

# the Abingdonian

## august 2000



**The Abingdonian**  
**August 2000**  
**Volume XXIII No. 1**  
**(Issue 304)**

My heartfelt thanks go to those pupils and colleagues who have helped with this magazine. I must express my special gratitude to E. Macdonald 5PW and G. Smith 3BJLS, whose fine photographs once again grace the pages of the magazine, despite my having failed to thank them last year.

All photographs of pupil artwork were taken by NWH.

Illustrations of sport do not necessarily show the team whose article they accompany.

All prizes are recorded within the House reports, rather than as a separate list.

The volume numbering of the magazine started from the first issue in the Nineteenth Century, but has never been consistent; volumes have varied from two issues (in Volume XXI) to thirty-four issues (in Volume V). In an attempt to restore order to this confusing situation, I have begun a new Volume (XXIII) and intend that there should be six issues in a volume from now on.

**SH** (Editor)

If you would like to subscribe to The Abingdonian, please contact the Editor at the School address.

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"Landscape", oil on board,  
by W. Smith VJFH

# Inspection

**the Headmaster traces  
the course of the  
inspection process,  
culminating in the  
extremely favourable  
verdict given at the end  
of inspection week in  
November 1999**

Paul Revere may have been witless with fright as he galloped into Lexington, Massachusetts, on that famous night in 1775, shouting the warning that, according to American myth, opened the War of Independence: "The British are coming!" But at least he had the advantage of a sense of urgency, of real and present danger, an advantage which I did not enjoy when passing on the news in 1993 that we would be inspected in the academic year 1999-2000.

However, we had time to get our act together. First, I and various other key figures were trained and qualified as inspectors and went off to terrify other schools in order to learn how to avoid being terrified in our turn. Systems of appraisal, assessment and reporting were overhauled. Colleagues were tasked to produce handbooks, codes and schemes of work, which they churned out with varying degrees of enthusiasm and urgency. Administrative structures were clarified, consolidated, and cast into reams of stately prose which will be of the utmost interest to future historians (whether they believe what they read or not will be another matter). The edifice of pastoral care which had been painfully constructed over the previous decade and a half was extended upwards, sideways and downwards, re-plumbed and re-wired. And I looked, increasingly anxiously, for another job, but failed to find one.

At least, that was how it could have seemed to an unkind observer. In reality, all these were processes which had been going on for ever, even if some of them received a fillip from the realization that judgment was beginning to loom. Abingdon's never-ending pursuit of excellence was simply focused down on to objectives more sharply defined by inspection requirements and criteria.

Inspection is, unavoidably, an intrusive business, and even the best may feel threatened by it. The surest antidote is the confidence born of thorough preparation, but there is value, also, to be derived from a sense of team solidarity and the realization that all are equally engaged in an operation for which credit (or blame) will be fairly shared. Working parties were set up to examine the implications of inspection as they would affect the MCR, the non-teaching staff were briefed about what to expect and invited to make contributions, and in due course the boys themselves were alerted to what was going on.

To ensure that nothing was overlooked, a committee was established at the beginning of the Michaelmas Term 1997, under the chairmanship of DJD, with a brief to carry out a review of all the School's working practices in the light of published inspection requirements. Over the ensuing months,

this group ploughed through a vast range of topics, commenting and advising as they did so. Their work cleared a way, in turn, for the massive compilation entitled "School Inspection Details", which had to be produced in compliance with meticulously defined requirements before the inspection team could start work. Much of "SID" owed its form – and its quality, which greatly impressed the inspectors – to TJK, but numerous members of staff contributed, and certain key strategic documents had to be the products of the Headmaster's pen and approved by the Governors.

The fateful year itself began in purposeful style, with a staff training day in January, led by Mr. Roy Haygarth, HMC Inspection Co-ordinator, the ultimate pundit. Discussions followed about the shape of the inspecting team; it mattered that we were to be inspected both as a boarding school, and as a senior school with junior school attached. Our designated Lead Inspector, Mr. Brian FitzGerald, made his first contact with us in April. Matters such as the inspection timetable, arrangements for the inspectors' accommodation, and liaison and communication, were discussed and settled with mercifully little difficulty. Taken simply as an exercise in logistics, it was a substantial proposition: seventeen senior professionals had to be housed, fed, provided with fully equipped working spaces and support, and moved around our complex, split-site campus for five days during which they were going to work, in most cases, between about seven each morning until midnight or later. Not for nothing did those of us who were experienced inspectors drill home the message that attention to our visitors' needs was to be understood as a matter of prudence as well as courtesy.

Schools are not required, or encouraged, to put on special shows for inspection, doing things that they would not normally do. However, there can be no objection to a programme which ensures that important parts of the School's ordinary offering are not under-valued or omitted simply through an accident of the calendar. Chapel, music, drama and games were thus allowed to adjust their normal routines so as to give the inspectors a sight of what could be described as normal. Similar considerations applied to the planning of activities by housemasters, and the organization of teaching programmes by heads of department; the inspection was to be a family snapshot rather than a group photograph, but it would be legitimate to ensure that most of the family were around and doing things when the moment came.

A fair judgment on the School's activity must take account of the extent to which it does, or does not, fulfil the expectations of its clients, the parents. So a





questionnaire was organized, and arrangements made for its return under confidential cover to the Lead Inspector. The response rate – almost precisely fifty per cent, a quarter of all respondents offering more than the minimum of comment – was regarded as healthily high.

The countdown went on. A formal preliminary visit by the Lead Inspector in mid-September produced few problems and much in the way of reassurance (Upper Field Pavilion had been destroyed by fire during the previous night). The Headmaster's personal statement for SID was finalized, after many revisions, in late September; it felt uncomfortably like an *apologia pro vita sua*. October, and the first half of November, passed amid blizzards of paper, most of which settled into orderly drifts, as heads of department communicated with their respective inspectors, and TJK placed his computer under imminent danger of overload as he generated more and more statistics about examination performances (decidedly high) in relation to the pupils' measured abilities (generally sound).

And then "The Inspectors are coming!". But still there was no melodrama. Months of careful preparation paid off; arrangements worked smoothly; everybody performed up to, or perhaps even a little beyond, the highest expectations; the inspectors themselves proved as delightfully amiable as they were unfailingly scrupulous. An enormous amount depends, in such episodes, on the tone set by the leader; Brian FitzGerald was the very soul of courtesy, as well as the incarnation of professional rigour, and his team moved as one. Perhaps some of those under

inspection were lulled, as a result, into attitudes more relaxed than they had originally intended, but any fears which an anxious Headmaster might have developed on that account were proven unnecessary.

The climax, and termination, of every inspection is a verbal report made by the full team of inspectors to the Headmaster in the presence of the Governors, and such members of the Senior Management Team as he invites to share the experience. This is often considered to be a rather problematic meeting; unavoidably lengthy, one-sided (the Headmaster may only intervene to point out errors of fact, if such occur), and formal. It is preceded by private meetings between individual inspectors and heads of department, which give a clear enough indication about the general drift of the report. However, whole-school issues, bound to be of concern to senior management, are reserved for the plenary session; an adverse verdict on the School's overall régime might have to be endured in stoical silence.

Abingdon's report, however, did not come from the usual mould; its opening statement – "This is an excellent school, with many strengths and few weaknesses" – used language which inspectors are trained to avoid, except in the rarest of cases, as indicative of peaks of attainment which few could be expected to scale. Had we, then, scaled such peaks? As the stately sentences rolled on, it became clear that we were, indeed, thought to have achieved the heights.

I would have been happy just to float away at that moment. Instead, it was the inspectors who stayed not upon the order of their going, but went at once. It was a melodrama after all.

**"Landscape",  
oil on board,  
by N. Moffatt VIJEF**

# School notes

## The Millennium Sundial

The School has quietly marked the advent of the new millennium with an attractive and useful addition to the front of Big School, beneath the windows of the Masters' Common Room. AJPE, the Millennium Sundial's creator, explains how the sundial works, and gives some of the background to its installation.

photograph, opposite,  
by G. Smith 3BJLS

To look upwards along the gnomon of the Millennium Sundial is to look in the direction of the North Star, or Polaris, about which the celestial sphere revolves. For many centuries after sundials were first introduced into Britain (probably by the Romans) the significance of this direction was either not understood or not exploited, with the consequence that sundials could only record hours of unequal duration. There is an Anglo-Saxon dial on the church at nearby North Stoke, for example, which is similar in its basic semi-circular design to the Millennium Sundial, but which seems, like most, to have had a horizontal gnomon.

The art of dialling, or gnomonics, was perfected by the Arabs, who over several centuries preserved and enhanced the astronomical inheritance of the Greeks as it survived in the lands they had conquered. Their knowledge was in turn mastered by Renaissance scholars in Europe and became widespread with the advent of printing. One notable figure from this latter period is Nicolaus Kratzer, horologist to Henry VIII and an early Fellow of Corpus Christi College, Oxford. A copy of Holbein's portrait of Kratzer, in which he is depicted constructing a polyhedral dial, now hangs in the Mathematics Department in Mercers' Court. Oxford's colleges are, incidentally, adorned with many examples of the diallist's art, dating from 1590 onwards. One of the most splendid is Christopher Wren's All Souls' dial, which is visible from near the Radcliffe Camera.

If the shadow of a gnomon aligned in the modern way is cast onto a perpendicular disc (that is, a disc parallel to the equatorial plane), then the hour lines can simply be marked out at equal intervals to obtain equal hours. But if the shadow is cast onto the vertical wall of a building, for convenience of public viewing, the hour lines have to be marked out at unequal intervals according to a more complex geometrical construction. This construction depends on just two angles: the latitude of the site and the declination of

the wall. An Ordnance Survey map gives Abingdon's latitude as 51 degrees 40 minutes north. Simple astronomical measurements relating the path of the shadow of a vertical rod to a line marked perpendicular to the wall of Big School show it to decline by about eight degrees east of south.

Abingdon's new sundial was designed and laid out by AJPE, with advice taken from AJM, and manufactured by Michael Harris, a local stone-mason. His son Matthew, an Old Abingdonian, helped cement the heavy object finally into place. It is made of Bath stone with a grey slate inset, which was etched and gilded by Nick Vincent. The Hindu-Arabic numerals were chosen to contrast with the Roman numerals on the nearby mechanical clock. The brass gnomon was manufactured with great precision by another local craftsman, Peter Buchanan. The motto – *tempus rerum imperator* – is traditional. The red letters mark the arrival of the new millennium, and the blue letters give a clue to the identity of the patron.

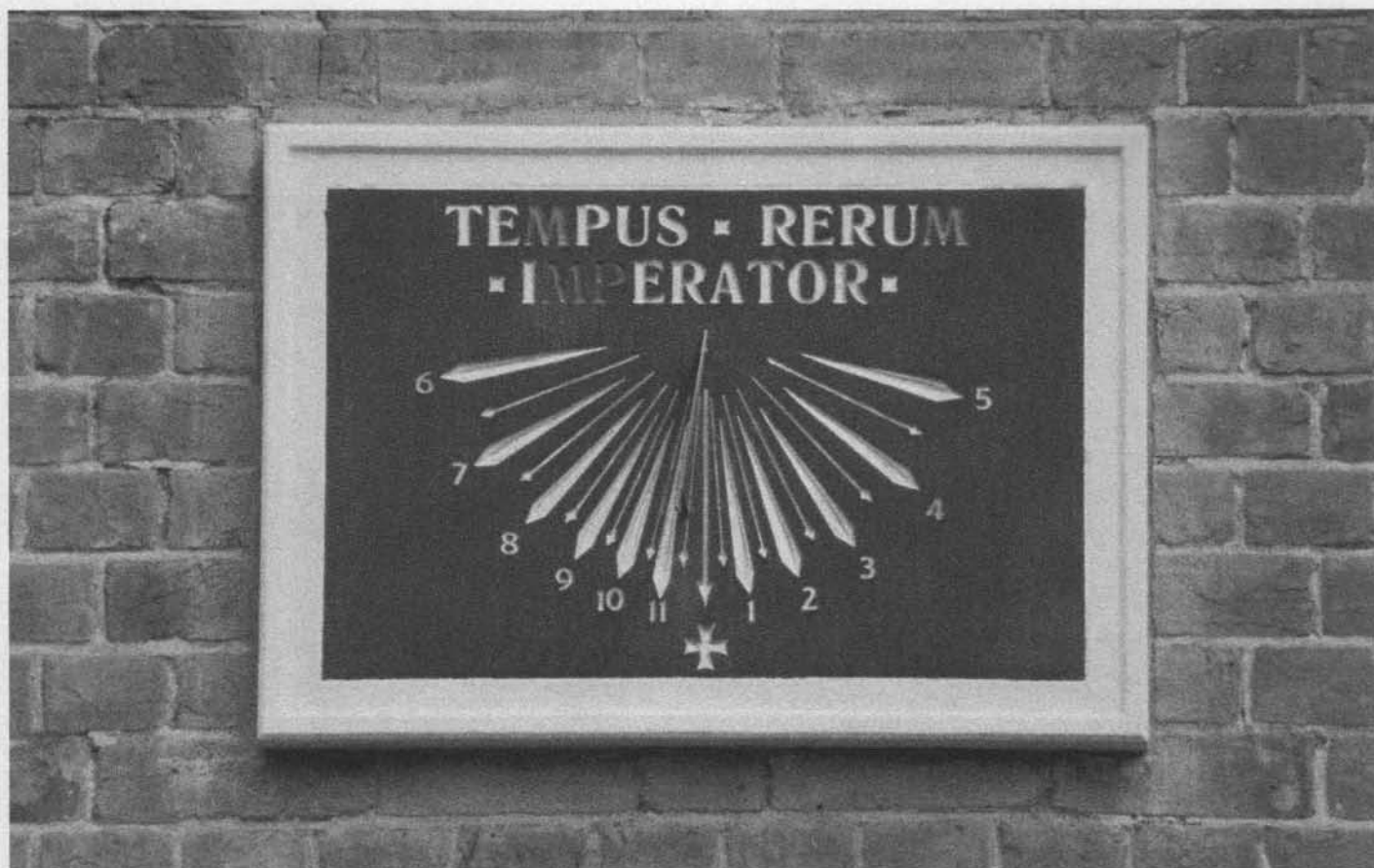
The Millennium Sundial tells local apparent time. Because the sun's height in the sky varies throughout the seasons and because its distance from the Earth also varies, this differs from local mean time by anything up to seventeen minutes. Also, because the sun is overhead at Abingdon five minutes and eight seconds later than it is at Greenwich, a further correction has to be made to obtain Greenwich Mean Time. Combining these two corrections for the fifteenth of each month gives the following table:

January +14; February +19; March +14; April +5; May +1; June +5; July +11; August +10; September 0; October -9; November -10; December 0.

But what is the point of a sundial? To tell the time? Ptolemy, the great Alexandrian astronomer, knew better than this:

*I know that my day's life is marked for death. But when I search into the close, revolving spiral of stars, my feet no longer touch the Earth. Then, by the side of Zeus himself, I take my share of immortality.*





## And now dinosaurs...

After last year's exciting discoveries at Waste Court (the skeleton attracted mention in the national press), continued efforts have been made to investigate the archaeology of the School site. Lacies Court has been the scene of several digs, which in October uncovered a wall, possibly Roman, running parallel to Bath Street. Subsequently, a small trench in the middle of the lawn uncovered a Seventeenth Century latrine pit, and Roman pottery by the shovelful. It seems clear that a major building stood here in Roman times.

Waste Court was the scene of a minor dig in October (which uncovered debris from the building of the existing house) and a major excavation in April. Many local volunteers, including staff, pupils and parents, participated, as well as archaeologists from as far away as Malta. A hole ten metres square was opened up, and although no more bodies were recovered the archaeology of the site has become much clearer. A series of ditches and pits from Roman times and earlier was found, and traces of flint-working explain last year's discovery of a flint arrowhead (which, it is hoped, will be on display from late September as part of Abingdon Museum's "Abingdon Before the Abbey" exhibition).

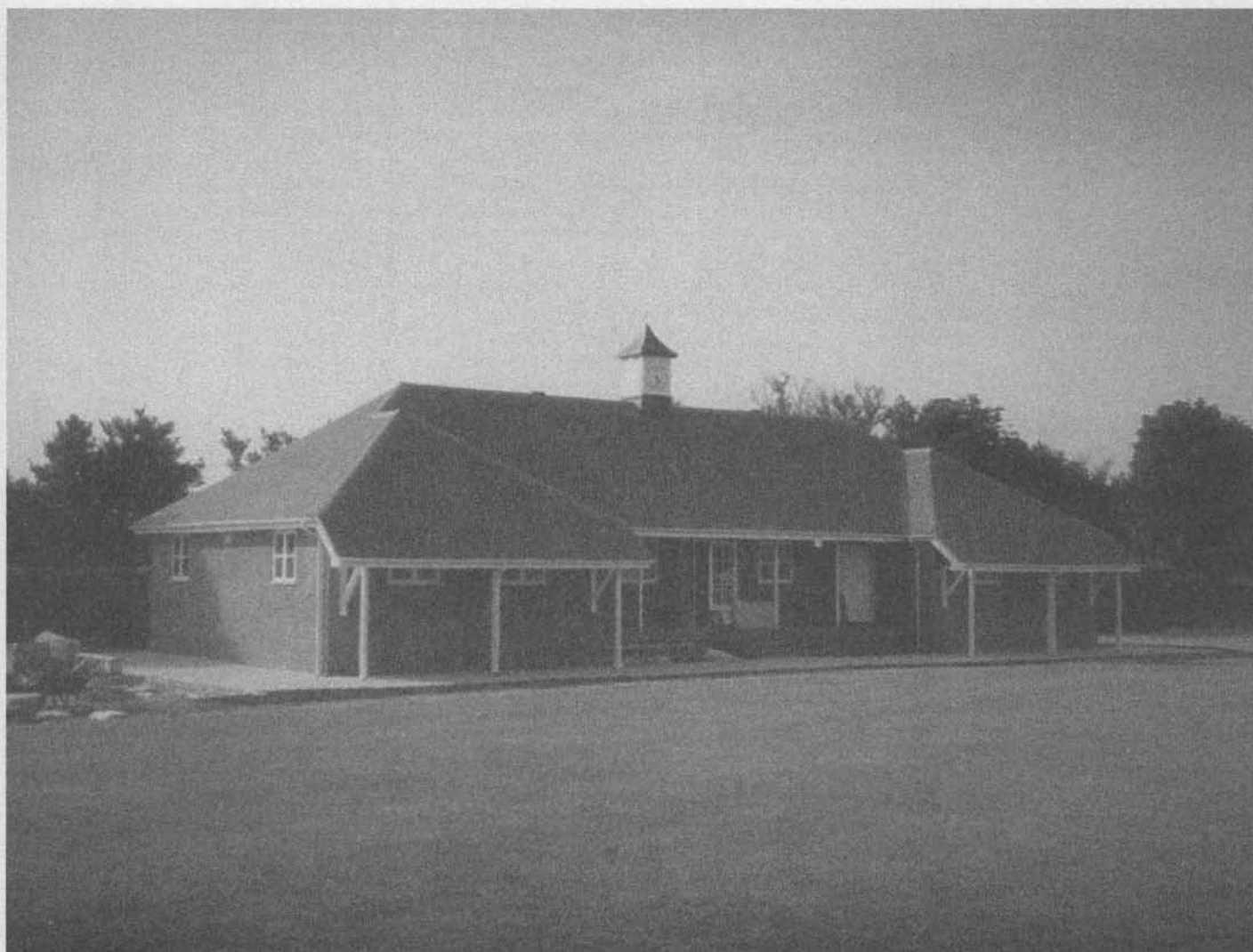
A group of Bronze Age pits contained the most exciting discovery. Archaeologists always complain that the public think that they are looking for fossils; this time, the public perception proved well-founded.

A fossilized vertebra over six inches across was recovered from one of the pits; initially, it was thought to be from a woolly mammoth, since such finds have been made locally in recent years.

However, when the fossil was taken for examination by an expert at the Yorkshire Museum (the finds are being processed at York University), he soon came to the conclusion that this was not a mammoth's vertebra, but in fact a dorsal vertebra from a young dinosaur, a sea-creature called a Plesiosaur. This dates from the Jurassic period, lasting 205–138 million BC.

The fossil probably comes from Northamptonshire ironstone, so it is not a local fossil: it must have been transported to Abingdon somehow. This cannot have been done by a glacier, since the fossil is unworn and in such perfect condition that it cannot have been exposed to the elements for very long. The possibility considered most likely at present is that a Bronze Age person found it, thought it special, and either that person brought it to Abingdon or passed it on to someone from Abingdon, who then carefully buried it in a pit. There are other examples of fossils being buried in Bronze Age contexts, but not local ones. There may have been religious reasons for doing this; perhaps the fossil was buried beneath a house as a good-luck charm. To a Bronze Age person, a huge bone made from stone must have seemed amazing.

**a summary of the  
Easter holiday  
excavations  
at Waste Court  
and Lacies Court,  
by SH**



# Cox's fields

**a report by the Bursar,  
Commander R. Jackson,  
on this fine new facility**

**photograph courtesy of  
the Bursar**

Abingdon has long since outgrown its playing field space and, with no room available for expansion at the present town centre site, it seemed eminently sensible – once the new foundation including Josca's had been set up – to concentrate further playing field space out at the Frilford site.

After some considerable skilled negotiation by Mr. Jonathan Barton, of Dreweatt Neate, and a parent, and a significant financial donation by the late Mr. Richard Cox OA, the School, in September 1997, became the proud possessor of a fifteen-acre field next to the thirteen acres of playing fields already owned by Josca's. The new field was named Cox's Field West, in recognition of our benefactor, and the Josca's field became Cox's Field East.

Planning permission for the change of use from agriculture to that of a school playing field had been sought and was given in June 1997, and in the spring of 1998 the new field was levelled, de-stoned, fertilized and sown. An Abingdon pupil, John Walford, carried out an archaeological survey of the new site and recovered some interesting Roman period finds (mainly coins, but also a spoon).

Cox's Fields are currently laid out for six rugby/soccer pitches. Since Mr. Cox had formerly been Chairman of Reading Football Club, it was therefore wholly appropriate that the first match to be played on the new fields was a game of soccer, in the Michaelmas Term of 1998.

Clearly, with up to two hundred boys using the new fields we needed somewhere for them to change and shower, and in November 1998 planning permission was given to build a pavilion with sixteen showers, changing space for one hundred and eighty, and a club-room. Work started in the spring of 1999 and was finished by the end of the summer.

The handsome new pavilion has been named the Savin Pavilion, after Tony Savin, Headmaster of Josca's from 1963 to 1999. The pavilion was officially opened by Mr. Savin at a small ceremony earlier this year, in the presence of boys from Josca's, as well as that of staff from both schools and representatives from the family of Mr. Cox.

The combination of Cox's Fields and the Savin Pavilion gives the two schools one of the finest playing field facilities in Oxfordshire.



# The Masters' Common Room

At the start of the academic year, the MCR welcomed Nick Hele (French and Russian), Adam Jenkins OA (Classics), Jane Jelley (Art), Rebecca Cool (French Assistant), Manuela Kröger (German Assistant) and Julia Mills (Crescent House matron). The end of the Michaelmas Term saw the departure of our three assistant tutors ("stooges"), Simeon Crawford, Luke Dibden and Courtney Watson. Their replacements from January were Nick Dickson, Dugald Laurie and Nick Tuck. A new Russian assistant, Daria Ter-Minassova, also joined us.

The MCR has been very productive this year; JAR took leave after the birth of her second daughter, Rachel, in November. Her absence was covered by David Franklin, who will be joining the Classics Department on a full-time basis from September. In the Lent Term, MDM became the proud father of daughter Ailsa; sons were born to NMR (Alexander), and DGA (Cameron). As a result of what the Headmaster described as "this outburst of philoprogenitiveness", Saturday June 10th was declared a half-holiday. But this was not all; after the end of the Summer Term, sons were born to BAHF (George), and TJCG (Philip). We must also congratulate RPF and SPO on their respective weddings.

Laurel Glockner stood in for NJB's Summer Term sabbatical, and PW's teaching over the same period was covered by Chris Lane, who has covered for the Modern Languages department in the past. The Estates Bursar, David Carson, took an unusual sabbatical in the summer, to act as German vehicles advisor to the filming of *Captain Corelli's Mandolin* on the Greek island of Cephallonia. The middle of the Summer Term saw the departure of Anne Marshall, the MCR Secretary, who had been with us for fourteen years. In her place we welcome Rebecca Cottam.

At the end of the Summer Term, we bade farewell to several colleagues. JRWB left us to join the History department at Radley. A colleague once referred to John as "the schoolmaster's schoolmaster", in awe of his capacity for not just covering, but specializing in more aspects of schoolmastering than seemed feasible for just one person. A man of legendary breadth and depth, John quickly earned the respect of both boys and staff on arriving at Abingdon after a varied career first as an accountant, then at Eton and most recently as Headmaster of Beaudesert Park. Abingdon represented a return to what he loved – teaching History (as well as Ethics and Classics), coaching cricket and rugby, and a new rôle as Head of Department. He brought an expertise in History and cricket which was originally and sparkingly communicated in the classroom, a mixture of tactful cajoling and witty bonhomie which fused a department of diverse personalities. It is the boys who

will miss him most. They appreciated his meticulous treatment of each pupil, and his effortlessly relaxed control of a class (he has no need to resort to the detention system, and did not use it once in his three years). Such qualities, masked by an impervious modesty, marked John out as a remarkable man who will be missed here and no doubt greatly appreciated at Radley. For all that he has given them, Abingdonians might in time forgive him for that treachery. We wish John, Ann, Tom and Katie all the best, and are glad that they have not moved far.

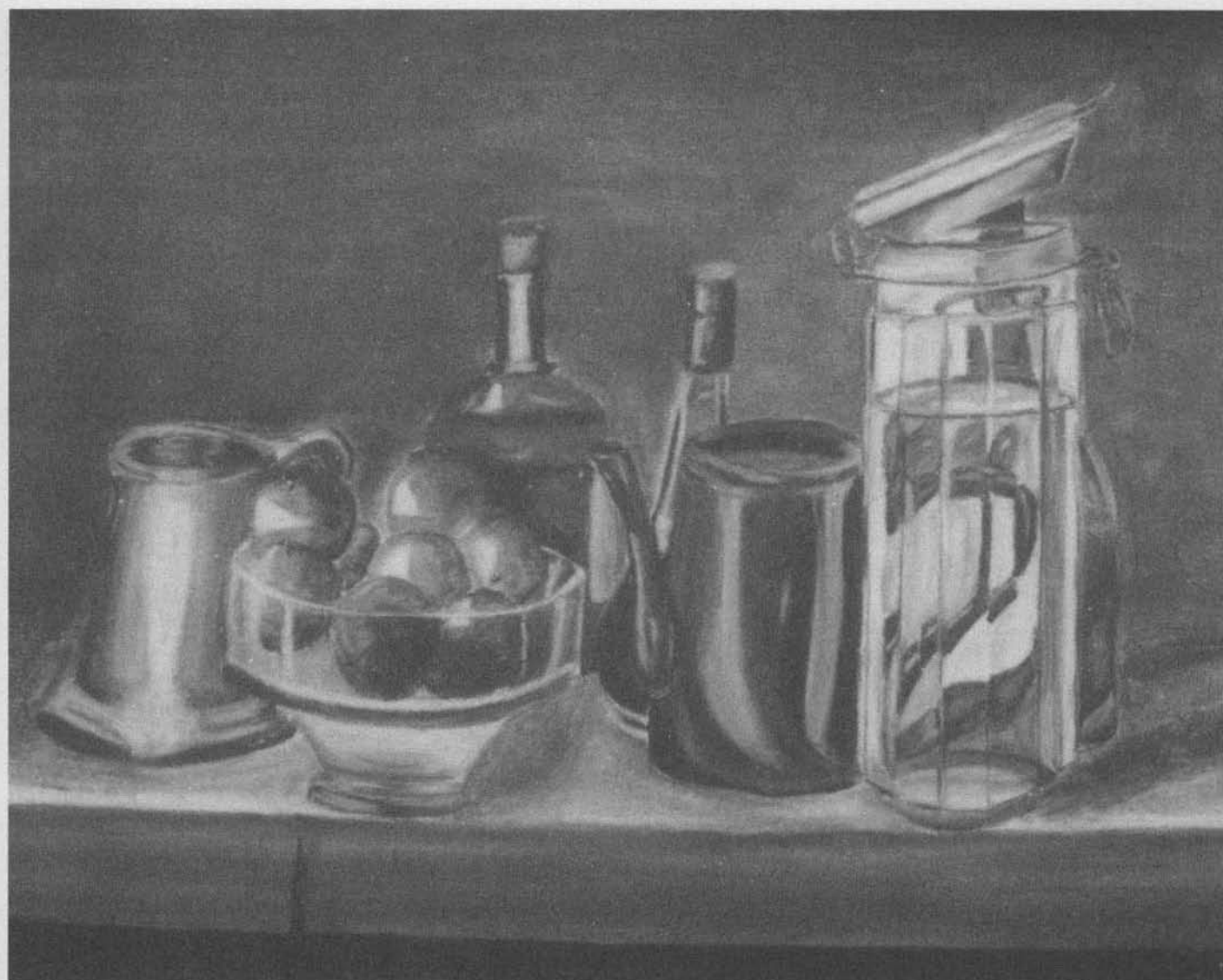
JRWB's replacement from September is Jonathan Bromley. An additional Geography teacher, Sean Spratling, has also been appointed.

FCB came in 1991 to run School House after twenty years at Marlborough College, where he was a housemaster for seven years. He had also taught in West Africa and New Zealand. He has brought vigour, discipline and enthusiasm to all he has done, and shown a keen determination never to give up however trying the situation. A decade of Abingdon boys have learned that high standards are required. Underlying all he achieved was the desire to see that pupils make the most of the opportunities presented to them, whether they were naturally talented or had to struggle to achieve results. With his colleagues he showed a zest for Mathematics, was keen to share new insights, and warned against Mathematics education becoming dominated by syllabuses and examinations.

He himself embodied the breadth of interest so valuable to the School and to his colleagues. He coached a Third Year rugby team until his final year, he ran athletics when he first arrived and he organized the conservation group at Abbey Fishponds. He sang in Chapel Choir, the Choral Society, and in Boarders' Choir, and was a regular supporter at musical concerts. He and his wife Shirley will be remembered by many staff for their frequent generous hospitality and their wise counsel to colleagues. They both brought a wealth of experience, a keen insight of character and a determination to maintain standards in all that they did. Frank and Shirley are retiring to Wiltshire, and perhaps working in New Zealand. We wish them well.

Annabel Casey came to the School twelve years ago as matron in Waste Court, and served in the same capacity in School House for ten years, together with a year on exchange in Sydney. She leaves us to take up a similar post, but with considerably more responsibility, at Eton College, where she will be "dame Annabel." Annabel will be hard to replace and we shall miss her. Her command of the spoken word, wit and sense of humour are her strengths, and she has contributed much to the lives of many boys who have been in School House. We wish her continuing success and happiness at Eton.

**a survey of the various arrivals and departures among the teaching staff this academic year**



# A visitor's view

**this year's  
Russian assistant,  
Daria Ter-Minassova,  
reflects on her time at  
the School**

**"Still Life",  
oil pastel on paper,  
by D. Rowley 5DJH**

January 14th was a special date in my life. This was the day when I came to Abingdon School as a Russian assistant. Now, as my placement here has come to an end, it is the right time to sum up.

On the day of my arrival I was taken round the School by GCR, the Head of Russian. My first impression was that this was a beautiful, calm, peaceful place. This impression will stay with me for ever. The impressive buildings – Big School, School House, the Chapel, the Grundy and Hooke libraries, the Amey Hall and many others – form a link between the past and the present, a link which seems to be treasured both by boys and staff.

Needless to say, as a student at Moscow State University, I found it quite hard to adjust to my new status as a teacher. The fact that I would have around one hundred and fifty pupils from First Years up to the Upper Sixth was amazing and frightening at the same time. I had never imagined that the Russian language could be of any interest in the West. What I should do with them, and how, were questions which I kept asking myself in the beginning.

It took me some time to get used to the pigeon-holes in the common room, because we do not have this system in Russia. The abbreviations of the teachers' names – GCR, NJH, JHT – puzzled me for quite a long time as well. But on the whole it was fairly easy to find my place here thanks to the welcoming staff of the School.

I found life at Abingdon intense and full of interest. Apart from general lessons much attention here is paid to sports, music, arts and the like. On the one hand Abingdon School gave me a chance to feel how it is to be a teacher, and on the other hand I was given the opportunity to become part of its social and cultural life, too. I would like to thank the Head of Drama, JHT, who allowed me to attend his lessons with the Upper Sixth, an invaluable experience for me.

I will miss Abingdon School. I will miss your lessons, the sleepless nights spent searching for material for tomorrow's class, assemblies, breaks, drama rehearsals, your atmosphere of friendship. Now it is time to say goodbye. So I say "До свидания, Абингдон! И до встречи!".



# The class of 1900

Of the nineteen boys who left Abingdon in the summer of 1900, five of them had been at the School for less than a year. They were some of the fourteen boys whom the Rev. Charles Wimberley had brought with him, in January 1900, from Chard School in Somerset, setting up Tesdale House, the new boarding house in the Marcham Road. Two of these, brothers Charles and Ronald Hett, went on to Blundells in Tiverton and were never heard of again. In fact, to be never heard of again was the fate of eight of the class of 1900. There were two other brothers – Gerald and Frederick Holiday – who went on to Bloxham, and Charles Greenwood became a clerk in the London and County Bank, but we have no idea what became of Harry Herdman, James Chambers or Arthur Slater.

We have only the briefest information on James Mortleman, who was one of four brothers to attend the School. He went to South Africa in 1909 as a Civil Engineer. *The Abingdonian* records the birth of a second son in Johannesburg in 1912, and his service with the M.T. column of the South African forces during the First World War; but then there is silence. Much the same goes for Robert Townsend. He went to California with his brother Murray, and they became fruit farmers. The last reference to him, too, is the announcement in *The Abingdonian* of the birth of a second son in Santa Cruz in 1913.

Ralph Talbot, who had come to the School in 1897 as the Young and Summers Scholar, and had represented the School in cricket, football and rowing, left to take up an apprenticeship at the Great Northern Railway Works in Doncaster. In 1906 he was on the point of taking up an appointment in India when he was killed in what *The Abingdonian* describes as “the railway disaster at Grantham”.

In July 1912, just as *The Abingdonian* was going to press, news reached it by cable from South Africa of the death of Edward Martin, son of one of the Abingdon doctors. The cause of death is not given, but in November his family presented the School with a handsome prayer book, the cover bound by Edward’s sister, Miss Dora Martin.

In 1900 the Boer War was at its height, and Archibald Sells, who left School “wishing for an interesting life”, joined the Natal Mounted Police and served in the war. He was wounded in the Zulu Rebellion of 1906; he then became a sugar farmer. In 1914 he came “home” to fight. He joined the Royal West Surrey Regiment and went out to France in April 1916. He was wounded in July, and then in October was killed by a sniper whilst observing enemy lines.

Sells was the only one of the class of 1900 to be killed in the war, but William Harragin and Cuthbert Ellison both died of pneumonia, probably caused by influenza, whilst serving with the army; Harragin on

November 1st 1918 in Dar-es-Salaam, and Ellison here in Abingdon whilst at home on leave on February 18th 1919.

All of the remaining class of 1900 played for the First XI in their last summer at the School. Walter Cottrell, one of the fourteen who had come with Wimberley, was both wicket keeper and, with his 133 against Oxford Boys’ High School, the top scoring batsman. He won a Classical scholarship to Durham, and on graduating became a schoolmaster. He played for the O.A.C.C. until 1928, by which time he had been ordained and had a parish in Acton. No more is heard of him after this.

However, it was Alan Stevens, not Cottrell, whom *The Abingdonian* described as “without doubt our most brilliant bat”. He was a brilliant footballer too, bringing intelligence and style to both games. An exhibitioner of Wadham College, Oxford, Stevens became a Non-Conformist minister. In 1924 he was the Congregational Minister at Stone in Staffordshire, married and with three children. In 1927 he went to Aberdeen; born and bred in Berkshire, he longed for home, as a poem published in *The Abingdonian* in 1929 makes clear:

*If I were a free man  
And could do just what I wished,  
But I am not  
And I cannot,  
I would leave this country at once...*

He went on to say that he would take the “most straight and direct” road south, to Berkshire, and roam once more amongst its rivers, meadows, lanes, hedges, and “quiet little towns”. Stevens’ longing for home is so powerful that it is with something of relief that one reads that at his death, in 1947, at the age of 65, Stevens was living at the Manse in Chinnor, Berkshire.

James Montgomery was a bowler. In the same match which saw Cottrell score 133, Montgomery achieved nine wickets for nine runs. He read Mathematics at Pembroke College, Oxford, where he was the Abingdon Scholar, and then went on to teach Mathematics at Felsted. He was last heard of in retirement at Sheringham in Norfolk in 1955.

In 1975 *The Abingdonian* records the death at 92 of the last of the class of 1900, Norman Riches, who was born in 1883. Riches was another of Wimberley’s boys, and whilst one can hardly claim him as one of the greatest cricketers produced by the School, since he was only here for a short time, he is probably the greatest cricketer associated with the School. He played for Glamorgan and in 1921 captained them in their first season in the first class list; he was their top batsman, scoring 1005 runs in twenty-seven innings.

**proving that some things never change, “The Abingdonian” of 1900 started its editorial wondering what century it was in... As the School prepares to embark on the Twenty-First Century, and bids farewell to its last leavers of this century, the Archivist, Mrs. S. Wearne, looks back to the last leavers of the Nineteenth Century – the class of 1900**

# Josca's

Mr. St. John Parker, in the last edition of *The Abingdonian*, informed readers that the school and financial management of Abingdon School and Josca's had been brought under the control of a single governing body. I am grateful both to him and to the Editor for being given the space in these pages to celebrate the increasingly evident success of this move, and to tell you a little of what has occurred at the Frilford site over the last few months.

**a report on the year by  
Mr. C. Davies,  
Headmaster  
of Josca's School**

For some of you, it may be the first time that you will have heard of the retirement of Tony and Gillian Savin, respectively as Headmaster and Secretary, after thirty-six years of loyal and spectacular service to Josca's. Many of the things which you will read about in the next few paragraphs have changed little in the time since they have left.

Our academic standards remain high, and they need to as Josca's continues to prepare all boys at thirteen for Common Entrance. No favours are either asked for or offered in the transfer from Josca's to Abingdon. Traditionally, as you are aware, a good number make this journey, and this year, with Mathematics and History in particular producing some excellent grades, I am delighted that nineteen have gained places at Abingdon. Five more go on to St. Edward's, two to Cokethorpe, one (a sports scholarship) to Shiplake College, and three to M.C.S. This means that a very healthy proportion remain within the one institution, and I very much hope that this ratio is maintained, or even increased, over the years. As stated above, however, Josca's will continue to prepare boys for an entrance examination which is common to and recognized by all public schools.

The buildings in which our boys are educated have become increasingly impressive. Eight weeks into the new academic year, our new science block was opened with a classroom above it. Both are stunning additions, and the science block especially has been visited by a number of teachers from the Oxfordshire area who have left an interesting shade of green. These new amenities are matched by the impressive and generously proportioned pavilion which has been erected next to our First XI cricket square. A shared facility with Abingdon, who use their vast new acres on the adjacent Cox's fields, it will serve both schools well for many a year.

With a general programme of refurbishment planned for the next five years, touching every aspect of the School from the car-parks and playgrounds to ICT and the provision of music and drama, the School will clearly continue to develop. Nor is it likely

that the School would refuse a munificent benefactor if he or she were to insist on a new sports hall being rushed into action...

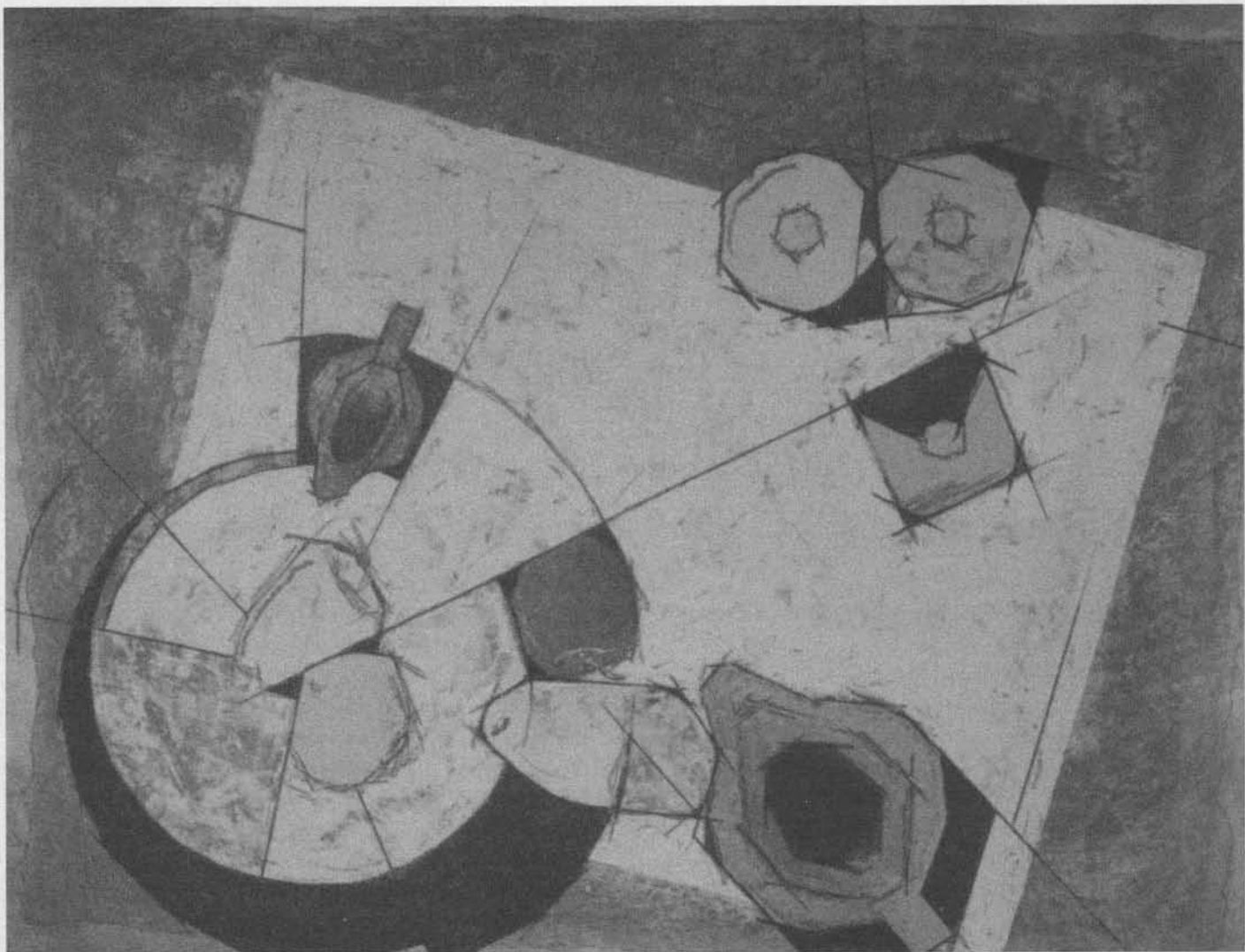
An ISI inspection was another experience shared with Abingdon. Former Josca's pupils will not be surprised to hear that the strength of the relations between boys and other boys and between boys and staff headed their list of main findings. Overall, the clear directive given was to continue to build on the successes of recent years, adapting and responding, as all top schools must do, to the ever-changing environment and atmosphere in which they operate. As if one inspection was not enough, as I write we have just received the outstanding results of our reception year's Ofsted inspection, carried out to monitor the use of Oxfordshire's resources in the Early Years Grant system. This scheme effectively offers a rebate of nearly a term's fees to the parents of four-year-old children.

The HMC inspectors rightly picked out sport at Josca's as a strength. Rugby in particular has benefited from some high-level coaching in recent years, and results have been outstanding. The last eight of the prep schools finals were reached for the second consecutive year, where we competed against schools two and three times our size. But for injuries to three or four key players, our final position (fifth) might have been even higher. The boys were back to something like their best when on tour in Dublin, at the end of the season.

Soccer is also growing in strength and next year, in an effort to explore a wider range of fixtures, we make the change to playing rugby in the Autumn Term and soccer in the Lent Term. Cricket in its wonderful setting has also been well served by this year's First XI, three of whom have represented the County. I hope that readers will excuse my using these pages to advertise our splendid hundred-run victory over the Abingdon boys.

In addition to the major sports, swimming, fencing, judo, golf and tennis also feature prominently in an average week.





I am particularly delighted by the great strides being made by music in being recognized as a discipline with enormous values to a school. The boys gain clear enjoyment from both playing and listening to it. A visit early in the year from the Abingdon Big Band and First Orchestra elicited the desired response from our boys: "Can I play one of those please?" We have not looked back. Music in one form or another now introduces each assembly. Bands and choirs are active at all times of the day. Music examinations are becoming the norm. I have been fortunate indeed to be able to appoint someone to teach Music and Drama full time at Josca's next year and I am sure that we shall see a continued rise in their respective profiles.

Other staff appointments will follow the retirement of Pat and Paul Dewhurst from the teaching staff at Josca's in July. Countless generations of you will be aware of the commitment and vivacity of these two stalwarts. We wish them every happiness as they embark on what will be the least mundane of all retirements. Even now their tandem is being MOT'd and serviced for the next fifty thousand miles.

In September, Simon Littlewood will take over the teaching of English to our top year groups, and Claire Delo will be busier as more specialist science teaching becomes part of the curriculum across the year groups. The new year will also herald the first cross-over teaching between Abingdon and Josca's. David

Franklin will teach all the Josca's Latin, as well as having a full rôle to play in the powerful Abingdon Classics department.

This year's examinations might have been over, but as former Josca's pupils will remember, we then entered one of the busiest times in the School year. Year Eight (group one) set off to France, not on the traditional camp this time but to Chateau Beaumont in Normandy, where a week of high-class accommodation, supervised adventure and trips awaited them. The lower years embarked on a series of day trips to destinations as diverse as the Imperial War Museum, Woburn Abbey, a teddy bears' picnic on the Downs, and the West Midlands Safari Park. As I write this, Superstars is in full flow, and the School Ball, Sports Day, the leavers' party and prize day are yet to feature.

Overall, even to a 'new boy' such as myself, it is clear why so many boys and parents who have shared in its past speak with such warmth about their former school. For those of us who intend to share in its future we eagerly anticipate an exciting next decade for the School when its extant strengths continue to bear fruit and the additional benefits of the links with Abingdon bring new dimensions to its success.

Do not just take my word for it, however. Former Josca's pupils and Abingdonians are always welcome to make an appointment to see round the School. We look forward to greeting you.

**"Still Life",  
oil on board,  
by B. Hewett VIAPS**

# Intellectual pursuits

## Schools Challenge

Knocked out of the competition not by intelligent opposition but because the questions were too easy, A.J. Wilson, magnanimous in defeat, explains how the School's initially successful team succumbed to their opponents in their third outing of the general knowledge season.

**a report by A.J. Wilson  
VIJEF on this annual  
inter-schools general  
knowledge competition**

The team this year in the almost legendary competition consisted of J. Haworth, A.J. Wilson, J. Herford and E. Heaney. Expectations were high at the start of the season, as both of the senior members of the team were part of the mighty Abingdon squad which had reached the national semi-finals three years before. Furthermore, in December we convincingly vanquished a novice team from Slough Grammar School by 900 to 280 points.

Our first away fixture was at the City of London School in early February. Mr. Mearns heroically volunteered to drive us down, and after navigating the labyrinthine intricacies of London's traffic system and crossing the Thames four times we arrived in time for tea before the confrontations began.

Initial tension allowed our first opponents, the ladies of Wycombe Abbey (who had, incidentally, earlier beaten Radley), to gain an early advantage. However, we soon woke up and powered into a commanding lead. A large number of music questions and Heaney's encyclopaedic knowledge of Edward Lear ensured a comfortable victory. We next faced Bedford Modern, who had knocked out our disgruntled hosts in the first round. They were clearly brimming with confidence, and once again we fell behind at first. However, a spectacular team effort overwhelmed them, and we won again. By an extraordinary coincidence, the scores in both of our matches

were identical: 830-460. Morale on the journey home started out high, but was steadily muted by Heaney's relentless and astoundingly inaccurate impressions of various masters.

The last round before the national finals was away at Bournemouth School, at the end of March. From the very start, the omens were inauspicious; as soon as we arrived it began to rain torrentially. The match was supervised by the organizer of the competition, who turned out in fact to be miserably disorganized. An incredibly complicated electronic scoreboard was set up, which proceeded to show the wrong totals. More importantly, the questions used were designed for a much lower level, and hence were far too easy. This gave a decided advantage to the home team, as their unutterably irritating and smug star player had inhuman speed on the buzzer, and mopped up endless trivial bonus questions. Our gallant efforts to make a gentlemanly and intellectual contest of it were thwarted again and again, and we finally went down to lose by 860 to 670 points.

A visit to see the sea was suggested to cheer us up, but even this hope was destroyed by thick fog. Thoroughly dejected, all we had to console ourselves with was another two hours in a minibus with Heaney.

Many thanks go to our glorious leader, Dr. Zawadzki, for orchestrating the campaign, and to Mr. Mearns for transporting us around the country.

## Public speaking

**a note by WHZ**

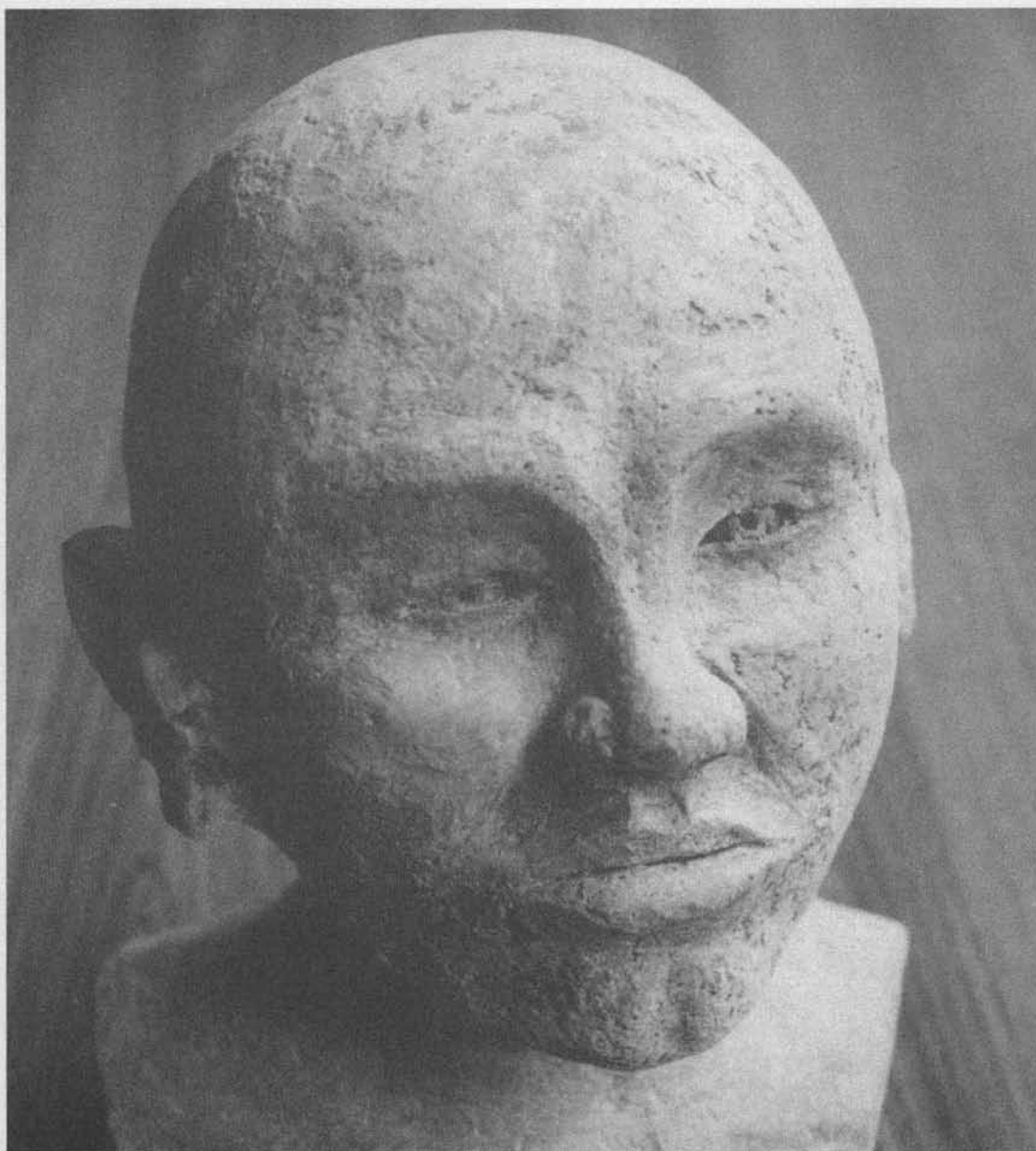
The Debating Society, the sponsors of the annual Public Speaking competition, would like to express their gratitude to GGB, who very kindly volunteered to organize the Lower School section of the contest, in which all tutor groups participated.

The winning team in the Lower School was 2B: G. Clarkson (chairman), C. Moger (main speaker) and T. Swarbrick (vote of thanks).

In the Third Year, Drummond-Hay's won, with a team comprising M. Last, R. Vasudev and J. Barclay. Wilmore's (D. Prior, L. Berryman and A. Pride) triumphed in the Fourth and Fifth Year section, and the Sixth Form contest was won by a Garnier's team of L. Bridges, S. Pickard and I. Macdonald.

The Debating Society is very grateful to all members of staff who kindly acted as judges.





# Lower Sixth Challenge

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

In the final, held on July 3rd in the Amey Hall in the presence of the entire year group, 6SAE (C. Smith, K. Thyagaraja, D. Walford and D. White) defeated 6TCG (J. Hayden, L. Pearce, B. Wall and M. Watkinson) by 450 points to 270. Although 6TCG were quite a strong team, they were not on their best form on the day and were not able to match the speed of 6SAE in answering the individual starter questions. Indeed, owing to the absence of some key players, such as A. Brodie, (6SAE) and J. Herbert (6TCG), both teams had had to field their reserves. 6SAE were also able to win maximum points in five rounds, which alone provided them with 250 points.

Looking back at the competition as a whole, it was good to see that all the participants – thirty-seven

boys, that is around a third of the entire year group – were able to contribute to their teams and to tackle a wide range of questions. Current affairs were well answered, as well as sport, science, popular music and the cinema.

Some of the contestants were on less sure ground when dealing with literary, historical and religious topics, and the general standard was not as good as in some recent years; nonetheless, it reflected the eclectic knowledge of our Sixth Form pupils. The most grotesque howler was the answer to the question "Who is generally regarded as the first Christian Roman emperor?". Answer given: "Nero." *[Surely an argument for the re-introduction of compulsory Classics at A level? – SH.]*

The strongest individual performers will be invited next term, after some very rigorous and demanding tests, to represent the School in the nation-wide Schools Challenge competition.

**a report on the annual general knowledge contest devised and compèred by the School's own answer to Jeremy Paxman, the irrepressible WHZ**

**"Portrait", ceramic, by L. McTier 5KDB**

# This House believes...

**a report on the  
Debating Society's year,  
by B. Wells VIWTP**

After perhaps one hundred years of prestigious history, the fate of the Debating Society was placed in the hands of A. Brewer and B. Wells, as Chairmen, and P. Batchelor, as Secretary. The year started well, and the crowds began to swell to a hitherto unprecedented level. An early highlight from the debating floor was the eagerly-anticipated sight of Mr. Henderson speaking on the 'pros' of alcohol. He was ably helped by L. Whibley, the only person this year who managed to mention blackcurrant yoghurt during his speech without the audience realizing; however, much that came out of Whibley's mouth, after his comments on homosexuality in the great debate *This House would ban gays from the Army*, was regarded with disdain by the highly intellectual Abingdonians which the Debating Society breeds.

An example which, I believe, shows the intellectual prowess of the society, came in response to a comment made by a First Year: "I believe that James Bond should be fined for speeding; did you see his latest film?" He was gently informed by the ever-tactful A. Hunter that – although the matter under discussion was the right of celebrities to be allowed special dispensation in the eyes of the law – James Bond was not real. The First Year is still receiving counselling after confronting his mother about the reality of both Father Christmas and the Tooth Fairy; his childhood illusions had been shattered in one swift sentence.

The year's other highlights were D. Benoliel's triumphant appearance as all the Teenage Ninja Mutant Turtles in the balloon debate on super heroes, knocking out the likes of Superted. The Headmaster

graced our floors this year to speak for the motion *This House believes that the Conservatives are unelectable*; he fled to a meeting before the final vote which heralded his defeat by B. Wells and N. Black, whose two speeches were based on the lively catch-phrase "the Conservatives are delectable and electable".

The debaters have always held the status of tigers when it comes to girls, and so they continued this year with strong connections made with Headington, St. Helen's and Wycombe Abbey. There is still some dispute as to whether they can actually debate or not, though the food is always great at their schools.

On an individual note, B. Wells and A. Brewer enjoyed great success in reaching the debating finals at the Oxford Union, and, though victory was snatched from their grasp, they enjoyed the experience and had the pleasure once more of beating Headington. The Rotary Club saw a trio of Hunter, Wells and Brewer deliver with wit, style, charisma, panache and elegance a superb speech on stuttering. They breezed through the first round, and looked set to have taken the second round as well; if audience reaction was anything to go by they would have won hands down. The judges felt otherwise, however, and after much booing and hissing the crowd dispersed into a cold night, the competition much the worse without this tremendous team.

Thank you to Dr. Zawadzki for all his great work and effort; the whole Society owes him a debt of gratitude. Good luck to next year's officials. Perhaps their year will be the lull after the storm – or even better; who knows?

# History Society

**a report by  
D. Mitchell VIWHZ on  
this year's lectures by  
distinguished  
academics**

The History Society provided its members with three talks of an extremely high quality this year, delivered by three eminent historians.

The first lecture, entitled "Lessons of the First World War", was given in November by Dr. Niall Ferguson, Fellow of Jesus College, Oxford, and was based on some of the ideas from his recent book *The Pity of War*. Dr. Ferguson's reputation as a controversial historian ensured him a large audience, all of whom were well entertained by his engaging rhetorical style, which was all the more impressive since he delivered the entire talk with only the notes which he had scribbled on the back of an envelope.

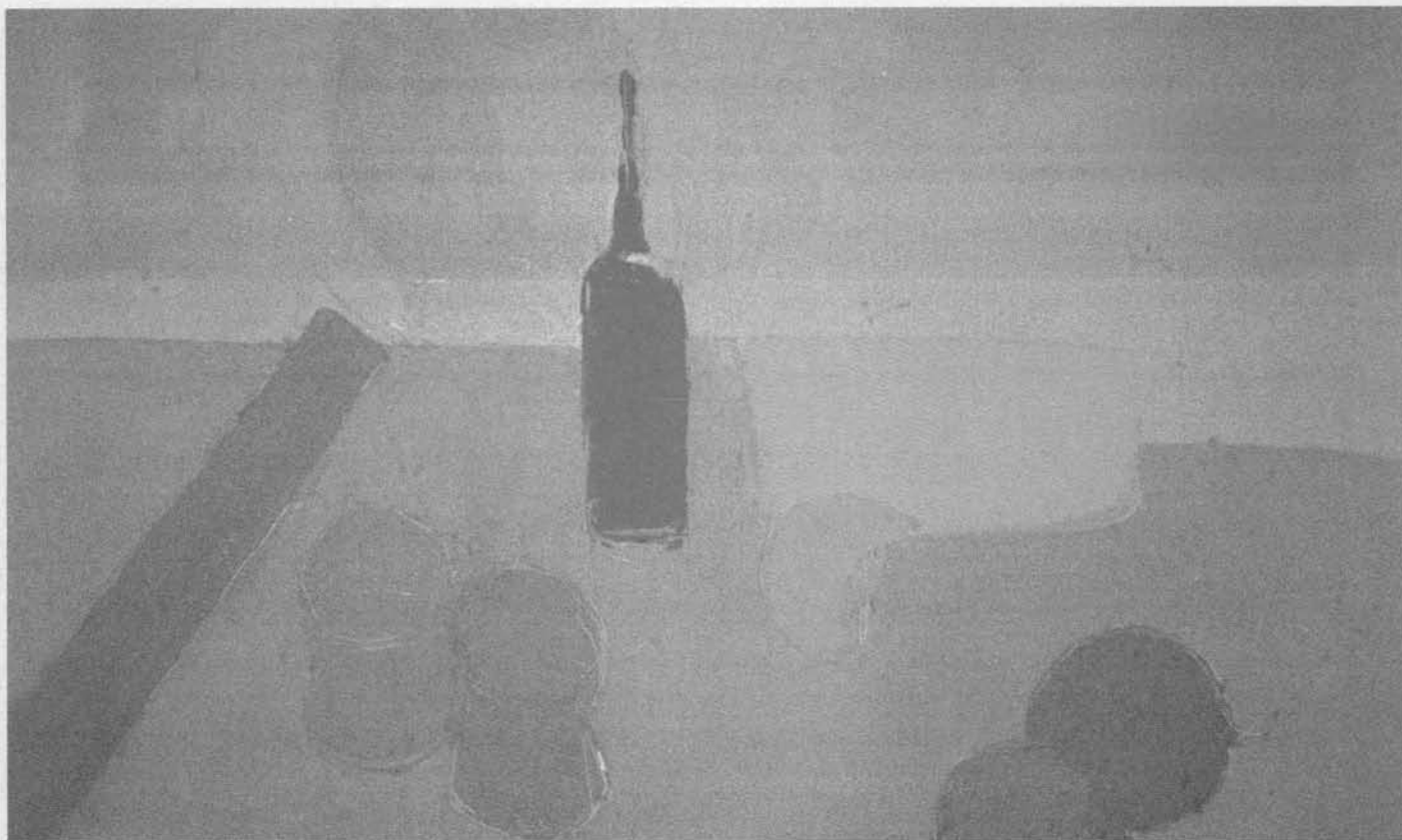
Dr. Leslie Mitchell, Fellow of University College, Oxford, gave the Lent Term lecture, on "England and the European Revolutions of 1848". This topic was particularly useful to A level students, and Dr.

Mitchell explained the fortunes of British 'revolutionary' movements with vigour and clarity.

The final talk of the year was given in May by Professor Norman Davies, formerly at the School of Slavonic and East European Studies, University of London, and now Supernumerary Fellow of Wolfson College, Oxford. He was fortunately able to fit Abingdon in between overseas lecture tours. His talk explored the concepts of national identity discussed in his Christmas blockbuster *The Isles*. Professor Davies' lecture was especially notable for the impressive range of historical periods which he referred to, from pre-history to the present.

All these talks generated stimulating and wide-ranging discussion, and did much to enhance our understanding of the past, and therefore our understanding of the present.





# Challenges and olympiads

In the UK Biology Olympiad, all four of Abingdon's entrants won medals. S. Atkinson won a silver award, one of only ninety nationally, and T. Butler, P. Gardner and B.K. Teh gained three of the forty-seven gold awards. B.K. Teh and T. Butler were among the top ten candidates nationally, and the latter narrowly missed a place in the UK team competing in Turkey in the international final.

Similar success came in the International Chemistry Olympiad; P. Gardner (third nationally), B.K. Teh (twenty-third) and M. Brown (thirtieth) took three of the forty-one gold certificates on offer. As one of the top ten, P. Gardner was invited to try in the Easter holidays for membership of the UK team of four, to compete in Copenhagen over the Summer. He successfully made it into the four-strong team.

Several of our A level Chemistry students also entered for the "Chem 13 News" examination 2000, organized by the University of Waterloo, Ontario, for Canadian school-leavers. Out of over four thousand (mainly Canadian) entrants, P. Gardner came second and M. Brown sixth. No other United Kingdom school featured in the top ten places.

Forty-four members of the Sixth Form took part in the UK Senior Mathematical Challenge, which attracted 45,000 entrants. They won thirteen gold, thirteen silver and ten bronze certificates; of the gold certificate winners, eight (S. Brooks, M. Brown, T. Butler, D. Cole, P. Gardner, D. Gee, M. Stockwell and A. Wilson) qualified for the next round, the National

Mathematical Olympiad. S. Brooks, indeed, gained a gold medal and went forward into the British team. This will involve a trip to compete in the International Mathematical Olympiad in Kuala Lumpur this summer. This is an incredible achievement, especially for one so young.

One hundred and nineteen Fourth and Fifth Year pupils took part in the UK Intermediate Mathematical Challenge, for which there were over 150,000 entrants nationally. Abingdon pupils won fifty-five gold, forty-one silver and nineteen bronze certificates. Of the fifty-five gold certificate winners, twelve (D. Atkinson, P. Brazier, C. Brookes, A. Crisp, M. Cullen, T. Gallard, M. Gardner, E. Heaney, J. Howe, C. Johnson, J. Mak, and J. Tolan) qualified for the next round. E. Heaney was placed thirty-seventh in the country and received a prize and a Certificate of Distinction as a result.

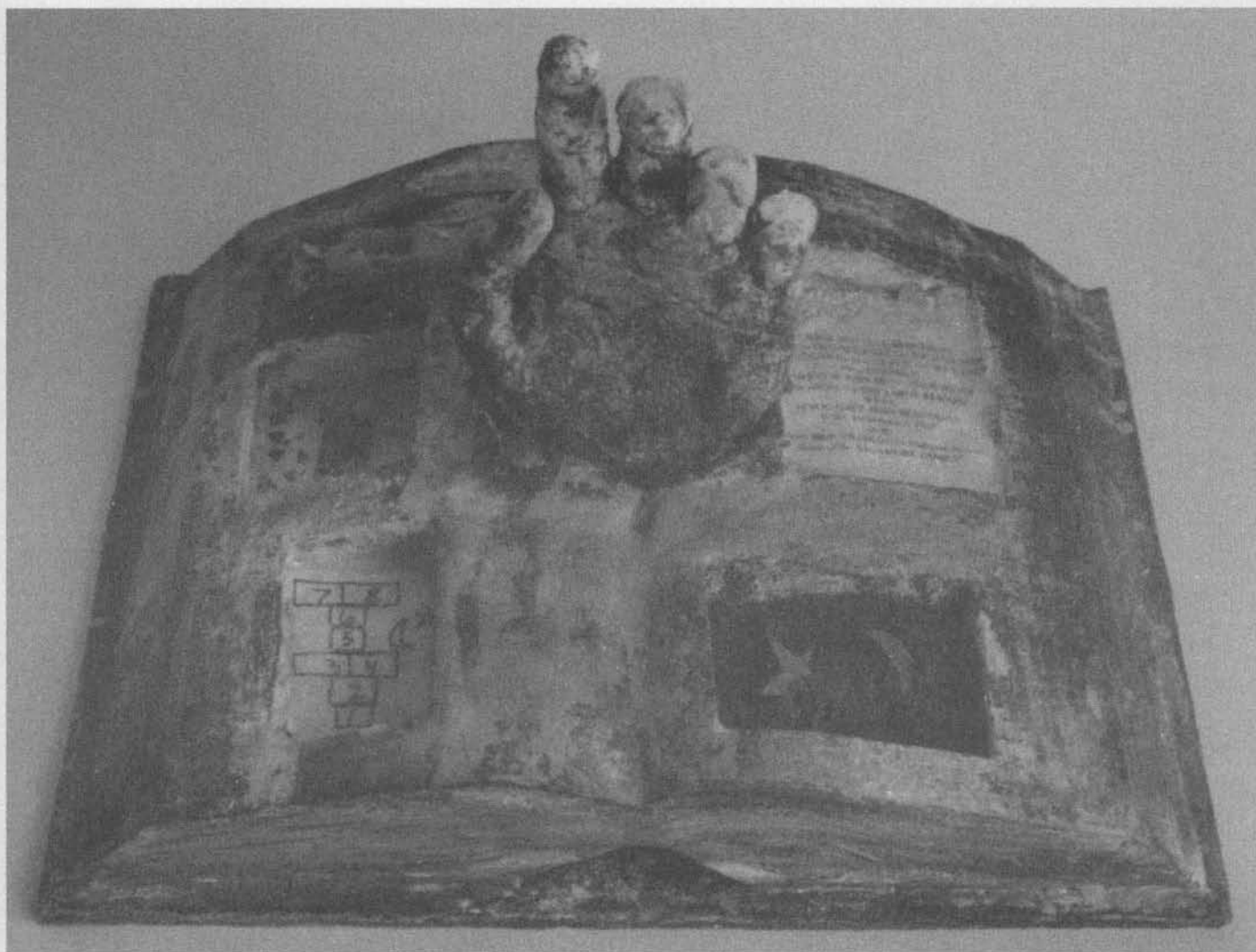
One hundred and twenty Second and First Year pupils took part in the UK Junior Mathematical Challenge, for which there were over 30,000 entrants nationally. Abingdon pupils won thirty-one gold, twenty-three silver and thirty bronze certificates. Of the gold certificate winners, C. Moger qualified for the next round and subsequently received a certificate.

In the National Physics Challenge, gold medals were awarded to T. Adams, T. Ainsworth and T. Garton-Ash: silver medals went to A. Crisp and J. Mak, whilst C. Brooks gained a bronze.

M. Brown won the 1999 national Peterhouse Cambridge science essay prize.

**in a wide range of disciplines, pupils have shone this year at national level.**

**"Still life",  
oil on board,  
by J. Mendelsohn-Malik  
VIDH**



# Shadowing the Carnegie

**a report by  
C. Lillycrop 1J on the  
Carnegie Medal  
shadowing forum,  
June 27th**

**"Book",  
ceramic, paper and wax,  
by A. Ings VIJEF**

The Carnegie Medal is a annual prize awarded for the best fiction book for children written that year. A group of boys from 1J and from 2A went to the John Mason School for the Carnegie shadowing forum, the climax of a project undertaken by twelve boys and Mrs. Cooper to read the Carnegie Medal shortlist while the national judging was in progress.

The boys involved were T. Astley, A. Brown, B. Cullen, H. McKend, M. Stott, T. Caldicott, C. Gill, P. Godsmark, C. Halls, T. Lodge, C. Lillycrop and S. MacLachlan, and the shortlist this year was *Tightrope* by Gillian Cross, *Postcards from No Man's Land* by Adrian Chambers, *Kit's Wilderness* by David Almond, *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban* by Joanne Rowling, *The Rinaldi Ring* by Jenny Nimmo, *King of Shadows* by Susan Cooper, *Little Soldier* by Bernard Ashley, and *The Illustrated Mum* by Jacqueline Wilson.

All the boys enjoyed reading the books and although nobody read all eight, everybody read enough to be able to make a good judgement on which was the best. This was a very good achievement considering that we only had seven weeks and we were busy revising for our yearly examinations.

We travelled to the John Mason School for the Carnegie forum with them, Radley and Didcot Girls. For the first half an hour we had an ice-breaking session where we found out a bit about the other people in our group (we were divided into groups speaking in favour of each specific book).

After this, we had lunch, which was the highlight of the day for many of us because there were generous quantities for everyone. So, with a good meal in our stomachs, we planned what we were going to say in favour or against our book. We were allowed quite a long time to think about this, so it was reasonably late by the time that we went down to the auditorium and made our speeches.

In general the speeches were good; however, a few people were a bit nervous. After all the speeches were over, we voted for our favourite book and went upstairs again. Then the Carnegie cake was cut and we all had a piece. To end the day the winners were announced: two John Mason boys were adjudged to have made the best individual speeches; the people speaking about *Kit's Wilderness* won the team prize; and *Harry Potter* received the most votes.



# The truth about inspection

About nine months ago the major topic the Headmaster talked about – the big word of the moment – was the Inspection. We heard about it before it happened, when dates started appearing on work we had never thought that we would see again. And we heard about it during its course, at which time we were told that this was the only Inspection we would ever have and so we ought to enjoy it. And we heard about it afterwards, when the Headmaster told us how proud he was because we had done so well. Which was marvellous – the School was fantastic, perfect in every way, except perhaps with a minor problem at morning registrations.

But I am afraid that I do not think that this is true, and I hope that none of you does either. You see, I had hoped that the inspectors would come in and say that it is a good school – of course it is, we know that – but also try to improve it, by perhaps saying that this teacher is not good enough, or more importantly that this or that School policy is wrong.

But I suppose that this was quite a naive hope, really; the idea that fifteen total strangers could come into the School and completely assess it in just four days – ridiculous. No: if the Headmaster had really wanted to know what was wrong with the School, there is only one group of people he could have asked; the pupils.

And so I want to talk about what the Inspectors never said. There is a lot that they should have said, but School policy is the most important issue. So, instead of me criticizing individual members of staff, I might, perhaps, comment on the School's recent policy of appointing teachers because they can coach a sport and not because they can teach in the classroom. Or, as I call it, a policy of appointing games teachers rather than good teachers.

But I am not going to, as more interesting examples can be found within the School rules. Now, if you look in the List Booklet you will realise that the School has only got two rules: that we must not break the law and that we must use common sense so that the School is not brought into disrepute. Now I am not sure about this, but are logos on jackets actually illegal? And eating food in public ('public' meaning that infamously clean and well-mannered paradise also known as Abingdon town centre); is that really rude, or more a necessity to avoid the starvation engendered by School lunches?

I expect all pupils would agree that these rules are a little too petty, but surely the School cannot limit human rights too much? Well, apparently they can; despite the fact that sixteen-year-olds in this country

are now allowed to buy cigarettes, get a lottery ticket and even have sex, they are still not allowed to walk the three hundred metres to Woolworth's without 'town leave' if they are in the Fifth Year.

My point is that surely the Inspectors should have questioned these rules and pointed out that young adults are being talked about when these rules are being made. They should have expressed the opinion that teachers should be more respectful to the pupils. So why was no comment made about it? Well, I am afraid the reason is that, as heads of other public schools, the inspectors realized that for a teacher to get close to a pupil – to treat him with respect and as an equal – is not the point of the School. Instead, the pupils are here to be processed through the ranks, and to get good exam grades, and to boost the league tables, yet not to grow emotionally as individuals.

This is clearly unacceptable, but it is perhaps inevitable in any large institution, especially when we consider that this institution is competing with many others throughout the country. However, if the pupils are going to be regarded as just another group of clients, then is it not about time we realized that the School is a service provided for us? And if we are the customer, then should we not be consulted when the Headmaster discusses a new policy? And why, if a teacher is doing a bad job, do we accept it?

To conclude, the inspection was nothing really to be proud of. The good results were hardly unexpected, and can only count if we lower ourselves to believing that the pathetically limited categories they use for marking are in any way important. However, the School can learn from the inspection; it can learn that a truthful reappraisal of all that concerns pupils, all that they care enough to complain about, would not be an inadvisable event to take place before our current Headmaster retires. The respect gained from doing this would, perhaps, be the best leaving present that he could ever hope to receive from the pupils.

**in the spirit of Voltaire,  
we print a public  
speaking address  
delivered**

**by S. Pickard 6NAFP,  
member of the winning  
Sixth Form team in the  
inter-house competition**

# Pondicherry

a story by  
H. Clayton 5PW

"Enlarged",  
ceramic,  
by R. Hamilton 5PW

A dark, cloaked figure glided across battlements and down steps like a phantom ghost in the moonlight. These were the battlements of Pondicherry, the last French territory in India, and the phantom figure was Prince Ahmed, the Sultan's youngest son.

The young Prince reached the door to the gate-house and checked himself – he had to be sure of what he was doing. But he was: the British would be no worse overlords than the French. To make himself Sultan he would not be selling off his people. He thought about the life he would lead if he did not exploit the rivalry between the British and the French; he would be destined to serve his older brother – given the token appointment as Captain of the palace guard, not even given command of the real army.

Ahmed stared down into the city from underneath his hood. The streets were full of produce from all over the world: French "protection" had been good to Pondicherry. The French-backed Sultan had poured both money and administrative and military talent into the city. Foreign travellers passing through the city had remarked that this city was the only one which they had visited where nobody went hungry or was without work.

The night breeze was cool as the young prince turned and took a step towards the gate-house door. He checked himself. This was a momentous decision – he would alter the course of history, he would change the world order. If France lost her foothold in India then Britain would completely control the tea trade; was he subjecting the world to an existence under the British whip? No. Trade ruled the world, and tea was important, but there were other commodities. Anyway, why should he care about British domination? He would be the beneficiary.

Ahmed, son of the Sultan of Pondicherry, shook his head as if he were shaking off a dizziness. He strode along the wall and straight up to the small wooden

door. He reached out and touched the iron handle with his fingertips, and froze...

As soon as he walked through that door he would have to be as ruthless as a Bengal tiger. This weakness was unlike him. He must be without regret. The French had told his people that they need their help in ending the British domination of India; but it would be replaced only by French domination. No, if his people were going to be oppressed then he would benefit from it. No longer would he live in his older brother's shadow. Sanjay had always been the clever one: their parents adored him because he was the first-born; he held the birthright. A Sultan was not a clerk; he was an authority, a warrior, a leader. All the administrative duties that Sanjay's great intellect could perform were the employment of slaves in Ahmed and Sanjay's father's court. With a sabre, with a lance, with a cross-staff, with a musket, he was Sanjay's superior – these things a Sultan should be well versed in; not the works of French poets. Ahmed's parents always praised his brother for excellent knowledge of the arts and command of European languages. The arts were irrelevant. If he needed to learn foreign languages what were all those interpreters living off his father's generosity there for?

Ahmed turned away from the door and sighed once. He went to take a step away from the gate-house, back to his father's palace, that would be his brother's and should be his – he spun around, drew his sabre and burst into the gate-house, slaughtering the two French guards before they could utter one word. He quietly raised the gate and the redcoats poured in. They filtered through the city like a pack of rats.

Ahmed watched the insurrection take place from atop the gate-house. By sunrise Pondicherry would be his. Just as his proud cheeks began to flood with colour, the screaming started and he became as white as the clouds.





# Leathaw Park

An old man was sitting on a bench. Around his feet, leaves swirled as if in a miniature hurricane, coloured a richer orange than can be imagined and a cardinal crimson so deep that it seemed they had been stained with blood.

The time of year was, of course, autumn, but the wind felt as if it was blowing straight from the centre of the coldest Antarctic winter. The man shivered in his timeworn grey-green raincoat, which covered everything but his black boots. The collar of the raincoat was turned up to wrap loosely around his face, which was so deeply engraved with worry lines that it resembled the front panel of the antique grandfather clock which stood in his study. His hair was white, his eyes brown (but with green radii which used to emanate from his pupils like rays of light when he was young), and his expression inscrutable. There was a certain sadness on the outside, but it did not even hint at the turmoil behind his tired old face.

He remembered how he used to come to this park when he was just a child, six years old. He had great dreams for the future then: some of them had been achieved, others had not. It did not matter now. His hair had been blond, his eyes lighter and livelier; he seemed to remember the autumns being warmer, and the snow lying thick on the ground. Then he was pleased to describe it as being blanket-like, not knowing that this was a cliché. But the reason it had become one was that it was true; for the snow always lay perfectly even. The old man remembered how something in the snow's orderliness reached him as a young child: it seemed too perfect to be real, an affront to him in some incomprehensible way. He would kick it up, stamp his footprints all over it, making his destructive mark in nature's perfection.

A tear came to his eye as he remembered this, and he kicked the pile of leaves that had accumulated at his feet since the wind died down. Nature's purity and flawlessness still irritated him: a peculiarity the psychologists, those distant cousins of his mortal enemies, the doctors, would pick over like money-hungry vultures. He hated the doctors, even though he knew they were only doing their job; one which he had, in fact, paid them to do. They had confirmed what Dr. Matthews, the family's private physician, had told him: he had a condition known as Nervosomatic Chysemia, which, in short, meant that he was going to die. In fact, he was not just going to die (that would not be so bad, for, while he rarely saw it this way, he was already lucky in his eighty one years.)

"It's a terminal disease," Dr. Matthews had told him. "Right now some bacteria are colonizing the space around your brain; we can't stop them without ripping your brain to pieces." It was not a pleasant image, and he did not know why the doctor felt

compelled to mention it to him. Actually, he suspected that he knew the reason, but it did not really matter any more. "Slowly your neural connections are being torn apart. You'll experience a long period of intense depression as the connections weaken, followed by a short period of euphoria – then a very long period of death." Dumbstruck, he had asked how long this process would take.

"If you're lucky, a couple of years. If you're unlucky, no more than a week. That's unlikely though – you should live at least a year."

Shame. He would have preferred a short, sharp death to the long, drawn out agony which would devour the rest of his life.

He caught sight of the river which flowed through the northern part of the park, and remembered a summer's day when he had walked with a girlfriend through the park. That afternoon, gazing at the rapid-flowing river, he had asked her to marry him. Alice... Now there was another person he had lost in the pursuit of power. He did not feel sorrow or regret: he did not feel anything but a throbbing pain in the back of his head. He wished he had never felt that pain, for it had led him to consult with Dr. Matthews and learn of the fate to which he had been consigned.

The wind had picked up again, and was blowing leaves to and fro in front of him. He grabbed one leaf, which caught his eye because of its striking golden colour, and tore it in half along a jagged line. For some reason, this reminded him of a game he used to play in this park when he was very young. He would take one leaf, the biggest possible, and tear it in half once, then again, then again, then again... The object of the game was to end up with the smallest fraction of a leaf possible. It had been a stupid, pointless game, he knew, but somehow he had managed to get great pleasure from it. His smile turned into a grin, and suddenly he started laughing.

In one uninfected part of his mind he half-guessed what was happening to him, but he did not really care. He got up from the bench, and started running; running through the leaves caught up in a gust of wind. He was laughing like a little child, and people were staring at him. Soon he reached a deserted corner of the park. Exhausted, he stopped running, but kept on laughing – so much that it felt as if he was choking. Suddenly he crumpled to the waiting earth, falling into a bed of red and yellow leaves. Slowly the wind blew them across the ground, and they gathered on top of him. Like a blanket.

a story by

T. Garton Ash 5DJD

# House reports

## Lower School

The year started with an influx of seventy-five First Year boys and the promotion of fifty-five 'oldies' into the Second Year. Between them, they had a reasonably successful first sporting term, and the rugby players achieved a fair amount of success despite not really gelling as a team. Particular mention should go to P. Minch, who captained the rugby side with real drive and determination. Next year's season will not be quite the same without JDED-H's guidance. 2B were narrow but deserved winners of the inter-form rugby, beating 2A by 17 points to 14.

**a report by  
RSS and AMB**

The Lent Term started with the banning of Pokemon cards, a blessing to both parents and staff. Despite this setback, the term continued in fine spirits. The charity football was won by the "Chums", with the "Hippies" as runners-up. The Road Relay saw a reasonable turnout by the Lower School; M. Pinner was the fastest Second Year, whilst J. Canlan-Shaw and R. Wheeler were equal winners of the First Year competition. The team from 2A (J. Foyle, M. O'Byrne and C. More) were the best Second Year team, and 1W (C. Ingham-Brooke, T. Scrace and N. Miles) were the best in the First Year. It was a sad year for the staff in the Lower School, as it was the first time for many years that neither the tutors nor the housemasters ran. The inter-form hockey ended with some tricky mathematical calculations needed from AMB, as all teams drew their matches; 2X won it on goals scored.

As well as sporting achievements, it was a busy term elsewhere. The Public Speaking competition was a huge success, and was won by 2B (C. Moger, T. Swarbrick and G. Clarkson); the runners up came from the First Year and were R. Whitworth, S. McKenney and C. Lillicrop.

The Easter holiday was a productive time for Lower School, with a First Year trip to Osmington Bay and a Second Year trip to Rydal Hall. This involved the great majority of the boys, and special thanks should go to AMB and MGHD for their organization of these successful ventures.

The final term, although the shortest, is by far the busiest. Most of the inter-form sporting accolades went to 2B, who won the swimming, athletics and cricket, not leaving a great deal for anybody else. The First Year shared it out a bit more; 1D won the swimming and 1W the athletics.

We were pleased to see so many boys from Lower School succeeding in the scholarship examinations, and the following deserve special mention: A. Brown, B. Cullen, C. Moger, A. Wimborne, W. Guast and C. Kennedy. Art exhibitions went to G. Cowie, C. Kennedy and S. Moulds.

The First Year academic prize winners, after some very fierce competition, were R. Woolley, D. Emerson and M. Halford. The Woodgett Cup for all round contribution went to H. McKend, who has worked very hard throughout his time in Lower School. We also congratulate G. Dalziel of 1D on being awarded the Junior Layng Reading Prize.

It has been another very successful year in Lower School, and AMB and RSS would like to thank the considerable efforts of all the tutors – GGB, IAM, AJM, MGHD, and SW. Possibly the most thanks should go to AJJ for his charity work, particularly in Lower School.

A final thank you should go to the Second Year prefects who have worked hard in an often difficult job. Good luck to all the Second Year going into the Third Year; we wish you the best.



# Crescent

a report by  
C. Fudge 6TCG

This past year has been a highly successful one for Crescent. At the start of the year, we were joined by two new members of staff; a young modern languages teacher, Mr. Hele, and a new Matron, Julie Mills, fresh from an expedition trekking across Greenland. They both soon became important and well-liked members of the House community.

The Michaelmas Term began with B. Wells and M. Rees Jones leading as Head of School and Head of House respectively, and A. Hunter, A. Trill, M. Yeung, T. Betteridge acting as House Prefects. In a busy term for rugby, with Crescent boys in teams all the way down the School, B. Wells represented the 1st XV. S. Perkins and J. Hayden also played for the 1st XV and will head to South Africa this summer, along with Colts 'A' XV member N. Andrews, on the rugby tour. Crescent boys also excelled in other sports, with M. Yeung gaining full colours as captain of badminton and M. Futagami from the Third Year earning half-colours for some gutsy cross-country running. P. Lee was also recognised for his outstanding chess abilities.

The Lent Term saw C. Fudge and B. Wells in the 1st XI hockey team, and M. Rees-Jones and L. Pearce in the 2nd XI. Lower down the House, N. Andrews became a Colts 'A' XI goalkeeper and A. Gould, A. Martin and J. Stockings featured in their respective 'A' teams. With School House, we then went on to win the Senior inter-house hockey plate competition as a 'Boarders' team.

Although Crescent is very sporty, it is also recognized that everybody has different talents, and it was pleasing to see boys contributing to the School in many other ways, such as Voluntary Service, Music, Drama, CCF, Debating and even in the stationery shop. Musically, T. Ting entertained audiences all over Oxfordshire with some stunning piano playing; T. Allen and T. Murray played in the TVYO; N. Betteridge achieved Grade Seven on the flute, also playing in the First Orchestra along with A. Martin. T. Murray staged the highly successful "Abingdonschool-beatsconfederate" concert, managing to transform the Amey Hall into a soulful arena in which to display his skills and passion for fusion music. The concert also featured A. Hunter on the guitar and N. Herbert, as always, behind the scenes with the technical crew. As a house, we also made some valuable contributions to charitable causes: £163 was raised to help a Romanian student attend university, and we sent £250 to the Six

Counties Kidney Association which, although seemingly small amounts, will, we hope, make significant improvements to quality of life.

In the Senior inter-house Public Speaking competition, the Crescent team was narrowly defeated in the final, C. Fudge combining with 'veterans' A. Hunter and B. Wells. The same three, with Mr. Phelps' artistic guidance, then went on to host the House Revue, an evening of comedy and light entertainment, which gave the whole House a chance to act on stage, and to share a joke with the staff at the same time. As the Lent Term drew to a close, A. Hunter took over as Head of House, bringing flair and wit to the job, which complemented the stability and organizational skills of his predecessor.

A number of prizes were awarded: W. Sheppard and N. Herbert received the academic prizes for their year groups; B. Wells carried off the Slingsby Cup for Outstanding Sporting Achievement, the Mitchell Seward Cup for Debating, a TASS Quatercentenary Prize, and a TASS Travel Bursary (clearly a versatile chap). M. Watkinson won the Politics Prize; T. Murray was awarded the Headmaster's Prize, and J. Hayden received the Griffin Travel Scholarship.

In the summer, A. Gould, C. Howard and H. Hunter performed in the witty production of *The Game of Our Lives* in the Amey Hall. T. Betteridge rowed in the 1st VIII; N. Betteridge and D. Easterbrook were also important members of the Boat Club. We managed to break our run of second place finishes by convincingly winning the inter-house swimming gala, again combining with the other boarding houses. A. Hunter played 1st XI cricket for the third consecutive year and led the House team to victory against School House on the boarding open evening. The match featured the unforgettable sights of Third Year W. Sheppard nervously facing a 1st XI fast bowler, and the wives of various members of staff holding cricket bats for the first time.

During the barbecue which followed, we said thank you and good-bye to this year's leavers, who head off to various exotic places on 'gap' years, before starting at new universities; they are a great bunch of people and will be missed. The House looks to be in safe hands though, with a new set of prefects in place, and ever-improving facilities, thanks largely to the diligent work of the maintenance staff and ambitious planning from our Housemaster.

# Drummond-Hay's

a report by  
W. Baker 6SCW

This year has seen many achievements, both on an individual and a larger scale. We have performed especially well in inter-house competitions. In the Road Relay we did well, but special mention should go to J. Wood and M. Cullen, who came third and eleventh respectively; the former was awarded full colours for cross-country. In the inter-house hockey, our 1st XI narrowly lost to Wilmore's 3-4 in the final, and our Junior hockey team won the tournament with a convincing 6-4 victory.

The list of triumphs goes on. In the inter-house athletics we were head and shoulders over all the other houses. Every year group won, most impressively the Sixth Form team, who won by 123 points. A. Addis was Victor Ludorum for the Fifth Year; our congratulations to him. In the Public Speaking our Third Year team, consisting of M. Last, R. Vasudev and J. Barclay, were the winners for their age group. The Sixth Form won the football league at Cox's Fields. The Third and Fourth Year teams won in the swimming gala, and the Lower Sixth came second. We also won the inter-house cricket, beating the favourites, Garnier's, by five wickets in the final. These achievements are excellent; however, without the enthusiasm and drive of our Housemaster, I am sure that we would all agree that we would not have gone so far. His individual style, understood by few but appreciated by all, inspires the House to gain these achievements.

Once again the House has produced excellent sportsmen who have represented the School at the highest levels. M. Terry was the captain of the 1st XV rugby, and W. Baker was vice-captain. Also in the 1st XV were I. Downie, D. Smith, J. Gardner, G. Unsworth, J. Willcox-Jones and P. Thomas. M. Terry also received full colours, the backs prize and the 1st XV prize, an outstanding achievement. J. Wilson was awarded the forwards prize for the 2nd XV.

We were also very well represented in the cricket and hockey teams. Most noticeably, I. Downie received half colours for hockey, and also represents the 1st XI in cricket. S. Dexter captained the 1st XI cricket team, and P. Thomas was vice-captain. Outside School, J. Watkins and G. Stern have been selected for County cricket teams; H. Cole has represented the County at hockey.

The musical side of the House is thriving, with several prizes being awarded. M. Spencer Chapman was awarded the Music Society's Prize for Brass, and J. Mearns the Ward Trophy for Achievement. He was also given the accolade of a Duxbury Tie, a rare award, given because of his contributions to scholarship and music in the School and his work in the Library and in the House. He has also been offered an Oxford place to study Classics; M. Spencer Chapman will study Natural Sciences at Cambridge.

Drama was also well-served by members of the House. Both M. Spencer Chapman and J. Wilson were in the extremely successful *Sweeney Todd*, and the latter was awarded the Drama Cup.

Academically, the House is similarly performing exceptionally well. J. Mearns won the Mercers' School Memorial Prize, as well as the Classics prize, and B. Ashworth received the Wheeler Cup for Outstanding Effort. This was well-deserved; he should also be recognized for all the effort which he put into maintaining House spirit. A. Addis won the Fifth Year prize for the best Mock GCSE results. The Fourth Year academic prize went to I. Collin, and the Third Year prize to T. Gater. TASS Travel Bursaries were awarded to A. Morris, M. Spencer Chapman and P. Tolley, to help fund their 'gap' year plans.

Tolley in addition received the School's Leadership Prize; as senior NCO in the CCF's RAF Section, he was also honoured by the RAF with a Sir Geoffrey de Havilland Flying Foundation Medal for all his achievements, as well as a Commandant's Certificate of Commendation. These are very high honours, awarded only to the top five or so cadets in the country, and he was invited to a parade at RAF Cranwell in July to collect his award. To cap it all, he won the School's Birnberg German prize as well.

J. Wood received a TASS Quatercentenary Prize, and was also adjudged the best cadet in his platoon and second in the battalion when he attended the leadership challenge in Canada. Both Tolley and Wood achieved Gold in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme. A. Gates, S. Dexter, A. Morris, T. Marsh, N. Dagleish, R. Turnbull, M. Stalker, J. Evers and P. Phillips all reached Silver. C. Rose was awarded the Freeman Prize for Service. The House prizes for outstanding achievement throughout the year went to J. Barclay in the Third Year, B. Hayes in the Fourth Year, and J. Willcox-Jones in the Lower Sixth.

Our House Prefects – C. Rose, J. Wilson, M. Terry, J. Mearns, S. Dexter, M. Spencer Chapman and C. Browne – kept the House in order by their example and character. They have encouraged a relaxed and friendly atmosphere which has contributed to the achievements of the House. Success has also been due to the excellent organizational skills of our Head of House, P. Tolley, and the inspirational leadership of the Head of School, J. Wood.

To follow on from the example set from the old team are seven new House Prefects: D. Wilson, I. Downie, G. Unsworth, K. Sawetz, R. Ellwood, W. Baker and P. Thomas. The last two will be joint Head of House for the coming year. Mr. Drummond-Hay will not be with us next term, as he is on sabbatical; instead, we have Mr. Spencer to fill his shoes – and what big shoes they are.





# Fishpool's

Despite Drummond Hay's inevitable domination of all things vaguely related to anything which has at some point been considered to be sport, Fishpool's still managed to produce two practically Herculean rowing deities, in the form of G. Larsson and next year's Captain of Boats, J. Hamand. Also prominent in sporting fields, G. Bailey quietly ran his way to a multitude of long-distance honours. S. Balch carried off the Wintle Cup for Contribution to School Sport.

The Third Year managed to come second in the inter-house athletics, and third in the swimming gala, but were knocked out of the cricket and hockey contests. Not all was gloomy in the Middle School, however; O. Haenlein proved the fastest Third Year in the Road Relay, and J. Kelly was selected to represent the County in tennis and hockey. Many Fishpool's boys represented School teams at all levels; G. Smith, for example, has turned out to be a crack shot, competing at County level. He has also put his steely eyes to the view-finder of a camera, and many of the photographs for this year's School magazine are his.

There was slightly more success in academic awards this year. In the Third Year, J. Kelly gained the House academic prize, and N. Gardner sat GCSE French two years early. The Fourth Year prize went to W. Allan, whilst both Scholar's academic prizes went to Fishpool's boys, M-L. Jones and W. Horwitz; in addition, G. Cooke was awarded a prize for his Mock GCSE results. The Fifth Year were well-represented at

prize-giving in the form of S. Evans, who carried off not only a David Taylor Drama Prize but also the Senior Layng Reading Prize. T. Webb received the Judge Medd Prize and a Tappins Coaches Travel Award, whilst G. Larsson won the Economics and Business Studies prize in the Lent Term. The Palmer Tame Fine Art prize went to B. Hewett. Several members of the Upper Sixth received Oxford and Cambridge offers, contributing to the School's record number of offers this year.

Other intellectual areas have been served by individuals such as P. Taylor, who descended into the hallowed Chair of the Debating Society, and J. Margree, who, skilfully evading yet more actual work, has constructed his *magnum opus*, *Working Title*, a play to be performed at the Old Fire Station, in Oxford, this August. J. Persaud was rewarded for his work in the technical crew by being presented with the Amey Hall Service Prize.

Next year, many of the Lower Sixth will don the sickeningly multi-coloured ties of faceless authoritarian evil, as they emerge back into society as the iron fingers of the Headmaster's crushing hand of merciless bureaucracy. W. Richards, G. Coppock and J. Rowley have become House Prefects, with J. Mather and A. Fraser as Head and Deputy-Head of House.

We wish the outgoing Upper Sixth all the best with their plans for the future, whether these include 'gap' years or going straight on to university.

**a report by various hands, including J. Margree and P. Taylor, both 6NMR**

**"Landscape", oil on paper, by N. Hayes VIDH**

# Garnier's

a report by TJCG

**"Landscape", opposite,  
oil on board,  
by T. Humi VIBAHF**

This year, the second in the House's existence, saw further strengthening of the spirit evident at the end of the last, thanks in part to a good example from the Upper Sixth and the Fifth Year.

The Public Speaking competition was the first of the year, and the House was strongly represented, with G. Potter, A. Nash and A. Macdonald only narrowly losing their semi-final, and the Sixth Form team, consisting of L. Bridges, S. Pickard and I. Macdonald, winning a place in the final, which took place in front of about three hundred members of the School. This was closely fought, with little to choose between the chairman and summing-up of each team. However, Pickard's controversial and fluent speech was sufficient to win the sympathies of the audience – if not all the staff – and the competition.

Later the same day, the Road Relay took place, involving forty of the House. Third placings by the Fifth and Third Year teams were encouraging, but the highlight was the Sixth Form team of S. Curran, B. Grady, A. Beck and H. Mackenzie, who successfully defended their title as fastest team by over a minute from Drummond-Hay's. Beck won the title of fastest runner. In the hockey competition, both teams played with spirit, and some skill, but were unable to progress beyond the semi-finals. The shooting competition saw our team, consisting of M. Bungey, I. Sanderson and N. Rogers, perform creditably, coming fourth.

A good sense of spirit was generated for the inter-house athletics, with particularly pleasing performances by the Sixth Form, who came second, and the Fifth Year who worked well together to come fourth. The Fourth Year, for whom we had high hopes, were completely scuppered by clashes with GCSE oral examinations and meningitis inoculations, which removed most of the key athletes. There were some good individual performances, with M. Johnson winning the Fourth Year high jump and A. Jack coming second in the Third Year triple jump, an event which he had not tried before.

The postponement of the Sixth Form swimming gala meant that four of our most capable swimmers were unable to compete, owing to a Biology field trip. As a result we struggled manfully at this level, and also at Third Year level, in spite of a very enthusiastic approach. Having lost narrowly to Drummond-Hay's last year, the Fourth Year team had a point to prove and, once again, the last race was the decider. We came second. We can take some comfort from the fact that the individual medleys of both Fourth and Third Year galas, the premier event for individuals, were won by M. Johnson and S. Jackson (described as a "fish" by Drummond-Hay's supporters). In the inter-house cricket competition, we also lost to Drummond-Hay's in the final.

The House social evening, a regular feature of the Summer Term, was slightly different this year because of the addition of a cabaret. N. Moffatt, A. Ings, B. Pritchett and N. Rolfe provided some jazz accompaniment whilst the parents arrived and chatted. This was followed by three short but very funny comedy sketches, performed by S. Pickard, B. Pritchett, M. Bungey, A. Nash and T. Vaughan-Fowler, capably directed by L. Bridges.

Outside the context of the House, there has also been plenty to be pleased about. Several were involved on stage in productions such as *Sweeney Todd* (J. Sasanow) and *The Game of Our Lives* (M. Johnson, in the starring rôle, J. Buchan, I. Sanderson, G. Potter, and A. Macdonald). L. Bridges and S. Pickard co-directed *An Evening with Gary Lineker* as part of the Sixth Form drama festival. Behind the scenes, R. Asher and A. Ings earned themselves special ties for their service to the Amey Hall technical crew, the former also receiving the Larkhill Trophy.

On the sporting side, S. Jackson and J. Henley represented the County for rugby at U14 and U15 level, and G. Potter represented Oxfordshire U14s at hockey. H. Mackenzie, the winner of a TASS Quatercentenary prize, rowed in the British VIII which came fifth at the Junior World Championships in July last year. B. Grady and S. Curran played for the 1st XV, in which the former was the forward of the season, and both rowed in the 1st VIII with N. Moffatt and H. Mackenzie. B. Garner's bowling skill earned him a consistent place in the 1st XI cricket.

Community Service involved several boys in the House, of particular note being a concert arranged for the elderly in early July, with the help of J. Fisher, O. Burdall, J. Buchan, A. Peychers, S. Jackson and J. Mugnaioni. Four boys took part in the successful Ten Tors expedition, L. Conway and N. Holman completing the fifty-five mile course and J. Buxton and B. Jack completing the forty-five mile course. N. Holman has been awarded a prestigious RAF Flying Scholarship, finishing top of his class.

Academically, A.J. Wilson and D. Gee qualified for the final round of the United Kingdom Senior Mathematical Challenge, and S. Woodcock won the prize for Russian. At prize-giving, he was also awarded the Clifford and Jane Ellis Prize for Character, and D. Gee received a Duxbury Tie for his years of service to the Library. Academic prizes were won by S. Probert, P. Tubman and S. Jackson; the Science Times Cup went to D. Shackleton.

We say goodbye to eighteen boys from the Upper Sixth, several of whom have made a huge contribution to School life. In their own way, each will be missed, and we wish them well. The Head of House next year will be L. Bridges, with S. Pickard as his deputy.





# Mearns'

a report by RSKM and  
M. Legg 6GCR

The achievements of the Upper Sixth feature in many other contexts in this magazine, whether scholarly – such as the various Olympiads, be they Mathematical (S. Brooks) or Chemical (P. Gardner) – or music (a catalogue of J. Haworth's activities in this sphere alone would fill a whole page) or dramatic (M. Iles, along with M. Hawksworth, performed with the National Youth Music Theatre). Between them they amassed many prestigious School prizes: the St. Catherine's College prize for Intellectual Initiative (S. Brooks), the Music Society prizes for Strings (J. Haworth) and Brass (S. Atkinson), the Ford and West Biology prize (S. Atkinson), the English prize and Aitchison Cup for Musical Versatility (both to E. Mason), the History prize and Bevan Religious Studies prize (D. Mitchell), the Larkhill Trophy for Drama (C. Stos-Gale), the David Taylor Drama prize (M. Iles), the Mervyn Gray Applied Science prize and Smith Chemistry prize (P. Gardner) and the Mitchell Seward Cup for Debating (P. Batchelor).

Yet an inventory of this kind gives little impression of the great good humour, quick-witted repartee and range of skills and interests which characterized the group under the careful tutelage of WHZ. From a Housemaster's perspective, it was a group to relish very much indeed, and we wish them well.

A Lower Sixth perspective can be seen in M. Legg's report, which follows. A quick glance will confirm that the present group of leavers has not taken all the verve and wit with it.

"A year of quiet contentment, rather than of overt celebration, was experienced by all. The dark blue of the House tie failed to attract any silverware in inter-house sporting events, and the trophy cabinet only contains the inter-house singing prizes which were uncontested this year.

The year has, however, presented many opportunities to individuals. A year of transgression for one year has been a formative year for another, and so we have seen many fine examples of individual successes. O. Varney (allegedly the 'victor ludorum') collected a plethora of points at the athletics competition; the Mearns contingent of Compton, Conway and Legg helped the School team to victory in the European Youth Parliament championship, and many members of the House were involved in the School's recent rowing successes. M. Legg was awarded the French prize, and T. Herford the Sawbridge Choral Prize.

And so, drying our tears upon floral hankies as we say goodbye to the Upper Sixth, we look forward to greeting a new year with new School Prefects A. Winearls, T. Garside and T. Herford, and House Prefects J. Stevens, A. Wyman and M. Legg). New honorary scholars M. Conway and A. Wyman add leaden intellectual weight to the House, and new

confidence stems from what has been a hard, but ultimately rewarding year.

As the venerable Alan Hansen, the spiritual guide to many members of our House, once sagely phrased it, "a shocking time was had by all" at the House social evening, with indulgence in copious amounts of conversation, laughter and forty-five kilos of sausage rolls. The evening was the highlight in the hardly vacuous Mearns' social calendar, and allowed parents an insight into the School and its population which is probably more useful than the veneer and varnish of the average open day.

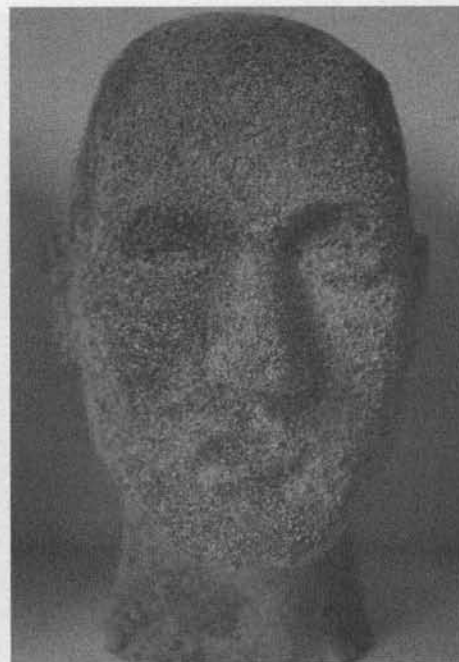
Indeed, it may be said that the year has been uneventful. However, I believe this to be untrue; it has been a year of great change and development. It has also been a laugh."

But the younger groups have been very active too and have done many good things. The Fifth Year prize for Mock GCSE results went to A. Crisp, the Music prize to E. Finnis, and the Dr. James Molloy Prize to M. Stroud. Some of the more noteworthy Fourth Year successes came from individuals such as K. Ramdoo who was not only a Victor Ludorum in the athletics, but also featured in 'A' teams in rugby and cricket. A team which included Ramdoo and W. Martin won the charity football competition. The Fourth Year academic prize went to O. de Wilde, and S. Winearls' contribution to Community Service was noted and appreciated. T. Farmer's contribution to the building of the *Sweeney Todd* set was vital, along with that of T. Bennellick. Their handiwork received close scrutiny from the whole tutor group on the night they went to the show together. The inter-house cricket was an impressive collective effort, and contested with zest. Several members took part in a highly successful Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme expedition. M. Burnard played for the 'A' team at hockey as well as giving a lead in House matters, while I. McKenzie captained the 'B' team. J. Anderson won the four length medley in the swimming gala, while J. Moffatt contributed to the Public Speaking competition.

As for the Third Year, they too did a great many creditable things, including guiding DJTF nicely in the art of tutoring while JAR was on maternity leave. The Third Year academic prize was won by M. Coppock, and the group contributed notably to the charity fund-raising event in November, and fielded a five-a-side team of N. Kennedy, A. Marsh, C. Dyer, N. Hawken and H. Matthews. In the inter-house hockey they got to the plate final, only to fall at the final stage. J. Allan was the fastest competitor in the House at this level in the Road Relay.

All in all, this has been a year of much activity, thoughtful contributions, and measurable work and progress at all levels of the House.





# The Scholars

Once again, one looks back upon a year of busy and purposeful activity by the Scholars. The year sprang to a start with a newly-enhanced Scholars' induction morning, at which parents and new Scholars were given an insight into the pastoral and academic arrangements which were to follow, as well as a ceremonial presentation to mark the boys' election to the office; this was followed by a very agreeable lunch. The event was the first of many other social and cultural opportunities which were collectively supported by the Scholars during the year.

For example, at the beginning of the Summer Term, the Sixth Form Scholars were treated to a pleasant lunch at Pembroke College, Oxford, followed by a tour and history of the College given by Dr. John Platt. The Roysse Society, as usual, was also privileged to have some outstanding speakers, including the eminent historian and writer Mr. Timothy Garton Ash, who spoke illuminatingly to the Middle School boys, and Sir Peter Williams, who addressed a Sixth Form gathering later in the year.

Scholars were active in all areas of School life. Many boys derived benefit from CCF activity, and an unprecedented number did Community Service, most notably W. Horwitz, J. Anderson, M. Hardy and M. Chilcott, all of whom were responsible for organizing high-profile entertainment events for the local community. A very successful Waste Court concert, jointly given by the boarding element and Scholars, was also one of several fund-raising events with which the boys were involved.

The Scholars, as always, loomed large in the broader cultural activity of the School. Many were engaged in memorable performances with the Choral Society, Chapel Choir and the other bands, orchestras and ensembles, as well as the big musical production

*Sweeney Todd*. The Fifth Year, including C. Mason and T. Adams, were central figures in a highly successful production of *And Then There Were None*. P. Taylor, M. Legg, J. Szurko and B. Burnham had a busy year as the School's representatives on the Vale of White Horse District Council Youth Forum, culminating in a visit to the Houses of Parliament and a vigorous debate with our local MPs Robert Jackson and Evan Harris.

It is difficult and even invidious to summarize the sporting achievements of the boys, given the breadth of their involvement. Almost anecdotally one remembers spirited rugby performances from the likes of D. Shackleton, J. Gallard, A. Paxton and N. Fuggle, whilst B. Burnham, W. Horwitz, J. Hedges and N. Fuggle had very successful seasons on the hockey pitch, the latter two also representing the County. C. Hall and M. Cullen both ran for School cross-country teams, whilst D. Shackleton's century for the U15 'A' cricket XI against Bloxham has already become legendary. Our dedicated and fiercely competitive rowers included A. Paxton, A. Peychers, N. Evans and J. Anderson, who trained indefatigably to the last.

A number of trips out of School proved successful and very well supported. The most notable were an evening in Oxford to see Bizet's *Carmen*, produced by WNO, various exciting Welsh adventure excursions organised by TLW in conjunction with the Waste Court boarders, and a mass gathering to see *An Evening with Gary Lineker* here in School, preceded by a very pleasant, special dinner.

Most popular of all, though, was the post-exam relaxation at Alton Towers on the last weekend of the year, when boys took terrifyingly daring plunges into "Oblivion" whilst the Master of the Scholars retreated to the recently-restored chapel and the elegantly-landscaped gardens.

a report by RSE

"Heads",  
ceramic,  
by M. Ambler VIWHZ

# School House

After nine enjoyable and rewarding years in School House it is time for another housemaster to take over. My wife and I will be initially moving to our cottage in Wiltshire and then, hopefully, to a teaching post for two years in New Zealand.

## FCB pens his final report on School House's year

School House also loses its Matron, Miss Annabel Casey, this term. She is to become a dame at Eton College; we wish her well in her new, demanding post.

We have had our fair share of incidents both amusing and rather more serious during our nine years here. We will remember bowling trips to Swindon, House Society events, Christmas parties, sporting, dramatic and musical successes and revues. Many boys have been sent on their way to take up excellent offers in further education. We have experienced changes of attitude and expectations in both boys and parents, and observe that a housemaster's job is becoming still more demanding. Problems with some Fourth Year pupils have made it an unsettling year, but the majority of boys have been positive in both their academic and Other Half activities, and there have been many commendable achievements.

All our Sixth Form leavers have realistic university offers, with R. Rothkopf and I. Hardingham hopeful of places at Oxford. A number of leavers gained awards on Leavers' Day; there were drama cups for A. Brewer and D. Benoliel, the Richard Turner Memorial Prize for W. Gervers, a Fifth Year academic prize for J. Mak, and Travel Bursaries for J. Kingsley, D. Benoliel, A. Brewer, R. Rothkopf and D. Boswood. A. Brewer also gained the Mitchell Seward Cup for Debating. There was even a special prize on Leavers' Day for O. Norman-Longstaff for his imitation of the Headmaster on his last day. P. Luscombe, entrepreneur *extraordinaire*, gained the Older Cup and Prize for Initiative for his considerable contribution to charities. He will assist behind the scenes when D. Benoliel puts on his play at the Old Fire Station this August, and also in Edinburgh when *Sweeney Todd* hits the Festival.

Drama has taken off during our time at Abingdon. There have been several very successful boarders' plays, beginning with a production of *The Royal Hunt of the Sun* and continuing up to this year with *The Game of Our Lives*. I am sure that BAHF will continue to bring his directing expertise to the benefit of the boarders in the future. Notable thespians have included D. Benoliel, H. Green and T. Gatten. The last two brought much hilarity to the School House Revue which followed the boarders' Christmas dinner and Carol Service, ably supported by J. Kingsley, D. Boswood, W. Gervers and S. Ismail – alias "Ali G." – again directed by BAHF. We hope that this has started something of a tradition, since the demise of

traditional Christmas party games which we started nine years ago. This year we welcomed back the three Hoppenstedt brothers from Germany for our Christmas celebrations; all had spent a year in the Sixth Form during the past twelve years.

We held a House Concert in the Lent Term. There are some very promising young musicians in the House, and the mantle of organizing more music within the House will fall on the shoulders of T. Gatten, who plays the clarinet, and C. Maeng, a pianist, together with all-round musician in residence, J. Mak. The latter's performance of Mendelssohn's *Rondo Capriccioso* was technically assured and played most sensitively. RSE will need the support of active musicians next term with the Boarders' Choir. We do hope that this enterprising activity will continue. We were delighted to attend the confirmation of T. Humi and W. Gervers last term, and hope that boys with strong convictions will follow their good example later.

On the sporting front, there have been many achievements. D. Desai has played regularly this term for the 1st XI cricket with A. Rehman the first Third Form pupil ever to get a game with them. N. Williams has rowed for the 1st VIII all term, including rowing at Henley and in a GB trial. W. Gervers rowed with the J16s, as did J. Tarrell; his IV has been unbeaten during the term and he recently went to Nantes with the J16 VIII to represent England in the annual Anglo-French competition.

I would like to thank R. Rothkopf for his kindly, effective term of office as Head of House, and all the House Prefects for their good work this year. I hope that their experiences will be of benefit to them in the future. Running any boarding house would be impossible without good, reliable prefects and committed tutors. We have been fortunate in School House in having the help of a number of visiting tutors together with hard working, involved resident tutors. MDM, Richard Bailey, RSS and JGB have all contributed enormous energy and enthusiasm to the successful running of the House. During the second half of this term the House has been well served by its new Head of House, W. Skjott. His thoughtful but firm direction will be of considerable benefit to the incoming housemaster. We hope that BAHF, his wife Jo and their new son George, will have as an enjoyable time as we have had in School House, and we wish them good luck, success and happy housemastering.



# Townsend's

It is now the end of our second year as a through House and, recognizable by our distinctive red tie, we are emerging as a force to be reckoned with – at least in some areas. Once again we have not been conspicuously successful in the major inter-house competitions such as athletics, cricket and swimming, where we have given other houses the chance to shine. In other areas we have taken no prisoners, beating all comers in the inter-house chess competition, including a strong staff team: our grand pupils (as opposed to grand masters?) were S. Bough, M. Stockwell and J. Tolan.

Our other great strength lies in shooting, where our 'A' team, consisting of P. Wakefield, A. Campbell and S. Vaughan had a convincing victory. Demonstrating our strength in depth, the 'B' team – W. McGeehin, C. Coventry and C. Johnson – came a close and creditable third (we could have fielded a 'C' team as well). Individually, P. Wakefield shot extremely well to come third in the British Junior Championships and first in the County 'Ten Bull' competition (he holds the County Championship in every one of the six categories for which he entered). In the County 'Schools and Cadet' target competition, first place was shared by three members of the House, P. Wakefield, S. Vaughan and A. Campbell; quite an achievement.

Other individual successes on the sporting front came from Fourth Years J. Richards and J. Calnan in cross-country: they were also part of the team with P. Brazier and J. Paul to record the fastest time for their year group in the Road Relay. T. Kingham was a member of the winning J16 coxed IV at the National Schools Regatta. His performance was the more remarkable considering that he had been extremely ill at Christmas; his battle to regain health and fitness was recognized on Leavers' Day by the award of the Richard Anderson Trophy.

T. Guiver, A. Roberts and D. Brown rowed well throughout the season, and N. Brodie had a meteoric rise as a cox. Disappointingly, he was unable to steer the 1st VIII at Henley because he was too light, but he made up for it on land by winning the award for the best new CCF recruit.

A. Bitmead and M. Walker both won half colours for badminton; S. McMahon captained both his hockey and badminton teams, as well as being our most successful swimmer; A. Hough captained the Junior cricket team, which was unsuccessful despite J. Wilcox scoring thirty-seven not out.

The Middle School academic prizes were won by C. Kirkland and J. Richards. The former had the rare achievement in his end of year reports of achieving an 'A' for effort in every one of his subjects. P. Vasudev

was awarded the Fifth Year prize for his excellent Mock GCSE results.

Once again, many boys in the House have been heavily involved in charity work and Community Service, but of particular note this year were D. Findlay and O. White; both boys have received certificates for their service to Nicholson House and Abingdon Hospital respectively.

The Upper Sixth represent the second group of leavers from Townsend's, with T. Butler (Natural Sciences), T. Brown (Classics) and N. Hayes (English) hoping to take up offers from Oxford and Cambridge.

T. Butler received a prize for Mathematics, and C. Johnson the Middle School equivalent, the Parker Prize. To T. Beardsworth went the Design and Technology prize. J. Mendelsohn-Malik was awarded the Sheldon Peach Prize for Pianoforte; his performance of Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue* earlier in the year will be long remembered.

TASS travel bursaries went to N. Hayes and J. Mendelsohn-Malik, whilst A. Bitmead received a Tappins Coaches Travel Award to go to Australia and beyond. Maintaining the travelling tradition, D. Morris will be spending a month in Namibia this summer (accompanied by his Housemaster) on the World Challenge Expedition.

Turning to the parents for a moment, it was good to see so many of them at the social evening late in June. We had an enjoyable evening trawling through the wonderful array of activities presented on the School's ICT network; bravery to try new applications – if not the level of skills – seemed to increase with the intake of wine as the evening progressed.

The millennium year has started well. I thank T. Brown for his help as Head of House, and wish our departing Sixth Formers every success with their examination results and thereafter.

We also say a sort of good-bye to C. Coventry, who leaves us to join a boarding house. I hope that he will continue to regard himself as an honorary member of the House – especially if he is competing against us.

a report by JT



# Waste Court

**a report by TLW**

**"Abstract",  
oil on board,  
by T. Lee VIBAHF**

Starting a new year is always a little nerve-racking. Doing so when you are having to 'train' a new House Tutor adds an extra piquancy, particularly with the prospect of accommodating the entire HMC inspection team in ten weeks' time. SH had been an excellent House Tutor, bringing a professional, yet friendly, approach to the rôle. Would AJJ be able to fill his substantial shoes? [*Only a petite size eleven – SH.*] The answer has been a resounding "yes", the Abingdon Classics Department coming up trumps again. Thank you, therefore, to SH not only for three years' outstanding service but also, as Head of Classics, for the cunning appointment of another young man willing to go well beyond the call...

The year has gone very smoothly, thanks to the efforts of all the staff and the cooperation of a particularly pleasant group of boys. The HMC inspection, the Social Services inspection, hosting of the 11+ interviews and the 13+ Scholarship examinations all passed smoothly, the boys taking the intrusions in their stride. I should thank the Scholars and their staff particularly for their help and co-operation as the above events all impacted heavily upon them, and they responded with their customary good grace.

Numbers have been healthy. We started the year with twenty boarders and climbed to twenty-four by the end, a very varied bunch containing an unusually high number of transfers from the day side (indeed, we had to turn the House office into a bedroom to keep

up with the demand). Next year we look almost certain to be full, with approaching thirty boarders and with Scholar day-boy numbers remaining at around fifty-five.

The House has continued to be very active as a community, with a variety of trips run, including paint-balling, climbing, canoeing, viewing the "Art of Star Wars" exhibition, and a trip to Alton Towers. Adding up the number of trips, House concerts and dinners (such as the Halloween dinner) organized by Waste Court this year, it is surprising to find that there have been twenty-four, almost one a week over the entire School year.

In addition, a number of congratulations should be made for individual achievements, these reflecting the high degree of involvement that our boys have had in the life of the School. P. Bürck and T. Burch made the 1st VIII and were awarded full colours for rowing (Bürck only started rowing in January, and Burch only joined the School in April). D. Reuter rowed in the 2nd VIII and has been appointed both School Prefect and Head of House; J. Park will be Deputy Head of House. Z. Ardalic deserves especial congratulations for managing not to be deported back to Croatia (despite the Nationality and Immigration Department's best though thoroughly misplaced efforts), and on being selected for the Croatian junior national debating team. J. Wilson and T. Worthington both made impressive contributions to *Sweeney Todd*.



In the Lower School, M. McCormick was invited to contend for a School Art scholarship, and S. MacLachlan and T. Rutland put in some superb performances on the cricket field. A number of boys have made huge strides, academically speaking, over the year, our Upper Sixth being particularly notable in this regard.

Christmas saw our customary change of 'gap' students. We were very sorry to lose Courtney Watson, who had served the House superbly during his time here, bringing a mix of inexhaustible enthusiasm, good humour and politeness to everything that he did. We have, however, found Nick Dickson to be similarly impressive; South Africa has reason to be proud of these two fine ambassadors. I hope that our connection will continue for many years yet.

A steady, gentle stream of maintenance work continues in and around the House, evolution rather than revolution being the pattern. The downstairs toilets have at last been replaced, and the battlefield between the main building and the Coach House outside is finally becoming a proper courtyard. In addition, some of the Sixth Form rooms have been re-decorated, although the furniture still remains rather battered.

It remains only for me to wish our leavers all the best. The Second Year have all progressed safely to the Middle School, and the Upper Sixth await their examination results with a mixture of excitement and trepidation. Our leaving one-year Lower Sixth boys both return home having made a great success of their time here. We look forward to a similarly successful year to come.

# Wilmore's

The Middle School has had a successful year. The Fourth and Fifth Year team won its section of the inter-house Public Speaking competition, with a team comprising D. Prior (who also won the Christmas balloon debate in the guise of Winston Churchill), A. Pride and L. Berryman, who spoke on the loss of childhood innocence. The Third Year academic prize went to D. Sullivan, and the Fourth Year equivalent to N. Sadler, who also took five wickets for eleven runs in a cricket match against Stowe as a member of the undefeated Junior Colts 'B' XI. The Junior hockey side won their section of the inter-house competition.

In the Fifth Year, prizes for Mock GCSE results went to T. Adams and J. Brockbank, whilst the Griffin Cup for Craftsmanship was awarded to G. Upcott. P. Timberlake, P. Peacock and C. Thomson all played hockey for the County at U17 level, and M. Browne, awarded half colours for cross-country, and the fastest Fifth Year in the Road Relay, represented the County in cross-country running. As for rowing, G. Upcott, E. Macdonald and A. James were prominent as coxes. W. Burdall was also a strong contributor in this field, and in addition won the Oxfordshire schools sailing championship. The Fifth Year also won their section of the Road Relay.

The Lower Sixth were also strong contributors. S. Allen in particular had an active year, winning the Cobban Prize, being the fastest in his year in the Road Relay, playing for the 1st XI hockey (and, with K. Roche, being selected for the County U19 side), starring (with others) in *Sweeney Todd*, and being appointed the new chairman of the Debating Society; K. Thyagaraja will be Secretary. Allen, Roche and J. Dando were awarded half colours for hockey. It is therefore no surprise that the Senior team won the inter-house competition. B. Hancock was another who received half colours, in his case for cross-country,

and has played a prominent rôle in the School's successful shooting teams this year. He was promoted to be senior NCO in charge of the RAF Section CCF at the end of June.

The departing Upper Sixth have a wealth of talent. H. Duff captained the 2nd XI soccer team. The Hester Tankard went to J. Dando; the Mayor's Prize for Service was awarded to B. Warner (who also received his full colours for cross-country); W. Smith won the Liversidge History of Art prize, and A. Brodie the Geography prize. A TASS Travel Bursary went to E. Webber, who played drums in the "Abingdon-school-beats confederate" charity concert.

M. Brown won the Physics prize, and the Mervyn Gray Applied Science prize, as well as the 1999 national Peterhouse Cambridge science essay prize and a gold in the national Chemistry Olympiad. He has been offered a place at St. John's College, Cambridge, to read Natural Sciences.

W. Bartlett, whose original compositions have so impressed the Music Department (his violin concerto was performed at a charity concert in the Summer Term), was rewarded with the Paul Comber Cup for Creativity; Oxford, too, have recognized his musical talents with the offer of a place to read music at St. Peter's College.

T. Coe, the Head of House, was awarded the David Barrett Cup and the Giles Lewis Memorial Cup for Woodwind. He has also been offered a place to read Biology at Pembroke College, Oxford. In the Lent Term he ran from Faringdon into School to raise £500 for Mozambique flood relief efforts; he also captained the 2nd XI hockey.

Other charity efforts included a darts competition, won by R. Cox, which raised over £180 for the NSPCC. A sponsored hike involving L. Moss and O. Lever raised £300 for a cancer hospice.

a report compiled by SH

# Voluntary Service

Voluntary service at the School has grown over the past two years. About 135 boys are now helping in schools, the hospital, charity shops and nature reserves, as well as visiting and entertaining the elderly. Greater involvement in the community has broadened our outlook and benefited both ourselves and, we hope, the people with whom we work. S. Nickson has been working at the hospital and at the Oxford children's hospice, Helen House:

**reports on the continued strength of the School's contribution to the welfare of the local community, by J. Anderson 4SH, D. Boswood VIBAHF, D. Findlay 4MMH, W. Horwitz 4SH, S. Nickson VIAPS, and P. Tolley VICMM, introduced by MMH**

The first group of Sixth Form pupils from the School began visiting wards at Abingdon Community Hospital in September 1998. It was a new experience for most of us, but after a tentative start we all seemed to find our feet. An hour-long session each week gave us a good chance to get to know the elderly patients, who enjoyed the distraction which we provided from their daily routine. We came across a large number of interesting personal histories.

In the summer holiday I worked at Helen House, and was pleasantly surprised by the friendly and happy atmosphere. A large nursing team looks after up to eight children (and their families) and I joined the university students helping there in the holidays. Apart from washing-up, most of my time was spent entertaining the children with board games, computer games and even sessions in the jacuzzi. Despite the hours it really did not seem like work, and I look forward to returning in the summer.

Middle School boys are the largest group of volunteers. They once again took the initiative in arranging entertainment for old people. They then visited weekly, and now visit old people in their own homes. D. Findlay writes:

A great friendship has evolved between the boys and the elderly. Visiting has become important and fun. At Lady Eleanor Court the residents laid on tea for us, so we invited them back to the School for tea, a quiz, and some music.

In December a group of us (T. Daffern, D. Findlay, D. Hammersley, and R. Williams) decided to lay on tea and entertainment for Nicholson House. We turned up in Christmas hats, bearing sandwiches, a Christmas cake (made by D. Findlay), a violin and some music. We had a game of bingo, a quiz, tea and then sang carols. We had a great time and were rushed off our feet as twenty-five visitors turned up. We had only expected twelve, but word had got around. We invited them back in the summer for tea with us at the end of their "Mystery Tour".

W. Horwitz, another dedicated helper, has been visiting an elderly lady for two years now:

I and a friend have visited an elderly lady in her home in Abingdon. Our projects to help her have included mild "D-I-Y" (hanging a clock on her wall), general domestic chores like Hoovering, and gardening (we redesigned her front garden, so that now it shows a rainbow of colours – all of them green – all year round). Topics of conversation vary from minute to minute, but not necessarily from week to week. We ring her occasionally to check up on her, but have been mistaken for relatives, social workers, government officials and the frozen food delivery man; nevertheless, we look forward to carrying on our visits next year.

J. Anderson, who has been involved with the scheme for just as long, has similar experiences to relate:

We have been visiting an elderly lady in her home for a year now, and it quickly became apparent that in her rôle as a doctor and a former mayor she had acquired something of the air of a martinet. Having been a doctor before the war, when women were not supposed to work, life was tough for her – as she frequently reminds us: "When you were married, they didn't want you" (interpret that how you wish).

When the winter weather prevented us from gardening, we talked to her about her life. She told us about the war, and her visit to Australia shortly afterwards, travelling on a small converted bomber aircraft, as well as recounting her experiences as mayor. She also shows a great deal of concern for our mothers, appalled by the fact that they have to drive us to the bus every day.

The Middle School groups are always enthusiastic and committed, and will doubtless continue their good work in the Sixth Form.

Sixth Formers at first tended to be the non-sportsmen, but now all sorts of people are taking





part. Some pupils have counted their work towards their Duke of Edinburgh's Award, like P. Tolley:

I have been helping out at the Abingdon Day Centre on Fridays. I started to do it as the Service section of my Duke of Edinburgh Gold Award, and possibly with the wrong intentions: I 'needed' to do it for myself to get the Award. However, since then the whole emphasis of my service has changed; I look forward to going to help each week.

There are several jobs which I regularly do. These include shopping for clients (who are mostly retired widows and widowers), offering an arm to help people with walking difficulties, serving drinks and lunches and, most importantly, talking to the clients. This is the part of the service which I enjoy the most. It enables me to find out a lot about the people who attend the Centre – about their needs, travel, local history, war stories and just general chat. They also like to hear about my life and stories, and they often remember to ask about things which I told them I was going to do the week before.

The staff are great to work with too; I can talk very easily with all of them, and there is a lot of banter which goes on. They do a fantastic job of always being happy, cheering the clients up, and brightening up the Centre for special occasions.

I have absolutely no regrets about choosing to do Community Service. The thing which makes it that little bit more worthwhile is when the clients say "thank you", and really appreciate our help.

Others have found their work equally rewarding. D. Boswood has been helping out at the Thomas Reade Primary School, providing the valuable computing skills which the teaching staff did not have:

"This is our new helper, Daniel. He will be helping us on the computers this term."

As I stood in that classroom, being peered at by thirty young faces, each scrutinizing me for weaknesses, I was daunted. Teach thirty kids? How was I going to manage that?

Despite those first, shaky moments, the rest of my eighteen months at the primary school has proven character-building, eye-opening and also a lot of fun. I help deal with any computing queries from half of the class of eight and nine year-olds, which allows the teacher to concentrate on the other half of the class, who are studying without the computers.

I think that the experience has taught me a lot about myself, as well as about teaching. The most valuable skill which I have learned is patience, never getting annoyed with those who need to be told things more than once. When dealing with children of varying ability, it is very important to make sure that both the least and most able get the attention which they need.

Many of the Upper Sixth are spending part of their 'gap' years on similar schemes abroad. It is good to see that the Abingdon traditions of service and sharing are in such good hands.

photograph by  
G. Smith 3BJLS

# Charities

Under the new management of AJJ, charities have continued to take on a high profile this year. The amounts raised defy easy computation, since charitable efforts are being made in almost every area of the School's activity, but are a credit to the School community. AJJ looks at the sheer variety and quantity of fund-raising activity undertaken over the past twelve months.

The first charitable event of the year, a "bring-and-buy" sale, took place in the Boarders' Hall in October. We were inundated with books, compact discs, videos and bric-a-brac from parents and pupils, and also had a well-stocked tombola stall thanks to the generosity of local businesses. In addition, there were various side-shows and entertainments. A total of £600 was raised by this event for the Nairobi Hospice in Kenya.

After the Michaelmas Half Term break, Lower School and Mearns' House engaged in a sponsored sports afternoon, involving activities ranging from rugby, football and pool to the less well-known sport of war-gaming. An enjoyable afternoon was had by all, and a total of £3200 was divided between Oxfam and CWARS International.

"Acting for M.E." in November is reported on more fully in the Drama section of this magazine. The purpose of this event was to raise funds for the charity Action for M.E., which aims to raise public awareness of this often neglected illness. The total raised from ticket sales and by collections after both this event and the Autumn Concert which took place the following week was £2350.

Collections made after the School's carol services at the end of term netted £400 for the Abingdon Millennium Miracle, a project set up by the Abingdon churches to build wells in Africa and India to mark the year 2000.

Fund-raising in the Lent Term began with doughnuts going on sale twice weekly at morning break. The charity which was chosen to benefit from these sales was Action against Breast Cancer (ABC), a local organization run by Dr. Anthony Leathem, OA. To raise further funds for this charity, a ribbon week was held in February, and in the same week Dr. Leathem came to address the Sixth Form assembly. ABC might perhaps seem an unusual charity for a boys' school to be supporting, but, as Dr. Leathem made clear in his excellent presentation, breast cancer is a disease which can affect the lives of everybody, either directly or through the suffering of a relative or friend. After the consumption of over five thousand jam doughnuts in the name of charity, a cheque for £1000 was sent off.

The Lent Term also saw the annual five-a-side football tournament, competing for the Richard Anderson Cup, awarded in memory of a pupil of the School who died as a result of meningitis. Over forty teams paid their entry fees and competed on the afternoon of February 16th, with the winning teams being the "Outcasts" (Third and Fourth year), the "Wench Connection" (Fifth Year) and the "Pedigrees" (Sixth Form, winners of the Richard Anderson Cup). This year, for the first time, there was a separate Lower School competition, which was won by a Second Year team. These two events led to a donation of £630 being made to the Meningitis Research Foundation.

Possibly the highlight of the term for many was entitled "Abingdonschoolbeatsconfederate", a charity concert held in the Amey Hall on March 15th. It was described as "a mixture of musical styles from jazz to hip-hop, blues to rap", and certainly lived up to that billing. Organized primarily by T. Murray and other Sixth Form pupils, the concert was a hugely successful and innovative event, with plenty of experimental numbers (including a guest appearance by the Chapel Choir) composed by the performers themselves. A grand total of £1300 was sent to the National Meningitis Trust as a result. Another musical charity event was a sponsored violin practice organized by Mrs. Pringle of the Music Department, which raised over £600 for Children in Need.

In response to the flooding crisis in Mozambique, a Sixth Form pupil, T. Coe, decided to run the seventeen miles from his home in Faringdon to School one morning. Unfortunately, he took a wrong turning, and ended up running twenty miles, but he gathered £500 in sponsorship.

In the last week of the Lent Term, a Sixth Form football team, led by C. Browne, took on the might of the Masters' Common Room in a sponsored match. Despite some heroic goal-keeping by TPL, the boys won 4-0, and between them raised about £400. Of this sum, £250 was sent to the British Retinitis Pigmentosa Society, and the remainder was dispatched to the coach driver of the School cricket team's recent tour to Barbados, who was seriously ill in hospital and having difficulty paying for his treatment.





Finally for the Lent Term, a collection at the Commemoration service on the last day of term – when added to the profits from a pancake stall run on Shrove Tuesday by Rebecca Cool and members of 3NJH – led to a cheque for £200 being sent to the local Abingdon Alzheimer's Club.

The Summer Term was slightly less active in terms of charities, owing largely to the pressure of public examinations, but even so a significant amount of fund-raising activity went on. In order to sweeten the bitter pill of coming in to School on May Day, a 'mufti' day was held, which raised £1350. This sum was divided between the Oxfordshire Mencap Association and the National Deaf Children's Society.

After the Summer Half Term, it was decided that the pupils had gone without fattening foods for long enough, and thus the twice-weekly sale of doughnuts at morning break was reinstated. This consumption led to a donation of £300 being sent to Vila Maninga, a charity working with orphaned and destitute children in Mozambique.

A charitable event organized by the Music Department saw a performance in the Amey Hall in mid-June to raise funds for the Mathieson Music School and Orphanage of Calcutta. Pupils of that

institution were on a tour of England, raising support for the work being done there. The School was founded by Father Mathieson, from Oxford. The concert involved performances by several Abingdon School bands as well as classical Indian music and dancing by the Mathieson pupils, and, being well-attended, was successful in its aims.

The final and perhaps most picturesque event of the year was a charity balloon release after the prize-giving on Leavers' Day late in June. About four hundred pink and white balloons were launched, for each of which pupils had sold tickets, which, with a collection after prize-giving, raised £320 for an orphanage in Honduras. The prize for the furthest-travelled balloon was a video games console. The balloon returned from furthest away was discovered in the Black Forest region of Germany. The owner? None other than the Editor of this illustrious magazine...

These are merely the highlights of the year's activity; there were many other events organized by houses and by individual departments. The grand total raised for charities this year is somewhere in the region of £18,000, a very pleasing sum, of which all the boys, especially those who have served on the Charities Committee, should be very proud.

**photograph of  
"Abingdonschool-  
beatsconfederate",  
by G. Smith 3BJLS**

# Drama

## The Game of Our Lives



**a report by BAHF and  
L. Bridges 6NAFP  
on the Middle School  
production of  
"The Game of  
Our Lives",  
by Mr. Alex Martin  
and the cast**

**photograph courtesy of  
BAHF**

*The Game of Our Lives* served to remind us just how much acting ability and theatrical talent lies within the Middle School. This, combined with genuine zest and enthusiasm from a cast whose social lives were bolstered by the production as much as were their acting talents, produced a worthwhile piece of drama.

The play was based on a real life proposal made at the Hambledon Cricket Club in the summer of 1789 to embark on a cricketing tour of France, in the hope that through learning a British sense of 'fair play', the French masses would forget their grievances. Although the real Hambledon cricketers, on hearing of the revolution, wisely decided not to venture over the Channel, Alex Martin's script played on the question of what their fate may have been had they gone. Throw into this an eccentric balloonist, a flamboyant Italian courtier, French peasants with an axe to grind, a group of very boisterous cricketers, and a French Queen infatuated with, but completely removed from, the realities of peasant life, and you get a good idea of the spirit of the play.

The aristocrats, led by Cara Cummings' outraged Duchess of Devonshire, M. Johnson's commanding Duke of Dorset, his subservient secretary (H. Hunter)

and W. Martin's suave Sir Horace Mann, played on the comedy of the distinctions between classes with elegance and timing.

Perhaps most impressive was the fact that the cast themselves had played a significant part in the writing of the piece. With their collective creative imagination unleashed in a series of workshops, the cast developed their own characters from the inception of the initial idea. One hilarious scene, in which the Queen and her courtiers fail miserably to dig like peasants under the guidance of an irritable gardener (R. Powis), was improvised entirely by the cast.

The now legendary Figgis-Phelps directorial partnership was joined by Mr. Taylor and Mrs. Finnimore, assisted by the set design of Mr. Biggs and the efforts of the nocturnal stage crew, led by J. Herbert. L. Bridges deserves special mention for his unselfish production management, even stepping into a part at a few hours' notice. Throughout the three performances everybody understood the need for teamwork, and gained satisfaction from the whole as much as the individual performance. They are talents to watch. If only the future of English cricket looked as bright...



# And then there were none

This murder mystery was performed very creditably by a cast of Middle School actors, as part of the Joint Drama Festival involving pupils from Abingdon and St. Helen's schools. The natural good humour and confidence of the cast shone through the gaping holes and melodrama of the plot, which concerns a miscellaneous group of people, all mysteriously invited to visit an island resort.

A sinister message accuses each of them of being involved in a death, and one by one they are killed off in the various ways suggested by the song *Ten Little Indians*. At the end of the play, after the last character has hanged herself, it is revealed that the lawyer Sir Lawrence Wargrave has set the whole thing up in order to punish these people, faked his own death, and later killed himself.

In spite of this rather ridiculous story, the actors were very convincing. M. Stockwell and Natalie Barclay were very effective menials as Mr. and Mrs. Rogers, the caretakers. I was very amused by T. Sykes

as a Wodehousian Twenties toff ("Oh, that must be the two children I ran over; dreadful nuisance, you know, my licence was suspended for a year"), and T. Worthington's wonderful, arrogant Captain Lombard. C. Mason and W. Allen were very convincing old men – one a doctor and the other a general – and T. Adams was superb as the rather dim policeman, Blore. Roz Gater carried off a sympathetic part as a comparatively innocent maid, while in contrast Jo Clegg was an evilly conservative Victorian-style lady.

S. Evans shone as Sir Lawrence. He seemed very at ease with his part and brought it off with a very mature style. At the end, when his voice read out his suicide note, it was genuinely frightening, though this epilogue could quite easily have fallen flat.

In all, *And Then There Were None* worked very well for what it was, but I did not feel that the script itself stretched the actors to their full potential. I hope that we will see them again, in a production properly worthy of their talents.

**a report on the  
Abingdon Drama  
Festival production  
of Agatha Christie's  
"And Then There  
Were None",  
in the Amey Hall  
February 11th and 12th,  
by K. Thyagaraja 6SAE**

## Sweeney Todd

Another fantastic effort from the drama team. Musicals are not normally my thing (I am no fan of Andrew Lloyd Webber and his ilk), but *Sweeney Todd* surpassed all expectations and turned out to be a great mixture of horror and comedy, with some tender moments thrown in for good measure.

Through an astonishing series of coincidences, the barber Sweeney Todd winds up running a business where he cuts the throats of customers who come for a shave, and his accomplice Mrs. Lovett makes them into pies. Meanwhile, Todd is plotting revenge against the corrupt Judge Turpin, who sent him to prison for fifteen years on a false charge, and who holds his daughter captive and is believed to have caused his wife to kill herself. Although Todd manages to kill Judge Turpin, a series of ironies causes him to kill his wife by accident (it turned out that she had not killed herself after all, but was living as a beggar) and then to kill Mrs. Lovett in revenge for deceiving him. Then he himself is killed by Tobias, a boy who was imprisoned in the kitchens after discovering what was going on, and had turned insane. This is obviously melodramatic in the extreme, and that is not even counting the fairytale love interest between Todd's daughter Joanna and the sailor Anthony.

So it was not the plot which made the evening work, but rather the superb singing and acting of everyone involved, as well as the excellent set created by the technical crew.

The indubitable star of the evening was the mighty J. Wilson, who played Sweeney Todd with panache and flair; in turns terrifying, tender and comic. It also goes without saying that his singing was of the highest quality. Josie Pearson, who played Mrs. Lovett, also sang well and captured perfectly the enigma of the hardened and worldly woman who has no objection to casual murder and cannibalistic displays.

S. Allen, as the rival barber Pirelli, managed very convincing accents in both Italian and Irish, a considerable feat while singing. He also possesses a great singing voice. An actor who managed contrast very well was M. Iles, as Tobias, originally a naive and harmless boy, who is transformed into an insane killer in the final scene. M. Spencer Chapman was an ominous and repellent Judge Turpin. D. Benoliel displayed his locally-acclaimed comic talent as the evil keeper of the lunatic asylum, Mr. Fogg.

Plot criticisms aside, the script certainly contained some great lines; I particularly enjoyed the exchange between Todd and Mrs. Lovett on the subject of cannibalism, discussing a general "with or without his privates", and a politician "so oily, he's served with a doily." I also appreciated the concept of Todd's razor as his 'friend', and also a symbol of his power.

In all then, my verdict, in common with pretty well everyone who saw it, is that *Sweeney Todd* was a great evening's entertainment. We wish the production luck at the Edinburgh Festival this summer.

**a review of the joint  
Abingdon-St.Helen's  
production  
of Stephen Sondheim's  
"Sweeney Todd",  
in the Amey Hall,  
December 8th to 11th,  
by K. Thyagaraja 6SAE**

# Huis Clos

One of the highlights of the Drama Festival this year was a production of Sartre's *Huis Clos* (*No Exit* or *In Camera* in English). The production was especially noteworthy as the play was entirely directed, produced and performed by pupils from the two schools; the result was quite outstanding.

**a review of the Drama  
Festival production  
of Jean-Paul Sartre's  
"Huis Clos",  
in the Drama Studio  
at St. Helen's,  
February 10th to 12th,  
by Mr. C. Brewer**

*Huis Clos* is a remarkable statement by a man whom many regard as the greatest single contributor to Twentieth Century philosophy. Sartre was also a fine dramatist, but his work is demanding and requires commitment and maturity from the performers, and concentration from the audience.

The great achievement of this production was in maintaining the tension, never for a moment failing to entertain and even enthral the audience from the beginning to the end. It was a team performance in which not only the director (A. Brewer) and the three principals (J. Margree as Garcin, Kate Sherman as Inez and Camilla Lewis as Estelle) contributed, but in which the dramatic impact was considerably enhanced by the original music, the set, the lighting and most notably the sound effects, for which we should thank P. Taylor and P. Luscombe in particular.

The play, in one act which lasted for about ninety minutes, took us to a room in Hell. We were introduced to three characters who had just been

admitted and were trying to establish what was in store for them, whilst reflecting on their damnation and sharing their life stories with one another. They wondered what instruments of torture would be used against them and what Hell would mean.

What they discovered was that, with "an economy of manpower", they were to be each other's tormentors, and that they had been condemned to torture one another. This was not to be carried out by physical means but by the psychological impact of their personalities upon one another. It became especially poignant when they realized that in this hell they were probably going to be companions, without respite, for eternity, and this led to the final denouement, when they discovered the greater truth, that "Hell is other people".

This was a powerful drama, but with a dark and astringent humour. Above all, this was a play which left its audience resonating with a profound message about the nature of the human condition.

# An Evening with Gary Lineker

**a report on the  
Abingdon Drama  
Festival production  
of Arthur Smith and  
Chris England's  
"An Evening with  
Gary Lineker",  
February 14th to 16th,  
in the CMR,  
by D. Mitchell VIWHZ**

As a late addition to the directorial team, I found my job limited to putting the finishing touches to an already excellent production. The acting was superb, the script entertaining and the technical requirements fulfilled with vigour by C. Stos-Gale. Most impressive of all, however, was S. Pickard's directorial debut: he combined a detailed understanding of how each line should be delivered in order to get the laugh, with an eye for how the play fitted together as a whole. The final result was a fluid and dynamic production which flowed from comedy to despair and back again, interspersed with convincing moments of tension.

The production would not have worked had any one actor been below par; the parts were of equal size and the jokes were evenly shared between the characters, and many relied on sheer group dynamic. Thus it was impressive how well the cast worked as a team. Philippa Graham's wonderful portrayal of a frustrated wife was fantastic to watch, and combined well with the natural comic timing of L. Bridges (who

was also producer). The pair worked extremely well together, and provided a solid base around which the other characters could work.

Radhi Iyadurai not only kept up an utterly convincing German accent for the whole play, but also played her part with the necessary panache, whilst J. Evers won a laugh with almost every single line, bringing his lust for physical humour to the production. Meanwhile, R. Ellwood was suitably exuberant and played the part of Dan with the required flair and arrogance, as he made what will, it is to be hoped, be the first of many acting appearances here at Abingdon.

One of the most satisfying things about this production was that it entertained a complete cross-section of the School, from First Year pupils to parents to the Headmaster himself. All who saw it took something from the production. As one audience member was heard to comment on the final night, "the boys done good."





# Acting for M.E.

This event was organized by members of the Sixth Form, in particular J. Margree and P. Luscombe, and presented by a cast of Fifth and Sixth Form pupils, or the "Fat Tree Theatre Co." as they preferred to call themselves. The idea behind the production was to raise money for Action for M.E., a charity dedicated to promoting awareness of M.E., a nervous disorder with terrible effects. A packed house was treated to sketches by Ben Elton, Victoria Wood and Michael Palin among others, as well as some material written specially for the event. Comic genius was displayed to magnificent effect, vocal performances had the rafters ringing with applause, and D. Benoliel revealed a rather disturbing penchant for cross-dressing.

The most striking element of the performances was the originality of much of the material. Musical numbers and sketches were devised, and then performed, by the cast themselves. Despite the members of the cast being very familiar to many of the audience, we had been for the most part unaware of their depth and range of talent.

The evening kicked off with L. Bridges appearing to tell us that "Acting for M.E." had been cancelled, but that he would entertain us with mouth organ classics; his rendition was thankfully cut short by a gunshot from D. Benoliel (who, for the time being, was wearing trousers). This was to be no normal production. This was bedlam unleashed.

The material was of excellent quality, making it extremely difficult to pick out highlights. However, particularly enjoyable was *Proposal*, in which D. Benoliel played a young lover trying to propose to his

girlfriend (Jenny Newman), whilst off-stage J. Margree (in whose twisted mind the sketch had been conceived) and James Eaton, OA, loudly stated that he ought not to do this: "I'd rather have a spoon salesman take a spoon and spoon-feed me spoons." Inevitably, it all ended in tears. In fact, all D. Benoliel's performances were particularly strong, though he appeared in guises as diverse as a mad news-reader and the tooth fairy. His oratory mimicking the Headmaster was particularly amusing.

Rare moments of sanity were given to us by the musical talent displayed. The audience was hugely impressed by Emily Gervers singing *New York, New York* and *Like Someone In Love*. She possesses a superb voice, of which we hope to hear more in the future. Likewise Abingdon's own renowned J. Wilson, who sang both *In The Dark* and *I've Got You* with great passion and flair. There was also a combination of song and comedy in Victoria Wood's *Frieda and Barry*, in which D. Benoliel tried, ultimately successfully, to persuade J. Margree to go to bed with him.

The singers were backed up by a band which contained a particularly strong host of string players, not to mention the indomitable W. Bartlett playing the planks. The band was at its considerable best whilst accompanying M. Spencer Chapman.

In all, this was a fantastically entertaining evening, which ran smoothly thanks to the stage crew and P. Luscombe's lighting, which created a superb atmosphere. It was also tremendously successful in its stated aim, with £2350 being raised for the charity. Money well spent.

**a report on this charity evening of comedy and music in aid of Action for M.E., in the Amey Hall on November 19th, by M. Legg 6GCR and K. Thyagaraja 6SAE**

**"Landscape", oil on paper, by N. Hayes VIDH**

# Music

## A golden year

The past twelve months have been particularly remarkable for the cohort of fine instrumentalists who were enjoying their final year at the School. Not since the 'golden year' of 1994-95 – when eight boys in the A level set (Gurney, Finnis, Findeisen *et al.*) gained seven A grades – has there been such a set of leading lights.

**MAS reflects on yet another successful year for the Music Department, and mourns the passing of some outstanding talents**

If this seems a strange way to approach a review of the musical year, then it is worth remembering that an important part of concert and production planning is to ensure that strong talent is given a platform and an opportunity to guide and inspire some of the less experienced musicians.

The music calendars of each term bear this out: in the Michaelmas Term, the Autumn Concert (nicknamed the "Inspection Concert" owing to its strategic timing) featured J. Mendelsohn-Malik in Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue*; the Composition Project with the LSO and Messiaen's *Turangalia* helped to stretch able A level musicians; Sondheim's *Sweeney Todd*, a fantastically demanding piece of music theatre, was a production which gave a suitable vehicle for virtuosic vocal, instrumental and dramatic talent, so ably encouraged by the JEM-JHT partnership.

The Lent Term gave concert opportunities for two excellent brass players: M. Spencer Chapman (trumpet) in Copland's *Quiet City* in the Joint Choral Society concerts, and S. Atkinson (French horn) in Strauss' *First Horn Concerto* with the Thames Vale Youth Orchestra at Oxford Town Hall. These concerts were also notable for performances by T. Herford (bass/baritone) as soloist in Mozart's *C minor Mass* and M. O'Donovan OA (organ) in Saint-Saëns' lush and dramatic *Organ Symphony*.

Not surprisingly, the Brass and First Wind Bands enjoyed particularly successful years, and the Bands Concert in May was one of the year's great highlights. Eighteen months into her post as Bandmaster, Miss Fiona Parker is really making her mark, bringing her own particular musical interests and enthusiasms to bear: more atmospheric works, suites and modern medleys, and perhaps fewer marches and overtures. May's Orchestral Concert gave good opportunities for string and woodwind players, with Grieg's *Holberg Suite* and Beethoven's *Pastoral Symphony*. In the Grieg, J. Haworth, J. Mearns and A. Apps were able to shine on the violin, whilst woodwind and horn principals

gave exceptional accounts of themselves in the poetic and programmatic Beethoven. B. Warner (flute), C. McClements (oboe), T. Coe (clarinet), P. Barry (bassoon) and H. Richards (French horn) surpassed themselves with beautiful elegiac playing, memorable for its technical and musical accomplishment.

There were a good number of unusual events, many with a charitable dimension, during the course of the year. In November, the Big Band closed the inspection week with a shared event at the Oxford Union in aid of the Mulberry Bush School in Standlake, compèred by the Union's current President. In the Summer Term we hosted and took part in a special fund-raising concert given by the Mathieson Music School from Calcutta, India, who were on tour in the UK performing a mixture of Indian and Western classical music and dance. The enthusiasm and *joie de vivre* expressed in the performances by these remarkable young musicians was most inspiring. The concert, which also featured the première of W. Bartlett's violin concerto (soloist J. Haworth), was preceded by a most successful concert demonstration and workshop for about two hundred children from local primary and preparatory schools.

Other musical events included a fund-raising concert in June, given jointly by the soloists and cast of *Sweeney Todd* and members of the Big Band, looking to swell coffers to facilitate two musical tours this summer, to the Edinburgh Fringe in August and to the Greek Islands of Naxos and Paros in July. Just a few days before term broke up, the Big Band appeared alongside a girls' choir from Buenos Aires, Argentina, in Cumnor before their appearance at this year's Welsh Eisteddfod. This time the beneficiary was the English Speaking Union, who had supported the choir's tour.

We again entered some of our many ensembles for the National Chamber Music Competition. Two groups, a piano trio (J. Findlay, E. Finnis and J. Mak) and a string trio (J. Haworth, E. Mason and J. Mendelsohn-Malik) all won through to the semi-final





stage at Wycombe Abbey, but were sadly unable to match the success of last year's trio which played in the finals at St. John's, Smith Square.

In its curriculum work, as in its concert work, this was a memorable year for the Music Department. The department was very pleased with the adjective "outstanding" to describe its work in the opening sentence of the HMC Inspection Report (and was tempted to read no further). GCSE and A level numbers (twenty-two and six respectively) were good and of high quality; A/A\* grades are expected across the board this year. We are pleased with individual achievements: W. Bartlett will read music at St. Peter's, Oxford in the same year as M. O'Donovan at Merton (the latter is completing a 'gap' year at Southwell Minster before taking up his Organ Scholarship).

There was, of course, throughout the year the normal round of informal, music scholar and chamber concerts, together with house concerts which were not in themselves of high profile but were of enormous value to the individuals taking part and to the *esprit de*

*corps* of the boarding houses. Here, tribute should be paid to Mr. and Mrs. Burrow who have done such valuable work in promoting music and its importance in the houses; both Crescent and Waste Court have now followed the lead of School House, and it is gratifying to see how much these concerts are valued. The New Year's Concert had a particularly important rôle to play this year, as a result of the demise of the Christmas Concerts which were brought forward to facilitate inspection and to clear space for the Sondheim production. The Lower School Gala Concert in July was important for its collaboration with Josca's, the first, it is hoped, of many such events.

One particularly successful concert this year (owing in part to its brevity; music staff please note) moved the Headmaster to request a command performance of the Lower School Choir's *Hey Jude* at the final assembly of the year; this was eclipsed only by the School's enthusiastic rendition of the Winchester song, *Dulce Domum*, the solo verses being sung by JHT and the Headmaster.

**photograph,  
Big Band in Greece,  
by MAS**

# Big Band Greek tour

It was before Christmas that it became clear that there was a strong desire for a music tour to celebrate the talent in the Upper Sixth which has made the School's Big Band one of the very strongest of recent years. Each section of the band stood to lose key players: M. Spencer Chapman (trumpet), C. Rose (trombone), W. Bartlett, T. Coe, I. Macdonald and N. Moffatt (saxophone), and E. Mason, A. Ings and E. Webber (rhythm). So the project to take a concert tour to the Greek islands – emulating the success of the tour of southern France in 1996 – combining concert-giving, cultural sight-seeing and leisure activity, became a reality.

**a report on the Big  
Band tour of Greece,  
July 17th to 25th,  
by W. Bartlett VIJFH,  
introduced by MAS**

After a journey lasting almost twenty-four hours, involving two buses, a plane and a ferry, Big Band arrived on the island of Naxos in the early hours of Monday morning. Naxos is nothing short of a paradise island, with beautiful beaches and wonderful weather. After a day off to relax in the sun, the band felt inspired and ready for the first performance.

We played two concerts in Naxos, both in the main town square. After discussions with the local council about noise levels, we performed to an appreciative crowd of around a thousand; surely the biggest audience in Big Band's history. An impromptu saxophone quartet, led by the Big Band director, Mr. Simon Currie, entertained the streets of Naxos after the concerts, and their playing attracted the attention of bar and restaurant owners, as well as a large crowd of passers-by. The idyllic setting, atmosphere and wonderful food led to a great feeling amongst the Band, and this seemed to be conveyed in the music which we played. The enthusiastic response of the audiences gave the Band even greater confidence.

Encouraged by the success of the first two concerts, we then travelled by ferry to Paros, an equally beautiful island. The free time which we had during the day allowed us the opportunity to travel by boat to other parts of the island, away from the main town. We found several pleasant beaches away from the more 'touristy' parts of the island.

The first concert in Paros was out of the town centre and on a hill, with the result that whilst we were able to perform with an astonishing sea view, we were not able to attract the same audience as for our previous concerts. Musically, however, the concert was superb, as the band benefited from playing a sequence of concerts in close succession.

Fortunately, Mr. Alex Martin (father of M. Martin), who was travelling with the Band and is a fluent Greek speaker, was able to persuade the local authorities to allow us to play in the town centre for our final performance of the tour. The musical

standard which the Band had achieved, combined with the excitement of the final performance of the tour – and, of course, for some the last of their Big Band career – resulted in a concert which was a monumental success. The variety of music included classic jazz tunes such as *Satin Doll*, *Splanky* and *Tuxedo Junction*, as well as up-tempo funk numbers including *Birdland*, *Peter Gunn* and James Brown's *I feel good*. The performance was hugely enjoyed by the large audience which had gathered in the streets of Paros, and they were still shouting for more after the third encore. This concert was a fantastic way to end the tour, especially for the leavers, for whom it was their final performance with the Big Band.

The tour ended with a trip to Athens, a healthy dose of culture for the Band. We had a coach tour of the sites which kept us out of the sweltering Athenian heat until the whole Band left the coach to climb the Acropolis. The reward was very definitely worth the effort, as it gave most of us the first opportunity to see the astounding classical monuments, such as the Parthenon, an astonishing temple, and the smaller Erechtheion. A small museum has been constructed on the Acropolis to house many of the friezes and statues from the temples, and this provided a welcome respite from the most intense heat of the tour. The hill also gave a stunning view of Athens, as well as the ancient Theatre of Dionysus, the Odeum of Herodes Atticus and the perfectly preserved Temple of Hephaestus. Our stay in Athens was not completely without relaxation, however, as the Band made the most of the outdoor swimming pool on the roof of the seventh floor of our hotel.

Looking back at the tour as a whole, the musical highlights included the soulful saxophone playing of T. Richards OA, T. Coe, I. Macdonald, W. Bartlett and N. Moffat, the lyrical flugelhorn of M. Spencer Chapman in *L'il Darlin'*, C. Smith's trombone solo in *Sunflower* and C. Rose's roaring trombone note at the end of *Mr. Funk*. Special mention should also be made





of T. Murray's inventive use of keyboard sounds, A. Ings' funky bass playing in *Birdland* and E. Webber's epic drum solo in *Rock around the Clock*. This solo was so long that the rest of the Band (to his surprise) left the stage while he kept playing.

The end of the tour sees the end, too, for a particularly talented generation of musicians. The band included nine Upper Sixth formers and one OA, and was of an exceptionally high standard, not reached since the compact disc recording in 1997. The tour proved, however, to be the perfect opportunity for the younger generation to gain experience and confidence. A large proportion of the Band comes from the Third Year, so we can expect even greater achievements from

them by the time that they are all leavers. Strong performances by D. Procter, N. Hawken, J. Findlay and G. Potter (saxophone), M. Chilcott (bass) and M. Hardy (drums) show that the Band will be in safe hands in the next few years. A debut appearance by three-year-old Hector Stinton on a home-made trumpet is also promising for the future...

The Band would like to thank Mr. Stinton, Mr. Millard and Mr. Elliot, as well as the illustrious Big Band leader Mr. Currie for organizing the tour. It was just as successful as the previous Big Band tour, and everyone involved genuinely enjoyed the ten days which combined culture, relaxation and a fantastic musical experience.

photograph by MAS

# Chapel Choir

a report by RSE

It has been an exceptionally busy year for the Chapel Choir. The Michaelmas Term got off to a brisk start for a group of twelve boys who travelled to Mercers' Hall in London for the General Court service. As ever, they were generously and warmly appreciated and, indeed, entertained. Shortly after this the opportunity once again arose to reinforce our historical links with Pembroke College, Oxford, in the form of a week-day evensong. Very successful performances of the Smith responses, Tomkins' second service and Purcell's *Rejoice in the Lord Alway* seemed to underline the historical nature of the occasion.

Further challenges for the Choir came in the boarders' communion in October, with a fluent and assured contribution of Palestrina's *Missa Aeterna Christi Munera*. There was also a happy visit to Worcester Cathedral with music by Sumson and Howells. After a successful collaboration with St. Helen's Church choir on Remembrance Sunday, the term was fittingly broad to a triumphant conclusion at the School Carol Service.

Events of the Lent Term involved a wide variety of different repertoire. For example, the Music and Readings for Lent included Lotti's moving eight-part

*Crucifixus*, and there was also a performance of Schubert's *Mass in G* and Haydn's *The Heavens are Telling* (from *The Creation*) at the Candlemas Communion. The last week of term proved to be an exhilarating period, not only in the preparations for the Commemoration Service on the last morning of term (which included Monteverdi's wonderful *Beatus Vir*) but also because of the Foundation Dinner evensong, in which the Choir was privileged to be directed by Dr. Martin Neary, formerly Organist and Master of the Choristers at Westminster Abbey. The Choir also benefited from Dr. Neary's knowledge and expertise earlier that week in a workshop and rehearsal, and as a result excellent performances of *Stanford in G* and Tavener's *The Ikon of St. Cuthbert* rounded off the term admirably.

Two major events dominated the Summer Term. May brought an enjoyable visit to St. George's Chapel, Windsor Castle, to sing evensong, kindly accompanied on this occasion by CMM. The annual Leavers' Service – which this year was exceptionally well attended – was traditionally brought to a suitable climax by an excitingly spirited and well-controlled performance of Parry's *I Was Glad*.

# Musical distinctions

a report by MAS

photograph, opposite,  
Big Band in Greece,  
by MAS

This year's results in Associated Board and Guildhall music examinations were most creditable, although in number of entries and of Grade Eight passes achieved they did not quite match up to those of the previous year. Last year there were 227 entries, sixty-eight merits, thirty-five distinctions, and thirty-three Grade Eight passes (ten at distinction level). This year's 198 entries (including thirteen at Grade Eight) saw fifty-eight merits and thirty-eight distinctions (six of them at Grade Eight level).

There is, of course, inevitable fluctuation from year to year, owing to the number of Grade Eight examinations, which some candidates take early. It is perhaps more useful to look at the examination results over two years: 434 entries, 127 merits, seventy-two distinctions, forty-six Grade Eight passes (including sixteen distinctions).

Particularly outstanding results were achieved this year by some candidates. T. Herford's very high Grade Eight distinction (144/150) in singing in the Michaelmas Term and T. Dillon's identical result on the violin in the Lent Term were especially notable. We wish both of them well in their respective Choral Scholarship and Music College auditions in the Michaelmas Term.

The versatility of many of the senior boys is astonishing, and many hold Grade Eight passes in a number of instruments: for example, W. Bartlett (clarinet, piano and saxophone), T. Herford (piano, singing, violin), E. Mason (guitar, lute, violin), M. Spencer Chapman, T. Murray, and J. Haworth. The list goes on.

J. Herford, in the Fourth Year, has continued to impress with his compositional skills. Apart from attending composition courses run under the auspices of the National Youth Orchestra, his work has been performed publicly several times. In October, his *String Quartet No.5* was performed by the Bochmann Quartet at Burford School, as part of a new concert series; most recently, his piece *Tuphlos* was performed at the Cheltenham Festival.

We are indeed fortunate at Abingdon to have such high musical standards and such depth of talent across the full range of instrumental studies. These are the result of able, motivated pupils and a gifted, enthusiastic and committed team of teachers. The examination statistics made a strong impression on the inspector in November, and they explain and ensure a continued high level of achievement in our choirs, orchestras, bands and chamber ensembles.





# Joint Choral Society

The Abingdon and St. Helen's Joint Choral Society enjoyed another thoroughly successful year under the direction of RSE. Rehearsals for Mozart's "Great" *C minor Mass* and Bernstein's *Chichester Psalms* began in September, in preparation for two concerts at the end of the Lent Term.

The two works chosen proved to be an exciting challenge; Mozart is never easy to sing or play, whilst the *Chichester Psalms* provided the unusual experience of singing in Hebrew.

The programme of the performances began with Aaron Copland's wonderfully evocative *Quiet City*, scored for trumpet, cor anglais and string orchestra. There was some beautiful solo playing from M. Spencer Chapman and MAS, which – together with a carefully controlled string accompaniment – gave us a

thoroughly atmospheric start. The Bernstein followed, to complete an all-American first half, and was given a rousing performance, with the more intimate feel of the second movement also well captured, particularly by the treble soloist, O. Higginbottom.

Mozart's *C minor Mass* in provided a complete contrast in the second half, and also came across extremely well, particularly in the splendid acoustics of St. Barnabas Church. There was some exquisite solo singing, notably from T. Herford and the joint orchestra performed to their usual high standard, coping impressively with the many technical demands of this piece. The chorus, too, provided some exciting moments, whilst the whole ensemble was expertly brought together by RSE, producing two thoroughly enjoyable evenings for both performers and audiences.

**a report by JEM on the performances of Mozart's "C minor Mass" and Bernstein's "Chichester Psalms" at St. Barnabas Church, Jericho, Oxford, on March 11th and the Yolande Paterson Hall, St. Helen's School, on March 12th**

# Visits & Trips

## Alpe D'Huez

At three in the morning, on the day after the end of term, a somewhat tired yet excited group of four teachers and a total of thirty Third, Fourth and Lower Sixth Form pupils left Abingdon (almost without Mr. Millard) on their way for this year's ski trip.

**a report on the ski tour  
in the French Alps over  
the Easter holidays,  
by J. Herbert 6TCG**

**photograph opposite by  
G. Smith 3BJLS**

A couple of hours later we were at Gatwick and were airborne and on our way by eight. When we arrived at Lyon we then spent two glorious hours whining about how tired we were and the general inefficiency of the French baggage handlers.

We eventually arrived at the resort, after a fairly lengthy coach journey and more "Jamiroquai" than many of us could bear. Several people had contemplated suicide on the third repetition of *Canned Heat*.

The hotel was superbly situated for skiing; there was a bob-lift within metres of the hotel front door, and it was well within walking distance of the main lift. The rooms were comfortable (some more than others), but nobody had any real interest in staying in them anyway.

We were soon kitted out with ski-boots and skis and were raring to go. Later most of us went out into the evening to try our skills at bum-boarding, a slightly odd sport in which you spend about ten minutes climbing up a slope before hurtling down it again on a very small and slightly thin bit of plastic, with absolutely no control whatsoever over your direction of travel.

After many interesting, varied and painful crashes on the nursery slopes, a few brave – and possibly slightly mad – hard-core bum-boarders then approached the somewhat steeper red slopes on the other side of the resort. After a fairly quick climb we set off in a line – our first mistake – which led to some painful head-bouncing-on-ice situations. After that we were slightly more cautious, but nevertheless fairly insane; M. Ezra in particular created and perfected the "Superman-style-crotch-on-bum-board" method of hurling oneself head first down the mountain-side, whilst J. Eighteen's stunning rope-tangling crash was amongst the most memorable of our antics.

Everyone was up bright, slightly bruised and early the next morning, and we were soon all outside and ready to get down to some serious skiing. We divided into groups according to our ability or lack of it, and met up with our instructors.

Over the next few days we spent our mornings with our instructors, and the afternoons in small groups, sometimes with teachers, trying out as many slopes as the light would allow.

There were some very memorable runs – the red down to the small village of Oz was fun, although it got more and more slushy during the week. The Canyon was the run which was the most infamous; a group of us managed to persuade Mr. Mansfield to take us down it, only to spend most of the run on our rears or completely out of control.

On the penultimate day our group decided to hire snow-blades and spent the day on them. Although not quite as fast as skis, you do not use poles, giving many a large "I'm out of control" adrenaline rush. In reality, they were actually easier to control than skis, allowing almost instant turns and lightning reactions. They certainly made the board-park more interesting; many more bumps and bruises, but those who stayed standing managed some impressive stunts. Going back to skis was more difficult than I had imagined; I had to concentrate far more on turning.

The evenings were also good fun. There were organized activities for the Middle School, and the Sixth Form were allowed to decide what they would do. The activities were often well worth staying around for – ice-karting was fantastic – but the most memorable was night-skiing; hurtling down red slopes under bright floodlights made for a great (if seriously tiring) evening, even if the musical accompaniment was some desperately bad French 'music'.

By the end of the week, everyone had found their favourite slopes and had all improved immeasurably; the intermediate group, for example, had tackled a black run.

The journey back was fairly long, especially as we had to put up with a six hour delay (someone had driven a truck into our aircraft), but we all arrived home exhausted but happy. Our thanks go to Messrs. Broadbent, Griffiths, Mansfield and Millard for staffing the trip.





# Bielefeld exchange

The Bielefeld exchange this year consisted of twenty-two Abingdon boys together with about twenty St. Helen's girls. Without doubt everybody who was involved with the trip got a lot out of this exchange, not only through learning the language, but also by encountering the German way of life and culture. We also had a great deal of fun.

We attended lessons throughout the ten days, which gave us an insight into some very different teaching styles. Although we could not totally understand what was being said, for many this greatly helped our understanding of German because we could very quickly pick up an enormous amount of new vocabulary and many commonly-used phrases.

On some days there were outings to nearby towns and cities, such as Göttingen, Kassel and Minden. These gave us a look at some other parts of Germany. We were able not only to visit monuments such as castles and cathedrals, but also to explore and learn about the towns, visit the shops and experience the great atmosphere of local cafés.

The other side of the exchange was family life. For us this was definitely the most useful part of the exchange, as we were learning to speak the language in the correct way as well as broadening our knowledge of vocabulary and phrases. It was difficult to begin with, being in families where little English was spoken, and

we always had to think about what we were about to say, as things were often interpreted somewhat differently on the other end of the conversation. We found that family life was certainly a lot less relaxed than over here; for example, meals were always very formal and always ready at a certain time, and the father was most definitely the 'boss' of the household, around whom everything seems to revolve. But it was great to see and experience how a family other than our own operated for a change.

On the exchange there was a lot of free time (as school generally finished around one o'clock) in which we were able to meet friends, and try some of the activities that the Germans did in their free time. We found that actually they were all very similar people to us in their interests. At the weekend we were with families, so we were able to do things of our choosing. Many of the group made the three-hour journey to Berlin, apparently a very beautiful and historical city; others went shopping and simply made the most of the free time. Other free time was used in the form of friendly snowball fights, often at Mr. Bowley's expense.

We think that everyone enjoyed the exchange, and most of the families were very hospitable. This was definitely a worthwhile way to spend what might otherwise have been a rather boring and uneventful Half Term.

**a report on the annual  
German exchange,  
by M. Cullen 4SH and  
J. Richards 4MMH**

# Sweden

**a report on the A level  
Biology field trip to  
Camp Abisko, Sweden,  
July 31st to August 9th,  
by S. Atkinson VIWHZ**

**photograph by TCG**

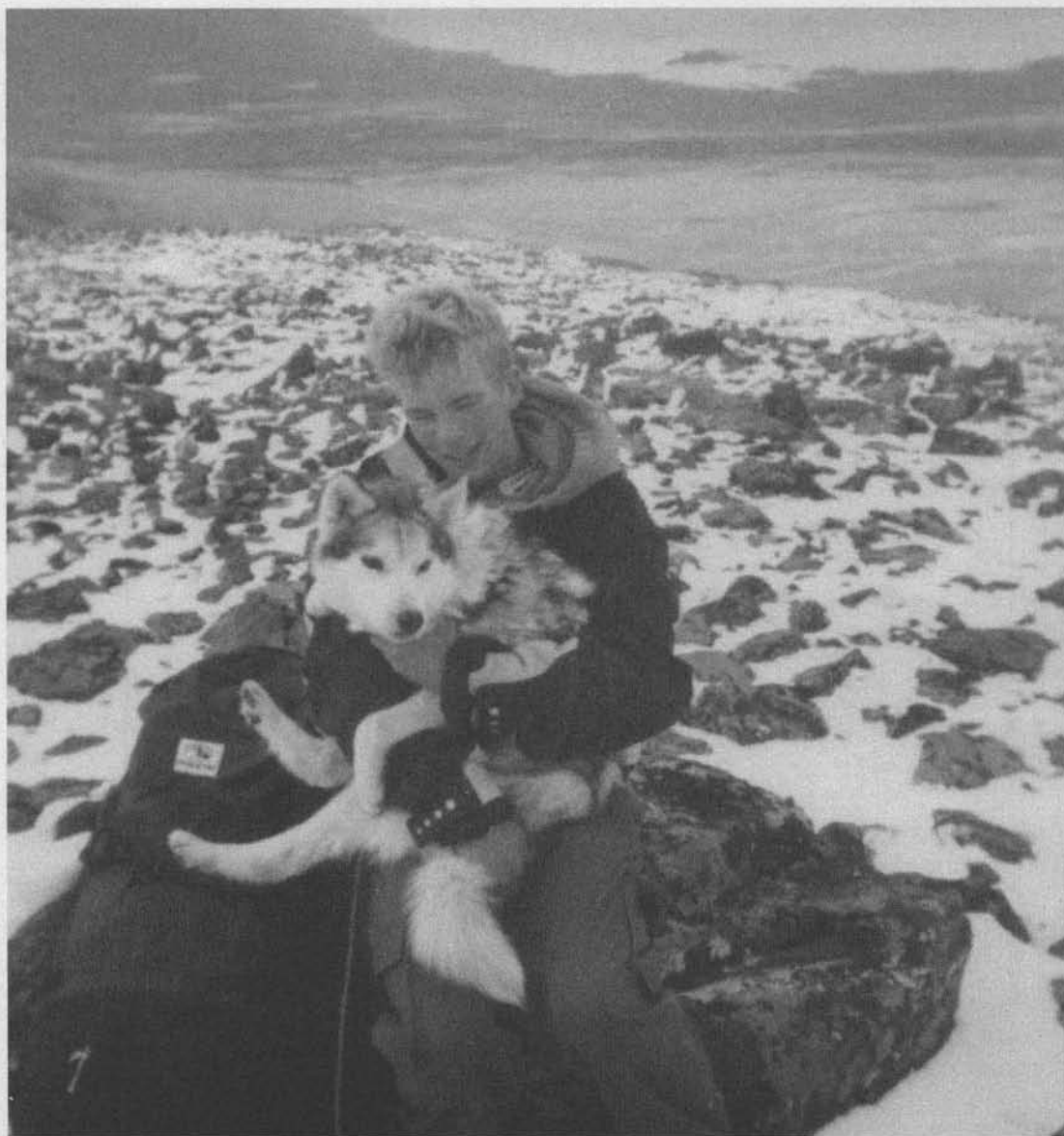
In search of a change of scenery from the usual field trips to Wales, the Biology department decided to lead an expedition to Arctic Sweden under the leadership of Dr. Gunn, Dr. King and Mr. Waters. At four in the morning on the first day, some thirty A level Biologists packed into a coach, bound for Heathrow and beyond.

We stayed in a lodge named Camp Abisko, which is situated near a scientific research centre whose facilities we were allowed to use. The 'town' itself, consisting of a few houses and a supermarket, lies on the southern shore of Lake Tornetrask, which is thirty-five kilometres long and sixteen wide. Two hundred kilometres inside the Arctic Circle, there was daylight for the entire trip.

During our stay we completed two full assessed pieces of course-work: an altitudinal transect, an investigation into vegetation patterns in boggy areas, and a personal research project of our own choice. This made for a hectic working schedule, often resulting in late nights in the research station.

However, the trip did have a much lighter entertainment and cultural side. We were privileged to be able to sample, in copious quantities, some of the local culinary specialities, including moose, reindeer and whitefish from the lake. Trips were organized to the iron ore mine in Kiruna (the deepest in the world), the Norwegian fjords and a slide-show of the work of photographer Sven Hornell (including a slide of one of Sweden's twin peaks). A showing of *Star Wars* was also arranged, and a football tournament organized, the final result of which, however, was surrounded by some contention.

The incredibly dramatic scenery and other-worldly quality of the atmosphere made this trip an incredible experience. It was well worth the time, and if you are lucky enough to go, make sure that you take enough film; there is plenty to take pictures of. Also be sure to take sufficient warm clothes (as it can be extremely cold in the wind above the snow-line) and industrial quantities of insect repellent.





# Greek islands cruising

When the thirty-six of us touched down in Athens at one in the morning, the captain told us that the outside temperature was thirty degrees Celsius. It was hotter there in the middle of the night than it is in England in the midday sun. The typical English white skin had to be smothered with suntan lotion before too many of us resembled boiled lobsters. An incident involving G. Upcott's foot, two fish-hooks and a trip to hospital made us realise that the sea in Greece is not always clean, though it is incredibly clear and warm.

At Lavrion, a few hours' ride south of Athens, we were allowed to get on the boats and sort out who went where. Each boat slept ten in three cabins and the saloon. They were spacious (for yachts) and surprisingly comfortable. There was no food aboard so the teachers were sent on a shopping trip, while the rest of us explored. For our first supper J. Cousin managed to cook the spaghetti in salt water, rather than in fresh, which tasted odd. Washing-up and cooking was split between everybody, although Cousins was never asked to cook again.

The next morning we set sail for the island of Aegina. The sea was rough and the boats were pitching and rolling all over the place. It was too windy to set the sails, so we motored and got used to the boats' violent movements. The motion had some bad effects on some, but after a while the wind dropped and the waves settled down. Up went the sails. Everyone had a go at steering. The highlight of the day was when seven dolphins were spotted following us. They came and played around our boats, jumping and diving.

We stopped at a small cove on Aegina, where we swam, snorkelled and ate lunch. It was peaceful, bar the frequent squeals of unsuspecting people being pushed over the side of the boats. We spent the night at the town of Aegina; food was eaten ashore; some of us who explored found small Greek tavernas in the back-streets, whereas the ignorant went straight to the pizzeria for another evening without sampling Greek food. Next morning there was exploring and souvenir hunting. Some were taken in by the seemingly good bargains, and bought caps, fishing rods and even one harpoon gun. Those looking for culture went by local bus to the spectacular temple of Aphaia perched high on a hill overlooking the Saronic Gulf.

We left mid-morning for a gentle sail to Epidavros, on the mainland, stopping for lunch and a swim at an uninhabited island. It was a quiet, small town, hardly touched by tourism, and we found a really good small restaurant on the sea-front. It served typical Greek food, but we were a little too early, as the day's catch had not yet arrived. We tried moussaka and other tasty Greek dishes. They went down very well amongst the crews. In the morning there was an

excursion to the theatre of Epidavros; for those who opted not to go, there was swimming in the bay and races to and from the boats by land and sea.

Poros was the next stop. One crew spotted two huge tuna fish and some swordfish on the way. Poros was a lively, bustling little town and yet again the ignorant ate in an Italian restaurant, which happened to be the most expensive in the whole town. T. Guiver managed to eat his own huge pizza and most of everybody else's too. A drunk woman from another boat mistook our boat for hers and tried to walk along our plank to get on board. Unfortunately she reached about half way and toppled into the sea; she eventually saw the funny side.

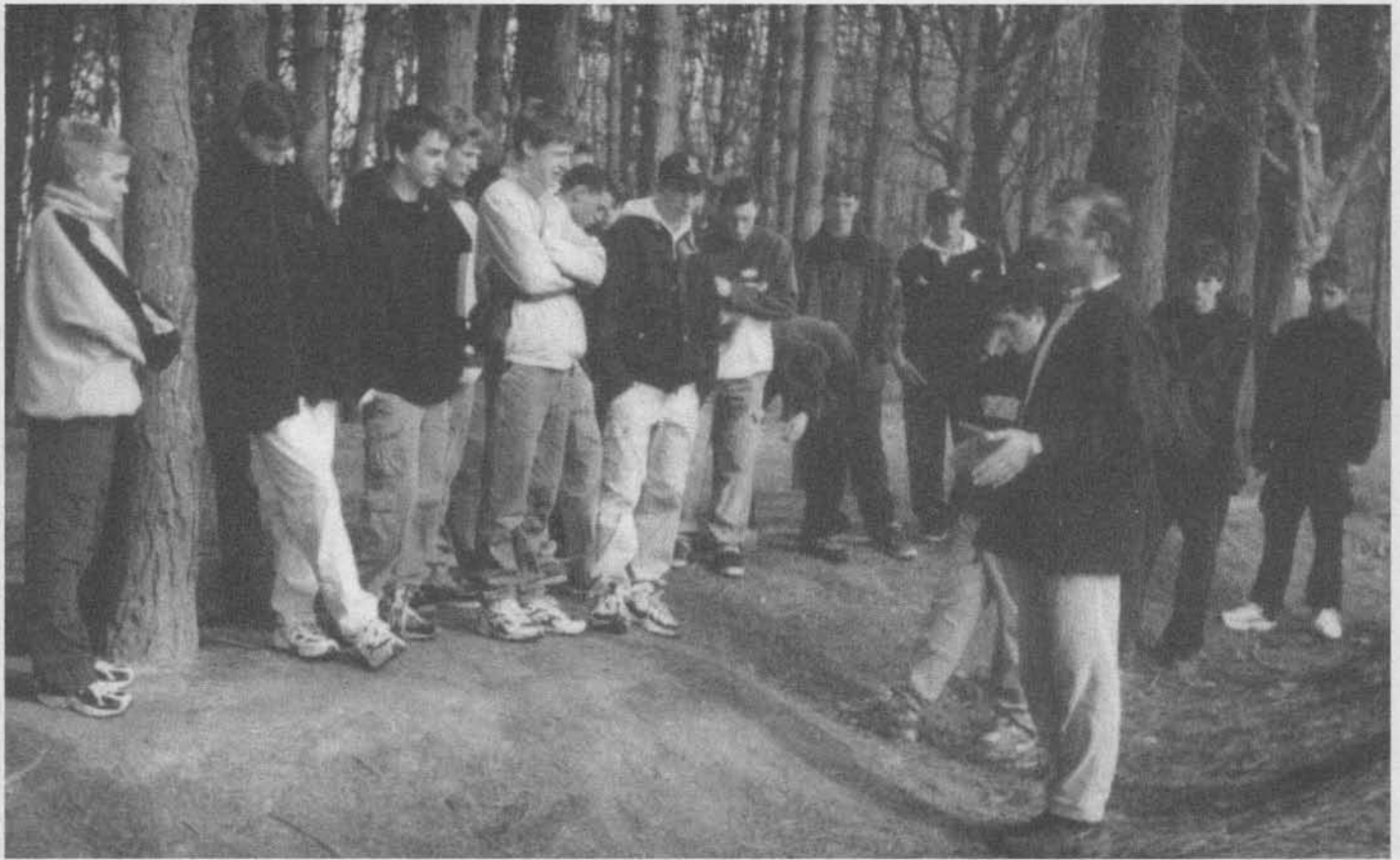
We left early in the morning for Askelli Bay, another part of Poros, where there was a water-sports centre. Ringo-ing, banana boating, dinghy sailing, wind-surfing, snorkelling, wake-boarding, water-skiing and para-sailing were all on offer at fairly reasonable prices and proved to be great fun.

After a fun-filled afternoon, it was off to the island of Hydra, a busy port where the boats were all at least triple moored, which meant having to clamber over other people's boats to get ashore. There was no motorized traffic on Hydra; all we had to look out for were donkeys. They were everywhere, but remarkably the streets were very clean. We had moored over the quay to a huge motor-cruiser, which housed a party thrown by Hugh Grant and Liz Hurley. An attempt at gate-crashing was planned but was foiled almost straight away.

The morning brought news of an engine failure on one of the boats. The engine could not be fixed (even by Mr. Mansfield), and the boat remained at Hydra with another boat and its crew. The other two departed for Perdhika, on Aegina. It was a typical fishing town where we ate squid and swordfish, which were very tasty and very cheap. In the morning we left early for Lavrion. It was our last day of sailing and the wind picked up. We had now become efficient and quick at hoisting and setting the sails. We stopped off in a bay below the temple of Sounion, for lunch. We swam ashore from the boat; the water was as clear as glass. The final stretch home was a long, slow beat to windward; the waves were big and we all got absolutely drenched, but we did not care. It was so hot that it was really refreshing to have waves break over the bows of the boat.

This was a great holiday, and if you should ever get the chance to go, then do so. You will never regret it. It still is in all of our memories, as if it was only yesterday that we were sailing along next to the dolphins. Our thanks go to Mr. Mansfield and especially to Mr. Townsend who organized it and will, we hope, do the same again.

**a report on the yacht  
sailing trip in the  
Greek Islands,  
July 1999,  
by T. Kingham 5DGA**



# First World War Battlefields

**a report on the History  
Department's tour of  
First World War  
battlefields in France,  
April 1st to 3rd,  
by J. Pallett 4AJPE  
and BAHF**

**photograph courtesy  
of BAHF**

People visit the Western Front for a variety of reasons. Some wish to see the graves of relatives who fought in the First World War, whilst the military historians go to survey the topography of the land and imagine the reality of battle. Certainly one cannot visit the Western Front without contemplating how so much life was lost for so little gain. This tour, firmly and expertly led by Majors Will Townsend and David Wynne, offered us all a chance to view the war in close-up.

With Mr. Carson straining at the leash, it was important to head straight for the battlefields themselves, to examine the trench systems and the lie of the land. Approaching the war from chronologically the wrong angle, we first visited Vimy Ridge, one of several strongholds to which the German army retreated after the failure of their invasion of France in 1914. As was the case at Passchendaele, we could see what an advantage was gained by occupying the high ground in such flat country and in such a static war. In contrast to Passchendaele, however, at Vimy Ridge the Allies found a method of attack which overcame the disadvantage of advancing uphill, by digging tunnels from which they appeared to surprise the Germans and successfully take the ridge in April 1917.

More notorious, however, is the carnage suffered by the British army at the Somme. Outside the village of Serre the majority of our group were mown down by machine gun (simulated by a fast hand clap) in a reconstruction of the attack which commenced on

July 1st 1916. Fortunately, Dr. Zawadzki managed to dodge the bullets and was last seen charging courageously towards the German line.

Having experienced the battlefields, we were ready to contemplate other aspects of the war. Everyone reacts differently to the cemeteries; comments ranged from the respect shown by their meticulous preservation, to how the graves stood in perfect rows as if on parade, or that their uniformity suggested the unity of dying together in battle, regardless of rank. At Thiepval and the Menin Gate, a glance at the names and regiments opens your eyes to the variety of nationalities from across the Commonwealth; Canadians, Newfoundlanders, Sikhs and even West Indians fought and died in a very foreign field.

Even more thought-provoking were two distinctly contrasting sites, both in Poperinge near Ypres. One was an execution post, against which 351 British soldiers were shot during the war; the other was Talbot House, a soldiers' rest home run by a regimental chaplain called Tubby Clayton. These two provided a contrast between the brutal, but arguably necessary, official treatment of soldiers' incapacity to fight, and an invaluable unofficial Christian shelter attempting to provide the men with faith and comfort.

There was as much to think about as there were pieces of shrapnel for Mr. Carson's trinkets company to collect. As *Black Adder* played us home, the war had touched everyone across a gap of eighty years.



# Bavaria

A group of Upper Sixth pupils spent six days in Bavaria during the October Half Term, accompanied by DGA and JRWB. The aim of the trip was to mix business with pleasure, to visit various sites of direct relevance to A Level studies, as well as to enjoy some of the cultural and gastronomic delights that southern Germany has to offer.

Our weekend in Munich was busy and varied. We rushed from the airport to the Olympiastadion to get some Bundesliga action with 1860 against HSV, where C. Rose's running commentary almost made up for rather a dull 0-0 draw. Then we went to one of Munich's famous beer halls for even more local colour.

We were very much in JRWB's hands for an historical walk round the city centre, and for our visit to the concentration camp at Dachau. The latter was moving enough in itself, but JRWB's knowledge and passion helped make the whole experience entirely significant to everybody in the group.

We also managed to fit in trips to the Lembachhaus gallery, home of some wonderful

examples of German Expressionism, to a very cosy theatre for a Dürrenmatt production, and to the Assamkirche, a striking baroque church.

We then travelled on to Nuremberg, where we spent three equally varied days. We got to know something of the old Imperial city, before joining up with some local pupils for a tour of the Nazi rally sites, the Reichsparteitagsgelände. Once again, our own historian helped us appreciate something of the horror associated with what we were seeing. We also spent some time as guests of the Wilhelm Löhe Schule, and are indebted to Christof Mähner for his efforts in laying on a programme for us. Cinema and restaurant trips helped complete the picture.

Accommodation in youth hostels in both cities was extremely civilized, and was made all the more sociable by our continually meeting up with a party from Christ's Hospital School. The trip was considered a great success by all involved, and should turn out to be the first of what may well become an annual event for German A Level pupils.

**a report on the joint  
Abingdon-St. Helen's  
Sixth Form visit to  
Bavaria in October,  
by DGA**

# Alsace

It took us thirteen hours to travel from Abingdon to Haguenau, leaving at seven in the morning and arriving in Haguenau at nine that evening: we travelled by coach and crossed the Channel by way of the Tunnel. When we arrived, our host families were awaiting us, and we spent our first night at their houses. On Saturday we had to get up relatively early, as some of us went to school with our correspondents for the first few lessons. We were then given a tour of Haguenau, during which we were given a brief history of the town. After this we spent the rest of Saturday and Sunday with our exchange partners.

Everyone had to get up early on Monday morning to go to school where they experienced French education until midday. That afternoon we set off on a school excursion to Fleckenstein castle, which has been kept in reasonably good condition and gave us an amazing view of the surrounding Alsatian countryside.

On Tuesday we had our first all-day excursion, to Colmar and Riquewihr. Our families provided us with a picnic lunch. We stopped in Colmar first, where some of us went to the museum which had many pictures of this historic town. Many of us also looked around the shops, as there were many opportunities to buy souvenirs. The town contained a lot of typical cafés and there was a particularly striking fountain in the town square.

We then proceeded onto Riquewihr to have our lunch and look around this small mountain town

surrounded by vineyards. There was a wonderfully generous baker there who was giving out freshly baked Alsatian cookies. After we had eaten our lunches we travelled to Haut Koenigsbourg castle. This was a very well restored and attractive castle with a panoramic view of the valley below.

Another excursion saw us cross the border into Germany and visit the famous university of Heidelberg. This town is particularly well known for its beautiful castle which stands on top of a steep hill overlooking the whole of the town, and most of us headed straight there. We studied the building itself and the contents, including several large beer vats, one in particular taking up the whole of a very large room. We went on to an Alsatian pottery village; there were a few shops selling this classic pottery and this provided a further chance to buy some more souvenirs.

Friday, our last full day in France, took us to Strasbourg. We drove past the European parliament buildings, and stayed in Strasbourg for the day, first of all walking to the gothic cathedral which was in the process of being restored. We then had time to look around the town for a few hours. On the way back we stopped off at a hypermarket where many of the Sixth Form and Mr. Bowley bought wine to take home.

The Saturday was our travel day back to Abingdon, with another early start and long day on the coach. We would like to thank Mr. Willerton and Mr. Bowley for a great trip.

**a report on the French  
exchange to Haguenau,  
March 31st to April 8th,  
by S. Jackson 3RGH  
and W. Teddy 3JAR**

# A week in Provence

Our small legion, led by the tyrannical Mr. Hullis, endured spartan conditions on our cultural odyssey under Provencal sun. At the airport, we were almost forced to leave one of the camp-followers (the infant Harry Fishpool) behind, since the tour company had neglected to book him a seat. Our luck, we thought, could only improve; however, we were to be dogged by misfortune at almost every turn...

**a report on the October  
Classics trip to the  
Roman sites of  
Southern France,  
by J. Powell and  
A. Wyman, with the  
dubious assistance of  
M. Legg, all 6GCR  
photograph, opposite,  
by M. Smith 4CJB**

Once we had settled into our utilitarian quarters in Arles, our outings were undertaken in orderly military fashion (though they were frequently handicapped by Mr. Hullis' blissful and somewhat comical ignorance of the local language).

The first stop was Glanum, an idyllic Greek settlement in the cleft of some small mountains. There we were to be met by Heidi, our site guide – our visions of a sultry Swedish dancing girl were rudely shattered by her non-appearance at the appointed time, and so, setting the trend for the rest of the expedition, our illustrious leader shouldered the burden of guiding us around a site which he had never seen before in his life. It was all going quite well until the guide – victim of a travel-company-induced communications failure – finally found us.

Vaison-la-Romaine, described as the “Pompeii of France”, did not live up to its billing, and we were somewhat disappointed not to find any evidence of volcanic activity. The same day saw us visit Orange, site of a spectacular Roman theatre, where D. Benoliel reprised his rôle in the *Bacchae* in front of an audience numbering in its tens. Orange also possessed a rather bizarre little museum with a Roman map made out of stone; somewhat inconvenient to use in the car, perhaps. We also drove straight past Avignon at one point; Mr. Hullis had omitted it from the itinerary as being insufficiently ancient and ruinous.

The hotel was an interesting distance from the centre of Arles, and it was only the brave who attempted the march voluntarily. However, it was worth it to feast upon a McBanquet, a vast improvement on the hotel's supply of bread and mashed chicken livers. The official tour of Arles began with the virtual hi-jacking of a commuter bus, before we stormed the Arles museum. Mr. Hullis was in raptures, to which D. Benoliel (one of his long-suffering Ancient Historians) listened with polite interest. Outside we gazed upon the remains of the circus, the ghost of Ben Hur and spectral images of chariots being particularly difficult to conjure up given that the site was simply a swampy hole in the ground. The cavernous tunnels of the cryptoporticus (a deeper hole in the ground, purpose unknown) were a welcome relief from the heat.

The troops were now deeply fatigued and longing for the green fields of Britannia. However, one mission still remained. Roused by the Ciceronian rhetoric of our insatiable general, we ventured into hostile Gallic territory once more. Another day's arduous trek across enemy country found us in the city of Nîmes, salivating at the prospect of the best-preserved amphitheatre in the Roman empire. Our visions of gladiatorial combat were somewhat spoiled by the presence of a large temporary dome over the arena, as well as the glowering company of our oriental ‘minder’, quietly christened “Oddjob”. We also coped very well with being booked to visit the town museum an hour before it opened.

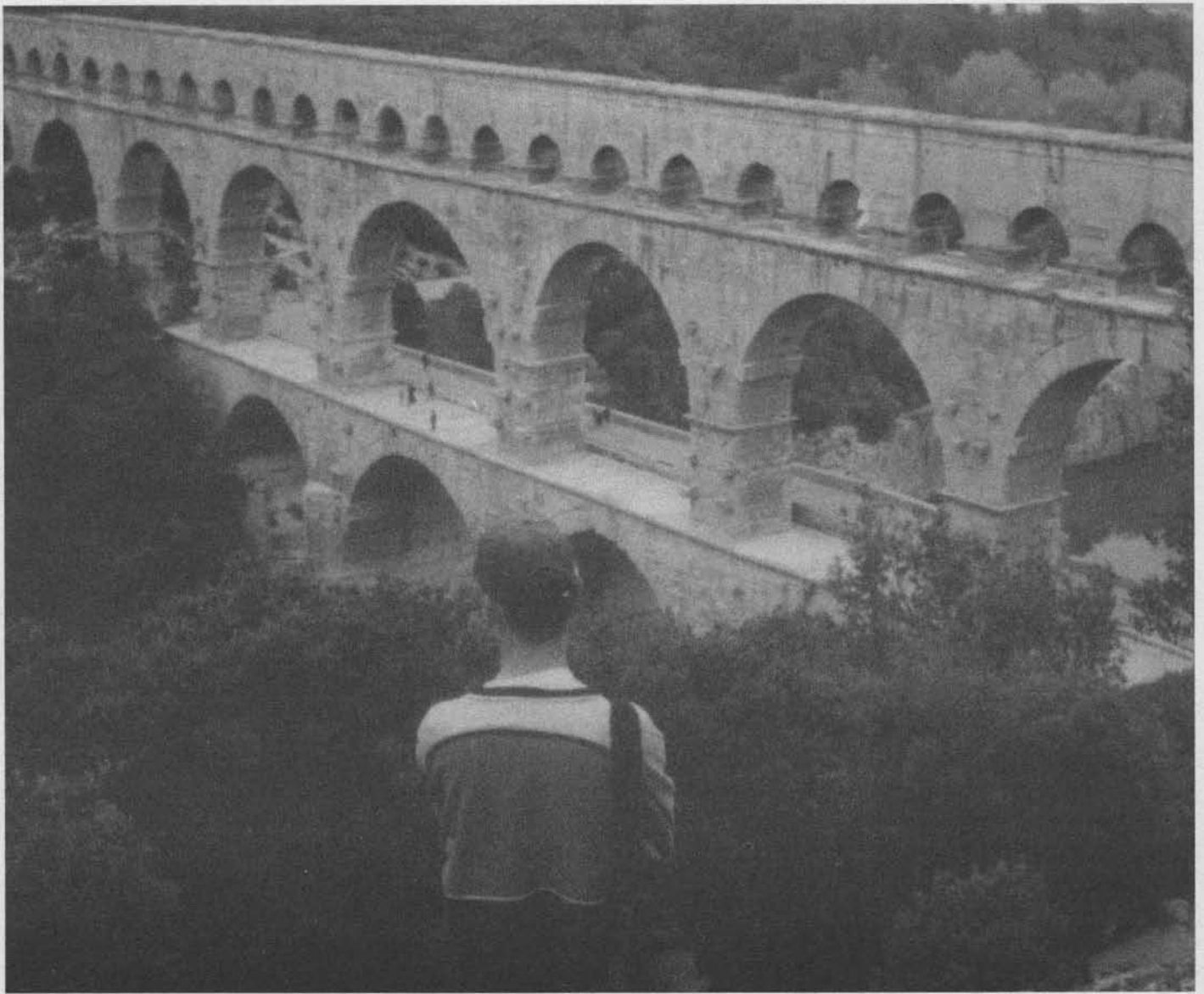
The highlight of the tour came that afternoon, when the group found itself almost alone at the Pont du Gard, perhaps the single most imposing monument to Roman civilization and sheer bloody-mindedness. This aqueduct quite unnecessarily spans a deep gorge with a channel supported some fifty metres above the surface of the river. Photographs cannot really do it justice, but we have included one anyway.

Winter was by now closing in, and the campaigning season was coming to an end. We begged our leader to head for home, as he cast his eyes longingly eastwards, dreaming of further conquests and exploration to the outermost ocean. Our epic journey back to the beloved fatherland began with a detour to a Roman bridge at St. Chamas [*highly recommended – SH*] before heading to museums in Marseille. Even at this late stage, the curse of the travel company still had the power to render Mr. Hullis purple and helpless with rage. We were booked to visit two museums, both of which were closed. An hour in a shopping centre and a picnic overlooking the picturesque old harbour were not quite so classical.

Il Duce's plans for next October's invasion of Sicily are already far advanced, and an island already invaded by Greeks, Carthaginians, Romans, Saracens, Normans and the Allied forces seems likely to be easy prey for the formidable legions of Abingdon in their never-ending quest for cultural plunder.

Thanks go to all the staff who, like Hannibal bestriding the Alps, made the trip so enjoyable despite every obstacle put in their path.





# Fishbourne

On the last Wednesday of the Summer Term, a coach-load of boys from 1J and 1W went on a Latin background trip to Fishbourne Roman Palace near Chichester. After a long coach journey we arrived in a housing estate. Although odd, this did not matter, because that is where the palace is. We ate the packed lunches provided by the School, which most people added to from a small café.

Lunch over, 1W went to the educational workshop, whilst 1J looked around the foundations and mosaics of the palace. The workshop was very good and we made educated guesses about how the Romans lived, by conducting experiments. These included writing, building bridges and roofs, making mosaics, and producing flour in a reconstructed kitchen. This had been modelled on implements found in the palace and at Pompeii, which we have also learned about in Latin. We made flour first from grain crushed in a pestle and mortar, and then using two stone wheels, a design more recently used in

windmills and watermills. To round off the workshop one of our class (B. Carter-Fraser) was dressed as an aristocrat, first putting on a tunic and a belt before donning an expensive linen toga. Then N. Miles was dressed in a slave's outfit – a piece of sacking which was never washed.

To follow this up was a slightly disappointing slide show, called "Voices of Fishbourne", which was slow but gave good information about the history of the palace and the sorts of people who might have been there during its occupation. Then we wandered around the very well reconstructed garden, reflecting faithfully the appearance of the grounds in Roman times, before visiting the less child-friendly but still interesting main hall, filled with mosaics and hypocaust systems and the footings of the palace walls.

After that, there was time for a quick wander around the gift shop before the trip home. Our thanks go to all the staff involved in organizing this informative visit.

**a report by  
A. Francis 1W  
on the annual First Year  
visits to the Roman  
palace at Fishbourne,  
July 5th and 6th,  
supporting study of the  
Cambridge Latin Course**



# The economics of Belgium

**a report on the  
Economics and  
Business Studies study  
visit to Belgium,  
in February**

The trip to Antwerp was an opportunity both for a holiday and a chance to see in practice what we had learned in the classroom. The group consisted of twenty-one boys, eleven girls from St. Helen's, Mr. Townsend, Mr. and Mrs. Evans, and Mrs. Cooper.

We arrived in Antwerp after a longish coach journey, but a calm ferry crossing, to find that the city was obviously not at its best in February and not true to the video which we had seen earlier. After the first night we awoke early, and having had a good breakfast headed for the National Bank of Belgium in Brussels. The visit was good, and the economist who looked after us talked authoritatively about the important role of the central bank to an economy. This was followed by a convincing economic argument for the Euro and the effect that it is having – and will have – across the continent.

In the afternoon we went on to Leuven to the eagerly awaited Interbrew brewery, where Stella Artois is made. The 'high-tech', fully-automated plant produces eleven million litres a day. Whilst seeing the manufacturing process we tasted the beer at different stages of production; unanimously, we preferred the finished product, and at the end of the tour we helped maintain effective demand by coming away laden with souvenirs from the gift shop.

The second day was anticipated less eagerly, as the first stop was the Vandemoortele factory near Kortrijk, where they make margarine and vegetable oil (for Tesco amongst others). The tour was thorough and showed vertical and horizontal integration at its best.

Technically, therefore, it was good and, like the brewery, we came away with a party bag; unfortunately, instead of chilled Stella we had flavoured soya drink and organic chip fat, which I suppose were arguably better for us.

That afternoon we travelled through pouring rain to Eupen on the German border to the Jacques Chocolaterie. Here we saw the complete process of making the world-renowned Belgian chocolates, the tour not only showing us the production process but also the history of chocolate manufacturing and its link, through raw materials, with the former Belgian Congo. This was the last of our visits, a theme of food and drink running through all three; this mix in excess did not, however, complement an extended coach journey home.

The final evening in Antwerp took us to the magnificent cathedral square with its many and varied restaurants, to indulge in traditional Belgian fare; mussels and chips. The following day we returned to England after a morning to shop or visit the galleries and museums in Antwerp. We stopped in the pretty town of Bruges for three hours before another glassy Channel crossing back to Abingdon.

Despite working for an hour and a half each evening to write up our visits, it was a happy trip. We learned a lot and enjoyed ourselves. Our thanks go to the staff who accompanied us, and to Messrs. Townsend and Evans for their organization and for keeping Phil, our nervous coach driver – who had never been to Belgium before – on side.



# Russian exchange

Eight boys from Abingdon School and five girls from Oxford High School, accompanied by Dr. Rolfe from Abingdon and Mrs. Earley from Oxford High, departed by air for Moscow as part of an exchange with Moscow English Grammar School No.1509.

As we landed, we realized that Moscow was going to be a very different place. It was like landing on another planet. On one side of us was an enormous silver birch tree forest and on the other side were small country houses ('dachas') covered in snow. It was a beautiful sight. As we travelled through the suburbs of Moscow we were amazed at the sheer size of the buildings and the beauty of the city.

After meeting our Russian friends, the English party split up and went to their new homes. We were all shocked at the Russians' homes, for they were so different from what we are used to. They lived in flats, ranging from three to eight rooms.

On Monday we visited and walked around Moscow, having all the interesting and picturesque monuments – Red Square, Lenin's Mausoleum, the perimeter of the Kremlin, and the like – pointed out to us by a tour guide. Tuesday was spent touring the Kremlin, its treasury and cathedrals. The treasury was remarkable as it was full of golden gifts and religious artefacts given to Russia. The sheer amount of wealth in these rooms stunned us. The objects which were pointed out to us were almost unbelievably beautiful. The cathedrals were very highly decorated with lots of gold features.

We spent Wednesday walking around the History Museum and St. Basil's Cathedral, which was

interesting and beautiful. Thursday saw a visit to a place called Sergiev Posad, a collection of magnificent cathedrals on a hill. The evening was spent at the Bolshoi Theatre watching a very enjoyable opera called *Zolotoi Petushok* ("The Golden Cockerel"). On Friday we had an excursion to Kuskovo, an estate of an old noble – again, extremely beautiful. This was followed by the English party's address and performance for the Russians, which went very well. The weekend was spent at home with our Russian families. Many of us visited the circus, clubs, market, theatre and each other. The following day was spent in the Junior section of the Grammar School. We toured the classes and were treated to an interesting presentation from each class. Our last day was spent with our Russian families until it was time to leave for the airport. We spent quite a time saying goodbye and thanking our Russians for their excellent hospitality. Many of us did not want to leave, but unfortunately we had to set off for the airport.

Moscow was very different from England. Everything was so much bigger and the scenery in the city so much more beautiful. The only way to explain what it was like, is to say that it was like a scene from a fairy tale, with golden domes glistening in the sun; marvellous. It was an excellent experience, and our Russian language skills certainly improved.

On behalf of us all I would like to thank our Russian friends for the hospitality and their warm, welcoming attitude towards us. A big "thank you" also goes to Dr. Rolfe and Mrs. Earley for their help and guidance, and for putting up with us.

**a report on the  
exchange visit to  
Moscow,  
April 7th to 18th,  
by M. Woodward 3RPF**

**photograph, opposite,  
by GCR**

# Namibia

On July 12th the ten members of this year's World Challenge expedition left for a month in Namibia. Accompanied by JT and John Heighton from the World Challenge organization, we have a varied and challenging time ahead.

The group have been raising money and planning the trip for some twenty months. We spent a long weekend in the Lake District, camping and walking with full packs, to practise amongst other things river crossings, search and rescue, and casualty evacuation (which, hopefully, we will not need). We also had a beautiful, hot June day in the Brecon Beacons, probably much nearer the conditions which we shall meet in Namibia than were those among the Lakes in February, where the temperature dropped to minus seven degrees – although I gather that the nights can be quite chilly in Namibia.

The plan for the summer is to fly to Windhoek, and then to spend five days on a project at the Cheetah Conservation Fund reserve near Otjiwarongo. A three day visit to the Etosha National Park for game viewing is to be followed by a trek on the Waterberg Plateau and then by a drive into the remote north-west, hoping to experience the culture of the semi-nomadic Himba tribe.

Coming south along the Skeleton Coast, the group intends to spend a week climbing in the remote but beautiful Brandberg Mountains. We shall then meet civilization again at Swakopmund, indulge in some dune-boarding, and drive back to Windhoek to fly home.

That is the plan, at any rate. Should we return, there will be a full account of our expedition in the next edition of *The Abingdonian*.

**a World Challenge  
expedition has gone  
this summer to  
Namibia; here we have  
a preview by JT**

# "D. of E."

## Expeditions

This year the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme has attracted record numbers of pupils. Awards have been successfully completed by M. Browne, S. Chan, N. Fuggle, S. Higazi, J. Howe, A. Markham, G. Stratton and W. Burdall at Bronze level, J. Persaud, R. Rothkopf and N. Watney at Silver, and C. Rose and B. Warner at Gold. The expeditions season this year has included the usual walking and canoeing expeditions, but now also includes cycling and sailing.

Some eighty pupils were involved in a major programme of expeditions on the first weekend of the Summer Term; the majority went to Dartmoor.

**reports on the  
expedition to Dartmoor,  
April 28th to May 1st,  
by M. Burnard 4RSH,  
A. Peychers 4SH and  
J. Anderson 4SH**

**"Landscape", opposite,  
acrylic on board,  
by A. Addis 5JEM**

Four minibuses, seven members of staff, fifty-three boys and countless tins of baked beans set off on the first weekend of term for a practice expedition to Dartmoor. Fitting every boy, his back-pack, his tent, his food and everything else on the minibus heading Dartmoor-wards was something of a squeeze, to say the least; I am sure that we must have broken some sort of 'lack of personal space' record (I vividly remember sitting on someone's ear with another person's ear in my mouth for a sustained period).

Eventually, at about nine-thirty that evening, we arrived at our camp-site in Okehampton. It was dark. Watching and hearing fifty-odd fifteen-year-old boys attempting to put up their tents in sub-zero temperatures on a slope in Dartmoor with only the aid of their fading pocket torches is an experience which will stay with me for a long time. It seemed to me, however, that no sooner had our tent been successfully erected than we were being ordered to get out of our sleeping bags and tear down our master-piece. 'Heartbreaking' is the only word which I can use to describe the feeling.

The next morning, our routes having been planned, our tents packed away, and half-cooked tins of baked beans consumed, we set off on our first day's walking. It was now nine-thirty on a Saturday morning, a time when I would normally be sitting on a comfortable Mercers' Court chair, watching – and, on occasion, understanding – Mr. Finch going through quadratic equations on the board. But there I was in the middle of the ascent of a tor on Dartmoor, suffering from chronic exhaustion. I would not have changed it for the world.

After a tiring day's walking across some simply spectacular countryside, we spent the second night

camped out beside a waterfall, one of the most picturesque places I have ever encountered, and the perfect place to recline after a long trek.

The following day brought some fantastic weather and a very satisfying walk, finishing up at Princetown. The highlights of this day's travels included the shrewd decision of our navigator to take a short-cut through half a mile of bog, waist high in a stinking brown liquid, and, later on, a rather disconcerting encounter with a very angry cow. That night was spent at a pleasant camp-site, along with a battalion of Harley-Davidson owners.

On the final day we carried out a brief map-reading and orienteering exercise before heading homewards at lunch time. Everyone returned tired but happy, with a few blisters, but also a newly-acquired wordliness (well, perhaps).

On the Saturday we woke to cold sausages and beans, and the barren rocky landscape of Dartmoor. We walked for six to eight hours a day (eleven hours for Burdall and Co.), covering about twenty kilometres up hills and through bogs up to our knees. Despite misconceptions about the likely standard of Devon weather, we ended up walking under a baking sun.

On the way to Princetown the following day, some took a slightly wrong turning and ended up on prison property. The rest of the group carried on round and up yet more hills, and then on a round trip along a river and back to the town, to camp on a proper camp-site – with a chip shop and real toilets, the expedition's saving grace.

After a quick navigation exercise the next morning, our gallant, if a little sunburned, expedition returned to Abingdon.





# Ten Tors



Dartmoor usually blesses its Ten Tors participants with some testing and peculiar weather conditions; this year was no exception.

**a report on the School's  
participation in this  
year's gruelling  
Ten Tors competition,  
May 12th to 14th,  
by DH**

**photograph courtesy  
of DH**

As our two teams set out on Saturday morning to walk their forty-five and fifty-five mile routes, the low mist and cloud which had shrouded the nearest peaks lifted, and it was set fair for the duration of the expedition. Some four hundred and twenty teams of six set out from Okehampton Camp at seven on Saturday morning, but by ten-thirty casualties were falling foul of the sun. Such was the case throughout the weekend, and many teams were unable to complete their route.

However, sunburn, blisters and extreme exhaustion do not defeat the excellent spirit and determination of Abingdon boys under pressure, and our teams both completed their routes intact and in good time on Sunday, beating off some well rehearsed and traditionally strong local competition.

The fifty-five mile team was first home at 3.10 p.m., ranking second out of the sixty-seven teams who started at their distance and first on their particular

route. Only forty-seven teams completed this distance. Our forty-five mile team appeared over the horizon an hour later, and were also well placed in a field of one hundred and seventy teams, with a similar number of teams falling by the wayside.

The conditions of the Ten Tors expedition are indeed testing. They have to be endured to be believed; simply completing the course is a massive achievement in itself. The competition is viewed as one of the most demanding and prestigious challenges of its kind for school groups and youth organizations. Our two teams proved that they are nothing short of the best, if a little blistered, burned and rough round the edges.

The forty-five mile team (J. Buxton, R. Garside, B. Hancock, B. Jack, R. Lewis-Crosby and D. White) were awarded silver medals. Gold medals went to the fifty-five milers, G. Bailey, L. Conway, T. Garside, N. Holman, B. Wells, and J. Wood.



# Thank you, Trebor

Waking up once more to the *Chariots of Fire* theme tune, in a tent with another twelve boys at five on a Saturday morning was not just another bad dream but part of my second crack at the Ten Tors endurance test. Having been in the forty-five mile team last year, the two remaining survivors (myself and J. Wood) – along with T. Garside, L. Conway, N. Holman and G. Bailey – were attempting the fifty-five mile route.

By the seven o'clock start, the mist had cleared and sun-cream was applied as a beautiful day commenced. The other teams – wearing matching hats, rugby shirts and T-shirts – could not compete with our mix of pink hockey shirts and CCF gear. After the Ten Tors prayer, we set off with two thousand other people, running towards our first tor and wondering what Dartmoor would throw at us.

The first leg decided the walking pattern for the rest of the two days, with myself leading up hill and down dale. J. Wood, our team leader, read the map and followed the compass; G. Bailey quietly ploughed on, his head down; N. Holman and T. Garside took turns to bring up the rear, with various injuries (to be treated later with Nurofen); L. Conway, the unsung hero, acted as back marker, making sure that no one who was feeling bad was left behind. There was not much talking, so our thoughts wandered from ideas as diverse as Trebor mint adverts to whether Woody had managed to pass his Army Regular Commissions Board [*which he had – SH*].

The highlight of the first day was the sour mix and jelly produced at various food stops. Being the first team to the first two tors had begun to take its toll, and feet were painful as we slipped into second place behind an amazing Southampton University team. We ploughed on, reaching our seventh tor by eight in the evening, at which time the Tors close for the Saturday night. The sun had shone all day, so we were sun-burned, and our feet, legs, backs, heads – in fact, most of our bodies – ached as we lay down to sleep, three of us to each two-man tent.

Waking up the next day at four in the morning (a first for all of us) was great fun. The sun was not up, and all of us were aching from head to toe, with another eleven hours of walking ahead of us. As we hobbled to tor eight, many of us were convinced that we had sunstroke; we were dehydrated and had not a drop of water between us. Upon hitting our first river we filled our water-bottles, dropped in puritabs, and walked on, impatient for the fifteen minutes to end after which we could sip our first mouthfuls that day of yellow, chlorine-flavour water.

The day dragged on. We went up and down about a hundred times to reach tor nine, where the soldier

manning it could not read our names ('Wells' was pronounced 'Mills'; an easy mistake to make). Here I was amazed to find myself taking over as morale officer, abusing and cursing the others. This only lasted for about one hundred yards, however, as lively banter was too exhausting, especially since we were having to cope with searing heat and pain which just would not go away.

Tor nine to tor ten was not our longest leg, but I think that we all almost started crying. We could have done with our mothers being helicoptered in to give us a hug. The relief on reaching the tenth tor was tempered by the fact that we still had three hours' walking left before we got back to 'home', Okehampton. Half way through this leg, at our last water stop, Woody was deposed as team leader in a bloodless coup. Our revolt consisted of us saying "Woody, you're not team leader any more." "O.K.," said Woody. It had happened; a communist régime had been installed.

We then went to climb our last hill. Another group followed in our wake, whining that it would take them at least five hours to get up it; to our surprise they arrived in Okehampton only forty-five minutes behind us. As we hit the path 'home', with a kilometre to go some fool had the bad idea that we should start running; being a communist régime we did so. In a strange way it was worth it; the crowds went wild as we passed many teams on the way to the line.

As we laid our bags down in the winners' enclosure, much like prize race-horses, we began to wonder why we had done it. Fifty-five miles as the crow flies is about seventy miles on Dartmoor, and we had completed this distance in twenty-three and a half hours. We were the second team in out of sixty-seven on the fifty-five mile route, which made us feel good. We all agreed that the free Cornish pasty at the end made it all worth while; it is certainly the furthest I have walked for a pasty.

Writing this, sitting with my feet in a basin of cold water, and hoping that I will one day be able to walk normally again, I have just one piece of advice for any prospective Ten Tors walkers; do the forty-five mile route. It is great fun, makes you feel good, and does not hurt if you train properly. But never ever do the fifty-five miler if you have – as was the case with me – done no real training. It is much harder than the shorter route, and you have to be mentally strong; the pain afflicts everyone.

This competition was the hardest thing I have ever done, and I could not not have done it without the Trebor mints advertisement playing over and over again in my head. Thank you, Trebor.

**B. Wells VIWTP, a member of the School's outstanding fifty-five mile team in this year's Ten Tors competition, reveals the secrets of their success**

# The CCF

## Canada

The prospect of fitting the seven weeks which I spent last summer in Canada into a report this size seems almost as daunting as the course itself did when I and the other eleven British cadets arrived at RAF Uxbridge for our initial briefing.

**a report on the 1999 Leadership and Challenge Course at Cochrane, Alberta, by J. Wood VICMM. WO2 Wood has been the CCF's senior NCO for the past two years, leading by example and displaying outstanding commitment to the CCF. This was recognized by his selection for this course in Canada, as well as by the Army, who have accepted his application to join as an officer straight after leaving School. His report does not mention that he passed out as best cadet in his platoon, came second overall out of all the cadets on the course, and was appointed RSM for the final passing-out parade**

First of all, what was the camp? It had its beginnings in 1948 for fifty Canadian cadets and has now grown to include the six week Leadership and Challenge Course. Every year twelve British cadets are selected to take part in the course, along with six Germans and one hundred and sixty one Canadian cadets. As can be gathered from the course's title, the training is built around leadership and challenges, but it is the wonderful scenery and living and working with a great bunch of people with different views of the world that make it so worthwhile; this course was the highlight of my life to this point.

The camp, home of the Canadian National Army Cadet Pipes and Drums, moved this year to a new site north-west of Calgary in the Rocky Mountain Forest Reserve. As is always the way, the camp was nowhere near completion when we arrived and we lived on a building site for the entire summer.

For me the course began with the hiking phase. Having done quite a bit of hiking – and being thoroughly sick of Dartmoor – I was looking forward to enjoying the beautiful scenery and fine weather. Of course, it proceeded to snow and rain for the first two days (of four), and we were forced to turn back on the first day because of a raging torrent which our guide had assured us that we could cross. At times relationships became very fraught as those who decided they did not like being constantly wet began to whine (a continual feature of some of my platoon throughout the course) but the rest of us had a great time wading through the rivers and eating our cold rations. As the sun finally broke through on day three, the beauty of the area became apparent. We walked from the sides of forests and lakes up to the heights of a snow-covered pass.

Following this was the watermanship phase, a five day course on kayaks or canoes. I opted for canoeing in order to learn some new skills, and over five days we progressed from the lake to the Bow River and then to the Kananaskis River. We learned capsize drills, eddy turns and many other essential skills, but the best part was definitely surfing. Egged on by our crazy

instructors I positioned the canoe facing upstream on a wave, and as we sat there Aaron, my partner, did the necessary headstand. I wish I had a picture of his face as he slipped forwards and wedged his helmet under the seat. We drifted about a hundred metres downstream before he managed to right himself.

The next two phases – rock climbing, and glaciers and mountaineering – were the highlights of the course. The glacier phase began very much like the hiking, with us walking up to the mountain, but instead of comfortable boots we had special plastic boots on and the weather was glorious. For me the attraction of the course was that it provided the chance to do something completely different and challenging, and this phase was certainly that. We learned how to rope ourselves together, walk on the glacier, climb up the peaks and rescue ourselves if we fell into a crevasse. Operating from a base camp we spent two exhausting days climbing two peaks (Yoho and Dei Poloui). The second was especially sweet, as early bad weather seemed to be rule out an attempt but as the skies cleared we raced to the top, arriving five minutes after our cut-off time to turn back. After such an effort the view from 10,200 feet was all the more superb.

The prospect of four days' rock climbing in the Rockies was one of the aspects which had attracted me to the course in the first place, and as it was to be my last adventurous activity I was determined to enjoy every second. The climbing proved to be excellent with a progression which allowed us to work our way up the grades to tackle quite tough climbs. My personal triumph was a crack at the Wassotch Slabs, at which the instructor described cadets' chances as slim to non-existent. A combination of a fear of heights and the physical effort meant that every climb in this phase was exhilarating.

The rest of the course seemed rather dull in comparison, but despite the inevitable lows in an unfinished camp there was plenty to do. We had a week of leadership training involving numerous command tasks, a week of mostly sports and rest, Search and Rescue training and an orienteering course.



The Search and Rescue involved us planning and carrying out an exercise to rescue six staff cadets, suitably covered in fake blood. As the signaller for my section I was at the centre of things and had a great time. This event was one of the highlights for many of the British cadets. Another of my tasks was planning and leading a day of 'rest and recuperation' in Calgary, which seems at first sight like an easy thing to do, but when you are travelling all over the city, and are responsible at all times for your platoon, it becomes far more complicated.

Over the course of the summer there were times when we wondered why we were doing the course. The Canadian cadet system is very different from ours (for example, they carry no rifles on exercises) and aspects of the course such as the sport, illness, being

marked all the time and many petty rules and procedures on camp were very annoying, provoking feelings of anger and rebellion at times.

There were, however, many memorable moments: carrying our platoon wheel on morning PT; dressing up as beach bums for one of the dances; insisting on saluting British-style despite doing Canadian drill; performing aerobics at six in the morning; painting a Union Jack onto a sheet and taping it up in the trees for the graduation parade (our company commanders loved this, but some noses were put a little out of joint). Finally, the satisfaction of passing out as the RSM with such a great group of friends at the end of the course made it a summer which I shall never forget. I cannot thank enough those who gave me this wonderful opportunity.



photograph by DJMC



# Rollestone recruit camp

**a report on the third annual Recruit Camp, by G. Cooke 5KDB; in a new departure, the recruits were accompanied by an 'Advanced Infantry' cadre of experienced cadets, acting as enemy when out on exercise, and honing their skills**

**photograph by DJMC**

The last day in the field involved acting as enemy against the recruits. Having scrambled into the minibus, we drove to the bottom of a hill and got out. We soon learned that our harbour area was at the top of this hill and so walked back and forth, moving kit up as we went.

Once we were all ready, a few senior NCOs went and built our observation post (OP) whilst the rest of us set up our bashas. We cammed them up, though we were not sure why as we were going to have a fire in the middle of the area during the night, so as to make ourselves obvious to the recruits. For a few hours we sorted ourselves out with ration packs and water, and sent out patrols every half hour in order that the enemy could practise observing us. In charge of the recruit sections was Cpl. Brads (who arrived the day before after being on a Parachute Regiment Course) and L/Cpl. Harris.

After a while we were told that we were to go and get ambushed. We 'bombed up' our magazines and made some final checks before patrolling down the track where the ambush was to be sprung. Getting slightly bored, we were laughing when we were ambushed and even when we 'died', and were happy

that we had let off a few rounds. The recruits had performed their first ambush well, so morale was high, despite the poor weather.

Back at the patrol harbour we were told to light our fire and to be nice and noisy, and we soon realized why when we saw shadowy figures lurking behind trees. We were told not to approach these enemy groups, which was just as well because I doubt that we would have seen them all.

In the morning we had a brew before getting ready for the attack which was to be sprung on us by the recruit sections. Firing from direction of our OP told us that attack was imminent and, sure enough, we soon saw a platoon running down the hill towards us. As soon as the sentries had been attacked, we opened fire. Unfortunately, at this point the LSW (Light Support Weapon) – which was our only machine-gun – decided to stop working properly, and despite the attempts of Cpl. Rivers (our instructor) to get it to an acceptable level it soon petered out. On the other hand, our rifles were firing hundreds of rounds, with L/Cpl. Feather 'bombing up' the magazines whilst the rest of us emptied them in a desperate bid to fend off the attack. Needless to say, we died. Again.



# RAF Cosford

The RAF Section has experimented this year with holding two camps, one at Easter and one, as usual, in July. This year's camps have been at RAF Cosford in Shropshire and RAF Honington in Suffolk.

Six cadets, accompanied by Sqn/Ldr. Haworth, went to RAF Cosford, not only the largest training base in England, but also in Europe. We arrived on a Wednesday and were at once sent off for a FAMEX (walking around the base answering questions from a sheet to get familiar with the area). After this there were several briefings (fire and safety and so on) followed by supper and yet more briefings. We were organized into flights with cadets from Wilson's School, St. Ignatius School, and Edinburgh Academy.

The next day the weather was awful, with rain and cloud, but we still managed to fly and complete command tasks such as using only so much equipment to cross a river, and weapons training in preparation for shooting on Saturday. We also had our first lesson in the use of the Clansman radio system.

On Friday command tasks continued, as did weapons training, but there were also section visits. Probably the most enjoyable of these was the visit to the RAF Regiment where we used a SAT range (a laser range for small arms training), using SA80 rifles with make-believe recoil provided by carbon dioxide. We fired both semi- and full-automatic at a giant screen where different scenarios, such as an ambush, were played. One of the best things was that our performances could be run back and analysed and the number of direct hits counted.

On Saturday we went down to the 'real' range for marksmanship tests, and also visited the excellent aircraft museum at Cosford. The next day one group

went flying whilst the rest went to church and went swimming and played more sport, followed by a second radio brief and a bowling competition.

On the Monday it poured with rain. This was only to be expected, as the plan called for a NAVEX that day (a six mile walk round the surrounding countryside answering questions). This really did show what we were made of and how well we worked as a team, for as soon as we started getting cold and wet, many of the cadets argued with one another. We came back cold, wet and muddy, but happy that we had succeeded. The plan had been that after this we would move into a NITEX (a military exercise carried out overnight on the airfield), but this was cancelled owing to the bad weather.

On Tuesday we visited Shrewsbury in the morning, and the riot police in the afternoon. We saw all their kit, watched the tactics which they use for dealing with barricades, and saw how they controlled and arrested a very aggressive person after trapping him in a corner with their riot shields. There was also a spectacular demonstration of the effect of petrol bombs, done by throwing them at riot police officers who ran through the flames. After this, the fun stopped somewhat and we had to clear the barracks up and had our drill competition, the final part of the inter-flight competition. The presentation was made by Gp/Capt. Williams, the Station Commander.

We would all like to thank Sqn/Ldr. Haworth for running such an excellent camp.

**a report on  
RAF Easter Camp,  
at RAF Cosford,  
Shropshire,  
April 11th to 19th,  
by A. Robinson 4SH**

## Escape and evasion

About thirty cadets and NCOs descended on Capt. Carson's Wiltshire farm in Pewsey Vale, for the CCF's first ever 'escape and evasion' exercise, planned and written in great detail by WO2 Wood, whose inspirational ideas brought those involved a fantastically enjoyable weekend exercise.

We left School at around two in the afternoon on the Saturday, after the senior NCOs (who, we later found out, were to be both the enemy and friendly partisans at different stages of the exercise) had stripped us of most of our kit, leaving us with the bare minimum required for the twenty-four hour exercise. Throughout the weekend the weather was good, which enabled the exercise to run smoothly and exactly to plan.

The exercise included practice of some more advanced fieldcraft, which enabled the cadets to expand their experience for future exercises. We found from this weekend that it is possible for the CCF to go away on a normal School weekend and carry out a highly enjoyable learning experience on exercise, and this will certainly become a regular fixture.

We all have to thank Capt. Carson (for letting us loose on his family farm for the second time that year), together with Flt/Lt. Hullis and Lt. Ocock for supervision. The exercise could not have taken place without the presence and efforts of the enemy forces, including WO2 Wood as "El Woodster", CWO Tolley as "Poll Tor", C/Sgt. Holman as "Combat Carrotio" and Sgt. Garside as "Partisan Garsido".

**a report on an exercise  
(suggested and planned  
entirely by cadet NCOs)  
staged in Alton Barnes,  
Wiltshire,  
on March 11th-12th,  
by R. Garside 5JPGB**

# Bavarian adventure

After the success of the adventurous training camp in Cyprus in 1998, DH looked longingly through the atlas for fresh woods and pastures new, finally lighting upon an Army-run facility in Bavaria for this summer's camp. Once again, the cadets involved had a wonderful time.

**a report on the CCF  
adventurous training  
camp at the REME  
Adventurous Training  
Centre in  
Gunzesried-Säge,  
Bavaria,  
July 8th-18th,  
by G. Cooke 5KDB,  
C. Coventry 5DGA,  
R. Garside 5JPGB, and  
N. Hopkins 5JEM**

The ten days which we spent in Bavaria were very much a break from the daily military routine which we normally experience on annual camp. Though the training was run by the Army, the whole atmosphere was much less formal, even down to the wearing of civilian dress. This undoubtedly contributed to the success of the camp.

The first hurdle was the twenty-one hour minibus journey through England, France and Belgium, arriving at the lodge at around two in the morning. The staff, who had driven us in shifts, were especially exhausted, and everybody tried to get some rest before reveille at seven.

The lodge was in excellent condition and provided superb facilities, such as a bar, table-tennis table, and satellite television. The hospitality was great, the food delicious and the portions generous (our compliments to the cook, Johnny Monger) and we got on well with the REME staff.

Most of us participated in at least seven different activities, most of which were new to the majority of the group. Not all of the twenty-three boys on the trip succeeded (thinking, for example, of T. Garside's poor attempt at water-skiing); however, each activity was definitely character-building, whether it involved strengthening teamwork in volleyball or testing our confidence, as when jumping from a white-water raft into a cold, wide, fast-flowing river.

The first activity was quite gentle; a trip to a local swimming complex, where we splashed around for a while before heading to a sports centre to learn the basic skills of climbing. This would enable us, later in our stay, to begin the more advanced techniques. A good number of us made it up the sixty-foot wall, and agreed that the effort was well worth it.

Our next three days involved kayaking, mountain walking and mountain biking, for which we were split into three groups. Kayaking was conducted on a nearby lake, where our instructor taught us the basics (capsize drills, paddling techniques, and the kit used) before playing some games, testing our co-ordination and skills. The wind and rain sapped our strength, and we retired for hot chocolate and warm showers.

Mountain walking again suffered from the rain, but after half an hour of walking, self-thermoregulation had led to a variety of kit, from shorts and T-shirt to full winter kit. There was a frustrating walk down a hill and then back up it when we found that

there was a steep, slippery and unmanageable slope at the bottom.

For the mountain biking, T. Garside and C. Mason set the pace uphill, whilst on the downhill legs R. Webber, H. Jay, B. Prior, J. Paul and G. Cooke put in some fast runs. At the end of an extra-long run downhill, we seemed to have lost some of our party, and after a while we were informed that L. Fowler had crashed and been taken to hospital by ambulance. He never seems to have any luck; he was hospitalized on his last RAF camp with appendicitis.

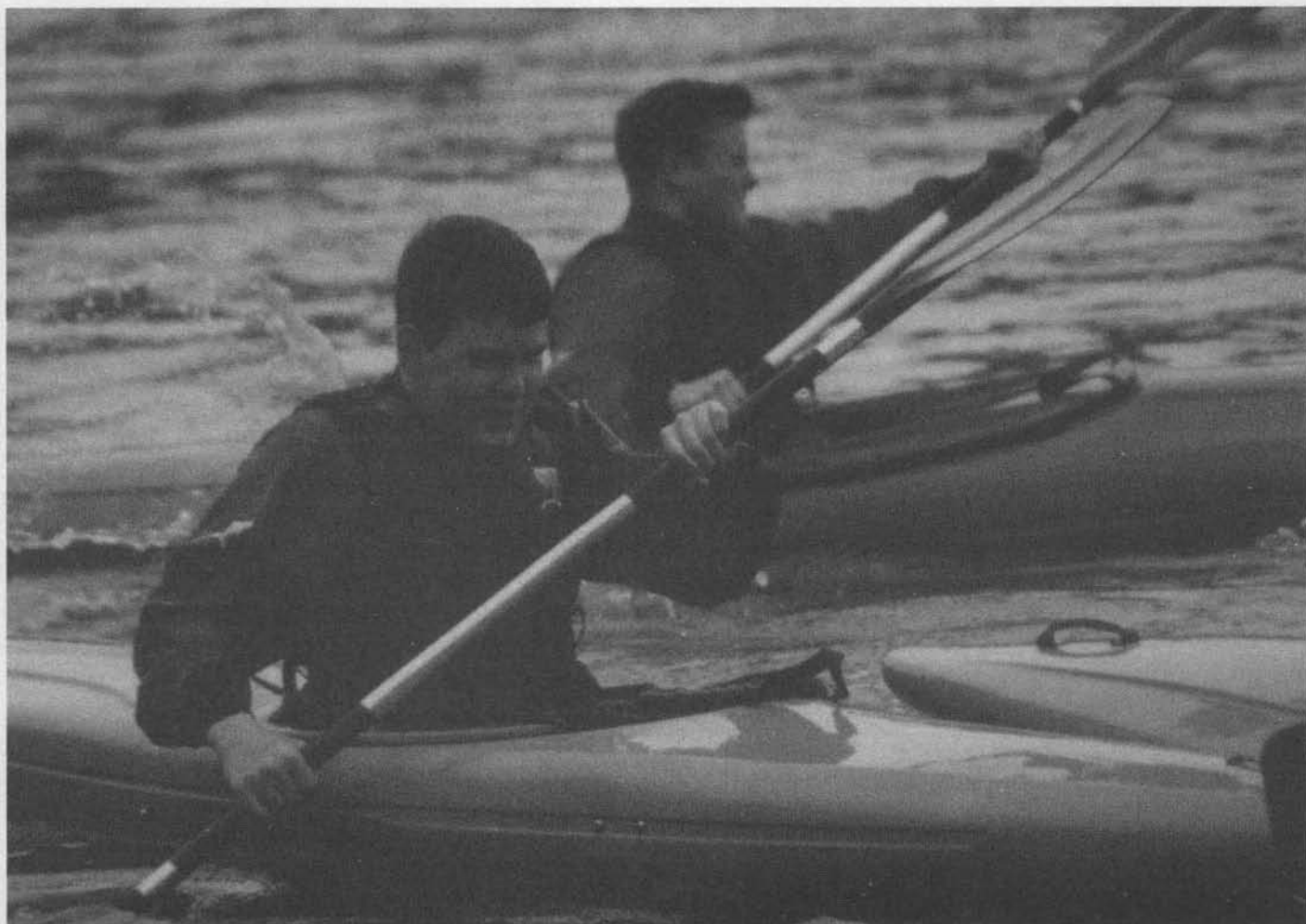
Luckily, it turned out this time to be no more than cuts and bruises, nothing that a warm shower would not cure. We should thank Mr. Griffiths at this point for walking to the hospital with two bicycles and waiting for many hours – and coming back still able to laugh about it later.

Merging back into one group, we went water-skiing. Given that we had only an hour for this, it looked like there would be only two minutes for each of us; however, thanks to a device called the "Wasserskilift", we were all pulled around the course in groups of six. The only drawback was that if you fell off, you would find that the other five were bearing down on you at an alarming rate... J. Paul and N. Hopkins showed us all how it should be done.

In the afternoon it was decided that a little 'R-and-R' was in order, so we were driven into a large town called Lindau, where we were free to roam for two hours. It is an old town beside a lake forming the border between Germany and Switzerland, and was interesting to explore. A volleyball match on the tarmac in front of the lodge ended the day.

Water-skiing was on the agenda the next day as well; the water was icy-cold, even through a wet-suit, but most of us braved it to try to improve our technique or attempt new sports such as wakeboarding. Many who had been beginners the previous day managed to complete full circuits of the entire course. Mr. Sandow nearly got right round on a circular and wholly unstable board, failing only at a corner; he was even better on a wake-board, showing that extreme sports are not just for cadets. Even L. Fowler was sufficiently recovered to have a go, though there was a wonderful moment where he was pulled right out of his skis, leaving them standing on the launching mat whilst he flew off across the water without them...





The afternoon involved more swimming, where, as usual, we took over the diving board and pool, vying with the locals as to who could make the biggest splash. Several independent sources claim that the Garside brothers' double 'bomber' was by far the best, though the eleven-cadet continuous dive was also quite impressive.

On Saturday we woke early and were driven into Austria to go white-water rafting. On the way we made a morale-boosting visit to the 'PX', the American forces' version of the NAAFI, selling everything from wide-screen televisions to sweets to hand-guns. Although no one bought the latter, many took the chance to buy technological goodies at knock-down prices. The only problem was that the only currency taken was US dollars and that ID cards had to be shown when making purchases; our thanks go therefore to RQMS McCreedy for buying a formidable array of items on our behalf.

After a quick game of volleyball, we headed off for the best water for the rafting, with three rafts. After a safety briefing we set out on what was arguably the best single experience of the camp. After several days of rain, the river was fast and high, making the ride all the more enjoyable, as the instructors were competent and we were all correctly kitted-out. There was always the option of sitting it out, which only one of us took. A short stretch on the flat gave us the chance to sample the freezing water and to 'engage' the other rafts with splashes and boarding parties. H. Jay was

particularly keen on this, and as a result seemed to spend more time in the water than on a raft. The run itself was superb, building up from small waves at first to much larger ones at the end, making the rafts pitch and toss, thoroughly soaking those in the front – totally exhilarating.

We had a lie-in the next morning (half an hour extra), before splitting into two groups for kayaking and climbing. In the kayaking, we were allowed to decide what we wanted to do, and we could do as much or as little as we wished. We played many games, including building a pyramid out of kayaks, with us still in them; this resulted in the sinking of the bottom kayaks. We also attempted eskimo rolls, though only N. Hopkins, T. Garside and H. Jay succeeded. Climbing built on what we had learned already, and included a 'two minute test', climbing as much of the chimney as we could in the time. The instructor could climb the whole wall blindfold in this time; the best of us managed half way. On the penultimate night there was a quiz, including such things as 'worm trivia', won by the "Leftovers", who defeated the staff team, the "Hikers", by a narrow, though clearly rigged, margin.

The journey home lasted a mere eighteen hours, and we returned to Abingdon weary, stiff but utterly content. We owe this wonderful experience to Sqn/Ldr. Haworth, RQMS McCreedy, Mr. Griffiths, Mr. Sandow and Miss Wikart. To all of them, our heartfelt thanks.

photograph by DH

# Sports reports

## Cross-country

I know that everyone in the Club will look back on this year as one of the best that we have enjoyed. We improved in almost every respect; our results consistently beat our previous record, we entered more races, we did more training and became a more solid and cohesive group than in years past.

a report on the  
Cross-country Club's  
extremely successful year,  
by R. Rothkopf VIBAHL  
and SPO

photograph opposite by  
G. Smith 3BJLS

Our busy race schedule began in November with the Dr. Challenor's relay, in which the 'A' team moved up from thirteenth to sixth. In January, the Oxfordshire Championships provided useful pre-season training, with A. Beck, H. Mackenzie, M. Cullen, M. Browne, W. Horwitz and K. Kear performing well. Next came the Knole Run at Sevenoaks, a notoriously long and tough race. The 'A' team came eighth, a magnificent achievement given that at least three teams above us had been on overseas training camps beforehand.

After this came wins at the Oxfordshire Schools Championships and the Vale of White Horse Championships at both intermediate and senior level, as well as the Oxfordshire trophy at the OU Tortoises relay. Effectively Abingdon now dominates local cross-country running from the Fourth Year upwards. In the Vale intermediates, Cullen and J. Richards managed second and third respectively in a close finish. In the senior competition S. Allen took first place, but apologized for his poor fitness afterwards; Beck was second and Mackenzie third. Other excellent performances came from Browne, B. Warner, B. Hancock, G. Bailey and J. Wood.

The ultimate test came soon after with the Midland and Northern Independent Schools Championships at Stowe. Here the usual suspects performed well, but it was an especially good day for R. Rothkopf, who crushed Bailey, Wood and Hancock (and it is very important that they never forget it). Towards the end of the season we beat Radley convincingly (again) in a friendly fixture. The last race of the year, the R.G.S., Worcester relays, proved to be the highlight. While the tired senior team could not manage a medal placing, the intermediates stormed through in blistering style to win the Lucton Trophy, possibly the first such major win since about 1985.

Unfortunately N. Hawker, captain and one of our fastest runners, was injured for most of the season (as was J. Kingsley). As well as the captains, Warner, Wood and Beck played equally motivating roles for the whole team.

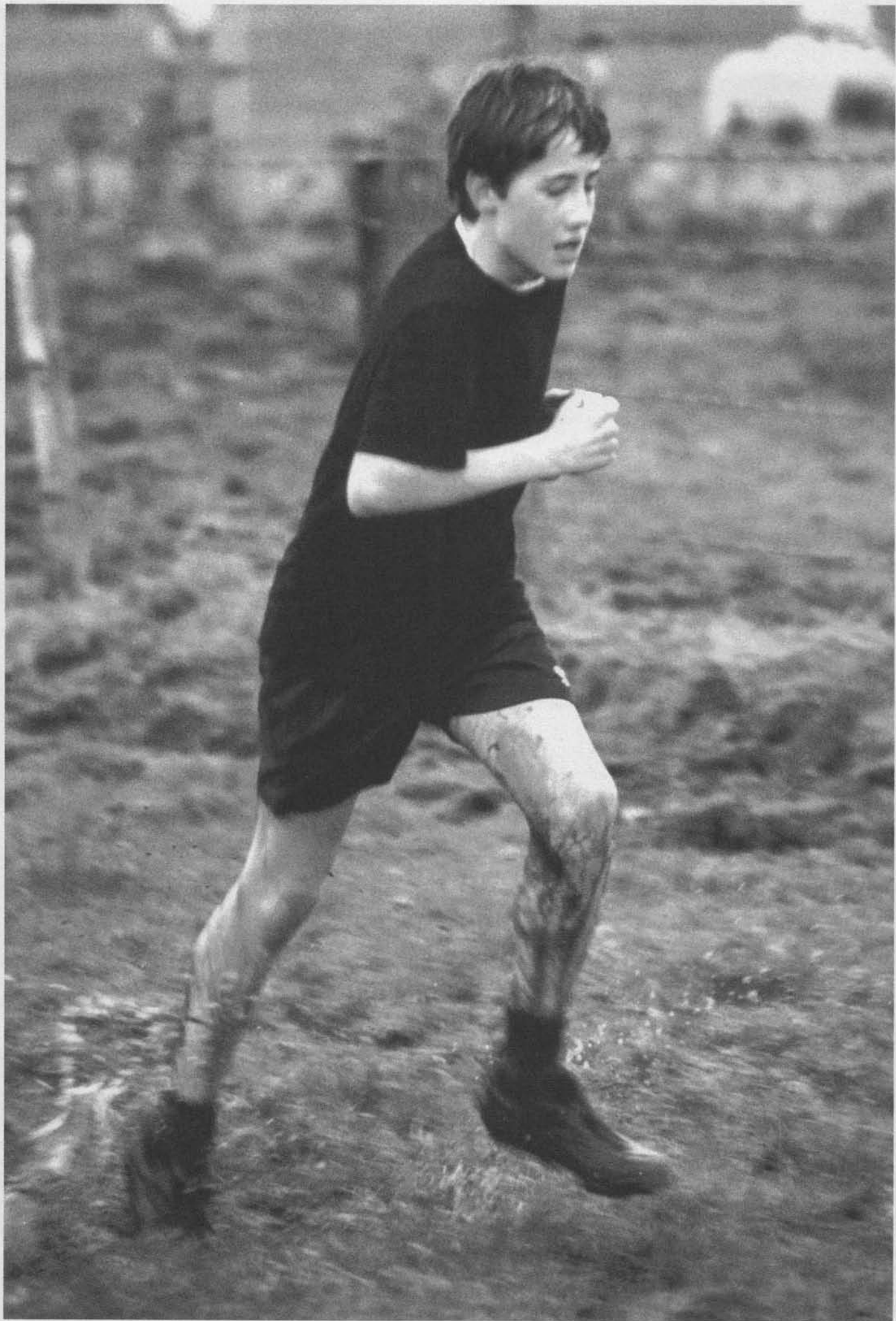
All these successes were made possible by the commitment and inspiration from our unbeatable trio of staff. Ladies first: Rebecca Cool, as blonde bombshell, team photographer and coach, added her infamous sunny energy to the training sessions and races and was an invaluable member of the team. Nick Tuck's hair colour may have changed, but his degree of support remained at a constant high. This relative luxury of staffing allowed more attention to be paid to the Lower School runners, who raced in appalling conditions at Pinewood and have laid down foundations for future competitions. Mr. Ocock, the pioneer of the Club's new-found indomitable enthusiasm, should feel very pleased with his work. Having set the racers a tough list of objectives at the start of the season, he made sure that we put in the necessary work. I would like to thank all the staff on behalf of the Club, and wish them and the Club the best of luck in the future.

SPO adds:

Cross-country is in its most exciting position for a long time. We have seven trophies to defend next year, and have a relatively young 'dream team' in Browne, R. Garside, Cullen, Richards, Horwitz and M. Futagami. Of course, there are plenty more exciting runners than can be mentioned in a short article. The real test for the club now is whether the junior end can become as successful as the rest.

Non-runners might not be aware that this is a hazardous sport. Of course there is the ever-present mud; earlier this year M-L. Jones suggested that we raced in "wellies with spikes". But there is more. This year runners have have been chased by dogs (particularly R. Bader. It did not seem to help when we shouted his first name - Ralf - at him; I wonder why?). Runners have also been electrocuted by metal gates touching farmers' fences, after which they mysteriously asked SPO to lead. Best of all were the perilous creatures of Christ Church meadow, where J. Stevens narrowly avoided injury when he tripped over a live squirrel.





# Shooting

a report on the new coach's  
revitalization of this sport,  
by SH

photograph by  
G. Smith 3BJLS

For many years the 'poor relation' of the School's minor sports, out of sight and out of mind in the dilapidated shed at the foot of Lower Field, shooting has been in the doldrums, the preserve of a few, battling on with antiquated equipment. Charles Parker kept the light burning for years; SH did his best with limited coaching skills; but for the past year Mr. Alan Smith, the School's new shooting coach, has been busy transforming the sport at Abingdon.

One simple means of gauging his success is numbers. From around twenty shooters in 1997, there were fifty-eight a week in the Lent Term this year, drawn from every year group – and there was a waiting list. Instead of offering just small-bore indoor shooting, we now offer full-bore and outdoor small-bore, as well as air rifle, mainly for the Lower School.

Have skills improved to match this expansion? Most certainly. With Mr. Smith's expert advice, and more regular practice than was possible before, shooters are scaling new heights. Teams have performed well in British Schools postal leagues, topping several divisions. However, the greatest success came in the Oxfordshire Junior Finals held in Wantage in March, where twelve of the sixteen finalists were Abingdon pupils, a record entry. Their results were outstanding, despite the out-of-date kit which many of them have to use.

The easier target of the two used in competition is called a 'Five Bull'. On these, at U14 level, G. Smith came second, W. Sheppard third, T. Astley (a Second Year) fourth, and W. McGeehin fifth. In the U16s, S. Vaughan and P. Wakefield became joint County champions (A. Campbell third, A. Asbury fourth). At U18 level, Vaughan and Wakefield again became joint

County champions, with Campbell fourth and P. Ball – next year's Captain of Shooting – fifth. There was an unprecedented shoot-off at U21 level because four entrants attained perfect scores. After a further round, none had dropped a point, and so it was decided that all four deserved the title. Therefore, once again, Vaughan and Wakefield became joint County champions, making them top in the County at every level which they were eligible to enter.

The harder 'Ten Bull' contest saw even greater success. In the U16s, Wakefield was first and McGeehin third. Wakefield took first at U18, Ball second, M. Bungey third, and B. Hancock fourth. In the U21, Wakefield took his sixth County championship prize of the day, having won every class that he entered, with Ball third, and Bungey fourth.

As if this triumph were not enough, several members of the Rifle Club – Wakefield, Ball, Campbell, Hancock, Vaughan and Asbury – went later in March to Chesterfield to train alongside the Great Britain Junior Development Squad, of which Wakefield was already a member. So impressed were the coaches there with the pupils' skills that they were invited to join the squad, and over the Easter weekend they attended team training at Bisley. The Great Britain Junior Squad administrator, in a letter to the School, wrote as follows:

*It was very kind of you to bring your juniors to the training weekend at Chesterfield; there is some real talent there, which we must try to mould to the fullest extent... Those who perform well could be shooting for Great Britain within a year or so.*

We look forward to it, and congratulate the shooters on their rapid progress to date.





# Tennis

First impressions matter: so do final impressions. Mine (of this season) is of R. Tattersall defeating Radley's No.2 at singles and very nearly taking a set off their No.1 before running out of steam. This was during a 'friendly' match mixing singles and doubles and played on the afternoon of Leavers' Day. The fact that the fixture took place at all on that afternoon reflected very well the boys' excellent attitude throughout the term; they were always willing to play and always did do in the right spirit.

At times this season, the 1st VI – and, it must be said, Tattersall in particular – have played some very impressive tennis, as some of the results indicate. The season took off after the early defeat against M.C.S., and the successive convincing victories over Shiplake, Oratory and Pangbourne showed a team developing both in confidence and ability. The pairings became established and we began to play more effective doubles tennis.

Then the players (mainly Upper Sixth) dispersed to take a few fairly important examinations, and quite understandably we never really regained the same standard of team selection as earlier in the term. We under-performed in the St. Edward's match, and the Radley fixture was the final opportunity to represent the School.

The first two pairs of R. Tattersall/P. Barry and A. Apps/N. Watney were established early on; the third pair was more difficult to settle. C. Rose, A. Brodie, J. Dando, B. Wells and C. Thomson all played (in various combinations) before the latter two established themselves as the best third pair and (as they frequently reminded the others) also the best pair. There is lots of talent in the leaving group and I hope that they will be able to develop their tennis.

The Second VI found victories hard to come by, but there was plenty of enthusiasm and interest in the squad, and also a good deal of ability. It was always easy to produce a team of six willing players, which was very pleasing. The following played and seemed to enjoy their tennis: P. Batchelor, G. Coppock, R. Davy, N. Hawker, M. Hawksworth, D. Mitchell, A. Teddy and J. Rowley.

A team comprising A. Brodie, J. Rowley, G. Coppock and A. Teddy competed in the senior part of the Youll Cup, being knocked out in the second round after having put up a good show, drawing the doubles and just losing the deciding singles match.

The U16 VI did not have much of a season to get their teeth into, but there are some promising players here who should develop well in the sixth form. C. Thomson was elevated to the dizzy heights of the 1st VI (where he seemed very much at home) leaving a

useful squad of C. Brookes B. Chadwick, N. Dalglish, D. Procter, N. Smith, M. Stalker, and R. Turnbull. Again, they were very keen to play; finding opposition was the problem. During the course of the season full colours were awarded to A. Apps, P. Barry, N. Watney and B. Wells; half colours were awarded to A. Brodie, J. Dando, and C. Thomson.

Many members of the Middle School have enjoyed their tennis in the occasionally balmy weather and on the consistently improved courts this term. New stars have emerged in the willowy figure of W. Teddy and the more substantial J. Kelly, while older stagers have kept up the good work; G. Sutcliffe led from the front, D. Madden narrated a good game, while J. Moffat sang the sound track. M. Cullen chipped his way into the final of the School singles competition; not bad for a Fourth Form pupil playing against men years older than him.

As a team, the U15s have an impressive record, and were always polite and a pleasure to take to away fixtures whether in victory or defeat. We very nearly progressed to the County round of the HSBC trophy, having brushed John Mason and Gillots aside, but came up against a hugely impressive Wallingford team of national standard. The U15 'B' team lost both their games, but did so with grace and good sportsmanship.

The U14s remain undefeated after two impressive wins against M.C.S. and the Oratory, with their B team also comfortably seeing off M.C.S., traditionally strong. Abingdon tennis is in safe hands with these players coming up through the ranks.

The Buckley Cup (the internal singles knockout tournament) was a very successful competition this year, producing some good singles matches and interesting results. Like Wimbledon, some of the big names were knocked out relatively early, and two promising Fourth Year players, G. Sutcliffe and M. Cullen, made it to the final. In a very good match, Sutcliffe defeated his opponent 6-2, 7-5.

Thanks must go to TRA, NWH, NMR, BAHF and BJLS for their help with the Tennis Club this season. Thanks also to the many parents who supported the teams.

**1st VI**  
M.C.S. Lost 2.5-6.5  
Shiplake Won 7.5-1.5  
Oratory Won 9-0  
Pangbourne Won 9-0  
St. Edward's Lost 2-7  
Radley Lost 1-5

**2nd VI**  
M.C.S. Lost 2.5-6.5  
Shiplake Lost 2-7  
Pangbourne Won 6-1  
St. Edward's Lost 1-3

**HSBC Tournament (Glanvill Cup):**  
Lost to M.C.S. 1-5

**PSLTA (Youll Cup):**  
1st round: bye  
2nd round: lost to Cheltenham

**U16 VI**  
M.C.S. Won 5-4  
Oratory Won 9-0

**U15 A VI**  
M.C.S. Lost 3-6  
Shiplake Won 6.5-2.5  
Oratory Won 9-0  
St. Edward's Won 7-2  
Radley Lost 1-8

**U15 B VI**  
M.C.S. Lost 1-8  
Radley Lost 2.5-6.5

**U14 A VI**  
Oratory Won 6.5-2.5  
M.C.S. Won 6.5-2.5

**U14 B VI**  
M.C.S. Won 6-3

**U13 A VI**  
M.C.S. lost 0-9

**U13 B VI**  
M.C.S. lost 2-7

reports by SAE (Seniors)  
and BJLS (Juniors)

# 1st XV rugby

18/9 Oratory (A) Lost 19-13  
29/9 M.C.S. (H) Lost 5-18  
2/10 Radley (H) Lost 10-20  
9/10 Stowe (H) Lost 6-12  
16/10 H. Wycombe (A) Lost 12-61  
23-24/10 Ipswich Rugby Festival  
6/11 St. Edward's (H) Lost 8-34  
13/11 Pangbourne (A) Lost 12-24  
20/11 Newbury (H) Won 19-5  
24/11 Shiplake (A) Won 14-5  
4/12 Marlborough (H) Lost 5-42  
11/12 Bloxham (A) Won 26-7

a report by W. Baker 6SCW

photograph by  
E. Macdonald 5PW

The season began with high hopes. The soon-to-be Lower Sixth had had an excellent previous season and it was hoped that this success would continue into the first game. The team began well, with an excellent performance in a tournament, where we beat Harrow. However, this success did not continue.

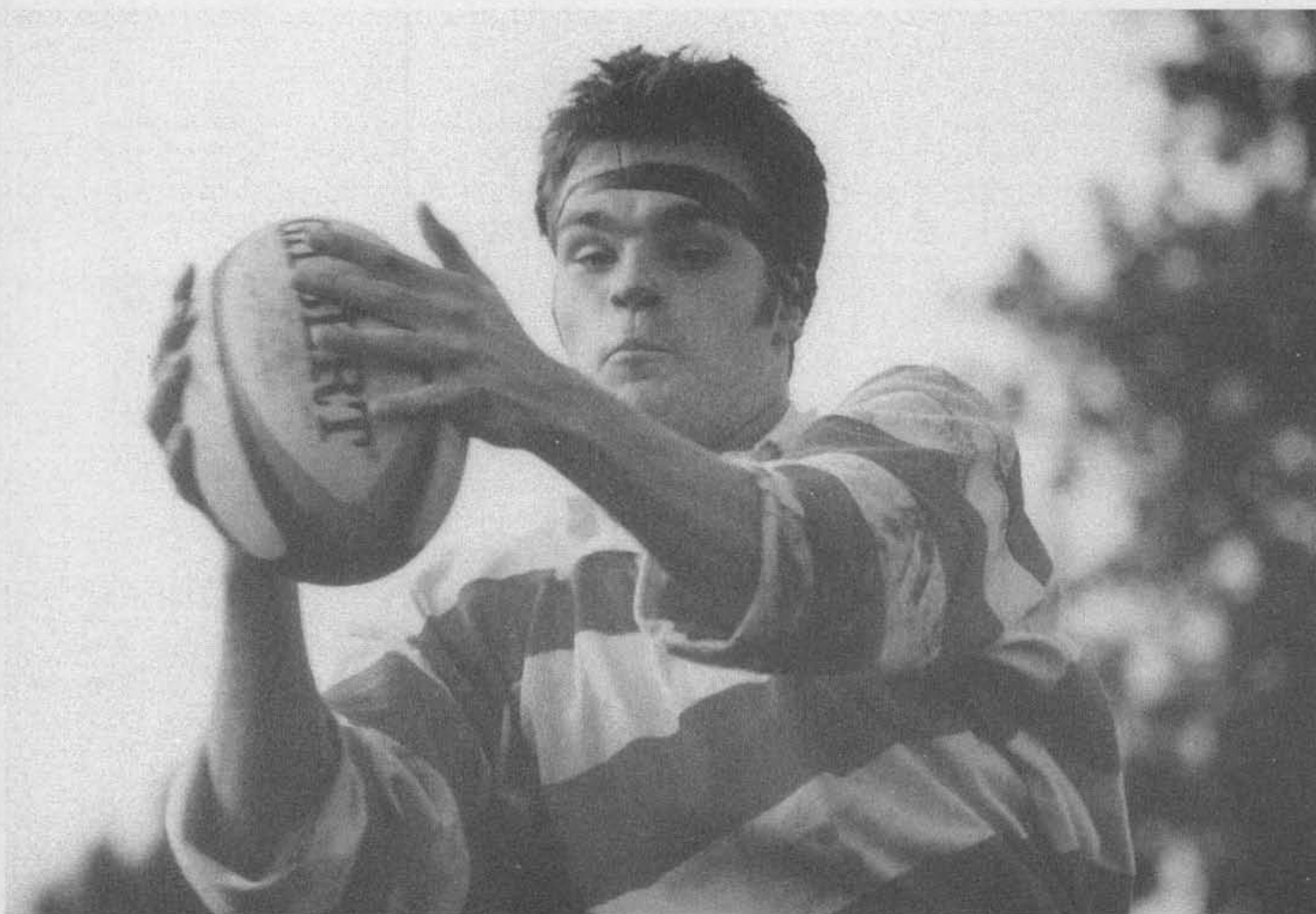
The season proper began with a match against Oratory. Our defeat was not the start which we needed. We played a good game, yet we could not convert the pressure into points. We were defeated by M.C.S. for the same reason, and then lost our next three games against Stowe, Radley and R.G.S., High Wycombe. The Radley and R.G.S. teams were stronger and played continuity rugby to a very high standard, which we could not match. However, the effort displayed by Abingdon was admirable and we kept our heads up throughout the eighty minutes. This quality was a major contributor to an excellent team spirit throughout the season.

In Half Term we went to the Ipswich Rugby Festival, where we began to play some excellent rugby; the most notable successes were a 5-5 draw against Marlborough and a win against the host school, St. Joseph's. This success once again did not continue into the following two matches, with losses against St. Edward's and Pangbourne.

Our effort, and our refusal to become discouraged, eventually paid off. Our first win was against a strong Newbury side, where attritional tactics wore down the opposing side. We then won against Shiplake, before playing Marlborough again and losing; they proved an extremely strong team, which only adds merit to our draw with them in the Ipswich Rugby Festival. We ended the season with a win over a very talented Bloxham side. It all came together; we kept the ball and won a high percentage of theirs. We converted the pressure into points, and our defence was solid. In all our performance in this match would have put us on a par with almost every team in our circuit.

The results of the season, seven losses and three wins, do not reflect the calibre of the side. Individually, and as a team, we had a lot of talent. The results did not go our way, but the team's refusal to give up was admirable in itself. Everyone in the team should be proud, as even when we were losing we kept our heads up and always came back at our opponents.

Half colours were awarded to S. Allen, W. Baker, I. Downie, J. Hayden, J. Mather, S. Perkins, K. Shaikh, D. Smith, G. Unsworth, J. Wilcox-Jones, and N. Williams. Full colours went to M. Terry (captain, back of the season), S. Balch, P. Batchelor, N. Hambridge, and B. Grady (forward of the season).





# 2nd XV rugby

This was a successful 2nd XV season, with the team unlucky not to have won three more tight games against our toughest opposition: Radley, Marlborough and R.G.S., High Wycombe. The success was due in no small part to the fantastic team spirit exhibited throughout, and the passion with which the tougher games were played.

The win at Oratory set the pattern for the term. An easy victory against M.C.S. followed, serving as a warm-up for Radley. This was the most hard-fought and passionate game in which I have ever been lucky enough to play. We went 10-0 up in the first half against some ragged Radley play, but a few mistakes allowed Radley to take advantage and go ahead 15-10, a gap which we could not close despite consistent pressure through the last fifteen minutes, helped by some fantastic support from the touch-lines, which at one point drowned out a Radley line-out call.

We then fought hard for a victory against a stronger-than-usual Stowe side, before facing up to R.G.S., High Wycombe. Captained by J. Wilson, the team played some of the best rugby of the season to go 18-17 up, only to have victory snatched from us in the dying seconds.

St. Edward's made us look like a team which had done nothing over Half Term (unfortunately, it was

true). However, Pangbourne, Newbury and Shiplake gave us three well-deserved victories, and raised the tally in the 'for' points column quite considerably, helped along by some fantastic kicking from T. Fleming (fourteen out of sixteen over two matches), and the try of the season from O. Thomas, a brilliant solo effort covering three-quarters of the pitch and avoiding at least seven tackles.

Against Marlborough we used the gale to lead by 17-0 at half-time. Marlborough then used the wind to win 19-17, despite huge pressure from us over the last fifteen minutes.

At Bloxham we played one of the most memorable games ever, in a mud bath at least three inches deep across the pitch. It was great fun, and we came out of it with a 17-10 victory after going 10-0 down.

My thanks go out to the team, the parents and friends who stood on the touch-lines in all weathers, but most of all to Mr. Richardson, without whose quiet advice and help we would never have been able to have such an enjoyable season.

Half colours were awarded to P. Barry, T. Coe, R. Holman, T. Marsh, P. Mather, O. Norman-Longstaff, P. Tolley (captain), B. Wells, J. Wilson (vice captain) and J. Wood. Forward of the season was J. Wilson, and back of the season P. Mather.

18/9 Oratory (A) Won 14-0  
29/9 M.C.S. (H) Won 35-0  
2/10 Radley (A) Lost 10-15  
9/10 Stowe (H) Won 14-5  
16/10 H. Wycombe (A) Lost 18-20  
6/11 St. Edward's (H) Lost 8-31  
13/11 Pangbourne (A) Won 19-10  
20/11 Newbury (H) Won 56-0  
24/11 Shiplake (H) Won 54-0  
4/12 Marlborough (H) Lost 17-19  
11/12 Bloxham (A) Won 19-10

a report by P. Tolley VICMM

# 3rd XV rugby

The 3rd XV enjoyed a relatively successful season, especially considering that it is a team normally associated with very limited amounts of practice; in the end we won five of the nine matches which we played. Our most impressive victories were over those who usually beat us very convincingly, such as R.G.S., High Wycombe, where we were helped very slightly by J. Gardner.

The forwards for the season were of a very high calibre and W. Bond, T. Butler and T. Davies in the front row were good examples. The second row comprised B. Hewett and T. Tarrell, who were also the key components of the line-out. The back row was made up of G. Bailey, T. Betteridge and captain M. Shields, all of whom excelled at support play, even if it was slightly lacking in strength and weight. Several other players – such as J. Buxton, J. Wright, A. Trill and M. Ezra – were also often found in the forwards.

There was considerable adjustment among the backs throughout the season, mainly through injury, or the inevitable removal of players to the 2nd XV.

One such was P. Mather, who was replaced by A. Hunter. The fly half and centre positions were dominated by H. Duff, P. Grayson, J. Dando and J. Mansfield, the top try scorer for the season with four against Cokethorpe. L. Pierce and P. Gooch also provided important support. S. Nickson was found on the wing – especially after his (literally) bone crunching tackle against Rendcomb – as was S. Campbell, impressive considering his previous position as prop. T. Humi and J. Drury completed the lineup, offering extremely good competition for the wing places, and C. Browne was a high-quality full back throughout.

The matches which we played were of a high standard, especially towards the end of the season against such teams as Bloxham, Pangbourne and Cokethorpe, but we suffered defeats at the hands of Rendcomb (playing their 1st XV), Radley, St. Edward's and Marlborough. The whole team would like to thank Mr. Beasley and Mr. Garnier for providing them with a season enjoyed by all.

25/9 Rendcomb 1st (A) Lost 5-26  
2/10 Radley (H) Lost 14-32  
9/10 Stowe (H) Won 25-7  
16/10 H. Wycombe (H) Won 38-5  
3/11 Cokethorpe (H) Won  
6/11 St. Edward's (A) Lost 5-50  
13/11 Pangbourne (A) Won 43-12  
4/12 Marlborough (A) Lost 0-45  
11/12 Bloxham (H) Won 46-0

a report by M. Shields VIAPS

# 4th XV rugby

25/9 Rendcomb (A) Won 38-0  
2/10 Radley (H) Lost 3-41  
6/11 St. Edward's (H) Lost 0-12  
24/11 Shiplake (H) Won 25-10  
4/12 Marlborough (A) Lost 7-27  
11/12 Bloxham (H) Won 61-0

a report by J. Wright 6SCW

The XV enjoyed an uneven season, which ended with perhaps a slightly unjust tally of winning three and losing three. The season started with a thrashing of Rendcomb 2nd XV; we played some excellent rugby even though we were facing a weaker team.

The next two matches went less well, at home to Radley and St. Edward's. We fought hard in these matches and were by no means outclassed, but succumbed to their superior fitness and ability to spread the ball across the pitch.

We came together much more as a team after Half Term and looked strong against Shiplake 3rd XV, whom we beat. The penultimate game saw us travelling away to Marlborough in freezing conditions. After having paid for starting slowly, we fought back

and at times took the game to them. Unfortunately, it turned into a game of attrition and, although we fought hard throughout, we were unable to come back. We finished the season on a high, playing in style, as we easily beat Bloxham. They were not an especially weak side, but our high level of continuity and few mistakes did not allow them into the game at any point.

Everyone played well and worked hard, finally learning to play as a team, rather than as a collection of individuals. At times we were stretched to field a full team owing to injuries and demand from above for the versatility of our players; most of the forwards thought that they were wingers, and J. Drury went from wing to full back to flanker.

# Senior Colts B XV rugby

18/9 Oratory (H) Won 17-5  
2/10 Radley (A) Lost 0-42  
9/10 Stowe (A) Won 36-12  
6/11 St. Edward's (A) Lost 15-24  
13/11 Pangbourne (H) Won 44-0  
24/11 Shiplake (A) Won 12-0  
4/12 Marlborough (H) Won 16-14  
11/12 Bloxham (H) Won 49-10

a report by J. Howe 5JGB

This was a very successful season, enjoyed by all involved. Our first game was against Oratory. A shaky first-half forced Mr. Evans into making his views clear at half-time. Apparently, we "needed to tackle like Scott Gibbs does" and "bisect like, well, bisectuals." However, the game was not without controversy; with ten minutes to go, and Oratory dead and buried, one of their players lashed out, and was subsequently sent off. The Oratory coach countered this by taking the ingenious action of bringing on a substitute for the offender. Both tries were scored by R. Kershaw.

The next game was against Radley; and as the score suggests, our bisectuality made no difference to Radley boys. We put up a brave first-half performance, but we deservedly lost to a better side. Some serious thinking went on before our next game, this time against Stowe. With help from our new line-out calls, our winning form returned, and we scored six superb tries, often running from our own twenty-two. The scorers were J. Farrant, S. Evans, E. Dingwall, D. Proctor, G. Stratton and A. White.

Then we travelled to St. Edward's, where we came up against a very even team. However, some unorthodox decisions by the referee caused lapses in concentration at crucial moments, and although we scored a late try, we could not salvage a result.

Pangbourne at home should be prescribed as a cure for a team's low confidence, and this proved to be

the case as we chalked up our record win of the season. Although Pangbourne put in a valiant effort, we made pressure pay with tries from T. Kingham, T. Gallard, M. Gray, J. Howe, and two from J. Farrant.

Then followed a game against a supposedly weak Shiplake side. The game was anything but one-sided, and bitterly contested in freezing conditions. The team we faced were Shiplake's strongest side in their category, and we certainly knew that we had been in a game afterwards. However, we eventually ran out as the narrow winners, with M. Stalker going over the line twice for us.

A fortnight later, we faced the daunting prospect of Marlborough, and we were clearly not favourites to win. Grim prospects became grimmer when we saw that they were physically as big as the Radley side. But there is no substitute for team spirit, and we were triumphant in what was certainly the game of the season. Scores came from T. Gallard and D. Desai. Perhaps it was a sign of how far we had come this season that we turned in a display infinitely better than at Radley. Scott Gibbs would have been proud.

Our final game was something of a formality against a tenacious Bloxham team. Tries were scored by M. Stalker, T. Kingham, J. Farrant, and M. Gray. Although we felt some disappointment at the close of the season, we really appreciate the work put in by Mr. Evans and wish him the best of luck for next season.



# Senior Colts C XV rugby

This year, we unfortunately lost several vital players through either promotion or injury, leading to a disappointing set of results. Against Radley, we scored the first try, which boosted our egos, but then gave away two. Although E. Ritchie soon retaliated, despite our efforts they scored a lucky converted try just before the whistle blew.

We then travelled to Shiplake to play a team which showed great handling skills among the backs. In a close game, Shiplake only just defeated us with a well-kicked conversion. Our row of defeats increased to three when we played St. Edward's after Half Term. They took an early lead, though a difficult penalty taken by S. Mayhew-Archer gave us a glimmer of hope. Very late in the match, N. Betteridge caught a

kick from their try-line and ran into the opposite corner to score our only try of the match; Mr. Spencer was jumping up and down like a rabbit on steroids.

We played well against the Radley 'B/C' team, but were, to put it bluntly, well and truly slaughtered. An ill-disciplined Shiplake team faced us for our final match, in which our strongest team yet played fantastically, passing well, handling well, and rucking over like animals.

Although we lost all but one match, we can be satisfied that we played well as a team, although various problems constantly forced Mr. Spencer to change the team around. Our thanks go to him for being such an enlightening, energetic and blinking good coach.

2/10 Radley (A) Lost 8-17  
20/10 Shiplake B/C (A) Lost 10-12  
6/11 St. Edward's (H) Lost 8-12  
20/11 Radley B/C (H) Lost 0-22  
24/11 Shiplake (A) Won 37-0

a report by M. Hylla 5JGB

# Junior Colts A XV rugby

This was a fairly typical season, with expected wins against so-called lesser opponents interspersed with defeats, some heavy, against the big guns. At times there was some excellent rugby played. The team did not change greatly from week to week, as is often the case, but owing to injuries or absentees some regular 'B' team players got their chance to display their talent at a slightly 'higher' level. In terms of competition for places this was just what this team needed.

The season began with two well-earned wins against M.C.S. and Oratory and we went to Radley with high hopes. However, the much bigger Radley forwards starved us of any quality possession and in the end we lost by a comfortable margin. We recovered the following week to win a hard-fought encounter against Stowe, but then suffered two heavy defeats at

the hands of R.G.S., High Wycombe and St. Edward's. Good wins against Pangbourne, Newbury and Shiplake preceded probably our best performance of the season, away against Marlborough. This was an excellent match; the score ebbed and flowed, the tackling was fierce on both sides and the result was in doubt right up to the final whistle. The home side had some very big, robust forwards and equally bulky but skillful backs, and though they scored early on, we matched them for effort and commitment. The second half was keenly contested and our forwards made some strong runs, setting up second-phase ball for the backs who ran with pace and determination. This was an outstanding team effort and much was gained in defeat; such a performance will give the team great confidence in the future.

18/9 Oratory (H) Won 17-5  
29/9 M.C.S. (H) Won 18-7  
2/10 Radley (A) Lost 0-32  
9/10 Stowe (H) Won 10-7  
16/10 High Wycombe (A) Lost 0-44  
6/11 St. Edward's (A) Lost 5-31  
13/11 Pangbourne (H) Won 8-5  
20/11 Newbury (A) Won 29-0  
24/11 Shiplake (H) Won 43-5  
4/12 Marlborough (A) Lost 22-31  
11/12 Bloxham (A) Won 52-0

a report by ADW

# Junior Colts B XV rugby

The season began with all of the squad energetic and fired-up, romping to victory with flamboyant rugby against Oratory. Sadly, we then let ourselves down with weak tackling against a strong Rendcomb 'A' XV. However, new additions to the team aided us in our convincing victory against M.C.S. The game against Radley was lost despite our revitalized performance in the second half, but the team bounced back quickly with a victory over Stowe. Team spirit was high as we played a controversial and thrilling encounter with R.G.S., High Wycombe, away, losing in a very tight game. The team was then baffled by the intelligent play of the Cokethorpe 'A' XV.

Our lack of fitness told in a tense and narrowly-lost game against St. Edward's, the lead switching hands rapidly; this was a game which thoroughly absorbed the spectators. However, our form returned and we brushed aside a weak Pangbourne side, the dynamic play continuing as we beat a strong Shiplake. The last game of the season was on the windswept pitches of Marlborough and the cold winds affected the team greatly. After losing a man to replace an 'A' team injury early on, we were finally defeated.

The team would like to thank Mr. Dibden, Mr. Griffiths and the supporters for all their help and encouragement throughout the season.

18/9 Oratory (H) Won 43-5  
25/9 Rendcomb A (H) Lost 0-35  
29/09 M.C.S. (H) Won 41-5  
2/10 Radley (A) Lost 0-15  
9/10 Stowe (H) Won 22-5  
16/10 High Wycombe (A) Lost 10-19  
3/11 Cokethorpe (H) Lost 0-33  
6/11 St. Edward's (A) Lost 15-17  
13/11 Pangbourne (H) Won 42-0  
24/11 Shiplake (H) Won 26-12  
4/12 Marlborough (A) Lost 14-40

a report by  
H. Hunter and A. Martin 4DAG



# Juniors B XV rugby

18/9 Oratory (A) Won 48-0  
 25/9 Rendcomb As (H) Won 24-7  
 2/10 Radley (H) Lost 5-27  
 16/10 H. Wycombe (H) Lost 7-22  
 6/11 St. Edward's (H) Lost 10-31  
 13/11 Pangbourne (A) Won 15-7  
 24/11 Shiplake (A) Won 48-0  
 4/12 Marlborough (H) Lost 22-29  
 11/12 Bloxham (H) Won 65-0

a report by R. Morton 3KJS

The squad enjoyed a successful and promising season, although the promotion of regulars to the 'A' XV caused some disruption; five players, for example, filled the Number Nine jersey. In the backs, H. Cole, C. Kirkland and A. McKenzie all shone. In the pack, our front row was strong and N. Patterson was tirelessly aggressive. The forwards' technique developed enormously over the season. Thanks must go not only to Mr. Hele, but also to Mr. Evans and Mr. Burrow, for making such achievement possible through their coaching.

At times, the team played 'total rugby', rucking effectively, running incisively and passing the ball with flair and imagination. On other occasions, most disappointingly against Radley and St. Edward's, we were slow to the breakdown and tackled weakly at key moments of the game.

We started the season by winning easily against flu-weakened Oratory and, against Rendcomb's 'A' XV, battled to maintain an unbeaten record.

Unfortunately, we lost the next match to Radley's well-drilled backs, despite enjoying much possession. A fortnight later, our first-minute try stirred R.G.S. to exploit their physical superiority and emerge as comfortable victors. Things looked still bleaker after the St. Edward's defeat, but two consecutive victories renewed our optimism. At Pangbourne we rediscovered the team spirit which had vanquished Rendcomb and, on a stodgy pitch, Shiplake offered insufficient opposition to prevent us finishing the season unbeaten away from home.

The penultimate game (Marlborough) was a fine encounter, begun in heavy sleet. We led three minutes from time, but lost to a last minute try. The "Cox's Fields Jinx" (played four, lost four) again cost us, against a team which we should beat next year.

Finally, we entered the Bloxham game hoping that our form on smaller pitches (in this case Lower Field) would hold. The result was a resounding victory (our third clean sheet) from a game played in superb spirit.



# Junior Colts C XV rugby

Coached by Mr. Phelps and Mr. Griffiths, and captained by N. Herbert, we had a remarkable season, winning many of our matches; the first was a victory over Oratory. The next match, against Radley, we also won, though not by a large margin. One of our most interesting matches was against Shiplake for the first time. Unfortunately, after some poor concentration – attributable to injuries – we were unable to grasp a victory, and went down to lose. Fortunately, no injuries out-last-ed Half Term, and we came back with high hopes of beating St. Edward's.

However, on a blustery day at Oxford we did not perform at our best, and after a closely-fought first fifteen minutes we let them slowly slip ahead. We did score once, but it was not enough and we lost.

Our next match was to be against Shiplake, this time at home. We needed to break our losing run and get our own back. We set off well and were soon ahead on a day perfect for rugby, though a bit cold. We were well up at half time and we had clocked up fifty points by the final whistle. They did not manage to score, although they did come close in the final minutes.

18/9 Oratory (H) Won 44-0  
2/10 Radley (H) Won 15-5  
9/10 Stowe (A) Won 22-5  
13/10 Shiplake (A) Lost 22-0  
6/11 St. Edward's (A) Lost 5-17  
24/11 Shiplake (H) Won 50-0  
4/12 Marlborough (A) Lost 5-43

a report by  
N. Herbert and A. Rowe 4DAG

# Juniors A XV rugby

This season saw a side which had never played together sprout into a formidable rugby team. We had pace and power throughout and by the end of the season we used it to our advantage.

The first match of the season, against Oratory, saw foul weather and they took advantage of our lack of experience, snatching the lead early on. At times we looked dangerous, and we managed to score two tries, but it was not enough.

We then played M.C.S., proving faster and stronger than them, and raced away with the victory. Against a technically superb though physically smaller Radley side, they took the game to us and won.

You can always guarantee a tough match against High Wycombe, and they did not disappoint. The first half was closely-fought and it was tight at half time; in the second half they seemed to go up a gear and the final score flattered them.

The second half of the season saw a new team; the concentration which we had lacked in the first half of term really came together in the second, and so did the team. With it came an unbeaten run.

The St. Edward's match was close, but our size, strength and two conversions won it in the end. The Pangbourne game was one of the best and the most stressful games we have ever played in. The honours were close for the whole game, though we always thought that we had the upper hand – but by the last minute we were losing by two points. We had a scrum on the five metre line and we span the ball through the hands to our rather slow left-winger, who scored it. This victory was a huge confidence boost.

Against Newbury, we handled the very wet conditions better than them and were always in control; frustrated, their discipline slipped. However, we were very professional and capitalized on their mistakes. Full of confidence, we blew Shiplake away, tries coming practically every five minutes.

As usual for the Marlborough fixture the weather was appalling. Missing some key players, we carried our form over from the previous match and played some great rugby. The final match was against a big Bloxham side which never got going; we did not let them. It was a muddy day and we used our superior pace, handling, power, technique and determination to please our supporters, who turned up in droves to see their side win in style.

This was a wonderful way to end a great season, which had seen the team go from strength to strength, always improving. The most impressive things about the side were its team spirit, determination and will to win. We have not mentioned individuals because it was very much a team effort. The team would like to thank our coach Mr. Evans and all the supporters who came along to the matches.

The following players regularly represented the side: J. Barclay, B. Bowie, J. Donnelly (eleven tries), T. Gater (captain), O. Haenlein, A. Hollands, S. Jackson (five tries), J. Kelly, A. Marsh, R. Muirhead (vice-captain, five tries, twenty-two conversions), A. Paxton (six tries), R. Powis, J. Prinold (six tries), O. Sanders, G. Stern (eight tries). Those who also played were: M. Coppock, J. Hoyle, C. Kirkland, J. Lakin, E. Lee, W. Poole, D. Stalker, A. Thompson, and R. Vasudev.

SAE adds:

A big thank-you to the boys for making it – in the end – such an exciting, successful and memorable season. They formed one of the most talented teams which I have seen at Juniors level, improving a great deal through the season. They always aimed to play attractive, open rugby, and often succeeded. They seemed to enjoy the game and (almost more important) they obviously enjoyed playing together as a team.

I have very much enjoyed coaching them, and wish them the best of luck in future seasons.

18/9 Oratory (A) Lost 10-23  
29/9 M.C.S. (H) Won 51-0  
2/10 Radley (H) Lost 15-27  
16/10 H. Wycombe (H) Lost 5-32  
6/11 St. Edward's (H) Won 19-15  
13/11 Pangbourne (A) Won 22-19  
20/11 Newbury (A) Won 34-7  
24/11 Shiplake (H) Won 82-0  
4/12 Marlborough (H) Won 19-5  
11/12 Bloxham (H) Won 50-0

a report by T. Gater 3KJS  
and A. Marsh 3JAR

# Juniors C XV rugby

2/10 Radley (H) Won 80-0  
16/10 High Wycombe (H) Drew 24-24  
6/11 St. Edward's (H) Won 24-20  
13/11 Pangbourne (H) Won 85-0  
24/11 Shiplake (A) Won 66-0  
4/12 Marlborough (A) Lost 12-22

a report by the captain,  
G. Rowland 3BJLS

The Juniors 'C' XV are not usually considered an important part of the School's rugby, but after this year things will never be the same.

The team started its season by thrashing Radley, which of course boosted everyone's spirits enormously. After this game, G. Rowland, C. MacKenzie and G. Norris came into the team, bringing badly-needed superior tackling power. It was this which led to the draw against R.G.S., High Wycombe, although they were a far superior team. We beat St. Edward's, even

though they played better than us; our superior determination led us to victory. From then on it became easy; the Pangbourne and Shiplake matches were cut short after massive totals were reached.

But then we met our match, in the shape of Marlborough. Mr. Sandow had been telling us how good they were and how biased the referees were, but an undefeated season made us arrogant, and, of course, we lost. It is to be hoped that next year's team will do as well as we did, and will crush *all* opposition.

# Minors A XV rugby

18/9 Dragon (A) Lost 5-36  
13/10 Christ Church (H) Won 12-5  
16/10 H. Wycombe (A) Lost 7-33  
10/11 Cheam (H) Lost 12-19  
20/11 Newbury (A) Lost 5-45  
30/11 M.C.S. (H) Lost 12-19  
1/12 Dragon 7s (A) Won 2, Lost 2  
7/12 Moultsford (A) Lost 0-33  
12/1 Josca's (A) Lost 14-22  
19/1 Cothill (A) Won 26-1  
26/1 Ludgrove (A) Lost 20-26  
8/2 Reading (H) Lost 12-21  
16/2 Pangbourne (H) Won 45-0

a report by C. Moger 2B

After a disappointing season in the First Year, a slightly altered Minors 'A' team went out looking for some wins. We were up against the Dragon, who have a strong team, first of all. Although we played hard, we were not yet playing as a team. We were confident going into the game against Christ Church. The team played well and tries were scored by G. Cowie and A. Green. Christ Church fought back and did manage to score, but it was too late. The game against R.G.S., High Wycombe, was lost because of bad tackling. A try from C. Moger was too late to make any impact.

Against Cheam Hawtreys we thought that we had won early on when we scored two tries (P. Minch and A. Shaw). However, again the game was lost through bad tackling, with their outside centre scoring three times before the end. The game against St. Bartholomew's, Newbury, was a hard-fought one, even though the score does not show this. The wet cold weather caused many handling errors, though our major downfall was, again, tackling.

After this losing streak, the team regrouped and went out to play M.C.S. By half time the score was 12-7 to them, and in the second half we equalized with a try from C. Moger. In the last few minutes, though, the defence was slack and a try was conceded. After a very hard-fought game we lost. Next came a Sevens tournament hosted by the Dragon. The team did not get long to practise and learn the rules beforehand, but put up a good show (beating St. Hugh's and Christ Church) before being knocked out.

After Christmas was the match against Moultsford. The horrible weather cannot be to blame for all the mistakes that were made; the team did not play together, and lost heavily. The previous year's meeting with Josca's had been a terrible 72-0 defeat, and this match showed how much the team has improved. The game was extremely close, with two tries from A. Green, finishing with Josca's in a precarious position with only eight points between us.

The next, very physical, game was against Cothill, who are a very competitive team. Two extremely good tries from G. Cowie and A. Green gave us a ten point lead. Cothill were not finished yet, though, and we conceded a try right at the end of the match. However, this was not enough and we came off the winners of a very hard match. The team were now confident as we went off to play Ludgrove. The game started well and looked as if it would be a walk-over after G. Cowie, L. Simpson and A. Green all went over the line. We were lulled into a false sense of security, and the opposition fought back and scored twice before half-time. We went out in the second half to score another three, but we were denied all but one. They, however, managed to score and convert their third try, putting us one point behind them as none of our kicks went over. They also scored again in the few last minutes.

Reading were our next opponents and the match was just like so many others we had played. Our downfall was again one or two large players and bad tackling. Although we were fairly even throughout the game with two tries each, the game was lost in the last few minutes, with us conceding a try.

The last game was one in which everyone played their hearts out. It was against Pangbourne and proved to be a walkover. Within the first ten minutes we had a very comfortable lead, so Mr. Drummond-Hay let everyone have a go (even the substitutes from the other team we had fielded). It was good fun, and all the team enjoyed being able to celebrate a good win.

Everybody in the team enjoyed the season and improved a lot thanks to coaching from Mr. Drummond-Hay and help from a couple of boys in the Sixth Form. As a reward for skills or hard work and improvement, colours were awarded to G. Clarkson, J. Coleman, G. Cowie, B. Cullen, J. Dingwall, M. Duhan, M. Halford, C. Kennedy, R. Mallett, P. Minch (captain), C. Moger, C. More, L. Simpson, T. Swarbrick, and M. White.



# 1st XI hockey

We started the season with high hopes and a competitive squad. The Lower Sixth brought with them a strong core of enthusiastic, talented players, complemented by the leadership and experience of the Upper Sixth (despite B. Wells' rather pathetic complaints before every game that he really did not feel like playing hockey that day).

We were helpless to prevent a 5-1 drubbing from King Edward's Southampton in the first week of term, but still managed to learn some valuable lessons – especially K. Roche, who had the misfortune to deflect a tame opposition shot round his own keeper for an embarrassing own goal. Soon a certain pride and team spirit was beginning to form in the squad, and it was this, along with expert coaching and gruelling fitness drills (who can forget being shouted at for an hour by a mean matron in dark glasses?) that led us to our best form of the season and some satisfying victories.

Against Pangbourne, we played our best hockey to produce a 3-0 win away from home. Our confidence grew in leaps and bounds from this and we went on to collect wins against Shiplake and against Stowe. We learned that some games were going to have to be won by sheer grit and determination, as some teams used physical play to prevent us from playing the flowing, attacking hockey of which we were capable. Shiplake might complain that we had employed similar tactics against them, however, as the referee had to send off A. McKenzie for repeated use of the back of the stick.

Unfortunately, we were perhaps guilty of complacency against Leighton Park, as a series of errors made a gift to them of four goals, and insult was added to injury when they quipped that we were "pansies in pink". We finished the half-term off nicely though, with a scrappy win against Reading, coming

back from a goal down to win despite a spectacularly missed penalty flick, barely reaching the goal-line.

Our midfield and striker combination was the key to our success throughout. Captain S. Balch was influential with a great all-round game and good, vocal leadership. He was assisted in midfield by the considerable skills of Roche's intricate dribbling and S. Allen's strength on the ball, both working hard with J. Mather and M. Schwerg to feed I. Downie with quality chances, most of which he put away, finishing as top goal scorer. The defence received very little recognition for their outstanding commitment and hard work. They formed a strong unit for the most part with intelligent communication and strong tackling, but it was only when P. Timberlake was brought up from the Colts that we were entirely sure of ourselves.

Against Bloxham, Downie's importance was highlighted, as in a frustrating game we failed to score against a team with which we were more than evenly matched. Most shocking of all was Mather missing from two yards, when it appeared easy to put the ball in the back of the net.

An especially high point was the thrilling match against local rivals, Radley. After we had led for most of the game, Radley grabbed a last gasp equalizer to snatch a 3-3 draw with an amazing reverse-stick strike. After such an emotional high, the end of the season was a slight anticlimax, as we drew with Merchant Taylors and lost to M.C.S. in a game featuring C. Fudge's infamous catch and Roche smacking a player in the mouth but then blaming him for his own injury.

On behalf of all the squad I would like to thank Mr. Sandow and Mr. Hele for their commitment and excellent coaching, which produced a memorable and enjoyable year of hockey.

a report by C. Fudge 6TCG

# 2nd & 3rd XI hockey

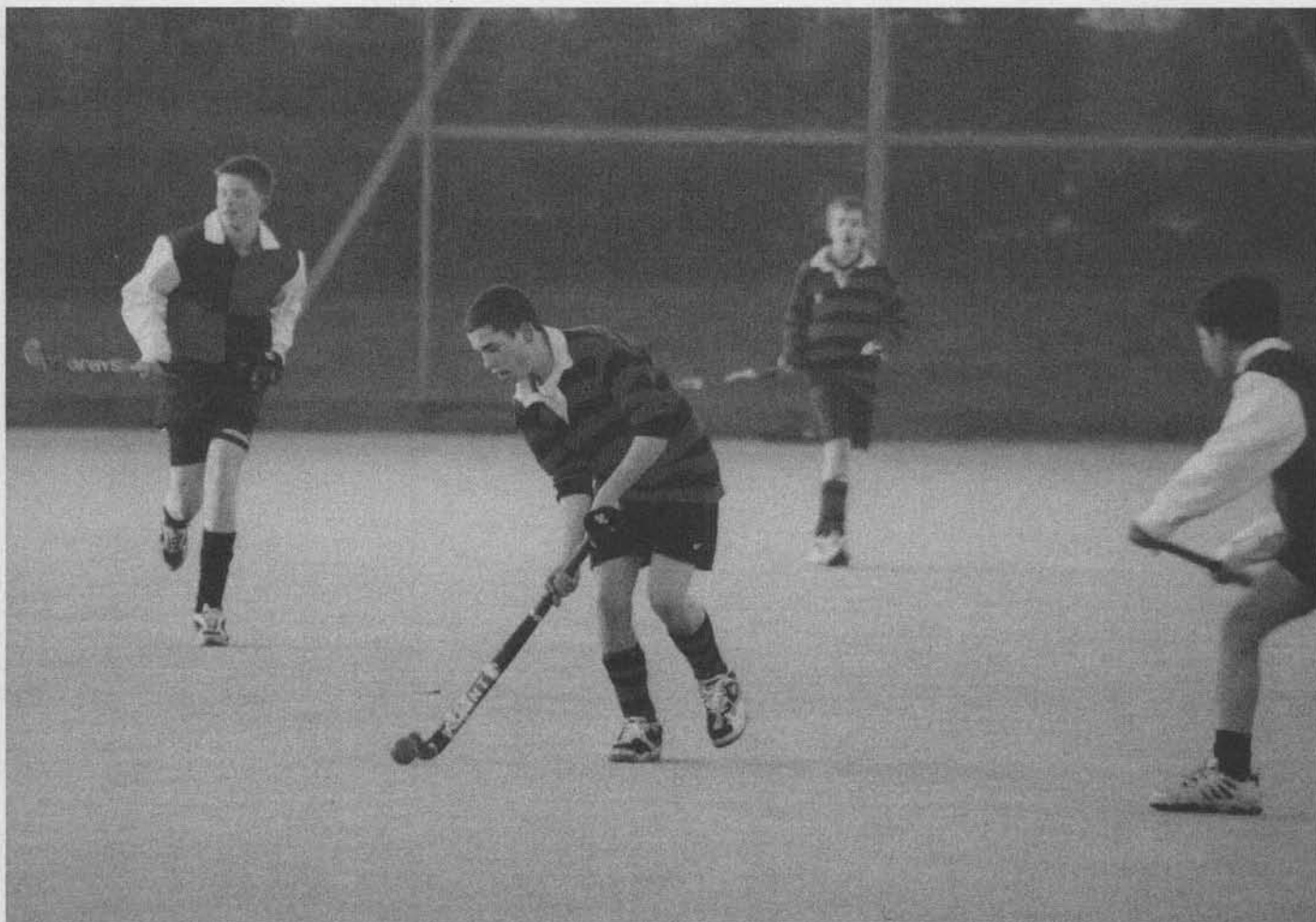
The 2nd XI had a rather disastrous season, winning no matches (but coming close on a number of occasions). When it worked and the team played as a unit we looked strong enough to beat most of the teams we played. However, on the days when it did not work it was almost humorous. The main problems were a lack of team spirit and an unwillingness to pass the ball. That said, there were some strong individual performances throughout the season.

M. Sanderson had a good season in goal (despite what the score sheet might suggest), saving many a shot which someone less nimble would have let in. In defence A. Bitmead and M. Rees-Jones were solid and reliable, while in attack L. Pearce and T. Matheson ran well with the ball and scored a few. In midfield, J.

Eighteen, A. Rabindran and G. Coppock provided some good ball for the attackers to utilize, yet we still failed to score on most occasions.

The 3rd XI had a very good season, with more victories than defeats. Excellent victories were achieved against such strong sides as M.C.S. and Merchant Taylors. Everyone who played performed very well, the midfield and forwards collaborating to produce many goals. In defence, M. Parker, in particular, played in a strong and determined fashion. There were many promising features evident in the team's development, and the many fine players from the Lower Sixth deserve every success next year. We would like to thank Mr. Sandow, Mr. Townsend and Mr. Evans for all their help throughout the season.

reports by T. Coe VIJFH  
and J. Dando VIJFH



# Junior Colts A XI hockey

15/1 Southampton (A) Lost 0-5  
 26/1 Pangbourne (H) Drew 2-2  
 2/2 Shiplake (A) Drew 0-0  
 5/2 Stowe (A) Drew 2-2  
 9/2 Reading (H) Drew 1-1  
 1/3 Bloxham (H) Drew 1-1  
 15/3 Merchant Taylors (H) Lost 1-5  
 22/3 M.C.S. (A) Won 3-2

a report by M. Burnard 4RSH

photograph by  
 G. Smith 3BJLS

The season began with a visit to our strongest opponents, Southampton. Although we battled hard throughout and won several short corners, we were soundly beaten by a more experienced and better-organized side. There were, however, some promising signs, and from this point onwards our season could only get better.

The following week, we were once more disappointed, this time with a draw against a weak Pangbourne team, whom we outplayed and dominated from the start (goals from M. Burnard and A. Martin). Indeed, the season continued to frustrate us, with a goal-less draw – which we could so easily have won – against a relatively weak Shiplake side.

The following Saturday, however, the team really pulled together properly for the first time to force a draw against a much more confident and physically much stronger Stowe team. This was a very keenly contested match, and we did ourselves proud (P. Tubman scored twice). We then drew with Reading, J. Watkins scoring.

After Half Term it took us a number of weeks to rediscover the form and drive which we had displayed at times in the first half of the season. During this period of 're-discovery' came a draw against Bloxham – our only goal coming from A. Martin – and a loss to Merchant Taylor's despite a goal from M. Burnard, both matches thrown away through defensive lapses and attacking indecision.

Thus far in the season our record was lost two, drawn five, won none. There was but one match left, and that precious win was proving elusive. Against a very confident M.C.S. side, the team pulled together in a way that so far had not been seen. 2-0 down at half time, we battled back under the inspirational captaincy of A. Martin (who scored one goal, the others coming from P. Tubman) to win the game.

This was the pinnacle of our season, which had evidently ended a few games too soon. Throughout the season, A. Martin's skill and power of shot coupled with P. Tubman's speed and finishing ability had been our most potent weapons.



# Senior Colts XI hockey

This was a team which seemed to have little to prove. As Junior Colts they had had a very convincing unbeaten season, and many of the players had already gained county and divisional recognition. Their talents soon became very apparent to their two slightly overawed coaches, even if training sessions earlier on could and should have been slightly happier occasions had the team recognized that those coaches might have some talents themselves.

The first two matches were won convincingly, and with a certain amount of style in attacking play; there was still some work to be done on tackling, and the midfield was looking very scrappy. R. Kershaw and C. Thomson were emerging as an effective attacking partnership, with six goals between them. These two continued the good work at Stowe, where we won 5-1; the weaknesses of the first two matches were overcome, with N. Fuggle personifying a more competitive spirit in an excellent second half performance. Fitness was also a deciding factor in this match, but indiscipline by some key players took some of the gloss off the afternoon.

Everything came good for the County Championship, when the team emerged as worthy winners. Apart from occasional unforced errors these matches, against Rover Cowley (won 3-0) and St. Edward's (won 2-0), saw the team playing close to their full potential. One important factor was that the team maintained a high level of discipline and was able to really concentrate on producing good hockey. As well as the usual goal-scoring heroes, N. Andrews' name should be added to the roll of honour for having the courage to put on the goal-keeper's kit at such short notice – and for not putting a foot wrong. This

marked a highly satisfactory conclusion to the first half of term, with the only disappointment being that the team would not be able to compete at a higher level as county champions.

The next challenge was to come back from being 2-0 down to draw 2-2 against Bloxham. The second half of this match was another of the season's high points, even if the result represented the only blemish on what would have been a perfect record. Several questions were asked of the midfield and the defence, and were answered effectively by concentrating on holding positions. The final matches, at home to Merchant Taylor's (won 5-0) and away to M.C.S. (won 2-0) saw the team and some individuals at their best for sections of the game, with J. Hedges, M. Armitage, G. Stalcup and P. Peacock all proving their worth in attacking play, and R. Balch and E. Dingwall doing great things to help the goalkeeper keep a clean sheet. N. Andrews should be mentioned again for a superb save against Merchant Taylor's at a stage of the match when they still might have got back into things. Finally, P. Timberlake deserves praise for combining effective leadership of a successful team with hard work on many aspects of his own game.

The following played for the Colts A team during the course of the term: N. Andrews, M. Armitage, R. Balch, E. Dingwall, J. Farrands, J. Farrant, N. Fuggle, J. Hedges, R. Kershaw, P. Peacock, R. Pickering, G. Stalcup, C. Thomson, P. Timberlake (captain), R. Wheeler, and A. White. It was a challenge and ultimately a pleasure to work with such a talented team. I am sure that they will continue to achieve some great results representing the School, and that they will go on enjoying their hockey.

Played 8  
Won 7  
Drawn 1  
Lost 0

a report by DGA

# Juniors B XI hockey

The Junior 'B' XI's unbeaten record was matched only by the Colts 'A'. Winning most games by comfortable margins, the 'B' team dominated all their opponents. The most emphatic victory (8-0) came over Shiplake. Our two other best results came against previously unbeaten sides from Merchant Taylor's and M.C.S. The one game which ended in a draw was against Pangbourne. In an almost entirely one-sided match, their keeper, in his first appearance in goal, pulled off an incredible series of saves to keep the score to 1-1.

The strengths of the side were their teamwork and spirit. With a strong defence and midfield behind them, the forwards always looked capable of scoring goals. They have set a standard that will be hard to match, let alone beat, in the future.

The team was drawn from a squad consisting of J. Barclay, S. Cataldo-Francis, M. Gould, P. Little, S. McMahon (captain), A. Nash, G. Norris, W. Poole, C. Ranscombe, G. Rowland, O. Sharp, D. Stalker, and G. Stern.

Played 8  
Won 7  
Drew 1  
Lost 0

a report by S. McMahon 3RPF



# Senior rowing

**Henley VIII**  
**Bow: J. Persaud**  
**2: N. Moffatt**  
**3: N. Williams**  
**4: P. Bürck**  
**5: J. Hamand**  
**6: T. Burch**  
**7: L. Whibley**  
**Stroke: H. Mackenzie**

**All the above received full colours**

**Cox: E. Macdonald**  
**(half colours)**

**Special thanks to N. Brodie and J. Tarrell for substituting when necessary**

**a report by MDM**

Training started early, with a pre-season trip to the East Coast of America during the Michaelmas Half Term. We were once again hosted very kindly by families from St. John's School, Worcester, Massachusetts. We had an excellent visit, and rounded it off by winning two events – the youth VIIIs and the youth novice VIIIs – at the Head of the Fish Regatta in Saratoga Springs (the Fish is a river).

As the season proper started, river levels were for once manageable, and training got under way in earnest. We had a small senior squad to work with, but they all worked hard. We had our first success at Henley Schools Head, when our experienced boys won the junior coxed IVs in style, and also the junior novice IVs. Reading University Head, over Half Term, saw our reduced squad come third among the schools competing. The Schools Head saw the 1st VIII get a disputed time penalty, which put them sixth equal (fourth on time); the 2nd VIII finished fifth. We really paid for our efforts in the Eights Head two days later, where we finished well down the order.

We had our usual Easter training camp in Hazewinkel, Belgium, and in the excellent water conditions selected our 1st VIII. Our chance to repeat last year's clean-up at Wallingford was thwarted by river conditions. We settled for racing at Ghent in senior men's events; the VIII came third in the U23 category and second in the U23 coxless IVs. It was an excellent weekend.

We prepared well for National Schools Regatta, but once again the weather won. Most serious racing was cancelled, and a timed race over 1250 metres was used to determine the winners of Championship VIIIs. We came seventh, only two-and-a-half seconds behind bronze. The Sunday was better, and we won the bronze medal in Championship coxed IVs.

We were seriously affected by A level examinations this year, and had to alter our crew significantly before Henley. It is a real credit to the commitment, dedication and determination of the boys (and the depth of talent that we have in the Boat Club) that we managed to produce a competitive crew at all. A lot of hard work went in over those three weeks, but there were disappointments at Reading and Marlow regattas. Henley Wednesday saw us defeat Shrewsbury, who led us for half the course. Thursday saw us row through King's, Chester, in much the same way. We lost on Friday to Groton School, USA, who defeated St. Paul's on their way to the final. I was very proud of the way that the crew had defeated two top British schools at Henley; it really was a great achievement after only three weeks.

N. Williams went on to be selected for the GB VIII for the Coupe de la Jeunesse in Switzerland at the end of July. H. Mackenzie got together with three others to win junior IVs at the National Championships in a record time, and went on to race for England at the Home International Match.



# J16s rowing

After our lack of wins last year we vowed that this time things would be different. In the Michaelmas Half Term seven of us travelled to America with the seniors for a week-long training camp and then a race at the Head of the Fish. This was a confidence booster, as we broke the course record. We then went to Wallingford Head in early December, winning the senior IVs.

Earlier that term T. Kingham attended Great Britain trials and only narrowly missed out in an event aimed for people two years older. Disaster struck as he contracted a form of meningitis in the holidays, and the life-threatening nature of the illness left us thinking that he would not row again for the year. That was obviously not his plan as he returned to action shortly after a few of us went to Peterborough with the seniors. At Henley Head the VIII won, and the IV, with Kingham, won more convincingly, by almost a minute. At the Schools Head, we were aiming high and almost made it. Having to start from the back, the 'A' VIII had to overtake seven crews and finished second to Radley who had a clear run. The 'B' IV won their category.

A quick visit to Abingdon Head gave us victory in everything that we entered before our visit to Belgium. We raced at Ghent in an U18 event, and only narrowly missed out on the medals. The seat racing, designed for crew selection, gave good results on bow side but left four of our six possible stroke siders all beating each other in a cycle.

The crew was finally decided, and we travelled back to Ghent where we camped not far from the course. In the U18 event again, we won silver to a crew who looked to us a trifle over-age. The 'B' IV went to Bedford the following week and beat Radley to win their event. Disappointingly, all National Schools Regatta junior events were cancelled owing to the wind. On the Sunday, we put out two coxless IVs. We were not really expecting to do well, but both did themselves proud, with the 'B' IV being narrowly knocked out in the semi-finals by the bronze winners. The 'A' IV, crewed by Kingham (steering), D. Easterbrook, T. Stockford and A. Maclean, went a bit better and in the final hoped for silver; when we saw after about three hundred metres that we were leading, we realized that we could win. After a close-fought race with four boys from King's, Chester, 1st VIII we slowly pulled out a lead of just over a length. The coxless pair also won bronze, despite tough competition from very fast boats. Shortly afterwards, our cox was selected for the 1st VIII. A. James replaced him and did a great job.

Reading Amateur then arrived, along with the chance to race Radley, who took almost a length from us in the early stages, only for us to row straight through them. We then had to race them again at

Marlow, and despite managing to decrease their lead around the outside of the final corner, we lost by a third of a length.

The last weekend of our official season brought three days of solid racing, and three days of success. On the Friday we qualified for Henley as the youngest competing crew; Saturday brought Reading Town and wins in every event we entered; on Sunday we cleared up again at Wallingford, even winning in a slightly strange crew combination and in separate events over Oratory and Groton School from America.

The next week we competed at Henley, but owing to illness, we had to change our bow man on the day; A. Addis fell ill that morning and was unable to race. We gave it everything we had, but lost to Imperial College by one-and-a-quarter lengths. Our final success of the summer came when we won with style the J16 coxed and coxless IVs at the National Championships regatta.

We would like to thank Mr. Slatford for all his efforts in making us into a successful crew and giving up all his free time to coach us.

RSS adds: The success rate since the squad came together at Christmas has been impressive: won sixteen races, one silver and two bronze medals; lost only four races. In three of these they lost to Radley, whom they subsequently beat; in the fourth, our third crew narrowly lost to St. Paul's first crew.

There have been many highlights for me throughout the season, most of which are mentioned above. In addition, both coxed and coxless IVs qualified for the Franco-British competition. Thanks go to TJCG for lending us three excellent J15s to replace the J16s who sadly could not make the trials.

It has been an incredible but somewhat tiring season. The parents, as always, have been amazingly supportive; their towpath cheering has often turned near defeat into victory. The boys have impressed me a great deal; they have been so enthusiastic and determined – at times I have found it difficult to keep up with them. A. Maclean deserves particular mention; he took on the role of captain with relish and I shall never forget watching him try to make the crew do press-ups before the Schools Head. D. Easterbrook should also be congratulated for his position as water monitor, a job no one else could have done.

The final note of thanks must go to Nick Dickson, and I know I write on behalf of the whole of the Boat Club. Nick has worked tirelessly; the victory at the Schools Head was solely his doing. Many people said that it would be difficult to follow Courtney Watson, but Nick has surpassed our expectations.

I have enjoyed this season immensely and I am very proud of all that the boys have achieved. I hope that they will remember this season for years to come.

## J16 'A' VIII

**Bow:** A. Addis/W. Gervers  
**2:** W. Burdall  
**3:** A. Maclean  
**4:** T. Guiver  
**5:** D. Easterbrook  
**6:** T. Stockford  
**7:** N. Hopkins  
**Stroke:** T. Kingham  
**Cox:** E. Macdonald/  
A. James

## J16 'B' IV

**Bow:** N. Evans  
**2:** D. Brown  
**3:** A. Addis  
**Stroke:** N. Betteridge  
**Cox:** A. James

**Coaches:** RSS  
Nick Dickson

a report by T. Stockford 5KDB  
and RSS

photograph, opposite,  
courtesy of Mr. D. Macdonald

# J15s rowing

**J15 'A' VIII**  
Bow: J. Calnan  
2: N. Herbert  
3: A. Lin  
4: H. Feather  
5: J. Anderson  
6: J. Tarrell  
7: F. Hemsley  
Stroke: P. Bickerton  
Cox: T. Wilson

**J15 'B' VIII**  
Bow: A. Pride  
2: A. Livingstone  
3: A. Eeles  
4: D. Puri  
5: D. Goodacre  
6: M. Holman  
7: O. Burdall  
Stroke: S. Haste  
Cox: A. Champion

**J15 'C' VIII**  
Bow: S. Winearls  
2: H. Jay  
3: A. Warren-Upham  
4: A. Ashby  
5: A. Rowe  
6: J. Stubbs  
7: D. Atkinson  
Stroke: T. Jackson  
Cox: B. Hayes

**J15 coxed IV**  
Bow: P. Brazier  
2: M. Smith  
3: B. Townsend  
Stroke: W. Allan  
Cox: L. Berryman

a report by J. Anderson 4SH

photograph, opposite,  
by G. Smith 3BJLS

This year saw several new faces enter the J15 rowing squad, and the first ergo test suggested great potential. The Lent Term saw the start of the head season (time trials) and the newly-constructed teams entered two such competitions. First came Henley Head, in which the 'A' crew showed a strong but leisurely performance to finish third, whilst a slight miscalculation in team composition led to the 'C' crew finishing one place ahead of the 'B' VIII.

Nearly a month later, a rearranged set of crews – who had improved dramatically in fitness and technique since Henley – visited the National Schools Head in London. The 'A' VIII took the long course, and the others took the short course. Everyone put up a good show, especially the 'B' crew, who came second in their event.

We went to train with the 'enemy' the following week, which turned out to be invaluable in learning Radley's strengths and weaknesses. Their coach showed us why they are such a good crew; during a race between the two 'A' crews, Abingdon down by a length, she shouted "Come on, Abingdon, they're not going to wait for you!" Terrified by her fearsome glare, we speeded up no end.

Now it was the end of the Lent Term, and we knew that to be the best, we would have to do some hard work. This work happened on an excellent trip to Hazewinkel in Belgium, where a multi-lane 2000 metre lake provided a great training course. We undertook up to five hours of rowing each day, supported by wonderful food and cross-training on the slides at the local pool. We came back much improved, and were finally beginning to gel as units.

With the cancellation of Wallingford Regatta, Bedford was our first regatta of the Summer Term. Our 'A' VIII and IV, who powered through the water to blow St. Edward's away, had a victorious day, making it a double win. The 'B' crew had a very close race in their semi-final, but lost after a good start.

Meanwhile, tragedy struck at the 2000 metre National Schools Regatta in Nottingham. Just after the coxed IV had gained the best time in their heat, it was announced that atrocious weather conditions

meant that the course had to be shortened to 1500 metres, and the format changed to time trials, rather than straight races. The 'B' crew boated, and came third to get a bronze medal. Shortly after this all races for J15 crews were called off. The 'A' crew never touched the water, and the coxed IV, who seemed to have a winning formula, never got to race in their final. A disappointing day all round.

With some high-performance rowing in semi-finals from both the 'A' and 'B' crews, Radley remained the only crew which we had not yet beaten. There was another win for the 'A' coxed IV at Bedford Star, but we were all becoming more and more determined to beat Radley and get some silver-ware. This was especially true after Marlow, where the umpire started us before we were ready, but we still came from behind to lose to Radley by only half a length.

Our chance came on the 'weekend of glory'. With Reading Town Regatta on the Saturday, and a rearranged Wallingford on Sunday, we knew that we had to 'go for it', and we did. The 'A' and 'B' VIIIs beat St. Paul's School BC crews, and the J15 'A' coxed IV comfortably beat both 'A' and 'B' crews from St. Paul's School BC. That day we had won three out of four events. Could we repeat it at Wallingford?

At Wallingford the 'B' VIII raced Radley, a match which both teams were looking forward to. We did not perform as well as on the previous day. The 'C' VIII and coxed IV had two very unfortunate losses, but the 'A' coxed IV cruised to an easy win over the Oratory. The best news of the day was that after finding a rhythm which had been missing earlier in the term, the 'A' VIII rowed a marvellous, powerful race to beat Radley by a canvas (not much) in a dramatic finish.

All the rowers should be extremely proud of their efforts and the determination which they have shown throughout the season. Both 'A' and 'B' VIIIs finished the season in the top two crews in their respective divisions, a tremendous achievement.

We would all like to thank our long-suffering coaches, Mr. Garnier and Mr. English, who have been very patient and have devoted huge efforts to make the season such a great success.



# J14s rowing

a report by DAG

Almost forty Third Year boys eagerly signed their names up for a taste of rowing in the J14 squad, no doubt inspired by the Boat Race and the exploits of Messrs. Redgrave and Pinsent. Despite poor river conditions, the squad journeyed long and far (Oxford University Rowing Tank on Iffley Road) in their pursuit of excellence during the inclement Lent Term. A day's racing at Bedford Head in quad sculls was the reward in March, when the worst of the biting wind and lashing rain had died down. Abingdon put in a number of good performances but sadly failed to win.

Spurred on by their first taste of competition, and bolstered by a new influx of boys, the squad faced the Summer Term keenly. Another trip to Bedford in May,

this time to compete in the Amateur Regatta, finished with the 'B' quad in the Plate final, only to scull bravely but in vain.

The final trip to Bedford, in June for the Star Regatta, saw the octuple and 'B' quad lose in the semi-finals and the 'A' quad narrowly beaten in the final after leading at half-way. Thames Valley was the final chance for a tankard, yet once again first place eluded the squad. Both quads and the octuple sculled powerfully but were ultimately not fast enough to win.

The J14 squad promises to have a successful year in 2001 as the J15s, after making the switch from sculling to sweep-oar rowing. My thanks go to TLW and SPD for their expert coaching.



# 1st XI cricket

Botham's Ashes; Jessop's Match; Tate's Test – cricket has a habit of remembering its heroes and, in the case of the unfortunate Fred Tate, its villains. England were one down with two to play in the Ashes summer of 1902, when Tate came to Old Trafford to play his first (and only) Test. Having dropped the catch that allowed Australia to add a further forty-eight second innings runs, he was last man out with his side four runs short of victory. Tate's Test it has been ever since.

Played 15  
Won 3  
Lost 8  
Drew 4  
Abandoned 2

Eton abandoned  
Oratory Lost by 5 wickets  
Reading Lost by 3 wickets  
Berkshire Gents Won by 3 wickets  
Bloxham Drew (rain)  
Pangbourne Drew (rain)  
St. Edward's Lost by 9 wickets  
AMB's XI Lost by 20 runs  
Stowe Lost by 6 wickets  
M.C.C. Lost by 115 runs  
S. Oxon. Amateurs Drew  
M.C.S. Drew  
OAs Won by 1 wicket  
Birkenhead Lost by 3 wickets  
King Edward's Lost by 4 wickets  
U.C.S. Won by 30 runs

Colours:  
S. Dexter (re-awarded),  
A. Hunter,  
E. Webber,  
T. Bracher

Half colours:  
I. Downie (re-awarded),  
O. Norman-Longstaff  
(re-awarded),  
M. Armitage,  
D. Desai,  
B. Garner,  
O. Thomas,  
P. Thomas,  
P. Tolley

Batting Cup: S. Dexter  
Bowling Cup: B. Garner

a report by JRWB

It is a game that I remember every April, not out of sympathy for poor Tate, but because of the chord it strikes with any coach pondering his side and its prospects for the term: "My God," England captain Archie MacLaren is reputed to have said as he scanned his team list, "My God, look what they've sent me." Look indeed, for the XI that MacLaren so disparaged was one of enormous stature; between them they scored 220,000 runs and took 12,000 wickets before their first class careers ended, and the side included a member of the Privy Council and, less obviously, the future Maharaja Jam Sahib of Nawanagar.

MacLaren's dismay was prompted not by what he had, but rather by what he did not. The selectors had dropped Gloucestershire's pride, Gilbert Jessop (who scoured a seventy-five minute century when recalled for the next Test), and also the legendary C.B. Fry – F.A. Cup winner (that same year), long jump world record holder, and one whose reputation as a man of honour was to bring him an invitation (which he declined) to be the King of Albania. His cricketing credentials were no less impeccable.

It was unrealistic, of course, to expect any member of the Abingdon 1st XI to be revered in the Balkans on the strength of a single summer, but who, I wondered, would bowl for us like Lockwood, spin like Rhodes, keep like Lilley or rattle the scoreboard like Tyldesley and Ranjitsinhji? Who might be our discarded Fry? And who, if anyone, would have to be our Tate?

In April the prospects were good, for the Upper Sixth bristled with men of proven ability. Four remained from the fabled tour to Barbados, J. Gardner was an agile wicket-keeper with a combative nature, S. Dexter and I. Downie were fine batsmen, T. Fleming and O. Norman-Longstaff brisk and penetrative bowlers, and A. Hunter a thoughtful off-spinner who had proved his worth as a wicket taker. It was a side of experience and skill, and yet its record was poor. Twenty-one players, and several fragile temperaments and fractured relationships later, the season became a troubled baptism for a number of promising Fifth and Lower Sixth Form pupils, and an undeserved disappointment for Dexter, the steadfast captain.

The first half of the season brought little cheer; outlasted by Oratory and Reading, and swept away by powerful sides from St. Edward's and Stowe, the XI had only a victory against the Berkshire Gentlemen to celebrate. Batting and bowling rarely functioned well in the same game, and the fielding, often good for twenty overs or thereabouts, suffered as concentration wandered. Important catches were dropped and partnerships went undeveloped, all symptoms of a malaise which allowed the opposition to score runs and take wickets too easily.

Highlights programmes, of course, have turned even Test matches into collections of boundaries and wickets, and that was how we played too often. The virtues of a good "leave", a smartly-taken single, a desire to grind out a score in the face of mean bowling took far too long to learn, and by the time the frivolous haymaking had gone, so too had the frivolous haymakers of April's first selection.

Thereafter there were signs of real determination, and Dexter led the way. Taking personal responsibility in difficult situations, he scored more runs with patience and technique, and took more wickets with his away swing and off cutters, than any other player. His reward was 283 runs at an average of 28, 22 wickets at 18 apiece, and the confidence of a young team who valued his qualities both on and off the field. E. Webber played and practised with care and application, virtues demonstrated most clearly in his excellent 69 at Stowe, and T. Bracher added technical merit to his hard hitting style, playing especially well against U.C.S. and Reading. Downie held some fine catches and showed signs of quality with the bat, and M. Armitage, D. Desai and R. Balch, three Fifth Formers of promise and ambition, grew into 1st XI batsmen as the season progressed.

The bowling had greater rigour from the start and Fleming, Norman-Longstaff, B. Garner and Hunter all bowled telling spells. Of these Garner and Hunter stood out, the first a Fifth Former entrusted with opening the bowling, and the second the man to whom the side invariably turned when the opposition were batting with least difficulty. Garner's line was





outstanding (17 wickets at 21, including a hat-trick), Hunter's patient and accurate off-spin probing (16 wickets at 36), and both beat the bat or suffered from dropped catches more than any.

Examinations took their toll on selection for games against South Oxfordshire Amateurs and the M.C.C., but a battling draw was secured in the first and in the second P. Thomas, deputizing for the examination-tied captain, led the side with a tactical maturity beyond his experience. On the day that England triumphed at Lords, the XI, galvanised by Dexter's bowling (5 for 21) and the batting of Desai and Bracher, had the better of a draw with M.C.S., and on the following day, set a topical but generous 188 by the OAs, made it with a single wicket and a few balls to spare.

The end of season festival at King Edward VII's, Lytham, showed how far some players had come since half term, the wicket-keeping of O. Thomas and batting of Armitage in particular. The first two matches were lost against strong teams from Birkenhead and the host school, but not before our batsmen and bowlers had rattled some players whose

reputations and county and national honours were far loftier than Abingdon could boast. The third game brought a comfortable and deserved win over a limited U.C.S. XI (precisely the kind of team that we had performed so poorly against in the first few weeks), and the long journey home was all the better for it.

A steadier and more committed team emerged therefore in the final weeks of the term and, encouraged by contributions from J. Watkins (Fourth Year) and A. Rehman (a Third Year), it is possible to see a brighter future.

More and better practice will be needed (preferably in more and better practice facilities) and the impact of public examinations in the Lower Sixth absorbed, but a positive note brings us back to the forlorn figure of Fred Tate. Asked about his experience, as he limped back to Hove to resume his county career, he replied "I've a little lad at home who'll make up for that", and so he did. Maurice Tate played thirty-nine times for England and became only the second player to notch up the Test 'double' of 1000 runs and 100 wickets; let us hope for a few more like Maurice.

photograph by  
E. Macdonald SPW



## 2nd XI cricket

Played 7  
Won 4  
Lost 2  
Drew 1

6/5 Oratory Won by 8 wickets  
13/5 Reading Drew  
17/5 M.C.S. Lost by 12 runs  
20/5 Bloxham Won by 8 wickets  
10/6 St. Edward's Lost by 4 wickets  
17/6 Stowe Won by 29 runs  
29/6 M.C.R. Won by 4 wickets

a report by NJH

photograph by  
E. Macdonald SPW

The 2nd XI finished the season with a handsome playing record. The team lost only twice, although unfortunately to local rivals, and achieved some impressive victories. The side began by defeating the Oratory easily, quickly scoring the necessary 105 runs. The match against Reading frustrated our players and bored spectators; an opposition batsman re-emerged after tea to complete his very patient century. Asked to score 199 in twenty overs and eight minutes, we initially stuttered before defending the inevitable draw.

The term's worst performance was probably at M.C.S., who coped better with light precipitation and a fresh breeze and displayed greater hunger for victory. Disappointingly, we fell short in a limited-overs run chase without losing all ten wickets. The way we then punished Bloxham for setting a small total gave us confidence, but the more effective preparation and approach to the game shown by St. Edward's ultimately defeated us.

Born of two tastes of an 'Oxford education' was a most satisfying victory over Stowe. Our score was 126 for seven declared, but a first wicket stand of 56 put them firmly in the driving seat. First-time captain A. Winearls' mature insistence on keeping an attacking field paid off spectacularly (97 all out).

N. Andrews' increasingly accurate off-stump line made him leading wicket taker; P. Peacock extracted bounce from most wickets; numerous opposition batsmen misread J. Wilson's 'skiddy' deliveries; P. Tolley's left-arm bowling restricted opponents, but rarely got the breaks it deserved; R. Garside bowled well when giving the ball more flight; A. Winearls improved over the season and, in a strong bowling line-up, A. Hutchinson was under-used.

Our batsmen made few notable scores. R. Balch, D. Desai and O. Thomas all contributed intelligent innings when not on 1st XI duty, but the flashing blades of the middle and lower orders brought the most runs. D. White stands out as one who smote with fervour, his trademark agricultural treatment of the last ball sealing a rain-soaked victory over the Masters' Common Room XI.

The team often fielded comically, but rarely displayed anything but a sensible and mature approach to the game. A sense of enjoyable and sporting teamwork prevailed and I was pleased to note that we very seldom felt the need to respond to the inane 'banter' peddled by certain opposition. This was, therefore, a successful season of which the boys can be very proud.



# Junior Colts B XI cricket

This series of fixtures, although relatively short, illustrated the depth of talent in the current Fourth Year. Their excellent team spirit and sense of fair play were also apparent. In none of the games was control ever wrested from us; numbers ten and eleven were never called upon to bat; the bowlers kept a strict control over length and line and were well backed up by the fielders.

Perhaps as a result of this comfort, the side responded alertly and cheerfully to their captain's instructions. This is an important facet of the game, and I was impressed by the maturity and collectiveness of their approach. Although an appreciation that it is

a team effort was always obvious, there were plenty of individual performances to enjoy: the solid defence and straight bats of Gurney and Wood; the stroke playing potential of McKenzie, Burnham and Burnard; the all-round ability of Brewerton and Ramdoo, and the control exerted by bowlers as disparate as Hardy, Wilcox, Sadler, Knox and Monsell. W. Martin kept wicket in his usual jovial style, and Cox and Rendell fielded well, making little of their disappointments with the bat.

All in all, looking after this group was a rewarding experience, and I look forward to observing their further development in future years.

Oratory 60 (Hardy 5 for 12)  
Abingdon 63 for 3

M.C.S. 159 (Monsell 5 for 35)  
Abingdon 162 for 6 (McKenzie 100)

Abingdon 149 for 7 (Wood 41)  
Bloxxham 44 (Wilcox 8 for 4)

St. Edward's 70 (Knox 3 for 9,  
Brewerton 3 for 10)  
Abingdon 71 for 5 (Gurney 28  
not out)

Abingdon 165 for 8 (Gurney 37,  
Wood 33)  
Stowe 115 (Sadler 5 for 11)

a report by JFH

# Juniors A & B XI cricket

The 'A' team clearly has a lot of ability. The bowling, in particular, has depth with several good 'B' team bowlers good enough to get into most 'A' teams. One problem throughout the summer was giving all the bowlers a chance to bowl. Highlights of the season included an excellent win over M.C.S. in the Lord's Taverners semi-final (the final to be played next season), and a very tight draw with R.G.S., High Wycombe, when anything was possible to the last ball.

Individual batting performances which stood out were D. Shackleton's 109 not out against Bloxxham and G. Stern's 92 not out in the semi-final. All the bowlers had their moments, with A. Rehman showing the most control and accuracy. Usually the team's ground fielding was good, but we needed to take more of the harder catches offered. A. Nash filled the vacant wicket-keeping slot with improving confidence and competence, making several smart stumpings and taking a fine catch against M.C.S.

Stern led the team by example with the bat. He usually handled the many bowling options shrewdly, and showed increasing good sense with the field pacing. The side was blessed with some very promising all rounders - J. Mugnaioni, R. Muirhead, H. Cole, Stern, Shackleton, and Rehman to name but a few.

This was an enjoyable season. Most of the team were prepared to listen and learn and, given this attitude, should be a force to reckon with in school cricket over the coming years.

The very successful 'B' XI season was largely due to the strength-in-depth of our bowling. None of the sides that we played against were able to match us in that department. Our batting, however, was weaker and there were occasions when we wobbled badly. Not so in our first encounter against Oratory, when a good steady opening stand of 36 by J. Stockings and A.

Davis paved the way for some hard hitting from G. Potter and A. McKenzie. Oratory were then skittled out for 34, S. Cataldo-Francis taking four wickets.

Against M.C.S., Abingdon produced a typical bowling display; six bowlers used and wickets shared around. Here, though, our batting problems were exposed for the first time, and we lost seven wickets before reaching the winning total. Bloxxham were also unable to cope with our bowling and again wickets were shared by eight bowlers. Their total was passed by the Abingdon opening pair in seven overs.

In our first encounter with Pangbourne, rain curtailed play after we had batted poorly and reached a total of 65. This prompted Pangbourne to rearrange the fixture, a move which they were to regret. Against St. Edward's, we elected to bat and struggled along. St. Edward's never took up the run chase, were completely bamboozled by the spin of T. Reeves, and only some forceful play near the end of their allocation of overs enabled them to reach a respectable total in a rather tense drawn game.

Our one and only defeat came at the hands of Stowe. A stubborn innings by J. Stockings enabled us to reach 107 runs in thirty overs. Tight bowling put Stowe under pressure and an enthralling game developed. The last over began with Stowe needing six to win, with two wickets left. A dot ball, a four, a wicket and then the winning runs left us bemoaning a number of misfields and fourteen wides bowled.

Our final match was the rearranged fixture against Pangbourne. Having won the toss we put them in and tight bowling restricted them to 75 runs. In fact, if catches had been held, their total would have been much less. Another steady opening partnership saw us to an easy nine-wicket victory. The perfect end to a very successful season.

Juniors 'A' XI

Played 9  
Won 4  
Drew 3  
Lost 2

a report by RPF

Juniors 'B' XI

6/5 Oratory (A) Won  
Abingdon 205 for 8  
(Potter 46, McKenzie 45)  
Oratory 34  
(Cataldo-Francis 4 for 14)

17/5 M.C.S. (H) Won  
M.C.S. 68  
Abingdon 70 for 7

20/5 Bloxxham (H) Won  
Bloxxham 20  
Abingdon 21 for 0

10/6 St. Edward's (H) Drew  
Abingdon 129 for 9  
St. Edward's 93 for 5

17/6 Stowe (A) Lost  
Abingdon 107 for 9  
(Stockings 34)  
Stowe 109 for 9  
(Brooke 3 for 15)

28/6 Pangbourne (A) Won  
Pangbourne 75  
Abingdon 76 for 1

# Valete

**"The Abingdonian"  
wishes every success  
to the Upper Sixth as  
they leave the School**

David Alexander  
Mike Ambler  
Andrew Apps  
Raphael Arwas  
Robert Asher  
Ben Ashworth  
Nick Aston  
Stephen Atkinson  
Sam Balch  
Philip Barry  
Will Bartlett  
Paul Batchelor  
Alex Beck  
Dan Benoliel  
Tim Betteridge  
Andrew Bitmead  
Nick Black  
William Bond  
Dan Boswood  
Tom Bracher  
Nye Brewer  
Matthew Brewer  
Giles Brooke-Hollidge  
Stephen Brooks  
Matthew Brown  
Tom Brown  
Chris Browne  
Tim Butler  
Stephen Campbell  
Richard Chamberlain  
Toby Coe  
Dan Cole  
Leo Conway  
Robert Cork  
David Cox  
Andrew Coxall  
Sam Curran  
Julian Dando  
Reuben Davy  
Stephen Dexter  
Hamish Duff  
Will Ferguson  
Tom Fleming

Jon Gardner  
Paul Gardner  
David Gee  
Peter Given  
Ben Grady  
Peter Grayson  
Nick Hambridge  
Ian Hardingham  
Aliza Hassan  
Nick Hayes  
Nick Hawker  
Matthew Hawksworth  
Ben Hewett  
Julian Hitchin  
Richard Holman  
John Haworth  
Tom Humi  
Adam Hunter  
Mark Iles  
Alex Ings  
Tristan Jonckheer  
Jamie Kingsley  
Tom Lee  
Greg LeTocq  
Quentin Lett  
Anthony Leung  
Oliver Lever  
Robert Lewis-Crosby  
Jonny Ma  
Ian Macdonald  
Hugh Mackenzie  
Jack Mansfield  
Tom Marsh  
Spencer Martin  
Jamie Mascaro  
Ed Mason  
Peter Mather  
James Mearns  
Jon Mendelsohn-Malik  
Dan Mitchell  
Nick Moffatt  
Alastair Morris  
Alex Morton

Luther Moss  
Tom Murray  
Steven Nickson  
Oliver Norman-Longstaff  
Matthew Packford  
Nick Page  
Mark Pajak  
Matthew Parker  
Paul Pattison  
John Persaud  
Mark Priest  
Matthew Rees-Jones  
Chris Rose  
Robert Rothkopf  
Arthur Scheuer  
Jamie Selkirk  
Mark Shields  
Philip Slater  
William Smith  
Peter Sommerville  
Michael Spencer Chapman  
Olly Spriggs  
Chris Stos-Gale  
Robert Tattersall  
Boon Teh  
Matthew Terry  
Paul Tolley  
Antony Trill  
Oli Varney  
Ben Warner  
Nick Watney  
Tristan Webb  
Edward Webber  
Ben Wells  
Luke Whibley  
Ben Williams  
Joe Wilson  
Alastair Wilson  
Andrew Wilson  
Jonathan Wood  
Simon Woodcock  
Mike Yeung  
Keith Yuen