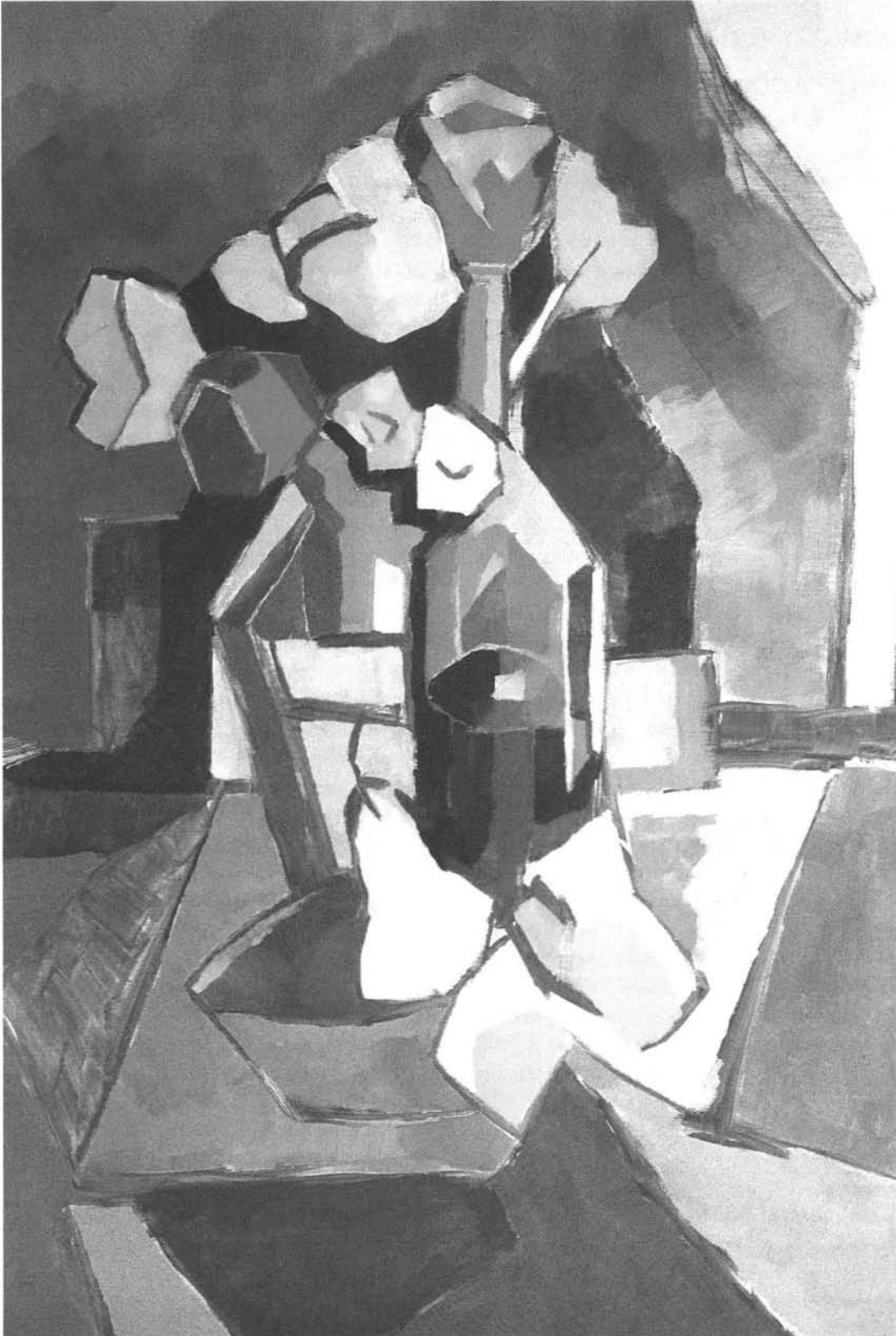


# the Abingdonian

## august 2001



**Volume XXIII No. 2  
(Issue 305)**

This year's dramatic change in appearance will please some and disappoint others; reaction to the previous look varied from calling the magazine "the Rolls Royce of school magazines" to describing it as being "printed on toilet paper". The French manufacturers have ceased production of the "toilet paper"; hence the radically different feel and, to the Bursar's patent delight, a significant reduction in printing costs. It is hoped that not too many will consider the enforced change to be a retrograde one.

As always, thanks go to my colleagues, who have produced articles with the minimum of fuss and in a year notable for its hectic pace. Please read this year's issue not merely as a testament to the breadth and depth of the pupils' talents, but also as a tribute to the dedication of the staff who make it all possible.

My particular thanks go to AMS for her accurate and painstaking proof-reading.

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

Prizes are recorded within House reports, rather than as a separate list.

**SH** (Editor)  
s.hullis@abingdon.org.uk

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cover: "Portrait" (card construction) by H. Feather 5SPO  
left: "Still Life" (oil on board) by B. Pritchett VINAFF

# Farewell Abingdon

How does one finish a marathon? (Because a spell of twenty-six years and a term in one job resembles a marathon run, in some ways.) Exhausted, relieved, elated? All of these in a race really run, but none of them, so far as I am concerned, as I finish at Abingdon. Everything seems to have gone so quickly, there is still so much ground to be covered, the adrenalin is still pumping, and the endorphins are still doing their kindly work.

**as the Headmaster enters the home straight, his final term at Abingdon School, he reflects on his feelings**

**opposite:  
"pop portrait"  
by B. Townsend 5RSB**

On the one occasion, however, when I did subject myself to the ridiculous and exhilarating ordeal of a real marathon, there was another after-effect – one which has recurred, in a manner of speaking, I had had to swerve to avoid the body of a man of my own age, who had fallen down and died on the course just yards ahead of me as I trotted through Docklands; the imperative need to keep moving pushed the shock into the back of my mind for fifteen miles – but his ghost was at my shoulder as I crossed the line, and grief followed the realization. So it is after these many laps at Abingdon: I think that it may not be the recollection of targets achieved, or records broken, or even buildings created, which I shall carry away, so much as the memory of problems unsolved and sadnesses unhealed.

But is that all? An effort of endurance, stained and scored by distresses? Like most of those, I suspect, who engage in the peculiarly masochistic activity of marathon-running, I was conscious of trying to prove something to myself; but perhaps again like most of the others, I doubt if I would have had the nerve to put myself to such a test if there had not been some larger, better reason prompting the action. I was running to raise sponsorship for the building of Mercers' Court, and the generosity of those who responded went beyond mere money. So it has been over the years at Abingdon.

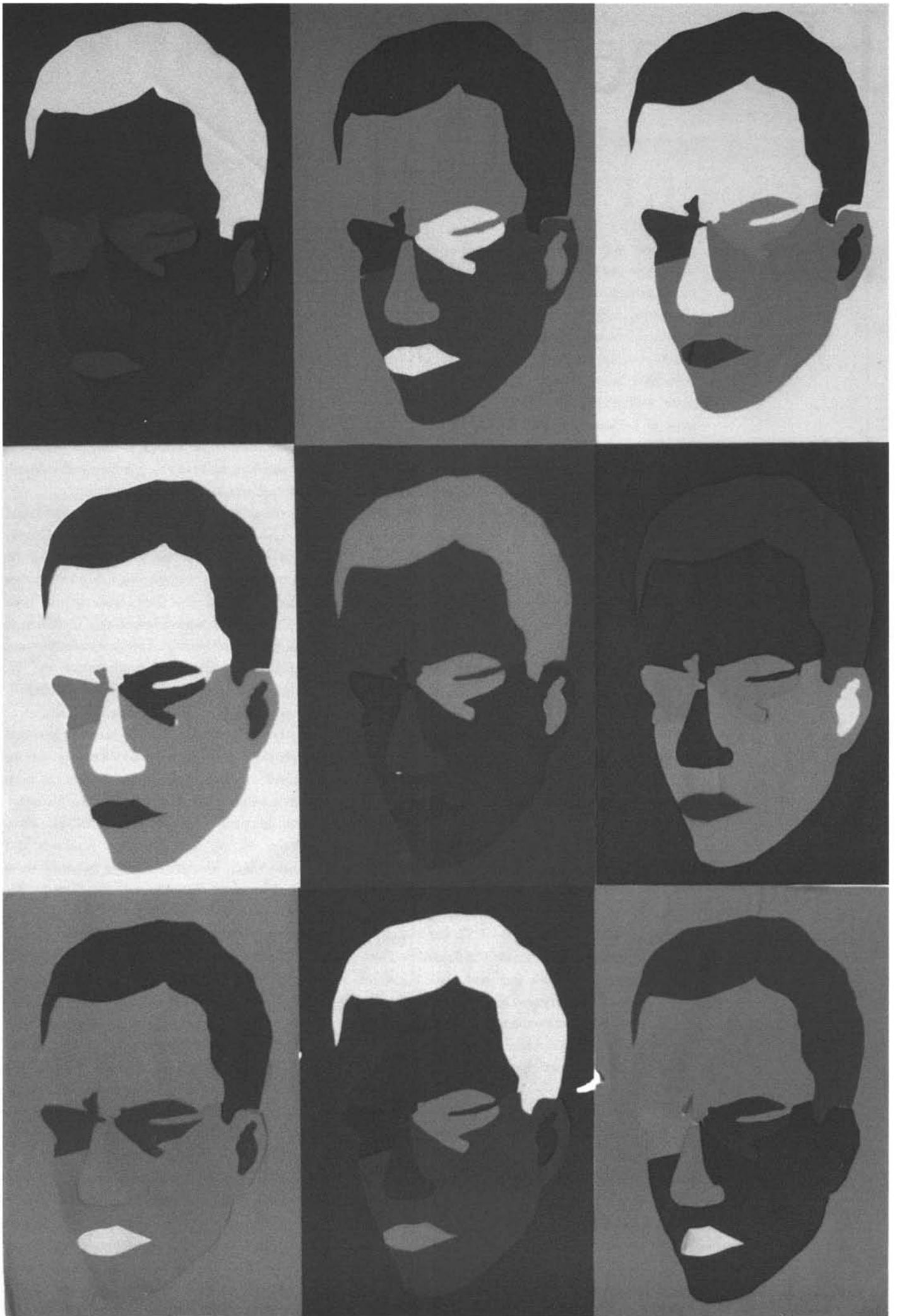
I blundered into school-mastering by accident, disappointed of what I thought then were better things. The further step into headmastering was taken more purposefully, but still more reluctantly, under pressure of economic necessity – children came expensive even in the early Nineteen-Seventies. Once there, though, the value of the activity made itself felt through the untutored practice, and a conviction grew in me that educating the young, helping them to find paths of profit and fulfilment, is one of the noblest – if least rewarding – of professions.

My generation probably suffered in its expectations from the fact that its fathers had been mauled by the consequences of two great wars; we

were brought up to think that our destinies might not be in our own hands: indeed, many of us were taught that we should lie where fate threw us. It is all so different now, for the opportunity-takers who believe that life owes them happiness. Perhaps I should have been alert to the premonitions offered by childhood visits to my uncle, who was an early Harwell scientist, but my first teaching activities had been set in environments very different from that of Abingdon, and I suppose I thought that schools such as Winchester would be my natural habitat. However, chance ensured that where I fell I stayed, and perhaps chance knew best.

Over the years, I have come to value many of the qualities that characterize Abingdon School: its essential modesty and restraint, its deep-rooted commitment to the achievement of quality, its aversion to pretentiousness, and, most of all, its quiet, under-stated, undemonstrative warmth. Equally, I never cease to be exasperated by what might be called its complementary failings: its lack of ambition, its propensity for tunnel vision, its tendency to parsimony, and its distrust of originality. You cannot have it all ways, though, and Abingdon is, in the end, essentially and endearingly honest, locally-rooted and English; these are qualities which matter.

I am a pragmatist by inclination, training and experience, and I have tried to work with Abingdon School as I found her, and to move in the direction which has seemed right for the times. But there must always be principles to animate one's pragmatism; mine have been, first and foremost, a concern for academic values, a commitment to uphold the freedom of the individual as expressed in the choice of independent education, and a desire to promote the cultural values of our Christian past. All three of these have seemed to me to be deeply embodied in Abingdon's traditions as well as in my own personal philosophy, and, as I stagger over the finishing line, D.V., on December 14th, it will be my best wish for Abingdon's future that she should continue to thrive on that triple foundation.





# House reports

## Crescent

a report by  
T. Gallard 6JFB

This year will go down in the House's collective memory as one of many facets: a year of arrivals; a year of sportsmen; a year of examinations; a year of musicians; sadly, but inevitably, a year of departures. Above all, however, it has been a year of success.

As ever, the profiles and achievements of Crescent boys have been high throughout the School. Once again, we have had an excellent Head of School in the guise of J. Herbert, backed up by Head of House J. Hayden and School Prefect S. Perkins. The appointment for next year of our fourth successive Head of School in the shape of N. Betteridge (winner of a Headmaster's Prize), and new Head of House T. Gallard, consolidates Crescent's influential position in School life.

The vast contribution of the departing Upper Sixth was mirrored in our success at prize-giving, with S. Perkins (Rugby 1st XV Trophy), J. Hayden (Clifford and Jane Ellis Prize for Character), T. Ting (Sheldon Beach Prize for Pianoforte), and of course J. Herbert (Larkhill Trophy, TASS Quatercentenary Prize, and the Older Cup and Prize for Initiative) all receiving prizes which recognized their achievements. N. Herbert won a prize for his mock GCSE results, and W. Sheppard a Middle School academic prize. Five out of the thirteen special prizes were won by Crescent boys.

Academically, we wish the Upper Sixth every success in getting the grades which they need. There are high hopes also for the present Lower Sixth who, having won the Lower Sixth Challenge and far exceeded the School average at GCSE, are looking to continue their record with their AS results. These impressive results and the increased academic strain under which all years are now finding themselves seem to have had little effect on the Other Half, with yellow ties being in evidence from the sports-field to the debating chamber, from the Amey Hall to the skies above Abingdon.

J. Hayden and S. Perkins were key members of a successful 1st XV, and D. Easterbrook was a 2nd XV regular, whilst also rowing for the 2nd VIII. At a marginally lower level, Crescent made up almost half of the 4th XV on many occasions. P. Peacock played 1st XI hockey, and C. Fudge captained an unbeaten 2nd XI under the coaching of Mr Griffiths. Further down, many members of the House represented the School in a variety of sports at all levels. In athletics, A. Cruickshank received a standing ovation for his gutsy

performance in the 1500 metres. A. Gould represented his year's 'A' teams in three major sports, and A. Martin's contribution to School sport will be missed, as indeed will he.

There continues to be a strong Crescent influence in the Debating Society: C. Fudge was an excellent secretary, sharing the Mitchell and Seward Cup, and his organization of the public speaking competition is just one example of his many contributions. There are also signs of new talent emerging, with T. Gallard as the new secretary, and both C. Manners and J. Marsh on the committee for the coming year.

The thespian spirit is also evident in the House, with D. Easterbrook and J. Marsh starring in a highly successful production of Joe Orton's *Loot*, and N. Herbert and A. Rowe both helping behind the scenes in the Amey Hall Technical Crew. Music has also been strong with many appearing in concerts, including T. Ting's and M. Watkinson's impressive contributions; M. Futagami led the Second Orchestra and N. Betteridge played piccolo for the First Orchestra. T. Allen was also involved in many musical events.

The House staff have, as ever, been diligent and helpful, and it is thus with accentuated sadness that we bid farewell to those leaving. Mr Griffiths has been called to a better place, and we will miss his razor-sharp wit, his peculiar turn of phrase, and his Lotus. But above all, we will miss the kindness and helpfulness which have characterized his sadly short time at Abingdon. We also say goodbye to Mr Hibberd, who has made an invaluable contribution to House life in the short time he has been here. Mr and Mrs Phelps are also leaving, making the short trip across the field to take over Waste Court. We wish them all the very best for the future.

The building works in Cobban culminated with the construction of the new games room, kitchen and Matron's day-room, providing a much needed social hub to the House. All three of the houses are now in the best condition in memory, and thanks must go to Mr Davies, the Estates Bursar and the maintenance staff for making this happen. The House has been brought closer socially by numerous trips and events, including paintballing, which gave a welcome chance for some old scores to be settled between boys and staff (with the boys, more often than not, being on the receiving end). The House social was extremely successful, with over one hundred pupils and parents watching a parents against pupils cricket match.



# Drummond-Hay's

a report by  
A. Addis 6CMM

The year began with Mr Spencer taking over as housemaster, since Mr Drummond-Hay was taking a sabbatical for a term. The smooth running of the House continued surprisingly well under Mr Spencer until the return of our housemaster, revitalized by his break, brought renewed drive to the House.

Contrary to the stereotypical view of Drummond-Hay's as a house obsessed with sport, many boys in the House have shown wider talents. The House won the poetry reading competition, with J. Bishop as the individual winner. The Third and Fourth Year reached the semi-finals of the public speaking. Mrs Manship's Lower Sixth produced a very successful Chapel service on the Holocaust. The House also raised £614 from the sponsored walk for Multiple Sclerosis. Many members of the House have been active in community service: M. Blake, M. Salmon and M. Stalker, along with others, held a tea-party for eighty of the elderly.

The House showed excellence in the academic field as well. Sixth Form prizes were awarded to T. Ainsworth for English, A. Addis for Ancient History, M. Stalker for Geography and J. Holdsworth for Technology. J. Evers won the Wheeler Cup for Outstanding Academic Effort. For their service to the School many others won prizes: P. Thomas, W. Baker and J. Wilcox-Jones won a Headmaster's prize, D. Wilson the David Barrett Cup for Service, O. Thomas a Duxbury Tie, and E. Gurney the Richard Turner Memorial Prize. Travel awards went to T. Dillon, R. Ellwood and P. Thomas. This record of achievement shows the breadth of talent within the House.

Internal House prizes recognise achievement within the House for both academic and service effort. P. Thomas won the Upper Sixth prize, and A. Addis and T. Ainsworth Lower Sixth academic prizes. R. Turnbull, for contributing to every aspect of School life, won a Lower Sixth prize. J. Chater and M. Smith won the Fifth Year prizes and J. Donnelly, J. Barclay and W. Poole won the Fourth Year prizes. In the Third Year four boys won prizes: T. Bainbridge, R. Coster, C. Watson and R. Soames. Ivan Collin won the House academic prize for his mock GCSE results, and J. Prinold and E. Cottrell were awarded academic prizes.

T. Dillon, the House's most formidable musician, won the Music Society Prize for Strings. He reached the final of the National Youth Chamber competition. A Grade VIII distinction violinist, he wishes to pursue a musical career and has won a place at the Guildhall School of Music.

The successful 1st XV had several players from Drummond-Hay's, namely W. Baker (captain), I. Downie (fly-half and winner of the Slingsby Cup for Outstanding Sporting Achievement), and G. Unsworth (full back). In addition, J. Wilcox-Jones, D. Smith, P. Thomas, O. Thomas and D. Wilson received full colours, and G. Stalcup (next year's captain of rugby) received half colours. I. Downie was prolific in 1st XI hockey, scoring many goals (including six in one match). The 2nd XI, in which R. Wheeler and E. Keeling played pivotal rôles, was unbeaten. The 1st and 2nd VIIIs included A. Maclean (next year's head of School), A. Addis and J. Wilcox-Jones. G. Unsworth received full colours for tennis. Many members of the House also represented the County: in rugby, I. Downie, D. Smith, G. Unsworth, J. Wilcox Jones, J. Watkins, J. Prinold, J. Donnelly, and R. Coster. M. Cullen competed in the County cross country team. H. Cole and J. Garrett represented the School in their age groups in County hockey. J. Watkins and G. Stern played County cricket.

A new inter-house competition was created this year, the tug-of-war. The House won both junior and senior events with the special help of J. Barclay as anchor-man in the juniors. We were unable to repeat the clean sweep of victories in last year's athletics with the Fifth Year failing to win, coming in as runners-up. However, we retained the athletics cup in style. All the other year groups won, with great individual performances from J. Donnelly and J. Wilcox-Jones, who were both *victor ludorum* for their age groups. The junior team won the inter-house hockey, showing the younger years' House spirit. The Fourth Year won the swimming gala, and the House cricket team retained the cricket cup, beating Wilmore's in the final by thirty-one runs. Finally, R. Turnbull won the School's Buckley Cup for tennis.

All this sporting achievement was only made possible through the passionate leadership of Mr Drummond-Hay and his team of house prefects. P. Thomas and W. Baker were excellent heads of House, leading by example. Thanks go to I. Downie, G. Unsworth, D. Wilson as both School and House prefects and R. Ellwood and K. Sawetz as House prefects who ensured that the House stayed the "best". With this excellent example to follow, the new prefects have a tough job. They are G. Stalcup, E. Keeling, M. Salmon, A. Addis and A. Maclean. We all look forward to next year in which we hope to achieve even more.



# Fishpool's

Different houses seem to specialize in different things. Whilst the newer houses, Garnier's and Townsend's, do not yet seem to have chosen which aspect of School life in which to specialize, other houses are more obvious, for example Drummond-Hay's, who once again have been proving their skill in sport at every available opportunity. Fishpool's, however, remains a universally successful house, trying its hand at all manner of activities whilst maintaining its friendly atmosphere.

In terms of academic success we maintain our usual high standards. A. Huzzey and S. Withnall carried off Middle School Academic prizes, and W. Allan gained a prize for producing excellent results in his mock GCSEs. P. Taylor was awarded the St. Catherine's Prize for Intellectual Initiative as well as sharing the Mitchell and Seward Cup for Debating. J. Rowley won both the Liversidge History of Art Prize and a Tappins Travel Award, and W. Richards was fortunate enough to carry off a TASS Travel Bursary.

The Lower Sixth seem on the whole to have coped, admittedly grudgingly, with the new AS level system. Burdened with three sets of important examinations in as many years, life for the Lower Sixth is not as much fun as it once was, but the Fishpool's candidates have refused to allow these minor inconveniences to interfere with their work and Other Half activities. C. Brookes, for example, pulled off an admirable triple, winning the Ford and West Biology Prize as well as prizes for French and Russian.

The Third Year seem proud of their CLAIT certificates, which they gained for ICT work. In addition to this, M. O'Byrne received a prize for the most commendations, as well as getting to the second round of the Buckley Cup for tennis. R. Kilsby proudly states that he won some sweets for listing as many acids as he could for a Chemistry prep., and H. Cook believes it to be an academic achievement that he has survived a year of being taught by Dr Gunn and Mr Strawson.

We have also been well represented by sportsmen. We have produced three 1st XV rugby players – P. Garrick, R. Balch and L. McTier – and one 1st VIII rower, T. Stockford. J. Mather won the Wintle Cup for his contributions to School sport. H. Monsell in the Fifth Year looks promising for the rugby team next year. G. Clarkson played rugby as captain of his year's 'A' team, and C. More spent the Third Year engaging in rugby, hockey, tennis, cricket, badminton (for which he is a County champion), and athletics. T. Astley swam for the County (joining N. Evans in Fishpool's already magnificent swimming team), and shot for Great Britain.

In the inter-house athletics, special mention goes to G. Bailey, S. Evans and W. Bright, though in the end we did not do as well as we would have liked; the number of people we had running for us in the final relay was very impressive (only pupils who had not taken part in any other aspect of the competition were involved in this event...).

Other Half activities have been well attended. S. Evans has been appointed one of the three chairmen of the Debating Society, and O. Diamond has been a key figure in Chapel Choir, performing solo pieces in concerts and services. Drama has been astoundingly well represented. S. Evans successfully produced and starred in Tom Stoppard's *Arcadia*, and created his own magic show with T. Sykes to a full house. P. Taylor appeared as a stand-up comedian in the magic show, and his success in that position has led him to try and take his one-man show to Edinburgh this summer. He will be accompanied by J. Margree (winner of the North Drama Prize), who produced Stoppard's *The Real Inspector Hound* in order to raise money to take his own play, *Working Title*, to Edinburgh; we wish them both all the best. T. Dyson collected the David Taylor Drama Prize this year, the second time it has been won by a Fishpool's boy in as many years, and S. Evans and M-L. Jones jointly carried away the Layng Reading Prize.

As this year ends we bid farewell to Mr Sandow, with his unique brand of tutoring, and Mr Revill. We wish Mr Sandow luck whatever he does, and wait eagerly for Mr Revill's return after his sabbatical.

Next year P. Garrick and S. Evans will return brainwashed and fully trained to carry out the Headmaster's bidding as School prefects and joint heads of House.

Finally, we wish the Upper Sixth all the best in their futures. Whether they will look back at Fishpool's with warmth, care, love and a special place in their hearts is anybody's guess. But whatever they are doing – teaching Americans how to speak English, studying at university, or lounging around, drinking and making a nuisance of themselves – we sincerely hope that they will have enormous fun doing it.

**a report by  
S. Evans 6APS**

**opposite:  
"still life" (oil on board)  
by B. Pritchett VINAFF**



# Garnier's

a report by TJCG

After the success of last year's cabaret at the social evening, and with most of the talent still with us, I suggested that a repeat would be in order. I was told by L. Bridges (winner of this year's David Taylor Drama Prize) that he and B. Pritchett were working on the script for a Christmas pantomime. Directed by L. Bridges and produced by S. Pickard, the fact that it happened at all is testimony to their drive and the enthusiasm of the cast. After only two weeks of rehearsal, helped generously by the Amey Hall technical crew, *Jesus and the Beanstalk* ran for two nights in the CMR to full houses. The cast of nineteen included A. Nash as Buttons (or the Angel Gabriel), S. Probert as a convincing Mary and, unforgettably, J. Rowe as Cinderella. Mince pies, mulled wine and musical interludes added to the festive feel.

The boys have not limited themselves to drama in the House. In addition to numerous A level and GCSE assessments, L. Bridges, J. Sasanow, I. Sanderson, A. Macdonald, and A. Nash starred in Moliere's *The Hypochondriac*; J. Sasanow also starred in Joe Orton's *Loot*, and G. Potter, A. Nash and A. Macdonald directed and produced *The Fantastic Mr Fox*, in which T. Vaughan-Fowler, J. Mugnaioni, H. Callaghan and B. Harris starred.

Turning to sport, in the Road Relay we entered ten teams but were unable to defend our title of fastest team. Nevertheless, a team from 6JEF came fourth, which bodes well for next year. In the hockey competition the seniors met the Boarders in the second round, and they were too strong for us. The juniors were very unlucky not to beat Wilmore's, having fought back from 3-1 down, the result of dogged defence by J. Dingwall, some threatening runs by S. Moulds and good leadership by G. Potter. The match had to be decided on a penalty shoot-out, and we lost. As if to prove a point, we won the plate final 5-0. In athletics, we were not affected by clashes as in previous years, and everyone competed cheerfully to produce our best result of third, behind the Drummond-Hay's sports academy and the Boarders. It was in the Fifth Year that we had our greatest successes: M. Johnson won the high jump as usual (no record this year), P. Tubman the triple jump and, most pleasing of all, the 4 x 100 metre relay team finished well clear of any other house. In the swimming galas, the Fourth Year came second, and the Third Year came fifth. The less said about the cricket the better, except to say that we won the plate final, again.

Many boys represented School teams, but of particular note were G. Potter and J. Dingwall, who both played hockey at County level; J. Hedges who won his full colours for hockey; and B. Chadwick, who received full colours for badminton and tennis. G. Sutcliffe also received his half colours for tennis.

Most of our musicians seem to be brass players or saxophonists, and we were well represented in the Big Band by J. Rowe, M. Gardner, A. Macdonald, S. Jackson, G. Potter and N. Rolfe, some of whom were joined in the First Wind Band by S. Probert and H. Richards. The latter deserves special mention for achieving a diploma in performance for the French Horn, and performing a concerto later in the year with the First Orchestra. He was one of the joint winners of the Music Society's Prize for Brass this year.

In the Public Speaking Competition, both the Third Year team and the Sixth Form team reached the finals. The latter came up against the "Dream Team" of Fishpool's and lost, in spite of an heroic performance by R. Mitchell, who stepped into the breach at the last moment when one of the other team members was ill. The Third Year team of P. Stern, E. Rowett and J. Dingwall won, mainly due to Rowett's powerful oration on the Power of the Imagination, but also as a result of some shrewd reconnaissance on the part of J. Dingwall, who gave the vote of thanks.

J. Buchan, J. Fisher and A. Peychers made a major contribution to community service, organizing tea parties and entertainment for the residents of Fountain Court, but they were not alone; many members of the house gave their time to this area.

During the Lent Term we were asked to raise some money to buy some much-needed sports equipment for No.4 School, Ialoveni, in the Republic of Moldova. The Road Relay was targeted as the best opportunity and several boys raised large sums. Special mention ought to be made of S. Moulds and J. Dingwall who each ran two legs of the course wearing fifteen layers of clothing. Hot they were, but they also raised over £100 between them. The total sum sent to the school was £400, and we were immediately sent some photographs of happy children with their new equipment, showing that it had made a real difference.

There has to be something to balance all this extra-curricular activity, and that was provided in the classroom. Academically, many boys have made excellent progress. In particular, M. Kay was awarded the Bevan Prize for Religious Studies, B. Pritchett the Palmer-Tame Prize for Fine Art and H. Richards shared the Prize for Applied Science. Year prizes were awarded to M. Pile, D. Shackleton, S. Jackson and B. Harris. Conditional offers at Oxbridge were made to M. Bungey, Y. Dong, M. Kay and B. Pritchett.

We say goodbye to eighteen boys, including M. Pile and G. Sutcliffe from the Fifth Year, and wish them success in their next steps. My thanks go to all of them for their contribution, but especially to L. Bridges and S. Pickard, who have been exceptional heads of the House. Their successor in this rôle will be S. Probert.



## Lower School

Once again, Lower School has been a hive of activity, with plenty going on throughout the year, particularly of a sporting nature. The rugby season was a very enjoyable one, with more boys than ever before representing the School (eighty-six in total), allowing us to field as many as five teams. The 'A' XV had a fairly successful season, showing a tremendous spirit and willingness to play as a team, whilst the First Year showed a lot of promise. The inter-form competition was a closely contested affair on a very wet December afternoon, and was won by 2W, who narrowly beat 2J (19-10) and drew with 2D (5-5).

Cross country races were also run in miserable conditions, but that did not detract from two excellent races. K. Kear held off J. Canlan-Shaw to win the

Second Year race by the narrowest of margins, whilst an impressive run by M. Watkins saw off the spirited challenge of J. Cooper to win the First Year crown. The overall competitions were comfortably won by 2W and 1B.

Next came the hockey season, which was a huge success. The 'A' team battled hard to achieve an unbeaten season despite a lack of fire-power up front, whilst the 'B' team deserve special praise for their unbeaten record. The inter-form competition was won by 2D who overcame freezing cold and hail-storms to defeat both 2W and 2J.

March saw the charity football competition, and there seems to be a theme developing here because this was also a wet and very muddy afternoon. Despite the

**a report by AMB**

**above:  
P. Vickers 1A  
at Little Canada;  
photograph by AMB**

weather, an enjoyable competition was held, raising over £150. The highest-placed First Year team were the "Little Ponies", whilst the "Sopranos" beat the "Hippies" in the final on penalties, although they did lose an exhibition match against the staff team thanks to a spectacular thirty-yard volley from RSS.

The annual Road Relay competition saw a large contingent of Lower School entrants, including AMB and RSS. B. Shelton ran the fastest leg whilst J. Cooper avenged his earlier defeat to record the fastest time amongst the First Year. The team winners were 2W and 1X. The Lent Term also saw an excellent public speaking competition. The standard was extremely high and produced a compelling final where it has to be said that opinions on the floor were very divided between the two finalists. The verdict went in favour of 2W (A. Francis, E. Wilson and J. Swarbrick) by the odd point over a valiant 1B team (W. Stockdale, M. Hutchinson and T. Dean).

The Easter holidays were also a busy time for the Lower School. Thirty-seven First Year boys and five members of staff travelled to Little Canada on the Isle of Wight for a most enjoyable (and very muddy...) adventure week, but unfortunately the usual Second Year trip to Rydal Hall had to be cancelled owing to the foot and mouth outbreak.

The Summer Term began with the scholarship examinations for a small number of the Second Year pupils, and they did themselves and the Lower School proud by gaining nine of the fifteen awards. This was a tremendous achievement, and special congratulations go to M. Halford, A. Francis, J. Thomas, J. Cook, T. Davie, D. Emerson, C. Halls, C. Lillycrop and S. McKenney.

Then came a new inter-form activity devised and organized by AJJ: a tug-of-war competition, which was fittingly won by 2J, who defeated a much bigger and heavier 2D team in the final, with 1X proving the strongest First Year team. Next came the end of year examinations. It was no surprise to see the newly appointed scholars leading the way in the Second Year, whilst the First Year prizes went to J. Mann (1A), S. Robertson (1B) and M. Griffiths (1X). Also at our end of term "prize-giving" assembly, awards went to A. Tierney, who won the Junior Layng Reading Prize, whilst the Woodgett Cup for all-round contribution went, from a very strong field, to N. Miles.

The examinations were followed by a very successful Field Day, where for once the weather was very kind to us. Two coach-loads enjoyed trips to *Explore* at Bristol and the newly opened *Action Stations* in Portsmouth, whilst three smaller minibus groups ventured canoeing down the River Wye, caving in the Mendips and visiting Madame Tussaud's in London.

The Summer Term always sees a lot of sporting activity, and this year was no exception with vast numbers of boys taking to the fields and swimming pool to let off steam. The cricketers performed reasonably well, with the Second Year team narrowly

losing out in the semi-final of the Oxfordshire cup, whilst disappointingly the First Year team never got round to playing their cup games owing to the weather and some disorganized opponents. There were two very notable achievements during the season which deserve special mention, though. First, G. Salmon (1B) took a hat-trick in the game against Josca's; secondly, J. Canlan-Shaw (2W) scored three fifties during the season and finished with a batting average of fifty, which is a testimony to his concentration and determination as well as his undoubted ability.

We also entered teams in a local tennis league for the first time, with reasonable success, both at First and Second Year level, as well as offering our usual coaching sessions on a Friday evening, which were well attended. However, pride of place in this sport must go to M. Watkins (1B), who is an exceptionally talented tennis player: this was reiterated by his outstanding achievement of reaching the final of the Buckley Cup (a tournament open to players throughout the whole School) where he eventually lost to Sixth-former R. Turnbull by two sets to one.

The end of term brought with it a number of inter-form competitions. The Second Year cricket was convincingly won by 2W, but the swimming galas and athletics competitions were much closer affairs. Both swimming galas went down to the very last race, with 2W and 1B winning by the closest of margins from 2D and 1X. However, 2D and 1X inflicted their revenge at sports day, winning their respective athletics competitions by a few points in each case.

Also packed into the final few days were the Lower School gala concert (which saw many soloists perform, as well as the whole Lower School choir); the shadowing of the Carnegie book prize, organized by GJC; and a Lower School production of *The Code of the Woosters*, adapted by JHT, performed in the splendid setting of Claydon House in Buckinghamshire, and starring T. Dawson, E. Wilson and R. Whitworth amongst others.

This has been a very successful year, and a lot of praise and thanks must go to the tutors – AJM, GGB, IAM, MGHD, AJJ and SW – for all their support and effort throughout the year. It is also the end of an era in some ways, with the retirement of MGHD after twenty-three years with the Lower School. I am sure that all those connected with the Lower School during that time will join with me in thanking him for his commitment and contribution for all those years and in wishing him an enjoyable retirement. There is also the departure, if only temporarily, of RSS, who is taking part in an exchange visit to Australia for a year; we wish him well and look forward to hearing all his stories when he returns in September 2002.

A final thank you must go to all the Second Year as they move on into the Middle School; we very much hope that you have enjoyed your time here with us in the Lower School, and we wish you all good luck for the future.





# Mearns'

Prior to the new incumbency, the House had been Randolph's, an act of unstinting focus and application almost impossible to follow. How would I fare, how would I cope?

Up went the plaque over the door announcing 'Mearns' House'. Within days it was down again: removed as a prank by some high-spirited member(s) of the pupil body. Was this an indication of things to come? The machinery was cranked into operation. Discussions and deep cogitations were had between the Housemaster and the House sleuths. There was a certain stroking of chins on the part of the House tutors. Very shortly a certain young chap was told that, fond as he might be of the name-plate, the Housemaster was even fonder of it. Within hours the missing article wonderfully reappeared. Things were looking up. It was a good omen.

And so a pattern was in many ways set for the coming decade. A natural boyish exuberance was pushed, prodded and poked along constructive, purposeful lines with very little offence on either side. The result was a great deal of impressive and purposeful achievement, year on year.

In time the House took on a certain character – sometimes to the delight of other Houses. In the area of sports, while we had an unbroken line of individually talented boys, we rarely outshone collectively. Mearns' was frequently a safe touch on the cricket pitch or in the swimming gala. This, I

maintained, and always shall, created a different kind of spirit. Teams consciously bound together as they played through the game, observed the rules, carried out the forms, held their heads high. Individuals who gave their all in the swimming gala were cheered and at times not just by their House fellows, but by all. Other individuals in the meantime shone in their own area of expertise. We have had a long line of players representing the School first teams in their age group at rugby, cricket and hockey. Notably, we have had a distinguished line of coxes, a number of whom ended the season coxing at national level.

But it was in the area of music that boys in Mearns' were particularly distinguished. At a time when it was remarked that over 480 boys in the School were involved in music, well over sixty of them came from Mearns'. And in the days of the inter-house singing competition we showed very strongly. The promised inter-house yodelling match with Drummond-Hay's has yet to take place: one piece of regrettably unfinished business.

This year was no exception in terms of the musical success of the House, as witness the prizes picked up on Leavers' Day; T. Herford (who has been offered a Choral Scholarship at Trinity College, Cambridge) won the Sawbridge Choral Prize and the Aitchison Cup for Musical Versatility (as well as the History Prize and a TASS Travel Bursary). The Music Society Prize for Organ went to H. Langford, and J. Herford

**a report and retrospective by the retiring housemaster, RSKM**

**above:  
"cubist painting"  
by J. Anderson 5SH**

won the Paul Comber Cup for Creativity. R. Morris gained the Ward Trophy for Musical Achievement, and H. Morgan the Music Prize.

The fact is that the collective determination of the House has moved slowly and inexorably upwards. This year the Third Year group failed by the narrowest of margins to win the athletics competition outright, and the House as a whole finished fourth out of seven, self-evidently a middle-ranking position which we are filling more and more.

Over the years there have been many changes in style and pastoral concern, often reflecting shifts in educational approach and expectation. At first the rapidly increasing demands of course-work pushed boys hard to get organized well in advance of deadlines. The extraordinary intrusiveness of the recent AS levels into the lives of boys was very evident on the pastoral side, where a normally exuberant, creative and outward-looking group was hard put to it not to become introspective, preoccupied and beset with examination phobia.

The biggest single change in the character of the House was its conversion to a full through pattern of delivery. This was to mean that boys one interviewed, usually on Open Day in recent years, would be under one's watchful eye until they left the School. This was a very considerable enhancement of the Housemaster's rôle and a substantial liberation for him. His operation was no longer somewhat acephalous, but a full and natural progression. His rôle had substantially increased in weight and involvement. Although a relatively recent innovation, in the experience of the present writer this new set of arrangements has been a thoroughly enriching development. To bid farewell to parents and boys on the occasion of the House social at the end of the Summer Term, once the final examinations are over, and with the knowledge of the vital progress which has been made by the boys in the course of their senior schooling, makes for a most agreeable and meaningful occasion.

And so to the present year's groupings. Picking out names can be invidious, but the following highlights have been particularly notable. The Third Year was impressively cohesive and M. Duhan (winner of a middle School academic prize), G. Milne-Day and J. Wood showed sterling qualities in all the House cricket matches. The Fourth Year were really finding their feet. T. Benellick was awarded the Amey Hall Service Prize, and A. White coxed the J15s, a crew motored by T. Williams. A. Marsh was splendidly invincible with the javelin once again on sports day, whilst a Middle School academic prize went to J. Stanier. H. Abrahall was seen determinedly line-drawing in the muted light of Syracuse Cathedral, while J. Allan's musical talent thrived. The Fifth Year

were preoccupied, inevitably, with examinations, but rose above them as time and occasion allowed. M. Burnard received warm accolades from his MEP for his contribution on a recent trip to the European Parliament, as well as carrying off a prize for his mock GCSE results. D. Goodacre rowed very well, while K. Ramdoo revealed a talent at football as well as on the cricket pitch. D. Madden looked positively insouciant as he flicked tennis balls over the net with great aplomb.

The Lower Sixth's contribution to fund-raising on behalf of Breadline in the last week of term was an impressive finale. It was organized in less time than it takes to say "Moldova" by M. Stroud and J. Barton. The five-a-side football was played to a man, including our scholars, with passion and verve as well as a great deal of skill. The House will be led with real vigour next year by R. Garside, who follows a long line of Abingdonians with outstanding qualities in the CCF, a real commitment to games (running in particular), and a whole-hearted dedication to his studies. He will be ably supported by his team of prefects.

An abiding memory of the Upper Sixth group is seeing the Head of House in his rugby kit negotiating the road relay not just as a three-legged race, but flanked on both sides so that between the three of them they made it a four-legged race – for charity. Well done A. Winearls. We appreciated M. Legg telling us about the virtues of guitars in French only for him to be contradicted by M. Conway in German. The classical duo of A. Wyman and J. Powell shared their enthusiasm with SH in Sicily last October and then again in Rome at Easter (thanks to the generosity of TASS). Indeed, Powell won the Classics Prize and shared the Griffin Travel Award (also Classical) with Wyman and Legg.

T. Dargay, winner of the Dr. James Molloy Prize, has already drawn up the specifications for his 200+ m.p.h. motor-car. We were indebted to J. Cox for keeping us up to date with the ravages of the foot and mouth affair. T. Garside won the School's Leadership Prize. But these are only moments in the achievements of a diverse and talented group. We wish them all well.

At some point in the future, no doubt, the School will be able to boast a purpose-built Sixth Form centre with specific annexes for the House prefects. In the meantime the present uniquely structured facility continues to function. Who designed it? One feature was inspired: the full bank of windows overlooking the Jekyll garden and on to the Amey Hall, a glimpse of Arcadia. Everything that was possible in Mearns' House was only made so by the tutors. My warmest possible thanks go to them, and I am delighted that RSH takes over from an in-House position, and wish him every success in the future.



# Townsend's

This academic year, like most other years, has been very busy; if unspectacular in its successes, has been rich in house spirit and participation. In most inter-house sporting activities we found good points and victories difficult to come by, but in the cricket, athletics and swimming we had some excellent individual performances and were never last – though, equally, we never threatened the winners. In hockey and the tug-of-war, we battled our way on to the podium, and a well deserved victory was achieved in the Middle School charity five-a-side football competition under the captaincy of A. Hough.

Shooting was a different matter, and here we excelled. S. Vaughan won the Senior Cup, P. Wakefield the Junior Cup (both shoot for Great Britain), and a strong team won the inter-house competition. On the river, we had good representation in the 1st VIII: N. Brodie coxed, T. Guiver rowed at three, and T. Kingham at bow. Kingham has also had success rowing for Great Britain, winning a gold medal in Munich and at the time of writing attending the World Championships.

An important and pleasing feature of the year has been the high number of boys taking part in and contributing to the "Other Half". Possibly as a result of having DH and MMH as tutors in the House, community service and the CCF have been popular, as has the hard-working Amey Hall Technical Crew. The Drama Festival kept M. Stockwell busy, and L. Fowler had great success with his play *You Are Being Watched*.

Academically, it has been a hard-working year too. S. Bough won the Economics and Business Studies Prize, whilst M. Stockwell was awarded both the Mathematics and Physics prizes. In the Middle School, C. Johnson and A. Campbell took Fifth Year prizes for their mock GCSE results: Campbell also won the Larkhill Trophy, recognizing his work in the Amey Hall, and Johnson picked up the Mathematics Prize. Middle School academic prizes were awarded to W. McGeehin, J. Muir Wood and W. Guast. The Science Times Cup went to A. McKend, and J. Muir Wood won the Griffin Cup for Craftsmanship.

Our House social evening on July 3rd was fun, and it was good to see nearly fifty parents taking advantage of the double bill, as it were, and going on after the buffet to enjoy a performance of *The Real Inspector Hound* in the Amey Hall.

As always, we say farewell to the Upper Sixth leavers and wish success to them all, especially M. Walker and A. McKenzie (winner of a TASS Travel Bursary) in their applications to Oxford, and o. White and M. Stockwell in their applications to Cambridge. J. Iwata is leaving at the end of the Third Year to go to school in America, and we thank DH for his tutoring in the Sixth Form and wish him the best of luck with his new post as Head of Physics at Trinity, Croyden. My thanks go to the five House Prefects as they performed their duties with good humour, and especially to the two heads of House, A. McKenzie and A. Hutchinson.

**a report by JT**

**above left:  
untitled ceramic  
by G. Coppock VINMR**

**above right:  
"jug" (ceramic & metal)  
by P. Lau 5DAG**



# Waste Court

The year began in promising fashion. The House was full to official capacity, T. Worthington had been awarded a scholarship following his performance in the GCSEs and, shortly afterwards, A. Tang and E. Lee were awarded Music scholarships. We then settled into the routine of bedding-in new House members and consolidating the work of established characters.

**a farewell report  
by TLW**

All seemed to have been successfully achieved by Christmas, a number of functions having helped to bind the House together. Most notable, perhaps, was the "Not-even-close-to-being-Halloween Party". The usual ingredients of good food, ridiculous games and high spirits produced a pleasing crop of incriminating photographs to display in the House. The term closed with a reluctant farewell to Mr Dickson, our South African auxiliary tutor, whose friendliness, enthusiasm and energy had been greatly valued throughout the year he spent with us. He has been succeeded by Mr Versey, who has rapidly established himself as an equally valuable and well-liked asset.

The Lent Term began with the pleasing news that D-M. Reuter, our Head of House, had received a conditional offer from Keble College, Oxford, to read PPE. January then took a worrying turn, however, with the first signs of a potential Malthusian crisis. The steady rise in numbers through the winter months had taken us from officially full to officially seriously full. We threw a party to celebrate the magic "thirty boy barrier" being passed. Then more arrived, so beds were exhumed from the cellar, and broom-cupboards filled. Disease struck, famine threatened, but war was thankfully averted. A planned expedition to Wales to "lose a few" had to be cancelled owing to foot and mouth. In the end it proved unnecessary anyway; exponential growth stalled and talk of a cull faded.

The summer saw the usual round of examinations, cricket, swimming and the like, and also an unusually large number of boys' efforts publicly rewarded. C. Lillycrop was awarded a scholarship, which he will take up on joining Crescent next year. Reuter was awarded the Judge Medd Prize and won a silver medal in the National Rowing Championships, rowing with the 2nd VIII. T. Burch also took silver at the Nationals, but in Championship VIIIs, sitting in the engine room of the 1sts. He then rowed at Henley, helping to push the School to the semi-finals. J. Eysers was awarded the Wheeler Cup for academic effort, having transformed himself from an academic worry to a star turn in the course of his Upper Sixth. B. King was selected to perform in a run of Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte* at Garsington Opera; Y-R. Kim was selected to be a Lower School prefect; and M. Labi was appointed Head of House, both for the coming year.

In addition to the personal achievements, material changes have continued within the House. Various murky corners have been brightened, a large quantity of very useful furniture was donated to the House thanks to the efforts of a kind parent, and the "quad" between the two buildings has been paved and landscaped to a plan devised by Mrs Demmar-Waters. Work has also started on the roof and ceiling of Big Dorm. The initial phase of this project involves essential and urgent structural work: parts of the roof were in a state of serious disrepair and were becoming potentially dangerous. Next year should see the restoration of the plasterwork on the inside of the ceiling. This second phase is not only a necessity (the building is listed), but also an opportunity: once complete, the School should be able to see probably its finest ceiling revealed for the first time in forty years. Thanks are due to the Mercers' Company for finding the lion's share of the funding required for this task.

The end of the Summer Term marks one other major change. My wife, my daughter and I are leaving Waste Court and Abingdon, in order for me to take up a post at Portsmouth Grammar School. I am pleased to report that Mr and Mrs Phelps will be succeeding us. I was fortunate enough to inherit a house in good shape and I hope that he is able to say the same. Certainly, a great deal has been done to continue improving the facilities and to further strengthen the unique and unconventional spirit of the House. I owe a considerable debt of gratitude to all the staff who have made this possible, particularly the enthusiastic and highly capable resident tutors with whom I have had the pleasure of sharing both a place of work and my home. I would also like to pay tribute to the boys who have passed through the House during my time here. It has been, for the most part, a pleasure living and working with them; I have many very fond memories of my time here as a result.

No doubt next year will be exciting. Numbers are high once more, and with fresh hands at the helm I fully expect the House to go from strength to strength. WTP has the huge advantage of retaining AJJ as House Tutor and Miss Lupton as Matron. I leave with something of a heavy heart, but sure in the knowledge that a place of great importance to me will be left in the safest and most able of hands.

# The Scholars

a report by RSE

It has been another year of busy and purposeful activity for the Scholars. As is now the established pattern, the year began with the Scholars' Induction Ceremony back in September. Once again this was a happy affair, which was well supported by parents, and which did a great deal to establish *esprit de corps*, especially during the most agreeable lunch which took place after the more official proceedings.

There were a number of other opportunities for collective activity during the year, not least the meetings of the Roysse Society. This year we welcomed three distinguished speakers, who all engaged with the boys marvellously, and with real intellectual rigour. The first was Mr Peter Riddell, senior political correspondent of *The Times*, who spoke fascinatingly on the pre-election political climate. Dr David Bostock of Merton College, Oxford, subsequently took us into perhaps unfamiliar philosophical territory with a look at the nature and significance of numbers, and most recently, the author Penelope Lively proved to be a wonderfully illuminating guest when she spoke of her work and the creative process in general.

The Scholars very much enjoyed the various theatre trips available this year. Highlights included a very popular visit to see *The Duchess of Malfi* at the RST in Stratford and *The Magic Flute* at The Apollo in Oxford. We all enjoyed seeing various School productions during the year which included Scholars, most memorably C. Mason and T. Adams. More generally within the School, the Scholars were once again corner-stones of other cultural groupings, notably the very active Lower Sixth form pupils C. Brookes, J. Findlay, T. Garton Ash, M. Nowotny, M. Rowland and T. Ainsworth, all of whom have been key players in such worthy institutions as the Literary, History, Biology, European Literature and Theology discussion societies.

The Scholars were conspicuous in their service to the community once again: N. Evans, R. Neatherway, R. Myers, A. Garton Ash and P. Thyagaraja were all in the forefront of this. Most particularly commended are M. Chilcott and N. Shaikh, who did sterling musical work at the highly successful tea parties for the elderly, and J. Anderson and W. Horwitz, who won prizes for their outstanding contributions to a variety of community service activities over their three years in the Middle School. J. Gallard, J. Szurko, R. Neatherway, B. Burnham, M-L. Jones and M. Legg all represented the School admirably at the Vale Youth Forum, the last two at the European Parliament in Brussels. The group produced the winning conservation proposal which the Council chose to fund. We were also all delighted that M-L. Jones was joint winner of the Laing Reading Prize. Earlier in the year the spoken word was skilfully woven by our Fourth

Year Public Speaking team, which included him, as well as N. Shaikh and O. Thompson, and was unlucky to come only second in the Fourth and Fifth Year final.

There was much in the way of sporting achievement during the year. The new crop of Third Year Scholars proved to be a significant element in their rugby squads: L. Arlott, W. Beaufoy, B. Cullen, F. de Albuquerque, J. Fyne, R. Heath, C. Kennedy and V. Raine all represented the School, and mostly at A team level. In other years, N. Shaikh, A. Paxton, D. Shackleton, M. Hardy and B. Burnham were equally committed. The hockey season also gave opportunities for our two 'stars' N. Fuggle and J. Hedges to demonstrate their quality in our most successful School teams ever.

A. Pechers, W. Horwitz and M. Cullen also made outstanding contributions to the cross country running teams, and saw off any suitable opposition with ease in the School's Road Relay Competition. Many boys were involved in rowing, and the Third Year were again very active here, with no fewer than eight of the tutor group rowing in novice crews. At a more senior level, D. Waller, A. Paxton, A. Mould and J. Anderson were unstinting in their efforts, and very successful as a result. The Summer Term brought yet more talent to the fore, with our talented racket players C. Brookes, M. Rowland, and R. Heath (who competed and won at County Championship level), as well as some distinguished Middle School cricketers, including A. Wimborne, who represented the County.

As one would expect, many of the Scholars were also crucial to the wealth of musical endeavour in the School, in bands, choirs and orchestras, as well as in individual performances. It is almost invidious to pick out any individuals, but one must commend J. Findlay for two excellent distinctions at Grade VIII level on violin and piano, H. Richards for gaining his professional diploma in horn playing and R. Morris for scoring an outstanding and highly unusual 140/150 for Grade VIII violin. The last two also won through to the final of the National Schools Chamber Music Competition at the prestigious venue of St. John's, Smiths Square. On a more local level, we all enjoyed the Waste Court house concert at the end of the Summer Term, which also gave ample scope for boys of all ages to demonstrate their talents, as well as an opportunity to say farewell to TLW.

Further accolades will be given elsewhere in this publication, but it would be wrong to let this opportunity pass to pay tribute to the tremendous work which TLW has done with the Scholars, and in particular in welding the two communities together within Waste Court. We shall all miss him and the family next year, and wish him well as he moves on to Portsmouth Grammar School.



# School House

**a report by BAHF**

**above:  
BAHF in the stocks  
at the boarders'  
summer fête;  
photograph by  
G. Smith 4BJLS**

The House has had plenty to digest this year: the loss of Mr Burrow and then of P. Luscombe in quick succession; a new housemaster and an equally raw crop of Third Year boys; a fresh and wise new matron and a quartet of sportsmen transferring from the day side. Those new to the House brought new perspectives, perhaps even new values.

The influx of sportsmen into the House over the last year has given it a sporting profile to match its academic and musical traditions. The arrival of D. White, J. Mather, J. Willcox-Jones and H. Monsell brought charm and at times provided the atmosphere of a rugby academy (and a corresponding burden on the laundry), while the later transfer of G. and P. Stern brought D. Desai and A. Rehman some company at the high table of the cricketing aesthetes.

Back in the engine room, N. Williams joined White, Mather and Willcox-Jones at the heart of a highly successful 1st XV, and rowed for the second year in an equally successful 1st VIII boat; J. Tarrell joined Monsell in the Colts 'A' XV and more significantly developed strongly as a 1st VIII and Britain U18 oarsman of genuine skill and potential; the School's run of victories on the badminton court was further extended partly thanks to skill of K. Ma, B. Lo, A. Harsono, N. Yeung, J. Wei, J. Li and P. Wong, who also looks like stepping into the shoes of Ma as a fearsome prop.

In internal sporting competitions the boarders competed strongly, especially in the athletics and swimming competitions (in which we came second and first respectively). Monsell deservedly won the Fifth Year Victor Ludorum for his victories in the 100 metres, 200 metres and long-jump; in the pool, S. Ng brought a rare level of graceful power to the event.

Whilst the sportsmen's achievements received recognition, others performed equally startling feats of a contrasting nature. The Mayor's Prize for Service went to J. Stiff, and a Middle School academic prize was awarded to H. Aspeling-Jones. A. Lui won the Smith Chemistry Prize.

J. Mak, clutching no fewer than ten A\*'s from his raid on the GCSE bank, found the ideal medium for his subtle and precise piano style in a chamber trio with both violin and cello (Mendelssohn) and violin and horn (Brahms). Having performed beautifully in countless events at school he reached the finals of the U19 National Chamber Music Competition. Not surprisingly, he was awarded the Ward Trophy for Musical Achievement. He also found time to organize a house concert which gave all who wished – and some who did not – a chance to display their musical talents. C. Maeng once more approached the piano looking as though he meant it harm, but instead caressed it with beautiful sensitivity and technical virtuosity. Both pianists are as talented as they are modest, which has only improved the enjoyment of listening to them.

In other artistic ventures two names stand out. W. Gervers, stirred by personal desire to raise money for cancer research, organised a highly entertaining concert at St. Helen's 'for one night only', and demonstrated in so doing the power of one person's will and initiative to put on a show and make a difference (raising £2,000). L. Laing-Peterson's equally enterprising direction of *Loot* caught the play's cynicism on the nail and again proved to himself that he could do it.

These highlights suggest that the full 'director's cut' would, I hope, reveal a House of varied talents and energetic purpose at every level and degree of success.



To begin with the Upper Sixth, S. Allen played for the 2nd XV, 1st XI and County U18 hockey, won the 1500 metres in the inter-house athletics, and was a member of the team which won the Oxford final of the Rotary Club "Youth Speaks" competition. On Leavers' Day he collected the TASS Quatercentenary and Mercers' School Memorial prizes.

K. Roche captained the 1st XI hockey and 3rd VI tennis, as well as representing the County at U18 level hockey. D. White played for the 1st XV and was awarded full colours, going on to be vice-captain of the 2nd XI cricket team. P. Gooch was a member of the unbeaten 2nd XI hockey team, won the high jump in the inter-house athletics, captained the 2nd VI tennis, won the Richard Anderson Trophy, and was granted a Tappins Travel Award. K. Thyagaraja passed Grade VII piano with merit and raised £150 for Breadline through a sponsored fast, before being awarded a TASS Travel Bursary.

B. Hancock, S. Allen, D. Curtis and D. White made up the triumphant road relay 'A' team, and B. Hancock was selected to take part in the International Air Cadet Exchange, spending two weeks in the United States. C. Smith won the Applied Science Prize and the Music Society Prize for Brass, as well as picking up a TASS Travel Bursary and the Hester Tankard. A. Brodie captained the highly successful 1st VI tennis, and D. Walford won the Freeman Prize for Service.

6JFH reached the final of the Lower Sixth Challenge, but despite sterling work from A. James, D. Procter, J. Brockbank and D. Prior were comfortably beaten by 6JFB. T. Adams won the Birnberg German Prize and M. Nowotny the Politics Prize. C. Thomson, M. Browne and S. Higazi all played for the 1st XV; Thomson and Browne were awarded full colours. P. Peacock, Thomson and P. Timberlake all played for the 1st XI hockey team; Timberlake also played for the County U18 team and was a member of the divisional squad. Peacock played 1st XI cricket, while Brockbank and Browne played for the 2nds. In the inter-house athletics Browne produced two superb runs to come second in the 1500 metres and first in the 800 metres, while Thomson won the javelin event and was also a member of the 1st VI tennis. W. Burdall rowed and E. Macdonald coxed for the 2nd VIII.

In the Fifth Year, N. Sadler won a prize for his mock GCSE results, and won the discus in the inter-house athletics. A. Evans played for the County U16 hockey side, while R. Cox played some matches for the School 1st XI. L. Berryman received the Giles Lewis Memorial Cup for Woodwind.

As for the Fourth Year, C. North played for the badminton 1st VI which continued its magnificent run of victories. R. Muirhead was selected to play for the Berkshire U15 rugby squad and it was unfortunate that a shoulder injury curtailed his rugby season; later, in cricket, he scored sixty-four not out against Reading two days before going into hospital for repair work on that same shoulder. N. Patterson was stroke and R. Guast bow in the J15 2nd VIII which reached the final at the Thames and National Schools regattas. D. Sullivan received the Fourth Year academic prize.

The Third Year took third place in the athletics. C. Davies won the 'B' division 100 metres with the fastest time for both divisions, while scholars J. Fyne and B. Cullen won the 'A' division 400 metres and discus respectively. The swimming gala proved a real triumph, with victory by the narrowest of margins. G. Cowie won the 'A' division breaststroke, J. Fyne won the 'B' division freestyle, and we gained three relay victories. A. Wimborne took a hat-trick of wickets for the Juniors 'A' XI against Bartholomew's School in the Lords Taverners' Cup. G. Cowie received the Third Year academic prize.

In the inter-house hockey competition we won the Senior Cup and the Junior Plate. Hockey colours were awarded to S. Allen, K. Roche and P. Timberlake. Half colours were awarded to C. Thomson and P. Peacock. C. North received full colours for badminton.

The Middle School cricket team surprised everyone by reaching the final of the competition. Captained by A. Davis and with E. Antysz in fine form with the ball, a narrow semi-final victory was won over the powerful Garnier's team.

Throughout the year we have raised £295 from the sale of doughnuts. This has gone to the NSPCC.

At the end of the year, we say goodbye to SAE's Upper Sixth tutor group and to SPO, who is moving across to tutor in the Scholars' house. He is being replaced by Mr David Bickerton, who is joining us from King Alfred's, Wantage. Leaving too are the Head and Deputy Head of House. C. Smith has been a tower of strength. Modest, caring and extremely efficient, he has been ably assisted by K. Roche. Both have maintained a close watch on the House, often prompting their housemaster into action. Both have made huge contributions to the life of the School.

information supplied  
by PJW

# School notes

## Have tank, will travel

The contrast between spending a summer at Abingdon School working as the Estates Bursar and spending a summer on the Greek island of Cephallonia working on a major movie is obviously great. I do not need to explain, justify, or go into detail about which I would rather do; however, do not believe for one moment that making movies is a soft option.

**the Estates Bursar, David Carson, a collector of military vehicles, took a sabbatical last summer to assist with the filming of "Captain Corelli's Mandolin" on the Greek island of Cephallonia. Here he describes his varied experiences.**

I arrived on Cephallonia in the third week of May 2000, a few days after filming had started on *Captain Corelli*, directed by John Madden (famous for *Shakespeare in Love*) and starring Nicholas Cage, Penelope Cruz, John Hurt and Christian Bale.

My job was to supervise the armoured vehicles appearing in the film and in general to ensure that all German vehicles were correctly painted, and displaying correct unit markings for Greece in 1943. It soon turned out that owing to a shortage of drivers I was going to be driving all sorts of other military vehicles as well. I supplied three German vehicles for the production: two I own, and another belonged to a group of friends. I employed two of my own friends to help keep these three vehicles running.

The working hours on a film of this scale are long, to ensure that the maximum is achieved in the shortest time scale, owing to the huge costs of keeping a crew on location. Thus we officially worked a twelve hour day, six days a week. However, our accommodation was a half hour drive from the unit base, added to which was travel time to locations, along difficult and often only dirt track roads, meaning that a fourteen or fifteen hour day was more usual. Thus we were starting work at about 6.30 a.m., finishing between eight and nine each night, grabbing a quick meal back in our mountain village in a local café, and then getting some mosquito-free sleep, if we remembered to shut our windows.

The temperature when we arrived was 32° (12° higher than back in Britain), which then rose to 42° by June. This was quite an obstacle, and although we did acclimatize, wearing a German uniform inside an armoured vehicle is not a great deal of fun in that sort of heat.

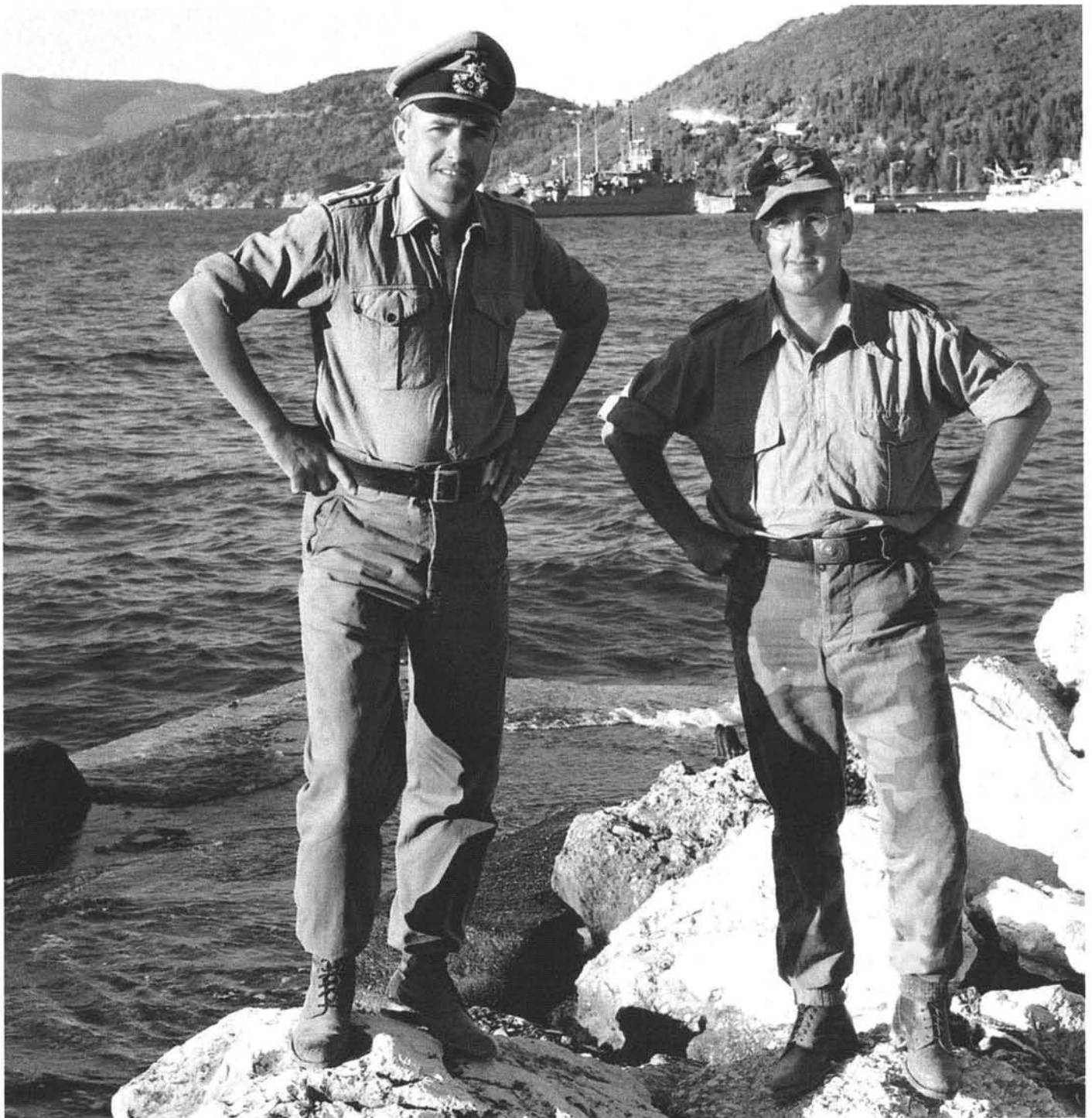
Some days were very busy, driving around the port of Sami where we filmed the arrival of the Italian ships and troops. We repeated one scene about fourteen times. I was on top of an armoured car, dressed in a thick woollen Italian uniform. The metal was so hot

that I had to have rags tied around my hands in order to climb on and off. The novelty wore off after a while and my driver and I decided to have a well-calculated mechanical problem outside an ice-cream shop.

Other days were much more interesting, and I especially enjoyed being given the job of driving the lead German officer, Captain Webber (played by David Morrissey). This gave me a chance to watch a number of important scenes close-up. The most memorable film moment for me was the firing squad scene, when Corelli and his 'La Scala' boys are executed. This was a closed set (with a skeleton crew only) and was very moving. It was all the more poignant for me because I was portraying a German soldier, and I had got to know the Italian actors playing Corelli's men well over the weeks. Although this was not real, it gave me some idea of the dilemma facing the character Webber, who also is a friend of the men whom he is having to execute.

The sets – created by one of the most talented teams in the world, led by Jim Clay – were outstanding. Both the Argostoli town set and the village set were built over a period of five months. They were both beautiful, and we came to think of them as our home as well, so fond did we become of these make-believe communities.

What about the actors? John Hurt was unassuming, kind and very sociable. I spent an enjoyable evening in his villa at one of his famous parties. Nicholas Cage was protected as American stars often are, and my only direct contact was asking him somewhat bluntly to get out of the way as I was directing a German half track around a sharp bend on a mountainous track. I think that he realized that it was his safety I was concerned about... Penelope Cruz was quiet and unassuming. My most intimate moment with her was when she offered to share her fruit salad with me, as we were sitting in the shade one afternoon. Totally overwhelmed, I managed to hand her a plastic fork, but declined the fruit salad.



Other highlights included the islanders themselves, who were a delight: friendly, helpful and welcoming. Those of us staying in the small village of Diverata above Myrtos beach became honorary villagers during our stay. I recall the night that we got involved in a saints day celebration and ended up jumping over a bonfire of olive branches. I was not sure if it was a test, but the locals in the bar overlooking us cheered and clapped loudly.

The most enduring memory I have of my time on Cephallonia was the day that I met the uncle of one of our Greek extras, who, as a boy of fourteen, had witnessed five hundred Italians being executed by the Germans in September 1943. He showed me where the three machine guns had been located, and also the wall against which the Italians were lined up in three ranks. He explained how the Germans had tried to

burn the bodies of the Italians, with little success, and how two days later they had returned and ordered the villagers to dispose of the bodies or they would be executed as well. The villagers loaded the bodies into carts and tipped them down two disused wells, which he also showed me. This was very moving, and it was an extraordinary experience, in that we were repeating these events on film almost on the same soil that these men had died on.

The film has now been released, to critical disdain. It certainly is not the book, and some people do not feel that Nicholas Cage is right for Captain Corelli. However, I enjoyed it, and feel honoured to have made a minor contribution towards the making of the film. I should also like to thank the Headmaster and Bursar for allowing me to disappear for four months, and everybody else for not noticing that I had gone.

**above:  
DJMC and subordinate  
on Cephallonia;  
photograph courtesy  
DJMC**



# The Masters' Common Room

**perhaps it was the prospect of a new Headmaster, perhaps the advent of spring, perhaps mere coincidence, but the Lent Term saw the announcement of a remarkable succession of departures from the Common Room. Here are appreciations of all the leavers, in no particular order, and by various hands**

At the end of the Michaelmas Term the two overseas auxiliary tutors, Nick Dickson and Dugald Laurie, returned to South Africa and Australia respectively. During TJK's sabbatical that term, his teaching had been carried out by Mrs Jo Quirk. JDED-H's P.E. teaching was looked after during the same period by Mr Steve Hibberd, who then stayed on for the remainder of the year and leaves us to take over Latin and P.E. at Josca's from September.

James Millard (JEM) left us in December, after five years at the School, to become Director of Music at King's College School, Wimbledon. James came to us in 1995 from Brentwood, in order to broaden and deepen his experience in a bigger department. He first made his mark as a dedicated and effective classroom teacher, doing sterling work with the A level sets as well as composition with the Middle School and singing with the Lower School; in the latter he revealed his penchant for more popular song styles, from *Titanic* and *Pocohontas*, for example. James' first few years saw him in the organ loft accompanying Chapel Choir rehearsals, the direction of which he later inherited from RSE. He leaped at the chance to direct the Choral Society, which he did most effectively, and which proved to be the start of a close association with JHT; together they staged *Jesus Christ Superstar* and *Sweeney Todd*. JEM contributed greatly to the wider life of the School, as a respected and effective tutor, a team cricket coach, and in staff football, where his exploits were legendary.

In January James was replaced by Mr Simon Whalley (SRW), and we also welcomed two new auxiliary tutors, Nathan Versey and Jared Griffiths.

February saw arrivals of a different kind, when RSH and his wife became the proud parents of twin daughters Olivia and Sophia.

Our Russian assistant from January until mid-May was Anastasia Chumakova. Nastia, as she was known to senior pupils and staff, afforded invaluable aid to the Lower Sixth and early takers in the Fourth Year. She was also of great assistance in preparing recorded and written materials, and will be remembered for the readiness with which she performed any task given to her, her cheerful demeanour and pleasant smile. That she was popular in her homeland was all too apparent from the vast correspondence which she conducted by e-mail every day. She returns home with our best wishes for success in the examinations which she faced immediately on her arrival.

The end of the Summer Term saw a mass of departures. Angèle Thomas had joined us as our French *assistante* in September, and quickly established herself in Common Room and the classroom alike. She soon understood and answered the pressing demands of examination classes, including Oxbridge,

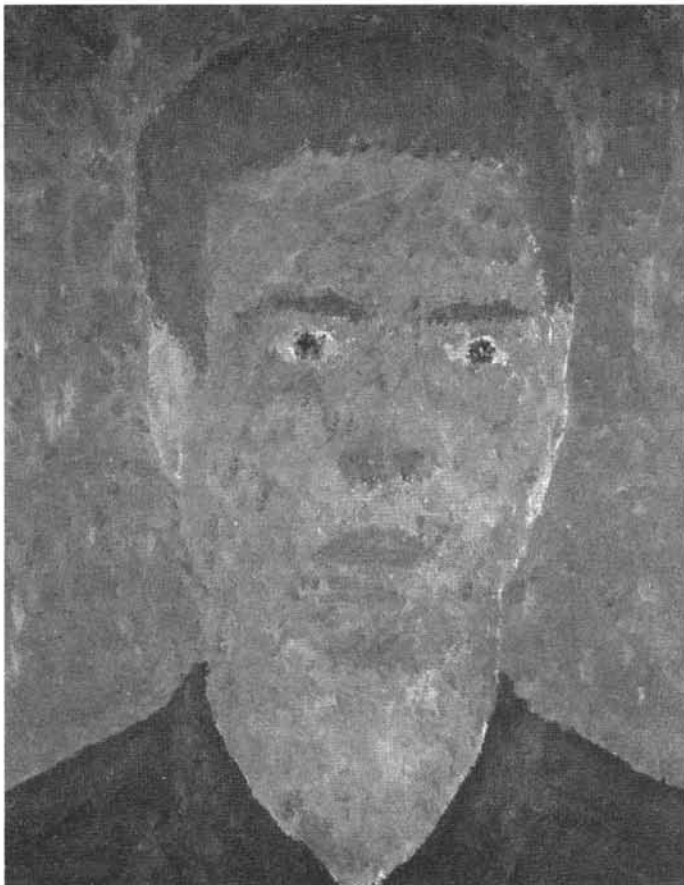
while seeing to it that the Lower School French classes were well amused and often sub-consciously instructed, thus bringing a charm and appeal to the language which many might envy. Angèle was willing to spend extra time with desperate or nervous oral candidates, and to turn her hand to new classes and Sixth Form work packs. These last, and her full contribution over the year, will ensure that colleagues and pupils alike will long remember her appreciatively. We all wish her very well in her further studies in France.

Brigitte Jeanson also joined us last September as a further French *assistante* in response to the greater number of Sixth Form French candidates, and immediately brought welcome Gallic reinforcement to the French Department. In her quiet and methodical fashion, Brigitte guided boys at all levels through their oral topics and and coaxed them into more sophisticated and accurate conversation. She was also willing to assist with last-minute oral revision and a francophone dinner on the eve of the A level examination. The results this summer will owe much to her rigour and professionalism. Brigitte's input this year has been invaluable, and she leaves with all our best wishes. As she lives in the vicinity, we very much hope that she will stay in touch.

Katrin Mayer, this year's German assistant, came to us from Schongau, Abingdon's twin town in Germany. She arrived armed with a formidable Bavarian accent and soon had the boys on the defensive. Katrin settled into our routines very quickly, her cheerful, friendly and easy-going manner finding favour with both staff and pupils. The boys enjoyed her lively approach to German conversation sessions, and those sitting public examinations were particularly appreciative of the time and effort which she gave to help them to prepare for the oral topics. Much of their progress and increase in confidence was due to her enthusiasm, hard work and invaluable knowledge of her own country. Her bright disposition also enabled her to establish warm relations with the Common Room, and we all wish her well for the future.

When John Bowley (JGB) arrived in September 1998 to teach Modern Languages, it was immediately obvious that he was going to make a big impact. Three years on in this, his first post, even those early optimistic expectations have been surpassed. As with many of the best in the teaching profession he was heavily involved in various areas of school life.

John taught French from Lower School to Oxbridge level and German throughout the Middle School and in the Lower Sixth. He did so professionally, yet with good humour, energetically but sensitively, and always effectively. His love of language together with a reluctance to accept anything but the highest of standards ensured this. He was one of the



mainstays of the department in exchanges, both in France and Germany, not least through introducing us to old friends of his in Haguenau in Alsace. For four terms as Head of French he also gave us the benefits of a fine administrative mind. As for his entrepreneurial skills, what will Open Days be like without him managing the Modern Languages café?

His work as a conscientious and caring boarding tutor in School House took up much of his energy, and many have good reason to be very grateful for his contribution. The "Other Half" has also benefited from his help in all sorts of ways – badminton and debating, to name just two – and his charm, wit and willingness to give so freely of his time will be greatly missed. There were also some rather surprising sides to John. His almost unhealthy interest in 1980s pop music was matched by his love for and encyclopaedic knowledge of James Bond films; his classes certainly learned a lot more than French or German, and he could demand a big signing-on fee from any pub quiz team. He is leaving to take up the post of Head of Modern Languages at Bromsgrove, and does so with our best wishes. His replacement as Head of French is Mrs Veronica Walker (VMW).

Any school would miss a member of staff who could produce 250 bats every evening; so it is with Abingdon and Nigel Hunter (NWH), who was appointed in 1980. The sunny temperament which he always displays perhaps can be traced back to an idyllic childhood spent in the British Solomon Islands.

Within a year of his arrival, Nigel took over as Head of Art, a post which he held with distinction for

the past twenty years. He was fortunate that the department had just moved into new premises, but the subject would not have flourished and expanded as it has done without his flair and his good management, both of the members of his department and of the material resources at his disposal. His own interest centres on the plastic arts, especially sculpture, three-dimensional design work and, in particular, ceramics, which he was able to develop with additional space in the Warehouse. The results at A level are a testament to his and his department's teaching skills.

When the housemastership of Crescent became vacant in 1985, Nigel was asked to take over and the burgeoning Hunter family moved in. A relaxed atmosphere was promoted by Nigel's geniality and his wife's robust good humour. A rearrangement of the School's management structure saw Nigel promoted to the new post of Senior Housemaster and then Third Deputy Head (Pastoral), which involved not only having a broad overview of the School's pastoral arrangements but also dealing, very effectively, with the fine detail of legislation such as the Children Act and initiatives such as employing a school counsellor.

The combination of his artistic talents and his good nature has laid him open to endless last-minute requests, whether from Griffen Ball organizers or from headmasters with ideas for improved flag design. Always willing to oblige, he has helped in many areas of School life, from those easily seen – tennis and squash, art trips and ski trips, and stage designs – to those more covert and subtle, including his ability to defuse tension in a tricky meeting with a witty aside.

**above left:**  
"self portrait" (acrylic)  
by J. Williams 5JHT

**above right:**  
"self portrait"  
(print & perspex)  
by S. Spriggs 5SPO



**above:**  
**"landscape"**  
**(oil on paper)**  
**by G. Larsson VINMR**

And the 250 bats? They were cut out for each night's performance of *Dracula Spectacular*, the first production in the Amey Hall, so that they would pop up from the programmes. No such menial tasks will await Nigel when he moves to become Director of Art at St. Paul's. He is succeeded as Head of Art by Mr James Nairne (JPN).

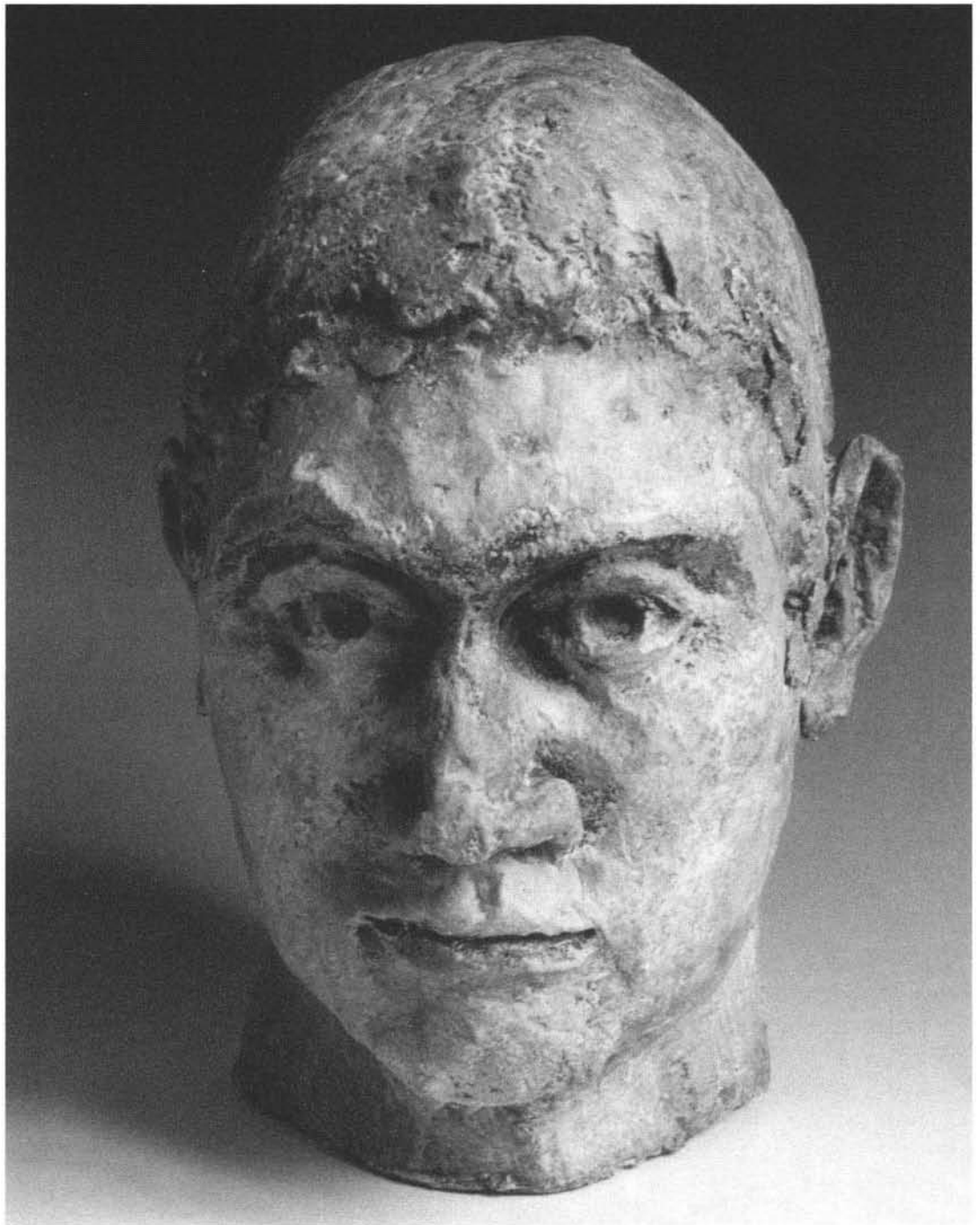
Stephanie Hunter (SEH) is a professionally qualified artist specializing in ceramics, and although a part-time teacher, her influence on the department was substantial. She possesses immense knowledge and supreme skill, together with the experience and judgement to inspire her pupils. For many years the standards achieved in sculptural ceramics and modelling have been impressive. She will be missed, but we wish her success in London and in her newly-expanding career as a garden designer. Stephanie will be replaced from this coming September by Mr Alan Bainbridge (RAB).

Good mathematicians are gold dust, but when David Griffiths (DAG) joined Abingdon, quiet but very eager, we quickly realised that we had unearthed a nugget from the Welsh valleys. Many colleagues and all manner of teams, crews and expeditions have had David to thank for his unstinting support and infinite willingness. He coached rugby, rowing, cricket and hockey (where he had an unbeaten season with this year's 2nd XI) and one would often see him *en route* from having coached one lot of boys in one sport to coach a different set of boys in a different sport. He also took Lower School trips, rowing and skiing trips to all manner of places near and far. He was always

quick to volunteer to drive a minibus or take an extra swimming session or revision class (he has a knack for making Mathematics accessible to all boys, and endless patience). He also organized the Maths Challenge and was Secretary to the Common Room. For all these reasons, and for his encyclopaedic knowledge, his razor wit, his warm teasing humour and famous early morning grumpiness, he will be remembered and missed by the boys and staff alike, but especially by the boys: he seemed always to have time whenever they needed it or simply wanted it; his sitting room in Crescent thronged with boys who had dropped in for a chat, to play on the Play Station, to get help with their work or to do all three at once. David leaves a large hole in the Crescent community and a small space in the Crescent garage where he used to park his Lotus. Mrs Amanda Bowden (ALB) succeeds him in the Mathematics department.

Barny Sandow (BJLS) was with us for four years, and made a huge impression – particularly impressive as he arrived a young NQT. He was tutor in Crescent, where he quickly fitted into the system and proved very popular and effective. He found it easy to get on with boarders and was always willing to listen to their problems without being judgmental. Barny was also responsible for looking after gap year students, ensuring that they settled in quickly and introducing them to the finest watering-holes in Abingdon. He extended his rôle beyond the call of duty by taking the French Assistante, Gwendoline Wikart, under his wing: this summer they married in France and Barny will join her at Stowe in the autumn.





**above:**  
**"self portrait" (ceramic)**  
**by B. Pritchett VINAFP**

atmosphere, but the physical environment has been transformed, with a phased programme of redecoration in keeping with the period of the building, and a stunning garden created by his wife Corinna – much of it despite the best efforts of archaeologists to wreck the lot. Tim has also been active in encouraging younger OAs to visit the School, despite the dangers of exploding beer-barrels in his front hall.

In Tim's rare moments of relaxation he has constructed the Biology department pond, written a novel (which he bravely allowed the staff Book Club to dissect), taken the occasional trout, and clambered up Welsh mountains to sleep in dustbin liners. We wish Tim, Corinna and little Arwen the best as he takes up the post of Deputy Head (Pastoral) at Portsmouth Grammar School.

From September, Waste Court will be run by WTP, and the Biology department will welcome Mr Paul Williams (PRW) in TLW's stead.

Some departures at the end of the summer were retirements rather than moves. The CCF, for example, sadly bade farewell to RQMS "Mac" McCreedy at a special parade at the end of the Summer Term, marking the end of his long and dedicated service with the Contingent.

Michael Dillon (MGHD) is a man of many talents, all of them most serviceable. He joined Abingdon in September 1977 from Peers School, Oxford, where he had been teaching Religious Studies, but as a boy at Fettes he had taken A level Physics, Chemistry and Biology. At Edinburgh University, he read English, with subsidiary honours in History, Latin and Moral Philosophy. When he gained his certificate in education from King's, Cambridge, in 1965, his teaching subjects were English, History and Religious Education, and it was as an English specialist that he taught at King's, Canterbury, from 1965 to 1969. Then came a bout of restlessness, and he went

On the sports fields Barny coached rugby with an enthusiasm bordering on zeal. Summer saw him on the tennis courts proving that you do not have to be a giant to excel. We will remember him best, however, for the hockey. Despite limited staff support, he raised the standard of hockey hugely, leading to the best season ever this year. In the Duke of Edinburgh's Award he was a committed helper on expeditions, where once again his good humour and enthusiasm shone through: one snowy day on Dartmoor he tramped for hours into biting winds looking for a Silver level group, only to discover that they had been taken off the moor for safety's sake. Barny is a culinary genius and once induced the boys to produce a Bastille day banquet on meths-burning stoves. But it is as a Science teacher that he made his greatest mark. His easy-going approach belied the fact that he devoted a lot of time and effort to lesson preparation. He has the ability to break ideas down into their simplest components and to give amusing and illuminating examples to demonstrate a point. Pupils certainly liked him and enjoyed his lessons; they also did very well.

Not everything was easy for him, however. He has given much of his time to helping look after his brother, who was seriously injured in a road accident. He suffers himself from dyslexia, which made report-writing sessions even harder. Unlike the students, staff do not get an extra 25% time allowance.

David Haworth (DH) joined the staff six years ago at a time of considerable change in the Physics department, and became a major force in its reorganization. His contribution went well beyond the Physics department, however, as he ran both the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme and the Combined Cadet Force with vigour and enthusiasm, building them up into major facets of Abingdon's "Other Half" and earning both activities a reputation for excellence within and beyond the School. Until this year's foot and mouth debacle, he also entered extremely successful teams into the annual Ten Tors competition on Dartmoor. These activities left him little time for the rowing which he coached when he arrived. David was always ready to experiment to make his teaching more interesting and effective, but his feet were firmly on the ground; a long line of boys benefited greatly from his efforts. He will particularly be remembered for his clear presentation and the work he put into notes, transparencies and computer programmes. He was an expert in computing and will leave the department and the School a legacy of systems set up and running. It has long been clear that David deserved promotion to head a department, and he goes to Trinity School, Croydon, with our best wishes.

These two Physicists will be replaced by Mr David Bickerton (DJB) and Dr Martin Judd (MJ). JPGB takes over the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme and DJMC the CCF.

RJS's sabbatical in the Summer Term was ably covered by David Flint (DF).

Julia Richards (JAR) joined us in 1995, quickly showing herself to be a major asset in the Classics department, as a tutor, and on the river. She also established herself as one of Common Room's characters, with her enthusiasm, boundless energy and almost indestructible good-humour marking her out as a great team player and as a leader in the making. As a classroom teacher, she has a unique style which makes pupils learn without realizing that they are doing so; their universal reaction on hearing the news of her departure was genuine disappointment that she was leaving them, sentiments which many colleagues would echo.

Her organizational abilities were first turned to J14 rowing. Novice schoolboy oarsmen bubble with misdirected energy and are somewhat organizationally challenged. It was therefore a great tribute to Julia's skills that nearly fifty boys each year were turned into competent oarsmen. Most importantly, she ensured that the emphasis throughout was on enjoyment: very few dropped rowing on moving into the Fourth Year, and Julia's enthusiasm stuck with them. Present success with our senior crews has its roots in the foundation which she so effectively built.

For her last three years, Julia was also Head of General Studies. She managed to develop the course considerably and pushed it up the School's list of priorities. She organized many top-class speakers, as well as developing a balanced core to the course alongside an interesting and varied set of optional subjects. Throughout, Julia has been driven by a desire always to do the best she can for her pupils, in whatever arena. Time and again she has delivered handsomely and yet has been reluctant to accept the praise due her, instead choosing to point out her own shortcomings. This combination of perfectionism and humility has made her an exceptional professional and a pleasure to work with. She carries our warmest wishes to the King's School, Canterbury: we trust that it will prove an exciting and worthwhile move for her and family.

The Classics department will be joined by Mr Nicholas Wilshere (NEAW), and DJTF takes over as Head of General Studies.

Tim Waters (TLW) has run Waste Court for the past five years, as well as teaching Biology since 1992. His style of teaching, always memorable, endeared him to pupils of all ages. An ardent supporter of Welsh devolution, his trips for pupils and colleagues to the wilds of Wales became legendary; an Australian tutor arrived jet-lagged at the House one January to be plied with alcohol at one of Tim's equally legendary dinners, only to be woken in the small hours and taken up snow-covered Welsh mountains the following day. Tim devoted tremendous energy to running the House, keeping ridiculous hours and working incredibly hard for all the boys, often to the obvious detriment of his own health and sanity. Not only has Waste Court enjoyed a remarkably pleasant

to work, first as an academic administrator in the Cambridge Institute of Education, and next, from 1970, as a skilled craftsman building harpsichords with the firm of Robert Goble and Son in Oxford. Teaching called again from 1974 onwards, and he worked at Headington before joining Peers School, where he taught History, Politics and English as well as Religious Education.

Michael's first task at Abingdon was to create a Woodwork department – one can hardly use the expression “from scratch” when discussing a man with cabinet-maker's skills. He took over what had once been the Headmaster's garage, and had latterly served as a dump-store for the maintenance operation. A loft was created; the ground floor was kitted out by the generosity of TASS; and so the Abingdon curriculum began a long march, which lasted all through the 1980s and 1990s, towards breadth, practicality and flexibility. The Dillon temperament rises naturally to meet a pioneering challenge, and Michael seemed to relish the difficulties of convincing colleagues and parents of the value of his subject. He was concerned above all to promote craftsmanship; in this, he was to some extent swimming against the tide of the time, which was strongly set away from “mere” carpentry and towards design projects of a sometimes conjectural sort. Michael's results, however, tell their own story - year by year, visiting moderators have been taken aback by the sheer quality of the work which they have had to inspect, and generations of Abingdon boys have learned what skilled woodworking is really about. In 1980 Michael was appointed as head of a new department of Design, with responsibility for setting up a metal-working operation to balance the woodworking side – the genesis of the Warehouse, and all the sophisticated practicalities which it contains.

Michael's commitment to the pastoral aspect of a schoolmaster's work, founded on and informed by his strong Christian beliefs, was evident from the first and made him a natural choice for the position of Lower Master. In those days, before the Registry had been invented, the annual 11+ entrance examination was very largely administered by the Lower Master, and Michael's shrewd advice on admissions matters was much in demand. His job specification also included “... the co-ordination of school administration for the First and Second years”, and went on to remark that “The Lower Master's pastoral responsibilities necessarily involve him in a wider sphere of activity than is the case with Middle School housemasters”. This important rôle was discharged with a mixture of quiet geniality and firm discipline. In those days the Lower School had no common room, or base of their own, and roamed in scurrying, squeaking, mouse-like packs round the corridors; however, they were gradually tamed by assemblies and chapels, supervised prep. sessions, and systematic rewards as well as punishments. Perhaps most valuable of all, Michael promoted, and personally led, the annual expeditions

to Rydal Hall in the Lake District, which became something like a rite of passage for successive generations of Lower School boys.

Michael's strong sense of duty, expressed in terms of family and Church commitments, tended to draw him into increasingly intense activity outside the context of Abingdon School. He was active in founding a church school near Witney, engaged in missionary activity in Uganda during 1996, and took a sabbatical in 1997, following the conclusion of his tenure as Lower Master, by working, with his family, in war-torn Bosnia. All this was done without fuss, even slightly apologetically, so that many people around the School would have been quite unaware that this mildly solemn, occasionally distracted, sometimes peppery, frequently amused figure was a practical philanthropist on a major scale.

The same unobtrusive generosity, mingled with insatiable technical curiosity and sheer delight in creation, has most recently led Michael to undertake the extraordinary task of building two harpsichords, one for his own use and one for the School. When the work is complete and the School has taken delivery of what will undoubtedly become one of its most prized heirlooms, the cycle of Michael Dillon's contributions to Abingdon might be thought to have come to a happy conclusion. But even after his departure, he will still be in evidence, supplying practical help and technical support to his successor in the woodwork shop for the next year or so.

The best schoolmasters are those who might properly say to their pupils – though they never would – not just “Do as I say”, but “Do as I do”. Michael Dillon has always been one of those who does, and does everything well.

MGHD's teaching will be taken over from September by Mr Michael Webb (MRW).

Some extra appointments have been made for the coming year. Mrs Jane Ganly (JSG) will join the Modern Languages department on a part-time basis, and Miss Jean Sinclair (JMS) comes as a part-time member of the Religious Studies department. An additional Chemistry teacher, Mr Mark Schofield (MS), has also been appointed.

Finally, there are several internal moves to note. RSKM has relinquished his housemastership to enable him to concentrate on university entrance procedures, in preparation for NJB's retirement next year; his replacement in the post is RSH. DJD has been elevated to loftier heights, and his replacement as Head of Mathematics is Mr David Forster (DF). RSS is making a year-long exchange visit to Australia, and his rôle in the Geography department will be taken over by Dr Philip O'Brien (PGO'B); AJJ is to look after RSS's housemastering responsibilities. NMR will be on sabbatical for the Michaelmas Term, and his place will be taken by Miss Jessica Böhlenius (JB). Mrs Jenny Terrill, who has provided special needs teaching on a part-time basis, now joins the staff full-time.



# Roger Mortimer

**an appreciation by the  
Headmaster of  
Mr Roger Mortimer,  
master at Abingdon  
from 1947 until his  
retirement in 1986,  
who died last year**

There can be no better start to a career than a good reference from a good historian. So Roger Mortimer chose wisely when he asked David Thomson, Fellow, later Master, of Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge, to write to James Cobban in response to a notice which JMC had placed in the newspapers, for an Assistant Master from September 1947. Thomson wrote:

*I am pleased to recommend him to you with real warmth. He is the sort of man who, by reason of his personality and integrity of character, would in my opinion make an excellent teacher, and a valuable member of any school's staff. He has excellent manners, a quiet and pleasant and very attractive personality, and he would be an excellent influence for schoolboys. He has a good sense of humour, as well as scholarly tastes. His subjects have been French and German, and his teachers have consistently spoken highly of his abilities and industry as a worker.*

The Headmaster-elect knew a good prospect when he saw one, and Roger was speedily launched upon a teaching career which was to run its full course at Abingdon until his retirement in 1986. Perhaps it was not a love match, to begin with. JMC's interview notes record that Roger gave as his reason for becoming a schoolmaster, "Thinks he would enjoy it", and for coming to Abingdon, nothing more than "rowing", while JMC's own praise for his candidacy was confined to "On the whole I should feel safe with him". But this mutual caution soon warmed, on both sides, into convinced enthusiasm. Roger was to become one of the band of long-serving stalwarts who realized much of JMC's vision, and whose devotion was rewarded by JMC's affectionate regard. Any inclination towards reserve on Roger's part, as he embarked on his life's work, would have been totally understandable in someone who had experienced the upheavals which surrounded his early years.

Born on September 13th 1924, he was one of that generation who had to watch with stoicism as the world lurched into another war of the sort which had killed so many of their predecessors, the foundations of national prosperity crumbled away, and their own social privileges vanished for ever. The best of them were rescued by their sense of duty. At Sherborne, Roger was head of his house and captain of shooting. When he presented himself for military service in 1943 he was turned down because of poor eyesight; so he went to Cambridge, took his degree and trained to be a teacher. He would never be the sort of missionary that JMC himself was, but the best staff-rooms are stocked with teachers of the exemplary, rather than the proselytising type. Roger offered a perfect model of versatility: German, French, Divinity, English, and Geography all featured in his timetable, and his

"Other Half" was replete with drama, cricket and tennis, as well as shooting (for which he had won a half blue) and rowing, which he had taken up at Cambridge and which rewarded him with the pink-socked splendour of Leander membership.

As a young man, he was active and involved, a natural boarding school master. Boarding had moulded his youth, but he was an instinctive community-dweller rather than an institutionalized personality. Boarding may even be said to have made his marriage in 1964 to Félicité Kinder, then matron in School House. Their son Richard, born in 1965, subsequently attended Abingdon, where his success was a source of quiet delight to his father.

In later years, Roger's jealously guarded chair in Common Room, and his privileged pipe, may have carried a whiff of Hugh Walpole's "Mr. Perrin and Mr. Traill", but they were also expressions of a stubborn insistence on the importance of human values and personal distinctiveness. Roger was at his best when he was on his own ground, and dealing in his own terms. He enjoyed his resident tutorship in School House (1947-64), and subsequently was happy and successful as housemaster of Larkhill (1969-78). He was poised and assured as master in charge of shooting, a responsibility prolonged into retirement; but he was perhaps most in his element as master in charge of rowing between 1950 and 1975.

The Boat Club which he inherited was ancient and respectable, but lightly equipped and limited in its aspirations; he increased numbers, introduced rowing in Vllls, and embarked on a competitive round which led to a rapid rise in standards. In effect, Roger was the founder of Abingdon's modern rowing fame, and it is only fitting that he should also have been the historian of ASBC: *A History of Rowing at Abingdon School, 1840-1990* incorporates a great deal of painstaking and meticulous research.

Change and disruption were hard for Roger to bear, on the other hand, and insecurity made him anxious. Loyalty was second nature to him, and his courtesy was instinctive, but he was saddened by the changes which time, and successive Headmasters, inflicted on the régime which he and JMC had built. He was fortunate in being able to turn in retirement to the Old Abingdonian Club, where he found congenial company and a valued role as Editor of the *Griffen* between 1984 and 1990. He was President of the Club in 1989. Roger's health deteriorated sadly in his later years, but his death on May 4th 2000 still came as a shock to all. The officiant at his funeral was a former colleague, Archdeacon Gerald Phizackerley, Chaplain of Abingdon 1957-1964, who had married Roger and Félicité. Roger is commemorated by a plaque in the School Chapel.



# Shadowing the Carnegie

The Carnegie Medal is an annual award given to the author who has written the best children's fiction book that year. The boys from the Lower School who were set the challenge of reading the shortlist for this year, were O. Bennett, T. Dawson, O. Foster, A. Hyde, C. Lillycrop, A. Locatelli-Malacrida, O. Margetts, L. Neatherway, R. Parker, S. Robertson, T. Scrase, W. Statham, and S. Taft. The shortlist for this year included *Heaven Eyes* by David Almond, *The Ghost Behind the Wall* by Melvyn Burgess, *The Wanderer* by Sharon Creech, *Coram Boy* by Jamila Gavin, *Troy* by Adele Geras, *Shadow of the Minotaur* by Alan Gibbons, *The Other Side of Truth* by Beverly Naidoo and *The Amber Spyglass* by Philip Pullman.

As we were hosting the forum, the other schools came to the CMR and were split into groups, each representing a particular book to discuss. The schools taking part this year were John Mason, Didcot Girls', St. Helen's, Larkmead, Fitzharrises and the Convent.

For a few minutes, we had an ice-breaking session, where we teamed up with a partner whom we did not know, and had to find out something which they liked and disliked. We then had lunch, which was eagerly awaited because we were not having school lunches;

there was also more than enough for everyone. This took about half an hour, and if we finished early we had time to think about what we would say in our group discussions.

During the group discussion, we were given a slip of paper on which we had to write a sentence about our opinions of the book we were discussing. This would form the basis of our speech. We then made our way down to the Amey Hall where we read out our little speeches. There was a prize for the best individual speech, which was won by a girl from Didcot Girls' who was in favour of *Coram Boy*.

We were left waiting for the judges to make their decision. Whilst that was going on, we were given a voting slip on which we had to say which book we would vote for. We then made our way back to the Charles Maude Room, where we all had a slice of the Carnegie cake.

Finally, the results were announced. *The Wanderer* won the judges' decision, and *The Amber Spyglass* won the most votes. I found the experience of taking part in this forum very interesting, because it made me read books I might not have read otherwise and it made me think about different aspects of the chosen books.

**a report on the successful event held in the CMR and Amey Hall on July 3rd, by O. Foster 1A**

**above:  
"abstract"  
(oil on board)  
by G. Unsworth VISCW**

# The peregrine falcon

**a story**  
by J Horsburgh 3DJH

Of all the animals I have observed in my life, none has yet demonstrated such a spectacular and awe-inspiring method of predation as the peregrine falcon.

High up in the brilliant blue sky, clear of scudding clouds, a diminutive falcon drifts dreamily on the rising thermals, like an autumn leaf carried on the bitter winds of winter. Piercing golden eyes impassively scanning the sky below, the landscape underneath reflected in those savage orbs, cruel hooked beak ever ready to strike, to rip the life from some innocent victim. Its fierce eyes then lock on to a tiny bird far below. The swift, its scythe-shaped wings whirling like a boomerang and cutting through the air, dashes onwards, its beak agape in a harsh scream.

The ferocious golden eyes scrutinize the bird for a moment, then the peregrine claps its wings to its mottled body and rockets downwards, careering along like a living missile. The falcon sweeps down, a steel-grey bolt from the blue as it homes in on the swift, which, blissfully unaware of the impending threat, flies blithely on.

Then the falcon strikes, impacting with such tremendous force that the swift is killed instantly and it falls like a stone, the victor close behind.

The swift crumples as it hits the ground, the falcon landing on the corpse a moment later, and, giving the world an indomitable and fearless glare, beginning to eat its meal.

# The gates are locked

**a story**  
by C. Johnson 2J

The gates are locked to Willie's heart: so are the gates to the zoo, where he is zoo-keeper for the mighty tiger, Gochou. As the tiger takes one last mighty roar, it echoes into eternity, never to return. The first light of morning can be seen through the dewdrops, which slowly disappear and rise up into the heavens. Willie wakes up, a joyful song on his lips, with the prospect of spending a day with his only true friend, Gochou.

When he gets to work ten minutes later, he goes straight to Gochou's pen. Gochou immediately goes straight to Willie and gives him an affectionate roar. Willie walks around the back and throws a bit of steak through the half-open door: then he turns around and walks off, leaving the cage door open.

Gochou is happily munching away at a piece of steak when she looks and spies the door open: she only has to push it and she would be on her way to freedom. She walks away, her mouth dripping with blood. When Willie comes back, he nearly faints. When he sees the open cage he runs to the manager, who fires him in a rage.

Later on, he has locked the gate for the last time and walks home with a box with a picture of Gochou on top. He sheds one tear, which drips down the photograph and into the deepest depths of his heart. He walks along, shuffling his feet and feeling utterly depressed and melancholy. He finally reaches his gate and locks that too, and so locks the gates to his heart.

# Challenges

**a report compiled**  
by SH

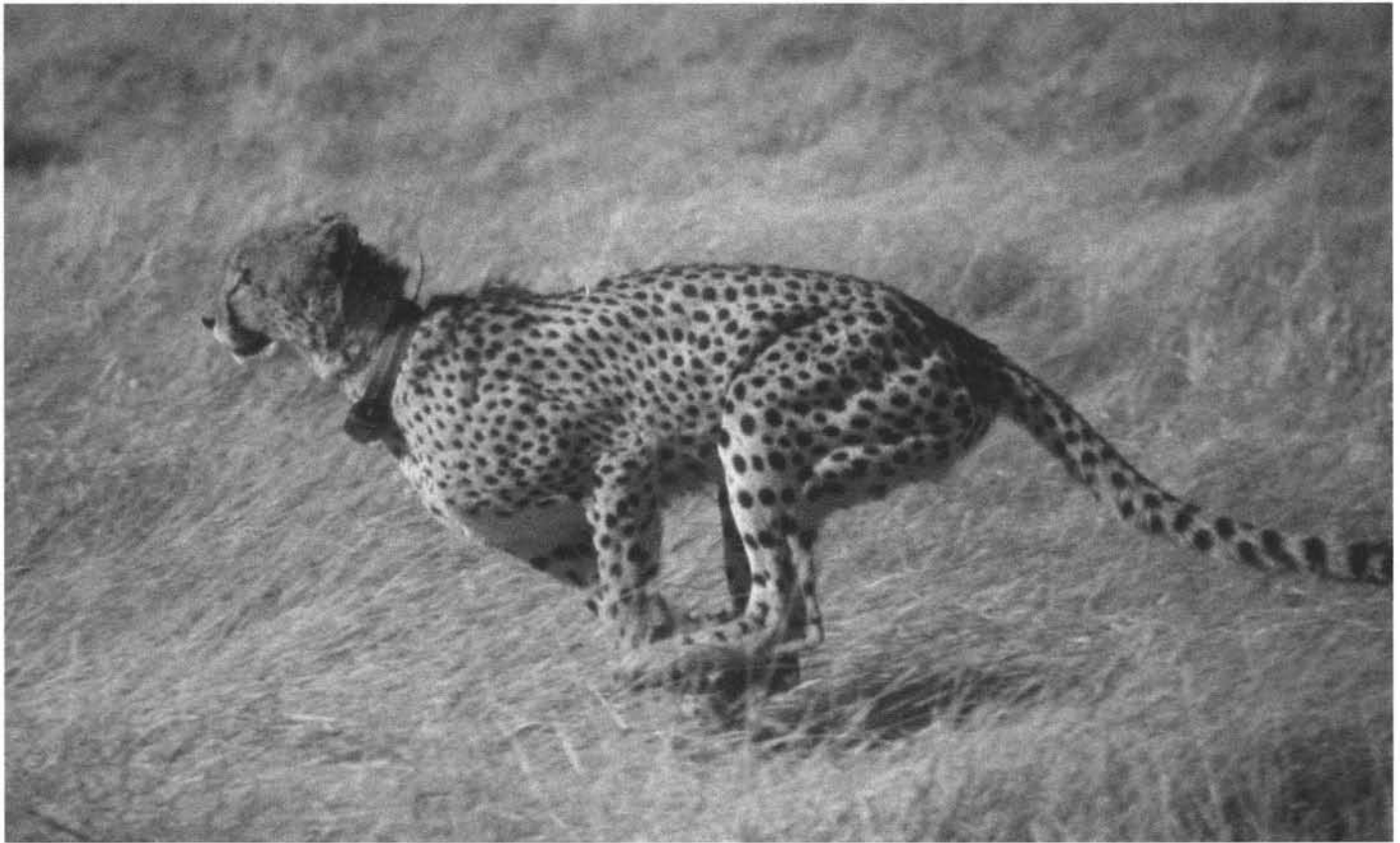
Once again, the UK Intermediate Mathematical Challenge involved a good number of Fourth and Fifth Year pupils; Abingdon's entrants won forty-six golds, thirty-nine silvers and seven bronze certificates. Nine pupils qualified for the next round: D. Atkinson, P. Brazier, E. Heaney, G. Morris, A. Mould, J. Paul, A. Pechers, D. Stewart and N. Yeung.

Sixty-five Sixth Form pupils entered the Senior mathematical Challenge, and notched up sixteen gold, twenty-one silver and twelve bronze awards. Of those winning gold, six (E. Lee, J. Mak, M. Stockwell, B. Wall, H. Wang and S. Wong) qualified for the next round, the British Mathematical Olympiad.

As usual, the Physics Olympiad competition also saw Abingdon success: B. Hancock won one of the fifty gold medals awarded nationally, and bronze awards went to M. Stockwell and G. Bailey.

In the Physics Challenge, for GCSE-level pupils, a total of two golds (of the forty-five nationally), four silvers and three bronzes was collected by Abingdon pupils. Bronze medals were awarded to W. Allen, T. Bandy and A. Lin; silvers went to B. Crundwell, J. Paul, A. Pechers and A. Robinson, and golds to E. Heaney and C. Johnson – the last named having completed the paper in bed whilst recovering from a major operation.





# Back to School

September again, and you think that  
The holidays could not have gone quicker.  
Time to dig out your dust-covered blazer,  
And start to eat custard that could not be thicker.

Away go the personal stereos,  
And out come the pencils and pens.  
Away go consoles and computers,  
You abandon your hideaway dens.

Homework is once again beckoning,  
And so is the awful school food,  
And soon, you'll be back on the buses,  
With all in a horrible mood.

The day you go back already?  
You're having a nice long lie-in,  
When your parents come in to awake you,  
Your holiday habits are chucked in the bin.

But when you finally get there,  
You find it's not bad after all.  
You catch up with all of your good friends,  
And play some great games of football.

You're getting back into the routine,  
And managing to last 'til four,  
But often before you know it,  
You're dreaming of holidays once more.

## Christmas

Christmas is a really big  
Hassle when it comes to organizing and  
Reorganizing plans.  
It is also an invitation to distant  
Samoan relations that you have never met  
To turn up on your door  
Mat!

Actually they turn out to be great fun  
Sitting getting very unsober by the fire!

## The Government's View of Beggars

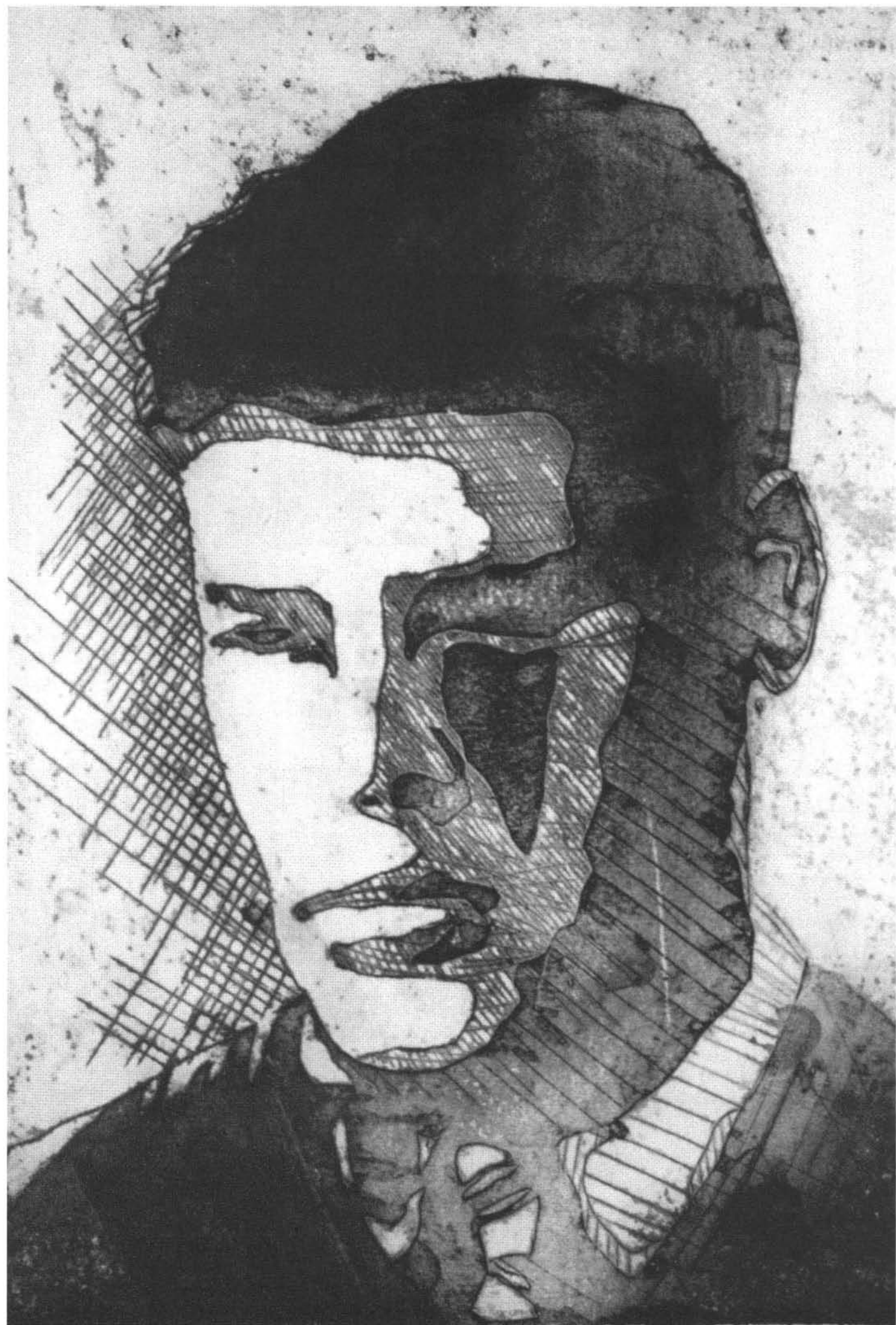
Don't spend money on those who beg,  
they'll only spend it on a beer keg.  
They carry their belongings in plastic bags,  
and all they wear are filthy rags.  
Their faces are dull and grey,  
the government wish they'd go away.  
Do not waste your emotions with pity,  
on they who lie on the pavement gritty.  
The government thinks they aren't sane,  
and spend the money on stuff to put in a vein.  
There's nothing to gain,  
by being humane.

The Bible says give to the poor,  
but in this land it applies no more.

## poetry

by **D. Emerson,**  
**O. Bennett and**  
**S. McKenney, all 2J**

**above:**  
**Namibian cheetah;**  
**photograph by**  
**E. Macdonald 6JFH**



# Heraldry at Abingdon

The history of ancient institutions such as Oxford colleges can often be read from the heraldry which ornaments their buildings; so, for example, the shield above one of the doorways of Worcester College tell us that the Benedictine monks of Abingdon Abbey sent their young men to study there in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth centuries – perhaps after attending the grammar school at the Abbey gates. Our own buildings, though relatively modern, are within this tradition, and it may be worth drawing attention to this aspect of our inheritance by way of a brief description.

Heraldry is a system for sending messages. An emblazoned shield is a statement of identity, and every element in its design and colouring carries significance to those who know how to read it: it can describe the owner's ancestry or identify a family characteristic; it can make statements about his office or estate; or it can proclaim his deeds and achievements. A shield permanently displayed states a claim: "I was here" or "This was my work."

Abingdon's heraldry is displayed mostly in the form of simple shields – that is, not surmounted by crests, or flanked by 'supporters', or surrounded by the ornamentation known as mantling, or adorned by mottos. A coat of arms fully displayed with all its appurtenances is known as an 'achievement'; every element in the achievement has its special significance, but the essential message of identity is expressed in the shield, which, therefore, stands alone. Heraldry has its own language of technical terms, mostly derived from mediaeval French, by which the various 'charges' (figures on the shield), and their 'tinctures' (colours) can be succinctly and precisely described.

Shortage of space makes it impossible for us to describe all the shields mentioned in this article, but a full account of each is lodged in the School archives.

Not surprisingly, the shield most commonly displayed around the School is that of John Roysse. A particularly fine stone carving proclaims his entire achievement from the wall of the Lodge beside the School gates; a less impressive version stands above the main doorway into Big School; a small, plain shield surmounts the foundation stone of the 1901 extension immediately below the sundial at the front of Big School. The formal description of Roysse's arms runs as follows:

*Gules, a griffen rampant and volant argent, on the shoulder for difference a rose argent seeded gold barbed vert; for crest, on a torse argent and gules, a griffen's head rased azure, about his neck a collar of roses argent barbed vert membered gold; mantled gules doubled argent.*

Interestingly, there is no Roysse shield on any of the first buildings to have been erected on the present site, in 1868-70, perhaps indicating that the Roysse cult had yet to take off at that time. However, the omission was amply made good not long afterwards when the wing containing Study Corridor was added to the north of School House in 1879-80; the northern gable of this wing displays a floridly splendid version of Roysse's shield in rubbed brick surrounded by foliage, now however largely hidden from view by later building work.

Inside what is now the Grundy Library, but was first constructed as the school-room, there is a fine variety of armorial allusions. The corbels which carry the timbers of the great roof are carved with shields as follows: (west wall from the north) Abingdon Abbey, Pembroke College, Oxford Diocese; (east wall from the south) Abingdon town, John Roysse, Christ's Hospital of Abingdon. Two of the stained glass panels which have recently been installed in the windows on the east side contain armorial bearings, those of Abingdon town (southernmost) and Sir John Mason (northernmost). Finally, the painted panels in the gallery balustrade depict the arms of (from the north) Roysse, Tesdale, Bennett (or something intended for Bennett, according to the *Abingdonian* of 1963), and Blacknall, all benefactors in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth centuries.

Three more panels are in preparation for the Grundy Library, to fill what are at present empty spaces in the balustrade: they will depict the arms of three notable headmasters – Godwyn, Jennings and Woods. (*Obiter dictum*: will it ever be possible, one wonders, to restore the Library's north window, so sadly vandalized in 1963?)

High up on the inside wall of the bell-tower, above the head of the bell-ringer as he swings on the rope, is a carving of the shield of the Mercers' Company. John Roysse would probably have approved of this, and now all the more, since his own arms have appeared in Mercers' Hall, the gift of the School. By the time that

**in a School currently looking very much to the future, it is important that we do not lose touch with our community's past. Perhaps the most tangible reminders of this past at Abingdon are the buildings and the emblems on them. In this article, the School Archivist, Mrs S. Wearne, and the Headmaster, look at the School's past as embodied in its heraldry**

**opposite:  
"self portrait"  
(collograph)  
by B. Townsend 5RSH**





**above:**  
**"landscape"**  
**(oil on board)**  
**by G. Coppock VINMR**

the School buildings began their long march eastwards from the bell-tower in 1881, Abingdon's tastes had evidently moved on from the relative austerities of the Thirteenth Century to the splendours of the Fifteenth Century, with all the heraldic display and allusion which flourished during the later Middle Ages. So it is that the lobby of Big School displays the arms of both Oxford University and Cambridge University (to the west and east respectively of the arch in the north wall), and those of Pembroke College, Oxford, and Trinity College, Cambridge, to the west and east above the doorway in the south wall. Trinity was the college of Edgar Summers, headmaster at the time that this part of the buildings was constructed.

Further to the east again, the buildings which were constructed in 1901 were elaborated with a positive efflorescence of heraldry. In what is now the Glyn Room (originally it was called the Wantage Room) the corbels of the ceiling bear the shields of Roysse (south wall), Abingdon town (east wall), Blacknall and Bennett (north wall). The three lions coupé around a bezant of the Bennett shield match the bearings on a Bennett tomb in Faringdon church. The room as originally built has been partitioned to create a small book-room, and in this annex there is one more shield on the south wall; the *Abingdonian* for 1902 assigns it,

rather confusingly, to "Young and Summers". Herbert Young had collaborated in 1895 with Edgar Summers in founding a scholarship in Mathematics and Science for the benefit of boarders.

The room above the Glyn, or Wantage Room, is the Pembroke Room, now part of the Masters' Common Room. This, too, is handsomely adorned with armorial corbels. The shields on these corbels are, from the south-west corner anti-clockwise: Tesdale, Wightwick, Dunch, Kent and Orpwood. Tesdale and Wightwick are honoured as co-founders of Pembroke College; Ann Dunch gave money to establish a scholarship for Abingdonians at Balliol, which lapsed in the Eighteenth Century. John Kent bequeathed property to Christ's Hospital in 1604 to augment the Headmaster's salary, whereupon Christ's Hospital promptly cut the salary by a corresponding amount; Thomas Orpwood was Mayor of Abingdon in 1562, when the negotiations for Roysse's re-endowment were approaching a climax.

The Chapel, built at the same time as the last mentioned rooms, but in a deliberately different style, is similarly rich in heraldry. The monogram (not a coat of arms) of Bishop Mitchinson, Chairman of Governors at the time and the Master of Pembroke College, appears on the north wall, beneath his mitre;

next to him is J.T. Morland, vice-chairman of Governors and Mayor of Abingdon in 1901; and at the western end is Archdeacon Hayward, representing the Old Abingdonians of the time. On the south wall, the arms of Lord Wantage, principal subscriber to the Chapel building fund, face Mitchinson's monogram, topped by a coronet; next comes J.H. Benyon, Lord Lieutenant of Berkshire; and finally there is the austere geometrical coat of Thomas Layng, Headmaster at the time. The Benyon shield is incorrectly tinctured, in that its two spur-rowels should be sable (black), not gules (red). More oddly, the Morland shield exhibits a distinct variation from other versions found elsewhere, in that it substitutes a leopard's face for a *fleur de lys*.

The external east wall of the Chapel bears three blank tablets, evidently intended to bear shields at some later date. A special feature of the Chapel is the set of tapestry-covered kneelers, for the sanctuary step and two clergy seats, made by "friends of the school" in 1963 in memory of Lorna Mary Cobban, much loved wife of the then Headmaster. They are described in a note which hangs on the wall nearby. The long strips on the sanctuary step bear the shields of the diocese of Oxford, Cambridge University, Oxford

University, Reading University, and the Atomic Energy Authority; the county of Berkshire, Pembroke College, Oxford, John Roysse, Christ's Hospital of Abingdon and the county of Oxfordshire; Pocklington School, Jesus College, Cambridge, Dulwich College, King's College, London, and Sydenham High School. (The Cobban family had close connections with all of the last five.) The two separate kneelers bear the arms of Abingdon Abbey and Abingdon town.

Sir James Cobban's own arms appear on a stone set on the east wall of Little School, one of the buildings which he added during his tenure. The arms of the present headmaster appear on the north front of the Amey Hall, and also on the Bath Street frontage of Mercers' Court, where they join those of John Roysse and the Mercers' Company.

Finally, by way of postscript, there are two tiny shields in the spandrels of a late Fifteenth or early Sixteenth Century door which has been imported to Lacies Court at some time, and now gives access to the foundation office. Carved in oak, one shield shows a clerical hat, or Canterbury cap, and a tun or wine-barrel, between the initials I (or J) A, while the other shows three Canterbury caps. Evidently they are punning devices: who was J.A. Hatton?

## Rhetorical questions

The well established Lower Sixth Challenge general knowledge contest provided an enjoyable, and at times exciting, attraction after the boys' return from AS examination leave in late June. There was even an element of drama when during the first heat our lights went haywire and we had to resort to hand signals.

In the final, held on July 4th in the Amey Hall in the presence of the entire Lower Sixth, 6JFB (M. Hylla and C. Manners of Crescent House, and R. Shaw and T. Worthington of Waste Court) beat 6JFH (D. Procter, A. James, J. Brockbank, and D. Prior) by 450 points to 320. The winning team were on excellent form. Despite brave efforts and some outstanding responses, 6 JFH were never in a position to catch up, let alone overtake their rivals.

Looking back at the whole competition, it was good to see that all the participants (thirty-seven boys, that is just over a quarter of the entire year group) were able to contribute to their teams' efforts and to tackle a wide range of questions. Current affairs were well answered, as were sport, science, history, classical mythology, and music. Some of the contestants were on less sure ground when dealing with the cinema, soap characters (are viewing habits changing?) and some literary topics. The overall standard was much better than last year. There were no grotesque

'howlers' this year, although the quiz master was alarmed when one member of 6JFH thought that Warsaw lay on the river Neva.

The strongest individual performers will be invited in the Michaelmas Term, after some very rigorous and demanding tests, to represent the School in the Schools Challenge competition which is played nation-wide. We very much hope that with the talent in our current Lower Sixth we can resume our strong national position in Schools Challenge in 2001-2.

Our 2000 team – made up of A. Brodie (VISAE), J. Powell (VIGCR), O. Thompson and M-L. Jones (4AMS) – showed great spirit and energy but were decisively defeated in the first heat by Radley (1020-590). The two Fourth Years showed great promise nonetheless and may yet make their mark in the Schools Challenge.

The 2001 Public Speaking competition was as usual a fiercely competitive affair. The Lower School contest was won by 2W (J. Swarbrick, A. Francis and E. Wilson); the victorious Third Year team were Garnier's (P. Stern, E. Rowett and J. Dingwall), and in the Fourth/Fifth Year the final was won by Mearns' (D. Madden, S. Winearls and M. Burnard). The Upper School title was taken by Fishpool's, with a team comprising J. Margree, S. Evans and P. Taylor.

**a report on the annual public speaking and general knowledge competitions organized by WHZ**

# Service activities

## Community service

This has been a year of strong commitment. Twenty-five Sixth Form pupils have helped in local primary schools and the Kingfisher School for the disabled, and have expanded the curriculum at two schools by providing Latin at Dunmore and football at Thameside. On two days of the week the Carswell after-school club was staffed by Upper Sixth boys who would have been offered permanent jobs had circumstances permitted.

### reports by

**A. Aggarwal 6APS,  
N. Evans 6DJTF,  
S. Vaughan 6DH,  
A. Peychers 5SH,  
T. Daffern 5CJB,  
L. Dickinson 5MMH,  
introduced by MMH**

A. Aggarwal has been one of those helping as a teacher for younger pupils at a nearby school:

Every Thursday lunchtime for two hours I go to St. Edmund's Roman Catholic primary school, acting as a teaching assistant to a class of ten and eleven year olds. I perform various tasks, such as individual teaching to children with learning difficulties. I have also taught groups of children subjects including English, Maths, Science and the basic use of computers, helping them to boost their performance in class or prepare them for their examinations.

It is extremely rewarding to see the children learn and progress as a result of my actions and therefore for me to know that I have made a difference in their lives and education. Over the year I have seen individuals who, to begin with, had immense problems with a subject but now had a better understanding owing to my explanation. In some cases I have had to re-learn areas of a subject: for example, when teaching Maths to young pupils you cannot use a calculator, which in A level Maths I am completely reliant upon. This year has been thoroughly enjoyable and I intend to return next year to the same school with a new set of children.

**The Lower Sixth have also provided voluntary help each day at Abingdon Community Hospital. N. Evans is one of them:**

The hospital is not an accident and emergency hospital, but instead looks after elderly patients who need regular medical attention and care. It provides a good opportunity for the potential medics among us to get a real taste of one of the less appealing aspects of patient care. If you think that it is anything like *ER* then you are looking in the wrong place, but if you want go out and put something back into the community, read on...

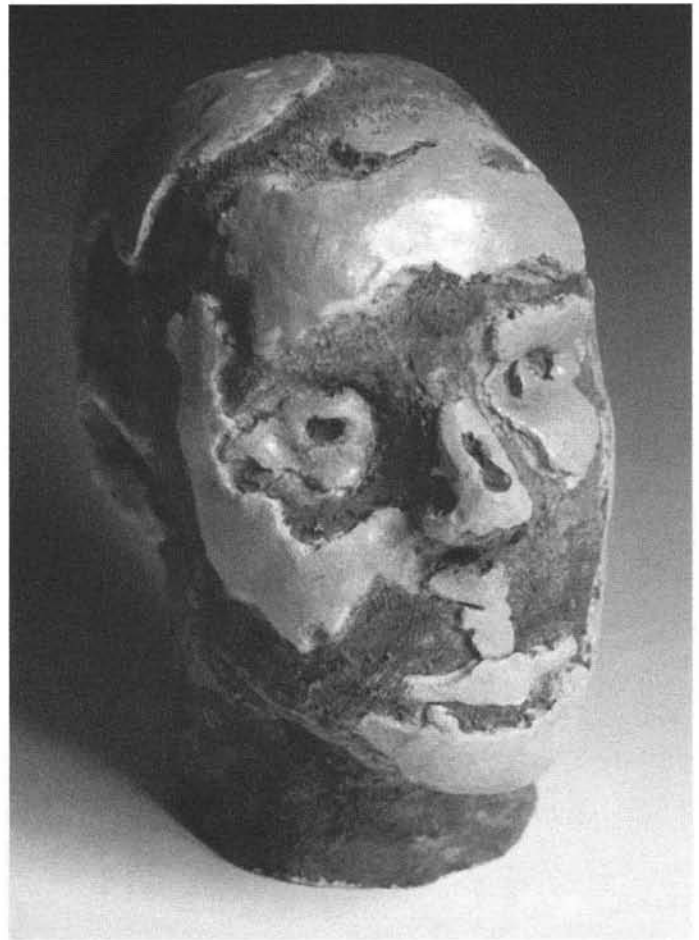
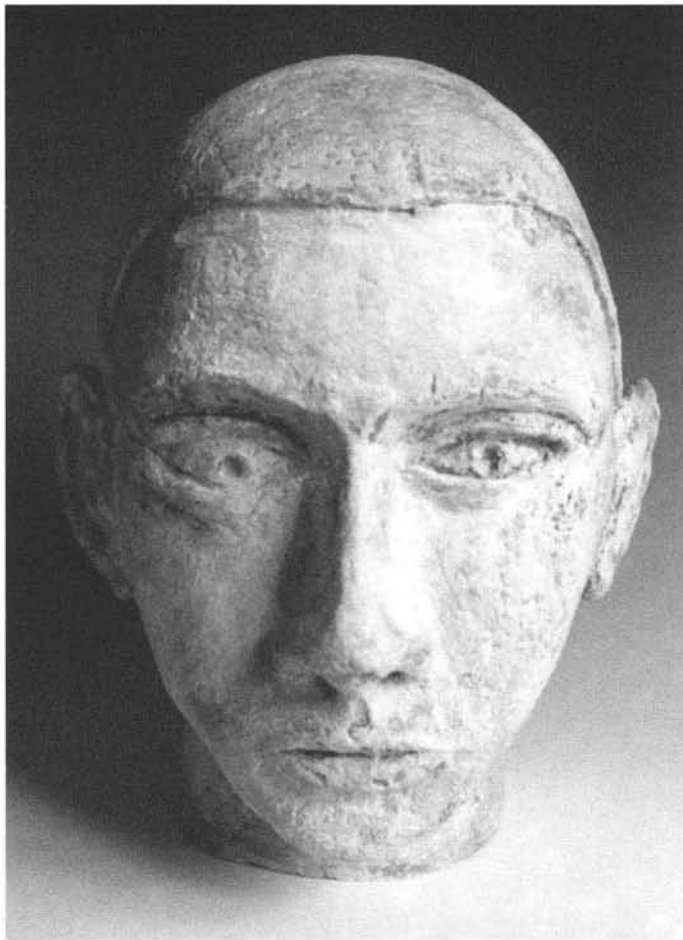
The visitor's main duty is very basic and straightforward. As long as you can hold a conversation, you are what the hospital needs. As anyone who has stayed in a hospital will know, it can get boring very quickly. The patients are eager to talk to anyone who comes along, and most enjoy chatting. It is genuinely surprising how much the patients enjoy talking about their lives and experiences. It is also surprising how much we get out of talking to them.

Whilst talking takes up most of our time at the hospital, it is not the only thing which you can do. Many patients have been stuck inside for days and are thankful for someone to wheel them around outside in a wheelchair. Others may need help reading or want someone to play a game of cards with. Again, if you can do these things, you are more than qualified. You do not need to be a particular type of person; anyone can do it. Nor do you have to be the most caring person since Mother Teresa, but if you can talk to someone about the merits of Oxford United or share your views on what is happening in the news, you can brighten up someone's day.

So, what do you get out of helping at the hospital? Some of the above may sound boring to you. It does look boring when you write it down on paper. However, it is a completely different thing when you are there and seeing the results of your actions. Listening to the old army sergeant and talking about the war makes the patient forget about his illness, and he begins to enjoy himself. Seeing the patients improve as you talk to them is a difficult feeling to describe but it makes you feel good about yourself. If you want to make a difference by making others feel better, and in doing so have the same effect on yourself, then there is no better way.

Ultimately, it is this feeling of having given something back to the community which makes it all seem worthwhile.





**S. Vaughan has also helped at the Hospital:**

Every Wednesday I visit the elderly at Abingdon Community Hospital. Usually I visit both wards every other week, but normally I just ask if there is anyone who does not get many visitors.

Sometimes we have a talk about the weather and hobbies, things like that. A few people who have broken hips or legs do not get out much so they welcome going for a quick stroll outside in a wheelchair. Also I have played some cards with the patients and once I played chess.

**Mrs Marshall, the former Common Room Secretary, wrote recently:**

Thank the boys so much for their hospital visits. It made all the difference to my father when he was ill. They really cheered him up.

The Lower Sixth also help at the Day Centre in the Charter, and a number of boys have visited elderly residents in their own homes. Twenty Fifth Year boys have made regular visits to the elderly and arranged afternoon tea parties, with first-class entertainment. A. Peychers, for example, has visited Fountain Court in Abingdon:

I am one of a merry band of helpers, which include the enthusiastic J. Fisher with sidekick J. Buchan, who trek over to Fountain Court each Tuesday to provide a

source of youthful entertainment for the elderly people there. At the start of the year, we had only three senior members in the team, but in no time we had managed to lure many others into the group, with tempting promises of bingo and an exciting *Who Wants To Be A Millionaire?*-style quiz, provided by our quiz-master, J. Fisher.

Within no time, one of the more lively elderly members was providing his own very 'varied' quiz in an attempt to rival the previously-undisputed quiz-master, and some new games were added to the activities on offer, though unfortunately we had to turn down one elderly person's plea for 'Twister'. A second session on a Friday was even organized for the keener members, though we soon found it easier to revert to having just the one visit on Tuesday again.

There is always much friendly discussion to go with our tea and biscuits, and I find myself really looking forward to going back there again each week.

Fifth Year pupils have also been visiting the residents of Nicholson House, as T. Daffern and L. Dickinson here explain:

Every Wednesday afternoon a team of boys travels down to Nicholson House to participate in our weekly activity. We usually spend around two hours at the old people's home, playing a variety of games, including the most popular, whist. Many people have no idea how to play whist; however, it is a very simple game and is quickly picked up by new volunteers and long-

**above left:**  
"portrait" (ceramic)  
by N. Rogers 5AJPE

**above right:**  
"portrait" (ceramic)  
by J. Lewis 5CJB



**above left:**  
**"personal box"**  
**(mixed media)**  
**by D. Rowley 6JEF**

**above right:**  
**"personal box"**  
**(mixed media)**  
**by M. Reyner 6DH**



standing residents. Occasionally we play pool with the residents whilst drinking tea and chatting to them. This is all relatively simple and requires little effort on our part, but it is clear that this insignificant visit brings great pleasure to the residents and breaks up the monotony of everyday life.

We also help at a games afternoon on a Saturday every month so as to give the residents something to look forward to. A variety of games are played, including whist, scrabble, dominoes, *Yahtzee* and many more. It only lasts a few hours, with tea and a few cakes to keep you going. Once again, the residents enjoy the experience and look forward to it.

Last Christmas we held a special event, a Christmas party for the residents. Some of them did not have homes or families to go to and the Christmas party which we provided was simple but fun for all. We started the festivities by eating the selection of sandwiches prepared for us by the kitchen staff at School. After this we had a quiz and gave out prizes to the winners. Then we did several rounds of bingo, awarding prizes as before. Finally we ate some Christmas cake and drank some tea before singing carols and returning to School to catch the bus home.

To thank the residents for their hospitality at Christmas we later held a party at the School for all of them. As with the party at Christmas, this was a great success. We began with sandwiches, hot sausage rolls and a selection of drinks. We then had two quizzes, one on music and one on general knowledge. This was followed by another tray-load of food, this time a selection of cakes. Then we sang a number of songs

and talked with the guests. We finished the evening with a raffle and some more prizes.

Our visitors said that they had enjoyed themselves immensely and welcomed and enjoyed our visits. This small donation of time and effort makes all the difference to these people and we enjoy ourselves as much as they do. There are always vacancies, so do not hesitate to join up; we have not regretted it.

Tea parties have now become a termly event, skilfully organized by J. Fisher and J. Buchan, with M. Chilcott, N. Shaikh and N. Hawken providing first-class musical entertainment. As one of our guests said to us:

We enjoy your visits, we are pleased to be here, and we like to see the boys having such a good time putting on the entertainment. This is good fun.

Finally, two Fifth Year pupils deserve special mention for three years' consistently reliable service. J. Anderson entered the School determined to offer some form of service, and his ideas, drive and enthusiasm have formed the bedrock of the Middle School activity which flourishes today, with over sixty boys involved on a regular or occasional basis. W. Horwitz has been unobtrusively supportive of all the Middle School community service activities over three years, and has been quick to spot the essential ingredients of a successful entertainment. He has shown flair as an entrepreneur, and has recently turned his hand to gardening.

# Charities

The year's fund-raising got off to an excellent start with the biennial sponsored walk in September. This mammoth event involved everybody in the School. Having been dropped off at Donnington Bridge by a fleet of Tappins coaches (kindly provided free of charge), the walkers undertook the eight mile trek along the tow-path back to School. The weather held out just long enough; those who were starting to flag half-way were revitalized by a barbecue at Radley boathouse, where pupils who had expected to get out of walking by having limbs in various stages of disrepair had helped a team of staff to cook about two thousand hot dogs and burgers. With a crack force of prefects marshalling, there was little chance of getting lost (though the least said about the First Year who ended up in Sutton Courtenay the better). The grand total collected came to £15,300, which was divided between Action for Kids, Farms for City Children, Help the Aged, the John Grooms Association, Sobell House and the House of Joy project in Romania.

October gave the boys the chance to lock up a member of staff in Abingdon police station to raise funds for Barnado's. MDM, SH, SPD, AMB, RSH, BJLS, WTP, NWH, TLW and KJS were generous (or foolish) enough to put themselves to the vote, and the boys voted by donating cash. It soon became clear that we had a two-horse race on our hands, as SH and SPD vied for top spot. SPD was under the delusion that this was a popularity contest and so, to ensure victory, said that he would be arrested in drag if he 'won'. This clearly caught the boys' imagination, and SPD was the runaway winner with 52% of the vote. The police van duly turned up and in front of a large crowd the villain(ess?) was led away, despite a valiant bid for freedom in which he was hampered by his wig and high heels. Photographic evidence exists of his incarceration, and over £600 was raised.

In the last week of term jam doughnut sales made a comeback and, together with a sponsored fast by K. Thyagaraja, raised £500 for Breadline, which works with the poor in Eastern Europe. Through this charity the School now has links with No. 4 School at Ialoveni in Moldova, which is desperately under-funded. It is hoped that each house will take turns to raise money for this school as a long-term project. To give some idea of the difference which our money can make, a teacher's annual salary in Moldova is £350.

The Lent Term began with a charity jazz and blues concert entitled "One Night Only" at St. Helen's. This event, organized by W. Gervers and other Sixth Form pupils, featured former pupils of both schools and a guest appearance by JHT. The audience was treated to a superb night's entertainment. Collections from other concerts were added to the takings from the night and £2,200 was sent to Imperial Cancer Research.

During the Lent Half Term the CCF raised £500 for the Gurkha Welfare Trust by having their adventurous training and recruit weekend sponsored. This money was used to build a new block of latrines, opened in May, at Sunwal Primary School in Nepal.

A book fair in the Library, organized by GJC, had the aims of encouraging boys to read on World Book Day and raising funds for the charity Book Aid, which supplies books to developing countries. In both objectives it was successful and £300 was sent off.

The rest of the term was dominated by sporting events. A staff against Fifth Year football match led to a 1-1 draw and £250 being raised for Cancer and Leukaemia in Children, and the annual five-a-side tournament in which about 300 boys took part raised £800 for meningitis research. The coveted Richard Anderson Cup was won by an Upper Sixth team, the "Thundercats". The next day saw the road relay, which was used by various houses to raise money: Garnier's netted £400 for Breadline, Drummond-Hay's over £600 for multiple sclerosis research, and the Lower School £250 for the ARCH project in Cameroon.

The Summer Term saw a new event, a tug-of-war tournament. Each house entered Middle and Upper School teams and despite some fierce opposition, both events were won by the extremely well-drilled teams from Drummond-Hay's. A separate competition for the Lower School was won by the team representing 2J. The event raised £500 for Douglas House, a new hospice for young people being built in Oxford.

After Half Term a summer fête was organized by the boarders. All the traditional stalls were there – 'Bash the Rat', 'Aunt Sally', a coconut shy – as were some more unusual ones including the chance to be photographed as the Headmaster and the opportunity to drench certain members of staff with wet sponges. TLW and WTP proved particularly popular. The weather was very kind and an excellent time was had by all (apart from TLW and WTP, of course); a total of £1200 was raised and divided between charities chosen by the boarders: Actionaid in Ghana (Waste Court), Bart's Hearts (School House) and the Six Counties Kidney Patients' Association (Crescent).

In the last week, collections after the Lower School Gala Concert and a production of *The Real Inspector Hound* netted £315 for diabetes charities, whilst Mearns' undertook a football competition to support Breadline and our school in Moldova. In addition, two year-long projects – a doughnut sale by Wilmore's for the NSPCC, and the Lower School tuck shop in aid of Douglas House and the Cornelius project in Kazakhstan – raised £295 and £405 respectively.

The grand total raised by the School this academic year was over £25,500, an absolutely superb figure and a great tribute to the boys' hard work.

**a report on this year's superb fund-raising efforts, by AJJ, who modestly fails to mention his own pivotal rôle in making it all happen**



# Amey Hall technical crew

Most readers will know that Abingdon and St. Helen's took a very successful production of Stephen Sondheim's *Sweeney Todd* to the Edinburgh Festival Fringe in the summer of 2000. This is not the story of that production, but rather of the leap of faith, the journeying and the physical hard slog which got us there and back again, relatively unscathed but changed for ever by the experience.

**CJB and his unsung heroes in the Amey Hall technical crew excelled themselves last summer; here at last CJB reveals the secret of how they managed it**

The decision was hatched during and following a rather good supper hosted by JHT. His enthusiasm was infectious, and in a few brief moments we had committed ourselves to taking a cast of over sixty boys and girls, a full orchestra, technical crew, staff, set, costumes, furniture, props and everything else something over four hundred miles and performing for a week in an as yet unknown venue. This memorable evening set in train extraordinary months of preparation, during which the pace denied us any time in which to contemplate the scale of our madness. This was probably a good thing, for had we indulged in self-doubt we might easily have been tempted to use Sweeney's razor on ourselves rather than go through with it.

The venue was found: a converted former church, incapable of supporting the complex technical requirements of the production. Budgets were tight. We could not hire additional equipment locally at Festival rates. So we would just strip everything out of the Amey Hall and take it with us; simple, really. We would need to extend the stage: take it with us. We would need extra tracks and curtains: take them with us. We would need to provide music stands and lights and an orchestra 'pit' – can you guess how?

It was now that rough calculations about logistics were done. How much did we have? How big was it? What did it all weigh? How big a lorry can you hire and drive without an HGV licence? We produced some answers – partly inspired guesswork – and pressed on in the belief that somehow we would manage. The set was re-built in the Amey Hall during the last week of the Summer Term, modified to fit the new venue, carefully marked, taken apart, and stored. The Hall was stripped of lighting and sound equipment and much more. All went into store, to be joined by furniture, props and costume.

On August 3rd I went into Oxford early to collect a large-bodied lorry, and met the first of many volunteer Technical Crew members who helped with the loading throughout the day. It took three attempts, but we finally loaded what we hoped was everything. A short test-drive proved that the vehicle would actually go provided that you did not mind the groaning noises when the body rubbed against the cab.

Carpet underlay and 'gaffer' tape did the trick, not the last time that the magic 'gaffer' was to come to our aid during this adventure. The next day we drove up surprisingly easily – but it was long and slow.

At this point the pace quickened somewhat. The lorry and Technical Crew were an advance party and they now had approximately sixty hours to produce a musical-ready theatre before the cast arrived. More importantly, the stage, set, technical installations and audience areas of the venue had to be inspected by the City Council and the Fire Service and passed for public performance. Our sixty hours theoretically included sleep, but no one can remember getting very much. The inspection loomed. No certificate meant no show. We had to pass. We did.

Having leaped this hurdle with what seemed like a rather superhuman bound, the rest of the show week was something of a doddle. Of course there were many last-minute adjustments and quite a lot of maintenance during the run to keep everything going smoothly. The Crew were so up to speed that they were almost flying by this stage, and I knew that whatever occurred it would be handled without panic.

This crew, containing many seniors on their last production, together with some inspired juniors, really was a vintage group. Their quality showed best at the end. With the show over and a slight anti-climax setting in, the cast and orchestra departed for Abingdon by coach. Many slept for much of the journey. The Crew had twelve hours to get everything out of the venue and into the lorry and the building returned to a frankly better state than when we had taken it over. We did sleep that night – well, some of it – and did the long drive back the next day. Back in Abingdon, the unpacking, reinstallation of equipment into the Hall and return of things to London and Stratford was to take almost a week. Discounting the months of preparation the enterprise had effectively eaten up four weeks of our lives. We had lived, breathed and occasionally slept *Sweeney Todd* during that time and we were all changed by it. Despite the fatigue, which was extreme at times, I can personally say that my abiding emotion is exhilaration. This was simply the most completely fulfilling extra-curricular School achievement which I have been involved in.



## The CCF's year

It is always a tremendous pleasure at the end of the year to record the successes of Abingdon's cadets and to pay tribute to those who have achieved particular notoriety and to thank those who have made it all possible. This year is no exception; the list is endless.

We have welcomed several new additions to the staff this year: Flt/Lt. David Temple joined Flt/Lt. Hullis in the RAF Section and Capt. Carson is now ably assisted by Capt. Parker, who takes Lt. English's place in the Army Section.

Despite the disastrous effects of the foot and mouth outbreak, dissolving any plans for British training in the latter half of the year, we have still managed to maintain a full and very varied training programme, and some very successful overseas ventures. Last year's Bavarian extravaganza was matched by this year's overseas national RAF camp in Cyprus, and the summer's Army camp in Germany. On both occasions, as usual, Abingdon's cadets took their ambassadorial role seriously and acquitted themselves very well.

The Easter break also saw cadets on camp at RAF Cosford once again, on a varied and exciting visit led by Flt/Lt. Temple. The RAF Section came tenth in the national 'Assegai' shooting competition, hardly surprising given that all but three cadets attained .22 marksman standard this year. There has been a frightening exodus into the air, too. Cadets from Abingdon have gained more gliding scholarships to solo standard and more hours of air experience flying than I can ever remember.

C/Sgt. R. Garside will this summer represent us at the international cadet camp in Banff, Canada, and F/Sgt. B. Hancock will be taking part in the International Air Cadet Exchange to America this summer, too. Both of these wonderful and well deserved trips will afford the boys experiences which they will never forget.

Sadly, this summer RQMS McCreedy leaves us after innumerable years of service to Abingdon CCF. "Mac" has seen us through good times and bad over the years and has been the most stunning example to the boys. His unfaltering good humour and common sense shine through, but most importantly he makes it a priority to see our cadets succeed and takes tremendous pride in their achievements. He has been invaluable and I have much to be tremendously grateful to him for. There are few people more deserving of a good rest.

As this is also my last term, I would like to record my gratitude to all the staff and cadets with whom I have had the pleasure of working. I will take with me some very fond and vivid memories of exercises and camps, of characters and of places. Most especially, my thanks go to CJB for his wise counsel, to SH and DJMC, both excellent, enthusiastic and supportive section commanders, and to Mac, friend and failsafe. I wish the CCF every success in the future.

**as DH leaves the Contingent, he reflects on a difficult but fulfilling year**

**above:  
CCF on a misty Dartmoor in February;  
photograph by  
G. Smith 4BJLS**



# H.M.S. Middleton

**the Captain of HMS Middleton, an Old Abingdonian, kindly offered pupils of the School the opportunity to go to sea on July 9th last year. They were led by AJPE.**

Old Abingdonian Lieutenant Commander R.K. Thomas, Captain of HMS *Middleton*, generously offered Abingdon boys a chance to go to sea on board his ship just after the end of the last Summer Term. All six boys were members of Abingdon's CCF.

HMS *Middleton*, a minehunter, left Two Basin, Portsmouth Dockyards at 1000. She sailed primarily with the purpose of providing training for members of the Royal Naval Reserve; so, besides enjoying a detailed tour, we also had an opportunity to witness these part-time sailors being put through their paces.

The ship's routines were fascinating to observe, particularly the careful navigation procedures, the detailed formal briefings, and the rigorously observed courtesies which were paid as we passed other vessels and significant shore-based naval establishments. For the latter purpose the cadets formed up on deck and stood to attention according to unfamiliar naval drill.

The tour of the ship took us to most of the areas within its fibre-glass hull, from the sleeping quarters and messes to the small armoury, where the boys had a chance to see a number of less familiar weapons stripped for cleaning. Over lunch an artificial singing fish caused some amusement when a cadet pressed its vital button, but a shout from below left us in no doubt that its performing days would soon be over.

A man-overboard exercise which we witnessed later was not perfect. On the first attempt at rescue the ship sailed straight past the hapless dummy, which therefore had to wait for the ship to turn again before an inflatable could be lowered and its sixteen-stone weight heaved out of the water.

An equally dramatic firefighting exercise demonstrated all the various stages in tackling a fire of escalating seriousness. The last stage involved a team of men and women, dressed in dense woollen suits and wearing breathing apparatus, hauling a hose down through the hatches in order to tackle the imaginary blaze below.

While we were all on deck, the Captain carefully explained the design of the ship, which is fabricated wherever possible from non-metallic materials in order to reduce its magnetic signature. He also described the use of the various huge floats, winches and cranes which we could see around us. The armaments which the ship relied upon were comparatively light, just one gun mounted on the foredeck, but this, we were assured, made a sufficient impact in the course of the vessel's fishery protection duties.

Before we departed, an Abingdon shield was presented by Cpl. H. Feather in gratitude for a fine day spent in the company of the Royal Navy.



# Alexandria and Imjin

On April 7th our parent regiment, the Royal Gloucestershire, Berkshire and Wiltshire Regiment, held a commemorative event to mark the two hundredth anniversary of the Battle of Alexandria and the fiftieth anniversary of the Battle of the Imjin River during the Korean War. The Battle of Alexandria saw the then 28th (North Gloucester) Regiment perform the unprecedented task of firing both to its front and rear, thus gaining the right to wear a 'back badge' on its head-dress. The Battle of the Imjin River is famous as the occasion where 'the Gloucesters' came under heavy attack from a numerically superior force and earned a reputation for great bravery, as well as a Victoria Cross.

The day began with an inspection by the Dukes of Edinburgh and Gloucester. As we were the only CCF to attend this event, our presence was much appreciated and commented upon. After this parade there was a service to commemorate the dead and the heroes of the battles. We then returned to the square in front of the cathedral and joined in a march-past through the city, with a band playing and cheers and

clapping from the large crowd. Next we went off for a well-earned meal in a huge marquee, attended by the Duke of Edinburgh.

However, the day's real triumph was still to come. When lunch ended, we entered the cadet competition, the Copenhagen Challenge. It was wet and cold, and rugby matches had just been played over the same turf. The course itself was particularly easy except for one of the obstacles, a length of tape four or five feet above the ground, with only a plank provided to get over it. Just before the start we were alerted to the fact that our team was supposed to include at least three female cadets; fortunately, Army logic did not prevail and we were allowed to enter.

Although we finished behind both Gloucestershire and Wiltshire ACFs, on points we emerged clear winners and were presented with medals and an expensive trophy by the Duke of Gloucester.

We would like to thank Lt. Ocock for his support, insights and marshalling, as well as R. Holman (OA) for turning out in his spare time to make up numbers and join the winning team.

**a report on the Royal Gloucestershire, Berkshire and Wiltshire Regiment's double commemorative day in Gloucester, on April 7th, by A. Watson 5CJB**

**opposite: HRH The Duke of Edinburgh inspects Abingdon's cadets (from left, T. Garside, A. Watson and T. Jackson); photograph courtesy "The Citizen", Gloucester**

# Westdown recruit weekend

Camps have been dramatically curtailed by the foot and mouth outbreak; the contingent was lucky to go training on Salisbury Plain on the last weekend before all training areas were closed down 'for the duration'.

On the first weekend of the February half term a section of recruits and cadets departed for Westdown camp on Salisbury Plain. For the first night the cadets each had to do an hour's 'stag' in the guardhouse to guard against anything from real IRA terrorist attacks to fires, armed only with a Maglite and a Motorola radio. The hour was spent walking around the small camp in ludicrously low temperatures or listening to the acute snoring of the officers next door.

Early next morning, after being awoken by the cadets on stag, we formed up in front of the Mess. After eating the usual army fry-up, the cadets and recruits separated for training.

The recruits learned Camouflage and Concealment (the art of hiding in a bush), and later had an introduction to patrolling and camp craft. The rest of us, the Advanced Infantry (AI) section, disappeared into a small copse to hone our skills for the Stowe Patrol competition in a fortnight's time (though this was cancelled owing to foot and mouth disease). We were also taught a few new tricks which

were not on the cadet training syllabus. After practising our patrolling, during which we were attacked by the local hunt, we returned to camp for the evening meal before heading out to the training area for a night exercise. The first part of this involved sitting on a large mound talking in loud voices, playing enemy for the recruits.

Next, the team for the Stowe competition spent the rest of the night in the freezing cold. The following morning we returned to camp for breakfast. After eating, the recruits set off for an ambush with Flt/Lt. Hullis. This was the first time they fired blanks, a new experience for them.

The AI section set off on the second half of the exercise to practise patrolling, which ended up with a huge section attack on the two Garside brothers. After winning the firefight and completing our objective, we returned to camp for the mammoth job of leaving it cleaner than we had found it. Later in the afternoon we boarded our coach and began the long journey back to School after an enjoyable weekend.

**a report on the Westdown recruit weekend, February 16th to 17th, by T. Jackson 5SPO**

# Paderborn

Army central camp in the summer is usually staged at a training area in Britain, jointly with other contingents from around the country. This year, Abingdon CCF army section cadets (together with three RAF section hangers-on) flew out to Germany to join one of the British units still stationed there, 20th Armoured Brigade. This opportunity to see some of the most modern and impressive vehicles in today's army made quite a change from the usual run of camps, as one of those involved explains.

**a report on the CCF's  
camp with the 20th  
Armoured Brigade at  
Paderborn in Germany,  
July 16th-23rd, by  
G. "Teddy Bear" Cooke  
6APS**

We arrived at the 20th Armoured Brigade barracks on the Monday afternoon, and were immediately sent to a briefing. The general outline of the camp programme was given and we were split into groups. Each group was assigned a regular Army NCO, who would be its instructor and supervisor for the week. The rest of the evening was devoted to sorting out our kit and having dinner, which provided us with our first shock of the week: the mess was fifteen minutes' march from our sleeping-quarters...

The second shock was that this was not just to be a CCF camp: pupils from a British school in Germany were also joining us, even though they were too young to be in the CCF and had received none of the training which we take for granted. This affected what we were able to do on the camp, and meant that some of our normal activities – such as blank-firing and live shooting – were not possible.

We were woken at some ridiculous hour the next day for breakfast, after which we moved on to the assault course. After a warm-up which was considerably more strenuous than the assault course itself, we were shown how to attack each obstacle before being split down into groups of eight. Unfortunately, owing to the presence of the younger children every group contained at least one person under four feet tall. We then raced around in the fastest time possible. I am delighted to be able to announce that "Cookie's Clan" came top of the platoon.

We moved on to map-reading and orienteering, which involved three instructional stands followed by a competition. Sgt. Brads, Sgt. Cooke, Cpl. Watson and Cpl. Persaud all deserve mention here for scoring over 350 points despite penalties of 210 points for lateness; I shall not embarrass the four who scored only ten points without any penalties – they know who they are. The evening involved command tasks; it still remains a mystery to me how the person in charge of one task expected the shortest, yet heaviest, member of the section to get over a seven-foot "electric" fence unaided...

The next day we visited the Royal Engineers and played about with various bits of machinery, including

an amphibious carrier for Challenger 2 tanks (which weigh sixty-two tons) and a bridging unit. Despite the confident promises which he made, the driver of an armoured personnel carrier (APC) did not make anyone sick, but he did manage to break one of the supposedly "squaddie-proof" vehicles, which was quite an achievement. In the afternoon we went into Hameln (of Pied Piper fame).

Thursday was exercise day (and night), and we were all fairly pleased at being able to get out into the field – back home, foot and mouth disease had made this impossible for some time. We were, however, somewhat surprised to hear that we would be sleeping in tents, and even more so when we were told that we would be pulled out if it rained; Abingdon School cadets are used to somewhat more spartan operating conditions. When we then discovered that we would not even be allowed rifles, we were left in a state of shock. Even so, it was still quite fun, and the addition of television crews interviewing various people and recording us in action added an extra element. The first stand was quite interesting as fake blood was spurted all over my face (at the time of writing it had still not come off). Other activities included anti-tank simulators, signals, and camouflage and concealment. When night came on, we went on patrol and were ambushed. This was dealt with easily as we had practised it earlier. As a result we were able to get our heads down reasonably early; congratulations to those who refused to sleep in tents and slept outside.

The following morning involved a trip to see the Royal Artillery, again consisting of simulators and vehicle demonstrations. The highlight of the day was undoubtedly the time spent at the Royal Engineer training centre, however, where we destroyed concrete blocks with a variety of different power tools.

On Saturday, we again went round different stands, playing around with a selection of vehicles from Challenger 2 tanks to Warrior APCs. The afternoon saw an attack demonstration involving tanks, Warriors firing their "chain guns", infantry and the like in a fairly impressive show. This complete, we headed off to the cinema to see *The Mummy 2* – this



was distinctly less impressive, however, and seemed to be a compilation of other films (we made it twelve) – mocking it incessantly kept morale up.

The final day consisted of water-sports and adventure-training. Activities included raft-building, sailing, wind-surfing, mountain-biking, trips to the Mohne Dam of “Dambusters” fame, and many more. The only disappointment was the so-called powerboat, which was easily outpaced by canoes.

The return journey was nearly ruined when we missed our flight home; fortunately, Capt. Carson managed to get us seats on the next flight out, and we all arrived back home safely. The camp had certainly been action-packed (I have not mentioned all that we got up to by any means) and our thanks must of course go to Capt. Carson and Lt. Ocock for organizing the trip, and to our hosts 20th Armoured Brigade for looking after us so well.

**above:**  
**D. Persaud 5SPO**  
**and C. Brads 6APS**  
**relax on an AS90**  
**self-propelled gun;**  
**photograph by DJMC**



# Drama

## A year of new horizons



**this year's drama reports are introduced by JHT**

**above: "The Hypochondriac"; photograph courtesy of JHT**

This year's drama programme was marked by travel and new experiences of locations beyond the School. It began in August with the production of Stephen Sondheim's *Sweeney Todd* at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe. Later in the year, a group visited Paris to see the work of Peter Brook, a leading British director. In July, Lower School pupils took their production of *The Code of the Woosters* to Claydon House in Buckinghamshire. All these trips offered pupils exciting opportunities to learn about drama in different environments and to meet new audiences.

Other events and achievements deserve to be recorded, many of which also involved travel. Shortly after the Edinburgh Fringe run, J. Margree's first play – *Working Title* – was successfully performed in Oxford at the Old Fire Station Theatre. It was an entirely independent venture by a company of Abingdonians and Old Abingdonians called the "Fat Tree Theatre Company", featuring D. Benoliel, J. Margree, Rosie Emanuel, J. Eaton, N. Brewer, C. Mason and W. Bartlett, with director M. Bartlett and producer P. Luscombe.

Abingdonians have been making their mark at other theatrical venues in Oxford as well. O. Higginbottom and J. Swarbrick featured prominently in Oxford Youth Theatre's production of *The Tempest* staged at the Pegasus Theatre in March this year, whilst a significant number of Abingdon actors once again found their way into Oxford Youth Music Theatre's annual production.

In December, news reached us that J. Wilson had been successful in winning a place at the prestigious Central School of Speech and Drama in London. He joins a growing number of Abingdonians who have opted to pursue professional training courses in the craft of performance.

The year ended with another burst of activity from Fat Tree Theatre Company. Its members gave three performances of Tom Stoppard's *The Real Inspector Hound* in the Amey Hall at the start of July to raise money for a further production of *Working Title* – now re-titled *How to Lose Friends and Irritate People* – at the Gilded Balloon Theatre as part of the Edinburgh Fringe in August, 2001.

# The Hypochondriac

*The Hypochondriac* was Molière's last play. First performed in Paris in 1673 with Molière himself in the leading role of Argan, it tells the story of a man who imagines himself so prone to illness that he tries to make his daughter marry a doctor. Ironically, Molière was suffering from tuberculosis, and collapsed and died shortly after the fourth performance.

Happily, no such misfortune attended any of the actors in this production, featuring senior pupils under the direction of SF. Most of the principal parts were played by A level Theatre Studies students, for whom *The Hypochondriac* was a prescribed text. However, there were plenty of opportunities for performers with no attachment to curriculum drama: many found their niche in the rarely performed *Prologue* and the *Interludes* which frame the three acts.

That this was a play with a medical theme was immediately apparent. On arrival, the audience was confronted by a stage the colour of dried blood, flanked by screens adorned with CJB's beautifully painted illustrations of human anatomy. A hint of the comedy to come was supplied by an enormous pair of buttocks painted on two doors at centre stage. These made an appropriate backdrop (no pun intended) to Argan's endless talk of laxatives, whilst also suggesting Molière's attitude to the doctors of his day, which the prologue at once made plain.

*Doctors, you're rogues, own up, come on!  
Your so-called learning's a great big con.*

I. Sanderson, A. Mould and A. Nash delivered their lines with authority in front of a tableau featuring white-coated medics hovering over their wheel-chair-bound patient.

The role of Argan was shared by J. Margree and L. Bridges. Both achieved comedy in their physical characterization of the role, albeit in very different ways. One roared and blustered, the other twitched and pecked, but both cut ludicrous figures in the outsize dressing gown and cap of a permanent invalid who surrounds himself with people taking advantage of his delusion and money. Beline, Argan's wife, pretends to listen sympathetically while plotting to become the sole beneficiary of his will. This called for false face and comic timing from Camilla Lewis, who delivered both with panache. R. Ellwood and J. Evers

were effective as the doctors (Lillicrap and Purgeon) who maintain Argan's medical habit through a combination of flattery and commands, whilst W. Skjott (Mr Florid), J. Sasanow and N. Dalgleish (Mr Goodfellow) completed a cast of professional rogues pandering to Argan's unhealthy obsession. One comic highlight was the scene in which Dr Lillicrap introduces his doltish son, Thomas (superbly played by T. Worthington) to Argan's daughter, Angélique (Jessica Lyall). Other fine performances came from Philippa Graham and Kate Sherman as Argan's servant, Toinette, S. Evans as his brother, Béralde, Katy Le Fèvre as his younger daughter, Louison and C. Mason as Cléante, Angélique's preferred partner.

The three *Interludes* contrasted with the style and period of the three acts, and seemed, on the face of it, to have little to do with them. Instead, they provided opportunities for gleeful musical slapstick which the performers were quick to seize. In the first, P. Garrick was noteworthy as a tragically-attired Punchinello backed by a quartet of crooning security guards (T. Blackshaw, E. Finnis, W. Gervers and D. Procter), while A. Markham turned heads (and stomachs) as a hideous old woman warning of the dangers of men. The second *Interlude* filled the stage with prancing nurses who re-appeared in the last *Interlude* with serried ranks of doctors to witness Argan's installation as a fully-fledged medical practitioner. In what was one of several directorial initiatives, Argan was placed on a throne of the flushing kind for a musical ceremony which lurched through Handel, Gilbert and Sullivan and Glenn Miller before finishing in style with Argan's death from over-excitement.

This was a production which owed its success to the combined talents of many people. In particular, SF's direction of the actors was as crisp and assured as always, CJB's work on the set was immaculate and JEM's musical direction – the last in a long and distinguished record of musical services to drama – was, as always, a delight.

**a report on the joint  
Abingdon-St. Helen's  
four-night run of  
Molière's  
"The Hypochondriac"  
staged in the Amey Hall  
in October,  
by JHT**



# The Code of the Woosters

**an insider's view of the joint Lower School- St. Helen's production of P.G. Wodehouse's classic story, adapted by JHT and staged at Claydon House, Buckinghamshire, on July 5th, by T. Dawson 2D**

**above: "The Hypochondriac"; photograph courtesy of JHT**

Roderick Spode marched on to the stage to rapturous applause from his followers, a fascist group known as the 'Black Shorts'. Sporting a Hitler moustache, the would-be dictator outlined his policies for the coming year – or so began the Lower School production of *The Code of the Woosters*.

Performing in the splendour of the saloon room at Claydon House, a group from Abingdon and St. Helen's brought this great story to life. A classic of the Wodehouse output, this particular tale sees Bertie Wooster (E. Wilson) and his valet, the inimitable Jeeves (T. Dawson), becoming involved in the affairs of Sir Watkyn Bassett (R. Whitworth), Stephanie "Stiffy" Byng (Lynette Hussey) and her lover Harold "Stinker" Pinker (W. Stockdale) in their various plots to steal an Eighteenth Century silver cow-creamer: "an imbroglio that would test the Wooster soul as it had seldom been tested before".

Although the cast had only had two weeks in which to rehearse the play, it was nevertheless a shame that they needed to use their scripts on stage for the production itself. However, this did not seem to detract from the overall impact of the play, which one person described as "a masterpiece".

Other members of the cast included G. Dalziel, O. Foster, M. Hutchinson, A. Powis and E. Caird. Roderick Spode – "Nature had intended to make a gorilla, and had changed its mind at the last moment" – was played by F. Gater, and the "fish-faced" Gussie Fink-Nottle by H. Wimborne. Georgina Nicholls was Aunt Dahlia, Wooster's good and deserving aunt (not to be confused with Aunt Agatha, who eats broken bottles and wears barbed wire next the skin).

It is hoped that this production of *The Code of the Woosters* will be resurrected and performed in the Amey Hall at some time during the coming year.



# Drama festival 2001

This year's Drama Festival – the third – took place during the Lent Term and involved more pupils than ever before. There were three plays by established writers, two new works written by boys, and an evening of magic, music and stand-up comedy. As in previous years, the participation of St Helen's pupils was a welcome feature of each one of the shows, and a sign of our continuing and valued theatrical partnership with them.

S. Evans and C. Mason opened the Festival with their production of Tom Stoppard's *Arcadia*. This witty and complex play received a carefully prepared treatment which was warmly appreciated by its Amey Hall audiences. Props from the original National Theatre production and costumes from the RSC gave the production an appealing and convincing look, although perhaps more could have been done with the dimensions of the set to create a sense of the appropriate style and architecture. Nevertheless, S. Evans produced a strong performance as Septimus Hodge, ably supported in other roles by C. Mason, T. Worthington, T. Adams, T. Sykes, W. Allan and A. Gardner. Rosalind Gater, Clare Robertson, Agata Belcen, Alex Mawson and Miranda Jewess were equally strong and effective in the female rôles.

Joe Orton's black comedy *Loot* came next, in a CMR production directed by L. Laing-Peterson. This play presented a different set of challenges for the relatively inexperienced producers, but the humour of the writing, along with the committed work of the cast, combined to produce an enjoyable evening in which J. Sasanow, T. Blackshaw, D. Easterbrook, A. Markham and J. Marsh were both successful and funny. Frances Flannery Gamlin played the part of the corrupt and scheming nurse Fay with a delightfully arch range of expression.

One of the most welcome developments this year was the participation of pupils in the Middle and Lower Schools. G. Potter, A. Nash and A. Macdonald from the Fourth Year jointly produced and directed a dramatization of Roald Dahl's entertaining children's story, *Fantastic Mr Fox*. This not only provided opportunities for actors in the First to Fourth years, but also created a box office sensation by filling the Amey Hall on each of its two nights. The directors achieved an impressive level of commitment from the cast, and an equally striking degree of self-sufficiency, with parents enlisted to build scenery and provide other essential help. Among the strong cast, T. Reeves swaggered engagingly as the suave Mr Fox, R. Powis almost stole the show as a rat with rodent-rage, while D. Roche, B. Cullen and T. Vaughan-Fowler were wonderfully disgusting as the cretinous farmer villains, Boggis, Bunce and Bean.

What was by now becoming a marathon for the hard-pressed but magnificent Technical Crew continued with an evening of two new plays by pupils. L. Fowler and I. Sanderson created and starred in *You Are Being Watched*, which addressed our fascination with the voyeurism of television shows like *Big Brother*. Their original idea had been a play involving twelve characters which would develop through improvisation, and retain an element of spontaneity in performance as the audience voted to evict characters from the story; however, only three actors remained to take the stage and perform a script which was being completed up to the last minute. Yet they produced a successful piece of theatre which held its audiences and entertained in equal measure. P. Taylor's *Don't Weep For Thursday* was a play scripted in more orthodox fashion, but one which sparkled with original and quirky dialogue, and revealed its author and director as a talent to watch. Stars included M. Stockwell as a deranged waiter, J. Eyers and A. Campbell as CIA agents (disguised as a standard lamp and a rug) and M. Kay as an anxious and bewildered spy. *Don't Weep For Thursday* was an accomplished piece of writing which received deft treatment from its cast.

The last act of the Festival was a suitably grand finale. S. Evans returned, this time with T. Sykes as his running mate, to mastermind an evening of magic, music and stand-up. Both entertained a packed Amey Hall with genuinely impressive feats of conjuring and illusion. Glamorous assistance was provided by Sarah Hoblyn and Katy Vlitos, and further support came from P. Taylor and J. Rose with effective stand-up comedy routines. T. Dawson, J. Knight and C. Parker from Lower School contributed an original sketch about an ancient and long-suffering father encouraging his bachelor son to find a mate, and pianist W. Bartlett accompanied Sarah Hoblyn in several sweetly delivered soul ballads. The highlight was unquestionably the Headmaster's appearance as the willing sacrificial victim of a power saw. Being sawn in half for the School's benefit is perhaps the latest in his many contributions to life at Abingdon. I suspect that he was left feeling like the rest of us at the end of a long, demanding and successful Festival: somewhat reduced, but more or less intact.

**a report on the third annual Abingdon Drama Festival, March 7th to 18th, by JHT**

# A demon barber at the Fringe

The idea of taking an Abingdon and St. Helen's show to the Fringe first arose in 1999. We knew we had some strong actors, singers and musicians who would give a good account of themselves, and we were keen to take advantage of the wonderful opportunity that the Fringe provides to perform to a wider audience. The proposal was put to the cast immediately after auditions in the Summer Term of 1999, six months before the show was staged at Abingdon, and we were delighted to find that nearly everyone wanted to come.

**JHT's account of the successful transplantation of the joint Abingdon-St. Helen's production of Stephen Sondheim's "Sweeney Todd" to the Edinburgh Fringe from August 8th 2000**

For a long time, we seemed ahead in the organizational game. JHT visited Edinburgh during the summer holiday in the hope of securing a suitable venue, but found that the Fringe office did not produce its list of spaces until December in the year preceding the summer festival; so for several months we had to bide our time. With the start of the academic year, rehearsals for the first production of *Sweeney Todd* began, and soon took all our attention. There was also the small matter of a School Inspection...

The Amey Hall production in December went well, and planning for the Fringe resumed in January 2000, with JEM and JHT visiting Edinburgh and seeing ten "theatres" in one-and-a-half days. These included church halls, university lecture theatres and primary school gymnasias. Only one – the Churchill Theatre – was a purpose-built performing space, but its stage was too small. We had to have a large space to accommodate the cast of around forty and orchestra of thirty. In the end, there was really only one choice: St. Oswald's in Bruntsfield. This was an old church which had been converted for use as a theatre and rehearsal space. It was owned by Edinburgh Council and used by Boroughmuir High School. Not only was it by far the largest venue we had seen (and the most affordable), but it also had a dark, gloomy atmosphere which suited the mood of *Sweeney Todd* to perfection.

Suddenly, the demands of the planning operation intensified. We had to give ourselves a name, and decided to take advantage of the show's fascination with razors by christening ourselves "Cutting Edge". Performing rights, posters and publicity materials, budgeting, even accommodation for the cast, orchestra, crew and staff – all required urgent action and all depended on securing the venue and the dates of the performances. As deadlines accelerated towards us, a complex game of cat-and-mouse negotiation took place, in which the frustrations of the Council's bureaucracy were experienced repeatedly. Eventually, St. Oswald's was booked, yet there remained two substantial challenges: financing the trip, and technical planning.

The financial demands were enormous. Emma Curran, who took on the role of production manager, brought to the team her years of professional experience and expertise acquired with the National Youth Music Theatre. Her seven-page draft budget projected costs of around £26,000 to take the company to Edinburgh for a week. Income from ticket sales was hard to predict with certainty. We had to accept the possibility that there might be a loss. Tense weeks followed, in which the whole project seemed doomed until the Headmaster of Abingdon and Headmistress of St. Helen's agreed to support the venture in the event of a limited shortfall. It was the end of March, and at last we knew that we could confirm details with the company.

The technical challenge was no less severe. It began to dawn that of all the shows to take to Edinburgh, *Sweeney Todd*, with its complicated set and lighting, was probably not the ideal choice. Nevertheless, the unflappable CJB and his redoubtable crew, led by the magnificent J. Persaud, pored over drawings, made endless lists and rehearsed the operation of packing, building and dismantling the set against the clock until they resembled a crack military outfit. One of the most awkward problems which they faced was gaining sufficient information about the technical facilities at St. Oswald's. There was nobody at the other end who could tell us details of power supply, lighting bars or stage dimensions, so two further trips to the venue were made, armed with tape measures, sketch pads and video cameras in efforts to find answers to vital technical questions. As a result, we realized that we would need to take our own lights, sound equipment and stage extension. This presented another challenge: making everything fit into the hired three-ton lorry. Rather like the troops who invaded Normandy in 1944, we knew that we had to have everything with us at the moment of arrival, since there would be no opportunity for re-supply.

Eventually, all was ready. A fund-raising concert shared with the Abingdon Big Band yielded valuable revenue prior to departure. Gunilla Treen's fabulous



design was printed on posters, hand-bill, programmes, tickets and T-shirts. Emma Curran had prepared a mobile press office, and WTP and his wife had agreed to join the party as pastoral supremos. Rehearsals took place over a weekend at St. Helen's, whilst the technicians, like a pathfinder squadron, set off in advance of the main party on Friday August 4th. The rest of us travelled on the following Sunday, and the first performance took place on the Tuesday. For all the months of preparation, it was still something of a surprise to find that our visit to the Fringe was actually happening.

In Edinburgh, we knew that we would have to work very hard to attract audiences. We also wanted to raise the standards of our performance. Both tasks were tackled eagerly by cast and orchestra. Hand-bills were distributed during the first days by members of the orchestra, while the cast was subjected to vocal workouts by JEM and our two secret weapons from Scotland, voice coaches Deirdre Trundle and 'Big Chris' Breckenridge. In the meantime, the technicians raced to get everything in place. The local Fire Officer visited to conduct a safety test which included holding a lighter to each part of the set. Happily, we passed, and a public performance licence was granted. By the time of the first show on Tuesday evening, there was a good audience for some very gutsy singing and acting. We had worried that no one would come: after all, we had heard that the average audience for a Fringe production was four. As it was, our auditorium was

hearteningly well-stocked with faces both familiar and new. The only disappointment was our failure to find enough time to programme every one of the two hundred lighting cues. This made for some hairy moments in the second half, but by the second night, everything had been rectified.

The rest of the week passed in a blur of excitement, adrenalin and exhaustion, the three staples of a Fringe run. Audiences were good and their reception of the show tremendously warm despite the absence of any reviewer from the press. Principals, chorus, orchestra and crew were magnificent. By day, we performed in the streets of Edinburgh in organized busking spots which certainly attracted punters. J. Wilson, S. Allen and M. Iles staged pavement shaving contests, while M. Spencer-Chapman and other victims of Todd's razor smeared themselves in fake blood and lay dotted about the cobbles of the Royal Mile holding out leaflets and presenting passers-by with a macabre petrified forest of arms. Best of all was the performance on a cavernous stage in Princes Street Gardens which was projected on large video screens and broadcast on the Internet.

All too soon, our run at the Fringe was over, and the enormous task of taking everything down and bringing it back to Abingdon was under way. It had been an extraordinary adventure which I suspect few of us will easily forget. My thanks go to everyone who took part, and to the very many people who contributed to the efforts to make it happen.

**above:**  
**WTP has a close shave**  
**as the cast of**  
**"Sweeney Todd" indulge**  
**in some organized**  
**busking on the**  
**Royal Mile, Edinburgh;**  
**photograph by JHT**



# Music

The year has been packed with music-making of all kinds: a range of activity which has spanned many musical guises, from classical to jazz, and has taken Abingdon performers to churches and cathedrals, opera houses and concert halls, marquees, retirement homes, school halls and classrooms. It has been tremendously exciting again to see individuals pushing onward to higher levels of technical accomplishment and musicianship, as well as to witness the boys' sheer enjoyment in the making of music, upon which visitors to the School so often comment.

**MAS reports on yet another year of exuberant musicianship**

**opposite:  
"cubist collage construction"**

**by J. Anderson SSH**

We got off to a tremendous start. The huge success of Big Band's tour to the Greek islands received a full report in the last edition of *The Abingdonian*. It was soon followed by pleasing news of the academic success of the previous year's public examinees, who scored a full complement of A grades – six – at A level and at GCSE (fourteen A\* and eight A grades). Later in the Michaelmas Term we were delighted to hear that T. Herford had won a choral scholarship to Trinity College, Cambridge to read music, and that T. Dillon had gained a highly prized place at the Guildhall, to study the violin.

It is striking to contemplate the sheer number of musical events which have occurred over the last academic year. No fewer than nineteen internally-organized concerts have taken place, together with a host of concert trips, parents' and social evenings and examination sessions. It is particularly gratifying to see how music now informs much other activity not directly organised by the department: dinners, services, social gatherings and, this year, prize-giving. All three boarding houses hosted their own concerts, and these are becoming increasingly impressive in range and in quality of performance. The Abingdon philosophy of bringing rewarding musical opportunities at whatever level to the largest number is surely as true as it ever was; the concerts have included music-making of all kinds in orchestral, choral, band, chamber, solo recitals, jazz and rock.

The year must also go down as one of the most successful in terms of individual and group achievement. The number of concerto performances by Abingdonians this year has been awesome; they have included Saint Saens' *Piano Concerto No.2* (T. Ting), baritone solos in choral works by Vaughan Williams and Duruflé (T. Herford), Rimsky-Korsakov's *Trombone Concerto* (C. Smith), Franz Strauss' *Horn Concerto* (H. Richards) and Mozart's *Violin Concerto in A Major* (T. Dillon). H. Richards

(French horn) successfully gained his Dip.ABRSM professional performing diploma at Christmas, a testament to his hard work and dedication over his seven years at Abingdon. (C. Smith's result in the same examination on the trombone was not known at the time of going to press). As we plan our First Orchestra tour to New England in 2002, it is no surprise to note that Richards is the only survivor of our first major international tour to Central Europe in 1995, when he had just completed his first year.

As far as ensemble work is concerned, this has been an exceptional year. The strategically placed Chamber Concert in February, just before the National Chamber Competition got under way, revealed some really exciting playing. Three groups stood out: a Schubert string quintet (K. Lee, M. Taroni, A. Gardner, J. Herford and C. Johnson), a Mendelssohn piano trio (R. Morris, E. Finnis and J. Mak) and a Brahms horn trio (T. Dillon, J. Herford and J. Mak). The latter two groups covered themselves in glory, winning right through to the finals concert of the Chamber Competition at St. John's, Smith Square, by way of qualifiers at Headington and semi-finals at Wycombe Abbey. Both trios played to Upper School assemblies and the Brahms was repeated at prize-giving on Leavers' Day.

The year was also remarkable for its Associated Board and Guildhall music examination entries, a total of 186 over the year, including a staggering and unprecedented eighty-three in the Lent Term, eleven at Grade VIII, of which six resulted in distinction and three in merit. All three violin Grade VIII candidates gained distinction (J. Findlay, M. Taroni and R. Morris, the latter with a splendid 142/150). Findlay gained two Grade VIII distinctions, in violin and piano, in the same session with the same mark (130/150). He was successful, too, at the end of the year in auditioning for the leadership of Thames Vale Youth Orchestra.



The final tally of Grade VIII distinctions and merits included R. Morris (Piano, 137), J. Herford (Piano, 136), L. Berryman (Flute, 130), N. Hawken (Saxophone, 127), H. Langford (Organ, 127), N. Fuggle (Flute, 121), D. Procter (Clarinet, 115), and T. Ting (Singing, 110). At Grade VII, outstanding results were attained by E. Mitchard (Piano, 141, and 'Cello 134), A. Heavens (Oboe, 135), N. Hawken (Piano, 132) J. Tolan (Singing, 127), O. Higginbottom (Piano, 126), H. Langford (Bassoon, 125), H. Chi ('Cello, 123), W. Allan (Clarinet, 123), B. Hancock (Bassoon, 114), A. Gardner (Violin, 109) and A. Pang (Clarinet, 101).

It is good to report that two First Year boys, E. Caird and B. King, were selected after audition to play the parts of two of the three boys in the double casting of *Die Zauberflöte* at Garsington, a huge opportunity and a marvellous experience for them. The boys performed some of their music from the opera at the Lower School and Josca's Gala Concert on the last Monday of the Summer Term.

Pleasing developments have also been taking place at Josca's. It is not quite two years since Abingdon boys visited to demonstrate instruments and to give performances with Chamber Orchestra and Big Band. Since then, Josca's have appointed their own Head of Music (Abingdon's former flute teacher) and the recruitment of instrumentalists has been steadily growing, with several Abingdon teachers now working regularly there and ensembles for brass and strings beginning to emerge. Saxophone is very popular, and there are hopes of starting a small jazz band in due course. It was good to see and hear all this encouraging music-making, particularly when the Josca's boys joined forces with Abingdon Lower School musicians in the Junior Strings ensemble and the Lower School Band. The increasing number of Josca's boys in this joint "Gala Concert" was striking; these larger numbers are now placing huge demands on limited rehearsal space at their site. We must hope that such limitations are temporary and do not stifle the enthusiasm for music which is developing there.

Highlights of the year included, of course, the large-scale concerts at Christmas (Saint Saens' *Piano Concerto No.2* and the theme from *Mission Impossible*), the Choral Concert in March (Rutter's *Gloria* and Duruflé *Requiem*) and the Bands (*Phantom of the Opera*), Orchestral (Beethoven's *Symphony No.5*) and Lower School/Josca's Gala concerts in the Summer Term. Equally important were the Chamber and

Scholars' Concerts, together with the more informal occasions. There were also a number of concert trips and workshops to support areas of academic study: to the CBSO in Birmingham to hear Brahms' *Symphony No.4*, an A level set work; to Covent Garden to hear *Billy Budd*; to Garsington to a workshop and dress rehearsal of Strauss' *Intermezzo*; and Middle and Upper School trips to WNO in Oxford to hear *The Magic Flute* and Janacek's *Katya Kabanova*.

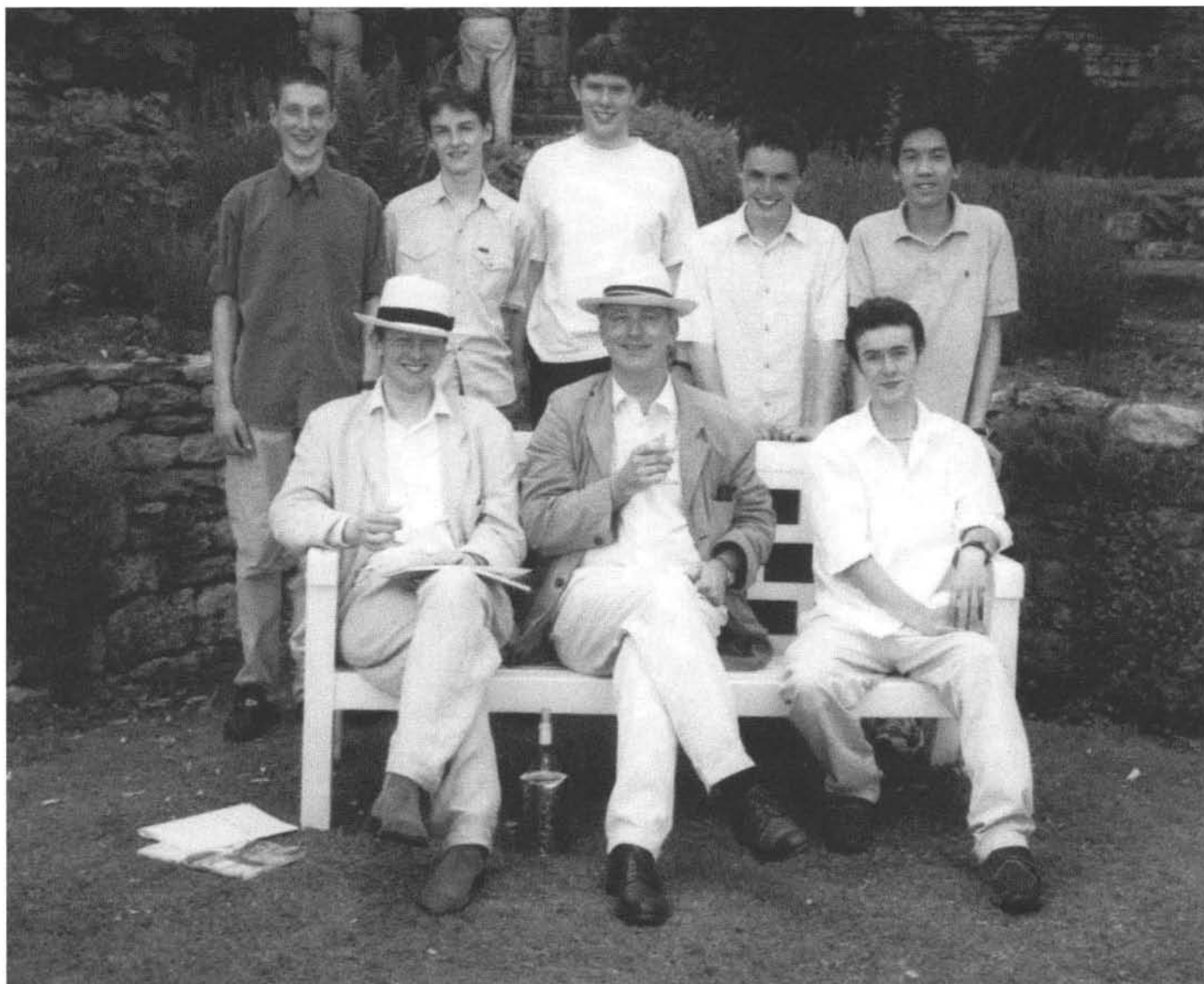
The year ended with a river boat cruise from Abingdon Bridge under the auspices of the Music Society. The weather was glorious as about seventy-five parents and their families were wafted upstream to Sandford Lock to the accompaniment of the saxophone quartet (N. Hawken, G. Potter, R. Powis and J. Findlay) and our most promising jazz ensemble (M. Gardner, N. Hawken, N. Shaikh and M. Chilcott). It was a suitably mellow and reflective way to conclude another cycle of vibrant musical activity.

We acknowledge with gratitude the immense contribution of Mr Iwan Llewelyn-Jones – Abingdon's distinguished senior piano teacher over fourteen years – and, more recently, that of Mr Glen Inanga. Both of these concert pianists have done much to inspire and develop the musicianship of generations of Abingdonians. It is hard to quantify the legacy of Iwan Llewelyn-Jones, who has prepared scores of boys for concerto and other solo performances, Grade VIII examinations and chamber music. I suspect that only those pupils will fully appreciate Iwan's kind but challenging influence on their musical lives. We wish both Iwan and Glen the very best as they continue to develop their increasingly busy performing careers.

In the New Year we welcomed to the department Mr Simon Whalley (SRW), who replaced JEM (now Director of Music at KCS Wimbledon). SRW came to us from Christ Church Cathedral School and St. George's, Windsor, and is a serious composer with a fast-developing reputation, as well as Senior Music Lecturer at Keble College, Oxford.

We look forward to introducing three new teachers in September: Miss Cindy Ho (piano), Mr Francis Pott (piano) and Mr Alan Wakeman (saxophone). Miss Ho is a recent piano graduate of the Royal Academy of Music; Mr Wakeman is an experienced jazz musician with an impressive discography; Mr Pott is a composer, professional pianist, Lay Clerk at Winchester Cathedral, recently music lecturer at St Hilda's College, Oxford, a former pupil of the Headmaster, and half-brother of CMM.





## Garsington

In late June, the Lower Sixth music set were lucky enough to attend a full dress rehearsal of Richard Strauss' *Intermezzo* at Garsington. The performance was preceded by a fascinating workshop, exploring the opera's comedy (which builds to an hilariously over-blown finale) and the distinctively luscious tone-world evoked by Strauss.

Garsington Opera's country-house setting was entirely appropriate, as the *Intermezzo* is a domestic opera, one which introspectively concentrates on a marital mix-up, rather than operatic themes of epic

romance and death. The action was placed right next to the house, parts of which were cleverly incorporated into the staging.

The visit was particularly useful for the Lower Sixth owing to the focus on Twentieth Century song in their A level course. All were impressed by the high standard of performance and the insightful quality of the workshop, but also by the beautiful location of Garsington Manor. A return trip next year, giving Mr Whalley another opportunity to demonstrate his finest quality picnics, would be most welcome.

**a report on the Lower Sixth's June visit to Garsington Opera, by E. Finnis 6DJTF**

**above:  
Lower Sixth musicians, SRW and MAS at Garsington; photograph courtesy of MAS**

# Visits & Trips

## Namibia

Twelve of us arrived at School late one summer evening full of excitement and impatience. Who could blame us? After raising over £2,500 over 18 months to fund the trip, we were due to depart to the remote African country of Namibia, which is situated between Angola and South Africa. We had arrived at School as part of our warm-up for the trip, checking tents and kit before our bus to Heathrow. We had to catch a plane to Frankfurt, where we would meet our connection to Windhoek, Namibia's capital city.

**a report on last  
summer's World  
Challenge expedition to  
Namibia,  
by D. Morris 6DE**

After a long overnight flight we arrived in Africa, for many of us for the very first time. Immigration forms and luggage checks confirmed that one of our number's baggage had not survived the trip and was presumably lost in Germany. Thankfully, it turned up days later. After all the forms and checks we left the airport to be confronted by our travelling companions for the next month and a Bedford truck, presumably dating back to the Second World War. We took the truck to a back-packers' lodge, where we would be staying for the next few days, soaking up culture and buying equipment for the rest of the trip.

After our stay in Windhoek we headed off to our first point of call, the Cheetah Conservation Fund (CCF). This was situated in Otjiwarongo, which was a large contrast to Windhoek, which is a more westernized city. We spent the next few days at the CCF. Here we shared chores such as preparing meals, cleaning the truck and washing up. We took turns at leading the expedition day by day, everyone having a chance at leadership (and skiving the chores) for one day at least. This constituted our project work for the trip. We were helping to finish the visitor centre which was due to be opened by the Prime Minister in the next few days. Some examples of the tasks which we performed included monitoring the cheetahs brought in from local farms, cleaning out cages, helping to build a playground for visitors, and releasing cheetahs back into the wild, which was very rare and quite special to watch. We did this with help from a local environmental group from Paresis High School.

On our first night in Otjiwarongo we witnessed our first antelope and real African sunset, which incidentally tended to happen at about 5.00 p.m. We also experienced our first night under the stars, blissfully unaware of the freezing temperatures to

which the African nights can fall. We spent the first part of the expedition here taking in all that Africa had to offer. Many of us had to adjust dramatically to the new way of life and living without such comforts as clean clothes and hot water.

After our project at the CCF, we headed on to our safari at Etosha National Park, renowned for being one of the best in the world. Here we got to see animals which we had only ever seen before on the television: giraffe, rhino, springbok and, on one evening, forty-six elephants. This was much easier than our time at the CCF and was greatly appreciated. Unfortunately, only a few days after arriving we had to leave and prepare for our trek up the Brandberg Mountains, which would for most of us be the highlight of the trip.

Our preparation for the trek was in remote Damaraland, south of Etosha and Otjiwarongo. Here we got ourselves fit, walked as a group, and organized water and rations. The trek was potentially very dangerous, as we were to find out from one or two close shaves – large boulders choosing to dislodge and skim by people's heads. Our teamwork improved noticeably, despite some members of the group deciding to take jerry-cans weighing close to thirty kilograms up the mountain "just to see what it was like" and deciding half way up that perhaps *we* should have a go as well. While in Damaraland, we looked at petrified forests, cave paintings and multi-million pound hotels, as well as a rare desert elephant. The scenery was outstanding, though round the braie (barbecue) we encountered our first scorpions.

After our stint in Damaraland we headed off towards the impending mountain range. Our old Bedford, which had done us admirably until now, showed us what it was really made of by climbing desert sand-dunes and some extremely hard terrain.



We arrived on a remote site in the Gaseb valley, set up camp, which would be our home for the next eight days, and made preparations for the next day, which would be our first trip up the mountain. Owing to the sheer scale of the mountain, we had to take more supplies up it than we could manage in one go, including 150 litres of water. We were to be living at over 5,000 feet for the next few days, and adequate food and water were essential. What this entailed was two hikes over two days up the mountain with food. The food drops were very tiring but our improvement was noticeable.

We could leave the supplies up the mountain, safe in the knowledge that there was not a soul around to steal them. However, we later found that a leopard had in fact attacked our valuable water supply and made off with choice portions of rusks and dried fruit. This left us in a very precarious situation, with not enough water or food and half-way up a mountain.

We took a day off between our last food drop and heading up the mountain, and unfortunately E. Ritchie suffered a deep gash in his foot and had to pull out. For many of us this climb would be the most physically and mentally demanding task which we had ever done and our safe return must mostly be due to our guide throughout the trip, John Heighton, who did far more than lead us well. We managed to reach the peak, over 7,000 feet, before having to turn back.

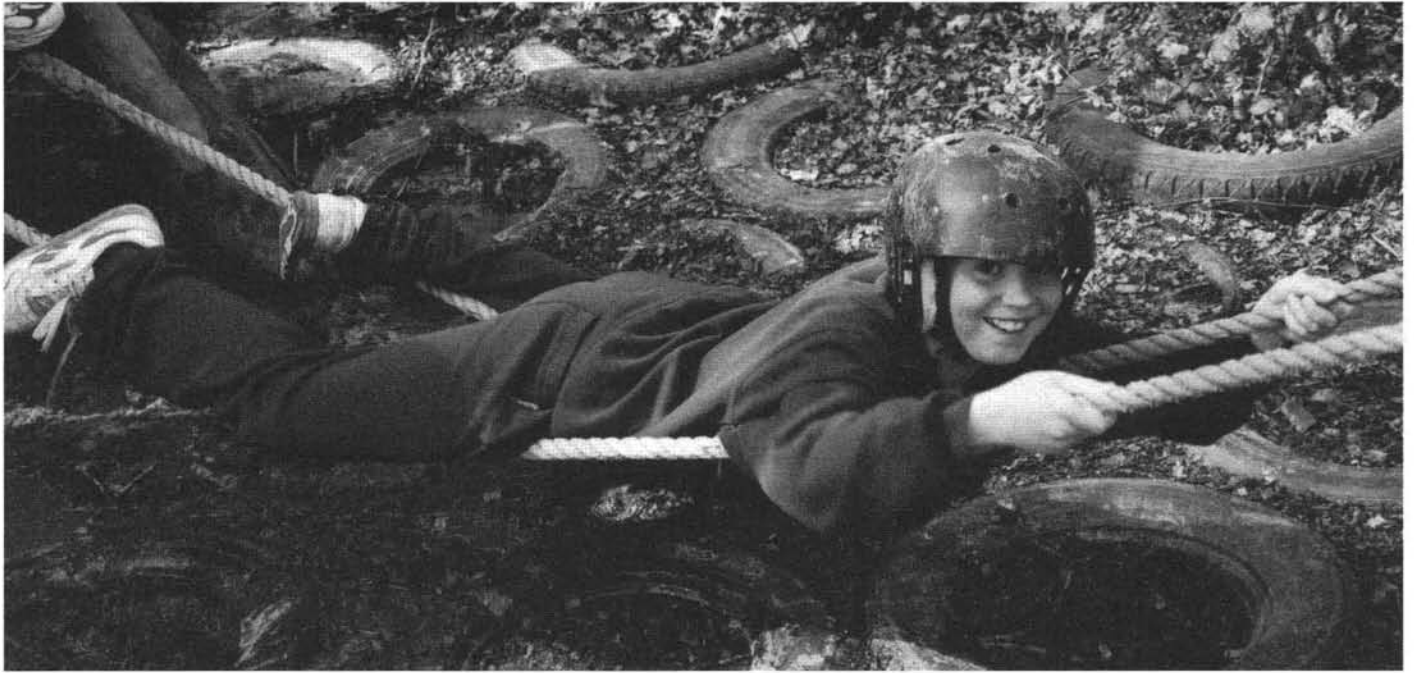
The view from the top of the mountain alone made the days, weeks and even months of preparation worthwhile, the climax of the occasion being an amazing sunset on the mountain.

After our trek we started back for civilization, and headed over to Walvis Bay and Swakopmund, where we would experience the delights of dune-boarding and the local tippie. After these highly enjoyable experiences, we headed back to Windhoek, with a few nights on the way in the remote and very beautiful Namib-Navkluft desert, for some souvenirs and a final slap-up meal at Joe's Steak House.

The trip for many of us was very enlightening and the experience was without a doubt eye-opening. Although the preparation was long, and fund-raising was tiresome (to say the least) not one of us had doubts or regrets about the trip. Every day was a new experience and the amount which we managed to achieve throughout the period is a credit to us all. Our thanks should go out to Mr Townsend for his organization and participation in the project, as well as our World challenge group leader, John Heighton. Our two South African guides, Hannes and Michelle, who stuck by us faithfully, also deserve a very big thank you. Those who finally made it to Africa were: J. Compton, T. Davis, J. Holdsworth, E. Macdonald, A. Maclean, D. Morris, E. Ritchie, T. Tarrell, P. Tolley and R. White.

**above:**  
**photograph courtesy of**  
**E. Macdonald 6JFH**





# French exchange

**a report by  
T. Bainbridge 3SRW**

On a dreary Monday morning twelve reluctant boys got onto a Tappins coach to Stansted Airport. We boarded the Boeing 737 armed only with the Ryanair in-flight magazine and a view of clouds. Two hours later we were disinfected from British foot and mouth disease and we met our hosts. We would be staying with them throughout the trip.

With Spanish Riviera-type weather the area of Perpignan in the eastern Pyrenees lends itself to arable farming. There are countless peach and apricot plantations, and especially large vineyards as far as the eye can see. Many a glass of fine wine is enjoyed here.

Our exchange school, the Institut de Saint Joseph, is in the town of Prades, about forty kilometres from the main town, Perpignan. It is quite small – around three hundred pupils – but with a playground looking out onto the snow-capped peaks of the Canigou massif. Prades has one of the finest examples of Baroque art in France in its Seventeenth Century church. The church also contains a rich collection of relics, including the remains of St. Valentine. Since the Nineteen-Fifties, when the renowned 'cellist Pablo Casals created his famous annual summer music festival there, Prades has earned itself an enviable reputation as a centre of culture.

On our trip into Perpignan, the old capital of French Catalonia, we visited the Castillet, a small pink brick castle built in the Fourteenth Century as a gateway to the town. Outside it was 'the longest papyrus in the world', which positively invited graffiti artists to leave their mark – any mark. One of our party wrote Abingdon School's greetings in French to "all the French and all the Catalans", and was rewarded by one of the French exchange partners

writing the same below it, in Catalan. The palace of the Kings of Majorca (the former rulers of Catalonia) was next on the list. A short climb up a hill, then the austere cavity walls stand domineering in front. Inside, as well as admiring the graceful elements of the Gothic architecture and the Mediterranean décor, was the exciting activity of dropping stones down the fifty-metre well. A quick shopping trip later and it was back home with our exchanges.

I cannot speak for the others, but my family was fantastic. There was Jean-Marc, a larger than life karaoke- and car-loving agronomist with a good line in foot and mouth jokes. Then there was Dominique, who produced dish after dish of fine paella, succulent hams and lemon tarts that put Maison Blanc to shame. It was all washed down with a glass of the local Muscat. Yannic, my exchange partner, tried his best to explain the finer points of French living in a mixture of French, Catalan and pidgin English, which I roughly interpreted as: eat as much as you can, sleep as long as you like and be merry.

During the weekend, activities provided by the host families ranged from windsurfing on the Mediterranean to snow-boarding on the pistes of Andorra and the French Pyrenees, but I preferred relaxing by the pool with a large jug of Diabolo Menthe.

Monday morning brought more culture and fantastic scenery, but I will not wax lyrical about the ancient Abbey of Saint Martin de Canigou, lost in the mists of time and half an hour's walk up the mountain: go on next year's exchange and see for yourself. Suffice it to say that a great time was had by all who went.

# Little Canada

Every year the First Year have the chance to go on an adventure week. This year we went to Little Canada on the Isle of Wight. Although the trip is not compulsory, about eighty per cent of us were able to take our life in our hands and head south.

We were told before we left that the centre was run by the company who own Centre Parcs, so we had visions of huge water slides, lots of biking and dinners of pizzas and hamburgers. After an hour's bus journey to Portsmouth and a ferry crossing spent consuming Mars bars and Cokes, we arrived at Little Canada. Although there was no indoor swimming dome, the camp looked exciting. We were shown to our chalets where the bathrooms were bigger than the bedrooms for four of us; I suppose that they mistakenly believed that we were going to use it frequently throughout the week. We did not...

The first day was spent getting used to the place with a mixture of sport and exploring. Dinner was not quite restaurant standard but was eaten quickly and happily after all the time outside. There were of course plenty of chances for starvation top-ups from the vending machines and tuck-shop. My £15 was eaten by Wednesday, with just enough left to send a post card home.

Monday was the beginning of the organized challenges. We were split up into groups with boys

from all of the First Year tutor groups, which gave us the chance to get to know people whom we do not come across so often at School. The activities during the day were often muddy and wet, with the drier, somewhat easier, tasks being left for the evening.

The things we were given to do included sailing, quad-biking, climbing, tunnel trailing, problem-solving, abseiling, dragon boating, bowling, jumping off high poles, archery, and fencing. Before writing this I did try to find out from others if there was one favourite activity but there was not; everyone had different favourites and fears. For me the best days included climbing, quad-biking and high ropes. The climbing was on a climbing wall with different levels of difficulty to overcome. Although I was not exactly Bruce Willis, I was very pleased with my achievement and speed. Quad-biking was just mud, motor and me – brilliant. The high ropes were like a high-level assault course, which included climbing a ten-metre pole and jumping off onto a trapeze. Looking back now I can say this was very exciting. At the time, however, blind fear might have been a better description.

I had great fun, but also learned a lot about being part of a team, how to encourage others and how to be helped. I got to know people much better than before and totally loved being outside every day. I would recommend this trip as a chance not to be missed.

**a report on the  
Lower School trip to the  
Isle of Wight,  
April 8th to 13th,  
by W. Stockdale 1B**

**opposite:  
M. Watts 1A  
at Little Canada;  
photograph by AMB**

# Normandy

Thirty-five Fourth Year historians travelled to France accompanied by Mr Bromley, Dr Zawadzki, Mr Taylor and Mr Carson. Using Caen as our base, we traced the Allied operations against the Germans on D-Day and then followed the British, Polish and Canadian drive inland to Falaise, a thrust which culminated in the closing of the 'Falaise Pocket', perhaps the decisive defeat inflicted on the Germans in the Normandy campaign.

Our guides, most notably ex-tank soldier Bill McQuade and Mr Carson, left us in no doubt of the importance of D-Day and the enormous risks taken in staging an amphibious operation on such a huge scale. Many of the sites remain largely unchanged, such as Pegasus Bridge, the Merville and Pointe du Hoc Batteries, and the landing zones and their defences (Gold, Sword, Juno, Omaha and Utah beaches).

Survivors of the battles have placed tributes throughout the battle zones, commemorating the men

who fought and died there. We visited British, Polish, American and German cemeteries, the American one at Colleville being perhaps the best known as it frames the feature film *Saving Private Ryan*. Dr Zawadzki, whose father fought in the Polish brigade which spearheaded the drive south to Falaise, laid a wreath at the Polish cemetery.

Mr Carson drew our attention to the remarkable exploits of the German tank ace Michael Wittmann and then led an impromptu archaeological dig by the roadside in the Falaise pocket, revealing a wealth of tangible, original evidence of the carnage inflicted on the Germans. At Arromanches we studied the remains of the 'Mulberry' artificial harbour with disbelief.

The trip was well planned and provided much that was of interest; credit is due to the masters in charge for a memorable experience. Everyone, not just historians, should take a look at these battlefields.

We shall remember them.

**a report on the Fourth  
Year visit to the  
Normandy battlefields,  
March 31st to April 3rd,  
by A. Jack 4RGH**



# Osmington bay

**a report on the Biology trip to Osmington Bay, June 22nd to 25th, by S. Evans 6APS**

Most of us would leap at the chance to spend a weekend, during term time, on a beach in Dorset in the scorching sun. There is a possibility, however, that some would shrink from the opportunity if the words "Biology Field Trip" were mentioned in the same sentence. But whether they were positive, or negative about the situation, twenty-four boys from the Lower Sixth set off to the British coast with Mr Davies and Dr Wilmore.

Following the AS-level examinations those biologists who decided to continue to A2-level were given the choice of two trips, on which they were to complete their Biology coursework. Given the choice between a weekend doing only Biology during term time or one-and-a-half weeks doing only Biology during the summer holidays, the twenty-four more sensible of the biologists selected the former.

After the three hour coach journey through some of Britain's more twisty roads, Biology was the last thing on our minds, especially when confronted with accommodation which had the temptations of quad biking, abseiling and basketball on the doorstep. However, hundreds of ten-year olds, who had also

descended *en masse* that weekend, did reduce the thrill slightly with their incessant screaming.

We spent two days researching and recording two different ecological sites. Making use of transects, representative samples, quadrants, guidance poles, little hand-held computers, and pieces of string, we recorded different species, their density and diversity, and had a whole lot of fun doing it.

The first day was spent on a rocky beach where we studied the different species in different depths of water. The data-recording started a little late because we had to wait for the tide to go out, and when it had finally receded all the way, we knew that we had only a very short time before it started coming in again. The second day was less rushed. We went to Studland and spent the whole day analysing the sand dunes. The heat on that day was very intense, so in addition to the data, we also collected a nice tan each.

The food was unappetizing, the beds uncomfortable, the children loud and the work-load tough, but the group got on well, our teachers and the Osmington staff were helpful, and on the journey back there was quite a sense of accomplishment.



At Segesta, the teachers hired a bus to take us up to the Greek theatre, but the bus could only fit all but one of the group: Mrs Wigmore bravely volunteered to walk. We quickly overtook her as we went up... When we reached the top we were allowed to walk around on our own and explore the theatre and the surrounding remains. The theatre is semi-circular, sixty metres across, and was carved out of the top of Monte Barbaro in the Third Century BC. It was immensely impressive and I felt the need to sketch. The theatre faces north, and this is regarded as quite curious, but it was probably built like this to allow a spectacular view of the hills and sea. We were set a time to get back to the bus and so we had to organize ourselves to get down to the temple, by foot, as the bus was not going back down. H. Abrahall and I were the last down as we got carried away sketching.

The walk down was demanding: it was long and fairly steep and my knees ached by the end. We made our way up to the temple and when I first saw it I was struck by its size. I had never seen a Greek temple before and did not expect it to be that big. Seeing it from the inside was even more impressive than from the outside; it made me wonder how on earth people in the Fifth Century BC managed to build it. It is very well preserved, with its thirty-six Doric columns still supporting the pediments and entablatures, but no-one knows to whom the temple was devoted. It directly faces the theatre, but it was very difficult to see the theatre from where I was standing. Again I decided to do a sketch.

Later the same day we visited Selinunte. We had a female guide who was really good and told us all that we wanted to know. 'Temple G' at Selinunte was absolutely gigantic, twice the length of a football pitch. When it was standing it would have been thirty metres tall and fifty metres across, and was one of the biggest temples in the world. The temple was completely toppled by an earthquake, and we were allowed to walk on the ruins, which were massive. I took some photographs, and typically for me was late back to the meeting place.

In Syracuse, several days later, while the guide was telling us about the *Orecchio di Dioniso* (the Ear of Dionysius) which we were about to visit, Abrahall stupidly stuck his hand on a cactus and got a huge spike embedded in his finger. He got very worried because he could not get it out, however hard he pulled. As we arrived we saw the actual Ear of Dionysius – surprisingly it *was* shaped like an ear. It was one of the most impressive quarries of its time. Legend has it that Dionysius could hear the whispers of all the prisoners who dug out the quarry – this is probably because of the cave's amazing acoustics. He would have listened through a small hole in the top of

the cave. When we walked in, the guide told us that we should sing our favourite songs to hear how they echoed. Unfortunately there was another group in there and they did not really approve.

The following day saw our ascent of Mount Etna. This was the day that I had really been looking forward to. Even though Etna seemed very close, the guide told us that it would take at least two hours to get to the point we were going to. As we were going up we went through Zafferana Etnea, which was a town in the news during the last major eruption in 1991. We could see the lava flows and there was dried lava in people's back gardens where the lava had burnt its way through. As we were travelling, the landscape became more and more alien, the forests disappeared and all that was left was black lava everywhere. Though the temperature stayed the same in the bus, we noticed a huge drop in temperature when we got off.

We parked on the side of the crater and were allowed free time for about an hour. There were two craters, one larger than the other. I went straight to the smaller one and had my photograph taken with me standing in the mouth of the crater. As I had never been on a volcano before I had no idea what the ground would be like. After my photo had been taken my foot slipped and I fell about five metres down the crater. It was terrifying. Thankfully I managed to grab onto a rock and saved myself from being injured.

On our last day, we visited the Alcantara Gorge, which cuts through basalt. Nearly everyone walked barefoot in the river. The water was incredibly cold and after a couple of minutes my feet were totally numb. We were told that when you got into the shady interior it got really cold. Slowly the water got deeper and colder. We were told that further upriver the sights were even better but half-way we were faced with a small waterfall. It did not look too demanding but three people fell in while trying to cross it. B. Cullen fell in three times and his whole bag was soaked. Fortunately I did not fall in but my shorts got quite wet as the water was quite deep.

After lazing around in our room, I decided to go swimming in the sea. I was the first in. Three of us dared each other to run into the sea, knowing that it was cold. I did the daring deed and it was freezing, though I got used to it quite quickly. Suddenly I felt a pain on my left wrist. I ignored it but a few minutes later I realized that it must have been a jellyfish sting, as Abrahall had just seen one in front of him. Knowing that they can be poisonous I got out of the water as quickly as possible and went to Mr Hullis. He popped antiseptic on it and gave me some cream to put on every now and then. I had a shower, but it overflowed, because of a crack in the surround. By then the pain had died down a bit.

**medical emergencies and delays on the flight home somewhat spoiled the memory of a superb trip to Sicily, October 22nd-29th. S. Gordon 4BJLS won the competition for Middle School pupils with his diary; extracts are given here.**

**opposite:  
Monreale cloister;  
photograph by  
H. Abrahall 4JAR**

# German exchange

The annual German Exchange went to Bielefeld over the February Half Term. The Ratsgymnasium, Bielefeld, our partner school, is a very old, mixed grammar school in the town centre. It has around five hundred pupils, all between twelve and eighteen years of age, and so it is a little smaller than Abingdon School. The German school day begins at around 7.45 a.m., and consists of five or six forty-five minute lessons, depending on the day. One advantage compared to the English school system is that lessons are mostly over by one in the afternoon. There is Saturday school, but only once a fortnight. Another difference is that no German pupils wear school uniform.

**a report on this annual cultural exchange, February 13th to 23rd, by G. Morris and D. Waller 4AMS, and A. White 4JAR**

We found that lessons were fairly relaxed, and that the teachers were not too strict; they spoke good English and encouraged us to participate in their lessons, which made the experience more useful, and on occasions amusing.

We were not in lessons every day, however, and had several excursions during our stay. Our first was to the town of Munster. After travelling for just over an hour, and watching a James Bond video in German (thanks to Mr Bowley, a huge Bond fanatic) we arrived at a massive palatial building. Two of the German teachers came with us, and explained in German what it was. Luckily, they could also speak perfect English. The weather was fine and sunny, so we did not mind too much looking around outside. We walked up through the back-streets among many churches and beautiful historic houses. It was astonishing how quaint and pretty it was.

Nearer the centre of the town was a church which had some cages hanging from it. The two German teachers informed us that heretics actually used to be placed in these cages as a punishment, and that people used to go in them to try to cure themselves of a fear of heights. After a guided tour of the town hall, complete with a German audio accompaniment (which was quite interesting and informative), we were allowed free time, to explore the town for ourselves. So everyone rushed to the shops.

We soon began to get a bit hungry, so we decided to try and find a place to sit down and eat. We opened up our packed lunches provided by our hosts. Ah. They did not all look too good, so we decided to go to a nearby McDonalds. When we went in we saw everyone else on the exchange inside.

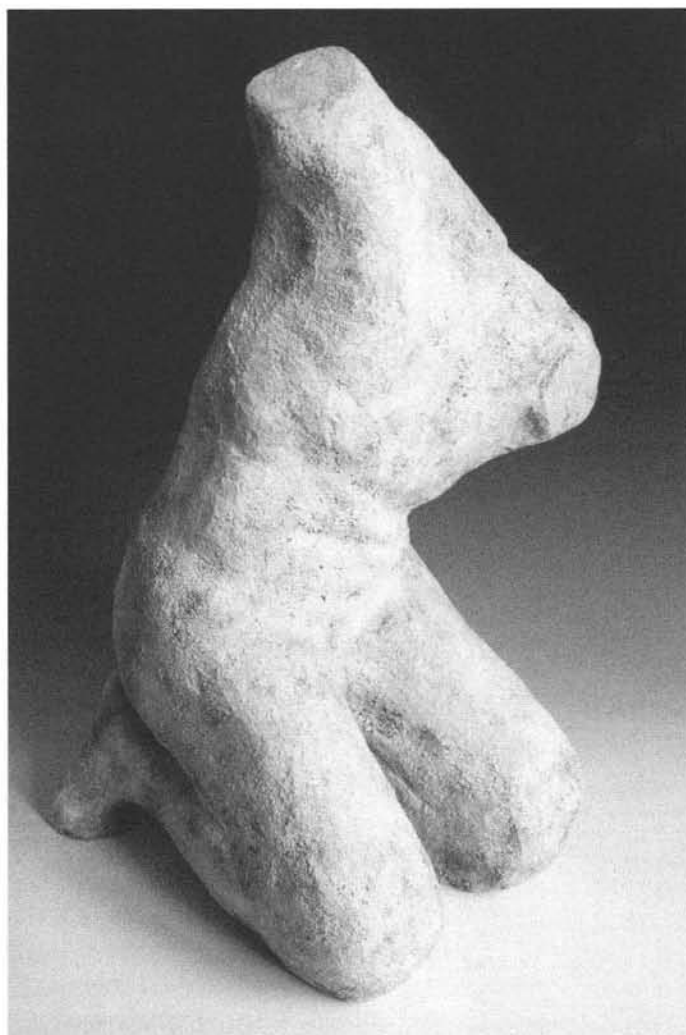
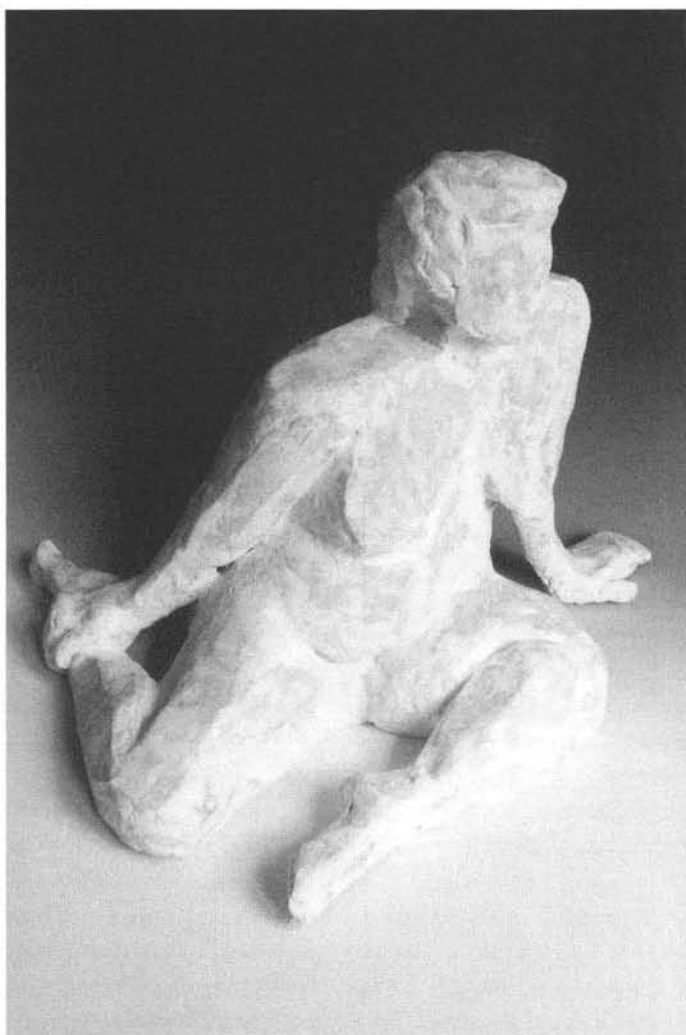
On Tuesday we visited Bremen, an historical port and free city. It was a long coach journey from Bielefeld to the north coast. There was a cathedral and bronze statues of the Bremen musicians, four animals

from a nursery rhyme which most of us did not know. We were also impressed with such sights as a Becks beer factory. After this we returned to the coach and went on to a science museum, built to look like a space ship. This was quite interesting and thankfully quite elementary, because we did not understand all of the German and would have had no hope if it had been complicated science or language. It was very much "hands-on", which added to the fun, and the highlight was a dark room maze where you had to navigate totally by touch not sight; some embarrassing moments followed. This museum was one of the best parts of the exchange.

The final day-trip was to the town of Hameln, of 'Pied Piper of Hamlyn' fame, and the statue of "Herman the German". The statue, shrouded in fog and sleet, was built in the Nineteenth Century in honour of a German of Roman times – Arminius – who helped the Germans to deceive the Roman army and massacre three Roman legions. Unfortunately, it was so foggy when we arrived that we could only see the large base, and the dim outline of a helmeted, sword-carrying statue.

Hameln, luckily, was less foggy. We first visited a local museum and were given a tour of exhibits which included an 'erotic walking stick', a full-scale model of a battle between the Hanoverians and the Prussians, and a large collection of artefacts associated with the famous Pied Piper (or 'Rattenfanger von Hameln' in German). After these, and other delights, we were given free time to explore the picturesque town before returning to Bielefeld.

We all thoroughly enjoyed the exchange, and the experience, and would recommend it to anyone as we found it such fun. We would also like to thank Frau Jentsch in Bielefeld and Mr Bowley in Abingdon who made this all possible. We all had a great time and spoke quite a bit of German.



## Moscow

At Easter a group of six Fourth Year boys and five girls from Oxford High School went on the away leg of the annual exchange with Moscow International Grammar School. The Russian party had visited in October, so we were not strangers with our partners, and although we had actually had less contact with the O.H.S. girls than with our Russian partners before setting off, we found that this was not a problem. By the end we were all getting on very well indeed.

We arrived in Moscow to find the weather sunny but cool. Apparently we were lucky, as the week before the temperature had been about ten degrees below freezing. During our first day we explored Moscow and, I think, felt as though we could walk no further.

We were still taking in the difference in culture when, the next day, we were thrown in at the deep end. It was time to perform our concert. We gave it our best shot, with very little practice. There were songs, poems and a performance of *Snow White and the Seven Dwarves*, but the highlight had to be morris-dancing, which was expertly (?) performed. Fortunately, we survived to tell the tale, and our hosts seemed appreciative of our efforts.

We enjoyed too many activities for me to go into great depth on any in particular, but Red Square, the monasteries and the ballet were all highlights of the trip. We also spent a number of days at the partner school, helping in junior English classes, struggling in Chemistry lessons, and playing 'international' basketball and football matches.

The timing of the trip could not have been better as a number of us had Russian GCSE papers to face when we got back. I think that it helped everyone enormously. More important than the academic benefits, though, were the social opportunities. Our host families made us very welcome, looking after us at home and in many cases accompanying us to art galleries, the circus or the Bolshoi. We have all tried to keep in touch with our partners as we all seemed to get on so well, and hope to see them again.

The whole group would like to thank Mr Hele and Mrs Earley (O.H.S.) for giving up part of their holidays and for making our trip run smoothly. I am sure that everyone involved would agree that the exchange was memorable, worthwhile and an incredible experience.

**a report on the Russian exchange, by T. Gater 4KJS**

**above left: "life study" (ceramic) by B. Pritchett VINAFP**

**above right: "torso" (ceramic) by G. Unsworth VISCW**



# “Hamlet” in Paris

**a report on the joint  
Abingdon- St. Helen's  
Theatre Studies  
trip to Paris,  
December 27th-29th,  
to see Peter Brook's  
production of “Hamlet”,  
by JHT**

A group of around thirty Sixth Form pupils and staff from Abingdon and St Helen's travelled to Paris to see a production of *Hamlet* by the celebrated British director, Peter Brook. A long way to go to see a play, you might think, and indeed it was. Why go to all the trouble? The simple answer is that many regard Brook as the finest director and practitioner alive today, and opportunities to see his productions in Britain are comparatively rare. Based in France since the Nineteen-Seventies, Brook has returned to these shores only intermittently, and then has tended to avoid established centres such as London or Stratford in favour of venues like Glasgow's Tramway. To see a Brook production, therefore, one has to be prepared to travel.

We set off at 6.00 a.m., having woken to find the roads thick with snow. J. Margree had called repeatedly to say he was stuck in drifts near Reading – an extreme case of ‘writer's block’ – but we collected him from a service station somewhere along the way, and arrived in Paris in time for dinner. The streets were festooned with delicate Christmas lights which created so beguiling an atmosphere that many felt the theatrical experience had started early. Indeed, part of the plan was to sample as much of Paris's theatrical activity as possible in the three days available to us, so the next morning, we visited the Pompidou Centre in the hope of finding some of the street theatre for which the city is renowned.

We were not disappointed. In front of the building stood a giant pole, from which eight musicians and bell-ringers were suspended in circular formation, as if part of some enormous clock. While they played, a trio of female acrobats performed death-defying manoeuvres on silky ribbons which fluttered down from the crown of the structure.

Gradually, and to our great delight, the whole thing rotated, no doubt signifying the arrival of another New Year in an on-going dance of time.

After this exciting preliminary, the exhibition of art and sculpture inside the Pompidou Centre which purported to explore links between art and show business was felt by many to be a disappointment, although the panoramic views from the sixth floor were worth the price of admission on their own. Lunch was followed by a walk to the Louvre, past the Palais Royale – scene of the first performance of Molière's *Hypochondriac* – and then a boat trip along the Seine in freezing conditions.

The evening spent at Brook's Bouffes du Nord Theatre was unforgettable. A lifetime of theatrical experiment and innovation had led Brook to a ruined variety theatre in a cosmopolitan, yet far from fashionable, corner of Paris. His company of actors reflected the variety of cultures on view in the streets outside. Brook's Hamlet was a black actor from Birmingham (Adrian Lester), his Ophelia an Indian actress (Shantala Shivalingappa). Others came from America, Iran and Japan. The mixture was intoxicating. Brook's pared-down production style places all the emphasis on the actor and his skills. Everything is conjured from his resources, yet this deceptively simple approach creates theatre of extraordinary intensity, as all those who sat through the two-and-a-half-hour performance (without an interval) would be able to testify.

Afterwards, a number of us stood in the circular auditorium, staring at the faded plaster walls and rich, orange square of fabric which constituted the performance space, rather like children at a magician's show, wondering how it had all been done, and longing to make the shadows come to life again.

# Fishbourne

**a report on the  
First Year trip to  
Fishbourne  
Roman Palace,  
July 2nd,  
by J. Ambler 1A**

The First Year arrived after a very hot and sticky two-hour coach journey, and immediately had lunch when we got off the coach, much to our liking. About half an hour later we were split into two groups, and my group went off in the direction of the museum.

Inside the museum we found lots of interesting things such as a huge carving of some workmen and a skeleton found in the Palace. Moving gradually around we saw a model of what the Palace would have looked like when it was first built.

The Palace was probably owned by King Cogidubnus, a local king in Britain when the Romans invaded during the reign of the emperor Claudius.

At the end of the museum was a long building full of mosaics which had been uncovered by excavations. My favourite was the famous one of Cupid riding on a dolphin. There were some sea monsters all around the edge, together with patterns which looked just like the F.A. Cup.

After all the mosaics we had a quick look around the gardens and gift shop before going into a classroom where we learned about different types of pots and bowls. One type of pottery was Samian Ware, which was very light and was a glossy red colour. Then we were shown how Romans would have dressed, and I was dressed up as a princess.



# Lord Mayor's procession

The trip was accompanied by Mr Jenkins, and after selecting three suitable representatives from the huge crowd of volunteers we left Abingdon School at dawn. The Middle School was represented by W. Shepherd, S. Thakore represented Josca's, and I was the representative of the Upper School. After I had failed to wake up Thakore in the middle of the night as required, Mr Jenkins' rather energetic waking-up manoeuvre and the 2.0 litre engine of his car made it possible for us to catch the right train.

We arrived at London just after rush hour, which turned out to be rather lucky. It was not too easy to go on the tube without hitting any people, as we were carrying two long poles, parts of the banner which we were going to display in the actual procession. After almost being banned from using the tube because of our over-sized luggage, we arrived at the Mercers' Hall just in time to have a very nice breakfast. Overwhelmed by the splendour of the premises, we had time to enjoy the service and to socialize with representatives from other schools over the meal. There was a very wide-ranging mixture of students coming from very different schools, all of which in some way are supported by the Mercers' Company.

After breakfast, everyone was issued with bright red raincoats, which says everything about the weather

on that day. Nevertheless, we enthusiastically put together our banner, and when we compared it with the other ones, we realised that the Art Department (Mr Hunter in particular) had done a really good job. Ready to march, we waited for the procession to start, and photographs were taken with the very stunning Rebecca Cunis who was starring as the "Lord Mayor's Maiden". The actual procession was rather tiring as it was cold, rainy and windy. After objecting to holding the banner at first, I found out that it was the best job to have, sparing me all the cheesy waves and grins. Thakore in particular enjoyed entertaining the crowds with his charm, and quickly conquered the hearts of the old ladies watching the procession. Despite the relatively bad weather, the streets were full of excited spectators, giving the event the audience it deserved. Nevertheless, as we neared the end of the procession everybody was looking forward to the next feeding in the Mercers' Hall.

Being entertained by two jugglers, we spent two more hours in the Mercers' place eating very delicate food and drinking champagne (or orange juice where appropriate). We did not regret giving up a bit of our free time, and made the right decision to stay on for the fireworks display on the Thames which turned out to be a fitting culmination of a very enjoyable day.

**three pupils were invited by the Mercers' Company to represent the School in London for the Lord Mayor's procession on November 11th. D-M. Reuter VITCG was one of them**

**above:  
"rust" (acrylic)  
by N. Sadler 5SPO**

# Sports reports

## Tennis

This has been an enjoyable and successful season for the tennis club. The weather has been pretty hot on the whole, and so has quite a bit of the tennis. Overall, in traditional inter-school matches, at all levels, we have been beaten by only one school, M.C.S. (revenge will be sweet next year, or so we hope).

**1st VI**  
M.C.S. Lost 3.5-5.5  
Shiplake Won 6-3  
Oratory Won 8.5-0.5  
Pangbourne Won 9-0  
Bloxham Won 5-4  
Youll Cup: Charterhouse Lost 1-2  
Clark Trophy:  
Cheltenham Won 2-0  
Stowe Won 2-1  
Whitgift Lost 1-2

**2nd VI**  
M.C.S. Lost 3-6  
Shiplake Won 8.5-0.5  
Pangbourne Won 9-0  
Bloxham Won 7-2

**3rd VI**  
M.C.S. Lost 3.5-5.5  
Cokethorpe Drew 2-2

**U16A VI**  
M.C.S. Won 7-2  
Bloxham Won 8-1

**U16B VI**  
M.C.S. Lost 0-9

**U15A VI**  
M.C.S. Lost 0.5-8.5  
Shiplake Won 9-0  
Oratory Won 6.5-2.5  
Bloxham Won 8.5-0.5  
Cokethorpe Won 3.5-0.5

**Thomas Bowl:**  
Abingdon 1: Bristol G.S. Won 2-0  
Solihull Won 2-1  
Bradfield Lost 0-2  
Abingdon 2: Seaford walkover  
K.C.S. Won 2-0  
Winchester Won 2-0  
Nottingham Lost 0-2

**U15B VI**  
M.C.S. Won 6.5-2.5

**U14A VI**  
Oratory Won 9-0  
M.C.S. Lost 2.5-6.5

**U14B VI**  
M.C.S. Won 5.5-3.5

a report by SAE

The seniors have led the way with a very successful season, and the presence of four members of the current Lower Sixth in the 1st VI bodes well for next year, as does some very promising talent at the junior end of the School.

The 1st VI lost their opening match against M.C.S. (on grass), but won the rest in fine and convincing style. Knocked out of the HSBC (Glanvill) Cup by Radley, they regrouped to play very well in the newly formed OXIST (Oxfordshire Independent Schools Tennis League), finishing third overall in the 'A' group.

In the final week of term they gave a very good account of themselves at the PSLTA (Public Schools Lawn Tennis Association) Championships at Eton. B. Chadwick and R. Turnbull emerged as a very strong and successful first pair through the term; they were on impressive, confident form at Eton, winning all their matches in straight sets against the first pairs from Charterhouse, Cheltenham, Stowe and Whitgift, losing just twelve games in eight sets. D. Procter and C. Thomson were a very useful second pair, while A. Brodie and G. Unsworth proved an experienced and effective third pair. The team was strengthened (there is no other word for it) on a couple of occasions, by the presence of M. Watkins (still in his first year in the School); what a prospect, and a reminder of the vintage days of the brothers Greenland. W. Allan and G. Sutcliffe also made useful contributions to the senior team.

The 2nd VI were an excellent outfit: loyal, dependable, affable, and really quite good at tennis. In a way they provided the heart of the club. I think they enjoyed their tennis, and they also achieved some good results. The 3rd VI managed a couple of outings and ought to be provided with more matches in the future. It is always good to have enthusiasm and strength in depth at the top end of the School.

The U16 VI had a limited fixture list, but they won both matches convincingly; this squad contains

plenty of talent for the future. They also performed very well in the OXIST league: the 'A' IV came runners up, while the 'B' IV won the trophy for their group. The U15 team at full strength were a very useful side, scoring some good wins through the term; again there was great success in the OXIST league: the 'A' IV won the trophy in Group A (by a single game) with the 'B' IV again runners-up, a great achievement. Progress in the HSBC competition was thwarted by an outstanding side from Wallingford School.

In the Thomas Bowl competition, played at Eton, the two U15 pairs (J. Kelly and M. Watkins, and W. Teddy and J. Nicholls) worked hard in the heat to great effect, progressing to the fourth and third rounds respectively. This was a very fine effort in an extremely competitive tournament, which features the top tennis schools in the country.

The U14 squad were keen and enthusiastic throughout the term; they should develop well as they play more matches. U13 and U12 teams gained useful experience in the Vale of White Horse, South-West Oxfordshire Doubles, and HSBC competitions.

The School's internal tennis tournament (the Buckley Challenge Cup) was an excellent competition this year, producing some very good matches. In the end R. Turnbull (6CMM) defeated M. Watkins (1B) by two sets to one (4-6, 6-0, 6-3) in a hard-fought final which included tennis of a very high standard.

Colours were awarded as follows. Half colours went to G. Coppock, J. Drury, P. Gooch (2nd VI captain), D. Procter, J. Rowley, G. Sutcliffe, A. Teddy, and J. Wright, whilst full colours were awarded to A. Brodie (1st VI captain), B. Chadwick, R. Turnbull, and G. Unsworth.

Finally, many thanks to the other members of staff who have helped with the Tennis Club this season: TRA, NWH, NMR, BAHF, and BJLS. Also, many thanks to all those parents who have supported the teams on match days; your presence has been very much appreciated.



# U13A tennis

a report by S. Taft 2D

Abingdon U13As have not played many tennis matches, as most were rained off. In both matches which we played I think we did well, although this may not be shown by the results. The first match we played was with S. Taft and S. MacLachlan, and first we played one set of singles each, which we both lost 6-0. Next we paired up, and after a huge effort we managed to take a game off the opposition, although we often managed to push them into deuce.

Our next match was in a tournament, with another pair from Abingdon with us as well. Taft and T. Raftery played in this, and did well, even allowing for the fact that only one other school took part in the tournament. We won three out of four matches, although the position you came was judged by games, so we came third in all. We did well, considering that we were playing some excellent schools and both matches were on grass, which we hardly ever play on.

# Shooting

a report by SH

Last summer saw the School hosting the South African Junior rifle Squad for a week, culminating in an enjoyable match between a School team and the tourists. Needless to say, South Africa won, though not by much. Several pupils have made it into the Great Britain Junior Development Squad: M. Bungey, P. Ball (captain of shooting), S. Vaughan, P. Wakefield and A. Campbell. The latter two will be representing Great Britain this year. Division two of the Oxfordshire 25-yard league this winter (a senior competition) was won by Abingdon's 'A' team, consisting of Vaughan, Wakefield, Campbell and Mr Smith. Mr Smith has won promotion to the top rank of British shooters – the 'X' class – and trialled for the Great Britain team. We are lucky to have such a talented and dedicated coach travelling from Swindon four or five days every week.

In the inter-house competition this year, Townsend's gained the trophy for the second year running – which makes them the only house ever to have won it. In fact, they made a pretty clean sweep of things, with Vaughan gaining the Senior Cup and Wakefield the Junior Cup. The Beginners' Cup, from now on to be awarded for Air Rifle shooting, went to Y. Kim, who achieved the School's best score this year in the NSRA's Youth Proficiency Scheme. The YPS continues to attract large numbers of First and Second Year pupils, who are then offered the chance to go on to .22 shooting; there is some real talent emerging.

As an experiment this year, lunch-time sessions have been run for those wishing to count shooting towards their Duke of Edinburgh's Award; there has been a reasonable take-up for these sessions, and it is hoped that more will make use of this opportunity.

# Fencing

a report by S. Evans 6APS

Under the watchful eye of Mr Phelps, and their new coach, Mr Du Prez, the fencing squad has been going from strength to strength as the year has progressed. Meeting once a week has not always been easy, especially when it comes to sharing what little room they have with cricketers and badminton players, and yet they have fought on (pun entirely intended), learned skills, and improved in fitness.

Captained by T. Sykes, R. White and S. Evans, the team has been strangely composed of the two ends of the school, the Sixth Form and the Lower School, while Middle School have stayed scarce. This has been nothing of a discouragement, however, as Mr Du Prez

successfully teaches the younger ones how to use a foil, and gives useful advice to the seniors as they spend their time fighting with épées and sabres.

Though the skills learned are not immediately recognizable as useful in later life, it is nice to take part in more unconventional sports. As time has passed, and the older fencers have matured and mastered techniques and styles, the possibility of competitions looms on the horizon. Perhaps one day, if support continues and new people are prepared to put in the effort and enjoy themselves, we will have a fencing squad to rival the legendary successes of the badminton teams.

# 1st & 2nd VIII rowing

As usual, the Michaelmas Term was a fairly quiet time for rowing. It was not until just before Half Term that we finally got to race, at Upper Thames Head. We won both IVs races which we entered and the pairs event against stiff local opposition. The senior squad travelled to Hazewinkel in Belgium during Half Term to get some intensive training and to select the pairs for Great Britain trials, which took place in November and produced two pairs in the top ten. It is hard to tell whether such placings are accurate; to this day I am not sure whether the kebab which J. Tarrell had consumed the night before slowed us down or made him row faster towards the toilets.

**1st VIII**  
Cox: N. Brodie  
Stroke: J. Tarrell  
7: T. Stockford  
6: N. Williams  
5: T. Burch  
4: J. Hamand  
3: T. Guiver  
2: N. Hopkins  
Bow: T. Kingham  
Coach: MDM

**2nd VIII**  
Cox: E. Macdonald  
Stroke: A. Maclean  
7: W. Burdall  
6: D. Easterbrook  
5: J. Willcox-Jones  
4: D. Wilson  
3: W. Gervers/J. Calnan  
2: A. Addis/F. Hemsley  
Bow: D-M. Reuter  
Coach: TJCG

a report by T. Stockford

After Christmas, the official season began and the first race was at Peterborough Head. This came as a slight shock to the system as one of our VIIIs smashed into another crew at the start and could not race. As for the other VIII... Well let us just say we did not have our best row. Next came more trials, and for this we were taken back to sunny Boston in Lincolnshire, a place which we hold dear in our hearts. Again, the results were good, with Tarrell and T. Stockford coming first and T. Kingham and N. Hopkins very close behind. As a result, all four were invited to Easter trials, where N. Hopkins, Tarrell and Kingham were invited to final trials, Kingham also being invited to race at Munich for Great Britain.

When the Schools Head arrived, both crews felt they had a good chance of winning their events, but sadly the weather meant that it was called off. The 1st VIII had another chance when the event was re-organized for 1st VIIIs, and won, finishing four seconds ahead of last year's winners.

At Easter, a new challenge was tackled. Rowing on the sea in San Diego was not entirely easy, even for us, and after qualifying for the final comfortably, we were given a bad lane draw and had to settle for sixth. When we came back it was not long before our first race in Nottingham, another fabulous place. We rowed well to reach our final for a shot at Radley early on in the season, but unfortunately the ten gallons of water which the waves decided to deposit in our boat proved to be a slight hindrance.

Next came Ghent, with a rearranged crew (as Kingham was off gallivanting in Munich) and a support team of some fairly nice sports cars. Saturday did not prove too successful, with just two bronzes, but Sunday gave us a second chance. The 2nd VIII were in an event against 1st VIII crews but that did not stop them upsetting quite a few of them by beating them. One coxed IV won the junior event whilst the other picked up silver in the senior event just behind

Leander. The VIIIs race was a bit strange, as after our new steady start we found ourselves coming through Leander's U23 crew and just overtaking Laga Delft from Holland on the line to be crowned U23 Belgian champions. We were not too cocky, however, as we had to shake hands with the others, who did seem to be a tiny bit larger than us.

This success forced a slight rearrangement in crew order for National Schools, where, after winning our heat, we came up against the big crews, and Bedford Modern, in the final. The way up to the start gave us a chance to sing (another of our many talents) which I believe may have annoyed a couple of crews who were trying to 'focus' at the time. Unfortunately, here our steady start was a little too steady and we were last off, but we were always a crew prepared to go the way of the tortoise. We made our way into third place past a shocking crew called Hampton and squeezed past Bedford. I maintain that if we could have added another five hundred on the end we would have got Radley, but we finished three-quarters of a length down to take silver. The 2nd VIII also took silver in their event by about a centimetre, in a race which had us all speechless at the end. The IVs went less well, although the coxless IV won bronze in their event.

Reading was the next race on our list, and after beating Reading Rowing Club comfortably we faced Bedford, who beat us by a quarter length on a course which gave them a staggered start and a tight bend in their favour. Again we found the finishing line to be getting to them just before we did, but we all knew that Henley was longer. The 2nd VIII lost narrowly to an Isis development crew, again on the outside. Both IVs won fairly convincingly, although the Windsor cox was convinced that they could catch us as we wound down halfway through to give them a chance.

At Marlow we rowed well to reach the finals of élite and senior VIIIs, but unfortunately the day had taken too much out of us and we found it hard to



compete with those who had raced only once. The 2nds VIII were also unfortunate, having a brief encounter with the bank to put them out of the race.

The next race in our diary was one in a town called Henley, which meant a bit of extra training. The 1st and 2nd VIIIs rowed before and after school. When the time came, the 2nd VIII were unlucky to be sent into a headwind which died soon after their race. They rowed brilliantly and were unlucky that the event had been trimmed down and it was much harder to get into; no school qualified. The Wednesday of Henley brought the 1st VIII up against the McCallie School from America: we rowed appallingly and only beat them by three-quarters of a length. We all got a bit more focused for the next race, against Coleraine from Ireland. This seemed to work, as we came across the line four-and-a-half lengths ahead, and the race gave us new confidence (as if we needed more of it).

On Friday we had lost before we had started – if you listened to anyone on the bank – as Kent were the

fastest school in America. However, none of that stopped us rowing through them to win by one-and-a-half lengths. Saturday brought us up against the Australians from Parramatta, who were obviously immune to our singing. They led from the start and we were unable to get past, although we were not beaten easily as they clocked up a time only four seconds slower than the record, in flat water with no wind. We knew that they would at least do the decent thing and beat Radley in the final, which cushioned the blow slightly.

At final Great Britain trials, Kingham got into the junior World Championship coxless IV, Tarrell and Hopkins are in the Coup coxless IV, and E. Macdonald is coxing the Coup VIII. In all we feel that the season has been successful, and we could not have done it without J. Hamand's enthusiastic and courageous leadership skills and Mr Martin's knack of trying to kill us whilst at the same time turning us into people who can almost row.

above:  
J14s training;  
photograph by G. Smith 4BJLS



# J16s rowing

## **J16A VIII**

**Bow:** S. Haste  
**2:** D. Goodacre  
**3:** H Feather  
**4:** J. Anderson (captain)  
**5:** N. Herbert  
**6:** J. Calnan  
**7:** P. Bickerton  
**Stroke:** F. Hemsley  
**Cox:** T. Wilson

**Additional 'A' Squad members:**  
A. Eeles, A. Champion

## **J16B VIII**

**Bow:** P. Brazier  
**2:** M. Smith  
**3:** A. Rowe  
**4:** A. Eeles  
**5:** A. Livingstone  
**6:** D. Puri  
**7:** O. Burdall  
**Stroke:** M. Holman  
**Cox:** A. Champion

**Additional 'B' Squad members:**  
D. Atkinson, J. Bosley, B. Hayes,  
T. Hooper, T. Jackson,  
A. Lin, B. Townsend

**coach:** RSS

**a report by J. Anderson 5SH**

With a large squad, featuring old and new faces, we began the season at Peterborough on the river Nene. Dubious timing by the judges at this head race meant that we were unsure of how much the 'A' IV actually beat everyone by, but they still won – with seemingly the fastest time of the day. The VIII came a close second in their event, but with no one to race against or push away from, and with two crew members away with 'flu, it was impossible to make any real judgment on the race or our performance.

With a high level of commitment from everyone in the squad, especially by the new and lesser known members like T. Hooper and B. Hayes, we were hoping to have success at the National Schools Head. However, as we waited for our races, the weather became progressively worse, and eventually the event was called off.

A fantastic training camp in San Diego, California, meant we entered the regatta season well prepared and with a nice tan, and having lost our event at the San Diego Crew Classic, we had the will to win some silverware.

By now, the foot and mouth crisis was in full swing, so Wallingford regatta had to be moved to Dorney Lake. There we had a successful day's racing. The 'A' VIII, 'B' VIII and coxed IV all won their events in style – especially the 'A' crew, who beat Radley 3rd VIII by half a length.

F. Hemsley and N. Herbert travelled to the inter-regional trials, and came third for the south-west of England in a pairs event, racing at a very relaxed pace. By now it was clear that there were more people eligible for the 'A' squad than places in the 'A' VIII itself, and three rowers (O. Burdall, A. Eeles and S. Haste) were battling for two places. They were all good in certain areas: Eeles is hugely powerful; Burdall is very technical; and Haste is a good all-rounder. Unfortunately, one of them had to go, and it was Eeles, though he should be commended on his effort and levels of improvement throughout the season.

A visit to Ghent in Belgium, for the international regatta, proved more comical than successful (but being pitched up against Leander and the Belgian National Team did not help), with some interesting pair combinations: H. Feather and D. Goodacre; P. Bickerton and J. Anderson; and Haste and Anderson, whose absolutely dreadful steering caused much amusement. An untried IV combination (Hemsley, Herbert, Feather and J. Calnan) had an unlucky race – they had to put the boat together on the way up to the start. That same weekend the 'B' VIII had a successful day at Bedford Amateur regatta, winning their event against college and university crews. The Novice IV (D. Atkinson, Hayes, Hooper and J. Bosley) also did very well, narrowly missing out on a win.

We realized that success at the National Schools regatta would take a lot of hard work and dedication. In the end, we had a reasonably successful weekend, with a silver medal for the coxed IV (Herbert, Calnan, Anderson and Hemsley) – losing by only a length to St. Edward's in an event with eighteen entries – and a bronze for the 'B' VIII, who were the fastest genuine 'B' VIII of the day. The VIII did well to come fifth in a strong field, and the 'B' coxed IV and the two pairs did well in their events too.

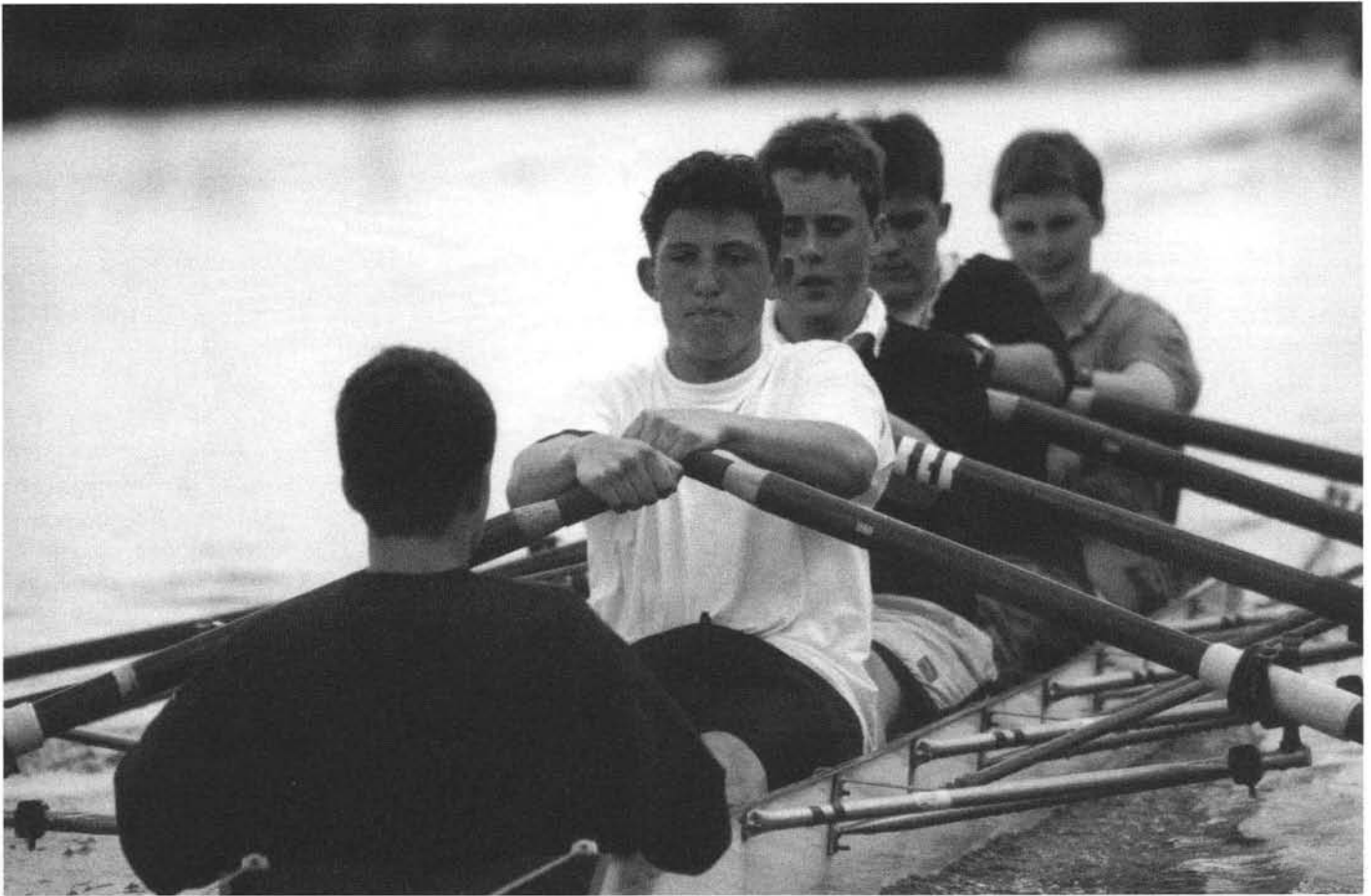
At Reading Amateur regatta the Novice IV (Calnan, Burdall, Haste and Bickerton, coxed by A. Champion) won their event easily, with the senior IV losing to Reading University in a closely fought race. Reading town regatta at Thames Valley Park proved mostly unsuccessful, except for a win by the 'B' IV.

We were to better our performances the next week in the Thames Valley Park regatta, with a win for a composite VIII (Pangbourne, Shiplake and Abingdon) against another composed of the same schools. An interesting VIII (Burdall, Hemsley, Anderson, Bickerton, Feather, Calnan, J. Griffiths, W. Burdall, cox E. Macdonald) had a great win over Memphis University USA and Trinity College, Dublin.

We had finished the season with nine regatta wins, one silver and two bronzes from regional, national and international events. Twenty-two people had won at least one event. Though for most the season was now over, for five squad members and Mr Slatford there was more to come. Hemsley and Calnan were involved in the 2nd VIII's bid to get into Henley Royal Regatta, narrowly missing out on qualifying.

At the Anglo-French trials, we had to beat two schools (Hampton and King's Chester) to become the Great Britain coxed IV. Through the dedication of all involved (including our coach Mr Slatford and assistant coach T. Wilson) we beat our opposition by two lengths over a 1500 metre course. The IV (Calnan, Feather, Anderson and Hemsley) went on to race against the French on Saturday July 28th, facing the strongest of all the French crews, their national champions. Although the IV had a fantastic race, pushing up on the opposition throughout, the French were superior oarsmen, and beat the GB IV by just under two lengths. However, Great Britain won the match overall, and in the mixed nationality VIII's races Calnan and Anderson received medals.

We would all like to thank Mr Slatford for putting up with constant insults from us regarding his size and weight, for giving up all of his free time to train us, and for introducing us to the wonderful world of Seventies and Eighties music. We would also like to thank his partner Estelle for letting him stay up past his bed-time to go out on the river with us, and we wish them all the best for their year in Australia.



# J15s on Lac d'Aiguebelette

It was April Fool's Day, but the 5.30 a.m. start was no joke. As the full minibus and loaded pink trailer set off on the first leg of the journey to Dover, we watched the sun slowly rise above the horizon, and long before we had reached our destination – 'Les Tilleuls' in Ayn on the edge of the French Alps – we had watched the sun set.

Straight after an early breakfast the following morning, we set off down the winding road to our training venue, Lac d'Aiguebelette, host to the 1997 World Rowing Championships. We were told that there had been snow-storms the previous week, but we were lucky enough to find the lake warm, sunny and calm. Within an hour all the boats – an VIII, two IVs and two pairs – had been rigged, the sun-cream applied and an early challenge set: to row a two-kilometre timed piece in the VIII and a IV. Two further outings that day, fuelled by some excellent farmhouse cooking, had provided all of us with our first opportunity to row in a IV.

The next morning we understood why, when we were introduced to "seat racing". While Jared Griffiths coached some of us in the exacting discipline of rowing and steering pairs, Mr English conducted the grim test. The two IVs sprinted against each other and the clock over about 500 metres, and then swapped two personnel before rowing back to the start and

repeating the process, again and again. By the end of the day's third outing, ten runs and nine swaps later, it was all over. Later we enjoyed some well earned rest and recuperation at the nearby town of Chambéry.

The following morning we rowed two long-distance, hand-blistering outings in VIIIs and IVs, and IVs and pairs, before taking a trip to the attractive resort town of Annecy. By the time of the last outing of the day, in the early evening, the fine weather had broken and we found ourselves rowing in the middle of an alpine storm. Completely drenched, we returned to Les Tilleuls for hot showers and some food, but were later plunged into darkness when lightning struck the building.

On the fourth and last morning of training we succeeded in beating the two kilometre times set at the beginning of the week by a satisfying margin, and Mr English was pleased to hear for the first time in the VIII the sound of one catch. The afternoon was spent walking in the countryside near Dullin. Later we returned to the lake to settle a bet by pitting the strongest combination in a IV against the remaining oarsmen in the VIII. After a gruelling contest the VIII won the race.

Everyone really enjoyed the trip, despite the hard work involved, and we thank Mr English and Mr Griffiths for their patient coaching.

## 2km Test VIII

**Bow: H. Green**  
**2: R. Morton**  
**3: W. McGeehin**  
**4: S. Jackson**  
**5: J. Prinold**  
**6: I. McKenzie**  
**7: T. Williams**  
**Stroke: A. Paxton**  
**Cox: A. White**

## 2km Test IV

**Bow: R. Vasudev**  
**2: S. Gordon**  
**3: W. Harrison**  
**Stroke: J. Donnelly**  
**Cox: A. Mould**

a report by  
**A. White 4JAR and AJPE**

above:  
**J14s training;**  
**photograph by G. Smith 4BJS**

# J15s rowing

**J15 1st VIII**  
Reading Town  
Bow: H. Green  
2: S. Jackson  
3: W. McGeehin  
4: A. Paxton  
5: J. Prinold  
6: I. McKenzie  
7: T. Williams  
Stroke: S. Gordon  
Cox: A. White

**J15 2nd VIII**  
National Schools  
Bow: R. Guast  
2: W. Harrison  
3: A. Marsh  
4: R. Morton  
5: J. Stanier  
6: N. Patterson  
7: A. Macdonald  
Stroke: R. Groves  
Cox: A. Mould

**J15 3rd VIII**  
T.V. Park  
Bow: T. Gatten  
2: H. Abrahall  
3: R. Guast  
4: M. Sabine  
5: J. Barclay  
6: M. McKechnie  
7: R. Vasudev  
Stroke: D. Waller  
Cox: A. Mould

**J15 IV**  
National Schools  
Bow: J. Stanier  
2: W. Bright  
3: R. Vasudev  
Stroke: J. Donnelly  
Cox: D. Boardman

a report by AJPE

Thirty contenders appeared for the first afternoon of training in January and completed the first of many wet and windy airfield runs. The next afternoon everyone rowed their first two kilometre ergo test, and the weight-adjusted times helped decide a provisional ranking from which initial crew selections were made. Subsequently, most Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday afternoon sessions were spent on the water, and, until the days had lengthened sufficiently, most Monday afternoon sessions were spent either running or in the gym.

Throughout much of the Lent Term training was hampered and sometimes halted by the fast water conditions and by flooding. However, the squad made the best of the available training opportunities and by the time of the first test – Henley Schools Head – felt well prepared. Unfortunately, the Thames was running too fast through Henley as the date approached and the event was cancelled.

After Half Term we set our sights on achieving good results at the Schools Head of the River in London, one of two major events in the J15 rowing calendar. The championship course, from Mortlake to Putney, was fairly safe from flooding as it is on the Tideway, and safe too from any travel restrictions likely to be imposed as the foot and mouth crisis deepened. But having travelled to the University of London's boathouse, rigged the boats and waited around for several hours, we received the news that, because of the rough water conditions, this event too was cancelled.

In retrospect, the high point of the Lent Term had come when we took two evenly matched VIIIIs to Henley and enjoyed our own private head race before dashing back to Abingdon for the F.A.S.B.C. Dinner. As many of us had followed Gold Fever on television and stayed up to watch the final of the coxless IVs event at the Sydney Olympics, it was especially interesting to hear Tim Foster reminisce about his gold medal-winning day. This was a much appreciated boost to morale for everyone.

During the Easter vacation fourteen members of the J15 squad travelled to France for the annual spring training camp.

With the Summer Term came the regatta season. Our first test came at Wallingford Regatta, which had been moved to Eton's Dorney Lake because of the foot and mouth epidemic. The 1st VIII had an easy route to the final of the J15A VIIIIs competition, and at an early stage led the field, but they soon drifted back and finished in fifth place, behind Radley, Hampton, Bedford and Eton. Nevertheless, it was encouraging at this stage of the year to be close to the pace of the top crews. The 2nd VIII also had an encouraging row but failed to make their final.

At Bedford Regatta we achieved our first wins. In the J15 VIIIIs the 1st VIII defeated St. Edward's and then Bedford 'B' in the heats before defeating Bedford 'A' in a hard-fought final. The 2nd VIII lost to Bedford 'B'. In the J15 Coxed IVs, the stern IV of the 1st VIII doubled up to defeat first Bedford 'A' and then Pangbourne in the final.

Two weeks later came the second major event of the year, the National Schools Regatta at the National Water Sports Centre in Nottingham. Our preparations for the event had gone well, but in the eliminator of the J15A VIIIIs the 1st VIII had a poor row into the strong headwind and were disappointed to come away, as in previous years, without even having won a place in the final. A quick-starting Bedford crew had gained revenge for its recent defeats and pushed us into fourth place. The 2nd VIII fared better, overtaking Canford in the latter stages of the J15 2nd VIII final to come fifth. A J15 IV was also entered and gained valuable racing experience.

At the next two regattas, the emphasis was on developing oarsmen rather than winning pots. At Bedford Star, four oarsmen from the 1st VIII were entered only in the J15 Coxed IVs, which they won convincingly, and this gave four 2nd VIII and four 3rd VIII oarsmen a chance to train and compete at the next higher level. The newly constituted 1st VIII acquitted itself well and came within a canvas of defeating St. Edward's in their heat of the J15 VIIIIs. The new 2nd VIII lost to Bedford in the J15B VIIIIs. In the J15 Coxed IVs the stern four of the new 2nd VIII doubled up to defeat Bedford Modern in the heats, before losing to a strong Canford crew in the semi-final.

At Thames Valley Park, the 3rd VIII competed together for the first time as the 'B' crew in the J15 B VIIIIs. Their race was characterized unfortunately by mishap, with one oarsman catching an overhead crab and another coming off his seat. In the same event, the 2nd VIII won their heat against Bedford and K.C.S. Wimbledon, but were then defeated in the final by Hampton and Shiplake. Two matched IVs drawn from the 1st VIII also competed in the J15A IVs but made no progress beyond their heats.

At Reading Town the J15 squad was back at full strength and intent on winning. They dominated the opposition. The 1st VIII won the J15A VIIIIs competition, defeating first Shiplake and then Pangbourne in the final. The two J15B IVs then met each other in the final, having eliminated Pangbourne. The 'A' crew won. Finally, in the last race of the season, a J15A IV, taken from the 1st VIII, defeated Shiplake easily in a straight final.

Thanks go to Jared Griffiths Griffiths and to TJCG on the coaching team, and to all J15 parents for their





## J14s rowing

This has been a year of triumph over adversity. We began with a group of boys who, from the outset, showed huge potential, but who were denied the opportunity of taking to the water for much of the Lent Term thanks to the state of the river. Despite getting only eight sessions on the river by Easter, and having to cancel the holiday training camp, the boys stuck at the land training with considerable determination and were at least fit by the start of the summer.

We lost a little more time on the water in April, but very quickly got into the swing of things once the river had stabilized. The boys' learning curve was astounding, the little technical work which we had been able to do on the ergometers during the Lent term being carried over successfully to the water, and there built upon. We kept the crews fluid week by week in order to ensure a good spread of skills and opportunity throughout. This paid off handsomely, as some initially quite unlikely characters began to show real talent.

The racing season was a little hurried, but very successful for all its brevity. Bedford Star and Reading

Amateur regattas saw us reach a number of semi-finals and a final. Bedford regatta saw us win the J14 quads event against some stiff opposition. It was hoped that Tewkesbury would provide the climax to our season, but the weather intervened again, the regatta being cancelled on the day thanks to gales. The final Wednesday of term saw a fun regatta between scratch crews within the squad. It was impressive to see everyone take the racing seriously, and some remarkably quick combinations emerged.

Despite the setbacks, this squad seemed to us to be the most talented squad that we have coached in the six years we have run the J14s. They reached a standard at least equal to that of the best past squads despite having had early training almost destroyed by the floods. Most impressive was the dedication and seriousness shown both on the water and on land, and the fact that they took all of the setbacks in their stride with little complaint. If they take the sport seriously over coming years, the seasons of 2004-5 could produce some exceptionally quick senior crews. We hope that they both aspire to that and deliver.

a report by JAR and TLW

above:  
J14s training;  
photograph by G. Smith 4BJLS

# 1st XI hockey

17/1 Southampton (H) Won 2-1  
24/1 Pangbourne (H) Won 6-0  
31/1 Shiplake (A) Drew 1-1  
3/2 Stowe (A) Won 3-2  
7/2 Leighton Park (H) Won 4-2  
10/2 Reading (H) Won 8-0  
14/2 St. Edward's (A) Lost 1-3  
28/2 Bloxham (H) Won 6-2  
7/3 M.T.S. (H) Won 4-2  
17/3 Eton (HA) Won 7-0  
28/3 M.C.S. (H) Won 3-1

a report by K. Roche VI SAE

Much was expected of this year's 1st XI; the Lower Sixth had in previous seasons boasted unbeaten records, and included a number of County players, as well as a divisional representative in P. Timberlake. These were supplemented by a number of already experienced 1st XI players, most notably I. Downie and S. Allen, who had been ever-present in the side since the Fifth Year.

Our confidence was tempered, however, by the knowledge that we were to face K.E.S., within a week of returning to School. In recent years Abingdon has suffered some heavy defeats from this opposition, and so it was with some trepidation that we took the field. After a tentative beginning, the team exhibited an increased confidence, which was exemplified by the strong and incisive running of C. Thomson, who fully merited the opening goal. This breakthrough lifted the side, and despite a spirited Southampton fight-back, we emerged worthy winners.

The victory had set the tone for the early stages. Whilst we remained miserly in defence owing to the considerable efforts of R. Balch, E. Dingwall, A. Fraser and P. Timberlake, scoring goals proved problematic. Close results against teams such as Stowe and Shiplake – to whom we were far superior – illustrated this weakness. Indeed, had it not been for the goals of R. Kershaw and C. Thomson, predominantly flank forwards, our results might not have been so positive before the introduction of a certain centre-forward...

When this team played to their potential, they were quite unstoppable, as Eton, Bloxham and Pangbourne will testify. D. Smith in goal proved an insurmountable obstacle for many opponents, and produced an astounding performance against M.C.S. in the face of a richly talented forward line. His understudy was a very promising Fifth Year, R. Cox, who showed his ability against Southampton and will serve the side admirably in years to come. The defensive unit is always one which goes unheralded in the free-scoring game of hockey. It is a measure of the quality of our back four, however, that N. Fuggle and P. Peacock, both very able competitors, struggled to

break into a defence which conceded only twelve goals in as many games.

The midfield, with no excuse for tiring owing to the innovative diamond formation, were able both to protect the defence and supply the attack with opportunities. G. Stalcup, who had only recently taken up the game, was the most improved player of the season. His uncompromising style of play won him few friends among the umpiring fraternity, but served to break up countless opposition attacks. He was ably assisted in the centre of the midfield by M. Armitage, whose individual display against Merchant Taylors' was described by Mr Sandow as the best of the season. His ability to command matches and distribute intelligently did not, perhaps, earn the recognition which it deserved, and he was very much an unsung hero. Owing to the efforts of Stalcup and Armitage, S. Allen (right) and K. Roche (left) were free to focus on attacking duties. Allen was our most consistent player in terms both of games played and performance on the pitch. He seldom gave the ball away, and tirelessly provided a potent strike force.

In attack, the sharp and effective running of C. Thomson and R. Kershaw became a perfect foil for the direct style of I. Downie. Their searing pace and unselfish play, combined with Downie's ruthless finishing, forced the capitulation of much of our opposition. This was never more apparent than in our trouncing of Eton, where Downie amassed six of our seven goals.

In this game, and in that against M.C.S., the team exhibited their immense talents. M.C.S. in particular were a very skilled team, who had beaten St. Edward's, the one side to whom we lost. The manner in which we won this game confirmed that which was already clear on paper: this was the best hockey team which Abingdon had ever fielded. Much of the credit for this achievement must go to Mr Sandow, who invested numerous hours both on and off the hockey pitch. We all wish him luck in his new position at Stowe and hope that, even without him, those who represent this side next season will be equally successful.

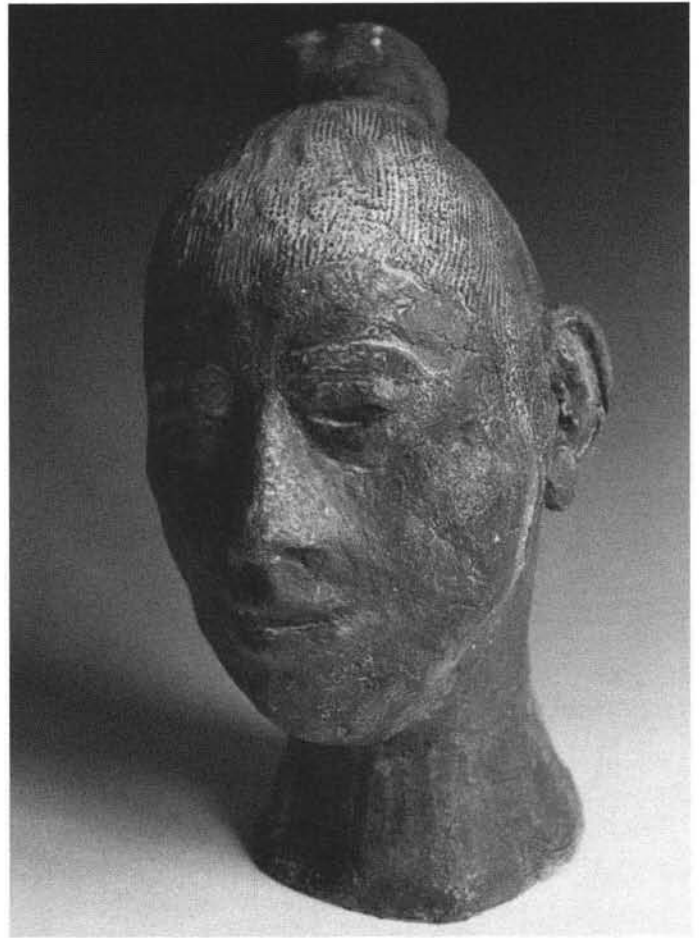
# Minors XI hockey

27/3 M.C.S. Lost 1-4

a report by R. Parker 1X

I have played hockey for four years, and so when I got to the School I was already quite good at it. In games lessons we went to Tilsley Park and after lessons, in a club, we played on War Mem. field. The grass on that field is very short and well looked-after, so it is great for playing hockey on.

Before our first match none of us had played together and so we were not very good. We played Magdalen, who were very good and also unbeaten. We lost, with M. Watkins scoring our only goal. That was the only match which we played this year. I look forward to playing much more hockey next year.



## 2nd XI hockey

The 2nd XI's results speak for themselves: played eleven, won eleven – no further purple prose is required. However, to avoid the wrath of the Editor I shall continue...

The season started with the traditional Arundel-type fixture against K.E.S. The squad was strong, containing many old campaigners of last year's 1st XI displaced by BJLS' 'young Turks'. A nervous game followed, A. White opening his account for the year after T. Matheson and J. Mather had combined to put the ball anywhere but in the goal. In what was to become normal service the XI were a class apart from Pangbourne, A. White again troubling the scorers and Matheson finding his touch with a hat-trick.

The Tesco's ground provided an entertaining contest against Shiplake. P. Peacock, rested from the 1st XI, scored the opener and White yet again provided an eleventh-hour winning goal. Stowe was also the scene for some delightful hockey, with Mather opening his account, Peacock adding to his tally and Matheson seemingly scoring at will to finish with a total of four goals.

Leighton Park were not up to the challenge and a depleted team (including Fifth Year A. Martin) put them to the sword – an L. Pearce hat-trick, a highly controversial Mather hat-trick and the ever-reliable White beating the keeper once again. Reading was a

similar story, with White, Matheson, Mather and new cap N. Fuggle on the score sheet.

Tight games against St. Edward's, Bloxham and Merchant Taylors' followed, with the usual suspects hitting the backboard before a relatively straightforward victory over Eton, notable for the opposition having a player dismissed – R. Wheeler stepped up and gave the Eton keeper no chance with the resulting penalty. Matheson, after an enforced absence, once again claimed a hat-trick.

The scene was set for a showdown with M.C.S. for the clean sweep and an unbeaten season. On the trampoline water-based Iffley Road pitch White calmly hit home twice, Matheson applying the finishing touch. Champagne, photographs and celebrations followed.

Unsurprisingly, Matheson claimed the Golden Stick award with thirteen goals, White being his closest rival with nine. Highlights of the season included Wheeler's 'shot' versus Pangbourne, G. Coppock's Corinthian spirit, D. White's amazing memory at Stowe, J. Farrant's illegal implement and A. McKenzie's advice to workmen from the safety of the minibus. C. Fudge was an inspiring and tireless captain throughout. After reaching the peak of his coaching career, DAG's work here is done – other, less fortunate teams require his help.

17/1 Southampton (H) Won 1-0  
 24/1 Pangbourne (H) Won 4-0  
 31/1 Shiplake (A) Won 2-1  
 3/2 Stowe (A) Won 6-2  
 7/2 Leighton Park (A) Won 7-0  
 10/2 Reading (H) Won 5-0  
 14/2 St. Edward's (H) Won 2-0  
 28/2 Bloxham (H) Won 2-1  
 7/3 M.T.S. (H) Won 2-1  
 17/3 Eton (H) Won 4-0  
 28/3 M.C.S. (A) Won 3-1

a report by DAG "as C. Fudge couldn't be bothered"

above left:  
 "Journey" (mixed media) by  
 J. Smith 6JEF

above right:  
 "Portrait" (ceramic) by  
 J. Wei 5DAG



# Senior Colts A XI hockey

13/1 Southampton (A) Lost 1-3  
24/1 Pangbourne (H) Won 5-0  
31/1 Shiplake (A) Won 5-0  
3/2 Stowe (H) Lost 1-2  
10/2 Reading (H) Lost 1-3  
11/2 St. Edward's (A) Lost 2-3  
28/2 Bloxham (A) Won 4-1  
7/3 M.T.S. (A) Lost 0-3  
17/3 Eton (A) Won 1-0  
28/3 M.C.S. (A) Lost 1-4

a report by M. Burnard 5RSH,  
with comments by DGA

I remember ending last season's hockey report with the optimistic words, "Things look good for next season". We lost the first match. There was no shame in this defeat, however. Our opponents, K.E.S, were a more experienced and better prepared team, and we battled hard, if eventually in vain.

The following week brought a sparkling, if slightly unexpected, big win against Pangbourne; last season our biggest win was by one goal. Determined to prove that this result was no fluke, the next week we soundly beat Shiplake, by the same score. By this point we were getting tired of thrashing every team we played (well, the last two at least), so we decided to go on a losing streak of three consecutive matches: Stowe, Reading, and St. Edward's.

After Half Term we came back ready for one more taste of glory, and this came in the form of a defeat of Bloxham. A week later we went to Merchant Taylors' School in London feeling invincible, and were beaten.

The high point of the season came a fortnight later with a win over Eton. Having scored early on, we struggled hard and valiantly managed to hang on to our lead, pulling every man into desperate defence for long periods of the match. After this great

performance, the season ended disappointingly with a defeat by M.C.S., a game which we could have won.

R. Cox's superb season in goal, S. Holland's dominance of the midfield and A. Martin's skill up front provided the most memorable moments of the term, in which the team matured into a good hockey-playing side.

Things look good for next season...

M. Burnard's modesty prevents him from mentioning the rôle which he and the other forwards played in the team's successes: their endless running and generous support of their team mates were refreshing aspects of the team's better performances. Cox would have everybody's vote for player of the season, I am sure, and I am grateful to Martin for some inspirational matches as captain. The main weakness was an inability to hold sway in the closer matches and to wrestle the right result from the proceedings. In my view the best hockey was played against Bloxham; the clean, crisp passing game exemplified for much of that afternoon, with Holland the midfield master, is something to build on for next year. And of course things look good.

# Junior Colts A XI hockey

13/1 Southampton (H) Lost 1-2  
24/1 Pangbourne (A) Drew 2-2  
31/1 Shiplake (H) Won 4-0  
3/2 Stowe (H) Won 3-1  
8/2 Leighton Park (A) Won 5-0  
15/2 St. Edward's (H) Lost 0-3  
28/2 Bloxham (A) Lost 2-3  
7/3 M.T.S. (A) Lost 2-4  
17/3 Eton (H) Drew 1-1  
28/3 M.C.S. (H) Won 2-1

a report by PJW

It is always somewhat daunting to begin the season with a match against a strong opposition, especially when there has been little time to practise skills and look at systems. As expected we began tentatively and were lucky that Southampton did not punish us in the early stages of the game. That allowed us to gain in confidence and produce some excellent counter-attacking hockey. Chances at either end were few and far between and the two goals that Southampton scored were the result of defensive errors.

Against Pangbourne we produced a devastating start with goals from A. McKenzie and G. Stern, but then relaxed and allowed them into the game. Some excellent goalkeeping from M. Woodward prevented a disaster and we settled for a draw.

A good victory against Shiplake was followed by an even better one against Stowe. The staff at Stowe are very hopeful that this side will prove to be a real success and in the first half it was easy to see why. We were forced on the defensive and reduced to the occasional break. One break caught them by surprise when J. Kelly opened the scoring. In the second half we enjoyed one of those periods when we did everything right. A high work-rate combined with

some skilful passing rocked the opposition. H. Cole, G. Potter and Kelly controlled the midfield, enabling us to secure a sweet victory.

Leighton Park proved to be rather weak and we cruised to a fairly effortless victory, but then came up against St. Edward's. Here we were second best because they were fitter and more determined. Once we ran out of puff we lost our competitiveness and have to acknowledge that some poor finishing by the opposition saved us from an embarrassing scoreline.

At this point we rather lost our way and a disappointing result away at Bloxham was followed by a poor performance against Merchant Taylors', where we made them look much better than they really were. A new fixture against Eton was always going to be interesting and so it proved. Eton were surprisingly good (it is a new sport there) and dominated the early exchanges. They deserved to take the lead, but we fought back and gained a draw. The final match against M.C.S. was a sweet way to end the season. A fine team performance enabled us to overcome a rather agricultural approach by the opposition. D. Roche cracked in a fine short corner, M.C.S. equalized and Cole sealed the victory with a fine penalty stroke.

# Juniors B XI hockey

Our opening match of the season was against K.E.S., a long way down the road. We played well as a team and put in a solid performance, even though it was the first time we had all played together as a side. We were unlucky enough to give away a last-minute goal, which left us the narrow losers.

Our next match was another away fixture, against a slightly weaker opposition in the form of Pangbourne. We cruised to a first half lead of 2-0 and finished off the opposition in the second half with another two goals; the goal-scorers were J. Florey, T. Fox, H. Poultney and R. Mallett. J. Garrett, in goal, was the least active of all our players in this match, as he never had to make a save or intercept anything in our goal.

Next in line was Shiplake. We again played well and thoroughly deserved the victory. Then we headed off to play Bloxham at Tilsley Park. We managed to keep the score goal-less at half time. Then we came out and put in yet another good performance, with goals from N. Hughes and S. Paterson, to complete three victories in a row. We travelled back down to Tilsley Park to play Merchant Taylors', and played the worst hockey of our entire season, conceding six goals. The only consolation was a late second-half goal from T. Fox.

Our final match of the season was against M.C.S. We played well, and made it a fine finish to the season when we won our fourth match. S. Paterson scored both the goals and ended up the team's leading scorer with four goals.

13/1 Southampton (A) Lost 0-2  
24/1 Pangbourne (A) Won 4-0  
31/1 Shiplake (H) Won 2-0  
28/2 Bloxham (H) Won 2-1  
7/3 Merchant Taylors (H) Lost 1-6  
28/3 M.C.S. (A) Won 2-0

## Badminton

The School's most consistently successful sport at any level, badminton, led with great success by IAM, manages owing to his characteristic modesty to hide its light very firmly under a bushel. Here N. Miles 2W 'lifts the lid' on the sport at U13 and U14 level.

In my two years in Lower School, badminton has been a very successful sport. There have been many matches, some harder than others, and some more important than others, but every time the U13 team has gone out and given it their all, and they have come away smiling, win or lose.

Our record – played two, won one, lost one – is fairly respectable. However, it is not only the U13s who are represented by the Lower School, as N. Miles and H. Dawkins, both in the Second Year, have also played for the U14s, playing two games and one tournament for the team and winning all of them. The tournament was for the Oxfordshire County Championship final, which was a very tight match, with Abingdon eventually proving victorious and coming away with a well-deserved shield.

A slightly larger tournament, although possibly not as important, was the U13 tournament shortly after the beginning of the Lent Term. This tournament did not go as well as had been hoped, but we made our presence felt and gave as good as we got.

A main factor in Abingdon's success is the amount of support and coaching which we have received from Mr Macdonald, who has been at every match, cheering us on with a constant smile, whatever the final result. If we lose a match he does not shout at us or try to change the team; instead he tells us what our

mistakes were and helps us to improve in those areas. Mr Macdonald also tries to bring out the talent in the new players, especially the First Year pupils who have never even held a racket before. Most importantly, he attempts to give everyone a fair trial, to allow them to show off their talents.

Badminton in the Lower School is very popular and very successful, mainly owing to the coach, the freedom of practice, and the wide variety of players to have matches with.

Badminton is a very misunderstood and underestimated sport, which many people think is easy and undemanding. However, badminton is one of the hardest sports I have ever played; it is exhausting, pushes you to the limit and sometimes you feel as if you are ready to collapse after a match. Nevertheless, through all the pain you will still enjoy it and be glad that you played.

In conclusion, badminton is successful and popular in the Lower School, and has allowed several players from the Second Year to compete with older, more experienced players in a competitive field.

At higher levels, colours were awarded to A. Aggarwal, B. Chadwick, S. Mitchell and J. Wilson. Half colours went to M. Gee and M. Rowland. Captains of badminton were Y. Dong and A. Harsono.

Abingdon U19s  
12/3 Larkmead (H) Won 7-0  
15/3 King Alfred's (H) Won 6-1  
21/3 Wantage (H) Won 5-2

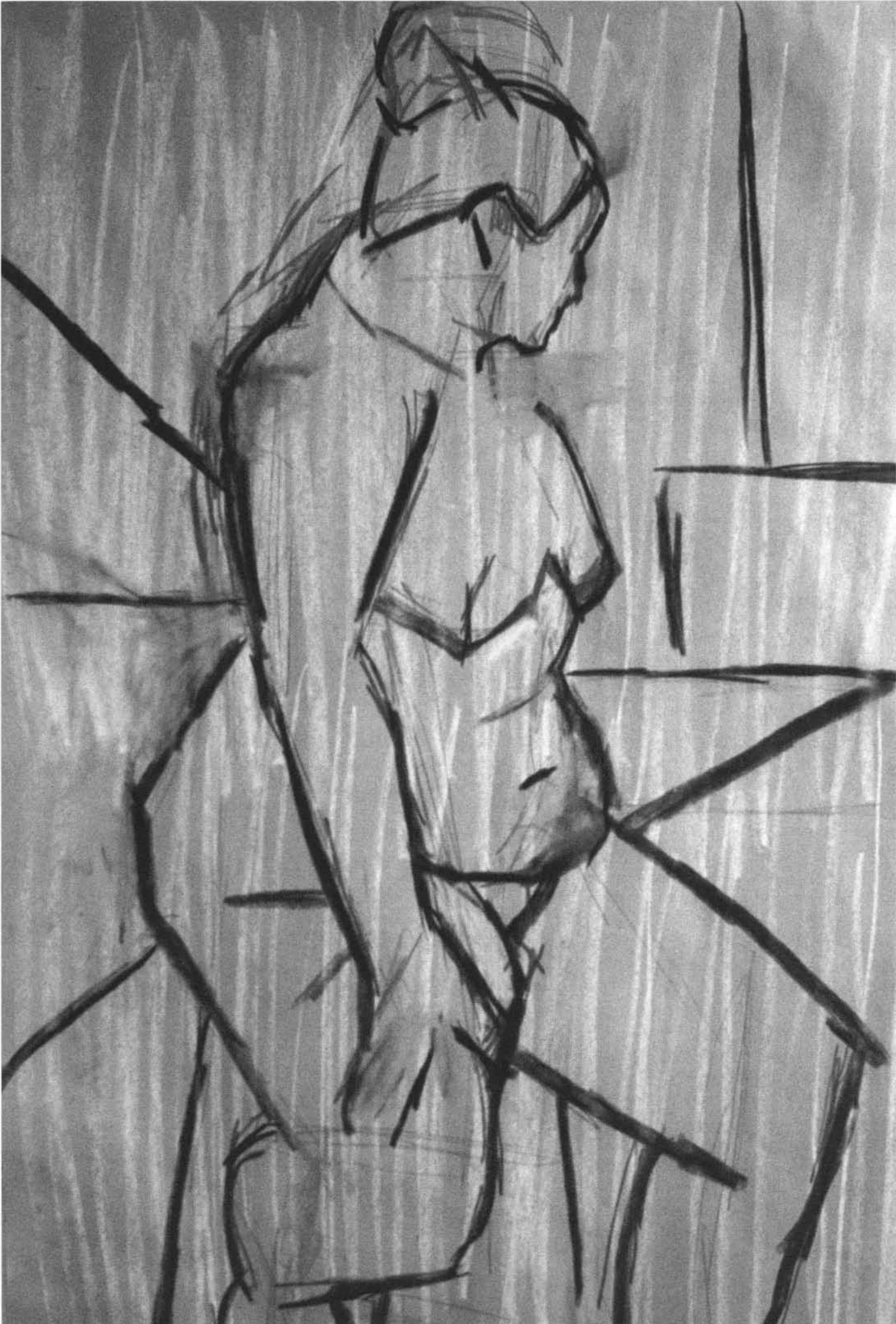
Abingdon 'A'  
20/1 Cheltenham (H) Won 8-1  
31/1 Oratory (H) Won 12-4  
10/2 Radley (H) Won 8-1  
3/3 Cheltenham (A) Won 7-2  
3/3 Malvern (A) Won 9-0  
6/3 Rugby (A) Won 7-2  
10/3 Millfield (A) Won 14-6  
17/3 Wellington (A) Won 14-1  
17/3 Eton (A) Won 14-1

Abingdon 'B'  
20/1 Cheltenham (H) Won 9-0  
10/2 Radley (H) Won 9-0  
3/3 Cheltenham (A) Won 7-2  
3/3 Malvern (A) Won 9-0  
6/3 Rugby (A) Won 9-0  
10/3 Millfield (A) Won 12-3

Abingdon U16  
7/2 King Alfred's (H) Won 4-3  
16/3 Henry Box (A) Lost 3-4  
20/3 Woodstock (A) Won 4-3  
21/3 Henry Box (H) Lost 3-4

Abingdon U14  
7/2 King Alfred's (H) Won 5-2  
21/3 Woodstock (H) Won 4-3

Abingdon U13  
11/2 ESBA Prelims Lost 2-3





# 1st XV rugby

The season began with high hopes. The team had just been on a tour of South Africa and had been very successful against the tough competition, winning two out of five matches. We also won the Douai Tournament in impressive style. The first two matches, against Oratory and M.C.S. were examples of how the tour had made the team into a single integrated unit.

The third match was against our local rivals, Radley. Our confidence was high. From the beginning we dominated, hardly letting them into our half. Our forwards out-rucked and mauled their pack, and our backs really showed their high levels of skill. Radley threw everything at us, and the weather was not even on our side, with a hail-storm half way through the match. We came out with an historic victory, beating Radley 19-3 away.

After Radley we were on a high, and we carried on our winning streak, beating Stowe. We came unstuck, however, against R.G.S., High Wycombe, when we lost. Although we were missing key players, most people would agree that they were the better team on the day. We got our own back, however, beating them in a tournament later on in the season. After R.G.S. we faced St. Edward's. Although we played to a high standard, we were not playing our best, as we just did not convert pressure into points. We won narrowly.

We then faced Pangbourne, who were, next to Radley, the team whom we most wanted to beat as we always seemed to come unstuck whenever we played them. After a very tight first twenty minutes we broke away and converted all our pressure into points and dominated the game. We relaxed a little towards the end, but we came away with a 27-22 victory, which does not reflect how much we dominated the game. Our next two games were against Newbury and Shiplake, both of which we won.

By this point in the season injuries had hit us hard, and when we faced Marlborough we had no kicker, which eventually resulted in a lost match. We threw everything we had at them, but with such a close match we needed to kick the points, which unfortunately could not be done. Our last match was against Bloxham. They were tougher than we originally expected, but we kept piling on the pressure to win.

The season was an historic one, with many great victories against tough opposition. One theme prevailed through the season: team spirit and dedication. It was a unique team and a very special one, and I was honoured to captain the side. Yet without the dedication of Mr Hamilton and Mr Watkins this would not have been achieved; we have our coaches to thank for our success.

16/9 Oratory (H) Won 16-7  
27/9 M.C.S. (H) Won 33-0  
30/9 Radley (A) Won 19-3  
7/10 Stowe (A) Won 22-7  
14/10 H. Wycombe (H) Lost 9-25  
4/11 St. Edward's (A) Won 6-5  
11/11 Pangbourne (H) Won 27-22  
18/11 Newbury (H) Won 18-10  
22/11 Shiplake (H) Won 56-17  
2/12 Marlborough (A) Lost 3-6  
9/12 Bloxham (H) Won 11-7

a report by W. Baker VISCW

opposite:  
"life study" (charcoal and chalk)  
by B. Pritchett VINAFP

# 2nd XV rugby

The 2nd XV record shows a pattern similar to previous seasons with defeats at the hands of Radley, R.G.S., St Edward's and Marlborough, but with fairly comfortable wins against the others. Injuries early in the term and later calls into the 1st XV led to an unsettled back division. Appalling weather during most of the term did little to help matters, and we are grateful to the many parents and friends who braved storm and tempest to support the team.

Oratory provided a good start to the season, with forwards and backs combining well. Against M.C.S. more than half the team scored tries, but this was not good preparation for Radley's visit. They used their powerful forwards to harness the wet conditions, notching up twenty points in the first ten minutes before we woke up. The rest of the game was much more even, and we were unlucky not to score.

Against Stowe, the forwards had to produce their own powerful performance before overcoming some stern opposition. However, we were not able to sustain this against R.G.S. or St Edward's even though we led in both games at half time.

The matches at home to Pangbourne and away at Newbury were played in dreadful conditions but the team stuck to the game plan. Although no tries were scored against Pangbourne, some good rugby was played. At Newbury half a dozen tries were run in and the pattern was repeated at Shiplake despite a pitch on which it was difficult to walk let alone run.

We took a team weakened by injuries and illness to Marlborough and suffered another mud-bath against a well-drilled team.

However, in the last match, against Bloxham, we returned to the kind of rugby which we would have liked to have played all season. On a crisp but dry day the drainage at Cox's Fields allowed good conditions under foot. For those playing their last game for the School this was an enjoyable finale.

D. Wilson was leading points scorer and proved an able captain. He deservedly gained full colours for his services to senior rugby. Half colours were awarded to K. Ma and A. McKenzie.

Our thanks are due to the coaching staff and particularly to Mr. Richardson, in his last season.

16/9 Oratory (H) Won 16-5  
27/9 M.C.S. (H) Won 54-0  
30/9 Radley (H) Lost 0-27  
7/10 Stowe (A) Won 18-7  
14/10 H. Wycombe (H) Lost 3-24  
4/11 St. Edward's (A) Lost 3-15  
11/11 Pangbourne (H) Won 15-0  
18/11 Newbury (A) Won 36-0  
22/11 Shiplake (A) Won 35-5  
2/12 Marlborough (A) Lost 3-24  
9/12 Bloxham (H) Won 50-10

a report by A. Addis 6CMM

# 3rd XV rugby

23/9 Rendcomb (H) Won 29-20  
30/9 Radley (A) Lost  
7/10 Stowe (A) Won 67-0  
14/10 H. Wycombe (A) Won 10-5  
1/11 Cokethorpe (A) Lost  
4/11 St. Edward's (A) Lost 3-7  
11/11 Pangbourne (H) Won 42-0  
2/12 Marlborough (H) Won 31-0  
9/12 Bloxham (A) Won 24-7

#### squad:

E. Bright, A. Brodie, J. Buxton,  
G. Coppock, J. Drury, M. Ezra,  
J. Farrant, T. Gallard, M. Gray,  
R. Harrison, M. Hylla,  
R. Kempson, T. Matheson,  
P. Peacock, L. Pearce, D. Procter,  
K. Roche, P. Timberlake,  
A. White, and  
J. Wright (captain)

a report on the season by  
J. Wright VISCW

Under the inspired teaching of "Big G" (Mr Garnier) and "The Brick" (Mr Hibberd), the Thirds had an exceptional season, winning six games and losing only three. We had a strong core of Upper Sixth players who were complemented by some skilful and (mostly) fast Lower Sixth players.

Having run out of petrol in September's fuel crisis, the Oratory cancelled our game, so our first match was against Rendcomb 1st XV. Despite suffering from the effects of the summer holidays, we emerged victorious. Radley proved too strong in torrential rain and hail, but the following week we thrashed Stowe, who had no answers to power and pace.

We played superbly against R.G.S., a large team, and eventually won; our winning try came from T. Matheson using a secret penalty move. We were the only team in the School to have won our match, so all the players deserve to be really proud.

The second half of the term started badly with a mismatch against Cokethorpe 1st XV, poor preparation for the game against St. Edward's three days later. The match was videoed, catching on camera the lack of tackling from one Lower Sixth centre which

led to their try, and proving that our second row P. Peacock's preferred position was on the wing. The same penalty move resulted in mild concussion for two of our players so we dropped it. Although we should have won, we were unable to score.

It was about this time of the season when we went for a 'friendly' against the 2nd XV. I will not go so far as to say that we taught them how to play rugby but we were unlucky to have only drawn against them (they should have beaten us by at least thirty points).

Our next match was against Pangbourne, whose team were tiny and it was the weather rather than the opposition that stopped us scoring a mass of points, playing in a mud bath. Marlborough are always tough opponents – we rarely beat them at this level – and many of the team had memories of an unpleasant encounter last year in the Fourth XV. We were therefore really up for the game and played our best rugby of the season, completely thrashing them. Everyone played excellently but special mention should be made of M. Hylla, who thundered over for the first two tries. We left them shell-shocked. Finally, we played Bloxham and won a scrappy game.

# 4th XV rugby

23/9 Rendcomb (H) Won  
30/9 Radley (A) Lost  
22/11 Shiplake (A) Won  
9/12 Marlborough (H) Lost

#### squad:

N. Betteridge, E. Dingwall,  
R. Ellwood, S. Evans, T. Gallard,  
R. Garside, G. Larsson,  
C. Manners, A. Markham,  
J. Marsh, S. Osborn-King,  
A. Pang, M. Richards,  
G. Stratton, R. Syfret,  
and J. Szurko

a report by the captain,  
E. Dingwall 6APS

The season started strongly with a convincing victory over a physical Rendcomb 2nd XV. The forwards comprehensively rucked Rendcomb off the ball, allowing the backs to put into practice an armoury of moves. The back row (A. Markham, R. Syfret and T. Gallard) was instrumental in the forwards' dominance, and special mention should be made of T. Gallard for yet another of his famous try-saving tackles.

A week on we went to Radley and were unable to match the heroic performance displayed by our 1st XV. Up front we were under enormous pressure from Radley's bigger, fitter and faster forwards and any ball that came our way was, for the most part, scrappy. As Radley translated their early pressure into points it became apparent that we had a damage limitation exercise on our hands. The resistance movement was led by N. Betteridge, who put in some bone-crunching tackles at full back, with J. Marsh and R. Garside following his example in the centres. Whilst these players stood out, the rest of the side must also take credit for their part in resisting the onslaught.

After such an arduous match a break was certainly in order but no one expected the 4th XV's next three fixtures to be cancelled. Our would-be opponents' inability to field teams meant that any continuity and momentum we had gained were dissipated. However,

this did not show against Shiplake, a month and a half after the Radley defeat. Although we were once again faced by a bigger pack, this time we were fitter and faster and ran them ragged up front. Prop G. Larsson was at his most devastating in this match and was well supported by the other members of the front row, A. Pang and J. Szurko. The solid platform provided by the forwards meant that the backs were able to put together some slick moves, in spite of the quagmire of a pitch, culminating in seven tries. S. Evans' forceful running combined with lightning pace earned him a hat-trick as he exposed Shiplake's weaknesses on the wings, whilst M. Richards' twisting runs punished a fragile midfield.

Our final match of the season was against Marlborough and, following the previous victory, we were quietly confident of causing an upset. Our good form continued in the first quarter of the match with Richards giving us a slender lead after ruthlessly exploiting a mistake by the Marlborough half-backs. However, the wide open spaces of Cox's Fields suited Marlborough's style of play and as the game proceeded their superior fitness and technique prevailed.

The team would like to thank Mr Garnier and Mr Hibberd for their guidance and support throughout what proved to be an enjoyable season.

# Senior Colts A XV rugby

The season started badly, against Oratory: we took the lead just before half time, but in the second half our lack of concentration, spirit and teamwork left us unable to come back when Oratory scored.

Against M.C.S. we were missing our regular fly half, which disrupted our back line. It was a scrappy game, which, although we failed to convert pressure into points, we won comfortably (although the score tells a different story). Next, we hosted Radley, a tough game, especially in the pack, where they dominated for most of the game. Our defence on the fringes of the rucks was promising, but a few missed tackles led to them winning convincingly. A well-deserved win followed against Stowe, where the forwards controlled the game well. The backs used possession effectively, running in three tries against a good defensive side.

We lacked confidence against R.G.S., who were not as strong a side as we had expected. We had opportunities to take the lead early in the game, but did not; solid defence prevented a hammering, but this was the only game in which we did not score, mainly owing to our mistakes rather than their defence.

The most frustrating game was against St. Edward's; some early big hits showed them that we were not going down without a fight, and a solo effort by H. Monsell left us behind by only a point at half time, but our opportunities did not go home.

Against Pangbourne, we played under about half an inch of water on a very difficult pitch. We worked hard and defended successfully in the first half, before using the slope to our advantage in the second. The team really started to pull together in this match. Newbury were a side with plenty of aggression, which was blunted by a J. Henley tackle. Our forwards

rucked well to secure possession for the backs, who scored two of our three tries. The only successful drop-goal of the season came here, from hooker T. Dyson.

Shiplake also proved frustrating, played on Lower Field in mud which prevented the backs from playing as well as they could. Our forwards relaxed after the first try, and although we kept winning ball, the game was very scrappy. Marlborough saw our best game of the season. The forwards coped well against a bigger pack, and we intimidated them in defence, often putting in big tackles when needed. Our centre pairing of J. Watkins and Henley was superb. Marlborough were on our line for the last ten minutes of the game, and we showed real character in playing until the final whistle. Bloxham, on the other hand, was another frustrating match on a muddy pitch; they scored a lucky try but we won convincingly.

T. Brewerton, A. Lin and A. Martin all improved dramatically through the season; K. Ramdoo was a superb finisher on the wing, and Monsell was an effective try-scorer at fly half. Henley and M. Hardy were both brave defenders, who never stepped back in the tackle, whilst J. Calnan and Watkins made many effective breaks in attack. In the forwards, J. Tarrell was invincible in the line-out, M. Smith was always a good scrummager, and T. Dyson threw and hooked as well as running the ball well. Brewerton was good in the loose and was always there to make a big tackle; A. Lin was a powerful second row forward; A. Lees proved a powerful runner of the ball. The back row – D. Puri, W. Allan and J. Chater – was very powerful and always quick and effective at the breakdown.

We would all like to thank Mr Broadbent for his time and effort over the season.

16/9 Oratory (A) Lost 3-5  
27/9 M.C.S. (A) Won 12-0  
30/9 Radley (H) Lost 17-42  
7/10 Stowe (H) Won 17-7  
14/10 H. Wycombe (A) Lost 0-26  
4/11 St. Edward's (H) Lost 5-11  
11/11 Pangbourne (A) Won 5-0  
18/11 Newbury (H) Won 22-0  
22/11 Shiplake (H) Won 29-0  
2/12 Marlborough (A) Won 7-3  
9/12 Bloxham (A) Won 20-7

a report by D. Puri 5CJB

# Senior Colts B XV rugby

In all, we had quite a successful set of results: we played nine, won six, and lost three (to very strong sides, apart from Oratory, which was a mistake and I was not there).

Our pack consisted of J. Pallett, who was strong and pushed like a tank, S. Winearls, the hooker, B. Burnham (another vicious forward), I. Collin and M. Pile, tough second rows. The back row was made up of C. Howard, J. Bosley (who sometimes played second row), and F. Hemsley. D. Atkinson and J. Paul also interchanged as the open side flanker.

In the backs we had a very good tackler and full-back, N. Orr. J. Cousin played scrum half, and for the final match went into the centre; he was vital because he was always quick at getting the ball out of rucks and

scrummages. A. Hough was the fantastic fly-half who scored a lot of points and extracted us from danger by doing his 'punts'. The centres were A. Gould, who sometimes played wing, and M. Burnard, a superb player. The wingers were I. McKenzie (left) and M. Johnson or A. Pride (right).

We had a few latecomers: H. Hunter (another demon scrum half), plus H. Feather and T. Rendell, two more beefed-up beasts.

In all the games which we won, we were always more than twenty-five points ahead of the opposition. The top try-scorers were I. McKenzie (nine) and A. Gould (seven). The main kicker was A. Hough, and the captain was C. Howard. Thanks go to our coach, Mr Evans, who gave us a lot of support and team talks.

16/9 Oratory (A) Lost 12-17  
27/9 M.C.S. (H) Won 3-46  
30/9 Radley (A) Lost 17-43  
14/10 H. Wycombe (A) Won 29-5  
4/11 St. Edward's (A) Won 24-5  
11/11 Pangbourne (A) Won 33-12  
22/11 Shiplake (A) Won 56-5  
2/12 Marlborough (A) Lost 14-27  
9/12 Bloxham (A) Won 55-7

a report by C. Howard 5RSH



# Minors A XV rugby

16/9 Dragon (A) Lost 67-0  
14/10 H. Wycombe (H) Lost 86-0  
11/10 Ch. Church (A) Won 22-0  
18/11 Newbury (H) Lost 19-17  
    Josca's (A) Won 27-10  
28/11 M.C.S. (A) Won 14-5  
2/12 Marlborough (H) Lost 35-0  
17/1 Cothill (A) Lost 29-12  
31/1 St. Andrew's (A) Lost 17-0

a report by M. Halford 2W

Our first two defeats were against two great sides. These were games we could not really expect to win and, although the scores were high against us, we kept going all the way through and showed good team spirit to bounce back from the heavy defeats. The first win of the season came against Christ Church. Our season then started to turn around.

The following game, against Newbury, was very tight. At the end we started to play some really good rugby, scoring good tries, but we had left ourselves too much to do and came out with a narrow loss. We went from there into a match against Josca's. We played well and the scores reflected that. We scored five tries and deserved to win. The next match to be played was a close game against M.C.S., which we won, showing how much we have improved since the First Year when we were beaten 20-0 by the same team.

We came up against Marlborough next, when we had to play against the year above's 'C' team. We did not play too well and were beaten. An otherwise clean match ended up with one of their players being sent off. Then we played Cothill, and started well, making a 12-0 lead early in the game. Everything went

downhill from there and we were beaten 29-12, but it was a closer match than the score suggests.

Our final match was against St. Andrew's. We went with a depleted team owing to illness and the standard to which they thought that we played. We lost without scoring but got close several times. The Minors also beat the Juniors 'C' team twice in two games and scored highly in both.

It was not only the 'A' XV which played, however, and many people turned up for training every week. The 'B' team did well in their matches and so did the 'C' and 'D' teams. There were so many people coming to rugby that a 'Development' XV and an 'Ever Improving' XV had a match against Cothill. The team benefited from the coaching of Mr Slatford and Mr Sandow in the first term, and in the half term after that Messrs. Hamilton, Broadbent, Hibberd and Drummond-Hay, who had missed his regular Minors coaching slot in the first term because of his sabbatical.

Although we were not the most successful team ever, we had a good team spirit and we enjoyed our rugby. We played through awful weather and some tough matches, but no one gave up at all.

# Junior Colts A XV rugby

16/9 Oratory (A) Lost 3-12  
27/9 M.C.S. (A) Won 17-5  
30/9 Radley (H) Won 13-12  
7/10 Stowe (A) Won 34-5  
14/10 H. Wycombe (H) Lost 0-34  
4/11 St. Edward's (H) Won 12-10  
11/11 Pangbourne (H) Lost 5-10  
18/11 Newbury (H) Won 51-10  
22/11 Shiplake (H) Won 108-0  
2/12 Marlborough (H) Drew 17-17  
9/12 Bloxham (H) Won 44-5

a report by BAHF

While the team heaved and sweated through their matches, parents were able to warm themselves on the glow of the talent and daring of this group. Champagne flowed as much on the field as on the touchline, and the sight of fine, dashing attacks and stoical defence triumphed over the bleak vista of Cox's Fields.

The scrum was given a solid platform by J. Barclay and R. Morton (challenged in later matches by B. Bowie). Barclay's handling skills brought him into loose play around the fringes and if he can develop greater fitness and speed he could be an exceptional power-house. R. Powis' accurate throwing to the towering J. Prinold ensured frequent line-out possession, and the hooker's importance to the side was underlined when he was twice absent through wanton detentions.

T. Gater's tackle count and A. Paxton's cleaning up of loose ball were at least double those of anyone else, and both players improved greatly in their awareness and execution of the pass. O. Sanders and W. Poole on the flanks provided continuity, but both need to remember that as flankers they must be in the game continually.

In the backs, the diminutive H. Cole's move to scrum-half gave A. Marsh swift service at fly half and a sniping option around the scrum. Marsh controlled our possession with great assurance, adjusting his

tactical kicking to the conditions and starting to pose a greater threat with breaks of his own. Our defence relied heavily on his ability to stop all comers in their tracks. In the centre the outrageous side-step of R. Muirhead and the deceptive shimmy of J. Kelly created opportunities for others (not always anticipated or taken), while Muirhead's trusty boot accounted for over a hundred points in the season.

The loss of J. Donnelly in the Radley match robbed the team of their Exocet, but E. Lee deputized reliably in the back three alongside the hard-running S. Jackson and G. Stern, who rose to the tackles when they really counted.

Notable wins against Radley and St. Edward's were chiselled out of disciplined defences, founded on the rock of T. Gater's leadership. There were more handsome wins against Stowe and Newbury, and a draw against Marlborough, in which the team showed an ability to both attack and defend with a man down.

Like a Gareth Edwards sidestep, we could see R.G.S. coming, but could do little about it. They provided a masterclass in gain-line penetration and handling precision to which this team should aspire. If they do, and resolve to train with greater intensity and concentration, then they could match the standard set by R.G.S. Few teams have the talent to aim so high. This team does: let us hope that they use it.

# Junior Colts B XV rugby

A disappointing total of three wins disguises the fact that there were only three matches in which this team was genuinely outclassed (Radley, R.G.S. and Park House all proving far too strong) and does not reflect the Herculean efforts of the players. Among many individuals who impressed were H. Green and N. Patterson, who showed that they have the skill and application to become top-class flankers; J. Hoyle at full-back, who was dependable in defence and incisive in attack; and A. McKenzie, who showed flashes of brilliance at fly-half (though I am sure that the forwards would like to see him kick hard-won possession away less often).

All the victories this season were achieved at Cox's Fields, a dramatic reversal of the "jinx" of 1999. Shiplake and Bloxham left more gaps than the team had found in other matches, giving us the freedom to move the ball around and play some genuine "champagne rugby" during these resounding victories. The highlight of the season, however, had come a few weeks earlier when a strong St. Edward's side were steam-rolled by a majestic team performance.

There is clearly no shortage of talent in this group, but the early part of the season included bitterly disappointing losses against Rendcomb, Stowe and Cokethorpe in particular, all physical but mediocre sides which this team could and perhaps should have

beaten. Weak tackling, poor communication and a lack of belief in their own ability cost them dearly in these fixtures, and they seemed to lack the fight to get themselves back into these matches once they had fallen behind. Victories in these three games would have given the team a winning season. Unfortunately, it was not until later in the term that they developed a tougher attitude and a more confident edge to their rugby. This was reflected in their final six results which, the Park House score-line aside, included three victories and two competitive matches against the good-quality opposition of Marlborough and Pangbourne, in which the team showed real spirit.

Coaching this group of players proved enjoyable, if frustrating at times. They seemed physically smaller than most of their opponents, but this may change in time for next year. What will definitely need to change is the approach of some squad members towards training; they would do very well to remember the maxim "fail to prepare and prepare to fail".

If there is one memory which I will take away with me from the season it will be the scene after the final whistle against St. Edward's. The sense of togetherness in celebrating that first victory was truly special, and the players involved should now appreciate the tremendous rewards which rugby can give if they are prepared to work hard at their game.

23/9 Rendcomb (A) Lost 7-8  
30/9 Radley (H) Lost 5-62  
7/10 Stowe (A) Lost 10-27  
14/10 H. Wycombe (H) Lost 5-51  
1/11 Cokethorpe (A) Lost  
4/11 St. Edward's (H) Won 38-12  
11/11 Pangbourne (H) Lost 7-12  
22/11 Shiplake (H) Won 38-5  
29/11 Park House (H) Lost 0-41  
2/12 Marlborough (H) Lost 0-20  
9/12 Bloxham (H) Won 74-0

a report by SPGS

# Juniors B XV rugby

The highlight of the term was the hard-fought and hugely satisfying victory at St. Edward's. N. Hughes showed how effective judicious use of the boot can be when he hacked and chased for the first try. J. Dingwall arrived on our winger's shoulder to score the second try in the corner.

This was, of course, not our only clean sheet. The squad cheerfully worked on tackling drills and relished the contact element in training. Rendcomb, Pangbourne, Shiplake and M.C.S. all drew blanks. R. Coster was a big tackler when not on 'A' XV duty, S. Florey developed positional sense and timing in the last games, and C. Moger and H. Taylor emerged as two back-row stars, all technique and determination, spoiling and stealing most ball that came near them.

That is not to say, however, that our defence was always solid. Against Radley, we were ahead by a J. Garrett try at half time, but allowed a downpour to unsettle us. At R.G.S. we won the second half, but had thrown the game away before the turnaround by repeatedly failing to align our defence properly.

Our other two defeats were also disappointing for different reasons: the game against Park House was not played in the Corinthian spirit which characterized other fixtures (ours was an exceptionally sporting squad); and at Marlborough, scrum half M. Duhan having been called across to cover for the 'A' XV just before kick-off, we found our resources fatally depleted by a succession of injuries during the game.

Apart from those individuals already mentioned, I shall be following the progress of R. Mallett and P. Minch (both quiet, competent backs) and of T. Reid (who more than adequately deputized at scrum half). M. White, C. Kennedy and S. Stead all have the frame to excel in the second row or at Number Eight, whilst P. Stern, J. Dexter and C. Dixon deserve better than the positional changes, touch-judge duties and even spells on pitch for the opposition which were needed to keep them involved at 'B' XV level.

My thanks go to the team for such a spirited season, and to SAE and DAG for their input into the coaching programme.

23/9 Rendcomb (A) Won 44-0  
27/9 M.C.S. (A) Won 41-0  
30/9 Radley (A) Lost 5-14  
14/10 H. Wycombe (A) Lost 7-29  
4/11 St. Edward's (A) Won 12-0  
11/11 Pangbourne (A) Won 44-0  
22/11 Shiplake (H) Won 55-0  
29/11 Park House (H) Lost 15-17  
2/12 Marlborough (A) Lost 10-33

a report by NJH

# Juniors A XV rugby

16/9 Oratory (H) Won 24-15  
27/9 M.C.S. (A) Lost 0-7  
30/9 Radley (A) Lost 0-32  
14/10 H. Wycombe (A) Lost 0-46  
4/11 St. Edward's (A) Lost 0-29  
11/11 Pangbourne (A) Won 39-14  
18/11 Newbury (H) Won 17-12  
22/11 Shiplake (H) Lost 5-12  
2/12 Marlborough (A) Won 13-5  
9/12 Bloxham (A) Won 7-0

a report by G. Clarkson 3KDB,  
with comments by SAE

The season started with a reformed (H) and refreshed team. A convincing win over Oratory saw three tries from V. Raine (the tight head prop) with conversions and a penalty by R. Coster. The season then plunged into a trough with losses against M.C.S., Radley, R.G.S., and St. Edward's; these defeats came without us scoring a point. The team returned to form after a string of injuries with an easier game against Pangbourne, which saw us start to put some good rugby together and achieve a sound win.

We then faced a tough game against an unbeaten Newbury side. We got off to a very good start, with first half tries by A. Shaw (after a great piece of forward play) and C. Watson (conversions and penalties were by C. Davies). Excellent second-half defence enabled us to cling on for a hard-earned win which boosted the team's confidence.

We then suffered a shock defeat against an unusually strong Shiplake team (another unbeaten side). We started poorly and gave soft points away; we could not quite pull the game round. M. Urtley put the only points on the board for us. We then went to muddy Marlborough and made light of the conditions to play some good rugby and achieve a satisfying win. Again, our defence was much improved from previous matches: their final attacking move was halted by a brilliant 'clothes-line' by our second row from across the pond, B. Cullen.

Again, playing conditions were poor for the final match of the season away to Bloxham; we exerted plenty of pressure but only crossed their line once: this was enough to secure the final win of the season.

Over the term, the team was plagued by injuries, with three concussions, a broken collar bone, a broken nose and a twisted ankle, as well as numerous bumps and bruises. Despite this, and the numerous changes to the team throughout the term, the team which we finished with was just about as good as it will ever get.

Special thanks to Mr Evans, our coach, for getting us to the peak of physical and mental fitness.

The team was drawn from G. Clarkson (captain), R. Coster, B. Cullen, C. Davies, M. Duhan, J. Fyne, A. Green, B. Harris, R. Heath, J. Hopkins, C. Kennedy, P. Jones, H. Poultney, V. Raine, M. Scopes, A. Shaw, L. Simpson, N. Turnbull, and C. Watson.

This team was a bit like the Barbarians... Well, in some ways; mainly because they always seemed to be playing away, and also because they always tried to play open, running fifteen-man rugby (although they did not always succeed), where everyone was a ball-carrier, and the tries could be scored by anyone. They rather took this to the other extreme: the top scorer (including two hat-tricks) was a prop, V. Raine. Still, as long as someone scored them...

This was a mixed, but ultimately very satisfying and enjoyable season from a coaching point of view. I felt all along that the year group was full of talent. Early on, selection was very difficult (there was so much talent to choose from) and in the back line especially it was hard to find the right combination.

At times during the season, when things clicked, they looked an excellent team; I certainly think that they will learn from the ups and downs of this season and go on to become very successful. There is strength in depth in the 'B' and 'C' squads to support this, and a large number of boys gained 'A' team experience this year. As a squad they trained very well, in the right spirit, and were always positive in their approach. Another plus was the improvement in skill and fitness of players who were prepared to work hard.

Results do matter, and the boys came through a tough first half of the season when tries (never mind wins) were hard to come by. To come back after half term, (with a more settled side) and win four out of the last five matches was a creditable achievement. I hope they are now on a winning roll that will continue next year.

Finally, thank you to the parents who supported the team so loyally through thick and thin.

# Juniors C XV rugby

30/9 Radley (A) Lost 5-25  
14/10 H. Wycombe (A) Lost 10-36  
4/11 St. Edward's (A) Lost 24-34  
11/11 Pangbourne (A) Won 48-0  
22/11 Shiplake (H) Lost  
2/12 Marlborough (H) Lost 20-22

a report by T. Reid 3JPG

This XV had a rather disappointing season compared to the formidable side of last year. We began with a false start as the Oratory fixture was cancelled. Our first game was against a very together and well-drilled Radley side, to which we lost. Our downfall was poor tackling and bad communication between our forward players. This led to more defeats at the hands of R.G.S. and St. Edward's. Our defeat by R.G.S. was due to poor tackling, but good kicking from C. More and

and individual effort from P. Rowe put a few points on the board.

With a strengthened side we beat a weak Pangbourne convincingly, and played a close match against a technically strong Marlborough side.

Every single member of the team enjoyed the season and the enthusiastic coaching of Mr Griffiths. We all improved and we have to thank him for the whole experience.



# U12 A & B XV rugby

Getting to know each other in the First Year made it harder to play as a group. Some of us had never played before, but we gradually learned how to do it. We played only three games, but they were quite hard.

Our first game – our only one in the Michaelmas Term – was against Park House. We played hard, with good scrums and rucks, but our weakness was our tackling. We let them have careless tries. However, every time our opposition scored, we scored. We came back refreshed after half time, and a good try (scored by K. Cruickshank) put us into the lead until the final whistle went. This was a well-deserved win.

After the Christmas break we played our last two games of the season. When we saw the Reading team, we thought that they must be a year above us, as they were tall and a strong side. The muddy pitch was not easy to play on. We failed to tackle or ruck and a bit of greediness around the whole team, as well as injuries, made us lose badly.

We regrouped and went out to play our last game against Berkhamsted. This time our hopes were high and we did not want to come off the pitch without a win. We did tackle this time and scrummaged well enough to deserve our many tries from K. Woodley and L. Knight. However, our concentration wavered a bit and we let them score a try.

Everybody enjoyed the season and improved a lot, thanks to coaching from Mr Hamilton, Mr Broadbent and a few of the Sixth Form. The team was B. Allen, K. Cruickshank, T. Dean, R. Haley, M. Hutchinson, L. Knight, T. Meadows, G. Mouradian, S. Robertson, G. Salmon, C. Tucker, M. Watkins, H. Wimborne, K. Woodley, and R. Worth. M. Watts, A. Hamilton, and N. Li were the joint captains. We look forward to doing much better in the Second Year.

The creation of a First Year 'B' squad in rugby can best be described as an "interesting" challenge for our sports masters. Many of us had joined Abingdon from state primary schools and had never even played the game before. Those who had played rugby were still in need of a good deal of skills training before being ready to face competition from any other schools.

Our first match, against Reading, ended with a decisive defeat. Mr Drummond-Hay was left wondering how on earth he was going to sound positive about it, but he remembered that when he had played his first ever rugby match he had lost 100-nil. We all felt a lot better after he had told us that.

We were improving by the time that we played against Oratory, with our forwards being well supported by the backs, and the team reducing the scale of our defeat to a mere fifteen point difference this time. The game against Berkhamsted had a very similar outcome.

Progress was, however, being made in team spirit; by the second term we had the advantage of knowing each other's names and knew whom to shout at when we wanted the ball or had a comment to make on another team member's skills or non-skills. We were also improving our rate of conversions. We all trained, with our main kickers having at least a 70% success rate of getting the ball between the posts and somewhat less if it went over the bar as well.

Tackling was improved with the help of both the auxiliary tutors and the Sixth Form. Thank you for your time and patience. Whilst we all realize that we have a good way to go in both skills and scores, we feel very pleased with our progress over the first two terms here at Abingdon and look forward to starting rugby again in September.

## U12A XV

29/11 Park House (A) Won 35-28  
31/1 Reading (H) Lost 0-33  
7/2 Berkhamsted (H) Won 22-5

a report by N. Li 1X

## U12B XV

31/1 Reading (H) Lost 10-60  
Oratory Lost  
7/2 Berkhamsted (H) Lost

a report by W. Stockdale 1B

# Senior Colts C XV rugby

A difficult season to say the least, but the team played with gusto and courage. Everyone always battled hard and gave it their best. We narrowly lost the first match against Radley, but credit must go to G. Hackford for his constant, energetic runs and two tries.

A heavy defeat against St. Edward's severely dented our confidence but a close and physical game against Marlborough finished the season, albeit with a loss. Credit for keeping us in the game must go to H. Hunter for his quick thinking and clever try and both T. Hooper and H. Holland for leading a frail defensive back line with many a bone-crunching tackle.

H. Feather had an excellent season, always in the thick of the action, launching rucks, tackling

ferociously and attacking around the fringes. R. Thomas and J. Anderson both demonstrated power and some awesome runs, especially Anderson, who showed courage and skill throughout the season. S. Spriggs and O. de Wilde were always fierce in the tackle, as was full-back J. Florey. D. Goodacre's kicking certainly redeemed many defensive errors.

The captain had a difficult season keeping the team together after losing all of their three games, but he could always depend on the huge beast of a scrum-half, T. Wilson, striking fear into any opposition.

Thanks go to our referees, Rev. Lewis and Mr Garnier, and also to the coach, Mr Phelps, for keeping us together with some awe-inspiring half-time talks.

## 30/9 Radley (H) Lost

4/11 St. Edward's (H) Lost  
2/12 Marlborough (A) Lost

a report by B. Hayes 5CJB



# Cross country

the cross country club, with a new motto "poenas dant" ("they mete out punishment" or "they suffer torments" – either being apt) continues to impress. In this piece, M. Cullen SSH (joint captain) and SPO sum up the highlights of the season

above:  
M. Cullen finishes strongly in the annual Road Relay; photograph by KDB

We had a mixed season, rebuilding after losing a strong Upper Sixth last year. Legs and lungs could not always keep up with hearts and minds, and foot and mouth threatened to bring doom and gloom to the first year of M. Cullen and J. Richards' captaincy.

We were generous in giving away the intermediate and senior trophies in both the Vale and County Schools Championships, and all this in spite of some notable performances, especially a fourth place for R. Garside in the Vale. In the intermediate age group, Richards and Cullen finished second and fourth respectively, and in the junior race M. Watkins and J. Cooper also finished second and fourth (exciting prospects for the future).

The highlight of the season (for everyone except A. Peychers, for whom the highlight was eating doughnuts before every race) was, as usual, the Knole Run, a horrible, physically devastating race which tests runners to their limits. Although the team did not improve on last year, Richards' fifty-fourth place was a real achievement.

Although much of Abingdon's season was undistinguished, we did eventually have something to sing about. Luckily for the Monday morning assembly, Mr Ocock stopped short of this and instead offered a riposte to Mr Sandow's hockey reports, which had been going from bad to verse:

*I think we've heard enough of hockey  
It's time for something a bit more Ocock-y.  
Cross country club this term,*

*More runn'd against than running,  
Finally managed to demonstrate  
A modicum of cunning.  
Off they went to the OU Tortoise  
Running with focus and a sense of porpoise.  
But where was their mascot, Masa Futagami?  
He seemed to be missing from the cross country army.  
They still did better than you'd expect,  
Best in Oxfordshire – that means RESPECT.*

The year culminated in the RGS Worcester Spring Relays, which took place on a new course, owing to the presence of a farm in the vicinity of the old one. The day should have belonged to the U16 squad. Defending the title won last year, Richards, Cullen, S. Taylor, Peychers, W. Horwitz and Richards stormed to a thirty second victory after leading from start to finish. However, you may have noticed that Richards ran twice; unfortunately the judges noticed too, which resulted in disqualification. Richards deserves great credit, as he hit both the course record and the third fastest time of the day.

And so the season finished on a low note, but great credit must be given to the 'A' team of: Richards, Cullen, Garside, B. Hancock and G. Bailey; and also to Horwitz, who at Dr Challenor's was the only Abingdonian to beat Richards this year.

Thanks are due to Mr Ocock, whose effort and determination have been hugely beneficial. Next year we expect to be stronger than ever, and as Garside puts it: "St. Alban's are goin' down".

# Junior Colts A XI cricket

The team's final record – won three, lost four and drew two – is not a true reflection of the quality of the cricket played by the side, particularly after Half Term. There is plenty of ability within the squad, which has an excellent balance to it.

The season started disappointingly with defeat at the hands of Lord Williams's School, Thame, in the final of last year's Lords Taverners' competition. Owing to the wet weather early in the season, this game was played on the artificial strip on Waste Court Field. This proved not to be ideal for either team, and unfortunately a poor final five overs of our bowling stint – where we allowed them to score forty runs in a low-scoring game – cost us dearly in a match which we could easily have won.

Eton followed next, on a day interrupted by heavy showers, which made the conditions very difficult for both batting and bowling. Nevertheless, a good close contest ensued, but unfortunately Eton came out victorious with two overs to spare.

The team dominated the following games against Oratory and Reading, although some stubborn resistance from one of the Oratory openers meant that we only achieved a draw in that game, before a poor batting display against Bloxham led to a disappointing end to the half term.

Next came an enthralling game against St. Edward's, which went right down to the wire, with all four results possible off the final ball; but, once again, the tide went against the Abingdon team and another defeat was recorded.

The team had to delve into the resources of the Juniors for the game against Pangbourne, owing to GCSE commitments, and subsequently lacked the necessary edge, particularly in the field, to force a win against mediocre opposition. However, the experience stood them in good stead for the next game against R.G.S., where the Juniors were called upon once again, this time thanks to a Duke of Edinburgh's Award canoeing course. This was an all-day game, giving the teams an opportunity to display a more patient approach, and the boys responded well, bowling and fielding tightly and then pacing their reply excellently to record an emphatic victory against a useful side.

The final game of the season was against M.C.S. The team was back to full strength, and dominated the proceedings from start to finish, winning in style despite a dubious wobble inflicted on them mid-way through their innings.

G. Stern was the most prolific batsman with over two hundred runs at an average of thirty-two (seventy against Eton, forty-five against St. Edward's, and

thirty-seven against M.C.S.), whilst there was plenty of depth in the remainder of the batting. D. Shackleton (seventy-one not out against R.G.S.) and A. Nash (thirty-seven not out in the Oratory match) accumulated useful runs in their anchor roles, allowing the likes of J. Mugnaioni, W. Poole, R. Muirhead (sixty-four not out against Reading) and A. McKenzie (forty against Oratory) to blaze away more freely. All of them contributed well at times, and it was a combination which normally worked to good effect – but not quite always.

There is also plenty of strength in depth in the bowling. A. Rehman (three for eighteen in the R.G.S. match) and Mugnaioni (three for nine against Lord Williams's, four for thirteen against Reading, and three for ten in the M.C.S. match) proved a very useful and effective opening partnership, taking twelve wickets apiece, both at an average of under fourteen. They were ably supported in the seam department by H. Cole (three for twenty-five against St. Edward's), S. Cataldo-Francis and latterly E. Antysz, whilst the off spin of D. Sullivan and Shackleton provided the necessary variety to the attack and all picked up useful wickets during the season (for example, Sullivan's three for twenty-five in the M.C.S. match).

Of the Juniors called on during the season, J. Dexter looks an accomplished all-rounder, P. Stern and S. Florey showed promise with the bat (Stern reaching forty-seven against Pangbourne), and A. Wimborne is a useful prospect with the ball, taking three for seventeen in the R.G.S. fixture: these four will no doubt provide the core of next year's team.

Fielding is often an aspect of the game which is overlooked, particularly by youngsters, but it is a key element of successful sides. I am sure that it was no coincidence that as the team's general standard of fielding improved over the course of the season, so did their results. Much of fielding is down to concentration and anticipation and Cole led the way in this department, with an excellent display of athleticism and alertness throughout, closely followed by Cataldo-Francis and Rehman, whilst Nash and Shackleton held on to some difficult catches at vital times.

It has been an enjoyable season, during which I hope that everyone feels that his game has developed and improved. I am sure that if individuals continue to work hard at their game, they will achieve a lot of success over the coming years.

**Lord Williams's, Thame (H) Lost**  
Lord Williams's 128 for 7  
Abingdon 109 for 9

**28/4 Eton (H) Lost**  
Abingdon 126 for 7  
Eton 129 for 5

**5/5 Oratory (A) Drew**  
Abingdon 177 for 7  
Oratory 130 for 5

**12/5 Reading (A) Won**  
Abingdon 192 for 5  
Reading 74

**19/5 Bloxham (H) Lost**  
Abingdon 93  
Bloxham 96 for 4

**9/6 St. Edward's (H) Lost**  
Abingdon 140  
St. Edward's 141 for 9

**16/6 Pangbourne (A) Drew**  
Abingdon 170  
Pangbourne 151 for 4

**23/6 R.G.S. H. Wycombe (H) Won**  
R.G.S. 148  
Abingdon 149 for 1

**30/6 M.C.S. (H) Won**  
M.C.S. 135  
Abingdon 138 for 6

a report by AMB





## 2nd XI cricket

5/5 Oratory (H) Drew  
Abingdon 121 for 9,  
Oratory 104 for 8

12/5 Reading (A) Drew  
Abingdon 192 for 5,  
Reading 145 for 9

19/5 Bloxham (A) Lost  
Bloxham 82, Abingdon 46

9/6 St. Edward's (H) Lost  
Abingdon 106,  
St. Edward's 109 for 2

22/6 R.G.S. H. Wycombe (A) Lost  
Abingdon 147  
R.G.S. 150 for 3

a report by NJH

above:  
"still life" (oil on board) by  
S. Pickard VINAFP

The team started with two strong draws in games which we were tactically just a little short of winning. All was going much better after our second game than had seemed likely when S. Holland recorded a primary (golden duck) facing the first ball of the season. Indeed, it was his composed knock (sixty-five) which put us in command against a Reading side which would probably have capitulated in a limited-overs format match.

The next week, we looked set to record our first victory after C. Cook had ripped through the Bloxham batting order (taking four for fifteen), leaving us needing just eighty-three. The team had not, however, reckoned with a first-change bowler capable of taking six for five, aided by sharp fielding, outlandish appeals (some withdrawn after the game by Bloxham's wicket-keeper), and some consequently questionable umpiring decisions. That the boys retained a sporting attitude in such circumstances is a credit to them.

From the Bloxham game on, it became impossible to field anything like our strongest side. A. Martin, H.

Morgan and Cook all had a certain star quality (Morgan took three for eleven against Reading, and Martin scored forty-nine against R.G.S.), but worthy characters such as E. Dingwall, J. Brockbank, J. Barton, M. Browne and E. Gurney, although competent cricketers, would not back themselves to turn a big game on its head in the manner of Botham at Headingley.

The 2nd XI enjoyed its cricket in June, but results went against us. St. Edward's rolled us over easily and R.G.S. punished us for not setting a sufficiently attacking field.

It seems important, however, to end on a high note and we should therefore turn our attention to the 2nd XI's policy (somewhat forced upon the selection committee) of bleeding young talent. J. Brooke and S. Hughes displayed a positive attitude at R.G.S., and C. West took himself to the top of the batting averages (thirty-four against R.G.S.) and showed potential as a left-arm bowler. Next year's XI should – one hopes without losing its gentlemanly spirit – have a more competitive edge.

# Juniors A XI cricket

The 'A' XI's season began on a wet and windy day on the playing fields of Eton, no less. Having skittled Eton out for fifty-two, confidence was high, but we had scratched our way to nineteen for three before the heavens opened and both sides went away wondering what might have been.

A disappointing performance against Oratory followed, with the last Abingdon wicket falling on the penultimate ball in rather bizarre circumstances. F. de Albuquerque, still in the process of learning the game, blocked the delivery, wandered out of his crease and was run out. That match highlighted the need to be sure what format is being played. J. Wood scored thirty-five, including some lovely straight drives.

Next came the first round of the Lord's Taverners competition. P. Stern cracked fifty-six of the 145 runs scored and Cheney wickets were shared around in their paltry reply. Back to the normal circuit, Reading proved to be too strong for us, even though Stern made a polished sixty-seven.

Our next opponents in the Cup competition were Warriners. Again Stern was in good form with fifty, but this time was joined by S. Florey with forty-nine. Warriners were never able to keep up with the run rate and we marched into the semi-final.

Again back to our normal circuit, we were forced to hang on for a draw against Bloxham. J. Dexter took six wickets for forty-two, including a hat-trick, and

then made forty-seven with the bat. Away at St. Edward's we just had one of those days. It is no exaggeration to report that we dropped at least ten catches. Having made only 126 runs, with M. Duhan scoring forty-one very valuable ones, we were forced to attack. Some superb bowling put St. Edward's under serious pressure, but catches dropped meant that they were less than ten for two when in fact they should have been four wickets down. This was a real opportunity missed.

The Cup semi-final against Barthlomew's (Eynsham) proved to be yet another walk-over. A. Wimborne was in brilliant form, taking six for fourteen, including another hat-trick. Rain washed out the Pangbourne fixture, so we ended the season with the Cup Final against M.C.S. This was another game that we rather let slip. M.C.S. reached a decent total, when we ought to have restricted them to less than a hundred. De Albuquerque took three wickets and both A. Hall and C. Watson bowled very economical spells. Our batting, unfortunately, was not up to the task.

**28/4 Eton (A) Match Abandoned**  
Eton 52, Abingdon 19 for 3

**5/5 Oratory (A) Lost**  
Oratory 179 for 7, Abingdon 145

**10/5 Cheney Won**  
Abingdon 145 for 7, Cheney 49

**12/5 Reading (H) Lost**  
Abingdon 149 for 8  
Reading 150 for 3

**18/5 Warriners Won**  
Abingdon 153 for 8  
Warriners 128 for 6

**19/5 Bloxham (A) Drew**  
Bloxham 175 for 9  
Abingdon 121 for 8

**9/6 St. Edward's (A) Lost**  
Abingdon 126  
St. Edwards 128 for 5

**19/6 Bartholomew's Won**  
Bartholomew's 54  
Abingdon 56 for 2

**30/6 M.C.S. (A) Lost**  
M.C.S. 149 for 9, Abingdon 134

# Juniors B XI cricket

When the heavens opened over Eton, only the ducks were left to paddle around along with us, thanks to a fanatical Eton schoolmaster. Eton got their victory and we did not cry foul. (There is a pun in there if you work hard.) A. Cornish (nineteen not out) and T. Fox (seventeen not out) saved us from total embarrassment. Next the playing fields of Abingdon, or at least Waste Court. Oratory wickets tumbled, all looked promising, but then Abingdon wickets tumbled too. Oh dear.

M.C.S. came next, and once again wickets tumbled as the Abingdon bowlers shared the spoils. This time, though, the Abingdon batsmen were in no

mood to crumble. S. Moulds with twenty-five and J. Dingwall with nineteen not out (and the loudest "no" this side of the Thames) secured the team's first victory of the campaign.

Batting first against Bloxham on their beautiful track, J. Wilson made hay with forty-one, while E. Rowett and Cornish were in fine form with three wickets apiece. Away at St. Edward's and against much more formidable opposition, M. O'Byrne led the attack with a hard-struck fifty. C. Dixon produced a fine spell of bowling taking three for twenty-four off ten overs, but the opposition's strength in depth saw them home to victory.

**28/4 Eton (A) Lost**  
Abingdon 65 for 8, Eton 66 for 1

**5/5 Oratory (H) Lost**  
Oratory 83, Abingdon 51

**2/5 M.C.S. Won**  
M.C.S. 71 for 7, Abingdon 72 for 1

**19/5 Bloxham (A) Won**  
Abingdon 119, Bloxham 21

**9/6 St. Edward's (A) Lost**  
Abingdon 136 for 8  
St. Edward's 137 for 6

# Valete

**"The Abingdonian"  
wishes every success  
to the Upper Sixth as  
they leave the School**

Seb Allen  
Ralf Bader  
Graham Bailey  
Will Baker  
Phil Ball  
Tomo Beardsworth  
Robert Blackmore  
Stephen Bough  
Laurence Bridges  
Adam Brodie  
Michael Bungey  
Tom Burch  
Joe Buxton  
Debs Chakraborty  
John Compton  
Michael Conway  
Guy Coppock  
James Cox  
Dan Curtis  
Tristan Dargay  
Chris Davis  
Tom Davis  
Tim Dillon  
Yin Dong  
Roshan Doostdar  
Iain Downie  
James Drury  
James Eighteen  
Richard Ellwood  
Jeremy Evers  
Martyn Ezra  
Alastair Fraser  
Carl Fudge  
Alex Gardner  
Tom Garside  
Peter Gooch  
James Hamand  
Ben Hancock  
Robin Harrison  
Alfie Harsono  
James Hayden  
Jonathan Herbert  
Tom Herford  
Nick Holman  
Ali Hutchinson  
Ben Jack  
Matthew Kay  
Richard Kempson  
Shah Khan  
Gudmund Larsson  
Matt Legg  
Brian Lo  
Andrew Lui

Ken Ma  
Charlie Maeng  
Jonathan Margree  
Justin Marshall  
Jeremy Mather  
Tom Matheson  
Ali McKenzie  
Nasir Noon  
John O'Byrne  
Jin Park  
Liam Pearce  
Baz Perkins  
Simon Pickard  
James Powell  
Ben Pritchett  
Ahilan Rabindran  
Dan Reuter  
Henry Richards  
Will Richards  
Kieron Roche  
Andrew Rodzynski  
John Rowley  
Mark Sanderson  
Sam Sargant  
Karl Sawetz  
Kelvin Shaikh  
Will Skjott  
Chris Smith  
Dan Smith  
James Stevens  
Marcus Stockwell  
Rob Syfret  
Tom Tarrell  
Paul Taylor  
Alex Teddy  
Ollie Thomas  
Pete Thomas  
Kartik Thyagaraja  
Terence Ting  
George Unsworth  
David Walford  
Martin Walker  
Ben Wall  
Matt Watkinson  
Owen White  
Rob White  
James Wilcox-Jones  
Nick Williams  
Dom Wilson  
Jonas Wilson  
Alastair Winearls  
James Wright  
Adam Wyman



# Josca's journal

## 2000-2001

### Headmaster's letter

Putting together a précis of the activities and achievements of both the pupils and the School as a whole is an increasingly challenging task even for the specialist summarizer, and I am pleased therefore to welcome you to the pages of our first extended 'magazine-style' review. Some of you will be reading this as a free-standing publication, others as a section within the foundation's *Abingdonian*. It is not meant to be a comprehensive analysis of all that we do, but I hope that it will give readers a full flavour of the School.

Along with these lines goes an invitation for anyone in the foundation to come and visit us – by appointment please - or at our next open day on Monday October 8th, from 2.00 p.m. until 4.00 pm.

Last year I mentioned that our five year plan of refurbishment of the School was in its early stages. From the School's point of view, this has been a year of significant development. The huge enterprise of refurbishing and redecorating the whole of the Frilford House end of the School has been combined into one massive undertaking, which will be completed for the start of the academic year 2001-2.

Although there are still some areas to be attended to, the completion of such a huge element of the five year plan has left us somewhat ahead of schedule, in a position to respond to the needs of the foundation and, indeed, to the demands of the market, both of which are telling us to expand the numbers of places which we have available at Josca's.

From September this year, we shall be introducing a second Year Seven group, consisting very largely of pupils who wish to enter Abingdon at thirteen but who, at the age of eleven, would prefer to spend a further two years in what is, unashamedly, a prep-school environment. This will be followed, in September 2002, by a further group, which will ultimately lead to a near doubling of the size of the

School in the top two year groups. We are confident that all the success which you can read about in the rest of these pages in scholarship, music, and sport will be enhanced by increased numbers at the top levels.

Other facilities at Josca's have also been significantly reshaped over the year. Our ICT facilities have been transformed this year, as our science was last year, in to what is now, a top of the range amenity. At the other end of the technological scale, changing and toilet facilities, especially for our younger pupils, have enjoyed a timely make-over.

For the most part, the staff has enjoyed a solid feel to it this year. Kathy Meason and Stephen Heames left us at Christmas, and David Franklin, who has taught this year in both parts of the foundation, has to return to a full timetable at the Abingdon end from September. Jeremy Freeman, our gap-year student, inevitably moves at this stage. Bitten by the teaching bug, he goes on the College of Cheltenham and Gloucester to take his full teaching qualifications. We wish them all well.

In May, we welcomed Alison Thomas to supervise our ICT network and in September we will make (a significant amount of) room for Stephen Hibberd, who will move from his post at Abingdon to be Head of Latin and Sports at Josca's as well as a form teacher of Year Seven.

# Valete

Eighteen boys leave us this year, to go on to the Oratory (one), Magdalen College School (two, including a scholarship), St. Edward's (three), Millfield (a scholarship), and Abingdon (eleven). Our congratulations and best wishes go to all the leavers, who are shown below.



## Lord Mayor's show

**a report by  
Sanjay Thakore**

I am a day-boy at Josca's and a boarder at Abingdon, and was fortunate enough to participate in this event. Pupils from the Middle and Upper School of Abingdon also participated in the show. It was a good chance to have a laugh and possibly make an appearance on television.

We set off for London by train at 6.00 a.m. and reached there at 9.00 a.m., just in time for a cooked breakfast and an introduction to the day.

Before we knew it, it was time to go and join the parade in the Mercers' section. We started by having our pictures taken with the Lord Mayor and his daughter, after which we walked around London holding the Abingdon flag. This was good as we also had time to socialize with some of the main stars of the show.

The day was a complete success and everyone enjoyed the occasion.



# Trips and lectures

3/11	Whittenham Nature Reserve	Year 8	2/7	Science field trip,	Year 7
23/11	Highclere Castle	Year 3		Sutton Courtenay	
5/12	Botanical Gardens	Year 3	3/7	Science field trip,	Year 5
5/12	Pantomime ( <i>Aladdin</i> )	PP1-3 &		Sutton Courtenay	
		Year 3	4/7	Teddy Bears' picnic	PP1
17/1	Botanical Gardens, Oxford	Year 4	5/7	Outlook Discovery centre	Years 3-4
25/1	Abingdon, field trip	Year 8	6/7	Trip to Boulogne	Years 6-7
12/2	Legion XIII Greek & Roman display, Abingdon School	Year 8	9/7	Swindon megabowl	Year 7
26/2	Sulgrave Manor	Year 4	10/7	Flagship Portsmouth	Years 4-6
26/2	Radley College evensong	Year 7	10/7	Ashmolean Museum	Year 3
		& choir	11/7	Cotswold Wildlife Park	Year 3
27/2	Manor School Music Fun day	Musicians	11/9	Lecture:	
1/3	<i>Hamlet</i> at BMW, Cowley	Years 7-8		George Spenceley, <i>To Follow a Star</i>	
8/3	Didcot Power Station	Year 8	18/9	Book Fair	
9/3	Science trip, Oxford University Museum	PP3	15/9	Assembly:	
				Anna Hernden, Riding for the Disabled	
22/3	Don Lind, astronaut talk, Abingdon School	Years 7-8	4/12	Theatre Workshop:	
				<i>Why did the Chicken Cross the Road?</i>	
29/3	Fossil trip, Oxford University Museum	Year 3	6/1	Danetree Vets	
2-9/4	Ski trip to Italy	Years 4-8	2/3	Book Fair	
25/5	Wyld Court Rain Forest	PP1	13/3	Roman afternoon, Mrs Whitten	
5/6	Kew Outreach, Abingdon School	Year 6	12/6	Book Fair	
7/6	<i>The Twits</i> , Oxford Playhouse	Year 3	14/6	Presentation to Year 8: Abingdon School CCF	
18/6-	Isle of Wight activity holiday	Year 8	25/6	Book Fair	
28/6	Beale Park	PP3	25/6	Greek Afternoon, Mrs Whitten	
28/6	Swindon Art Gallery	Year 5	26/6	Lecture:	
				Colin McNaughton, author	

**as ever, Josca's pupils across the year groups enjoyed a range of trips and activities away from the School site this year. Some of the key ones, along with visitors to the School, are listed here**

**above: Pre-Prep. pupils prepare for their Teddy Bears' picnic**



# Literary review

One of the innovations which we have seen this year has been the introduction of a termly Literary Review, organized and edited by Simon Littlewood, our Head of English. This has given a great number of boys the opportunity – and indeed inspiration – of seeing their work in print. Here we reprint a few choice cuts.

## Without You

Without you I'm like  
A clock without hands,  
I'm like a farm without food  
Or a kitchen without pans.

Without you I'm like  
A man without muscles,  
I'm like a school without work  
Or a sprout without Brussels.

James Hutchings (Year 4)

Without you I'm like  
A class without a teacher  
I'm like a pencil without lead  
Or a zoo without a creature.

Without you I'm like  
An orchestra without a band  
For whatever I do  
You always understand.

Jasper Done (Year 4)

## Autumn Thoughts (a poem to someone blind)

I see conkers, brown conkers, thundering to the ground with their green and spiky shells,  
I see blackberries like purple jewels,  
I see leaves fluttering to the ground, brown and crispy and crunchy,  
I see wheat like golden pillars standing there swaying from side to side,  
I see field mice scuttling in the stubble,  
I see hedgehogs hiding in the hedge,  
I see swallows diving back and forth before they go back over the sea,  
I wish you could see this too.

John Davies (Year 5)

## Character analysis

Charlie is a clown at the circus. He rides a unicycle and throws custard pies. He is very funny: everyone loves him – he is the star of the show. He has a white face with a red squeaky nose and a happy smile painted round his lips. On his head he wears an orange wig, and when he moves the curls bounce up and down. Charlie is always telling jokes and laughing: he seems like the happiest person in the world.

When the show ends and the people have gone home, Charlie is a very different person. He cleans off his stage make-up with the big smile, and his face is sad. He has no friends or family and lives alone in his caravan. His only companion is Scrap, an old terrier. He is sad and lonely. In the caravan there is no laughter, no fun, only silence. Charlie wishes that in his real life he could be the happy clown who he is at the circus.

Harrison Gray (Year 4)

## A winter poem

Witches in the sky at night,  
The pumpkin's smiling orange light,  
Trick or treating is such fun,  
Gruesome masks scare everyone.

Hissing fires and smouldering leaves,  
Birds are sheltering in the eaves,  
Multicoloured rockets fill the sky,  
Frightened birds fly up high.

Red breasted robins hide away,  
With the shortening of the day,  
Leafless trees and frozen earth,  
Telling the time of Jesus' birth.

Darkened days and driving snow,  
Lots of snowballs we can throw,  
Moles and hedgehogs hibernate,  
Sleeping out their wintry fate.

Michael Badger (Year 6)

My character is the world No 2 downhill mountain-biker. He is called Steve Peat: he has short ginger hair and green eyes. He is 5'10" and weighs eleven stone. He always tries to give his best.

Steve Peat is a perfectionist. Whatever he strives to do has to be absolutely right, whether it is cutting a piece of meat on his plate or doing a downhill track. Now you might think that being a perfectionist means that you think too hard about everything and you do not take risks... but it does not mean that for him. If you put him on a bike he will try anything no matter how dangerous or crazy it is. Steve will jump off a ten-foot vertical cliff with style and grace. Mountain-biking for Steve Peat is as easy as riding a bike.

Steve is also a kind person. He is always ready to listen and make a joke with others. Although he is famous, he rides for GT, one of the best biking teams in the UK; he always makes time for his fans and answers all their queries and questions, no matter how stupid they may seem.

The 'phone rang.

"Hello," said Steve, in his typical laid-back Steve Peat fashion.

"Hi, Steve. It's Rob here. How are you?"

"Yeah, I'm fine. And you?"

"Great, thanks; but there's something so great I've just got to tell you. Well, you know with all the foot and mouth going it's really hard to find a trail here?"

"Yeah. Don't tell me you've found one?" said Steve.

"Umm, no. I just thought I'd ring you to remind you about the damn restrictions," Rob added sarcastically. "Of course I've found one, and it's probably one of the best we've ever tried. So what I was going to say was, do you want to come with me on say, Thursday?"

Being a perfectionist there was a long pause before Steve replied. He had to think hard about if it was worth all the trouble of getting his bike ready for what could be a completely uneventful journey.

"What's it got then? Any good drops? Can you get big air?"

"Yeah. Yeah all that 'n' more: it's fantastic. We've just got to go."

"Okay, okay, but give me 'til Friday because my bike's in a bad state at the moment. I've got to oil it, adjust my disks, refill my sids with air and check the oil dumping." Mountain biking was a very technical business.

"Okay, sounds great. See you on Friday." Steve put down the phone. By Thursday night he'd got his bike ready and found his pads at the back of his garage.

The next morning the doorbell rang. That'd better not be one of those annoying people asking who I'm going to vote for again, I'm just going to say yes to all of them. But when he opened the door there was no-one in sight. Just as he was going to shut the door again there was a loud "boo". Steve jumped at least a foot in the air and fell down the steps backwards.

When he looked up, he saw Rob grinning at him.

"Why? why? why?" Steve shouted.

"Just my way of saying hi," replied Rob.

Steve got his bike from the shed and headed for the track, knowing that he could be in for a disappointing afternoon.

Devil's Creek cycle track was evil. It was dark, wet, slippery and dangerous, as the name suggests. The trees arched over like a dinosaur's ribcage around the twisting, winding paths. It had a mist of clouds over it where the rain vapour could not escape. This made it look alive and breathing. The paths were covered with big slippery rocks and deep wet mud. They glistened in the morning light. At the starting point was a sign saying, "Welcome to Devil's Creek – you cycle down this at your own risk." Someone had graffitied a skull and cross bones above it.

The men set off, secretly hoping for a bit of adventure. They accelerated down the first path until they met a boulder which they skilfully used as a jump. Ahead of them, a mile further, the track forked. Rob stopped to check his map, and to take some bearings – Steve zipped by showing off his new tricks. It was at this point that Rob shouted.

"Take the right fork!" – but Steve was too busy manoulling to hear him and headed left instead.

There was trouble ahead. As Steve got a few miles further he wondered why it was so quiet; eerily quiet – with only the sound of his own derrallier flapping about. He turned around and then it happened, faster than you can say "knife." He dropped down, down, down and down. Until THUD, there was a splitting noise and his leg collapsed. Time moved on, and as he tried to move he felt a cold numb sensation down one leg. He was stuck with nothing but his beloved bike for company.

Meanwhile, Rob was getting worried too, and he started to wonder if Steve had gone down the wrong track. Rob pushed the bike up the track. When he got to the top he saw Steve's 2.35 inch tyres going down the left track. He raced down it for at least twenty minutes until he skidded off the track. There was a fifteen foot deep pit at least two metres wide.

Rob looked into it and saw, lying on top of his bike, Steve. Steve looked dazed, so Rob guessed that he was hurt. He got out his new Ericsson mobile that was water, dust and shock resistant and tried to telephone the "Devil's Creek Rescue Service", but the 'phone did not have a signal.

"Damn phones, there must be a signal around here somewhere."

When he finally got a signal he rang them again. He told them to collect him at the pit on the left hand fork. The men came in a flash and took them both to the nearest hospital. The doctor said that Steve had broken his leg and would have to wear a plaster cast, but he did not think that it was too serious.

Months later, Devil's Creek was closed down for safety reasons.

**character analysis  
and story by  
William Wynell-Mayow  
(Year 5)**

# Prizes & awards

## SPORTS AWARDS

Arkell Swimming Trophy:	Edward Tolson
Tennis Doubles:	Patrick Collins Mallam Grant
Tennis Singles:	Patrick Collins
Tennis Colours:	Angus Watson
Colts Cricket Best Batsman & Fielder:	Jordan Tabor
Best Bowler:	Steven Mills
Seniors Cricket Best Batsman:	Scott Henley
Best Bowler:	Greg Talbot Harry Herbert
Cricket Colours:	Scott Henley Harry Herbert Gregory Talbot
Athletics Colours:	James Wilson
Superstars Prize:	Scott Henley
Belvedere Rugby Award:	Scott Henley
Josca's Football Award:	Gregory Talbot
Anderson Cricketer Award:	Scott Henley

## MUSIC AWARDS

In Music examinations, there were no failures, four passes, five merits and the following distinctions:

Mallam Grant	Grade I	Saxophone
Robert Morris	Grade I	Piano
Edward Tolson	Grade II	Trumpet
Alex Mugnaioni	Grade III	Euphonium
Ben Cooke	Grade IV	Horn
Tim Fegan	Grade IV	Trumpet

## MERIT AWARDS

These are awarded for effort and courtesy inside and outside the classroom.

### Bronze

PP3:	George Glister Alexander Hatzis Jonathan Alderson
Year 3:	Jim Grabham Aidan Chavasse
Year 4:	Harry Gray Charlie Robertson Luke Parker
Year 5:	Edward Tolson Oliver Clark James Hunter
Year 6:	Paul Scopes Thomas Durrands

Year 7:

Year 8:

Silver

PP3:

Year 3:

Year 4:

Year 5:

Year 6:

Year 7:

Year 8:

Gold

PP3:

Year 3:

Year 4:

Year 5:

Year 6:

Year 7:

Year 8:

Charlie Kingsman

Ryan Liu

Tim Fegan

David Mills

Jack Viner

Harry Bowerman

Scott Henley

Craig Fraser

Angus Watson

Elliott Benoist

George Wheatley

Oliver Stanier

Matthew Hinkins

Jeremy Talbot

John Davies

James Burford

Robert Morris

Max Gander

James White

Sam Barton

Kang Zang

Gregory Talbot

George Bull

James Barratt

Robbie Henley

William Wynell-

Mayow

Joseph Delo

Ben Cooke

Mark Beevor

## ACADEMIC AWARDS

PP2:	Form	William Horlock Charlie Gordon
PP3:	Form	Jack Gillard
	Academic	Alexander Hatzis
Year 3:	Form	Stephen Horlock
	Academic	Jack Rayner
Year 4:	Form	Harrison Gray
	Academic	Robert Henley
Year 5:	Form	Mark Jordan
	Academic	James Hunter
Year 6:	Form	Geoffrey Iwata
	Academic	Michael Coldwell
Year 7:	Form	Ryan Liu
		Harry Moore
	Academic	Sam Barton
Year 8:	Form	Craig Fraser





**above:  
revellers at the Parents'  
Association masked ball  
prepare with a couple  
of early glasses**

**SUBJECT PRIZES**

**Humanities Prize:** Andrew Kyprios  
**Science Prize:** Kang Zang

James Wilson  
*For representing Josca's in the final of the IAPS 800 metres athletics competition.*

**Prior Cup for the Sportsman of the Year:**  
Scott Henley  
Gregory Talbot

**SPECIAL AWARDS**

**Headmaster's Certificate of Excellence:**  
To all those who have been awarded Music distinctions, as well as:

**Hazard Award for a Musical and Theatrical Contribution:**  
Alex Mugnaioni

Gregory Talbot  
*For winning the Oxfordshire U13 squash championship.*  
Harry Bowerman  
*For winning the Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire and Berkshire U13 fencing championship.*  
Gregory Talbot  
*For the award of the top academic scholarship to Millfield School.*  
Angus Watson  
*For the award of a tennis scholarship to Magdalen College School.*

**The Abingdon Award:**  
This is a new trophy, presented to us by the Headmaster of Abingdon School. It is inscribed: *In recognition of the Union.* It will be awarded, annually, to the pupil in Year Eight who has achieved the best academic results over the year. Mr. M. St. John Parker awarded it to:  
Angus Watson

**Governors' Prize:** Harry Bowerman

# Sports reports

Josca's sport continues to thrive at all levels and age groups. In terms of results, this year could not be called a vintage one. However, it is with some pride that I can report that more boys represented the School in sporting fixtures than ever before. It is hoped that this trend can be continued in the years to come.

## Rugby

1st XV: Won 2, Lost 4  
2nd XV: Won 0, Lost 4  
Colts 'A': Won 1, Lost 6  
Colts 'B': Won 0, Lost 2  
U9s: Won 1, Lost 5

## Soccer

1st XI: Won 3, Drew 2, Lost 0  
2nd XI: Won 3, Drew 0, Lost 2  
Colts 'A': Won 3, Drew 1, Lost 4  
Colts 'B': Won 2, Drew 2, Lost 3  
U9 'A'/'B': Won 5, Drew 2, Lost 2

## Cricket

1st XI: Won 1, Drew 2, Lost 3  
2nd XI: Won 0, Drew 0, Lost 4  
Colts 'A': Won 0, Drew 2, Lost 4  
Colts 'B': Won 0, Drew 1, Lost 3

by Simon Littlewood

In retrospect it must be said that the rugby 1st XV's results were a little disappointing. In Josca's tradition we had a powerful pack of forwards who often dominated their opponents. Scott Henley, Harry Bowerman and Craig Fraser were the three outstanding performers in this division. However, in our efforts to play more than ten-man, one-dimensional rugby, the ball was often swung wide where we lacked pace and, at times, determination. The backs failed to capitalize on the plentiful supply of ball with which they were provided.

In defence we oscillated between the inspired (St Hugh's) and the dilatory (Oratory). Too many games saw players failing to take responsibility for their opposite numbers, leaving just four or five players to make ninety per cent of the tackles. As the season progressed the need for players to concentrate and work harder during training became apparent and future squads will need to apply themselves in this way right from the beginning.

This was a triumphant season for the 1st XI soccer, who were undefeated. The team had a first-class attitude and played some frighteningly good football at times. Gregory Talbot displayed abundant skill up front, whilst Alex Grant, Ben Paterson and Craig Fraser dominated the midfield. The back three were never less than solid, and David Mills proved himself to be a keeper of great promise. Many thanks to all those who represented the 1st XI and who helped make it such a successful season.

After a slow start to the cricket season, with early defeats at the hands of St Hugh's and the Dragon, the 1st XI developed considerably, and went on to enjoy excellent draws against Abingdon School and the County XI.

However, there is still too much reliance upon one or two dominant players, and not enough personal self-belief. When we lost players such as Scott Henley early on in the match, the rest of the team would fold too easily, and if the opening bowlers were off line the change bowlers were likely to spray it around as well. As a result we lost matches which we should certainly have drawn – or in which we might even have been able to claim victory.

Our bowling was stronger than the batting, and our openers, joint captains Harry Herbert and Greg Talbot, bowled well all term with the new ball. The change bowlers were more than useful, but an alternative spin bowler after Greg Talbot's leg spin would have provided balance. Under the present playing regulations – where seamers can bowl a maximum of eight overs – a good spinner is essential. (Please note, years Six and Seven.)

It was the batting which, all too frequently, let us down, however. With the exception of Scott Henley no batsman contributed consistently to the total. A number of Year Seven boys represented the XI this year and they will have to work hard on their games in the coming year and, indeed, foster greater belief in their own abilities.