded County Colours for Swimming, he will swim for Oxfordshire and North Berkshire at the inter-County finals in October. We wish him luck!

CHESS HONOURS

Congratulations to S. Bough who played for the England Under 14's Chess team against Wales on 31 May. He won one game but lost the other on time.

BENEFACTIONS

We gratefully acknowledge benefactions to the School from :

The late Lieutenant Colonel E.H.F. Sawbridge. Hugh Sawbridge was Director of Music at Abingdon from 1954 to 1960, and established the Sawbridge Choral Prize. He subsequently moved to Haileybury, where he taught until his retirement. He died earlier this year, leaving Abingdon a sum of money "For the furtherance of musical education and the sport of rowing".

Dr. and Mrs. M. Dowling. James Dowling left Abingdon in July 1997. Dr. and Mrs. Dowling have given a generous gift "to be used to help an academically able child, whose parents find it difficult to finance his attendance at Abingdon".

Mr. C. Parker, who retired from the staff in July, has established a prize for Middle School mathematics.

Mr. N.H. Payne, who retired from the staff in July, has presented a gift of trees to be planted on War Memorial Field.

Mr. D.C. Taylor, who retired from the staff in July, has established a prize for drama.

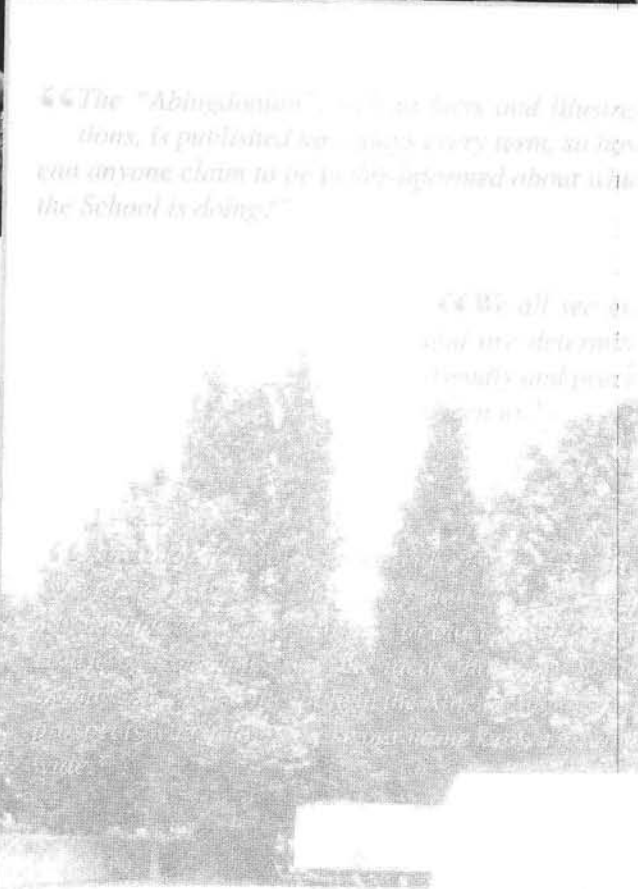
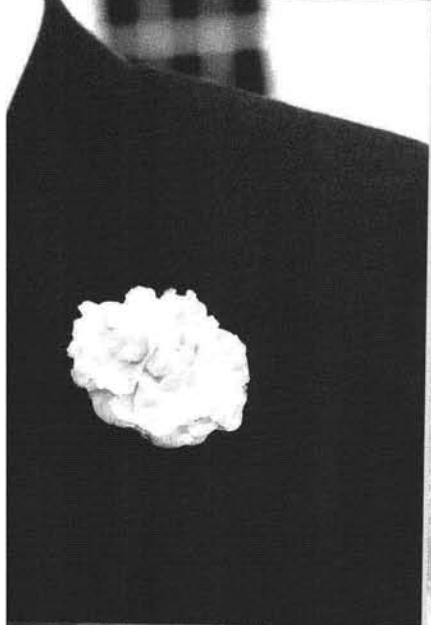
Senior members of the Golf Club, who left school this July, have clubbed together to present a silver trophy, to be competed for annually in a golf match between members of the School and members of the Masters' Common Room.

DOMESTIC STAFF CHARITABLE WORK

It is a well-established habit of the School's domestic staff to raise money for charity. Each term sees a substantial sum produced by such methods as raffles, or by direct donation, under the leadership of the Housekeeper, Mrs. Ivy Harrison.



On 24 April, there was a short and cheerful ceremony in Avernus, when the sum of £100 which had been collected during the course of the spring term, was handed over to Mrs. E. Pilling, a representative of the Abingdon Stroke Club, which provides support and assistance to those who have suffered from strokes. Mrs. Pilling, herself afflicted by a stroke some time ago, was for many years a member of the domestic staff at the School, and she had interesting tales to tell of conditions of work at Abingdon.



Leave

DEFINITION FROM

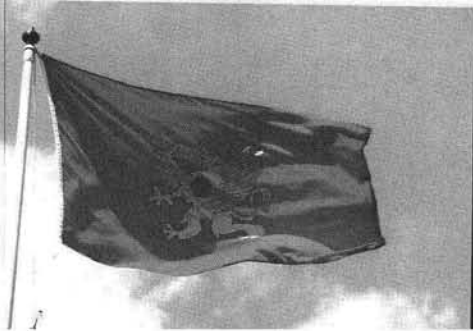
“The “Abingdonian” is a fact and illustrations, is published to us every term, so how can anyone claim to be in the ignorant about what the School is doing?”

“We all see great cause in collaborative activity, and are determined to make the most of the many results and products which are developed by us.”

“The available year spent in the warm glow of the most successful acquisition results that we have yet achieved.”

“The university library are well stocked with what would be available as one could wish - a wealth of enlightening material, who we are subject and affect.”

“One can Christmas, formances, and Orchard” Day a triumph - a cast made up e





s' Day

HEADMASTER'S SPEECH

“The hockey players showed spirit in adversity, but suffered from a certain reluctance to score goals; does Abingdon lack the killer instinct?”

“School Common Rooms are all too often perceived as places of torpor, sourness, or even misery, but the Abingdon Common Room is the reverse of all those things. It is a staff that people seem keen to join, and, still more happily, not usually keen to leave.”



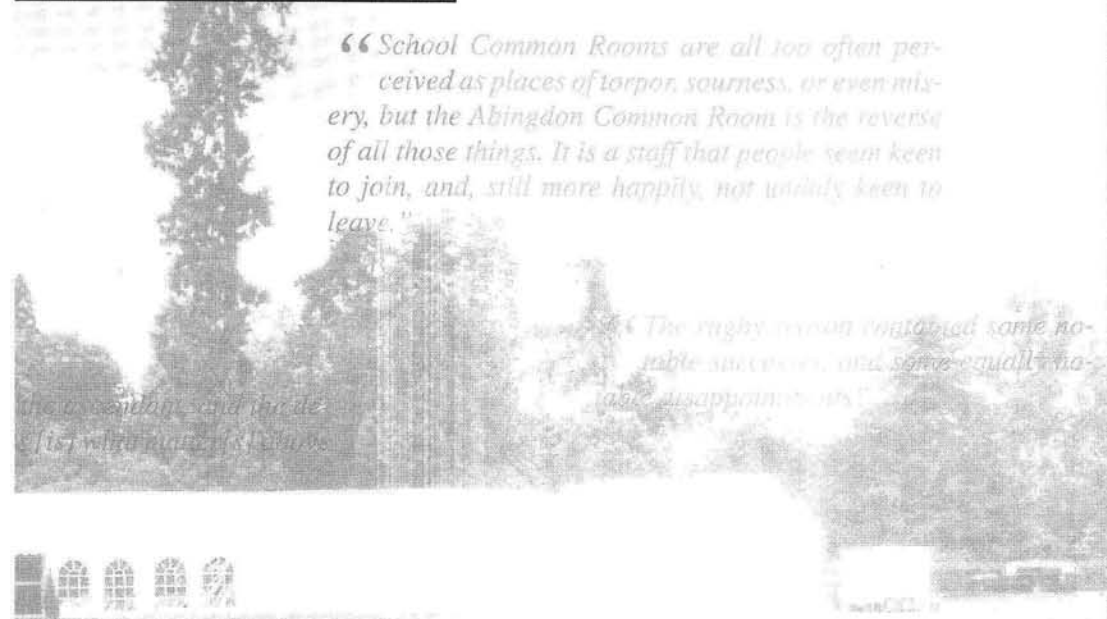
“The rugby team contained some notable successes, and some equally notable disappointments.”



“The cricketers have shown much dash and determination so far this term, scoring freely and taking numerous wickets, and the boat club has brought home a most gratifying haul of silver already, including a trophy of exceptional grandeur.”



“Assisted Places holders have contributed greatly to the life of the School, but they have been by no means uniform in type, or in level of achievement. However, they have, as a group, been decidedly rich in talent. If you take into account their artistic, sporting and serviceable qualities, and we have been much the better for their presence in the School.”



*...the... and the de... list... of...
particularly an exuberant
... some impressive recital per-
... productions of “The Cherry
...’s last major outing, and what
... Lord of the Flies”, acted by a
... of boarders.”
“A highly successful sixth-form lecture pro-
... gramme [has been] matched by a valuable
... e in the number of school society meetings.”*



Performing Arts

THE LORD OF THE FLIES

This play, directed by **Mr. Pettitt** and **Mr. Figgis**, began with a bang, giving the impression of a 'plane crash. Onto a set of camouflage netting and huge curving pinnacles in psychedelic colours emerged two boys. After the initial introduction a large shell, a conch, is blown to summon everyone. A troupe of singing choir boys arrives, along with others from the jungle. Ralph is a charismatic youth played by **R. Rothkopf** who, with the aid of Piggy, a large boy with northern accent and thick glasses played by **B. Wells**, manages to get himself elected to leadership. His opposition is Jack Merrydew, whose claim to leadership is that he is a Prefect. It is clear that these two dislike each other.

Ralph insists they make shelters and fire so that they can get rescued. Jack has other plans and leads his choir off to become the Hunters when the fire sets the island alight. They kill their first pig, accompanied by horrific sounds from **M. Lloyd**. The pig was quite real, fresh from the butchers to add to the horror. The Hunters all seem to visibly devolve into savages with ripped clothing and war paint.

Now fear grips them as lookouts spot movement on the mountain, and the Hunters go out to kill the Beast,

with much dancing and chanting. Simon, played by **D. Benoliel**, goes as well, and realises that the Beast is a dead parachutist. But before he can tell them, the Hunters corner him, and in a blood-mad frenzy stab him to death. Jack rationalises away this murder by claiming the beast can possess any of them. The group breaks up and the Hunters head into the mountains, while the rest remain on the beach.

The Hunters return at night to wreck the shelters and take Piggy's glasses, leaving him blind. Ralph fights with Jack, and separated, Piggy is led up the mountain by calls and shoves, until he reaches the top and is pushed to his death. The Hunters turn on Ralph, after Jack claims the Beast is him. They are about to kill him when an officer, **P. Wells**, arrives. They explain that it was a game, and he leads them off.

The actors were all boarders, and the play captured the character of the novel well. The Directors should be congratulated on an ambitious and terrifying production which clearly showed the depths the human (even the Abingdonian!) spirit can sink to when restraints of authority are removed. "Boys will be boys..."

E. MACDONALD 6WHZ



A GRAND ORCHESTRAL CONCERT

“Grand” is no exaggeration for what turned out to be a very enjoyable and successful evening. The concert saw all three of the school's orchestras in action, starting with the 2nd Orchestra. The orchestra was conducted tonight by three boys from the L6 A-level music set, **D. Hancock**, **A. Morris** and **P. Martin**. The orchestra played very well and the audience was impressed, although there were reservations about our taste in waistcoats!

Next was the Chamber Orchestra, superbly conducted by **Mr. Millard**. They began with Benjamin Britten's "Simple Symphony", which was played very expressively resulting in a moving performance. It was received extremely well by the large number of parents,



teachers and boys who turned up to see this event.

Then, to finish the first half, Chamber Orchestra finished off with Mozart's "Piano Concerto no. 11 in F", with **J. Mendelsohn-Malik** playing solo pianoforte. Although only in the 4th year, Jonathan showed much maturity in his playing, from memory, and he impressed all with his quick fingers and stirring performance.

After the interval, 1st Orchestra took the stage. Although many of the pieces had not been quite up to scratch at the rehearsals they came together on the night. First was Grieg's "Peer Gynt" followed by Schubert's "Unfinished Symphony". Then it was time for "Stephen Foster Revisited": a concerto for Saxophone Quartet,

greatly influenced by jazz. Up stepped **Mr. Millard** once again, temporarily replacing **Mr. Stinton** at the music desk, and after a quick shuffle of the orchestra, the four saxophonists stepped up, namely **R. Fields, T. Inman, W. Burn** and **S. Zaloumis**. It was a thoroughly enjoyable piece both to play and to hear. **Mr. Stinton** took the podium once again, and the evening ended with Elgar's "Pomp and Circumstance No.4". A Grand ending to a Grand concert. As usual, thanks must go to those who organised such a wonderful evening, especially to **Mr. Stinton, Mr. Millard** and **Mr. Elliott** and well done to all those who helped to make the concert such a great success.

P. MARTIN 6WHZ



A COMPOSERS' JOINT CONCERT

On Tuesday April 29th, there was a joint concert of student compositions held in the Yolande Patterson Hall at St. Helen's. The music performed was of an excellent standard, and there was something for everyone to enjoy. The GCSE and A-level compositions offered a variety of musical ideas: from solo works on the violin and piano to vocal works, string trios, percussion pieces and even minimalist experimentations.

The first half opened with a Serenade composed by **K. Cheung** for violin and piano which was followed by a song written by **Julia Rodderick** based on the poem, "The Jabberwocky". **Victoria Maw's** piece, "Waiting for the call" was performed in the first half and made use of a wide range of percussion instruments as well as a telephone! The last piece before the interval was **O. Horton's** composition, "Minimalism", for two violins, viola, cello and piano.

The second half opened with **B. Hunt's** "Trio Sonata" which was followed by **Alison William's** composition, "Tzigane" - a solo work for violin which she performed herself. **D. Pearson's** quartet, "Scherzando" was a lively, interesting piece scored for two violins, viola and piano. **Vanessa Pickford** then performed her work, "The Lady of Shalott" for a three-part female choir with piano accompaniment and a violin obbligato played by Vanessa herself. The concert ended on a happy note with a fun piece by **Fiona Eccles** called, "Gus the Theatre Cat" which was enjoyed by all.

The concert was attended by the music staff of both Abingdon School and St. Helen's who supported their students and enjoyed it as much as the performers did. It provided an excellent opportunity for all music students to either perform their own works or hear those of others and, overall, was a big success.

JENNI MATTHEWS, ST. HELEN'S

AN INFORMAL CONCERT

This event was another very successful one which the music department will be proud to remember. These concerts, although informal, are an excellent forum in which pupils can display their talent. They also have a chance to perform their exam. pieces, prior to the Associated Board Exams.

The concert was well attended by both boys and parents who spent their lunch hour in Studio 1 to hear the concert. This venue provides a comfortable atmosphere to which most boys are accustomed. Performers in the concert came from every year, including **Paul Soulsby** who came in, after having finished his A-Levels, to take part in the concert. Other excellent renditions were given by **E. Mason** playing Bach's Gigue in E on the violin and **B. Hancock** who played Handel's Sonatina on the Bassoon.

The concert was a great success and was received very well. It goes to show that there are some very strong musicians developing throughout the school.

A. MORRIS 6CMM

CHAPEL CHOIR

The chapel choir has completed another successful year, culminating with Evensongs in several very distinguished places. Not only have the choir trekked all the way up to Worcester Cathedral but we have also sung closer to home in Magdalen College Chapel, Oxford. We have further contributed to many school services, including more notably this term: Ascension Day, Leavers' Day, and St. Petertide. The repertoire has been challenging enough to stretch the capabilities (and ranges) of all the singers in the choir, and pitched at a level high enough to make every performance an adrenaline rush. We tackled settings of the Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis by Darke, Purcell, and Stanford, and the anthems "My beloved spake" by Hadley, "O how glorious" by Harewood, and "The record of John" by Gibbons.

Despite the decimation of rehearsals during the exam period, the choir still came through smiling. Thanks go to the long suffering organists and conductors, **Mr. Millard** and **Mr. Elliott**, who swap roles as and when it suits them, and the continued presence of **Mr. Burrow**, who helps to boost the bass line. Of course, all the choir members deserve recognition for their commitment to singing throughout the term. They are too numerous to mention each by name, but they are the ones who are habitually late for registration on a Monday, Thursday and Friday afternoon.

We are always on the look out for new singers to join the choir, especially from the lower years. The upper parts need a steady influx of new talent, as voices break and the choir becomes bottom heavy. Anybody interested should contact a member of the choir, or go direct to **Mr. Elliott** or **Mr. Millard**.

DJ HANCOCK 6CMM

ABINGDON

ACADEMICALS

... and some of you still do not know who we are! You are forgiven as our appearances this term have been limited. The group comprising **Mr. Pope**, **Mr. Salmon**, **S. Capper**, **W. Burn**, **E. Allen**, **M. O'Donovan** and **O. Smith**, sang at the Foundation Dinner and in Assembly to celebrate Remembrance Day. Whilst the latter was restricted to the sixteenth century composer, Thomas Tallis' work; the former was far more diverse, subjects including drunken sailors and tall, slender Lasses!

The ratio between rehearsals and performances has led to a far greater amount of repertoire than was required being learned. Rehearsals, rather informal as they have been, have been enjoyable: next term they will however be different as half (3) of the group will have fled!, **Mr. Salmon** to the princely heights of Reading Bluecoats and **S. Capper** and **W. Burn** off to Cambridge, choral scholarships in hand. The best of luck is wished to them all as the thinned out group looks forward to another tuneful year.

O. SMITH 6CMM

ABINGDON

SCHOOL PLAYS JAZZ

This compact disc is, with the exception of the cassette recorded by the Chapel Choir some years ago, the first commercial recording of music at Abingdon. It surely represents the pinnacle of the many recent achievements of the Big Band, who are the main performers on the disc, and reflects the growing interest and developing skills in jazz playing that have been clearly evident at the school for some years now.

The recording of a compact disc is a major undertaking, and requires careful preparation, not least concerning the choice of music. The contents of this disc offers a wide spectrum of styles and contrasts. Nine of the seventeen tracks are performed by the Big Band; there are also four tracks played by the Jazz Ensemble, and three from the Saxophone Quartet interpolated at intervals between the tracks of the full band to provide variety. Perhaps the total sum of this is a rather disparate collection of music, but the performers are able to focus their talents in ever new directions.

The recording itself is of a high quality; the venue was the Amey Hall, but the close recording techniques used serve to give more the feeling of a studio. The balance tends to make the saxes and brass less prominent than when heard live, but the blend is good. The playing is together; considerable effort must have been put in to get the level of precision of the chorus saxophones and brass to the high standard attained in, for example, "How high the moon". Andy Bush is to be congratulated for his coaching here.

Many individual players also shine - the policy of using lots of different soloists works well, showing a number of different approaches to the art of improvising melodic material. Underpinning them is the ever-stable rhythm section, which remains hugely impressive throughout the disc.

Perhaps what comes over most of all is the enthusiasm of the playing, not least in the final track, "Tequila". At occasional moments one remembers that this music is played by boys, none of whom are over the age of 18, yet the overall achievement level is astonishing and the product a disc which is highly entertaining. The more I have heard this disc, the more impressed I have become. If you don't have a copy already, then don't delay in getting one - there would be nothing more pleasing than to see the sales rocket, when this is so obviously deserved.

H. MORRIS OA



From left to right, the Music Staff: Michael Stinton, Mariette Pringle, Andy Bush, Simon Curren, Richard Elliott & James Millard

Clubs and Societies

SQUASH CLUB - FOUNDED 1997

Squash: A game for accountants when it's too wet to play golf, is the general opinion of this sport. Embarrassingly enough this is absolutely true as far as I am concerned, but the sport is not restricted to people like myself. Abingdon School Squash Club was founded in April, but had been unofficially running for some weeks previously. Levels of membership soared as people realised this traditionally yuppie sport has a compelling attraction.

Already the talent of some members is becoming apparent. **K. Kobayashi** of badminton fame is proving a difficult player to beat, and **A. Laarson** has an irritating habit of pulling off the most extraordinary shots to defeat his opponents. Other stars include **H. King** and **N. Cameron** who prefer to adopt tactics instead of relying on blind luck like most of us. There is rarely a break-time when the fives courts don't resound to the thud of squash balls, with dedicated players such as **R. King**, **M. Brown** and **S. Rowe** competing for the recently introduced Raspberry Cup.

A very big thank you to **Mr. Hamilton** without whom the club wouldn't have officially existed. Also thanks to **D. Wyndham-Lewis** who has provided both balls and laughter as he relentlessly continues to injure himself and his equipment in this dangerous sport.

G. BALL 6AMS

GOLF CLUB

Our run in the H.M.C. Foursomes annual competition came to an end at the hands (or clubs) of Radley in a competitive match played at the end of April at Frilford Heath. Abingdon was represented by **J. Willats** and **J. Howe-Davies**, **T. Burton** and **E. Russell**, and **A. Ferguson** and **T. Fleming**. We enjoyed two 'friendlies' against the Oratory, one at Frilford and the other 'away' at Mapledurham. **A. Cutler**, **O. Smith**, **M. Howe-Davies**, **A. Stewart**, **J. Weeks** and **A. Wilson** represented the school in these two matches, both just lost in close encounters. St. Edward's had a very strong team this year so our victory over them 2-1, with one match halved, was particularly pleasing. Our team of the three James, Alastair, Luke Altmann, the two Toms and Andrew has been one of our strongest for many years, and I am grateful to them all for their excellent courtesy and company both on and off the course. Their good play and humour was again commented upon by those of the Common Room who somehow emerged with a 2-1 victory, with one half, to claim

the (very kindly presented by the boys) 'Payne Trophy'!

A Middle School team also played Radley on their 9 hole course and, for the first time in this fixture, gained a victory. **P. Edwards**, **R. Smith**, **T. Bartlett**, **T. Fleming** and **A. Wilson**, with last minute help from **J. Weeks** all played well, a good augury for next year.

T. Fleming has been representing the County at his age group; he and **A. Wilson** should ensure some successes in the next three years, as will **J. Weeks** and **M. Howe-Davies** in their last year. Full colours were awarded to **L. Altmann**, **E. Russell** and **J. Weeks**; half colours to **M. Howe-Davies**, **T. Fleming** and **A. Wilson**. The Common Room again played an enjoyable 8-a-side match with TASS fathers (no mothers yet?) at Frilford Heath at the end of term, winning 3 - 1.

N.H.PAYNE

ROLEPLAYING SOCIETY

Wargaming Society, newly rechristened Role Playing Games Society, is an obscure organisation that meets every Wednesday afternoon in Room 4 to play fantasy or role-playing games, involving cards, miniatures or cardboard counters. There are about ten of us in the society, whose membership tends to fluctuate. The atmosphere is very relaxed. Members, provided that they pay the £5 membership fee, may borrow games from the Society from week to week.

Whilst there are no scheduled tournaments with other schools, there is of course a spirit of competition within the Society. It is very fun and enjoyable and does not deserve the stigma that has attached to the image of the typical wargamer. Everyone is always welcome to turn up and try their hand at any of our wide selection of games.

C. SCHMIDT 6AMS

BREWING SOCIETY

This term fresh blood entered the Brewing Society, to give a renewed vigour to the serious business of creating increasingly potent alcoholic beverages. Since the society is generally restricted to pupils in the upper sixth alone, members change every year, the last leaving their legacy for the next year to marvel at. This year was no exception: with trepidation, our five members - **C. Cook**, **D. Adams**, **A. Hall**, **W. Austin** and myself - peeked into the cramped cupboard that housed the last society's experiments.

In their last act as brewers, the old members had given us a tour of the society as a whole. They enthusias-

tically pointed out successes, but now we noticed some of the spectacular failures of last year. Still, such is the nature of Brewing (though nature isn't a word I'd associate with some past brews) and we knew we would be little better in the early stages.

With this in mind, we started on our own, new brew - a medium dry white wine - from a Boots' wine kit, supposedly completely fail-safe. This was undertaken with the experienced guidance of **Mr. Raffell**. There are some early doubts: like this June weather, cloudy just isn't a strong enough word to describe it. However, we go on, anxiously awaiting the day when we can taste our first creation... The saga continues...

D. BAXTER 6MJM

SCHOOLS CHALLENGE



Schools Challenge is one of the highlights of my year. This year, 1997, saw us (**J. Peterson** [captain], **C. Schmidt**, and juniors **A. Wilson** and **J. Haworth**, all managed by **Dr. Zawadzki**) reach heights not touched by an Abingdon team for many a long year.

We won outright regionally, beating Queen Anne's, Caversham; Aylesbury GS, and then a very strong Bedford team, whom we vanquished by only ten points when we scraped home on a bonus question. In the inter-regional round we convincingly defeated the East Anglian champions, Bishop's Stortford College, who tried to overawe us by displaying their silverware in the competition room, and by summoning a large crowd of spectators.

We were then given the honour of hosting the National Finals in our very own Charles Maude Room. The National Quarter-Finals were played in an atmosphere of mounting tension: we narrowly defeated the Royal Belfast Academical Institution (770-620). We broke for lunch, reconvening in high spirits to meet King Edward's School, Birmingham in the Semi-Finals. Unfortunately, they succeeded in beating us, and that rather badly - by 820 points to 480. In the Finals, they were beaten in their turn by Merchant Taylors', Crosby, so we do not have the satisfaction of being able to say that we had lost to the winners. That said, our effort paid off, as to get to the National Semi-Finals is impressive in itself.

C. SCHMIDT 6AMS



PUBLIC SPEAKING COMPETITION

This year the competition proved to be one of the most popular and heavily competed ever. A little under a hundred people took part. Unsurprisingly, therefore, there was a wide-range of subject matter. These topics ranged from football teams, designer labels and the Internet to astronomy, Celtic music and the history of the guitar.

In the end, however, the 33 teams were whittled down to two: one in each of the junior and senior categories. **Mr. Evans'** tutor-group (**A. Thapa**, **N. Munro** and **J. Dowling**) won in the senior category. Thanks must be given to all those members of staff who gave up much of their valuable time to judge the vast number of matches.

S. PAVLOVICH VI JFH

DEBATING AT WYCOMBE ABBEY

The Girls at Wycombe Abbey School decided to mark the end of their debating year by inviting members of the debating societies from Abingdon, Winchester, Radley and another school near Slough to a balloon debate followed by dinner.

Our two lucky contestants were **G. Mills**, whose portrayal of Gary and Tony from "Men Behaving Badly" was highly amusing yet startlingly accurate; and **C. Schmidt**, who won many a lady's heart in his typecast role as Casanova. Our rivals were swept aside as Charles took first place in emphatic style and Gareth finished a creditable second.

The guests were then escorted by the girls to the dining room for a first class meal and the chance to sample the house wine. The conversation flowed and many friendships were made. I'm sure the Abingdon contingent wish to join me in thanking the girls for a wonderful evening. Special thanks must go to **Dr. Zawadzki** for arranging our part in the evening, and to **Mr. Mearns** for kindly agreeing to drink orange juice and to act as our chauffeur for the evening.

The Abingdon representatives were: **J. Wearne, C. Schmidt, S. Karim, T. Myatt, V. Lee, C. Hignell, J. Weeks, R. Franklin, E. MacDonald, H. Allnut, and G. Mills.**

C. HIGNELL 6WHZ

SAILING ON THE JOLIE BRISE

In the Easter Holidays four boys from Abingdon and four girls from St. Helen's went on a sailing trip aboard the Jolie Brise. After seeing how the boat worked we slept for the night so that we could be ready for an early start. We left Portsmouth the next morning and decided to head straight for France. The crossing was very windy and we made good time. At one point it was so rough that two people were required at the helm in order to keep the boat straight.

We arrived at Honfleur in the early morning and from there we sailed to Cherbourg. Because of light winds this took longer than expected. Our arrival at Cherbourg attracted quite a lot of attention from the locals as the Jolie Brise was the most beautiful ship moored there.

From there it was back across the channel to Portsmouth, the skipper's home town. This was the last stop before we returned to Portsmouth. On the way back we had to clean the boat, ready for the next group. Special mention should be made of **W. Bourne-Taylor's** skill at shining.

The trip was enjoyable and at the same time taught us a lot about teamwork. We would like to thank **Mr. Townsend** for organising the trip and for making it so much fun.

S. ROWE 6MJM

FRENCH EXCHANGE

Our arrival was marred by several baggage losses, British Airways leaving a lot to be desired. After a one hour flight from Heathrow to Lyon, almost a two hour bus trip from there to Grenoble, and a 5.00 am start we were ready to sleep, but it was still only 4.00 pm. We then went with **Mr. Willerton** to greet our exchange partners.

All this took place on a Sunday; we still had five days of school to look forward to. "Le Lycée" was, to say the least, very different from Abingdon. It is a modern erection, somewhat resembling a shopping mall. As you walk down the centre there are not only classrooms on either side, but also vending machines, cafes selling beer and huge halls for smoking. The onus is clearly on the students to motivate themselves, far more than in England. There is nothing like our sort of pressure on the students to do well, especially as they only have one set of public exams (The Baccalaureat at 18).

First impressions of Grenoble revealed a mixture of breathtaking countryside and the beautiful architecture

of the city, which one could witness from high up in the Alps. With the term finished, families and partners had a chance for some sightseeing. Mont Blanc was impressive, as were the streets of Grenoble.

Overall the trip was entertaining and constructive, and thoroughly to be recommended.

N. CAMERON 6BF

GERMAN LINK ANNIVERSARY

At the beginning of the Summer term, **Mr. Pettit** led a team of three A-Level German students: **A. Johnson** from Abingdon and **F. Calbone** and **C. Yong** from St. Helen's to Bielefeld in Germany. The nature of the visit was to continue the strong link with the Ratsgymnasium in Bielefeld, and to aid the German students in a production (in English) of Pinter's short play 'The Room'. The German host families were very kind in lodging the travellers for two nights of the stay. The other four nights were spent in Langeoog.

Langeoog is a German holiday island on the north coast, where the population is limited and only environmentally friendly amenities are used. Fortunately, the Ratsgymnasium had previously bought a large house similar to a Youth Hostel, which the school regularly uses for trips to the island. Both the English and German parties were able to sleep in the house and take part in the daily sporting and social events, as well as working hard on the drama.

The English were able to help the Germans with their pronunciation and use their dramatic knowledge to help to create more effect. At one point, a German teacher was brought to tears by the way the pupils conducted themselves and spoke English so fluently; this brought astonishingly good results to all of the performances. The working atmosphere was relaxed but all showed incredible effort and commitment and should feel proud of what they achieved. This visit made us many new friends and highlighted the excellent relations between the two schools.

I would like to thank **Mr. Pettit**, who put in many hours to organise the trip.

A. JOHNSON 6MJM



YOUNG ENTERPRISE

This year's lower sixth Young Enterprise company was called Flair, and had a somewhat turbulent but relatively successful time!

We started in the September of 1996 with the appointment of directors. We decided to appoint **F. Dutton** Managing Director, a decision about which all were delighted! It's the job no-one wants as you have to present the end of year report! The other important appointment was me to the position of Company Secretary, an office with plenty of potential for work!

We had to decide on a name and a product very quickly as Open Day was approaching so we settled for clocks and candlesticks. We had two people capable of production in this area, which proved a number too small. After several mistakes and lack of commitment from many in the company we decided to change our product to radios imported from Hong Kong. This taught myself and Lawrence Chan a lot about import tariffs and VAT, as well as testing my Chinese calligraphy skills!

We enjoyed a fair amount of success with our new

product selling many credit card radios within the school, at the Young Enterprise Trade Fair and at the school's TASS fair. These selling opportunities taught us all a great deal about relating with people, and having the gall to just go up to someone and try to sell them a product they usually don't want!

We then tried other more grand tactics. We wrote to a number of bigger companies and associations to get big orders, and singularly failed. It enabled me to use my skills on computers to create databases and use mailing programmes, but it taught us all a bigger lesson. To sell you need personal contact- sending a load of paper to someone at a huge company gets you nowhere.

At the end of the day we made a bit of money, and we had gained a lot of experience of business on the way. Young Enterprise really is a good opportunity and I urge everyone who can to take it. It teaches you about commitment, motivation and team work. It's the old cliché I know, but together everyone achieves more, and if we had spread the work more widely we could have done a lot more.

Thank you to **Mr. Evans** for running Young Enterprise for this year and also to our ever loyal advisers Bonnie MacKensie, Dennis Robbins and Paul Unsworth! Young Enterprise is great for your CV if you want to go into business or finance, but it can be good fun as well!

R. FRANKLIN 6JEF

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TEN TORS 97 45 MILE TEAM

When the 45 mile team left for Dartmoor on Friday 16th May we had little idea or comprehension of the physical or mental test we were about to undergo. As well as **Mr. Haworth**, Crescent House Matron, **Mrs. Basham** volunteered to drive a minibus for which we are all very grateful. The team consisted of: Team Leader **R. Bryniarski**, **N. McConnell**, **E. Knowles**, **A. Hambridge**, **E. Wagner** and **D. Hancock**.

After a rigorous kit check and our brief, when we received our route, we retired to our tent to get as much sleep as possible before the event. We were woken in the morning to the sound of the Rocky Theme tune and after a superbly cooked breakfast of bacon and eggs we headed to the start for 7.00 am. We had to complete a distance of 45 miles on a certain route passing over ten tors with an overnight stop somewhere along the way. After sweltering heat and torrential rain we finally reached our eighth tor at 8.30 pm having covered nearly 30 miles in 13.5 hours of solid walking.

Getting up in the morning after the most tiring day of your life we discovered was not easy. Despite blisters and rucksack sores we were on the road by 7.00 am. After completing our last two tors we arrived at the finish at around 1.00 pm. This was an incredibly satisfying experience with hundreds of people clapping as we passed between them. We came in 4th place out of over 150 teams in the 45 mile event. We hope to complete the 55 mile event next year.

R. BRYNIARSKI 6MJM & N. MCCONNELL 6BF



TEN TORS 97 55 MILE TEAM

Team: **A. Howkins** (Team Leader) **M. Jones** **J. Dowling** **C. Walford** **P. Bradley** **C. Purcell**
Team manager: **Mr Haworth**

Friday 16th May-. The team left school at 1350 hrs, after some panic already, over incomplete kit- Four hours of discussion over the merits of three-way breathable waterproofs followed before we arrived in Dartmoor. After

checking in, and scrutineering - where it was just our lack of torches that gave the army cause for concern: it started raining in typical Dartmoor fashion, turning the whole field into a quagmire. After a hearty meal, everyone piled into the tent to get as much sleep as possible.

Saturday: At 0430 hrs. we were awoken again by the inspiring music from the tannoy, with classics such as Chariots of fire, the Rocky tune and Tina Turner. After breakfast, we plodded up to the start, where the Bishop of Exeter sent us on our way with the Ten Tors prayer. At 0705, we scrambled through the 2394 other people on the moor at the start, towards our first tor: Our well planned route cunningly involved a marsh, and several team members had wet feet that would last for the next 54 miles, but at least it was sunny, and we could see where we were going.

One by one, we negotiated the checkpoints, stopping only to check the team through, eat chocolate and chew painkillers. After tor four, at around 1500 hrs. it started raining. Our good pace thus far slowed to almost a crawl, and we wished that more of the wispy grass had burnt in the fires. This comparatively light "shower" was enough to prove that even the most expensive waterproofs are fallible.

At 1715 we passed the 45 mile team at the notorious Hartor Tors (checkpoint five). None seemed to have even the first sign of a blister.

After twelve hours and 50 km of walking, we reached our most southerly tor, and we knew that we were more than half-way but just when it seemed the worst was over, the fog set in thick and fast. The light was already failing, and to add to the confusion, we were walking on a road that wasn't on the map. Teams appeared out of the fog, only to disappear again on their respective routes.

Suddenly, the road stopped, and we weren't quite in the right place. Fortunately, the roar of a passing army vehicle helped us locate the track which led to our seventh tor. Just before sunset, at 2100 hrs, we pitched our camp, giving the team the first chance to see how bad the feet were. Christian's feet had almost doubled in size, and were not a pretty sight at all. Food was eaten quickly, and we crawled into the dry comfort of sleeping bags.

Sunday: We all woke at 0430 and struck camp. With uncanny precision Adrian checked us in at South Hessary tor just after opening time (0605). The team plodded on through blazing sunshine, round a seemingly endless clockwise hill, that gave chronic chafing and almighty blisters. It took most of the day to pass the last three tors, but as we neared the camp, we were cheered on by spectators, all of us happy in the knowledge that we were one of very few intact teams to complete the event. We got back to camp at 1545, where Mr. Howkins (Snr) provided some intoxicating liquid refreshment for the team. The 45 mile team was already waiting at the finish, and we stumbled over to receive our medals and certificate. After sitting down for a short time, the painkillers seemed to wear off and most of the team was rendered immobile. We quickly decided to return to civilisation.

P. BRADLEY VIDLS

SPORTS

1ST XI

The season began with the fixture against M.C.S, usually a highly competitive game, but which unfortunately fell foul to the weather. Games were managed against Oratory, and, for the first time against tough opposition at Eton. The following match against Reading was cancelled, but the sun did appear for the popular fixture against the Berkshire Gentlemen. Batting first, the Berkshire Gentlemen were restricted by some good bowling to an achievable total, helped on their way by our own **Mr. Hamilton**. After a good start, Abingdon lost several quick wickets, to fall short of the required total. The match against Lord William's School progressed until tea-time, with Abingdon batting first, reaching 120-5, **J. Horton** scoring 50. During tea the pitch was subject to a downpour of hailstones, which led to the match being abandoned.

The second half of the season saw a loss in a 35 over game against Bloxham. Again Abingdon's start was solid, but the accurate Bloxham bowlers restricted us to 121, a total which was difficult to defend. However, our bowlers kept the run rate down, making a close finish, with Bloxham winning inside the final over. One of the best performances of the season came against St. Edward's, where excellent bowling by **T. Jones** and **J. Church** kept their total within our reach. In reply, our batsmen excelled, especially **J. Horton** (78) and a quickfire 38 from **T. Jones**, but unfortunately Abingdon fell 20 runs short of the 210 required, thus ending in a draw.

The matches against Pangbourne, RGS High Wycombe, and the touring side from South Africa were all cancelled, but the weather did allow the important fixture against the M.C.C. to proceed. Batting first, the strong M.C.C. side were bowled out for 120, **I. Grant** taking 3 wickets, **T. Jones** and **A. Pike** claiming 2 wickets each. What seemed an easy target proved much harder, with tight M.C.C. bowling creating mistakes

from our batsmen as they tried to force runs, resulting in Abingdon being bowled out for 100, 20 runs short of victory.

The final three games of the season were also affected by weather, with only the game against Highgate being completed. In the game against U.C.S., which was abandoned at tea, **T. Allen** and **R. Smith** claimed 5 wickets apiece, thus keeping the opposition to 153 all out. In the final match against Highgate, Abingdon made 163, **T. Evans** scoring 54. Some good bowling from **I. Grant** (4 wickets) and **T. Jones** (2 wickets) kept Highgate to 98-8, producing a draw.

The players would like to thank **Mr. Broadbent** and **Mr. Sharp** for their time in organising the team, and to the parents who made such excellent teas.

Players who represented the 1st XI: **T. Jones**, (capt.) **T. Allen**, **J. Church**, **H. Dorling**, **P. Edwards**, **T. Evans**, **I. Grant**, **J. Horton**, **G. Jones**, **R. Janisch**, **P. Makings**, **A. Pike**, **E. Ryder**, **R. Smith**, **W. Smith**, **J. Thomson**.

I. GRANT 6CMM

2ND XI

This has been a season ravaged by rain, with only four games being completed. We beat Oratory and Thame convincingly, lost a nail biter against St. Edward's, and were beaten by Eton.

Despite the soggy summer, there has been a good team spirit throughout, with some notable individual performances. **W. Smith** proved to be the find of the season with his accurate off spinners and cool batting coming in handy. **R. Janisch** built on last year's foundations with a couple of attractive knocks. **T. Evans** also proved himself to be back to his belligerent best with a breath-taking innings against St. Edward's. **J. Cook** was a very good opening bowler and an unorthodox middle-order batsman. Despite the wet weather, it was an enjoyable season, with much promise for next year.

P. MAKINGS 6AMS

3RD XI

Despite a poor summer, weather wise, the thirds were able to enjoy a relatively successful season under the coaching of **Mr. Mansfield** and the able captaincy of **A. Smith**.

A combination of excellent bowling and fielding saw us overcome Oratory on their own ground in our first match of the season, despite a less than average batting total. This was followed by defeat against a very strong Eton team. However, the high point of the rain-interrupted season was victory at home to Magdalen College in front of a surprisingly large crowd. Unfortunately, rain denied us our chance to play Radley, with only three balls being bowled. We look forward to the corresponding fixture next year with keen anticipation.

C. HIGNELL 6WHZ

JUNIORS AXI

P 9 W 2 L 4 D 3

Rain, rain, and more rain sums up this season, with many matches having to be abandoned as draws or cancelled. We also suffered two broken arms and a fractured thumb! The highlight was getting to the semi-final of the Lords Taverners Trophy but attempts to play this match against MCS were thwarted, inevitably, by the weather.

The outstanding performances were an excellent half century by **O. Thomas** against Eton, an unbeaten stand of 138 between Oliver (83 not out) and **P. Thomas** (41 not out) in our 10 wicket win over Gosford Hill, and **A. Fraser's** seven wicket haul against St. Edward's.

Team from- **P. Thomas** (capt.), **O. Thomas** (wkt.), **I. Downie**, **A. Winearls**, **M. Beckett**, **M. Walker**, **J. Mather**, **A. Hutchinson**, **T. Garside**, **K. Roche**, **A. Fraser**, **R. Anderson**.

Also Played: **L. Pearce**, **T. Matheson**

R.P.FINCH

JUNIOR COLTS AXI

P7 W3 D4 L0

The above record does not flatter this team; full of potential in all departments, it was seldom in sight of defeat and, but for the vagaries of the weather, showed every sign of improving its 'momentum'.

Each of the players made significant contributions at some stage and all have the capacity to become specialists as their skills develop. **E. Webber** is an accomplished opener, **T. Bracher** has the technique to prove an effective complement to him and a middle order of **S. Dexter**, **S. Balch** and **J. Gardner** will serve many stylish runs. **T. Fleming** makes a suitably destructive all rounder to back up the wicket taking of fast bowler **O. Norman-Longstaff** and **D. Mitchell** (leg spin). **B. Wells**, **B. Hewett** and **A. Hunter** are useful utility players whose fielding and support play will prove critical to the future success of the team.

Also crucial, probably more so, is the issue of teamwork; **S. Dexter** (who also scored two good fifties) showed imagination and awareness as a captain: as the boys learn to concentrate their efforts and fire-power on the destruction of the opposition (rather than dissipating energy "internally"), these attributes can be fully exploited. I have high hopes for their future and will follow their progress with interest.

J.F.HENDERSON

JUNIORS BXI

The season suffered, of course, from an inclement summer, but we did get off to a sunny start. The opening match, against Oratory, turned out to be the best match. Batting first we declared at 140 for 7, with **M. Beckett** scoring 51. Oratory struggled to 40 for 4, but then a fine stand of 80 runs took them to within sight of victory. A flurry of wickets looked like turning the game our way, but Oratory's tail managed to see them through to victory.

The rest of the season was really a case of playing sides that were too strong for us. Eton DXI scored 210 for 4 and St. Edward's 203 for 6. In between those fixtures we played a somewhat closer match against

M.C.S. Batting first we scored an inadequate 93, with only **S. Sargent** making a decent score of 25. Sam had previously scored 48 against Eton. The Magdalen opening pair put on 40 and, although we began to take wickets, they had no trouble reaching our total.

Other fixtures that might well have provided closer matches were lost to the weather. Everyone tried hard and **T. Matheson** did his best to keep everyone going in the face of adversity.

P. J. WILMORE

U13

Won 3	Drawn 1
Tied 1	Lost 8

The above disguises some very close and exciting finishes which could have gone the other way. Abingdon's main problem, which persisted throughout the season, was a lack of consistency in all departments.

But there were some good batting performances : **Armitage** -78 n.o. to secure victory over Newbury; **Blackshaw** -24 invaluable runs to avoid a thrashing at Berkhamsted; **Gardner** - 60, **Desai** - 49; **Keeling** - 26 against a formidable St. Edward's attack. **Andrews**, **Higazi**, **Browne** and **Timberlake** also made useful contributions.

The bowlers worked hard throughout against some very sound batting sides who gave little away to chance. **Andrews**, **Armitage**, **Gardner**, **Keeling** and **Blackshaw** were all successful, although we always found it difficult to bowl out the opposition. **White**, **Morris**, **Peacock** and **Desai** gave good support.

Straton and **Vesudev** gained much experience behind the stumps and several players developed their fielding technique, in particular **Fenn**, **Wheeler** and **Farrant**. The enthusiasm shown by all on the field was impressive and they worked hard for each other.

In the 'B' team matches the following stood out as reliable and effective : **Roberts**, **Marsh**, **Greaves**, **Upcott** and **Osborne-King**. We congratulate **Armitage**, **Andrews**, **Keeling** and **Gardner** for well deserved colours.

N.H.PAYNE & P.K.H.RAFFELL

ROWING

This half of the season has been very successful for the boat club with crews competing effectively at all age levels, many long into the summer holidays at the National Championships or at international events representing Great Britain.

The regatta season kicked off with GB trials in London at the Docklands course, with racing in pairs to select oarsmen for the final trials at the end of the term. **D. Kingsley**, **R. Pinckney**, **E. Russell** and **T. Frankum** were all chosen from the two races, with **G. Harrington**, **D. Livingstone** and **J. Strong** picked from Ghent regatta in Belgium for a race-off before the trials. Poplar Spring regatta followed the next day, with the senior four winning the coxless fours from Hampton by two lengths, though unfortunately the eight did not perform as well, recording the second fastest qualifying time, only to come last in the final. The J15s put in a creditable performance to come second in their eight, in an event which is especially competitive at that age group.

Wallingford regatta followed two weeks later; both the first and second eights were entered for two events. The second eight were unlucky to draw strong crews in their events, being knocked out by Radley and Eton's second eights, which won Nat. Schools and Schools Head respectively. The first eight made their way through to the finals of both their events, putting out St. Edward's first eight in the process in an exciting semi-final, but a lack of fitness was apparent, and the crew could not respond to powerful challenges from Eton's first eight and Furnival boat club and lost by only a small amount in each race in a disappointing day.

Our spirits were lifted by our annual trip to Ghent regatta, with both the senior squad and the J16s being represented. The senior four won the junior 4- and 4+ events over the weekend, shrugging off Westminster, Kingston, Hampton, Eton and a Belgium national four on the way to the gold medal. The J16 four got a bronze in their event, and a bronze was also won in the junior coxless pairs, an event that was a benchmark for future

trialists for the national team.

At Bedford Regatta the J15s crashed the brand new eight into the finish bridge, meaning that it had to be sent back to Aylings and a replacement borrowed until that one was fixed.

The boat club had a full turn out for the National Schools Regatta, which is seen by many as the major event of the rowing calendar. The first eight broke the course record by seven seconds and were put in the middle lanes along with Hampton, the other heat winner. In the final the wind conditions were such that crews in the outer lanes had a great advantage in being shielded from the wind, which meant that we were left behind at the start, in a position that we could not recover from. Other crews had similar bad luck, and unfortunately no medals were won in the eights this year. We had to wait until the last race on the Sunday for a good result, with the senior four winning championship coxless fours from Hampton and Shrewsbury in the quickest time of the day.

Bedford Star regatta two weeks later marked considerable improvement for the boat club into the second half of term, with successes in all age groups. The J16s won J16 eights from Eton, the J15s won their eight and both A and B fours events, and the J14s also notched up their first win in J14 octuples. At Reading Amateur the first eight put out Hampton in the second round of Senior 2 eights, but lost to St. Edward's in the final. The novice four soared through their first round impressively, had a row over in the second round, and lost out by a foot to Monkton Combe's first four. The senior four beat Oxford University and Molesey to win Senior 1 coxless fours.

Marlow regatta saw the first eight cruise safely into their final with a win over local Marlow clubs in Senior 1 eights, but they went out in the first round of the sprints to Isis, containing five blues, despite leading them from the start. In the final we beat Eton's first eight by over three lengths in a trial run with new blades, but predictably lost to Goldie by about the same distance. The J15s came second in their event, but the J16s were unfortunately knocked out in the first

round, having attended prize giving about half an hour beforehand. Reading Town meant a win for the second eight in Senior 3 eights and also for the Novice four. The J15s won their eight and the A four category, and are training towards the National Championships in the hope of more victories.

Neither the first nor second eight needed to qualify for the Princess Elizabeth at Henley this year, but they were unlucky to meet St. Paul's early on in the draw. The second eight were knocked out; the first eight dispatched King's Chester, but then lost to St. Paul's. St. Paul's went on to win the P.E. We had also entered a four for the Visitors' Cup, the first round being against Rollins University, USA. During a practice outing at lunchtime, we managed inadvertently to collide with Temple Island at some speed, snapping off a large section of the bow. After being rescued, we had to borrow Matthew Pinsent and Steve Redgrave's spare boat for the rest of the event, a situation they didn't seem happy about. In the race we were passing the enclosures and were leading by a length, when the two crews accidentally clashed blades in neutral water ten metres from the line, and a rerow was called. In this we led from start to finish, resisting strong pushes from the opposing crew, to win by one and a half lengths.

On the Friday we beat Latymer Upper school by a large margin, and met Imperial College in the semi-final, where we experienced steering difficulties and collided with them after ten strokes. The collision left us four lengths to the worse, and even after our best efforts we were not able to get back on terms. Despite the disappointing finish, this was the first time that the School has reached the semifinal of a Henley event.

A week later four oarsmen went to final trials for the GB team. **E. Russell** was picked for the Great Britain first eight at the World Junior Championships in Hazelwinkel, and **R. Pinckney**, **D. Kingsley** and **T. Frankum** are in the GB coxless four at the Coupe de la Jeunesse (European Championships) in Nottingham.

T. FRANKUM 6WHZ

TENNIS

	1st VI	2nd VI
MCS	L 3-6	L 2-7
Pangbourne	W 6.5-2.5	D 4.5-4.5
Oratory	Cancelled: weather	
Shiplake		L 4-5
Bloxham	D 4.5-4.5	W 5.5-3.5
Cokethorpe		L 3-6
Radley	Lost 2-7	
GLANVILL CUP (Midland Bank U19)		
Bloxham	W 4-0	
Shiplake	W 4-0	
Bradfield	L 0-6	
YOULL CUP (senior)		
-bye in first round		
-lost to John Lyon in second round		
-lost to Cranleigh in plate comp.		

This year was always likely to be a different story from the runaway successes of the last couple of years, and so it proved. It has been a short season, with some games lost to the weather, and this made it more difficult to formulate effective pairings and develop a momentum. The situation was not helped by **P. Ewing's** unfortunate illness which ruled him out of most of the season. The grass courts were in a deplorable state too... Excuses, excuses. However, having accepted that this has been something of a transitional, re-building year, there were some encouraging signs. The 1st VI had a good run in the Glanvill Cup before coming up against an extremely powerful team from Bradfield. **J. Howe-Davies** and **S. Hughes** proved a classy first pair and Simon's presence next year gives us (again) a player of genuine quality. **M. Howe-Davies** and **S. Potter** also show great potential as a pairing, and they will have gained a good deal from the experience of this year. We tried other combinations at different stages, some more successful than others; the following featured: **P. Wells**, **W. Lau**, **J. Day**, **S. Yue**.

The 2nd VI have also enjoyed mixed success, with victories proving hard to come by. What is most encouraging, however, is the number of useful players coming through from the lower sixth who have gained valuable experience this year; the improvement of individual players has also been very encouraging, most

helped by participating, at least for a while, in the Buckley Cup Singles Tournament. (This was won by **M. Howe-Davies** who defeated **S. Potter** in the final). As last year, it has been very pleasing to note the number of players willing and able to play, and it has been very much a question of selection rather than scratching around to find a team. The following have played for the 2nd VI, most on more than one occasion: **L. Altmann, A. Cherry, C. Bowler, H. Robson, P. Wells, T. Burton, S. Yue, S. Williams, J. Day, W. Lau, A. Johnson, F. Dutton, J. Wearne, K. O'Leary, J. Chang.**

During the course of the season Full Colours were awarded to **P. Ewing** (Captain), **J. Howe-Davies** and **S. Hughes**; Half Colours to **M. Howe-Davies** and **S. Potter**

	U16 VI	U15 VI
MCS	W 5 - 4	W 6.5-2.5
Pangbourne	D 4.5 - 4.5	cancelled
Oratory	cancelled	cancelled
Shiplake		W 7 - 2
Bloxham	W 4.5 - 2.5	W 9 - 0
Radley	(a) Drew	(b) Lost
MIDLAND BANK (U15) COMP		
Matthew Arnold School	L 1 - 5	
John Mason	W 4 - 2	
Faringdon	W 5 - 1	
King Alfred's, Wantage	W 6 - 0	
<i>Public school Championships at Eton College Thomas Bowl (U15)</i>		
<i>-bye in first round</i>		
<i>-lost to Sevenoaks second round</i>		
<i>-lost to Reigate in plate competition</i>		

The picture is also very healthy at the junior end of the club, which in terms of future development is a helpful state of affairs. The U16 and U15 teams have both had very successful seasons, neither team having lost a match against regular opposition. The presence of one or two ex-cricketers has made a difference to both teams and with some useful players emerging from the U14 year group we seem to be developing the necessary strength in depth to see us through the next two or three years. The U15 team were unlucky to lose just one match, in the Midland Bank competition, against a strong team from Matthew Arnold school.

The U14 team of **G. Unsworth, P. Gooch, J. Rowley** and **A. Brodie**

entered the SW Oxon Doubles tournament at Radley and performed well.

The following played for the U16 team: **A. Heather, C. Howard, G. Roycroft, C. Watney, N. Gray, S. Tompkins, B. Watts, D. Pearson, P. Wesche, W. Pank**

The U15 team has remained settled throughout the term, and consisted of **R. Tattersall, A. Apps, P. Barry, N. Hawker, N. Watney, G. Unsworth.**

Thank you to the boys for their efforts - and thank you to **Mr. Ayling, Mr. Revill** (especially for his brave efforts for running a First Year Doubles competition, against all odds!), **Mr. Figgis, Mr. Salmon** and **Hugh Laurie** for all their help with the tennis club this season.

S.A.EVANS

ATHLETICS

Mr. Maughan took over as master in charge of Athletics too late to organise many fixtures. This meant that none of the small matches, against schools like Marlborough, Bloxham, Pangbourne and Douai had been arranged or would take place. Despite this upsetting news the club knuckled down straight away at the beginning of term to some tough but light-hearted training, and success was bound to follow in the matches that we did have.

Our first match was at Radley where the club did not perform to its maximum potential. The combined intermediate and senior team finished only fifth out of seven schools in a match which we have won in previous years. The teams had been weakened, however, by the absence of three of our key athletes.

We returned to Radley College a few weeks later to run in the "Oxford A.C. Medley Relays". In this event ten other schools, including St. Edward's, Radley, Marlborough and Eton, sent junior, intermediate and senior teams to run in the medley relay. A young junior team just missed out on a medal to finish fourth. The intermediates finished a creditable ninth, with a team weakened through injury. The senior team of **D. Higazi, S. Harrison, R. Ellis** and **F. Malone-Lee** took first place to win the pres-

tigious "Pressed Steel Trophy", which we hope to successfully defend next year. The next event that we competed in was the Vale trials at Tilsley Park. The top two or three finishers in this event would be selected to represent the area at the Oxfordshire county championships towards the end of term.

The following boys ran well or gained selection: Juniors: **J. Richards, M. Cullen, A. Addis, J. Stevens, G. Bailey** and **R. Fabes**. Intermediates: **N. Hambridge, A. Holland** and **P. Watson**. Seniors: **S. Harrison, D. Lacy, R. Ellis** and **F. Malone-Lee**. After this, a small group of athletes went back to Radley to compete in the "Radley Challenge". Each competitor takes part in one track event, one jump and one throw, gaining points for each. Five Schools were taking part altogether. Unfortunately **R. Ellis** had pulled out of the senior competition, so we could not enter the team competition, but we could compete as individuals.

In the intermediate section **T. Humi** and **M. Terry** did well, but it was **J. Kingsley** who won the competition with particularly good triple jump and 1500m. In the seniors **S. Harrison** did well and **F. Malone-Lee** even better to finish second. The following day the boys who had gained a place in the Vale team went to Tilsley park to compete against the best of the rest that Oxfordshire had to offer. Those who came away with a top three placing were: **R. Fabes**: 3rd Juniors 800m, **P. Watson**: 1st Inter Long Jump, 3rd Inter 400m, **A. Holland**: 1st Inter Hurdles, **F. Malone-Lee**: 2nd Senior 1500m, **S. Harrison**: 1st Senior Triple Jump, 3rd Senior 200m. **A. Addis** and **R. Ellis** also ran well, but just finished outside the top three. **P. Watson** will be competing over the summer in the English Schools combined events championships, an event that he won as a junior. We wish him the best of luck.

I would like to thank all the teachers who were involved in athletics this year, **Mr. White, Mr. Pettitt, Mr. Pritchard, Mr. Burrow** and particularly **Mr. Maughan**. We look forward to an even more successful season next year.

F.MALONE-LEE 6MJM

GROUP CAPTAIN S. G. HEAD, M.B.E.

Sylvan Gerald Head - but he only answered to "Danny" was born on 31 May 1923, and educated at Archbishop Tenison's Grammar School, Croydon, before joining the Royal Air Force. He saw extensive and varied service as aircrew in the War, during which he rose through the ranks, and even in later life there was more than a touch remaining of the dash and bravura which must have characterised him as a young Sergeant Pilot. His subsequent career as a commissioned officer took him through a series of increasingly responsible administrative positions, culminating in a period as Inspector of Recruiting for the RAF, and subsequently Deputy Director of Personnel at the Ministry of Defence, in the rank of Group Captain. During the later stages of his service career he acquired notable skills in the handling of money and resources.

Impatient to conquer fresh fields, Danny left the RAF early with the express intention of devoting his energies to the cause of education through school bursarship. As so often, his timing was impeccable - Ron Harrison was about to follow Eric Anderson from Abingdon to Shrewsbury, and the School's RAF connections, which were then particularly strong, readily suggested that it would be appropriate to replace a Wing Commander with a Group Captain.

Danny took up his new appointment in April 1976, just as the Jubilee Wing was getting under way, and when there was still a significant amount of debt outstanding on the Dining Hall - at a time, also, when the School was just about to face its first intake of fully fee-paying pupils, unsupported by the subsidies of the Direct Grant scheme. It was not a time for feeble wills or doubting spirits, but Danny had impressed the selectors at his interview by robust dynamism and vigorous originality, and he rose instantly to the challenge. In close collaboration with another senior RAF figure, Air Commodore Edmund Stockwell, who was prominent in TASS and formidably active as honorary director of the Appeal, Danny acted swiftly to develop financial and administrative strategies, which were to prove their worth for the School through a period of intense growth and development lasting through the whole of his Bursarship.

The Bursary itself was moved from Big School, where it had occupied the present Reeves Room and English bookstore, to the Lodge. The accounting system was overhauled and strengthened to meet the needs of full independence - few people can have realised how much of the business of a Direct Grant school had been handled by the LEA. The school buildings, which had suffered severely from the shortage of resources imposed by Direct-Grant stringencies, were systematically refurbished and progressively improved, with the aid of an in-house works team which grew steadily over the years. And, most conspicuously, a succession of development schemes, increasingly ambitious in scale, were brought to completion and paid for, invariably, ahead of schedule.

One of Danny's referees had written about him, at the time of his appointment, "he believes in a seven-day week and long ago he threw away the clock", and this was quickly proved to be no more than the truth. Such commitment was costly, however, and in 1977, while still engaged in the arduous business of clearing the ground for his reforms, he was struck by a severe heart attack, and rushed to hospital. The writer remembers having to collect the bursarial briefcase, and attempt to carry on with business as usual, on the basis of the notes Danny had made for his own use - a curiously moving, as well as an instructive experience. Fortunately, the invaluable Air Commodore Stockwell was able to come to the rescue, and serve as Acting Bursar for several months, until the Group Captain was able to return to work, with energy apparently fully restored but perhaps with a slightly more reflective look in his eye.

With Danny, enthusiasm sometimes went as far as intensity, and his dealings with people were occasionally made difficult by the strength of his feelings - he quickly became incensed by evidence of laziness, incompetence, or, worst of all, dishonesty. On the other hand, the essential warmth of his personality, and his boundless goodwill, made him incapable of bearing a grudge or sustaining a quarrel.

The key achievement of the Head Bursarship was to give administrative strength and credibility to a series of development proposals which were essential to the successful growth, and even to the survival, of the School as it emerged from the Direct Grant era, but which could have brought it down in ruins if they had not been sufficiently underpinned. He was well capable of grasping, and indeed of proposing, large conceptions, but he was essentially cautious in implementing them - resembling in this one of the School's great benefactors of the later seventies and early eighties, the late Ron Amey. Ron once remarked, in very early days, before Danny had had a chance to make an impact, "I don't take much account of Bursars" - but he so far changed his view that Danny later became one of his most trusted friends. The acquaintance ripened through collaboration over the construction of the Amey Hall, which was opened in 1980 - Ron was every bit as concerned about the specifications for the foundations as Danny was about the cash flow - and developed still further with the Warehouse project, the first phase of which was completed in 1984, simultaneously with the Sports Hall. Ron was not among the Governors who, on a famous occasion, felt it necessary to rebuke the Bursar for improving on his budgeted surplus in a particular year by an "embarrassing" £40,000!

Some people were surprised when Danny chose to retire in 1984, but his decision was undoubtedly affected by the fact that his wife Margaret had died in April of that year, after a protracted battle against cancer. They had married during the war and were a particularly close couple. Danny gave himself with characteristic devotion to the gruelling task of supporting his wife through the final stages of her illness, and subsequently became much involved in helping to support Sir Michael Sobell House, the hospice in Oxford for the terminally ill.

After retiring from the Bursarship and recovering somewhat from the shock of bereavement, Danny found a continuing need to release his still formidable energies. He served for a number of years as a part-time assistant to the Bursar at St. Catherine's College, Oxford - the College is linked to the School, and so the friendships deepened - and also became heavily involved with a range of charitable works. He moved house from Cumnor Hill to the newly-built Marina in Abingdon, and eventually, in 1993, appeared in the School again on a regular basis, as part-time secretary of the Old Abingdonian Club. In this last role, he performed invaluable services in maintaining and updating the Club's computer database, and helping John Griffin and Hugh Randolph in the business of keeping contact with the widely-scattered membership. More briefly, but quite invaluablely, he stepped into the breach when death struck the Bursary twice over, in rapid succession, first with the collapse of Alan Daley, and then with the longer illness of Bob Osborn.

Danny Head died, suddenly and apparently peacefully, when on holiday with friends at his cottage in France, on 26 June 1997. He is survived by a daughter, Valerie, and a son, Martin.

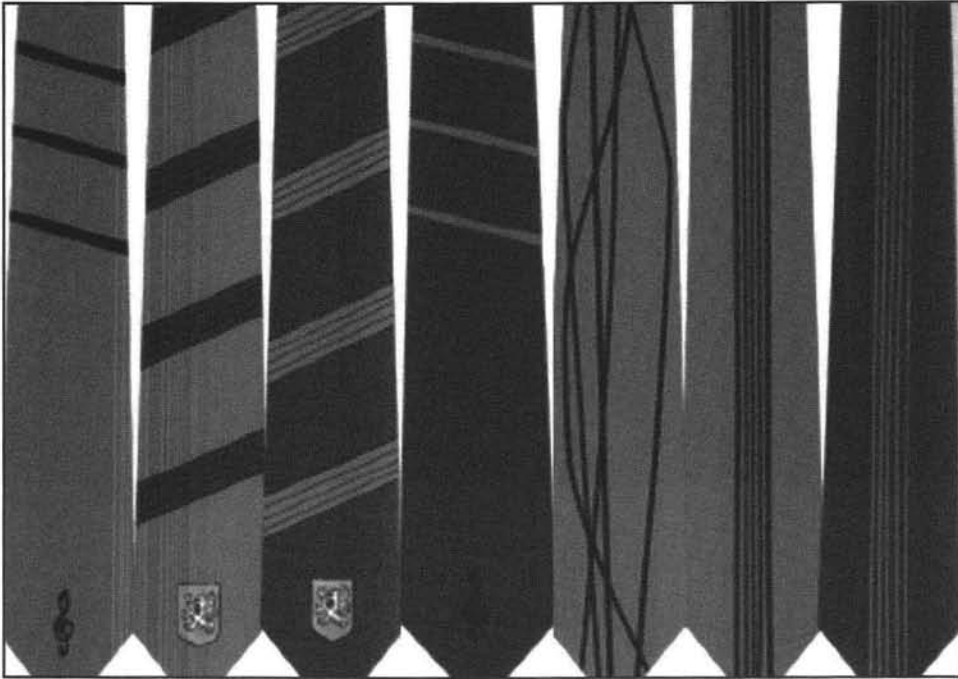
At a testimonial dinner given by the Governors on 2 November 1984, he was described as follows:

"He has been a prince among Bursars, and if there is any justice in the historical process his period of office will be recognised as one of the great formative episodes in the development of Abingdon School."

To those who knew him best, however, he was not only a great Bursar, but a warm, ebullient, splendidly honest friend.

M. ST. JOHN PARKER.

"THE WINNING DESIGNS OF THE COMPETITION
TO FIND A TIE FOR THE FIRST ORCHESTRA,
WHICH WILL EVENTUALLY BE COMMISSIONED."



BY TIM MURPHY JRSE

REPRODUCTIONS FROM THE EXHIBITION IN THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART, NEW YORK, BY JAMES BOLTON.
(See Review in *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin*, November 2, 1957, 149f.)

