



The Abingdonian 2004



Leavers 2004



The Abingdonian

Michaelmas 2004

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Editor's Foreword



A hundred or so years ago, and (as you can see above) on World Heritage Day this year, Abingdonians wrote with chalk on old roofing slates, schoolmasters wielded canes and pupils learnt and wrote through fear. Prompted by my role in this extraordinary piece of theatre, I borrowed a copy of *The Abingdonian* 1904 from the School Library (yes – they have most of the fascinating back copies there – and they are not written on slate, either!) to try to discern what other differences were apparent then, in particular regarding this august publication.

First, as they say in the television adverts, 'size matters'. Our School was much smaller then, and so a hundred years ago the reflection of Abingdon portrayed in *The Abingdonian* stretched

Headmaster's Foreword

In July at Prize-Giving we honoured the individual achievements of an Upper-Sixth Form that must go down as one of the most successful on record. Looking back over the academic year 2003-4, there is ample evidence to confirm my own instinct that we have indeed been amply blessed this year in a plethora of different ways.

It is certainly unusual in any school to be able to open two significant new buildings in any twelve-month period. Our new Arts Centre was many years in the design stage and right up until the opening ceremony it seemed determined to resist our attempts to strait-jacket it by insisting on compliance with a set timetable. Nevertheless, eventually we were able to celebrate a slightly premature opening on 11 October 2003 when Francis Maude, OA, our retiring Chairman of Governors, officially declared the building open as his fitting last public engagement at Abingdon. It was well into the autumn that the Art, Music and Drama Departments occupied their new premises with a sense of expectation heightened by delay. The boathouse project, in total contrast, seemed positively to explode from the starting line and was finished on time, and to budget, to be opened by Matthew Pinsent on the blustery autumnal evening of 22 October. The conditions did nothing to dampen the feeling of euphoria for a complex project (worked on by over 250 members of

to an almost desultory seventeen or so pages. The magazine you are holding has ballooned over the intervening century to one hundred and sixteen pages, and there is always more material landing on my desk for publication, it seems. But I had to call a halt somewhere, so my sincere apologies if your article or photograph did not make it into this issue. Thank you for all your submissions, nevertheless; without them the magazine would clearly not be what it is, and I am so relieved I did not have to use that cane to receive your submissions by the deadlines. I wonder if the Editor did a hundred years ago?

Quantity is a poor substitute for quality, though. I must admit that the quality of the written word and its attendant punctuation in *The Abingdonian* 1904 is a delight for the most censorious Editor's eye. But, I beg to boast, that quality can also be discovered everywhere in these one hundred and sixteen pages. Abingdonians can and do write as well today as they did a hundred years ago, and I must pay tribute here to the unstinting efforts of our proof-readers, AMS, this year assisted by Sue Hill, and Phil Richardson, who have acted as the gate-keepers of correct English over many editions of this magazine.

As usual, I wish to thank my team of boy Sub-editors, whose names appear overleaf, for their stimulating input into *The Abingdonian*: both in writing and in discussion in the weekly committee meetings. The last twelve years as Editor have been one long labour of love for me, but the time has now come to give someone else this wonderful opportunity to observe and record all that makes up our great School. Meanwhile, I heartily commend this edition to you.

D.J. POPE, EDITOR

the extended Abingdon community) finished to a specification beyond our wildest hopes just six months previously.

Moving from the world of construction and expansion, the year will also be remembered for various academic triumphs – a very healthy number of Oxbridge places and a record number of UCAS points per A level candidate. Very importantly, the vast majority of our leavers have been able to pursue their first choice course at their first choice university.

This year will also be remembered for both the breadth and depth of achievement within the Other Half. In the three major ball games – rugby, hockey and cricket – more than 35 matches were played with only five recorded losses. On the water, 2nd Editorial excelled themselves by winning the Queen's Mother Cup at the National Schools' Regatta, 113, led by only the narrowest of margins by an ou 113 in America in the final of the Princess Elizabeth 3 135 at Henley Royal Regatta.

It is... that we are able to claim an expansion of the Other Half, but over the last twelve months the Film Unit, under the guidance of Old Abingdonian and eminent documentary maker, Michael Grigsby, has not only established

itself but flourished to the point that several films made by the boys were shown at the National Film Theatre in June.

This year will also be remembered as a period in which the School has made a deliberate and determined effort to reach beyond our usual limits and boundaries. Sports teams have travelled abroad, our link with schools in Moldova has strengthened, our expeditions have crossed the Mongolian Steppe on horseback and, closer to home, we have renewed our commitment to the Oxfordshire Independent State Schools' Partnership. Most significant, however, was the publication with The School of St Helen and St Katharine of a joint memorandum of

Chapel

The Chapel is at the heart of School life. Each morning, for different year-groups, there is a short service, non-denominational in Christian character and suitable for those of any faith or none. The intention is to provide experience of worship, as part of the boys' spiritual education. Boarders attend a weekly evening service of varied type: Choral Evensong and Sung Eucharist with the Chapel Choir; Compline; Holy Communion in Houses, and services involving visiting preachers, drama, art and music. We enjoy excellent links with the local parish churches. St Helen's Church held their main Sunday Service in our Chapel for seven months whilst their building was being refurbished. Boarders visited the new St Helen's for the Ascension Day Eucharist.

St Michael's Church was used for Christmas Carol Services and the Commemoration and Leavers' Services. Boarders attended the Ash Wednesday Service there, and in a Confirmation Service, the Right Reverend Dr Richard Harries, Bishop of Oxford, confirmed eight boys: **P. Appleton, L. Hall, C. Lester, R. Marsh, E. Perou, J. Stewart** (also baptized), **S. Walton** and **S. White**. Confirmation preparation included pilgrimages to Dorchester Abbey and churches in Abingdon and Oxford.

A service for Firstformers and their parents began the year, an Act of Remembrance took place on Remembrance Day, and the Concert Band played in a Passiontide Service in the Amey Theatre. We are very grateful to the staff and local clergy who led services in the Michaelmas term when there was no School Chaplain. The new Chaplain was installed in the Chapel on 8 January by the Venerable Norman R. [unclear] of Berkshire. Visiting preachers in the Lent term were: the Reverend Richard Harrison [unclear] and Broadshire; the Reverend Malcolm At [unclear] Trinity Church, Abingdon; Canon John Ra [unclear] ve, Reading; the Reverend Michael Price, [unclear] School; Canon John Crowe, Team Rector of Dorchester; and the Reverend Dr Andrew Bunch, a vicar of Oxford churches. We are extremely grateful to the Chapel Organists: **Richard Elliott, Simon Whalley** and David Wickens (of St Helen's Church) – and to

understanding, outlining the future intention of both schools to build on the collaboration of the past with a positive desire to strengthen the bonds between the schools in the future to mutual advantage.

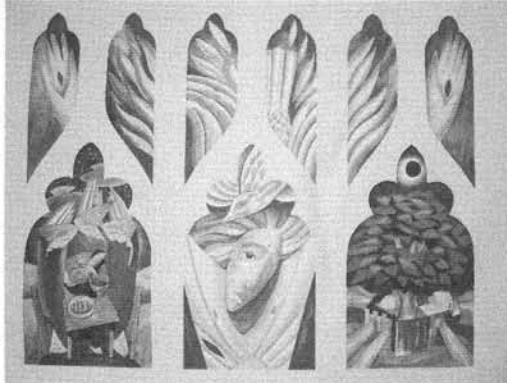
As I sit in my study reviewing the statistics and details of another school I am about to inspect, I am happily reminded of the huge amount of activity and energy generated at Abingdon. That fact certainly poses challenges but it is a defining feature of what we are, and I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Editor and his team for our School magazine which, once again, captures the essence of Abingdon most successfully.

M. TURNER, HEADMASTER

Mrs Elizabeth Turner, who kindly provides the beautiful arrangements of Chapel flowers.

Families and friends of the School are most welcome to attend the services on Thursday evenings, listed in the School and Chapel Calendars: the more support, the better!

In October 2004, the Right Reverend Dr Richard Harries, Bishop of Oxford, dedicated some splendid additions to the Chapel: an East Window created by Nicholas Mynheer, an Oxfordshire artist, and a complementary altar frontal, burse and veil (for Holy Communion) and lectern fall by Mary Barton, of Abingdon. The Trinity Window, with the altar, is the focal point of the Chapel, and provides an inspirational vision, especially when lit by the morning sunlight, not only to the Chapel congregation, but also to anyone walking along Chapel corridor towards it. The Window's Trinity theme is very apt, for the Chapel was itself dedicated on Trinity Sunday 1903 to the Holy and Undivided Trinity, and as every Abingdonian should know, the School was refounded in 1563 as The Free School of The Holy Trinity.



The artist's aim was to produce a window that is striking both in its design and intensity of colour. He writes:

'The design is based on the Holy Trinity. Christ is central to the design; he looks at us, engaging us, and says to each and every boy, "You are my beloved Son." (Matthew 3:17). The hands of Christ are raised to show us the wounds of the Crucifixion, but they are also raised in the triumph of the Resurrection.

The Holy Spirit is represented by the Dove above Christ. The feathers have been transfigured into Pentecostal flames which spread out across the windows. The left-hand panel depicts Abraham entertaining the three Angels: the theme known as 'The Old Testament Trinity' (Genesis 18). The right-hand side depicts a tree under which lies a town. The tree is a symbol for Christ, protecting mankind beneath. The light of Christ shines through Man and out to the world.

God the Father is represented by the whole of Creation: in the tree, the landscape, the moon and the very glass itself, as well as in the light which comes through it.'

It is wonderful. Do come and see!

HLK



The musical benefits of the new Arts Centre

The new Music School is set to enhance both creative and academic aspects of Abingdon's Music and, in some cases, to revolutionise it. We had been, for many years, proud of the quality, diversity and sheer quantity of music-making that had emanated from our modest 1960s Ingham Music School – a building whose timber cladding and flat roof will hold happy memories for many, not least the members of *Radiohead*. But the cramped conditions did not encourage the new developments in music technology to be embraced and this new facility gave us a Music Technology Room with 'state of the art' computers, keyboards and the very latest software for music composition and publishing, together with opportunities to do in-house music research. The new space gives us the chance to invest in professional software that will revolutionise the possibilities for composing work, especially at A level.

Along the corridor an extra room gives us increased flexibility, allowing GCSE and A level sets the opportunity for study and teaching in a dedicated and well resourced room. The upstairs teaching room has a small triangular 'mixing booth' with visual access to both this and the adjacent music technology and this provides an exciting future opportunity for a recording studio.

In addition to four extra practice rooms, the rehearsal space includes a decent-sized room for string teaching and our distinguished Head of Strings, **Mariette Richter**, will teach both upper strings and chamber ensembles there. This room, called the 'Kitching Room' after Frances Kitching, a particularly charismatic and inspirational string teacher of the 1950s, also doubles up for our termly music examinations. The extended north foyer not only gives vastly improved interval space for audiences but also an ideal place to rehearse the Chamber Orchestra and other larger ensembles when the Amey Theatre stage is not available.

The large rehearsal room downstairs was designed to take a full-sized symphony orchestra, allowing the theatre stage an

independence to accommodate drama sets and productions and other uses without interrupting the flow of weekly orchestral and band rehearsals. The name of **Mr Ingham**, a master who, when retiring in the 1960s, helped endow the then new Music School (his name appears on a plaque in the stairwell to the Masters' Common Room) lives on since this room is called the 'Ingham Room'. This large space has additional flexibility, affording opportunities for Drama teaching during curriculum time and for transporting large pieces of scenery and set, which can be brought straight through into the backstage area.

The percussion room is sited in this south-east corner of the building, allowing proximity for percussion to be brought through for rehearsal in the Ingham Room and strategically sited at some distance from violin and chamber music teaching. Another essential element of the concept of the new Music School was the desire to move to independent individual instrument storage and the wide corridors have enabled this philosophy to be realised. The handsome beech lockers enhance corridors both upstairs and on the ground floor. The unusual Arts Centre Secretary's office has created some interest with its dramatic mezzanine area for the photocopier and filing and this fulfils the important need for in-house secretarial and administrative support for the Music, Art and Drama Departments.

It is wonderful to have this new facility, and particularly to have been able to preserve the existing Amey Theatre whilst extending and modernising the building's provision effectively. It is perhaps significant that the two academic years during which the Arts Centre was being built saw the gaining of six Oxford and Cambridge places for boys reading Music (including three Choral Awards) and seven Organ Scholarships. The first term of full occasion, *Dan Howell* ten boys gain Distinctions in their Music examinations, including five at Grade 8, a record for a single term. This was a auspicious start and a benchmark for future generations of Abingdonians who will have many such reasons to thank the Arts Centre for its realisation.

MAS



The opening of the new Boathouse

A new Design and Technology Centre

The Design and Technology Department has had an exciting year, most of it spent planning the move of the woodwork workshop to the warehouse building, together with the metalwork workshop. The workshop was used for practical lessons straightaway. Both workshops' location in the same building should improve future possibilities, so we should see some really exciting work in the coming years.

The afternoons have continued to be very busy in the new workshops as boys develop their own ideas and designs. There are now two extra Clubs run by the department. Modelling aeroplanes in one keeps a keen bunch of Lower School boys very happy, trying to work out why some pieces of wood and paper fly. They always leave the workshop with finished models but by the time they have walked as far as the Science Block there seem to be considerably fewer models that have not regressed to pieces of wood and paper! Upper Field has been the site of many first and last launches. There is also a Wood-turning Club. SEB has kindly been showing the boys the fun involved in turning wood. The Club now has four lathes, one very kindly provided by TASS to enable more boys to try their hand at wood turning. Wood-turning has proved really exciting and it is not surprising to make a mess on the floor with piles of shavings.

Toward the middle of the year a group of Sixthformers had a tour around the Renault Formula 1 workshops at Enstone with **Mark Herd**, OA, who is now Senior Race Engineer. He showed us around the whole site and we were



A new Careers suite

amazed at the level of design and technology involved. A large industrial unit-style workshop, full of rows of computer-driven machines, milling away on blocks of titanium to go somewhere in the cars. Maybe with our workshops now working together, some boys will try to push the limits of creativity a little further. Who knows what they might design in the future?

MRW



Abingdon Film Unit

The Abingdon Film Unit was formed in September 2003 to coincide with the opening of the new Arts Centre and to offer boys the chance to make their own films. There had always been the intention to introduce film-making when the new Drama facilities became available, with an idea that it might also serve the School community by recording aspects of School life. However, the scale and ambition of the project increased greatly after Sarah Wearne, the School Archivist, introduced Michael Grigsby, OA to Jeremy Taylor and Kris Spencer in the summer of 2003, and the internationally renowned documentary maker agreed to return to the School he left as a boy in 1955 to teach and inspire a new generation of film-makers. At that point, I suspect few of us could have anticipated what excitement lay in store, or how quickly those involved would catch the film-making 'bug'.

It began with the **Headmaster**. His prompt and enthusiastic backing of the project made the serendipity of our summer meeting with Michael Grigsby into the practical reality of funding for his weekly visits to the School. By then, we had already advertised the Film Unit at the Societies' Fair, and received applications to join from nearly fifty boys. Practical considerations meant places had to be restricted to approximately half that number, so members were eventually selected after being asked to submit ideas for a one-minute film or soundscape.

Work began appropriately enough on 5 November with a series of workshops, in which Michael

Grigsby introduced boys to the development of documentary through films such as *Night Mail*, *Drifters* and *Listen to Britain* alongside some of his own films, including *A Life Apart*, *The Score*, *Lockerbie: a Night Remembered* and *Living On the Edge*. These sessions took place in one of the Geography rooms while we waited for the Arts Centre to be completed, and the location seemed appropriate as we experienced films and influences with a cosmopolitan dimension. We watched *Man with a Movie Camera* from Russia, *Nuit et Brouillard* from France and several remarkable films from Iran (*Kandahar*, *The Apple* and *The Day I Became a Woman*), before Larry Sider, Head of Post-Production at the National Film School, and originally a native of Chicago, visited Abingdon in December to lead a session on editing. The boys then pitched ideas for their own short documentary films, and six were chosen for production, with members of the Unit organizing themselves into teams containing a director, cameraman and sound engineer.

That brought us to the end of the Michaelmas term, but we still had no cameras or sound equipment. That was because the original bid for video equipment had been based on the 'domestic' range of models, which Michael Grigsby now encouraged us to avoid, as he knew that cheap equipment not only represented a false economy but could also prove a major creative obstacle. So, after further research, 'professional standard' equipment was ordered during the Christmas holidays, and exercises to train the boys in its use began in January. Michael Grigsby brought in the three 'Great Danes' – specialists Jonas Mortensen (Camera), Mikkel Eriksen (Sound) and Nikolaj Larsen (Editor) – to lead these sessions, which could now take place in the new Drama classroom on the top floor of the Arts Centre. The boys learned quickly, as they had to, for they had been presented with a unique opportunity. Michael Grigsby's retrospective season at the National Film Theatre was scheduled for June, and would include an evening devoted to the origins of his film-making career as a boy at Abingdon in the 1950s. Patrick Russell, curator of the British Film Institute's non-fiction collection, and the man responsible for the Grigsby programme at the NFT, was keen to show some of the new films alongside an extract from Grigsby's first film, *No Tumbled House*, a witty and irreverent portrait of the School made in 1955. So, research, filming and editing of the boys' first exercises in film all had to be completed by late April. There was also the small matter of a few examinations.



As they learned the practical skills of filming, sound-recording and editing, the boys were encouraged by Michael Grigsby to adopt some of the values that have characterized his work during thirty-five years or more of compassionate and fiercely independent film-making. For example, they were reminded of the importance of allowing the audience time and space in which to think and form their own judgements, instead of belabouring them with 'the message' in the manner of most of today's television, where authoritative voices, extreme camera angles and frantic editing paces have become the norm. Above all, Michael Grigsby conveyed to his charges his own sense of the quiet dignity of ordinary people's lives, and the duty of the film-maker to offer "a voice to the voiceless" by letting people speak for themselves without being trivialized or patronized. The Abingdon Film Unit boys responded enthusiastically. Their six short films, which were screened for the first time in the Amey Theatre on 19 May, showed a determined attempt to look at the world around them, with subjects including Oxford's homeless population, the benefits of horse-riding for an autistic boy, the old-world skills of a pair of local cobblers, two contrasting views of redevelopment in Reading, impressions of the morning journey to work in Abingdon and a reminder of what it's like to be a newcomer in a large institution.

This outward-looking approach was perhaps the most exciting and educationally valuable aspect of the whole enterprise, and one that made the three films selected for screening at the National Film Theatre in London on 11 June look very much at home alongside the work of Grierson, Cavalcanti and Grigsby. This was not simply the view of indulgent teachers or parents, either. Shortly after the NFT screening, the BFI told us they hoped to include one of the Abingdon Films (*Cobblers*) in an educational video/DVD resource pack for schools on British documentary, alongside one of Michael Grigsby's early films, *Tomorrow's Saturday*. In addition, Patrick Russell decided to place all six of the films in the National Film Archive at Berkhamsted, where they will reside in perpetuity alongside the work of all the great British directors. The Film Unit was attracting interest in the local and national press, too, with a feature article in the *Times Educational Supplement* and mentions in *The Times*, *The Independent* and a host of other publications. It was all heady stuff, and a fitting reward for the boys, whose hard work and creativity had achieved so much in a short space of time, and for those who had had the vision and courage to back the project in the first place.

Success brings its own challenges, of course, and Michael Grigsby and his colleagues must now

turn their attention to developing the next stage of the Film Unit's activities. The core of the work will continue to involve boys coming up with their own ideas for films and turning these into reality. In addition, there will be films that serve the School community in some way. But there are also plans to develop links with local state schools, and to pursue opportunities for dialogue with organizations in other countries so that we can continue to learn about the world around us in the most direct, 'hands on' way. In addition, we will seek to augment the audiences for our films via film festivals and the web.

It has been a very exciting year, and a great deal has been learned about the demands of working together to make films. There are many people to thank for this, including the Headmaster, the Governors, the ICT Department, **Simon Whalley** and the musicians who performed his magnificent score for the *No Tumbled House* extract shown at the NFT, the Film Unit tutors and, of course, the boys themselves. However, I should especially like to thank Sarah Wearne, who put us in touch with Michael Grigsby at the outset, and so opened the way for all that was to follow; Kris Spencer, who helped to run the Film Unit on a daily basis and offered his pastoral expertise to those groups that were struggling to 'get on', and finally, **Lewis Fowler**, OA, whose technical savvy and calm manner helped everyone overcome problems with computers or film equipment, and who undertook many of the unglamorous jobs that were necessary to keep the Film Unit 'on the road'.

JHT



Correspondence

A 'Public
Benefit' Test
for
independent
schools?

Dear Sir,

I was irritated to learn that the Government is planning to introduce a new Charity Act requiring public schools to prove they meet a new public benefit test. If schools do not accomplish targets they will no longer be able to receive tax relief and this would unquestionably lead to a rise in fees.

I feel the Government is not acknowledging the great amount that public schools do for their communities. At Abingdon around 135 boys participate in Community Service. This involves various activities from organising tea parties for the elderly to working in Abingdon Hospital. There are strong links between Abingdon and many of the primary schools in the town, where boys help children with reading, writing, music and drama. Abingdon also has close connections with No. 4 school in Moldova, which boys not only raise money for, but where they actively help the less privileged children.

I am certain that Abingdon will fulfil its benefit test, but feel the Government thinks that public schools resent having to help society, seeing community service as a burden more than anything. From my experience this could not be further from the truth – such experience can only broaden the horizons of those who partake in it.

Yours etc.,

JAMES DINGWALL, 6 NAFF

Dear Sir,

Mr Dingwall is absolutely right that the Government is planning to introduce a new Charity Act requiring independent schools to demonstrate public benefit. In fact, schools like Abingdon with an ancient charitable tradition and a healthy foundation in their local communities are in a very strong position. Abingdon as a school is very keen to preserve funds to allow all boys, irrespective of their backgrounds, to take up a place at the School if they demonstrate talent through our entry procedure. In addition, Abingdon School has been a pioneer of means-testing scholarships. In effect, this means that our scholarship funds can be targeted to those where there is a genuine need and not just to those who score the highest marks on our scholarship papers. We are also very keen that the town should use our facilities. One of the main reasons behind the development of the recently finished £3m Arts Centre project was that facilities for organisations such as the Abingdon Operatic Society would be considerably improved.

Without wishing to sound too complacent, I anticipate that we should be able to demonstrate public benefit merely by describing what we have always done.

Mr Dingwall also mentioned our Community Service programme, which is both large and active. Of course, the contribution made by Community Service extends well beyond the confines of Abingdon town to such far-flung places as Ialoveni in Moldova and Mongolia, where an Abingdon expedition has recently been involved in good works.

In short, I feel confident that Abingdon School is well placed to demonstrate whatever public benefit is required of us.

In addition it is important not to forget that parents who pay fees at Abingdon are in fact paying twice, once through taxation and once directly to the School. The cost of integrating independently educated pupils back into the state system would be colossal. Perhaps the Government can be persuaded to see this as a charitable contributions of sorts.

Yours sincerely,

MARK TURNER, HEADMASTER

Stress and
examination
pressure in
the UK

Dear Sir,

I think most British students can go through the early part of their school careers quite free of stress. Most can enjoy going to school without much pressure. The curriculum is especially tailored to their age's ability, so that the work is not too demanding for the children. In Britain and other Western countries, school mainly consists of activities and games, whereas in most Asian countries teaching follows a 'fill a duck' policy. This means that learning does not involve any activities: students are only expected to sit quietly, listen to teachers' lectures and learn the hardest things in the greatest detail possible. This eventually leads to a very stressful student lifestyle.

In Britain, there are not many public examinations until the latter end of the secondary school: at Abingdon, for example, in the Fifth Form, Lower and Upper Sixth. Students in these exam years are exposed to great stress as they take very many public examinations. These exams are of great importance. They can determine which university the student attends and the path his career takes in later life. Nonetheless, is this not an expected 'rite of passage' for everyone in modern society around the world? Every student in the modern world has to surmount different challenges, to undergo different public examinations in order to be successful. Therefore, I believe that a British education, in general, is reasonable and no more stressful than anywhere else.

Yours etc.,

ANTHONY CHAN 4 MRW

Dear Sir,

I believe British students are over-examined. Under the current examination system, students in the UK have to leap over six sets of public examinations – concrete hurdles! – in order to receive a university education. Editorials and public opinions cry out for change. One does not mow the lawn every day because the grass does not grow that quickly – maximum benefit can only be procured if things are done at an optimum frequency, and it seems that our system deviates quite a lot from that ideal.

The examination system loses efficiency in its leniency. Dual A levels (AS and A2) baffle me in that the job one examination can do is currently carried out by two, with the widespread opinion that examination pressure rises, while the ability of the tests to differentiate candidates is undermined, as lots of candidates are getting straight As. Should the syllabus be abridged, the difficulty of examination questions increased, and the A level returned to a single examination at the end of the Upper Sixth year, I think that the benefit would be threefold as the efficiency of examinations would be raised whilst both the number and required workload of examinations would be lowered.

In addition a 'split syllabus' would alleviate examination stress in the following way: the examinations would cover a smaller syllabus than that currently taught. This would allow students to expand their knowledge as well as to satisfy the examination requirements more easily. Both the need to be examined and the need to learn could be served in this way, and over-examination would cease to be as much a problem as it is now.

Yours etc.,

KOEL KO 6 DF

Drugs Awareness Day

On the annual Drugs Awareness Day (Tuesday 18 November) many members of the School community were privileged to hear a hugely interesting and beneficial drugs talk by Jonnie Leach. Mr Leach advised how to avoid the lifestyle he had previously led, whilst describing in some detail his habits and mental attitude towards drugs. He involved the audience directly and there was no sign of boredom in the auditorium.

His speaking style was relaxed but still informative and easy to listen to, and he most certainly knew what he was talking about. A speech always seems much more immediately relevant if the speaker

has found him/herself in the situation under discussion. Owing to his first-hand knowledge, Mr Leach described every detail and was undaunted by conventional 'taboo' subjects: he left nothing out, explaining 'trips', after-effects, chemicals, costs and jargon.

I would like to thank Mr Jonnie Leach for his forthright talk, which he gave on a number of occasions throughout the day to different pupil audiences, and I certainly hope to hear him speak again in the future.

A. HALL 6 ASH

Abingdon Fair

A FAIRLY SHORT HISTORY

Considering the chaotic mass of traffic created by the street fair that arrives annually on 'the first Monday after the first Sunday of October', I thought it fitting at least to mention the event that causes so much disruption to those travelling to School via the roads – thankfully its appearance is limited to only four days a year.

Hailed as the longest street fair in Europe, the Michaelmas and Runaway fairs began life in the 14th century as a means of employing and firing agricultural labour shortly after the Black Death epidemic of 1348. It is rumoured to be Abingdon's oldest and debatably most popular tradition, with the larger Michaelmas fair now attracting thousands during

its two-night stay in the town's High Street.

At one time the Runaway fair was an opportunity for workers who were bought the week before to run away from their new masters and attempt to sell themselves again. In modern times, however, the event draws a younger audience, providing less intense rides for younger children in the Market Place and adjoining High Street.

Words and photo by
T. EVANS 6 NMR

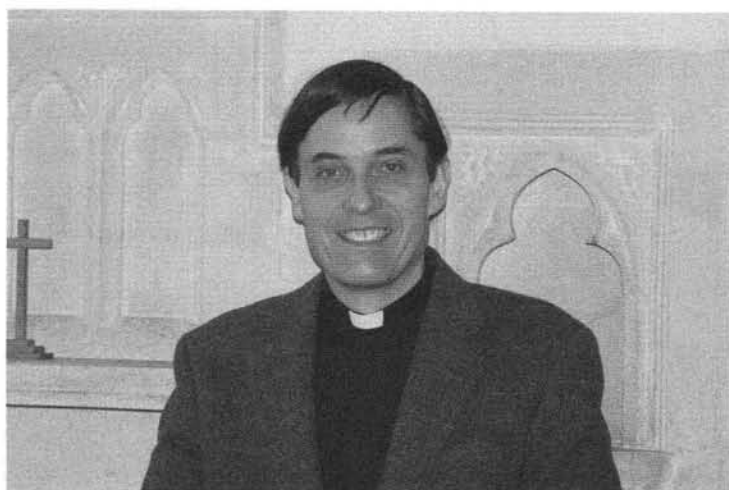


World Citizenship



Bo Zhao VI WTP presents a bouquet of flowers to the former First Lady of the United States, Hillary Clinton, in the presence of the former President of the United States, Bill Clinton, and the President of the People's Republic of China, President Jiang Zemin.

Welcome to a new Chaplain



Henry Kirk
(HLK)

Henry was born in Scotland, in East Lothian and so has the heritage of tartan and clan. However, at five, when his family emigrated to Australia, he was not given the option of remaining in God's own country. So, he grew up and was educated in Adelaide, eventually studying Philosophy at Adelaide University. A return to his

hometown saw Henry studying Theology at Edinburgh University. This became a part of a 'natural draw' towards ministry in the Church, in particular the Church of Scotland. After working in parishes in Aberdeen and Ayrshire, Henry began a career in school chaplaincy by taking up a post at Bishops in Cape Town. While there he met his wife, Carolyn and was ordained into the Church of the Province of Southern Africa by the then Archbishop of Cape Town, Bill Burnett. Thus he became Anglican in Africa. Three countries being too few to dwell in, Henry and family decided to return to the Northern hemisphere and to live and work in England. Chaplaincies at Rugby, Birkenhead and now Abingdon were leavened by two years in the parish of Linslade in the Oxford Diocese. Henry has worked as an Examiner and has a particular interest in Theology and Art. Outside work, he enjoys playing cricket, hockey and tennis with "limited skill" and has two Labrador dogs.

GRM

School Notes



Common Room Farewells

David
Haynes
(DJH)

David Haynes introduced computing at Abingdon and has guided the School with sure hands through the information technology revolution. Certain himself of the educational advantages of Apple Macintosh computers over PCs, he then set about convincing the managers of the School and pioneered and put in place the system that stands today. From no computers fifteen years ago, the School now has 300.

While recent generations of Abingdonians will know David as Head of ICT, earlier ones will remember him as Head of Physics, for it was to this post that he was appointed by **Eric Anderson**. After school in north London, he read Physics at Oriel College, Oxford, and following a Dip. Ed., taught at Solihull School for six years before coming to Abingdon in 1973. The School was if anything then biased towards Science, and David capitalised on that; Physics very definitely flourished.

His growing interest in micro-electronics led to a one-year secondment at Westminster College managing ISMEC – the Independent Schools' Micro-Electronics Centre. The School benefited greatly and the Bursar rejoiced as leading manufacturers gave us equipment to test and evaluate, while David



became even better known in this field with the publication of *Practical Introduction to Microprocessors* which received a generous review in the *Times Educational Supplement*.

For some fourteen years David organised and led the hugely successful annual Easter holiday Sec-

ond Form expedition to the Lake District – first at Hammarbank and then at Rydal Hall. And he was for some years Chairman of the Music Society, organising events (including starting the summer evening river cruises) and raising money.

It was in the late '80s that he moved over from being Head of Physics to become the Head of the new 'Electronics, Computing and Information Technology Department', a building job with much improvisation in the early stages. As the ICT empire at Abingdon has grown, so has David's involvement with so many boys and staff, and all must be grateful for his patient guidance in every matter to do with ICT. His reputation has continued to grow outside the School. He became an HMC Inspector for ICT, and he was asked by the Mercers' Company to advise on the setting up of ICT at their new City Technology College in Telford.

David's last teaching lesson at Abingdon had an element of coming full circle. It was with the Lower Sixth and was labelled a Physics rather than

an ICT lesson, on how to build a computer. The equipment used, and still routinely used by the Physics Department, was designed, and the prototype built, by David years ago – and it is as relevant now as it was then.

The **Headmaster** paid tribute to David at Prizegiving, recognising his good standing on his arrival here and even more so on his departure: liked and respected, loyal, humane, calm and cheerful. To that must be added what sustains David: his faith (he is a pillar of the church at Peachcroft) and his immediate family – Marion and their two sons. Both **Peter** and **Richard** have been outstandingly successful academically and Marion has been a staunch supporter of Abingdon from her long-standing position at Dunmore Junior School.

We wish them all every success, and to Marion and David a happy retirement – for David in the certain knowledge that his Apples have borne fruit!

TRA

Rick Finch leaves us after twenty-one years and two terms, for the last eight years of which he pioneered the role of Professional Tutor, having previously been Head of the Mathematics Department and co-author of several SMP textbooks. We have possibly grown so accustomed to the Department's outstanding results that we can easily overlook how vital strong leadership is in establishing such high standards. Rick also made his mark in the classroom: in the words of a Lower Sixthformer, "Mr Finch is one of the best teachers I've ever had - I suppose you'd describe him as one of the old school... now I really do appreciate his method: he's incredibly rigorous and expects you to work hard and I'm glad I've had him for mechanics and stats." According to **Adam Jenkins**, who studied A level Further Maths with Rick, he was a teacher "of infinite patience, capable of explaining the most complicated of ideas in a simple and precise manner." Multiply these testimonies many times over, add the warmth and respect of his fellow-mathematicians, and the equation results in years of success.

Who better, then, to pioneer the role of Professional Tutor, a position created in 1996? To this important appointment, Rick brought his efficiency, his humanity and his experience, applied to the support and encouragement of new entrants to the profession. As the business of education becomes ever-increasingly complex, Rick's genius for simplifying complicated problems proved most profitable when directed towards the many difficulties and



Rick Finch
(RPF)

challenges that a teacher-in-training encounters. **Katharine Radice** nicely summarises his effectiveness: "Rick, ever friendly and good-humoured and a very shrewd judge of character, has been full of practical advice and always ready to help out – an excellent mentor."

Generations of schoolboy sportsmen would equally warmly acknowledge their debt to Rick's advice and training. For nearly twenty years he coached Juniors hockey B teams, and for twenty-two summer seasons was master in charge of Juniors

cricket, during which period he also managed Oxfordshire U15 schoolboys for five years. It is a real challenge to produce match- and competition-winning teams at this level, integrating the new prep. school intake, inculcating team loyalties, developing technique and tactical awareness along with a strong ethos of fair play. Results are an objective measure of success, but once again what really counts are those high standards of commitment and conduct which will accompany our young cricketers all the way up the School (and beyond). For most of his own cricketering career, Rick was selected on the strength of his batting, defending his wicket with a tenacity which some professional players nowadays might emulate. When he turned out for Common Room, however, he also donned the wicket-keeping gloves, so we remember him as a neat, quick and reliable wicket-keeper as well as a prolific and stylish run-scorer. His love of the game and commitment to the School will be commemorated by the

Finch Cup, to be presented annually to the most promising Juniors cricketer each season.

In other areas, too, the School has benefited from Rick's talent and expertise. His grasp of facts, figures and statistics has come in useful when applied to knotty problems in the wider political world of teachers' salaries and conditions of employment. On the pastoral side, he has been the very best of tutors, offering clear-sighted, firm and kind guidance to the many boys in his care. For several years he took an active part in the Music Society and played in the Brass Band, sharing the stage with his son, **Robert** – a chip off the old block in the wicket-keeping department, too. Along with the occasional game of golf, time with the family – with Angela, Rob, daughters and grand-daughters – will be high on the list of retirement delights, to the reciprocal enjoyment of which we warmly commend him.

AMS



Jonathan Bromley

(JFB)

Heads of History at Abingdon come and go, like football managers: **Jonathan Bromley's** reign of four years was more or less par for the post-**Hillary** course (1987-2004). A keen student of the language, culture and history of Russia, he played a prominent role in our version of Trotsky's 'permanent revolution', producing an A level textbook on the last seventy years of Tsarism, persuading us to switch to OCR, the Examination Board whose slippery pole he is rapidly climbing, and leading us to the battlefields of France, Belgium and Berlin, the last-named expedition a joint production with St Helen's. He even managed to coax **Richard Hofton** through an appraisal process, no mean feat after the victim's three decades of evasion

and avoidance. There were so many highlights: head-butting a filing cabinet in his first term, on hearing unwelcome news; controlling Fourth Form football matches from deepest Kennington; propelling golf balls unfeasible distances with 1960s technology (wooden woods!). Cricketer and musician, he represented Abingdon at home and abroad. Open Days will no longer be dominated by jazz videos, Room 102's teachers are now denied the opportunity to recreate 'Les Misérables', peering classwards over a barricade of books, brochures and bills, but Jonathan will be long remembered: a congenial and critical colleague, he begins his career at St. Paul's High School with our very best wishes; may Caroline, Laura, Lucy and Tristan prosper too.

RGH



Allan Baird

(ACWB)

Allan joined Abingdon School two years ago, having previously taught in a comprehensive school in Newport. His quiet, determined approach made itself felt from the start. Many of his pupils have appreciated the careful teaching and structure he has provided for them during his time at the School.

His contributions as Tutor in Phelps' House, as master in charge of Cross-Country and the Christian Union, have been much valued by those involved. He leaves us to take up a post at Queen Elizabeth's Hospital School in Bristol, and is also planning to marry his fiancée in the next few months. We all wish him well in both of these ventures, and for the future.

DF

Graham Barrett joined Abingdon's English Department from the King's School, Canterbury in September 1974. As well as teaching English, producing plays, school magazines and literary journals, he took over the running of the Boat Club. In those days there were more than 30 boys in each of the junior forms or, as they came collectively to be known, Lower School. The Boat Club, on the other hand, while it had a fine pedigree, was a relatively modest affair, often confining its activities to rowing in IVs. This was before the days of the exponential growth of the sport, both at school and nationally. On either count Graham had, as the pundits might have put it, an opportunity and a challenge.

What was hardly foreseen was the verve and zest with which he entered into all of this. Witty, sharp, incisive, Graham was a teachers' person. He had a certain wary respect for the orthodoxies of scholarship – 'They cough in ink.....What would they say / Did their Catullus walk that way?' – yet was insatiably widely read. He was intelligent about every aspect of his work and challenged his classes to be intelligent too. No pupil could sleep or doze, blandly bypass or idly ignore him. He forced you to engage. When later he was Head of Department, a position he held for almost two decades, his approach remained dynamic, inspirational, exuberant; it caught the imagination of boys, whole classloads of them. What remained deceptive to some at least of his colleagues was just how professional he was and how much he cared. He did little to advertise either the teaching manuals he compiled and edited or the collections of short stories he put together, publications departmental colleagues are still glad to use.

The School has recently been very fortunate to hear talks from both the Children's Laureate and the Poet Laureate. It was striking that both drew attention to the difficulties they had had in negotiating their prep. school days; it seems clear that for many of their generation that particular phase in their education was not endowed with a rosy tint of nostalgia. Graham never gave a hint of his own experience at that age, but that age-group in particular engaged his professional sympathetic attention. It gave Graham no little satisfaction that these younger age-groups came almost exclusively from the local primary schools. He was immensely, quite exceptionally, effective at it. By the end of his teaching time this special interest and concern had blossomed into the managing and directing of the whole Learning Support programme, enabling it to deliver at all levels of the School. Long hours were spent negotiating with boys and parents at an age when they can feel particularly unsure and when a constructive approach can have a markedly beneficial effect.

Vitality and commitment were also very much part of Graham's involvement on the river. He built up the fleet; he gave of his time unstintingly. The memory of him lashing boats on to trailers on a wet Friday evening is an

abiding one. It was often, very often, possible to discuss a prep. for the following day at 8.00 in the evening in the boat house when, spanner or screwdriver in hand, he could be found building a trailer, repairing a boat or painting a blade. The months of May and June in those now far-off days were a haze of teaching punctured by regattas every Saturday and Sunday. Yet there was an upside: perhaps a hamper at Walton or an alert cox, decked out in a smart cap, blazer and white ducks at Nottingham, who could hold his own with the best of them. Abingdon crews came to be talked about and by the time Graham handed over the management of the Boat Club to his successor, it was a heavyweight organisation, respected throughout the land.

Those who as junior boys experienced Graham's earlier teaching might find it difficult to associate words like 'serenity' or 'considered reflectiveness' with him, but these also can be added to his repertoire. It was only fitting and fair (though, of course, life is not always or necessarily fair) that he should find contentment with Isabella. We wish them and their family long years of happiness and enjoyment – within easy reach of the brooding and beckoning hills of Devon, living commodiously in civilised style, responding readily to the attractions of nearby France. Perhaps the final word should be left to former pupil, **Nick Rawlinson**:

"And when a former pupil comes to try to say Hello,

Still chortling over WAATWs that were set all long ago,

He'll find the classroom empty, and no one in the chair –

And it's useless to investigate – Macbarrety's not there!

And when the loss has been disclosed, the Common Room all say:

"A minute past his teaching time? He'll be a mile away.

For sure by now he's resting, or a-drinking single malt:

And as a plan, we must admit, it's hard to find a fault."



Graham
Barrett
(GGB)

RSKM

Meg Vaughan-Fowler joined the School with a formidable reputation in the eyes of the boys, as word had got out that she had worked in prisons. Her work, in fact, had been as Director of the Phoenix Prison Trust, a charity giving valuable support to prisoners.

If the boys had expected someone corresponding to their idea of a prison warder, they were very much mistaken. Instead they got a highly experienced teacher of French and Spanish, with a keen sense of humour and great expertise in the classroom. Among her many achievements in one short year must be that the number of boys choosing to continue with Spanish to GCSE is high, and the subject looks set to flourish in years to come.

She leaves to take up a full-time post at Our Lady's Convent Senior School. She will be missed not only as a teacher, but also as a highly respected colleague. We wish her success for the future.



Meg Vaughan-Fowler
(MMVF)

VMW



Anne-Sophie



Pauline

As every year, we welcomed our two French Assistants from Caen University, **Pauline** and **Anne-Sophie**. They had both been studying English at university and were keen to experience teaching before starting their training course.

They immediately fitted in well, eager to help and to get to know everyone. They helped teach a range of classes as well as groups of Sixthformers. Both did a fantastic job in every respect, taking the role very seriously and showing excellent teaching capabilities. They were very patient and developed a positive working relationship with all their pupils. Pauline particularly deserves mention for the fantastic work she did with some boys experiencing learning difficulties. Our colleagues from the Learning Support Department were so impressed they gave her a Headmaster's Praise!

We are all very grateful for all the help and kindness both gave. Nothing was ever too much trouble. Displays in the Modern Languages Department were kept always neat and bright, lessons always very professionally prepared and conducted and they put tremendous effort and time into helping the Sixthformers prepare for their oral exams. Despite all the forests being destroyed in

order to supply them with enough paper for the photocopies... the boys were very pleased to be given so much reading to do, we are sure!

It has also been rare and very much appreciated to have Assistants helping outside lessons. Both Pauline and Anne-Sophie understood very well the nature of teaching at Abingdon and helped with a variety of events: the Modern Languages Film Society on occasions, Sports Day, cooking pancakes for the Boarders' Induction Day... Pauline also tried cross-country running despite having to sit numerous examinations during the year.

Last but not least, they will be remembered for being so much fun socially. Whitefield was a very cheerful place this year with a good group of people living there, entertaining their colleagues on several occasions.

Anne-Sophie and Pauline will be missed and we are very grateful to them for all their unstinting work. We wish them all the best for the future; both want to become teachers and we are certain that they will be very successful in the job. Au revoir et à bientôt (we hope).

EMTS



Katharine Radice
(KER)

Katharine has been at Abingdon for only one year but in that time she has made an enormous impact in a wide range of school activities, whether in the classroom, in the boarding house, in the debating chamber, or on the river.

She came to the School directly from a glowing career at Magdalen College, Oxford, where she had both served for a year as JCR President and won a first-class degree in Classics. She displayed similar qualities of organization, sympathy, and inspiration in all she did at Abingdon, encouraging all to achieve their full potential, both the most able and those who find things harder.

In the Spring and Summer terms she oversaw the Thirdformers as they took their first rowing strokes (and caught their first crabs), and she successfully shepherded the Crescent House GCSE tutor group through their first year of public examinations. Her duty nights in the House were also notable for their innovation: embroidery may not remain as an established activity, but some boys at least will now be adept in this life-skill.

In the classroom her approach has been at once meticulous and very encouraging: many of the boys she has taught have enthused about what they feel they have learned. One spoke of her “astounding commitment and the genuinely exciting atmosphere of intellectual discovery within the classroom”. This is surely what teaching should be all about.

On our classical travels she has been a memorable companion, whether for her bartering skills in Turkey or her road-crossing terrors in Rome. She has also promoted the reading aloud of Greek, helping to prepare successful entrants for the Oxford Reading competition and putting on a performed reading of sections of *Oedipus Tyrannus*, which will linger long in the memory.

That is indeed true of the whole year for which Katharine has been with us at Abingdon. We wish her every success and happiness at Winchester College and hope that she too will have taken away more from the year than simply TCG’s battered old Metro!

CB



Felicity Rutland (FMR)

Felicity Rutland spent ten years at Abingdon as our first full-time Registrar, before leaving in late August to take up the post of Registrar at Cokethorpe. Ten years ago, despite Kay Porter’s sterling work in the background, and the major part-time contribution of Roger Medill, the ex-Head of Rendcomb College, it seemed that if burgeoning applications were to be dealt with efficiently, good relationships with feeder schools were to be maintained and School publicity increased, we needed a full-time presence.

Felicity’s lively, convivial, sociable, larger-than-life personality endeared her to almost everyone. She had five children of her own to educate privately, was Chair

of the Governors at the Abbey School, Reading, and a Governor at St Andrew’s, Pangbourne. She already had plenty of educational contacts and a sophisticated and responsible administrative background in the City. Working very long hours, and with three sons at Abingdon, she wholeheartedly promoted the School, convincingly lauding its strengths in a genuine manner to anyone who would listen, and carving out an important role. Throughout her time here, Felicity was also an effective member of the senior management team and regularly attended Governing Body meetings to keep the governors abreast in developments in recruitment and School publicity.

Felicity came in like a lamb and went out like a lion. At first, she sampled the organisation of a large number of events herself, taking a leading role in Open Days, the production of new prospectuses, entrance examinations, the recruitment of Boarders and the organisation of the Griffen Ball. Later, she delegated more to colleagues on the teaching staff and an increasingly efficient secretarial team, herself taking more of a critical overview. She also played a major role in fund-raising towards the end of the Arts Centre Appeal, but this spell away from the Registry convinced her that her forte and major interest was in the promotion of Abingdon School to parents of prospective pupils.

It is a testament to Felicity’s effectiveness that in a competitive climate in which many part-boarding schools are having to adopt co-education to maintain numbers, Abingdon’s boarding places remained full of talented pupils throughout her reign. In wishing her great success in her new post, we feel certain that she will remain in close contact, and will continue to promote Abingdon’s interests from a distance.

TJK



Paul Williams
(PRW)

Paul Williams came to us from the Oratory School to teach Biology. All too soon he was heading back there on the promise of a position as Head of Department within a couple of years. In his short time here Paul made a big impact as he was involved in many different aspects of Abingdon School life. He was a Tutor in first School House and then Crescent House, and he assisted with the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme, which included many nights on the hills, dales and moors. In his last year he joined the CCF and worked hard for the boys and the School in that regard. He also gave his time and considerable experience and expertise to the Boat Club. He coached two medal-winning 2nd Vllls and medal-winning J16 IVs and pairs. He influenced the success of many

individuals and entertained us both at regattas and training camps.

We have not mentioned the considerable contribution he also made to the teaching of Biology within the School. He really does enjoy the subject and his knowledge, imparted in a fairly relaxed and easily digestible manner, helped many pupils to understand and gain an interest in it.

He will be missed in Common Room for his dry wit, impeccable dress sense (including the socks), vast knowledge of mail-order knitwear catalogues and his ability always to be first to coffee at break-time. I believe he will be taking J16 rowing next year so RSS has a job on his hands.

MDM



Henning
Braselmann

When I met Henning at Oxford bus station last September he looked the archetypal German student with his chequered lumberjack shirt, faded jeans, and, of course, sporting a goatee beard. The following day he walked into the Masters' Common Room clean-shaven and wearing a sharp suit, looking every inch the honest, straight-talking sheriff out of a western, who meant business – and Henning has certainly delivered on that promise this year.

to the very end of the year. Without doubt he has made a major contribution to the success of the boys' oral performance, particularly at AS and A level, where the boys' results owe much to Henning's work. In the Masters' Common Room his friendly, good-humoured and easy-going nature and willingness to get involved rapidly endeared him to his new colleagues, particularly those in the Whitefield community where he lived, and amongst the staff footballing fraternity who were more than happy to regard him as an equal ... and to mete out the customary 'retribution' to foreign players whose national football side has regularly (and fortuitously) beaten England since 1966 ... Henning, of course, took it all in good heart.

Energetic, fully motivated and highly enthusiastic about the prospect of teaching German, he has been an unqualified success as a Foreign Language Assistant, establishing an excellent rapport with all the boys, whatever their abilities, and by the end of the year it was clear that they had warmly appreciated his unstinting efforts made on their behalf, even if they tried his patience at times! As a member of the Modern Languages Department he has cheerfully undertaken every task assigned him – and often more – and maintained a high level of professionalism and commitment, co-operating

Henning leaves us to return to Germany to continue his studies, intending to join the teaching profession. It has been a great pleasure to work with him, and he has the ability and drive to become a first-class teacher. We hope that he will remember his time here with affection and will return to visit us in the future. He will always be most welcome.

NMR



Gareth Williams
(GRW)

We were very fortunate to be able to secure Gareth's services to cover JEF's sabbatical in September. He brought all the enthusiasm of a recent graduate to his Latin and Greek lessons, but was also meticulous in his preparation and thinking about the way he was going to teach new material, often using humour to make ideas memorable. Furthermore, his pupils will never forget some of the arresting interpretations of ancient literature which he offered them.

He looked after his Spencer's House tutor group with flair and was often to be seen coaching on the rugby field, but it was with football that he came into his own. And it is here that his departure was most felt among Common Room, since he lifted the staff five-a-side football to previously undreamed-of heights. For that and his champagne-dry sense of humour he will be sorely missed as he pursues a career in accountancy.

CB

Tombs family at Abingdon School: A Nineteenth Century military family

GALLANT DEED WINS A VICTORIA CROSS:
MAJOR-GENERAL SIR HENRY TOMBS, VC, KCB



Henry Tombs, VC, KCB (1824-74).

John Tombs entered East India Company service from Abingdon School and steadily rose through the commissioned ranks of the Indian Army. He clearly encouraged, by example, a preference in his six sons for military and overseas careers.

John's first son, George Tombs (1802-24), resided as a youngster with his grandparents and was in School as a dayboy. Baptised rather late in life (November 1808) at St Helen's, probably while his parents were home on furlough from India, he entered Pembroke College, but without record of graduation, died at Oxford, and was buried at St Helen's Church.

Charles Tombs (c.1812-46), the second son, likewise passed from Abingdon to Pembroke College (1831), entered Holy Orders and became a chaplain in Aden, where he died young.

John Wood Tombs (b. 1813), the third son, was a dayboy at Abingdon (1820-21), while living with his, by now, elderly widowed grandmother: nothing further is known of his career.

Francis Tombs (c.1820-1844), the fifth son, and Henry, the sixth son, may have lived also with relatives in Abingdon, attending School as dayboys. Francis Tombs served as a Lieutenant in the 19th Regiment of Bengal Native Infantry, but was killed at Bareilly, southwest of Delhi (31 January 1844). Erected to their memory by grandparents, memorials in St Helen's Church commemorate both William Henry and Francis Tombs.

Henry Tombs (1824-74), the sixth son, became Major-General Sir Henry Tombs, VC, KCB, and attracts most interest. There is strong evidence that Henry's early schooling was at Abingdon

(1831-34). As a new boy in a combined first and second form, Tombs is recorded in visitation lists in the School (1831-32). It is also significant that his father, then Colonel John Tombs, visited Abingdon (1831) and attended the Mayor's visitation dinner for the Master of Pembroke College. This home visit was conceivably intended by Colonel Tombs primarily to settle both Henry Tombs at Abingdon and his second son, Charles Tombs, at Pembroke College. Henry Tombs left Abingdon aged ten to enter the East India Company College at Addiscombe (1834): it became the Imperial Service College and later merged with Haileybury. Tombs then entered Sandhurst.

While serving as a Major with the Bengal Horse Artillery, Henry Tombs distinguished himself in the Indian Mutiny: he was awarded his Victoria Cross on 9 July 1857. His medal is displayed at the Royal Artillery Museum, Woolwich.

During the siege of Delhi, Major Tombs twice went to the aid of one of his subalterns, 2nd Lieutenant Hills, who later became Major-General James Hills, VC, GCB. One of the mutineers was about to slaughter Hills, when Major Tombs rushed in and shot the assailant. A second attack on the subaltern resulted in him being cut down with a sword wound to the head. Hills would have been killed had not Major Tombs thrust his own sword smartly through the assailant.

Field-Marshal Lord Roberts, VC (1832-1914), who also won his Victoria Cross during the Mutiny, wrote of Sir Henry Tombs: *'As a cool leader of men (he) was unsurpassed; no fire, however hot, and no crisis, however unexpected could take him by surprise; he grasped the situation in a moment, and issued his orders without hesitation, inspiring all ranks with confidence in his power and capacity. He was somewhat of a martinet, and was more feared than liked by his men until they realised what a grand leader he was, when they gave him their entire confidence, and were ready to follow him anywhere and everywhere.'*

Later, Henry Tombs led a punitive expedition against the Bhutanese, who were suppressed and sued for peace (1865). Sir Henry Tombs retired from the Indian Army on health grounds (1872). On his way home he underwent an emergency operation in Italy. Tombs died, aged only fifty, at Newport, Isle of Wight on 2 August 1874, and he was buried at Carisbrooke. During his final illness Queen Victoria insisted on receiving daily bulletins on the state of Tombs' health. The hitherto unknown meaning, importance and provenance of Indian Mutiny artefacts retained in the School archives now fit neatly into context.

A Tombs Prize in memory of Sir Henry was awarded at the Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst, to the young gunner officer passing out highest in the order of merit.

NIGEL HAMMOND, OA; MASTER, 1966-93.

In memoriam
Gordon Bayley

Those qualified to pronounce on the subject, the Institute of Actuaries, unequivocally name **Gordon Bayley** “an outstanding actuary of his generation”. He was probably the outstanding mathematician of his and arguably other generations at Abingdon. The honours he won in his profession are testimony to that judgement. He passed the Institute exams at an unprecedentedly young age, most of them before he was 21. Interrupted by the war (WWII) he qualified as a Fellow in 1946, aged 26. As a pioneer in several theoretical fields of life assurance, his seminal papers and contributions to discussions won exceptional awards. He was elected Secretary of the Institute and then President from 1974 to 1976. On his retirement his contribution to the actuarial profession was recognised by the award of its Gold Medal. For his services as a member of the Occupational Pensions Board and later of the Harold Wilson government committee to review the functioning of financial institutions, he was made a CBE.

Gordon was born in 1920 in Jersey where his father, Captain V. Bayley, was Commandant, an O.A. like his two brothers, Gordon’s uncles. His early childhood was spent in India where his father was serving with the King’s Liverpool Regiment. He started at Abingdon in 1930 as a boarder in the Lodge. We were about a dozen there under the watchful, kindly eye of assistant matron Norah, a tall native of Berkshire, already somewhat bent over under the burden of keeping small boys up to scratch. Among our contemporaries and friends in this 9-10 year-old age group were **John Paige, Robert Jackson, Duncan West, Hugh Tarran-Jones** and **Robert Emmett**, who was killed in the retreat from Dunkirk.

Gordon and I were almost exactly the same age and grew up together through the School until we shared Number 3 study in School House, in those days the privilege of Head and Deputy Head of School. Academically our paths diverged: I was comfortable with languages, classics and science. Gordon’s grasp of maths stood out from early days. Few of us could keep up. I couldn’t. The maths master, **W.A. Rudd**, himself by all accounts a one-time Senior Wrangler at Cambridge, would challenge the class, for light relief as he doubtless imagined, with mathematical conundrums – insoluble to most of us. As Gordon handed in his solution to Mr Rudd, a broad smile spread over their faces, then a rum-

ble of laughter from Rudd and the recurrent nod of approbation, nasally delivered, “Neat eh? Neat eh?”. While they enjoyed the joke together, the rest of the class would be scratching our heads to grasp it. But there was no sense of ‘the rest’ being deliberately excluded.

Modest and ever courteous at school, as he was to be in adult life, and without pretensions, Gordon never paraded his talent or suggested it was anything out of the ordinary. The only sign he gave that it might be of some practical use was when he told me at an early age that he might like to be an actuary – half-jokingly, because he knew I had no idea what that was. He had seen the word, he said, in a list of professions. By the time we were in the Sixth Form he spoke of a relation, Sir William Elderton, who had held high office in the Institute of Actuaries, and was now encouraging him to follow that profession. Gordon, judiciously as it turned out, chose that path rather than university, leaving Abingdon in 1938.



G.V. Bayley CBE, FIA, OA

As a sportsman, too, Gordon displayed top level talent. He was Captain of Boats for two years, 1937-1938, and gained his Colours for athletics and rugby, playing for the 1st XV for four years. He was an outstanding hooker, often getting the ball in set scrums against the head, winning it ‘nine times out of ten’, as one summary of the season put it, working with almost clockwork precision with the scrum-half, myself, having previously together worked out little schemes – “It’s all a question of mathematics,” he would say, then hoot with laughter. He led his forwards to subdue the opposition more often than not. In the line-outs, he wanted to wear his glasses secured with string or elastic, “to improve accuracy,” he said. Not surprisingly that was forbidden.

Rowing was his favourite sport and, so he later told me, probably inspired his love of sailing. Naturally he had every kind of gadget in his boat “to perfect performance”, in fact more to make life easier. He steadfastly followed the fortunes of Abingdon’s rowing and rugby for the rest of his life. Other sports he enjoyed as an adult were skiing, swimming and diving, when he allowed himself the luxury of securing his glasses firmly with elastic under his goggles.

Our No.3 study bore witness to Gordon’s love

of music. Happily for me and others down the study corridor and beyond, he had a fine but discriminating, so we thought, collection of the equivalent of today's 'pop'. One of the favourite singers at that time was Bing Crosby. Gordon had the best, probably largest among schoolboys, collection of his records (discs). Generous as always, he would share all with anyone who asked. Less ephemeral for us perhaps was his growing collection of classical music. This and other collections were greatly encouraged by the Headmaster, **William Grundy**, who generously gave senior boys memorable Masterclass sessions - especially for Beethoven. He would take us to Oxford to hear and watch - live - some of the greatest conductors of the age: Toscanini one year, Furtwängler another, conducting the Symphonies, Rachmaninov in person playing his piano Concertos, and the Oxford Bach Choir singing the complete St Matthew Passion. Gordon, who loved opera too throughout his life, could perhaps appreciate more easily than most how happily music and mathematics danced together: others would have to do with the more mundane music of words!

The year before the outbreak of World War II and the following year he lived with my family in West Kensington, London, while studying for and taking his actuarial exams. His powers of concentration were extraordinary: invitations from my brother and me and others to take a break from long sessions on his papers would pass him by, not discourteously, but simply unheard. Once he had completed the tasks he had set himself, he would emerge from his cocoon of concentration as the most companionable asset in any company, with a wonderful, open, uncomplicated sense of humour and the most infectious laugh - not in the least like the prototype of a dry, remote scholar-mathematician. I never knew him to do an unkindness to anyone. He was practical too and loved gadgets - he told me his father was "even worse" in that respect. I recall Gordon 'helping' to dig and construct the Anderson bomb shelter in our garden. He thought he could improve it by carrying out a few mathematical calculations. We all fell about in the half-dug shelter, Gordon leading the laughter. His practical commonsense and his straightforward manner were matched by his uncomplicated, impish good humour. Several bombs dropped onto our road, fortunately not on our house, which was anyway by then evacuated. As it happened, the Anderson stood the test, regardless of maths.

The link with my family and Gordon's was to be strengthened years later when he happily agreed to be godfather to my youngest daughter, Diana - a most caring and considerate godfather.

Gordon's path to becoming an actuary was interrupted by war service at first in the Pay Corps. He was soon commissioned into the heavy anti-aircraft home defence branch of the Royal Artillery. He was involved for a time in development of radar for aiming anti-aircraft guns. By coincidence, though we did not meet at that time, our lives again ran almost on parallel lines: I had been commissioned into the Royal Artillery, posted to an Ulster Regiment of light anti-aircraft divisional artillery, then to our Military Mission in Moscow. For Gordon the most important event from his posting to the Royal Military College of Science at Worcester, was his meeting with his future wife, Terry, a Captain in the ATS and his senior officer. Both were promoted to Major by the end of the war. They married soon afterwards and Gordon was blessed with a strong, loving family: Terry, two daughters, one son and three grandchildren, who survive him.

At Abingdon on Founder's Day in St Helen's Church and on other special occasions, the Headmaster, William Grundy, one of the most charitable and upright of Christians, would unfailingly read chapter 13 of St Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians, the 'faith, hope and charity' epistle. Being one of the outstanding classical scholars of the age, Grundy was at pains to explain to the School, at other times, that the word translated in the King James version as 'charity' was, of course 'ἀγάπη' - brotherly, sisterly love in the Greek New Testament. Whatever version - for Gordon, I think, as for me, and doubtless many others of our generation - this reading carried a special resonance, serving as a kind of lodestar, throughout our lives. It was my privilege to read St Paul's immortal words at Gordon Bayley's Memorial Service earlier this summer at St Lawrence Jewry in the City of London.

In a practical way Gordon's beliefs contained a strongly ethical element. For him religion was not mere ritual but demanded service to others, especially the young. He spoke often to me of his concern to help young students into his own profession which he regarded as an honourable one serving the community. I believe he never lost sight of that aim, as he rose to its heights, becoming Chief Executive of the *National Provident*, then unusually a member of its Board while still Chief Executive and after his official retirement Chairman of the UK Board of *Swiss Re*.

Gordon Bayley gave service to Abingdon School as a governor for nearly fourteen years and Chairman of the Board for some four years until 1983, maintaining a keen interest in the School to the end of his life.

HUGH LUNGI, OA

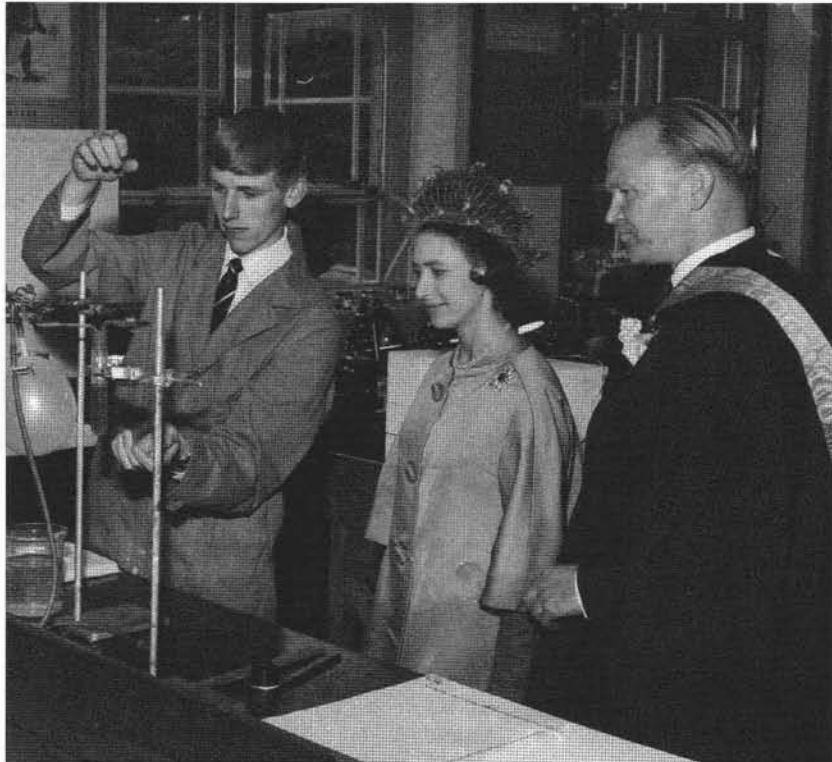
In memoriam

Joe Talbot

Joe Talbot was one of the most significant and influential figures to have worked at Abingdon during the third quarter of the twentieth century; this was a period during which many of the foundations of today's School were laid, and no-one dug better trenches, or poured more concrete, than JT. While in some ways he represented almost the archetype of the old-fashioned grammar school science master – formal, didactic, authoritarian – he was never

order to secure a grant towards the costs of his university place at Birmingham he had to undertake to become a teacher; this commitment was honoured with characteristic thoroughness, and Joe set his mind to creating as many doctors as he could from among his pupils.

He completed his training in 1939 ("1st class practical, 2/1 theory", as **James Cobban's** interview notes subsequently recorded – a curtly



Joe Talbot with Princess Margaret

on her visit to the School during the Quatercentenary Celebrations

a mere reactionary, and his delight in his work, his passion for quality in everything, his vicarious ambition for his pupils, and his sheer zest for life kept him fresh and vital, and more open-minded than many younger colleagues, to the very end of his career.

Joseph Talbot was born on 26 May 1915; his family name is famous in his native county of Shropshire, but he always laid a certain stress on the fact that his father had been a builder. He regarded snobs, when he came across them, with amused disdain, but he was a resolute exponent of what the Victorians used to call 'betterment'. When he left Adams Grammar School in Newport, Salop, he wanted to be a doctor, but in

apt summary of the balance of JT's abilities), and gained experience over the following nine years in grammar schools in Lincolnshire, Shropshire and Birmingham. He had damaged a knee while playing rugby in 1937 and was adjudged unfit for military service during the war, which was probably a lucky escape for someone, since there was a latent vein of ferocity in him which was better left unroused. (In later years he reminded more than one person of the Badger in Kenneth Grahame's *Wind in the Willows*.)

In 1948 he applied for a post to teach biology at Abingdon. JMC summarised him as "A good man", but told him that he would think the appointment over for two days (perhaps because

he had spotted that Joe was only “Very nominal C of E”); when the job offer eventually came through, Joe coolly replied that he, too, would think it over – for two days. Joe eventually became one of JMC’s most trusted lieutenants, and the relationship was marked by mutual respect; but the two personalities were sharply opposed, and Common Room was sometimes entertained by their clashes, most memorably over diametrically opposed verdicts in reports and references. Joe never allowed the compassion which he undoubtedly felt for flawed or inadequate characters to upset the cool objectivity of his judgements – he reserved his sympathy for action. In later years, generations of Oxford and Cambridge Admissions Tutors came to know and trust the granite-like quality of his estimates.

Like all Abingdon masters in the formative era, Joe was required to be versatile, and he rose to the challenge with a relish that some found intimidating. Rugby, athletics, boxing, expeditionary activity to Skye and Dolgoed, sailing (he built his own boat, of course), and every sort of practicality seem to have filled every waking hour that was not devoted to teaching. Much of this activity was not only strenuous, but fiercely competitive. Joe hungered after success, for others even more than for himself, and OAs from his earlier years remember, not always with entire affection, the hard intensity with which he urged them to emulate those of their fellows whom he had identified as “stars”.

His teaching was similarly demanding, especially when directed at the younger age-groups: structured, exhaustive, set forth on the blackboard in his impeccable and unvarying handwriting, solidly based on practical work, to be recorded in immaculate notes and reproduced in carefully corrected essays. Not everyone enjoyed this arduous apprenticeship, but those who persevered into the Sixth Form (they were many, and the numbers increased remarkably as the years rolled by) realised with delight that they had acquired valuable skills. Doctors of medicine proliferated astonishingly from his classes, and when a suite of laboratories was built for the exclusive use of his subject in 1969, Joe might fairly have made a claim to be seen as the founder of a notable school of biological studies; but his self-deprecating modesty would have inhibited any such self-advertisement. Indeed, those who were privileged to know him best came to realise that his dignified, resolute

bearing masked an essentially anxious temperament, while the brusqueness of his style, and the dryness of his wit, were largely the defence tactics of a shy man.

The expansion of boarding which resulted from JMC’s astute use of Direct Grant funding brought fresh opportunities for Joe when he was asked to open Crescent House in 1953. He and Paddy, whom he had married in 1939, ran Crescent as an extension of their family: this meant a great deal, for Joe was a family man first and last. Paddy was a marvellous housekeeper, and Joe kept the tables – Crescent had their own dining-room – plentifully furnished with produce from the garden which was his delight (onions were a speciality, if not a fad). When Joe retired from Abingdon, old boys of Crescent were foremost among those wishing to pay tributes.

The end of the Cobban regime might have been expected to bring problems for Joe, as one of its principal exponents, but his pioneer spirit relished new challenges, and he positively revelled in the renewed building programme that swept away the ramshackle improvisations of the Direct Grant era. He was appointed Senior Science Master in 1973, and when **Donald Willis** was disabled by strokes in 1976, he succeeded him as Second Master; in both roles he was a tower of strength. The School recognised his authority: disorder and disloyalty were unacceptable; though no diplomatist, he was a powerful manager of men. To a new and inexperienced Headmaster he was the perfect adviser – shrewd in counsel, discreet in warning, warm in encouragement, unfailingly strong in support. He always insisted that he was no more than a stop-gap as Second Master; in retrospect, however, it is apparent that he was a major influence for stability at a critical moment in the School’s history. It was a fitting crown to his career as one of Abingdon’s most notable schoolmasters.

After retiring in 1978 Joe made a busy new life for himself in Souldern, where he lived, next to his doctor son John, in an old barn that he converted with his own hands into a fine house. All his life long, he loved working with hard materials, and fashioned them with patient skill into things of use and beauty. He died on 2 April 2004.

M.St.J.P.

• EDWARD ANTYSZ • ALEXANDER DAVIS • JOSEPH DYSON • RICHARD GUAST • STEPHEN HUGHES • GRAEME INNES • ROBERT MUIRHEAD • NICHOLAS PATTERSON • DOMINIC ROCHE • NICHOLAS SHAIKH • DOMINIC SULLIVAN • BENJAMIN TAYLOR • ALASTAIR BLACKMORE • GEORGE COWIE • BRIAN CULLEN • CHRISTIAN DAVIES • JOINNIE FISHER • SAM FLOREY • JOSHUA FINE • NATHAN HUGHES • PETER MINCH • BENJAMIN PHILLIPS • HILTON POULTNEY • BENJAMIN SPSFORD • THOMAS SWARBRICK • NICHOLAS TURNBULL • ALEXANDER WIMBORNE • ADAM WOOLFORD • OLIVER BRUMMITT • SIMON BUTTERFIELD • TOBY CALDICOTT • CHRISTOPHER COWAN • BENJAMIN DAVIS • TOBIAS DURANT • CHRISTOPHER EDSON • CHRIS EVANS • ANDREW GORDON • CHRISTOPHER HALLS • ALEXANDER INGHAM-BROOKE • JAMIE INNES • MARCUS NURTON • WILLIAM PESKETT • TOBY ROCHE • SIMON TAFT • THOMAS WAKELING • JAMES WARTKE-DUNBAR • KANG ZANG • CHRISTOPHER CHECKLEY • DAVID FRY • ALEXANDER HAMILTON • MATTHEW HARRIS • NICHOLAS HOLMANS • MAX HUTCHINSON • JAMES NEEDHAM • HEW PALMETER • ANTHONY PRESTON • HENRY SCARLETT • SAAJ SETHI • WILLIAM STEPHENSON • MICHAEL SUTCLIFFE • MAX WOOD • RICHARD WORTH • THOMAS ACFMANN • ADAM BURNISTON • MICHAEL GOLDWELL • PATRICK COLLINS • MAX DERBYSHIRE • ALEXANDER DILLIEN • PADDY GERVERS • SEBASTIAN HOWARD • BENJAMIN JACKSON • RICHARD LAI • YOUNGSANG LEE • TIMOTHY MCKENZIE • ROBBIE O'NEILL • HENRY PIGNEGUY • FEARGHUS RAFFERTY • ROBIN WARTKE-DUNBAR • SEBASTIEN WILSON •

To suggest that any one particular group of young men will stand or fall at Abingdon simply by dint of which House they happen to be in would clearly be foolish in the extreme. A Housemaster here may be in the privileged position of being able to promote a particular set of values, to offer genuine support to those who need it and to get vicarious pleasure from the triumphs of many, but the majority of his charges will prosper whatever. Pierluigi Collina never makes the mistake of over-refereeing, and in a way I have usually tried to follow his example. Be that as it may, I have had many occasions this year to feel proud of being associated with the Abingdonians in my House. They have without doubt done their bit to make this School the place it is.

If a House's success is measured by the achievements of its most senior boys, we have had no need to fear comparison with anyone. The Upper Sixth, whether prefects or not, lived up to our expectations and all made a tremendous contribution to the house and to Abingdon. **G. Innes** is as principled a young man as you are likely to meet, and made an inspirational House Captain, respected as much by every member of the House as by his Tutor and his Housemaster. This is not just because he let so many of them beat him on the pool table. His energy and initiative in setting up the School's football team are mentioned elsewhere in this magazine. His ability to maximise profits on doughnut sales must also be recognised, and our charity effort did very well out of this. He will witness at first hand how this money is spent, as he is spending part of his Gap year at our partner school in Moldova. He has promised to report back. **R. Muirhead**, **N. Patterson**, and **D. Sullivan** were also School Prefects, and between them contributed energetically and successfully to sport in particular, but also were familiar faces in the houseroom, and in **Dominic's** case in the Lower School. The House's resident legend was, however, without doubt **N. Shaikh**, primarily because of his major role in our biggest triumph of the year – the victory in the House Singing Competition. No matter that we were also judged to be the most miserable-looking of the Houses, no matter that we had no bagpipes – we won! **JFH** thoroughly enjoyed the company of the whole group on

a daily basis, and they certainly recognise his qualities. I wish them well in the future and thank them for all they have achieved at Abingdon School. And if I am pleased to see the back of **B. Taylor**, it is only because he will no longer feel professionally obliged to check on his hair.

This year's Lower Sixth, under SAE's unfussy patient guidance has also had an excellent year as a group, settling down well in the Sixth Form and living up to our expectations of them. Boys in this group have had a major part to play in many of the School's sporting successes: they were well represented in our senior teams for rugby, soccer, cricket, and rowing. **B. Spsford** was again very active musically, **B. Cullen** did more than his bit in the Debating Society, and **A. Blackmore** continued to excel in sailing. On the other hand, one of the House's most gifted sportsmen, **C. Davies**, had his ambitions curtailed cruelly by a nasty injury early in the year. The group will go on to make excellent senior prefects in the House, many of them as House Prefects. **B. Cullen** will be next year's House Captain, to be assisted as Vice-Captains by **T. Swarbrick** and **N. Turnbull**.

The Fifthformers had the challenge of GCSEs of course, and despite **DJB's** avuncular guidance as their Tutor again, this was not always plain sailing. Hard work and dedication by many of the group led to some pleasing results, but this was not the case throughout, and some Sixth Form places remained in doubt until very late in the day. On a more positive note, **C. Cowan** is to be congratulated on being named an honorary Scholar following his academic achievements this year, and **C. Edson**, winner of an All-Rounder Award, also lived up to our expectations with a tremendous set of GCSE grades. I wish them all well in the Sixth Form. The group did continue to make a positive contribution in other areas of School life, particularly in sport. They were strongly represented in School rugby teams, certainly made their mark on the river, and provided some top hockey players. **T. Roche** once again excelled on the hockey pitch, and was already a key player in the 1st XI – a successful team by anyone's standards this year. **M. Nurton** and **C. Halls** also gave a tremendous amount to a variety of sports and exemplified a generosity

Fishpool's

• WILLIAM BRIGHT • JAMES BROOKE
 • MICHAEL CHILCOTT • ROBERT
 CLEGG • NICHOLAS GARDNER •
 STUART GORDON • ANDREW
 HUIZZEY • JAMES KELLY • THOMAS
 MCKEOWN • ADAM MOULD • GRE-
 GORY SMITH • MARK TOWNSEND •
 THOMAS ASTLEY • GEORGE CLARK-
 SON • ADAM CORNISH • CHRISTO-
 PHER DIXON • THOMAS EVANS •
 CHRISTOPHER KENNEDY • KEVIN KIM
 • HENRY LESTER • JAMES MILLS •
 CAMERON MORE • MICHAEL O'BYRNE
 • MATTHEW STOTT • SAMUEL WITH-
 NALL • PHILIP BIRKETT • TEDDY BROOKE
 • MATTHEW COFFEY • THOMAS DAVIE
 • FREDERICK FRYD • ALEXANDER GRANT
 • CHRISTOPHER INGHAM-BROOKE •
 PATRICK JONES • KEVIN KEAR • WESLEY
 PEILE • THOMAS RAFTERY • ARTHUR
 VERDIN • ROBERT WHITWORTH • LUKE
 WILKINSON • MARK WILLIAMS • EDWARD
 WILSON • SAM WYLIE • TIMOTHY BARROW
 • WILLIAM CLEGG • BEN COOKE • JASON
 DAVISON • JACK HAMMETT • WILLIAM
 HENLEY • STEPHEN HOSKING • THOMAS
 KEOGH • DAVID MILLS • ALASDAIR PEARCE
 • CHARLES QUARTERMAN • GREGORY SALM-
 ON • CHARLES TUCKER • ERIC WESTENBRINK
 • ADAM WITHNALL • HAI ZHOU • DYLAN
 CLIVE • JOHN COLEBY • WILLIAM CULLEN •
 SAMUEL DYSON • LAURENCE HAVELOCK •
 WILL HICKS • JAMES HOWELL • SAMUEL JOHN-
 STON • ALEXANDER KEARLY-SHIERS • JAMES
 LLOYD • STEVEN MILLS • JAMES O'KELLY •
 PATRICK SHEPARD • BENJAMIN STRICKSON •
 IAN VERMES • DEAN WALKER • STUART WHITE
 • JOSHUA WILKINS •

This year a reassuring beacon has illuminated the end of term. I have been very struck by the strength of friendships and community that exists within the House and the School at large. It has been tremendous to see how quickly and readily people have rallied to support individuals. When asked what pupils thought they value most about the School, and what they might miss once they left, the overriding answer was always the strong friendships they had developed over the years. Reassuringly, the second most popular answer was the staff. I think this really does illustrate the strong sense of commu-

nity that exists today. Each year within the House one sees junior boys joining and senior boys leaving, tutor groups maturing as they move up through the years; there is always a slight anxiety as the personalities mix at first, but for the most part it works well – thank goodness! Increasingly it is becoming far more apparent that there is greater tolerance and interaction between the year-groups, which must bode well for the future. **T. Raftery** and **P. Birkett** have given excellent service supporting the Lower School this year, as newly created Lower School Assistants.

The calendar for Inter-House Competitions has been as busy as ever with friendly rivalry notching up a degree or two; perhaps one of the flagship events is the Athletics Competition. This year our Fifth Form excelled, winning first place thanks to **A. Grant** (800m), **M. Coffey** (1500m and triple jump) and **T. Raftery** (javelin). Overall the House was placed fifth after a rather disappointing performance from the Fourth Form. Some early training may be required before next year! Once again the Fifth Form was in winning mood during the annual Public-Speaking Competition: **P. Birkett**, **R. Whitworth** and **E. Wilson** won against some very strong competition. **R. Whitworth** has also been making a name for himself in the newly formed Film Unit with his film chronicling his journey to school by bicycle. Community Service continues to grow from strength to strength each year; more boys than ever have been involved this year and members of the House have visited senior citizens, hospitals, primary schools and helped with conservation work. Special recognition and thanks should certainly be given to **C. Dixon**, **A. Cornish**, **S. Dyson**, **S. Mills**, **J. Lloyd**, and **D. Clive** for their contributions.

School teams have included members of the House as have many of the School orchestras and bands. Too many to mention individually but **M. Chilcott** (winner of the Paul Comber Cup for Musical Creativity), **S. Wylie** and **L. Havelock**, who provided so much energy and vitality to this year's House Sing-

ing, do deserve public commendations. In addition, **A. Mould**, joint winner of the Ward Trophy for Musical Achievement, will be missed next year by the Music Department. Other prize-winners include **C. Ingham Brooke** for Drama and **G. Smith**, who after years of service and long hours including many Sundays dedicated to the Amey Theatre technical crew received the Larkhill Trophy. Academic recognition came in the form of prizes to **W. Bright** (Art), **A. Huzzey** (Russian) and **R. Clegg** (Spanish). House Academic Prizes were awarded to **D. Walker** (Third Form) and **A. Pearce** (Fourth Form), following their excellent academic records and examination results this year. **N. Gardner** received the Judge Medd Prize, which is a significant achievement given its very exacting and challenging criteria.

This year we say farewell to some excellent young men in the Upper Sixth; they have been a very easy-going group, and I know that APS has enjoyed their company. At least four of them have ambitious travel plans for the Gap year and **W. Bright**, **S. Gordon** (who also won a Headmaster's Prize), **R. Clegg** and **S. Withnall** received various Travel Awards. Special mention should also be made of the retiring joint Heads of House, **J. Kelly** and **S. Gordon**, who have contributed much to the life of the House; **M. Townsend** has also given much sound advice, and **J. Brooke**, in his own unique style, did rally to the cause when called upon. To all the Upper Sixth I offer thanks, and good luck for the future.

I also thank the Tutors for their hard work over the year. In particular **JHT's** Fifth Form group has achieved and received tremendous recognition both within and beyond the House: this must be due to inspirational leadership! This September the House will move from its present location into the old but refurbished woodwork shop; this offers us more space and better facilities. I am sure they will be used to their best and maximum effect!

ICF

Hamilton's

• HOWARD ABRAMALE • JAMIE ALLAN • THOMAS BENNELICK • BENEDICK BOWIE • MAX COFFOCK • STUART GORDON • CRAIG DYER • NATHANIEL HAWKEN • ANDREW MARSH • PAUL O'DONOVAN • ALEXANDER PAXTON • JAMES STANIER • CHRISTOPHER STEEL • WILLIAM TEDDY • ANDREW WHITE • THOMAS WILLIAMS • LUKE WILLIAMSON • ALASDAIR ASHBY • MATTHEW DUHAN • RUSSELL FISHER • TIMOTHY FOX • ANDREW GRAY • RALPH HEATH • PETER JONES • GEORGE MILNE DAY • CHARLES MOGER • VASKA RAINE • TOM REID • MICHAEL SCOPES • MICHAEL WHITE • NIKHIL WILMINK • JAMES WOOD • JOSEPH CANLAW-SHAW • HENRY CARTER • PHILIP DEARLOVE • ALEXANDER FRANCIS • JAMES GIBSON • JOSHUA GREAVES • CALLUM JOHNSON • DAVID KENNEDY • ANGUS MUIR • NICHOLAS ROBINSON • JOEL ROGERS • GEORGE SCARLE • THOMAS STANIER • JONATHAN SWABRICK • THOMAS WINWOOD • ROBERT WOOLLEY • ALAN BAUMONT • JOSHUA BLAIR • DANIEL BUTLER • EDMLIND CAIRD • THOMAS CHAMBERS • HUGO HARRISON • CHRISTOPHER KERR • ARIUN KINGDON • CHARLES LESTER • RYAN LIU • ROBERT MARSH • EDMLIND PEROU • AIDAN TIERNEY • JAMES WHITE • KEMBLE WOODLEY • GEORGE COLLIER • TIMOTHY ELLIOTT-TUDY • ALEXANDER FISHER • GEORGE FISHER • ADAM FOGLE • TIMOTHY GOWER • MATTHEW HALLS • BENJAMIN HOLLINS • CHARLES KINGSMAN • OLIVER MAY • TIMOTHY MIDDLETON • MAX NEIL • JACK PATERSON • GUS ROGERS • MATTHEW ROSSITER • WILLIAM STOCKWELL • JUN SUZUKI

As I sit down to write this House report, the academic year has just come to the end and once again it has been a year teeming with both academic and non-academic activities. The boys in the House have wholeheartedly thrown themselves at nearly all that has been on offer and I am sure they have benefited greatly. Throughout the year there have been some notable achievements for members of the House as well as pupils putting themselves out for others and the House. I will, over the next couple of paragraphs, try to give a flavour of the year. I apologise in advance if I miss anything or anyone out but I shall try my best.

A great number of boys represented the School at sport throughout the year. In the Rugby term, **A. Paxton** and **A. Marsh** represented the 1st XV. In the Rowing season **T. Williams** was a constant member of the 1st VIII. **C. Dyer** flourished with his rackets on the tennis court. Other boys represented the School in their own particular age-group and I hope they will continue to strive towards the top of their chosen sport.

Away from sport there were other notable contributions to School life. **N. Hawken**, **P. O'Donovan**, **L. Williamson**, **A. Kingdon** and **M. Rossiter** played an important role in the School orchestras and added much value to Abingdon music. **J. Stanier** and **A. White** were officers in the CCF. Finally, the all-round contribution to the Amey Theatre, especially in the form of the technical crew, by **T. Bennelick**, was outstanding across many years.

In Inter-House events throughout the year, we saw some notable performances across all areas from Public-Speaking to Tag Rugby. The highlight in the first term was the House Singing Competition. I was pleased to get the whole House singing on stage and we were described as being enthusiastic. So roll on next year and I hope we can improve our singing voices! Alas there were no outright victories in the major events but plenty of excellent individual performances. In the Public-Speaking Competition our Thirdformers did us proud and won with **F. Rogers**, **T. Middleton** and **M. Halls** beating all competition. Once again I felt that the boys in the House were becoming more willing to put themselves out. This was true especially of boys doing something they were not very good at. The collective spirit of the House continues to develop and I hope that we can take this a stage further in the coming years.

It has been a very productive year on all fronts and I have been delighted to see a healthy and happy atmosphere in the House continue to develop. This is down to the boys, who get all the credit for dictating the correct atmosphere. I look forward to seeing this develop next year.

On the whole it has been a very good year for the House and as is customary I would like to thank those who have made it so pleasurable. Firstly, the senior boys for their help with organising teams for House competitions, especially **A. Marsh** and Head of House **A. Paxton** who were outstanding role models all year, and secondly, the team of House Tutors who have throughout the year been very supportive to both the boys and me.

In a couple of months we see it all start again and I look forward to seeing even better achievements from this House next year in all aspects of School life.

RSH

of spirit in this context as much as anyone. Much artistic and musical talent was also recognised, with **A. Ingham Brooke** doing well to win the Williams Art prize as well as an honorary scholarship, and **T. Wakeling** among others making good use of DGA's office as a guitar practice room. **T. Durant** and **K. Zang** also did much to revive chess in the House. The houseroom will certainly be a quieter place next year; I shall also miss **O. Brummitt**, **S. Butterfield** and **T. Caldicott**, all of whom are leaving the School.

The Fourthformers, having done so well in their first year in the House, went from strength to strength this year. Academic reports were good enough to suggest that they will achieve some excellent GCSE results. There were once again some tremendous sporting contributions with highlights including the large group involved in Junior Colts rugby, **C. Checkley** as successfully as anyone, **W. Stephenson** was *victor ludorum* on Sports Day, while **D. Fry** and **M. Sutcliffe** were involved in House and School tennis teams. **H. Scarlett**, **W. Stephenson** and **M. Wood** also played a big part in Abingdon music-making this year. The fact that so many of them were impossible to refuse as Lower School Assistants strengthened my view that this is an exceptional group of young men, who will continue to make a bigger and bigger impact here. **PKHR** has, as ever, done a great job of keeping their feet on the ground. This is not to say that there have not been some less positive moments but I am confident that every single member of the group can go on to become a successful Sixthformer.

PW had the pleasure of looking after the Thirdformers in their first year in the House, and did so with his usual kindness and professionalism. The boys obviously enjoyed each other's company and were mutually supportive in facing up to the challenges of life, whether as new boys simply to the Middle School or to Abingdon. This was at its clearest in the Swimming Gala, when the willingness to work with and for each other was most impressive. **T. Altmann** turned out to be a leader of men on that day as well as on other occasions and will also have enjoyed his sailing successes this year. **S. Wilson** and **P. Collins** were the group's outstanding sportsmen, and are to be congratulated on continuing recognition in their main sports outside the School. On the academic front, very few weeks went past without **M. Coldwell** or **A. Dillien** bringing another clutch of commendations to me. Nor were energy and initiative in short supply as **P. Gervers** and **F. Raftery**, among others, often showed us, usually as a force for good. Some in the group will need to

set their sights higher in the classroom next year. On the other hand, they are bright, personable young men, and I very much look forward to supporting them in fulfilling their own ambitions in the Fourth Form, as well as our ambitions for them.

And even if the large number of boys in the House who really prosper at Abingdon School during their time here do so more despite rather than because of being in Aitken's House, I shall go on enjoying working with the whole group and convincing myself that I am making some difference.

DGA

1497

Middle School Academic Prizes:

M. Coldwell
A. Preston

Music Society's Prize for Brass:

N. Shaikh

Subject Prize for Ancient History:

B. Taylor

TASS Travel Bursary:

G. Innes

Tappins Coaches Travel Awards:

A. Wimborne
G. Cowie

Williams Art Prize:

A. Ingham Brooke

Freeman Prize for Service:

D. Sullivan

Mitchell Seward Cup for Debating:

N. Shaikh

Older Cup and Prize for Initiative:

G. Innes

• JONATHAN BARCLAY • JAMES BISHOP • HUIJONG CHI • HENRY COLE • JAMES DING • JONATHAN DONNELLY • THOMAS GATER • CHRIS STOUGH HUNT • MICHAEL LAST • JAMES LEWIS • RICHARD MORTON • JAMES NICHOLLS • WILLIAM POOLE • JOE PRINOLD • RISHI VASUDEV • DENNIS WALLER • TRISTRAM BAINBRIDGE • ANDREW BROWN • JONATHAN COLEMAN • STEPHEN CORR • ROBERT COSTER • EDWARD COTTRELL • JONATHAN GARRETT • MATTHEW HASTE • JAMES HOPKINS • RICHARD MALLET • RICHARD SOAMES • CHARLES WATSON • JAMES WILSON • THOMAS WOODS • OLIVER ZELDIN • EDWARD ALLEN • DOMINIC BEALE • OLIVER BENNETT • OLIVER BURNHAM • ANDREW COLE • SAVAN CONOMOS • FRANCIS GATER • LUCAS HALL • SAMUEL JOHNSON • ANDREW McGRATH • PHILIP NORRIS • ALEXANDER POWIS • PAUL ROBERTS • WILLIAM STATHAM • PHILIP THOMAS • ROWAN WHEELER • ANDREW BELL • THOMAS BLAKEY • RYAN BUCKE • THOMAS DEAN • JAMES GARRARD • JALON GREAVES • LEON KNIGHT • JAMES LORRAINE SMITH • THOMAS MEADOWS • OLIVER MINTON • HARRY MOORE • STUART ROBERTSON • WILLIAM STOCKDALE • BENJAMIN TAYLOR • MATTHEW WATKINS • MICHAEL WATTS • THOMAS BENNETT • SIMON EDWARDS • SAMUEL FLETCHER • SIMON JEFFREYS • RICHARD MOORE • JAMES MOULDS • JOSHUA OGLE • BEN PRIOR • OLIVER RABAN • PAUL SCORES • ALEXANDER SHARE • JAMIE SOAMES • PETER STATHAM • AIDAN THORNE • TIMOTHY WEST • ROBERT WOOLFE •

Taking over the running of a Day-boy House is always an exciting and challenging prospect. When your predecessor has almost legendary status it is perhaps particularly daunting. For the boys who returned in September it was business as usual however, and I have been enormously impressed by and grateful for their enthusiastic support; in particular their continued willingness to take part in House events, trips, competitions and activities. Nearly a year on, morale is high, and the seemingly irrepressible esprit de corps has been buoyed up by considerable success in competitions throughout the year.

The newly re-introduced House Singing Competition was a focus for the whole House in the first half term of the year. Our performance of the traditional spiritual *This Little Light of Mine* was highly successful, skilfully directed by our illustrious and charismatic Head of House, **J. Barclay**. Amongst cries of "We were robbed!" from the boys, we only managed runner-up, but a good time was had by all, so to speak. This was the first of many occasions when the leadership **J. Barclay** showed welded the whole House together. He has been a tremendous Head of House and we shall all miss both his good humour and serious commitment which have won him the respect of Staff and boys alike, not to mention a Headmaster's Prize at the end of the year.

As the year progressed, the trophy cabinet continued to remain replete. Elliott's boys won the Inter-House Table Tennis Competition in the Middle School and also the Inter-House Tennis later in the year. The senior boys stomped to victory in the Tag Rugby, and overall we were the most successful House. On a more erudite level, a Fourth Form team consisting of **T. Blakey**, **S. Robertson** and **T. Dean** claimed victory in the Public-Speaking Competition with a dialectic on the existence of God, **TCG's** tutor group were excellent runners-up in the exciting final of the Lower Sixth Challenge. **S. Robertson**, **J. Wilson** and **S. Johnson** were only narrowly defeated in the final of the Inter-House Chess; our House team came second to the School of St Helen and St Katharine in Shooting; the Fourth Year won the Inter-House Swimming and

to crown the year Elliott's House swept to overall victory in the Inter-House Athletics Competition.

It goes without saying that Elliott's boys were equally active beyond House competitions too. **J. Barclay**, **W. Poole**, **J. Donnelly**, **R. Coster**, **J. Hopkins** and **H. Cole** all played for the 1st XV, the last being awarded the Team Trophy at Prize-Giving. Sadly, **T. Gater** was unable to play owing to injury, but made a tremendous impact as a coach, whilst deftly handling his duties as Head of School with style, commitment and maturity. A number of the aforementioned were in the 1st XI Hockey squad too, while **J. Prinold** rowed for the illustrious and successful 1st VIII which was notably victorious at the National Schools' Regatta. In a rather unusual departure for Abingdon, **J. Bishop**, **J. Ding**, **C. Hunt** and **J. Lewis** formed the backbone of the newly formed Soccer 1st XI which gained considerable success throughout their season. In addition, many boys played for the County, including **A. Cole** and **H. Cole** in Hockey; **S. Fletcher**, **R. Woods** and **S. Edwards** in Rugby and **A. Bell**, **O. Raban** and **M. Watkins** in Tennis (the last at national level, in fact.)

Culturally our boys were conspicuous throughout the school as musicians, actors, debaters, writers ... This is so much the case that it is invidious to pick out individual achievements. However, one does remember with pride the acting skills of **J. Donnelly** and **J. Barclay** in memorable parts of School plays, **P. Statham's** unforgettable imitation of Cilla Black in the charity *Blind Date* and **A. McGrath's** contribution to the newly established Film Unit showings. **J. Donnelly** was awarded the North Drama Prize, while **S. Fletcher**, **S. Robertson** and **O. Burnham** received the House Academic Prizes. Our top Scholar **D. Waller** won Chemistry and indeed national Science Olympiad awards, too.

A year of satisfaction, therefore. I and my excellent team of Tutors look forward eagerly to further success in 2004-5, as well as to the improvements and renovations to the houseroom which have been scheduled to take place.

RSE

Spencer's

• SAMUEL BLACKWELL • SIMON CATALDI • FRANCIS • JAMES COLE • CHRISTOPHER HALL • JOSEPH HENLY • JOHN HUBBLESTON • STEWART JACKSON • ALASDAIR MACDONALD • GRAHAM MORRIS • JAMES MUGNAIONI • ALEXANDER NASH • GEORGE POTTER • CHARLES RANSOMBE • CIARAN ROBERTSON • OLIVER SHARP • THOMAS VAUGHAN-FOWLER • PETER DEAN • JAMES DINGWALL • JAMES DYER • JAMIE EVANS • BENJAMIN HARRIS • JAMES HORBURGH • SIDDHARTH KAPOOR • TIMM LANGWALD • SIMON MOULDS • MATTHEW PINNER • EDWARD ROWETT • WILLIAM SOTHEY • DIMITRY WILLIAMSON • SIMON CROWTHER • CRAIG FRASER • CHARLES GILL • DOUGLAS GRAHAM • SCOTT HENLEY • NEIL HOLDSBY • ELLIOT JONES • RICHARD KING • JACK KNIGHT • ANDREW KYRIOS • ALEXANDER LOCATELLI-MALACRIDA • THOMAS LODGE • SIMON MACLACHLAN • JAIN MARSH • CHRISTOPHER PARKER • MATTHEW SMITH • THOMAS STANLEY • JACK ADDIS • SAM BARTON • DAVID BRAZEL • ALEXANDER FREELAND • HENRY FREELAND • WILLIAM HALL • PHILIP HATZIS • EDWARD HENDERSON • JONATHAN HUGHES • RUSSELL JOHNSON • OLIVER MARGLETIS • ALEXANDER MUGNAIONI • PHILIP PROBERT • CHARLES WILDISH • EDWARD BARRETT • JAMES BEDFORD • THOMAS CLEE • ALEXANDER CURPS • SAMUEL DAGUI • THOMAS DURRANTIS • DYLAN EVANS • WILLIAM GODSAVE • HUGH GRAHAM • EDWARD HALLETT • OLIVER HOLLAND • THOMAS JEFFERSON • MAX KIBBLE • HENRY LOCATELLI-MALACRIDA • CHRISTOPHER NEWMAN • SHASHANK TANDON • SAJAL WALIA •

Yet another action-packed year draws to a close, and there seems to be much to reflect upon. The achievements of Spencer's boys in both School and House life have been wide-ranging and admirable. These can be attributed to the attitude of the boys themselves – all unflinchingly willing and enthusiastic and many exceptionally talented. The camaraderie and convivial atmosphere in the house room, 'House Spirit' as **KJS** calls it, is perhaps one of its proudest features and is central behind the success of this academic year.

Perhaps the most notable event of the year was our House Pantomime, which has become something of a tradition. The much celebrated 'Romeo and Rapunzel' was fantastically scripted by **A. Nash** and **G. Potter**. The boys acted to a packed house, all of whom received the play with much laughter and rapturous applause. Special mention must go to **P. Probert** for his spirited performance on stage and **M. Smith** and **C. Parker** for their relentless

efforts backstage. The money raised will contribute to a 'House entertainment system'.

Having two or more Spencer's representative in the 1st teams for Rugby, Hockey and Cricket is a fitting indication of the talent present. **J. Mugnaioni** must be applauded for successfully captaining the 1st XI through perhaps the most successful season in our cricketing history. Apart from our two 1st XV regulars, **T. Vaughan-Fowler** and **S. Jackson**, **S. Henley** in the Fifth Form also made a highly commanding debut. **J. Dingwall** successfully represented the 1st XI for Hockey and will surely be an influential player next year. In addition, **C. Newman**, our resident Scholar, captained the Juniors A XI for Hockey and is certainly on the steps to greatness.

Spencer's has been a strong influence in the Debating Society this year. The three Chairmen, **T. Vaughan-Fowler**, **A. Nash** and **G. Potter**, are all Spencer's boys. **A. Nash** in particular must be congratulated for his impressive contribution which culminated in our second victory in the Upper School Public-Speaking Competition in as many years. Their influence has inspired younger members of the House such as **W. Hall** to get involved. **S. Kapoor**'s appointment as Secretary for the next academic year consolidates Spencer's tradition in debating.

Musically the House thrived. **G. Potter** organised *One Night Only*, which lived up to its promise. **S. Moulds** and **A. Macdonald** contributed greatly to make it an unforgettable evening. The proceeds went to the **Richard Potter**, OA Cancer Trust. Another notable event was the House Singing Competition: *Delilah* was sung beautifully, yet differing opinions meant that we fell short of first position. The boys sung with a clear sense of purpose and we enjoyed the event all the more for it. Our rendition included **P. Hatzis** playing the bagpipes, and for this he deserves thorough commendation as he regaled the audience as well as the adjudicator. **J. Dyer**'s labours must not go unnoticed, as it was through his musical expertise – that he so very often displays in morning Chapel services – that the whole House was kept in tune.

The House sees exciting times ahead: there has already been much talk of next year's eagerly awaited Pantomime. In addition, there has been a suggestion of a 'Spencer's Ball' – all proceeds of which will go to the charity of the House's choice. The House newsletter has also flourished as parental contributions have increased. Needless to say, the boys are also keen to settle the score with Aitken's in next year's House Singing Competition.

As ever the profiles of Spencer's boys have been high throughout the School. We have had our very own Head of School in **S. Jackson**, who was ably supported by our two excellent Heads of Houses and School Prefects **G. Potter** and **T. Vaughan-Fowler**. This has been a year-group that has truly contributed to School life and their presence will be missed by all. Their university destinations include Oxford, Edinburgh, Bristol and Cambridge. We wish them well.

S. Kapoor and **B. Harris** will take over as School Prefects and the new Heads of House. Finally, we say goodbye to **DJH** after his thirty-one years at Abingdon. He will be missed sorely by all those who knew him, and we wish him all the very best for the future. The House Tutors must also be thanked for being a constant source of support to their tutees. A final thank you to **KJS**, whose myriad sources of enthusiasm and energy hugely encourage the positive attitude and success of the boys in his House.

S. KAPOOR 6 NAFF

Townsend's

• NICHOLAS BRODIE • JAMES
 FINDLAY • RICHARD GROVES
 • WILLIAM HARRISON • GRE-
 GORY IVANOV • CHRISTOPHER
 KIRKLAND • WILLIAM MCGEE-
 HIN • IAIN MCKENZIE • STEW-
 ART McMAHON • TOM REEVES
 • DANIEL STALKER • BOON TEH
 • OWEN THOMPSON • CALLUM
 WEST • MARCUS WOODWARD •
 MATTHEW ALDER • HARRY
 COULES • ANDREW CRUICKSHANK
 • OLIVER DIAMOND • YUAN GAO
 • WILLIAM GLOVER • WILLIAM
 GUAST • BENJAMIN HALLETT •
 BLAKE IVINSON • JAMES LAYERS •
 PETER LYONS • HAL MCKEND •
 JONAS MUIR WOOD • DOMINIC
 WAITE • CHARLIE WILKINSON • SAJ-
 JAD AHMED • MARK BEEVOR • ALEX
 BOXELL • GARETH CADMAN • THO-
 MAS CARPENTER • BENJAMIN CARTER-
 FRASER • PHILIP COPE • HARRY
 DAWKINS • IAN DORWARD • EDGAR
 DYER • CHRISTOPHER HORNSEY •
 AARON LEWIN • NICK MILES • JAMIE
 MILLER • LAURIE NEATHERWAY • THO-
 MAS SCRASE • MATTHEW SPURRING •
 BEN ALLEN • BRUCE CHRISTIANSEN •
 KENNETH CRUICKSHANK • TIMOTHY
 FEGAN • GRAHAM FORREST • OLIVER
 FOSTER • ROBERT HALEY • ALEXANDER
 HYDE • BEN KING • BENJAMIN LERCH •
 NICHOLAS LI • JASON MANN • RICHARD
 PARKER • DAVID RAWCLIFFE • OLIVER
 AIKEN • MATTHEW BOXELL • JOSEPH
 BUCKLEY • AEDDAN EVANS • DOMINIC
 FLINT • MAXIMILIAN GANDER • LUKE
 HIMPSON • HARRY HOLE • THEO HOOLE
 • ALASDAIR HURLEY-RAWLINS • EDWARD
 VIMEY-COOK • EDMUND LONG • ALISTAIR
 MITCHELL • LUKE POWELL • TOM
 SIMPSON • MARCUS SMITH •
 JONATHAN WARLOW •
 SAMUEL WELCH

Another busy and varied year. We started by breaking with tradition and having three Heads of House, each for one term: **C. Kirkland**, **S. McMahon** and **I. McKenzie** each provided responsible and sound leadership in their own individual and different ways. Always noteworthy are changes in the houseroom itself and last year the table football was a popular addition: this year, reducing the floorspace still further but proving a popular attraction, has seen the introduction of a table-tennis table, supplied by courtesy of **RSS**, and with it has come a considerable improvement in skill levels.

Our first House event was the House Singing Competition in which we gave a stirring rendition of *It's been a hard day's night* by the Beatles. We were certainly the smartest House and played by the rules with no gimmicks: we even sang quite well so to come no higher than equal fourth was a disappointment we took in our stride.

But it was not a year of defeat despite our lack of success in the Inter-House athletics and the touch rugby competitions. **A. Hyde** shot particularly well for the House and **L. Neatherway** captained our chess team, whilst we were runners-up in two Public-Speaking Competitions. The Fourth Form, represented by **A. Hyde**, **R. Parker**, **J. Mann** and **D. Rawcliffe**, and the Sixth Form team with **T. Reeves**, **S. McMahon** and **C. Kirkland** were both narrowly beaten in two very exciting and closely contested finals. It was in the Lower Sixth Challenge that the team from 6 DE convincingly defeated the other contesting teams: **H. Coules** displayed an enormous depth and breadth of knowledge and was ably supported by **W. Guast**, **P. Lyons** and **D. Waite**.

Our other strengths were seen either in or on the water. There was a continued individual commitment and performance given by **N. Brodie** and **I. McKenzie** to the Boat Club as key members of the successful 1st VIII. In the swimming pool the 4MMH team captained by **B. King** came second in the Fourth Form gala, having initially won but being disqualified because **B. King** had swum in one too many races. The Third Form won its gala easily with a team captained by **J. Buckley**: our strength in this area bodes well for next year.

Community Service is a popular House activity and here numerous boys from all years have played important roles: of particular note in the Fourth Form were **B. Lerch**, **N. Li** and **B. King**. Taking their service abroad, **W. Harrison**, **A. Sergeant** and **J. Rose** found their visit to the projects we are supporting in Moldova very interesting and four boys: **T. Carpenter**, **P. Cope**, **A. Boxell** and **C. Hornsey** were involved in rebuilding a classroom in Ulaanbaatar as part of their World Challenge expedition to Mongolia this summer.

Our congratulations go to **N. Brodie** and **S. McMahon** on gaining places at Oxford and we wish luck to all our leavers as they start their university careers. **S. Ahmed** and **M. Spurring** leave us to start their Sixth Form studies elsewhere and our thanks and good wishes for his retirement were conveyed from the whole House to **RPF** as he took his Fifth Form through to its GCSE examinations.

JT

Second Form

• FAYAAZ AHMED • ALEX BA-
 BOOLAL • CHARLES BARBER •
 CHRISTOPHER BIRTLES •
 GEORGE BONE • GREGORY
 CRAVEN • NICHOLAS CROFT-
 SIMON • MARCUS CROSS • JAMES
 HARRISON • OSCAR HIRD • AL-
 EXANDER KEMPELL • ANDREW
 PHILLIPS • MATTHEW PURSELL
 • CHARLES REYNOLDS • JUSTIN
 ROBINSON • SHERIF SAM-SADEEN
 • MARK SCOTT • ALEXANDER
 SMITH • JOJO TODD • OLIVER
 VERDON • JONATHAN WEBB • JACK
 WOODS • CODY YELLOWLEES-
 BOUND • HARRY BOND • ALEXAN-
 DER CAMPBELL • RORY COPUS •
 JAMES CROWE • TIMOTHY DEEKS •
 THOMAS GREEN • MARK HEFFERN-
 AN • OLIVER HENSTRIDGE • ANDREW
 HONES • NICHOLAS HOWE • CHARLES
 HUTCHENCE • THOMAS MCKENNA •
 IAIN MITCHELL • EDWARD O'NEILL
 • GEORGE PALMER • ANDREW PAR-
 TRIDGE • SAM SELLER • MATTHEW
 STAFFORD • JULIAN THORN • ROBERT
 WALKER • DAVID WESTON • LUKE
 WHITE • JIANGHAO ZHU • EDWARD
 BAILEY • LAURENCE BARROW • ALEX-
 ANDER BIRD • OLIVER BOURCHIER •
 JAMIE BROWN • JAMES CALLOW • WIL-
 LIAM CHANG • ALEXANDER CLINKARD
 • SEAN CUNNINGTON • THOMAS DEVLIN
 • GEORGE DUGDALE • TOMER FARAGGI •
 ROBBIE HAND • TIMOTHY MEATS • RY-
 HICHI MURASE • ARJUN PREETHAM • PAR-
 ATHAN RABINDRAN • CHARLES SILVER •
 STEPHEN STINSON • JEREMY STOCKDALE •
 ANDREW TUCKER • SAMUEL WALTON •

A Typical Day in the Lower School

I wake up at twenty-to-seven. I then tumble out of bed, my eyes full of sleep, my mind full of dreams as if a tape player was still playing behind my eyelids. I pull on my shirt and trousers, the buttons scraping on my face. Stumbling downstairs, I trip over the cat and fall the rest of the way. After eating my breakfast I walk upstairs, do my teeth and face and go to school.

As I approach the hulking shape of the School, I stop, and look at the great flowing bricks, in their cold, hard-brown colouring. The black shape rising out of the ground is strangely inviting and uninviting at the same time. The white double-doors open inwards into a warm red and wood-coloured hallway. I turn left past the stone, old-fashioned-looking stairs into a grey, modern-looking hall. As I approach the Lower School houseroom, I start to hear the welcoming sound of many voices shouting and hollering. I enter the green houseroom and soon it is time for registration. A bell rings, and we all troop obediently into an uncomfortable line and stand still: wishing to all deities that it will finish quickly, and all fidgeting, as we are not used to standing still for such a long time.

9.05: First lesson: Modern Languages. Oh the joys of the past participle! Fighting hard to stay alert.

9.35: End of First lesson. Heading down to Little School for Latin.

10.05: 2nd Lesson: Latin. I never knew that Romano-British kings could be so fascinating!

10.35: 3rd Lesson: Maths. At last some practical work: Drawing Triangles.

11.05: Break. Off to the Tuck Shop. Hmmm, Polos or Fruit Pastilles....

11.35: 4th Lesson: English. Brilliant as usual. New book: *Lord of the Flies*.

12.05: 5th Lesson: History. Finally we are onto the Middle Ages! No more Sutton Hoo, just good old knights and castles!

After period 5 it's lunchtime. We all hurry to the Dining Hall as quickly as we can, making sure we aren't late, and don't face the long, boring line of the lunch queue.

We eat our food as fast as we can so we have more time to play cricket on Waste Court field. I always bat. I stay in for six overs and go out with a catch with 18 runs. We are late for registration so we run to apologise to Mr Jenkins for being late and then get in line.

Or I make for the Library. Pushing past a mob of Thirdformers going in the opposite direction, I am in. I scan the area for free computers, but there are none. I give up on them and resign myself to books. I pick a particularly interesting one about disasters and sit down, thinking about *The Day after Tomorrow* and its relevance to this book. Then I get bored with it and choose some fiction. I try to take it out, only to discover that I have borrowed too many books. As I trek back to Lower School to fetch a book to return, I ponder about the meaning of life.

1.35: Registration No.2. Much quieter than this morning.

2.05: 6th Lesson: Geography. We are on to the Geography of Football.

2.35: 7th Lesson: RS. How old is the Dalai Lama again?

3.05: 8th Lesson: Music (Singing). Difficult to sing in tune constantly.

After Lessons: The ball is floated wide to the winger who cuts back in. A little pop to me and I am over under the posts, an easy seven points for our team. A crunching blow from our full-back taking down their fastest player, we have turned

First Form

• PETER BROMBLEY • MAX EDWARDS • NICHOLAS EREAUT • THOMAS FINCH • PHILIP GARDNER • JOHN HAGUE • CHARLIE HARRIS • EDWARD HUMPHRIES • ROBERT KANE • HENRY KIBBLE • STUART LONERGAN • JULIAN MARTIN • JACK METCALFE • SAM MONTGOMERY • RICHARD OASTLER • JOE OLDHAM • WILLIAM OTTERBURN • JONATHAN PREST-SMITH • SAM PRIOR • TOMMY PRITCHARD • DYLAN ROBINSON • JOSHUA SMITH • JACK TINKER • LUKE ABBOTT • WILLIAM BLYTH • CHARLES BRAMPTON • EDWARD CALLOW • GEORGE CONSTABLE • ALEX EREAUT • ROBERT FIFE • JAMES HOLLAND • FREDDIE HOWE • WILLIAM HUTTON • GABRIEL LING • ANTHONY LLOYD • ADRIAN LO • MAKSIM MAKAROV • JOE MASON • RICHARD MOON • STUART RANKIN • JAMES RIDGLEY • RICHARD SLADE • LIAM SMITH • MICHAEL SUMMERS • ALEXANDER WARD • THOMAS WATKINS • AIDAN WATTS • MICHEL BAUMGART • CHRIS BURGESS • EUAN CAMPBELL • FREDDIE CLEWORTH • HENRY DUNBAR • JAMES EDWARDS • CHARLIE FLOYD • JAMES HUMBERSTONE • ROBERT HUSSEY • BEN JUFFKINS • TOM LOWENTHAL • VEERAL MANEK • JOE McDONAGH • RICHARD MEADOWS • HUGO MORRISON • SAM NEWMAN • DANIEL O'NEILL • CHARLIE REDMAN • JOSHUA RENCHER • GUY STEPHENS • TED THOMPSON • ALEX VEALE • NATHANIEL WATKINS •

A Typical Day in the Lower School

it over! On the break swerving left to right, I give it to the winger who scores. The final whistle goes and an unbeaten season is ours.

That was a good first term. The hockey season was not the greatest since not many of us have played before. We lost our first match to a team who had played together for six years, but only 2-1. Next match we had improved a lot, passing the ball from side to side gracefully and attacking well. We scored first but then they came back to draw with us 1-1, which was a fair result. We have started the year well. The cricket was the best, with three county players! I got two fifties and lots of twenties, and our team won nine out of eleven matches.

Or we sit at our table in the printmaking room of the Art Department. We write our parodies and draw the story as it goes. We pluck ideas from the political world we see before us and from the sporting legends of history. We are free to express ourselves in drawing, painting, comic strips, sculptures and computer art. I treasure these moments we have together as we are permitted to talk and do as we like. Now we see our art mounted on the wall to commemorate our efforts.

This summer, some Lower School pupils are in a drama production of *Animal Farm*. As I walk down the red-brick road to the Amey Theatre for a rehearsal, everything here that is quite old seems to be red and warm. The large structure of the Amey Theatre looms before me and I enter through the white doors. I turn into the Theatre which seats six hundred and go onto the stage. It makes you feel very self-conscious, as you imagine the six hundred in the audience staring up at you. We commence the rehearsal. I play 'Old Major', a stud boar who introduces 'Animalism', a parody of communism, to the other animals. I have almost the whole first page to myself, and I find myself quite frightened in an empty auditorium, let alone a full one! When I make a mistake, it is very embarrassing and I don't want to imagine what I will do on stage during the performance proper!

We're on the bus now, thinking back over the amazing day we've been through...

Music, Maths, Modern Languages, all inspirational. Art, Athletics, Astronomy, all interesting. Break, boys...beef-burgers, all brilliant. But most of all it's the atmosphere. Just walking to various lessons, seeing smiles on faces; green, green grass being overlooked by the wonderfully handsome red-brick 'Big School' makes me feel... like a real Abingdonian! A part of this amazing School...

"Sorry lads," said the bus driver, disappointingly, "no Radio 1 today, it's not tuned in." We drive on through the Oxfordshire countryside, chatting to each other about today, yesterday and the next great day that I will undoubtedly be experiencing.

"How was your day?" my mother asked me as I climbed through the door.

"Brilliant." And that was the truth.

T. FINCH, M. EDWARDS, C. HARRIS, J. TINKER, R. KANE, P. BROMBLEY, J. SMITH, P. GARDNER, S. LONERGAN & N. EREAUT, E. HUMPHRIES & R. OASTLER 1S.

School House

• SAMUEL BENELBAS • IVAN CHAU •
 DESMOND CHUNG • THOMAS GATTEN
 • MICHAEL GOULD • HARRY GREEN •
 JACK HU • JONATHAN LILLYCROP • AMIR
 REHMAN • GREGORY STERN • DUNCAN
 STEWART • PHILIP WONG • WILLIAM
 BLACKSHAW • CRAIG GOODDY • ADAM
 HALL • MICHAEL JARVIS • JAEWOOK LEE
 • JAMES LI • ANTHONY MAK • SAMUEL
 NG • IVAN RABOVOLLENKO • MICHAEL
 ROTHKOPF • PATRICK STERN • VASILIS
 CHRISTODOULOU • CAMERON DWYER •
 SHAYAN LASKAR • AARON MAK • DANNY
 MAK • HAN PARK • ODELEKE SANUSI •
 SANJAY THAKORE • CHRISTOPHER THOMAS
 • OLIVER WAITE • ANDREY ZHVITIASHVILI
 • BHAVESH AMIN • TIMOTHY CHU • MAT-
 THEW GREEN • YOUNG-ROK KIM • MAXI-
 MILIAN LING • GOR MOURADIAN • THOMAS
 PHILLIPS • HARRY RICHARDS • DAVID RIDLEY
 • JAMES STEWART • HEE WON YANG • BRIAN
 BALCHIN • JOEY CHAN • MICHAEL CHAN
 • KEVIN CHEUNG • JAMES COOKSON
 • JAMIE GRAVES • OLIVER
 HAMPSON • TOM SKEER •
 DAPO TEJUOSO •

The recollections of a year which stand out for a Housemaster are inevitably different from those of the boys. I recall **V. Christodoulou** steadfastly refusing to go to a dance with a girls' school despite all the blandishments I could throw at him; the boys recall an evening filling themselves at the *Flying Dragon* for Chinese New Year.

One opinion about life in the House that I hope all would share is that it becomes more civilised each year. Gradually, hierarchies between year-groups are dissolving, to be replaced by concerned pastoral care by Prefects, confident inter-year group relationships and a more genuine sense of a co-operative community. The boarding inspection we all underwent in October recognised this quality of boarding at Abingdon, and it remains our single most important objective.

In terms of the spread of School activities, the boys in the House contributed significantly. Academically, **D. Chung** secured a place to read Engineering at Oxford and the whole Upper Sixth clinched places at their chosen universities. **T. Gatten** was unfortunate enough to have secured an Academic Clerkship at Oxford before being narrowly turned down for a place to read Human Sciences. I hope next year to be able to report his success in re-application. Further down the School there was an almost universal intensity about the Fifth Form in their run-up to GCSEs, and outstanding work from many new boys, in particular **K. Cheung**, **T. Chu** and **M. Chan**.

Musically, we were led by **T. Gatten**, as much in the rendition of *In the Jungle* for the House Singing Competition, as in Chapel and various instrumental and choral groups. **G. Stern** and **P. Stern** were prominent on sports pitches, scoring centuries each at Birkenhead School, and representing senior teams in all three major sports. **H. Green** once again picked up the Sixth Form *victor ludorum* on Athletics Day and continued his all-round contribution to rowing, rugby, drama, art and music.

At the end of the year we said farewell to an Upper Sixth that encompassed a full range of talents and included in **J. Lillycrop** the most concerned and effective House Prefect I have known. We also said goodbye over the year to **D. Tejuoso**, **M. Green** and **J. Stewart**, who decided to continue their education elsewhere.

As of January 2004 I will also be continuing my education elsewhere, and will hand over the House to the urbane **Mr. Aitken**. I know that the boys in the House will work as co-operatively and purposefully with him as they have with me, and hope that he enjoys the experience as much as I have.

BAHF

Crescent House

• CHU CHU EJKEME • CHINWUBA
 EZENWA • MASAOMI FUTUGAMI • JOE
 GALLARD • ALEXANDER HERMES •
 DANIEL JEPSON • WILLIAM LEA • PU
 LI • MUSTAFA QURESHI • BILAL RIAZ
 • KENNETH SHAO • WILLIAM SHEPPARD
 • WILLIAM SUN • MICHAEL SWINN •
 CHRISTOPHER TURNER • DAVID BROOK •
 IVAN CHENG • JUNGHOO DOH • SIMON
 EICH • ZAHID KARIM • KOEL KO •
 TONY LAU • MICHAEL MCCORMICK •
 THORBEN OBERHOSEL • TIMOTHY RIP-
 PON • PETER ROWE • HUGH TAYLOR •
 JAMES ARROWSMITH • WILLIAM DRAZIN
 • GEORGE FENTON • MATTHEW HALFORD
 • EDWARD HOFMAN • DICKENS LAM •
 CHRISTOPHER LILLYCROP • THOMAS RUT-
 LAND • OLIVER TURNER • ANTHONY CHAN
 • ALEXANDER GEARY • CHRISTOPHER
 HALFORD • NICOLAI JUERGENS • ANDREW
 LA FORTE • KEVIN LEE • JAMES MICHEL-
 SON • NEYSAN PUCKS • JOEY WU • OL-
 IVER COOK • TOMMY IP • ROMAN JADANOV
 • CHARLES LAM • JONATHAN LAU • HAR-
 RY LEE • ALEX LEWINGTON • MICHAEL
 NAGI • TOBY OJO • MARK
 PLUCK • JOSHUA TURRILL
 • LIVIO DE LUTIO



was spartan – very much so, according to those who had experienced it. Now we are privileged to enjoy facilities that compare well with the best that other schools can offer, with the final stage of refurbishment to the boys' side of Crescent House being completed last summer holidays. Yet there remains much of the old Crescent that is recognisable. One thing that struck me was the fondness with which the 'Old Crescents' remembered the relationships that had existed within the House, something that remains for me today, above almost all other factors, a vital measure of the health of the House. By that standard it has been a successful year.

Within the House, three events stand out as especially worthwhile. During the Michaelmas term, we undertook to raise money for No.4 school in Ialoveni, Moldova. *Somerfield's* helped kickstart our efforts by donating 500 doughnuts to sell at Open Day in October, but it was the House piano that contributed most impressively. A happy evening in December saw us lining up to swing a sledge hammer at it for a fee. **T. Lau** gave a final performance of Beethoven's *Moonlight Sonata*, during which all sympathy for the piano disappeared, and with **PRW** leading the bidding for the first swing, the execution began. It proved a very well made piano, lasting for almost 40 minutes and raising £210 towards a final total of £400. During the Lent term, we held a House Concert in the Amey Theatre. Highlights included **M. Futagami's** unique style as compère (and two fine performances on the violin), the first performance of the Fifth Form band – name not yet revealed – of **E. Hofman, G. Fenton, O. Turner** and **M. Halford**, and the virtuosic playing of **T. Lau**, this time on the School's Steinway!

Then we embarked on the inaugural Mastermind Competition. Twenty-five boys entered from all years, choosing a wide variety of specialist topics, which challenged the research abilities of the House staff. The finalists were **W. Lea, K. Ko, J. Arrowsmith, C. Lillycrop** and **O. Turner**. After the heats most were agreed that

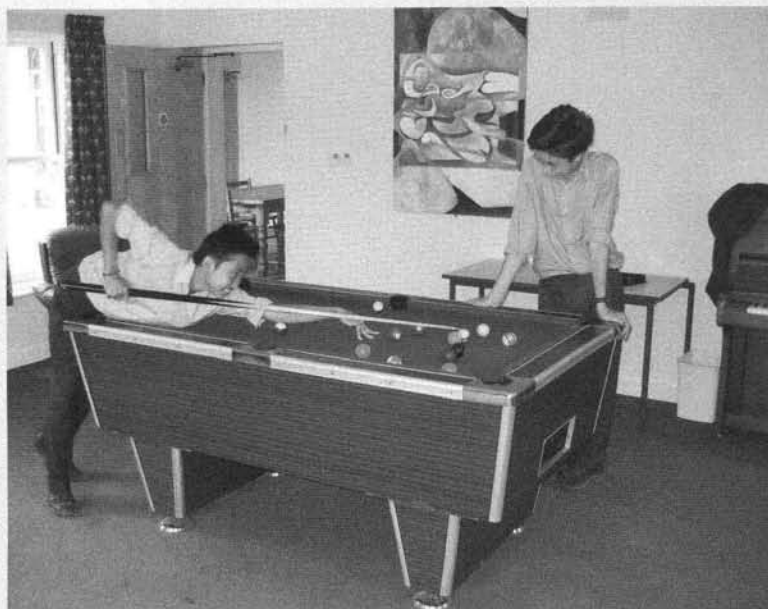
2003/04 was the Golden Jubilee of the foundation of Crescent House, and two events associated with that have provided the opportunity to reflect on how Crescent has developed over the years. In November of 2003, a group of former and current members of staff, including **Joe Talbot**, the first Housemaster of Crescent, met for lunch in the games room, an extension added during **Simon Davies'** tenure as Housemaster. A small group of Old Boys responded to the invitation to a reunion during June 2004. Unsurprisingly, the talk was of the numerous changes that had taken place to the accommodation and the gardens. Originally, still under the constraints of rationing, the boys were required to help produce vegetables in the House garden, and the accommodation

J. Arrowsmith was the one to beat, owing to his encyclopaedic general knowledge and his ability to perform under pressure, but **C. Lillycrop** kept his head, showing a decent knowledge of *The Life and Times of the first Earl of Halifax* and outperforming him in the general knowledge round, to win the coveted title of Mastermind 2004.

Each year-group has played its part in the life of the House. The Third Form took time to gel, coming from three different sources – Phelps', overseas and the prep schools – but eventually did so very successfully. **J. Lau** pipped **H. Lee** to the Academic Prize, based on examination results, by only 0.6%. **T. Ojo** was selected for the county U15 badminton squad and showed himself to be an emerging talent on the tennis court. **O. Cook**, **J. Turrill** and **M. Nagi** were the backbone of the J14 A VIII, with the first two also representing the Juniors A XV.

In the Fourth Form, **A. Chan** was the recipient of the academic prize, **A. La Forte** was selected to be one of the Lower School Assistants for next year, **C. Halford** was captain of the U15 cricket team and also scored 68 not out for the 1st XI during the Birkenhead tournament at the end of term. **N. Juergens**, apparently known as *The Tree* to members of Lower School, rowed in the successful J16 VIII. But I will remember the year more for the leavers from this group – we say goodbye to **A. Chan** and **J. Michelson**, who are transferring to the day side, and both hello and goodbye to **A. Geary**, **N. Pucks** and **L. de Lutio**, each of whom made a unique contribution to the life of the House.

In the Fifth Form, the GCSE examinations have been always on the horizon, although some were rather slow to realise it, but this has not stopped them making their mark on the life of the School. **M. Halford** was the winner of the Academic Prize, and also captained the successful Colts A XV. **E. Hofman** was one of the members of the new Film Unit, **D. Lam** was selected to be a Lower School Prefect, as they were known, and **O. Turner**



earned a place in the Great Britain VIII to race at the GB-France match during the summer.

The Lower Sixth have already shown themselves to be a group with huge talent, and I am very excited about the contribution they will make to the House as Prefects next year. **T. Oberhoesel** was a crucial, and astonishingly powerful, member of the successful 1st VIII – it is almost unbelievable that he was overlooked by the German selectors for the Junior World Championships. **T. Rippon** won his full colours for Badminton, as did **I. Cheng**, and will captain the Club next year. **H. Taylor** shared the History Prize and also starred in the *One Night Only* extravaganza. **P. Rowe** will be one of the Heads of School next year and **H. Taylor** will take on the responsibility of Head of House.

We say farewell to the Upper Sixth, many of whom have set an example of commitment and involvement that will be hard for others to follow. Several chose challenging university targets to aim at, and I applaud **C. Ezenwa** and **A. Hermes** on their offers from Oxford and Cambridge respectively, **W. Sheppard** and **C. Turner** on winning offers to read Veterinary Science and **W. Lea** to read Medicine. **W. Lea** performed an oboe concerto by Albinoni with the Chamber Orchestra and **A. Hermes** and **J. Gallard** won Academic Prizes in Physics and Religious Studies respectively. As leaders of the House, I could not have asked for a more committed and able pair than **W. Sheppard** and **W. Lea**. Backed up by a conscientious and, at times, courageous team of Prefects, they have managed affairs with understanding, foresight and absolute fairness, and will be a hard act to follow. I wish all of the leavers well for the future.

It is my privilege to have had a very dedicated Staff team in the house, and it is with sadness that we must say farewell to **PRW**, **KER** and **VEH**.

1186

TJCG

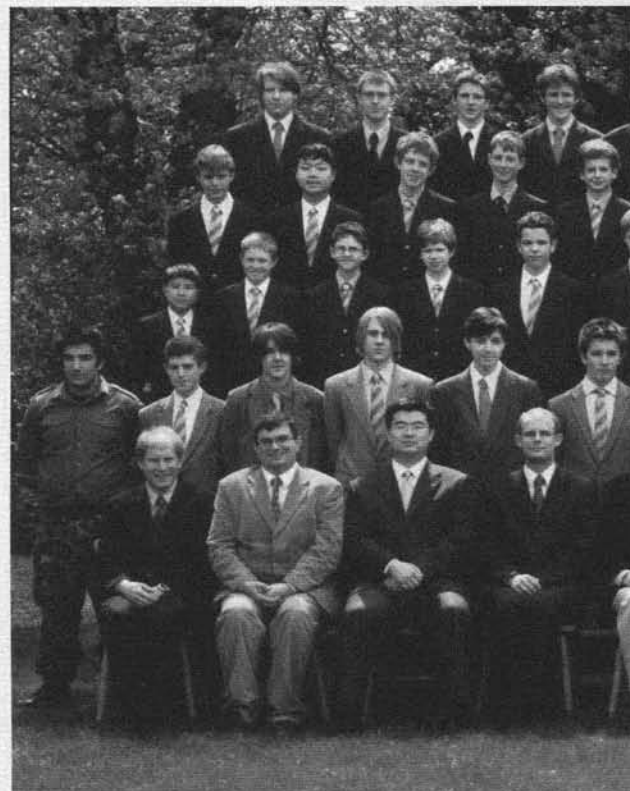
Phelps' House

• JAMES ANCELL • JAMES BIRKETT • ALEC GARTON ASH • HORACE HO • JUZHENG HUANG • ADRIAN JACK • MICHAEL-LUKE JONES • ALISTAIR MCKENZIE • EDWARD MITCHARD • RYAN NEWTON • CHRISTOPHER NORTH • OLIVER SANDERS • BO ZHAO • LUCAS ARLOTT • JOSHUA BAINES-BUFFERY • WILLIAM BEAUFOY • DAN BOARDMAN • HARRY COOK • JAMES CUNDELL • DIMITRIS DOULTSINOS • MALTE ENGLER • JOHN FOYLE • CALLUM FRANCIS • EDWARD GIVEN • RICHARD GRAY • ROBERT GROVE SMITH • RICHARD KAUDEWITZ • KYUNG SOO MIN • LEWIS SIMPSON • JAMES WANG • SUNG HYUN YU • PAUL ANTONY • JAMES COOK • TIMOTHY DAWSON • DAVID EMERSON • PAUL GODSMARK • PAVEL KOGAN • SAM MCKENNEY • RALPH MORGAN • NICHOLAS POLLARD • BAYLY SHELTON • MATTHEW STAGG • JONATHAN THOMAS • ROSS THOMPSON • JEREMY THOMSON • JACK AMBLER • BENJAMIN CHAMBERS • JASPER COOPER • GUY LOMAX • OLIVER MORRISON • EDWARD PATTISON • ADAM PAXTON • LUKE TITLEY • PATRICK VICKERS • JAMES WALLIS • HARRY WIMBORNE • PATRICK APPLETON • JONATHAN BAYFIELD • RHYS CADMAN • JOSEPH DELO • SAM DENT • HARRY DESMOND • JAMES HAWKES • ROBIN MADDEN • THOMAS METCALF • TRISTAN MITCHARD • JOHN MORGAN • ROBERT MORRIS • ALEXANDER PLINT • JAMES RHODES • OLIVER SQUIRES • FINLAY TAYLOR • BILAL YASSINE

It has happened – Waste Court is ringing with the sound of saw and hammer and the phased development of the Boarders' washing facilities has swung into action. The loft rooms are now ensuite and boys now have 6ft 6in beds: a luxury that Old Boys object to and that the Junior Boarders adore. We all look forward to the transformation of the rest of the House over the next two years and I would like to thank the Headmaster, the Bursary and the Works staff for their hard work.

This year, I have been impressed by the camaraderie and good spirit which have been so evident around the House. I attribute this new feeling of zest and enthusiasm to three factors. First, the new tutors, **JEJO** and **DAB**, instantly made themselves at home and inspired us all to aim for excellence. Second, the great leadership shown by the School Prefects, **B. Zhao**, **J. Birkett** and **A. Jack**, who have been faultless in their commitment and inspirational in judgement. Third, the new dynamic Third Form who have responded to the challenge of Abingdon with true grit and drive.

There can be little doubt that Phelps' is in an idyllic setting, which inspires the boys to set high standards and seek the compassion necessary to understand each other. These ideals give Phelps' House pupils a loyalty and commitment that mark each of them out as tremendous people.



It is no surprise that at Prize-Giving this summer the leaving Sixth Form was well represented from the House, as they have been its backbone, and we wish them all every success in their chosen careers. Sadly, we also have to say farewell to two tutors: **JFB**, who has guided the Upper Sixth to such success and the Fifth Form Tutor, **ACWB**, whose tolerance and compassion have been remarkable. Finally, I add an extra thank you to the unsung heroes of Phelps' – the domestic team who daily guide the House towards greater levels of hygiene and tidiness. **Carol Webb** has spearheaded this domestic attack and has to a great extent prevailed. She and her team are essential to the House and highly regarded by us all.

As ever, I will leave the final word to the Head of House:

This has been another successful year in the progression of Phelps' House. Last year was the first time in Abingdon's history that both Day and Boarding pupils mixed together in one House. This year it has become evident that this is a well rounded mix with **WTP** leading the House with an admirable amount of enthusiasm even through the most trying of times.

If last year was considered to be a fine year with Phelps' showing that they could do well in more than just the academic side of things, then this year was

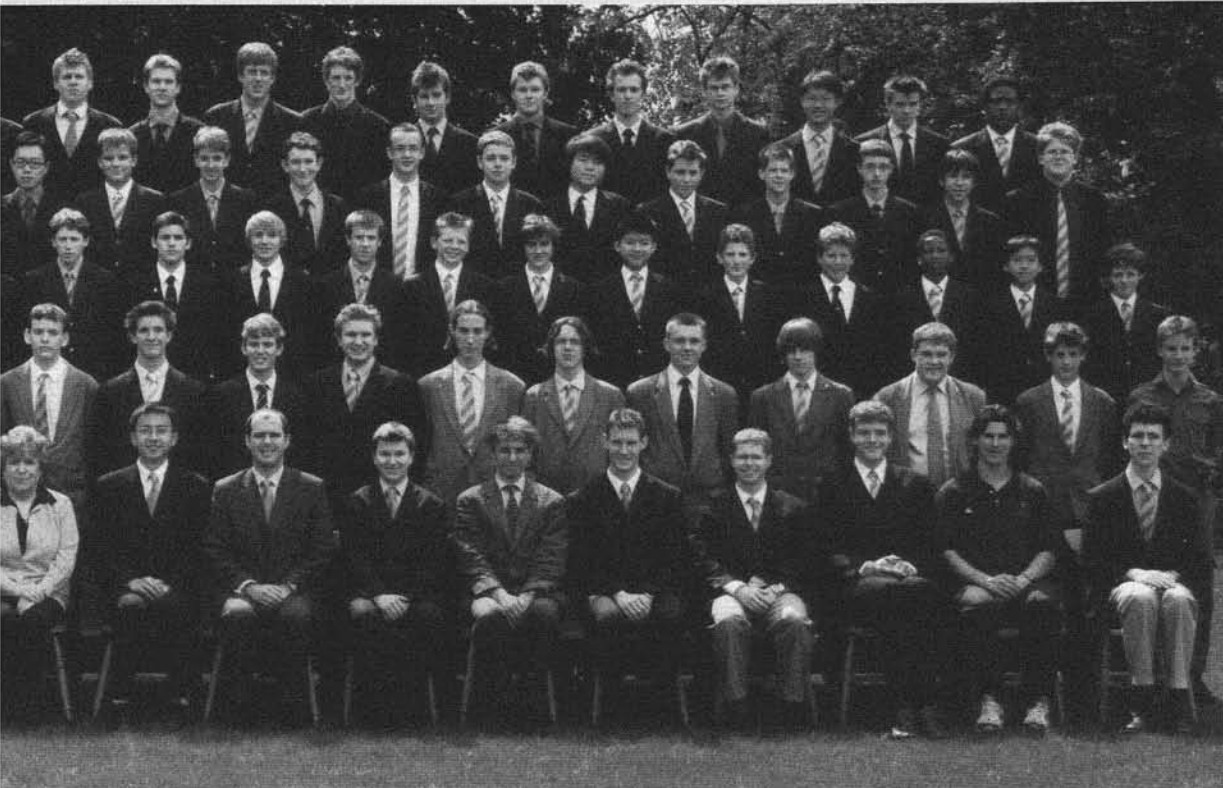
positively ground-breaking. In the Michaelmas term, the House spent many weeks in keen preparation for the House Singing Competition, boldly led by **M-L. Jones** and **E. Mitchard**, and the final rendition of *We Are The Champions* by *Queen* will be remembered for its quality for years to come.

T. Dawson and **N. Pollard** put on another superbly humorous House Review, with performances from boys from all years of the House with **J. Ansell** playing *One* by *U2* beautifully and the two organisers using sarcasm, irony and Alan Bennett to great effect.

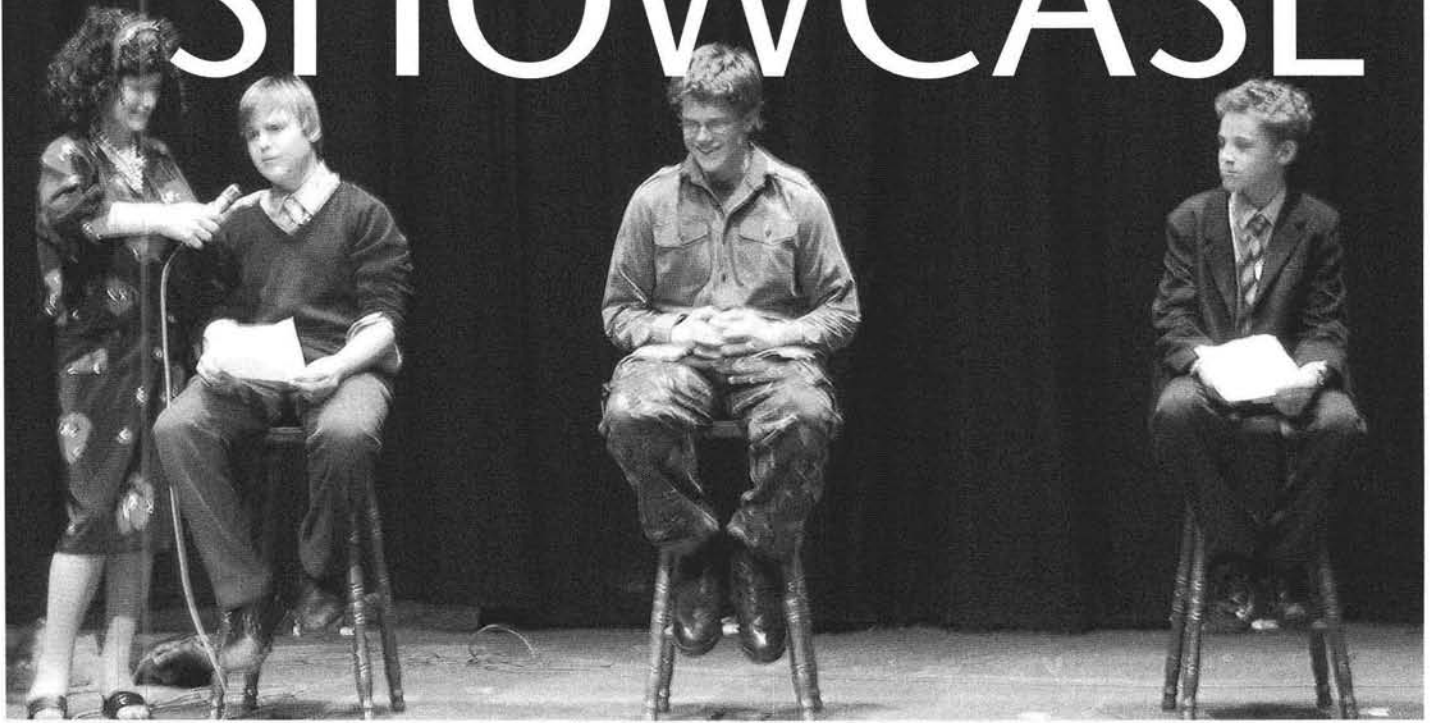
But Phelps' has had more to offer than just in the Arts. **C. North** has continued to beat back any opposing teams with his badminton racquet. **A. McKenzie** showed great skill and determination in the Hockey 1st XI, which lost only one of its eleven matches. Phelps' House put up a good show in the Inter-House Athletics Day, and the Thirdformers managed to win the Tag Rugby Competition.

Throughout the whole year, it has to be said that Phelps' House has shown vigour and enthusiasm in all areas of School life, and has proved that with enough of these qualities, one can achieve excellence.

WTP AND J. BIRKETT VIJFB



SHOWCASE



Charities

"P. Statham kept us entertained for the best part of an hour."

This year the Third Form Charities Committee, under the umbrella of Community Service, has largely masterminded charity fundraising. The participants of the committee changed every half term as they rotated around the different services available to them, but they all had an opportunity to select the charities that they would like to support and to plan events. Not surprisingly, the first event was a Third Form disco with girls from St Helen's and Our Lady's Convent Senior School! This was held in September and to make the most of the lighter evenings, included a BBQ too. Each School represented chose a charity to support and the £358 raised was shared between Helen House Hospice, *Abingdon Alzheimer's* and the *Kingswood Trust*.

During September six of the Sixth Form joined a re-enactment of Dick Whittington's Walk to raise money for the *Treloar's Trust*, a charity which funds a college for disabled children. The boys collected £600 through sponsorship and completed their leg of the walk from Witney to Abingdon in appalling weather conditions, pushing a coach and trying to control Dick's cat! Well done!

The £30 raised at Open Day in October on the 'balloon bash', suggested by **D. O'Neill**, was also sent to Helen House Hospice. The Lower School worked hard to put together over fifty Christmas shoe boxes which were collected just after half term by *Operation Christmas Child* and sent off to children in war-torn areas of the world.

The Lent term started with an appeal at the New Year Concert made by **T. Bennett** to support

the *Ellen MacArthur Trust*, which offers disadvantaged children the opportunity to go sailing. Those present will not have forgotten his enthusiastic speech about the work of the *Trust* and how Ms MacArthur had "achieved a huge amount even though she's a woman"! The £327 raised was shared between the *Trust* and another charity based in Africa, *Goodwill Children's Homes Trust*, which provides shelter for children in need. **J. Coleby**, from **CB's** Third Form Latin set, encouraged the class to learn the GCSE vocabulary list in a sponsored 'Latin Learn'. They raised a wonderful £413.87 for the *Uganda Church Fund* which is helping build a school.

Just before half term the Third Form organised another joint event with St Helen's, which took the guise of a Valentine's Day *Blind Date* competition. One boy explained, "We thought it might be a bit of fun and break the ice at parties. Cilla Black, aka **P. Statham**, kept us all entertained for the best part of an hour. She/he did such a great job that the contestants need not have been there at all!" The good news was that the event also raised £108.10 for the *Oxford Children's Hospital Appeal*.

The annual Charity five-a-side football tournament proved to be very popular again this year. The standard of football was impressive and I am grateful to the referees for their help. At one stage I was a little alarmed to see that the event had attracted the attention of a neighbouring tramp. Whilst I was wondering how to distract him in order to prevent him from wandering onto the pitch, I was informed that the 'tramp' was indeed a parent in fancy dress come to support his team *The*

Tramps! Starsailors, captained by **C. More**, won the Sixth Form Cup, completing their final in a small snowstorm. The Fifth Form Cup went to *Witness the Fitness* and the Fourth Form team, *The Russians*, took back their Cup from the Third Form. This event raised £408.55 for *SABRE Trust* (Serving Africa By Remote Exploration) and *Cystic Fibrosis*. The annual Road Relay was used by one of the Third Form teams to raise £162.43 through sponsorship for the *Marie Curie Breast Cancer Fund*.

The day before the Summer term started saw the **Headmaster** compete in the *London Flora Marathon* in horrible weather conditions. He may not have done as much pre-race training as he might have liked, so finished outside the top fifty, but it was a super achievement to have completed 26 miles in a respectable four and a half hours and, more importantly, raised £825 through the School sponsorship raffle and a further £300 privately, to support *The British Heart Foundation*. A sell-out concert event, *For One Night Only*, organised by **G.Potter**, raised a remarkable £2000, also for *Marie Curie*. The Non-Uniform Day raised a fabulous £1484.77, which was gratefully received by *Liberis Trust* to further their work providing homes for the abandoned children in Romania. They were able to visit the Lower School and give a valuable presentation during our Assembly. **JEJO** hosted the showing of a film in which he starred as the lead role when he was about ten years old. The nominal entrance fee raised £75, providing a start to his fundraising for *Mind, Meningitis Trust* and *Hope and Homes for Children*. At the start of the summer holidays **JEJO** will be joining his team to compete in the Four Peaks Challenge. We wish him well with his fundraising.

Another annual event was the collection of *Tesco's*

Vouchers. My thanks go to those who participated, for we were able to hand over thousands to The Kingfisher School to help enhance their computers.

After half term came the Auction of Promises. I would like to take this opportunity to thank those who contributed to this event, as we raised a further £2000 for the *British Heart Foundation*, thereby more than honouring our pledge to them in support of HM's marathon run. The Committee worked hard to put this together and it was great fun. Those present enjoyed bidding against one another and the excitement was enhanced by some generous telephone bids as well. My thanks to the auctioneer, K.Prince from *Drewett Neate*, who had us all laughing with his entertaining performance, despite the rather small audience, and managed to sell every lot including those with reserves. My thanks go also to the band, who, I believe, took some future bookings that evening!

The last event was again a Third Form occasion. **FAD** and the Music Department joined forces to present a Drama/Music evening and raised £50 for Sobell House Hospice.

STOP PRESS: Over the summer, *Oxfam* was very pleased to realise in excess of £2000 from our donation of classical records to six of their Bookshops around the UK.

As well as the practical giving, the grand total raised this year was approaching £8700 (before the *Oxfam* donation) and we have been able to support eighteen organisations, thanks to the generosity of many Abingdonians and their families.

ALB



Community Service

The start of another very successful year's service to the Abingdon community culminated in a rousing tea party, more action-packed than ever, as we approached the end of Michaelmas term 2003. The Dining Hall was packed with sixty senior citizens from Abingdon, and boy volunteers of all ages. Aside from the usual tea- and coffee-pouring by **W. Poole** and **G. Cowie** and the mingling with the visitors by **J. Needham**, there was carol-singing, a quiz, unicycling and a Christmas reading. The music was provided by the Brass Band and a Third Form string quartet. **Miss Parker** encouraged the visitors to join in the carol-singing with a degree of success, and indeed **G. Potter** even suggested that the visitors could teach our boys a few things about singing! Then followed more tea-drinking and the Christmas-focused quiz, which had questions about various customs at Christmastime around the world.

This had been expertly compiled by **J. Innes** and **P. Birkett**. A musical interlude provided by the string quartet accompanied the marking. Next a raffle, organised by **P. Probert**, was drawn, and prizes ranging from sponges and soap to chocolates were cheerfully distributed by our very own unicyclist, **M. Nurton**. The quiz winners too received their prizes: a diary and a fountain pen. Our thanks for mounting this event are due in particular to **MMH**, **G. Innes** and **DGA**, who drove the minibus.

During the previous term several boys had struck up friendships with the residents of Old Station House through their regular visits, as **J. Graves**, **P. Collins**, **M. Neil**, **S. Dyson** and **E. Henderson** here explain:

"... It has been an interesting experience, and we have met many new people. We have become good friends with many of the bingo regulars. Over the first few weeks it was hard to make conversation, sometimes, but as the visits continued, the elderly people opened up a little more and we became firm friends. Some proved to be very nice and generous people; all have very different personalities! We saw many arguments over a variety of subjects, such as who should get the help of 'the young boys', or whether we should play bingo or cards. We have many fond memories of the residents, and in particular, I remember the moment when one lady shouted, 'I'm not playing bingo because that's for babies!'. The next week she was playing it again. I usually play the piano to them before a bingo session, and from the response I can tell the residents enjoy us coming. Occasionally we study the Bible with them, which they greatly enjoy. We always make it our duty to visit those who could not attend the bingo session, too, for a friendly chat and perhaps a cup of tea. So no-one gets left out and everyone benefits fully from our weekly visits..."

The Lent term saw a total of thirty-six Abingdonians, from various years, visiting Abingdon Hospital, The Day Centre in The Charter and several local primary schools. Middle School boys meanwhile began to visit Cygnet Court. One successful formula was that of preparing entertainment in School one week



and visiting the next. **A. Fisher** made some excellent posters and ran a lively bingo session, which was much appreciated. **W. Stockdale** was an invaluable member of this group as he brews such good tea. **B. Balchin's** colourful programme was much admired at the Spring tea party. Once again Third and Fourth Form boys worked together to provide tea and lively entertainment for sixty-five guests from Old Station House, Lady Eleanor Court, Nicholson House and the Older and Bolder Club. **P. Probert** and **J. Needham** ran the raffle, **B. Allen** and **N. Li** delivered the quiz and the highlights of the afternoon were **J. Swarbrick's** and **N. Robinson's** imaginative rendering of *The Lion and Albert* and also a medley of lighthearted songs performed by *The Abingdon Academicals*, directed by **DJP** and **SRW**. A good time was had by all, the party ended spot on 5pm and the guests were very appreciative, to judge by the several letters of thanks they sent in later.

By the time the Summer term and the examination season came around, the reader might feel that our Community Service efforts ought to have been winding down. Quite the opposite! The visiting from the previous term continued apace, and the crescendo of activity reached its peak when **P. Probert**, **E. Henderson**, **C. Lillycrop** and **C. Tucker** gave help at the Strawberry Tea hosted by St Helen's Church Caring Action Group. This was very much appreciated. Next the boys from the Middle School and Upper School gave a party for the members of this Group and for the residents of Cygnet Court in the new foyer of the Amey Theatre. Our visitors were thrilled to see the new building, the artwork and the flowers in Lacies Court garden and were even more delighted to be serenaded by **A. Lo**, **E. Caird**, **A. Kingdon** and **D. Mak**. There were myriad compliments to the chef for the delicious tea, and **P. Probert's** hilarious raffle again delighted the crowds, bringing a very successful, enjoyable and worthwhile year's Community Service to its fitting end.

MMH

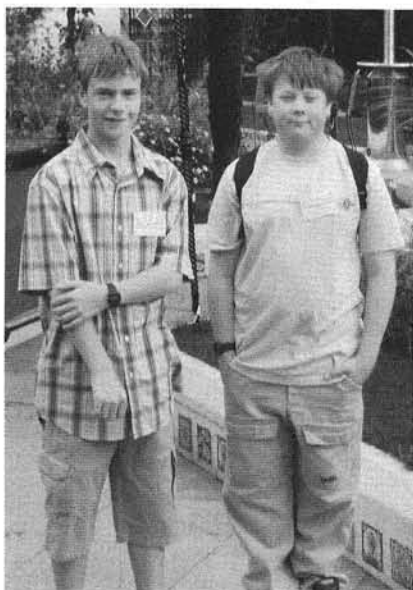
The Library

This year has seen a hectic schedule for the Library, taking part in several outside events: some new and some regulars in the calendar. In November, Abingdon School was pleased to host the regional heat for the Kids' Lit Quiz: held in this country for the first time. Kids' Lit Quiz was started by a tremendous enthusiast for reading, Wayne Mills, who is a lecturer in education in New Zealand and also acts as quizmaster. There were twenty teams representing schools as far afield as Birmingham and London (an extended region ...) and we were even more delighted when one of Abingdon's teams, consisting of four Firstformers, went through to the final in Newcastle



in December. Wayne expressed his astonishment at the level of knowledge displayed in this regional heat. It was tremendously exciting to be involved in this first final and even though the boys were not crowned champions, they can feel very proud to have represented the School at such a high level.

Throughout the Michaelmas and Lent terms, Lower School boys have been reviewing books for the Red House Children's



Book Award, culminating in two boys from the Second Form representing Oxfordshire at the national ceremony held in London in June. This was a wonderful opportunity to meet some top authors and illustrators, including Jacqueline Wilson. The overall winner was Michael Morpurgo with his book, *Private Peaceful*. Unfortunately, he had a long-standing prior engagement and was

not able to be there, but sent a very imaginative video which seemed to speak to each individual at the ceremony. (Abingdon boys, of course, had been fortunate enough to hear Michael speak at School earlier in the year in his capacity as Children's



Laureate.)

In the Summer term, the boys in the First and Second Forms again enthusiastically took part in *Shadowing the Carnegie*. This is an annual event which has the added bonus of sharing reading experiences with the other five secondary schools in Abingdon. This year included a quiz at John Mason School and a reviewing session at St Helen's. The Abingdon Forum, where all the reviewers make a presentation supporting 'their' book, an all-day event in July, was held at Fitzharry's School. Traditionally, the Carnegie winner on that day is never the same as the national winner – and so it was this year! The national winner was *The Gathering Light* by Jennifer Donnelly (a Richard and Judy recommendation) and Abingdon's winner was *Private Peaceful* by Michael Morpurgo (perhaps some influence from his earlier visit?).

In March, the poet, John Foster, came to visit the School and entertained and inspired boys from the First Form through to the Fourth Form with his lively approach to poetry.



Throughout the year, normal library business has carried on between all these activities and it seemed as though the boys were doing their best to refute any suggestion that 'the book is dead - and long live the computer', as borrowing has exceeded previous years. Long may this continue! We received a number

of donations, for which we are extremely grateful. These are detailed below:

Title	Donor
<i>Shell Connections 2003</i>	Foyle Foundation
Selection French texts	French Department
Selection Geography texts	Geography Department
Fiction selection	English Department
Physics text book	Physics Department
Chemistry texts	Chemistry Department
Classics	Classics Department
<i>Lord of the Flies</i>	Simon Woods, OA
English Criticisms	SAE
<i>Quantum Leaps</i>	RJS
Microbiology	Biology Department
French texts	Nicholas Hele and EMTS
British Medicine Research	Damian Riddle
<i>A School within a School</i>	Nigel Hammond, OA
Oxon Local History	Nigel Hammond, OA
<i>Asian Affairs</i>	RSKM
RS texts	RS Department
Selection books	Mr Peskett
Fiction	NMR
Travel books	IAM
<i>Mars: Inside Story</i>	ICF
<i>The Lord of the Rings</i>	BBC



D. Rawcliffe receiving his prize
from Rutherford Appleton

GJC

Laboratory

Young Geographer of the Year



From more than 5000 entries around the country, this report on the future of the oceans, written by **S. Welch**, was chosen to receive an award. **T. Middleton** was also awarded a certificate for a 'highly commendable' piece. The following extracts are from **S. Welch's** report:

What is the Effect of the Current Uses of the Oceans?

Waste disposal – Nuclear waste, sewage, and land-based materials and other things from shipping. 80% (millions of tons) of the waste is from dredging. 10% of all the waste disposed into the oceans is contaminated with heavy metals, oil, pesticides and nutrients. These have toxic effects on marine life, which has the potential to contaminate food.

Energy – By 2020, the use of tidal power will have increased greatly. This does not affect the oceans at all.

Fisheries – At the moment fisheries worldwide produce a total of 100 million tonnes of fish annually. 50% of these species of fish are at the maximum limit of what they can produce without dying out. This means that if we continue to fish at the current amount we run the risk of causing the extinction of many species of fish.

Human Settlements – These days, around 44% of the world's total population live in coastal areas. This amount of people (more than the total population of the world in 1950) puts a lot of pressure on the surrounding environment, and nearly all the settlements dump their waste into the sea, which can be a threat to public health. The rising population also leads to land being reclaimed, which can be dangerous to live on anyway, but also damages and destroys ecosystems. Also many of the resources including the fish are overexploited.

Biotechnology – Biotechnology can be used for developing pharmaceuticals, polymers and enzymes. This can be useful to prevent experiments on land animals, but could also cause unforeseen problems in the ocean ecosystem.

Oil & Gas – Large platforms are constructed and seabed pipes. The oil is pumped out of the oceans and then transported along the pipes to a mainland rig. As a result of the lack of pressure from the oil the seabed will sometimes collapse.

Transport – The seas have always been used as a means of transport but with many ships using it daily. This means that the seas will be polluted. However, it is becoming more common to have an electric motor. Even so there are still accidents during which oil or other substances can end up polluting the ocean.

The most sensible thing would be to choose uses which are both productive for humans and the marine ecosystem. The

most obvious of these would be the energy from tidal and wave power. This does not have any known effect on the oceans and is becoming an increasingly cheap use of the oceans.

Next we should try to remove any uses which are currently counter-productive. Waste-disposal is the main one of these; it pollutes the environment, which can affect the marine life and the fish we eat, and therefore affect us. The only thing we get out of it is somewhere where we can dump all of our waste without necessarily witnessing the effects. There is also fishing, although this has a stronger case. However, if we are risking the extinction of many species of fish, and affect the environment, then we should at least put restrictions on it. We cannot ban it because we would cause a large increase in unemployment. Oil and gas are probably sensible things to stop also, even though they are used to produce most of our energy and fuel our country, but there are land rigs and things like tidal power which can make up for this.

If we stopped ocean and gas rigs, and ocean dumping, then we would have less of a reason for us to actually use ships. And if we used electric motors for the aquaculture industry then we would not have the effect. Also, now, it is generally quicker for people to get to A from B by plane or by the Channel Tunnel and other transport services rather than by boat. The only other real use of boats left is for cruises. If we limit the amount of cruises, the effect would be limited.

Tourism cannot really be controlled. Thousands of people flock to the beaches annually and it would be hard to completely stop people from leaving rubbish, etc.

So the future uses of our oceans should be:

- 1) Energy
- 2) Controlled Fisheries and Aquaculture
- 3) Limited Transport.

S. WELCH 3AMS



Creative Writing

Early in the year the Children's Laureate visited Abingdon to talk to some Secondformers. He made quite an impression! **N. Howe** and **J. Zhu** sum it up:

Michael Morpurgo was interesting, from the moment he spoke. He started by describing his childhood and reading to us some of the books he has written. He told us an extremely fascinating and moving story that grabbed the audience's attention. He told us that with his interesting background, he was able to produce remarkable stories.

Some of the stories were technically semi-fictions because they were based on his life. He also read to us a story about a boy with two fathers, based on his own experience and past. He read it with lots of emotion. His voice and tone changed every second: you could tell that he is a brilliant reader.

He also talked about his school years with a friend who thought himself to be the next Jesus (he was very funny when talking about his career aspirations to be a rugby international and how 'Jesus' helped him in this).

He even had some of the audience on stage doing some acting. He told us indescribable secrets that he was supposedly sworn not to tell anyone. It felt as if he told them exclusively to the audience. He went on to tell us the story about what drove him to change his teaching career for that of a writer. This illustrates how he is distinct from other authors: Michael Morpurgo writes with passion in his stories, stories in which you could feel as if you are there, stories which touch your emotions and mind. The best example is his book *Private*

Peaceful. I read the book myself and it is truly moving. Reading it transports you into another world; one can so easily picture the story in the mind.

Being in his presence made me feel as if there were a magical aura around Michael Morpurgo, of passion and deep thought and I knew he was not any ordinary author.

After the talk, he received questions from the audience. He answered them fully and did not hold back any of his thoughts and opinions. It was very interesting to hear his feelings.

His books are mainly serious books about people and the experiences they encounter which he shapes and changes slightly. Or they came about by something he saw: for example, he once saw a small boy alone on a horse, herding lots of big bulls, but unafraid of these big brutes. This inspired him to write the story down. He showed us that there is a story in everything.

Above all, he seemed very human. I used to think that writers were, in some way, superior people, who are able to weave great stories so well, but when I met Michael Morpurgo in the flesh he seemed so much more like the rest of us than I expected. He showed us that everybody has faults and can be unlucky and yet do exceptionally well in other parts of life, writing fascinating books, for example.

N. HOWE 2GGB & J. ZHU 2GGB

The Storm

The storm began small just
Hissing rain, then it started suddenly with a swish crack smack.
Even the house was shuddering.

Strong winds whipped at the house.
Thunder rumbling like a mammoth.
Oh how warm and cosy it feels inside.
Rain turning to hail and smacking on the roof like gunfire.
More trees fall. What will this world look like in the morning?

S. PRIOR 1S

The Weather Man

I sat in front of my TV screen,
I turned to channel one and what's to be seen?
An old plump man as round as a berry,
With a pig-like nose, red as a cherry.
A clicker in his left hand, pointing frantically with his right,
He said, "There's a cold front from the east and there's rain in sight."

Surely now you would think it could only get better,
But I knew in myself it would get wetter and wetter.
"Possible thunder," he said in a loud but stuttered voice,

Then paused for a moment like a sleeping tortoise.
"Minus ten," he claimed, could that be right?
Is he working in centigrade or fahrenheit?

Then I saw it on the screen with my own two eyes,
A whirling dervish of incredible size.
I couldn't believe it, I thought I would die,
My eyes filled up, I was about to cry.
Then as my future looked simply the worst,
He chuckled and said, "It's April the first!"

J.MARTIN 1S

Je suis un héros

Henry David Thoreau a dit que ta grande majorité des gens vit en la désespérance silencieuse. Ils ont besoin de divertissements. Ils ont besoin de quelqu'un à juger, quelqu'un à aimer et détester en même temps, pourvu qu'il les amuse. Ils ont besoin d'un héros moderne. Le culte de la célébrité domine notre société: les idoles sont les héros de nos jours. Pas de Héraclès, avec sa force légendaire. Pas de Jason, avec ses vertus classiques. Pas d'Arthur, avec son courage et sa galanterie. Non, on peut devenir légendaire aujourd'hui simplement en amusant le public pour une période brève. Les héros du vingt-et-unième siècle ne sauvent plus de jeune filles en détresse mais les gens qui veulent admirer ou se moquer de quelqu'un. Ils ne tuent pas de dragons mais l'ennui.

La façon la plus facile pour un inconnu de devenir célèbre est à la télévision de réalité. Afin que je puisse être un héros, je suis entré au foyer du 'Big Brother'. Après y être arrivé, je me suis déshabillé; bien que je ne sois point nudiste, j'ai cru que si je montrais quelque chose de controversé, le public voudrait me voir et voterait pour moi. La semaine prochaine,

David Thoreau said that most people live in a state of silent despair. They need distractions. They need someone to criticise, someone to love and to hate at the same time, provided he keeps them amused. They need a modern hero. The pursuit of fame dominates our society: idols are our modern-day heroes. Not Heracles, he of legendary strength. Not Jason, the classically virtuous. Not Arthur, he of courage and gallantry. No, today you can become famous just by keeping the public amused for a brief moment. Twenty-first century heroes no longer save damsels in distress, but those who want to admire or laugh at someone. They don't kill dragons, only boredom.

The easiest way for the man in the street to become famous is on reality television. So that I might be a hero, I went into the Big Brother household. Having got there, I took off my clothes; not that I am a naturist, not at all; rather I thought that if I did something controversial, the public would want to watch me and would vote for me. The next week I slept with one of the other tenants; by doing so I earned some

j'ai couché avec une colocataire; à cause de cela, j'ai gagné en popularité, donc je l'ai fait encore trois fois pendant mon séjour. J'ai menti aux autres colocataires afin que je puisse gagner le concours et le prix. J'ai révélé aux millions de téléspectateurs que mon frère est homosexuel car j'ai aimé que tout le monde fasse attention à moi. Quand j'ai senti que ma popularité était en baisse, j'ai donné un coup de poing à Barry - un colocataire que j'ai trouvé irritant parce qu'il a emprunté mon discman sans ma permission.

Ceux qui critiquent la télévision de réalité m'ont dit que mes actions étaient sans moralité, mais à mon avis ça n'importe rien car j'ai amusé le public; donc j'ai gagné le concours trois mois plus tard. Quand je suis sorti de la maison, il y avait autant de huées que de hurras, mais tout le monde avait aimé me regarder sur le petit écran. J'avais fourni une distraction aux gens qui vivent en la désespérance silencieuse.

Je suis un héros.

A. GARTON ASH VI JFB

more popularity, so I did it three more times during my stay. I lied to the other tenants so that I could win the competition and the prize. I revealed to the millions of viewers that my brother is gay because I loved it when everybody paid me some attention. When I felt my popularity was waning, I thumped Barry - a tenant who was annoying me because he borrowed my Discman without asking.

Those who criticise reality television told me that my actions were amoral, but in my view that doesn't matter a whit since I kept the public amused; so I won the competition three months later. When I left the house, I received acclamation and approbation in equal measure, but everybody had liked watching me on the small screen. I had managed to distract all those people who live in a state of silent despair.

I am a hero.

TRANSLATION BY DJP

Abingdon Staff mountaineering

"Great things are done when men and mountains meet; this is not done by jostling in the street ..."

wrote William Blake. He might have been foretelling the exploits of two Abingdon staff: **JEJO** who successfully conquered four British peaks in twenty-four hours to raise money for charity, and **SAE** who was so moved by his experiences in the highlands of Papua New Guinea that he has recounted them in a travel book, awaiting publication. Excerpts from both authors appear below. **JEJO** writes:

We started our adventure in Burnley, the most northerly home of the members of our group and so a suitable staging point for the trip to Scotland. The school holidays had begun so I was able to arrive a day before everyone else and was consequently put in charge of preparing our rations. A trip to Asda and much boiling of water later, I was standing in front of a mountain of pasta, rice, tuna, peanut butter rolls, fruit, crisps and, as we were soon to learn, most importantly Jelly Babies. It seemed a massive amount of food for eight people and only 48 hours but we were going to have little sleep and keeping our energy levels high would be important. As the team arrived that evening the sense of excitement and trepidation grew: we were setting off early the next morning and I don't think many of us got much sleep.

Our journey up to Scotland was uneventful and we spent much of the time watching the skies, trying to fathom what the weather would be like. When we arrived there was low cloud but mercifully no rain. We had given ourselves plenty of time to allow for traffic jams on the way so were early enough to have a last hot meal at a cafe in the shadow of the mountain. We finally set off at 18:41 on Wednesday 16 July, nervous for what the next two days would hold but confident that we would succeed. Which of these contrasting feelings it was that caused us to set off rather too quickly I don't know but when we stopped for our first rest after about a kilometre, I think the enormity of the task ahead had really sunk in. The mood was not helped by a succession of walkers coming down whose comments varied from an incredulous "You're not going up now, are you? You do know how long it takes?" to the tourist who told us simply "If you go up now you'll die!" It emerged that two climbers had spent the previous night at the summit, having been caught in fog: our hearts were beginning to sink.

Fortunately, as we climbed higher the weather improved and we seemed to have the peak to ourselves. The views were stunning and, although we hit a layer of fog about 1km from the top, with the aid of a handheld GPS device we were able to navigate our way safely to the summit. A brief stop for photos and a Jelly Baby and we immediately set off down again. It was beginning to get dark but the first peak was done and our spirits were rising. The last few kilometres were completed with the

aid of head torches and the minibus was a welcome sight that was made even more pleasant by the plates full of pasta that were pushed into our hands by Nick and Colin, our two drivers. It was gone eleven as we set off again.

After attempting not to drop tomato sauce on our laps as we made our way along the bumpy country roads of Scotland, we all tried to get what sleep we could during the five hour journey to the Lake District. We fell out of the minibus at Seathwaite with bleary eyes and stiff legs to be greeted by a feeble attempt at sunshine. The clouds were high and it looked as if we might avoid rain again. This improved our mood and we set off again, although at a noticeably slower pace. We were fortunate that the weather held and our climb allowed for some impressive panoramas of the surrounding countryside. However, by now we were starting to feel the effects of the first walk and not much sleep. We had chosen quite a demanding route up Scafell so as to have an easy drive to and from the peak, something that was starting to seem like a bad idea! A succession of ridges meant several climbs and drops that did nothing to help our knee joints – several of the group have since said that this was the hardest part of the challenge. The summit was again engulfed in a heavy mist but touching the triangulation point and the obligatory Jelly Baby ensured that we began the journey down happy in the knowledge that we were halfway through the initial three peak challenge. As we reached the latter half of the descent, we started to meet people starting their day's climb and were again greeted with some bemused looks. I wondered whether it was tradition to tell them that they must be mad to be climbing at this time and mutter something about death but thought better of it.

We reached the minibus on schedule and set off again, with breakfast of cold tuna and rice in hand. We were lucky not to hit any traffic jams but the nearer we got to Wales the darker the clouds seemed. As we wound our way towards Snowdonia the clouds broke and the heavens opened. We drove into the car park at the bottom of the Pyg track, surrounded by mist and heavy rain. One of our drivers had decided to join us for this walk and a fresh walker in the group was certainly welcome. It was hard work: our legs were starting to give up on us, each step was a struggle and knee joints and calves were feeling the



strain. The rain did not let up and although we were on course to complete the 24 hour challenge we were feeling low. I was one of the first two of the group as we reached the top of the zigzag that leads to the final 200m path to the top and as we stumbled over the ridge we came across a large group of teenagers. Feeling rather embarrassed by looking as though I was going to pass out after having walked what is the shortest, easiest route to the summit, I managed to sputter out that it was the third of three. When they realised what I meant they gave the rest of the group an impromptu round of applause, which gave us the boost we needed to make it to the triangulation point.

In A night up the mountain, from 'The Light on the Statue' (a journey through Asia),

SAE writes:

“Our travelling alarm-clock woke me at 1.30 am. I felt absolutely dreadful, then even worse when I realised I had woken myself up to climb a mountain. In the dark. I rolled over, in disbelief, burying my head in my sleeping bag.

‘Please,’ I asked myself hopefully, ‘do I really have to do this?’

Yes.

My muscles felt stiff and tired from the previous day’s efforts; all my mountaineering enthusiasm had vanished. What I really felt like doing, at that particular moment, was sleeping out the final month and a half of my Papuan visa.

After a few minutes I heard Dron moving around in the main room. Eventually I stirred myself into some action. It was very cold – but the cloudless sky was still a welcome sight: at least if we got to the top of the mountain there was some chance that the sun might be shining. I went through to join Dron for an early breakfast of porridge. I found him trying to light an old paraffin lamp; he was halfway through a box of matches, not really on top of the situation. He was a grim, ghastly figure bent over in the flickering candlelight. I potted about groggily, wondering again what I had let myself in for. Suddenly a burst of flame and light sprang up from Dron’s corner. He cried out, already on his feet, holding the blazing lamp away from his startled face. He staggered around the room for a few moments trying to control the flames which were beginning to flick up towards the wooden ceiling of the hut. I ushered him towards the front door. He tottered towards it then stumbled down the wooden steps. Seconds later the light went out. I wondered whether

Our journey down was slow and painful but we were still ahead of schedule and when our other driver appeared from around a corner, camera in hand, we knew we were nearly there. I cannot express the relief I felt when I saw the wooden post that signified the beginning of the car park but should you ever go to Snowdon do not be surprised if you see a small, blond figure hugging a bollard. We arrived as a group and stopped the clock on 23 hours and 23 minutes.

The ferry to Ireland did not leave until the early hours of the following morning so we had time to enjoy a much needed hot shower at one of the group’s uncle’s house and a hearty pub dinner. We had time for a little sleep on the ferry and then started the journey to County Kerry. A full Irish breakfast on the way did a lot to raise our energy levels and was a very pleasant change from cold rice and pasta! We arrived at the base of Carrauntoohil with time enough for us to enjoy the walk and the beautiful surroundings without feeling under pressure. We were again lucky not to have any rain and we completed our challenge without any problems. It was with great relief that we reached the minibus without any injuries and in a fit state to be able to raise a pint (or two) of Guinness later that night in Limerick.

he had plunged into the lake; but I had heard no splash. Then he reappeared, walking slowly into the hut, carrying the unlit lantern. He looked sheepish. It was not a very good start.

We gave up on our idea of a bowl of hot porridge; instead J (who had got up to see us on our way) dished out some Australian dried oats which we ate with powdered milk and sugar; she told me to pretend it was Sainsbury’s De Luxe muesli. Before we left we spent a few minutes trying unsuccessfully to repair Dron’s torch which had somehow got broken; he was a good guide, and he knew his way around the mountain, but he was not one of life’s mechanical wizards. So we were down to one small torch, and, hopefully, the light of a nearly full moon.

Thus, ill prepared, half-asleep – but very determined – Dron and I set off to climb the rest of Mount Wilhelm; at 15000ft the highest of Papua’s highlands. Dron led the way. He wore plastic bags on his feet, tied up around his ankles. This was to protect him from the cold, not the rocky terrain. On a sunny day, with feet as tough as a Norwegian paratrooper’s boots, he could have ambled up a mountain of broken glass.

We worked our way quickly around Piunde lake, then turned on the torch for the first time to negotiate the wet, slippery cliff which led up to the larger Aunde lake. Past this second expanse of water, glinting in places from the moonlight, we climbed up again quite steeply, hitting some more sodden patches where water trickles ran into the lake below. And we walked. And we climbed. Now more fully awake, I relaxed and started to enjoy myself. There was very little wind and I could hear nothing apart

from the sound of my own breathing which was getting heavier the higher we climbed. The scenery was rocky, craggy: great, sharpened towers rose into the silver sky around us, an elaborate stone instrument through which the wind played a melancholy tune. The moon came and went behind burly clouds, altering the colour of the scene – sometimes almost black, then a swift change to a luminous grey-white.

I felt at times as if I must be dreaming, but hoped (and knew deep down) that I was not.

Dron kept up a fair pace. I followed him as much by sound as by sight for I could hear his plastic bag footwear brushing and scraping against the rocky pathway. Now and again I had to use the torch even though it partially reduced a hand hold. At the top of the very steep sections Dron paused so we or rather I could catch my breath. The phrase is 'kissim wind' in Pidgin and it is one which I practised over and over again as we made our way through the small hours of that silvery grey night. Once or twice we sat down to rest properly. Dron and I exchanged a few words but our knowledge of each other's language was limited. We drank from the water bottle I was carrying and gazed out over the surrounding mountains. If we timed the rest stop well we caught the moonlight turning everything different shades of silver; it was quite unlike any vision of the earth I had ever seen before. But I have seen it since. Outside this narrow, low-ceilinged cottage where I am writing is an old village hall with attractive leaded windows and Tudor style beams. Yet it doesn't take much, it doesn't require much of an effort of memory, for the view through my window to alter suddenly, for the old village hall to melt away into a range of sharp-edged mountains which I seem, once again, to be looking down upon through the glowing white light of a full Papuan moon. I wonder if they will always be there?

Close to the summit we passed the wreck of a World War Two USAF bomber. It was a spooky relic; the moonlight glinted and winked on the tarnished greyness of the metal. I paused, and let Dron walk ahead. I knew I would not see one; even so, I would not have been very surprised had I encountered an American pilot's ghost. Somehow, somewhere, during the night, we had left the real world behind. We had climbed above and beyond it. We were into something else now, something quite different, an ethereal element, in which a meeting with a spirit of the next world was almost to be expected. But I saw no spectral signs, heard no ghostly whispers; only Dron's plastic ankles swishing against each other up ahead and the sporadic, searching beams of the torch. As I walked on I kept telling myself to concentrate, to register all that I was seeing and feeling: the brilliant moonlight turning the rocky mountainscape into a glinting daylight, the flick flick of Dron's plastic feet, my lungs and legs beginning to feel the strain as the oxygen thinned out and the climbing went on. There was hard, physical effort mixed together with pure wonder at the extraordinary nocturnal escapade which I had become involved in. And I knew these elements would combine into a silver memory which I would want to cling onto forever.

The last section up to the summit was arduous. The climbing was no more difficult, but I was beginning to feel the gnawing, tell-tale symptoms of altitude sickness. Curious, not very nice

things were happening inside my head while each clambering, stretching action was now accompanied by more and more frequently recurring waves of nausea.

Shortly afterwards dawn broke somewhere on the far side of the mountain; the silver night faded into the murky first light of day, bringing with it, coincidentally, a splitting headache and an even deeper, darker vein of nausea. The moontime spell was over; we were back in the real, daytime world of weariness and pain. I put away my torch (the batteries flickering in anticipation of the sunrise) and tried not to vomit as I scrambled up the last few metres to the summit. Dron was already there, standing with his hands in his pockets, looking cold. A strong, icy wind swirled around us. We had made good time, and had reached the top by six o'clock, but in terms of the weather and the views we were about an hour too early. The sun was still too low, too pale, too cold. I wished I had stopped for longer to 'kissim wind' further down the mountain. It was really very chilly indeed. I started shivering, both from cold and tiredness. Inside I was glowing, though, like those children in the porridge adverts with their trick, internal fires burning, who are armed with carbohydrate power against the winter's day's trials. My own dried oats breakfast energy had long since dissipated but I still felt an internal buzz of pleasure and success. It was absolutely wind-swept freezing but that was because there was no more mountain above us. Because we had climbed it.

I looked around. The earliest gleams of sunshine were just starting to add a blush of pink to the surrounding clouds and mountains. They were a young girl's cheeks after an unexpectedly frank declaration of affection. I took far too many photographs, trying hard to keep the camera still against the buffeting wind. The summit is the apex of a triangle of Papuan provinces and I tried to work out the relative positions of the Madang, Chimbu and Western Highlands regions. I asked Dron to pick out a few landmarks but his geography seemed as shaky as his camerawork. His portrait photo of me ('At the Top') resulted in a cock-eyed shot of half of the Bismarck range – and my left elbow.

But it was, as I have said, very windy.

We had a drink and some dried fruit then sat watching the changes of light and shade on the mountains. The sun's rays began to create pretty highland pictures - but they were still not providing any serious warmth. It would be some time before the real heat of the day climbed up the mountain to join us.

I glanced at Dron. He too looked very cold and now, I noticed, rather unhappy.

'Dron,' I said, and indicated that we might think about heading back down the mountain.

He nodded and grinned - then began to strip off his plastic sockliners which had become shredded and torn. Underneath he wore a couple of pairs of socks; these would just about last out until he reached the warmer terrain.

It took only two daylight hours to descend. We saw the lakes from a long way off and the tiny white square of the hut. They acted as beacons which we were happy to steer by. As we got closer I could just see J standing by the door of the hut, watching out for our return. I gave a rather childish air punch of victory. She waved back.

We had stopped on two occasions for Dron to strip off a

pair of socks. He was down to bare feet as we wound past the lakes again and I followed his effortless, padding stride all the way back to the hut. It was about ten o'clock. Dron immediately sat down to a large pot of cold rice which he had cooked the day before. I felt far too altitude sick to eat anything. I drank half a cup of tea before crawling into my sleeping bag for the rest of the day.

But I was truly glad I'd got out of it much earlier that morning. If I hadn't, I'd have missed some of the stuff that dreams are made of.

The next day – clear and warm – we tramped back down to Keglsugl. My muscles ached. My head still buzzed from the altitude, from the curiously extra-dimensional memories of our night climb. We took our time, enjoying the scenery again in reverse, J spotting wild orchids which she'd missed on the way up. Back at Herman's guesthouse we said goodbye to Dron; I thanked him for guiding me to the top of Mount Wilhelm and paid him his fee. We shook hands and knew we had shared something.

The guest house was empty (the Israelis had moved on) so we spread out our gear, got the wood stove going again and heated up large quantities of water to wash ourselves and our clothes. Then we sat down to discuss what we should do next. We had handled one of Papua's physical challenges and were now right in the heart of the highlands region. Then, as on countless other occasions during the year, we faced a choice of options. We could stay in the highlands, but head off into a remoter

region – or we could continue down towards the east coast, to Madang, and see something of the life of the Melanesian people. The choice was complicated because of the very limited road network in the country; we could get down to Madang easily enough – but we would then have to retrace our steps back up into the highlands.

It poured with rain that evening. Two Australians arrived, planning to tackle the mountain the next day. We passed on our meagre knowledge and swapped life stories with Trevor and Ronnie, the way recently met travellers often do. Being well equipped Aussies, Trev and Ron had brought several cans of South Pacific lager up the mountain with them; we helped to lighten their load – and celebrated our modest mountaineering conquest.

We sat around the stove with our clothes drying on the line above. The hut was warm and snug. The underpowered generator churned away outside and the light bulb glowed dimly. The wooden walls looked parchment yellow in the feeble light. The rain fell and fell outside. I warned Ronnie about the slippery log bridges going up through the first part of the rainforest.

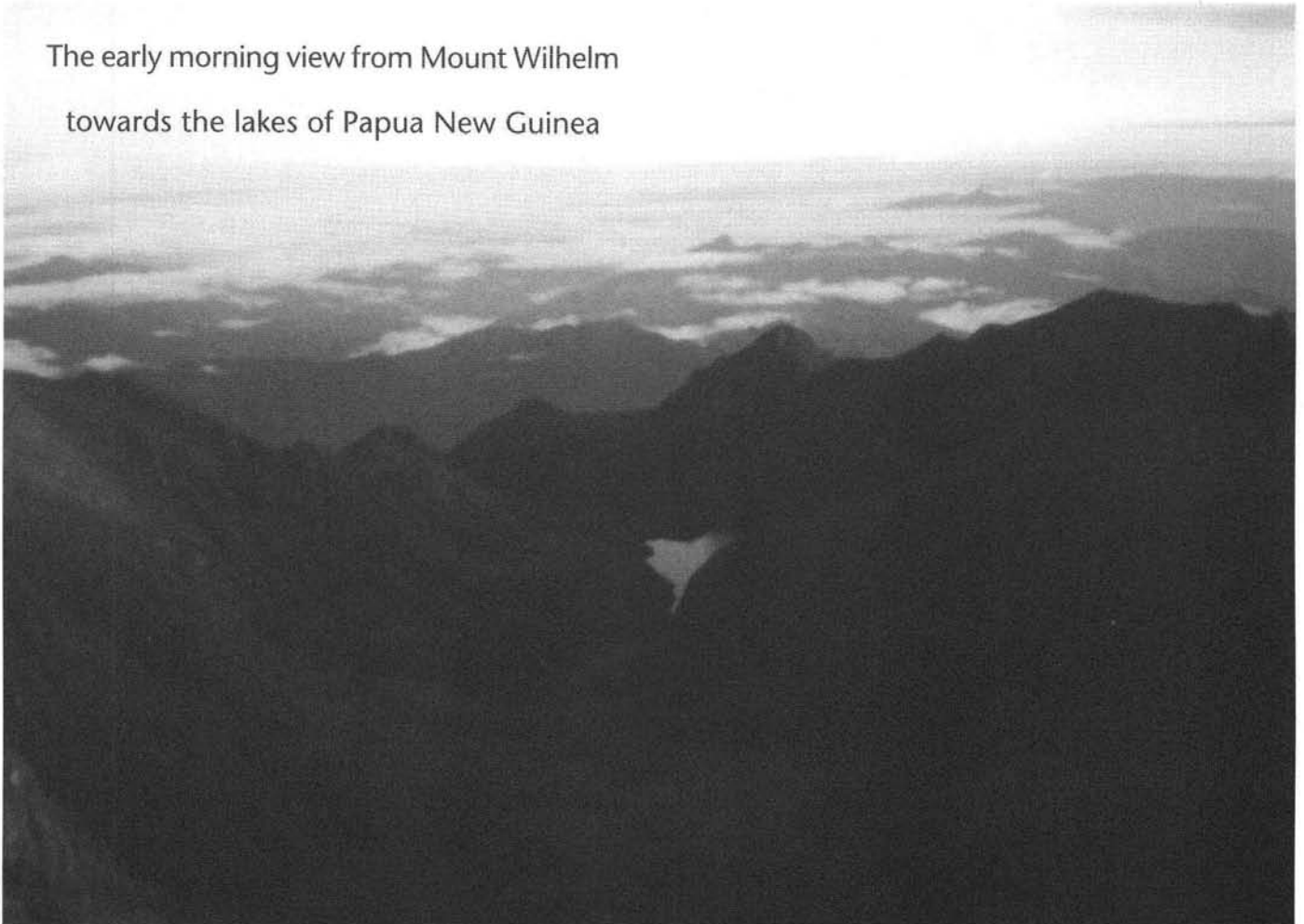
'No worries,' he replied, swigging from his lager bottle.

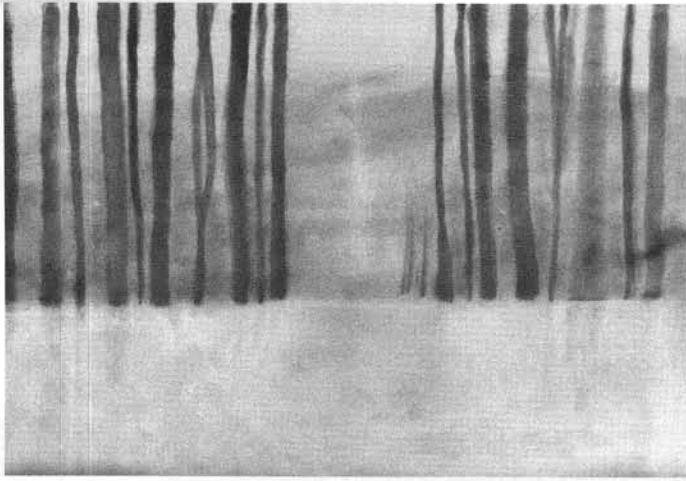
I felt happy, content and excited: I did not want to be anywhere else in the world at that moment.

Later, lying in our sleeping bags, comfortable on the raised wooden sleeping platform, J and I listened to the rain pelting down on the grass-thatched roof.

And we decided to head down to the coast."

The early morning view from Mount Wilhelm
towards the lakes of Papua New Guinea





A

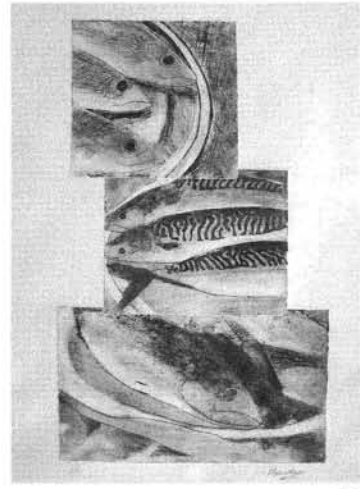


B

GCSE Art



C



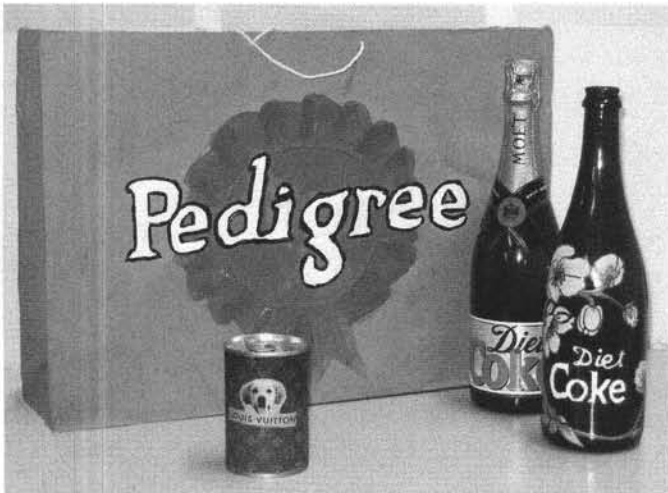
D



E



F



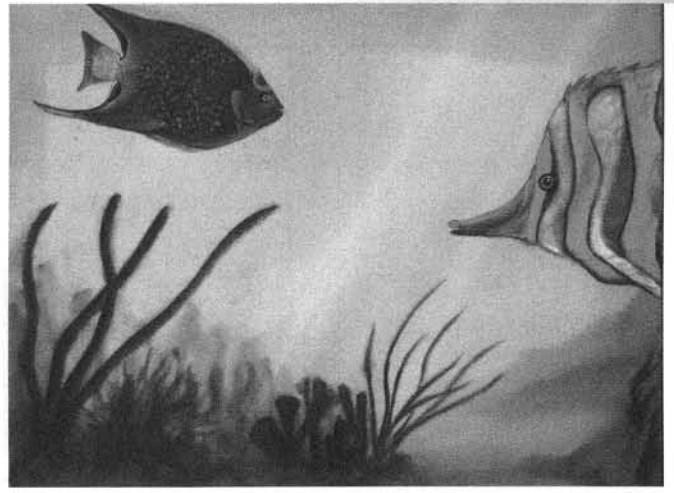
G

KEY:

- A: "Winter trees", ink and acrylic on paper, size A1, A. Powis 5CJB
- B: "Wittenham Clumps", chalk, size A4, A. Kyprios 5AJPE
- C: "Florida landscape", intaglio print, size A4, J.Gibson 5SEB
- D: "Fish", intaglio print, size A3, S. Laskar 5MRG
- E: "Locomotion", acrylic and ink on board, 90 x 40cm, A. Ingham Brooke 5DJB
- F: "Inside outside", intaglio print, size A4, A. Gordon 5DJB
- G: "Pedigree Foods", mixed media, various sizes, K. Kear 5JHT



A



B



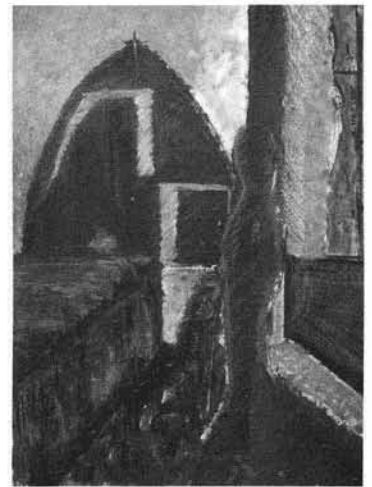
C



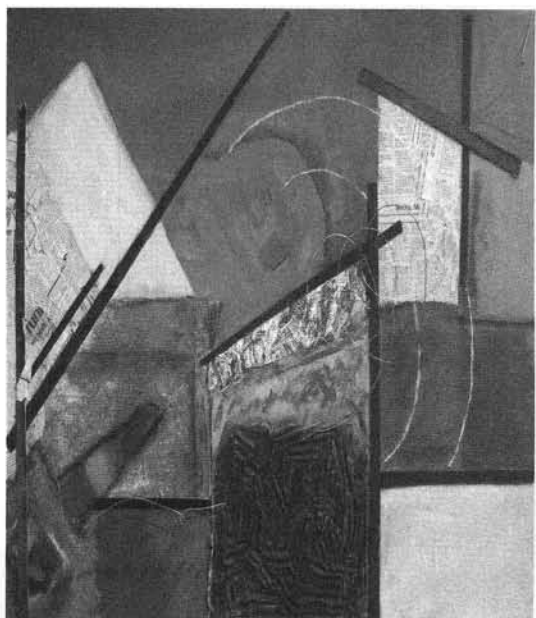
D



E



F



G

GCSE Art

KEY:

A: "Character", acrylic on board, size A1, H. Park SMRG

B: "Tropical Fish", acrylic on canvas, size A2, L. Wilkinson 5JHT

C: "Self Portrait", acrylic on board, size A1, P. Antony 5ACWB

D: "Junkyard", mixed media, size A1, P. Thomas 5CJB

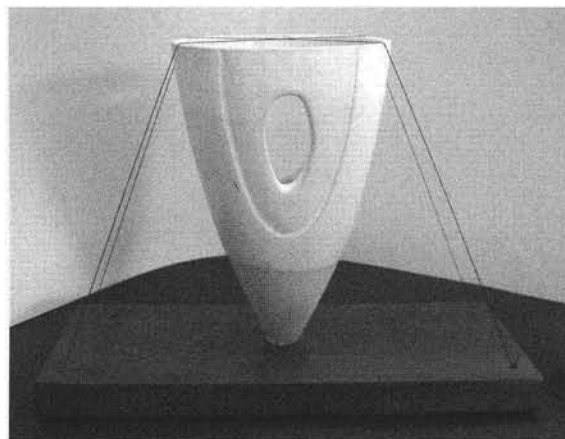
E: "Las meninas", mixed media, 35cm (h), J. Canlan-Shaw 5SEB

F: "Interior", acrylic on board, size A1, M. Spurring 5RPF

G: "Broken and discarded", acrylic on board, size A1, A. Francis 5SEB



A



B

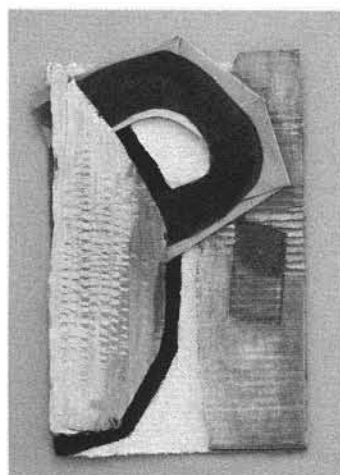


C



D

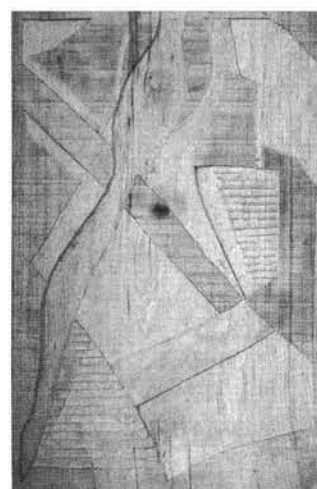
AS Art



E



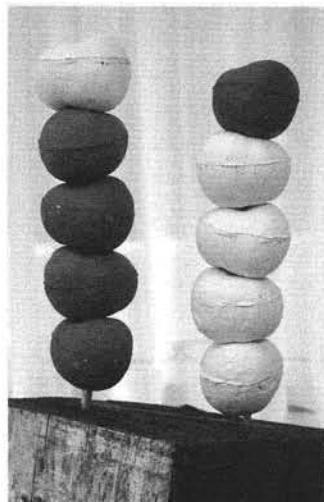
F



G



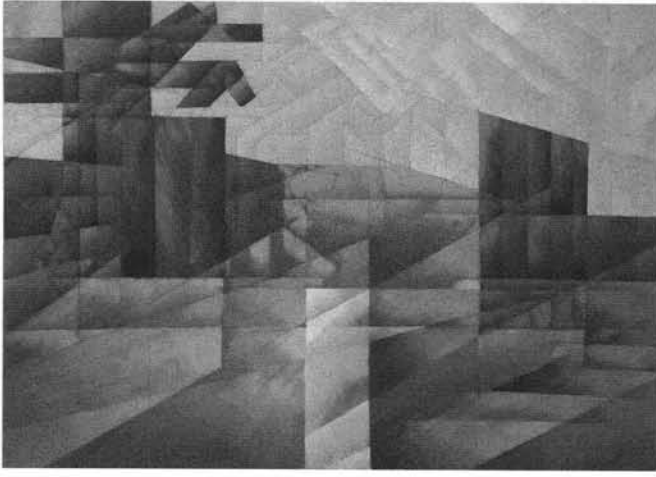
H



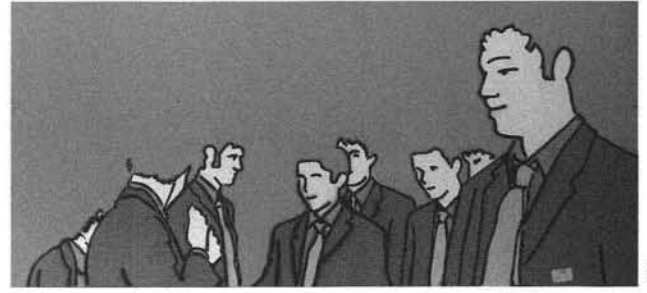
I

KEY:

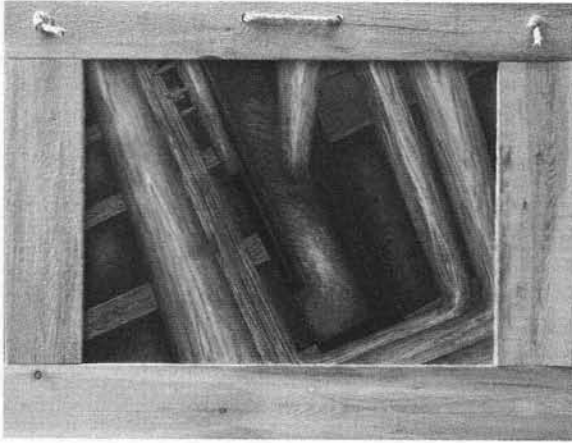
- A: "Windmill", mixed media, 250cm, T. Bainbridge 6TCG
- B: "Untitled (forces)", mixed media, 25cm (h), N. Hughes 6SAE
- C: "Garden drawing", charcoal, size A1, S. Moulds 6NAFP
- D: "Still life", oil on board, size A1, E. Cottrell 6TCG
- E: "Abstract", mixed media, size A2, D. Brook 6DF
- F: "Abstract (Garden)", oil on board, size A1, T. Woods 6TCG
- G: "Abstract", carved beech, size A2, A. Blackmore 6SAE
- H: "Garden", oil on board, size A1, T. Reid 6RSS
- I: "Apples", cast plaster, 30cm (h), R. Soames 6TCG



A



B



C



D



E

A2 Art



F



G



H

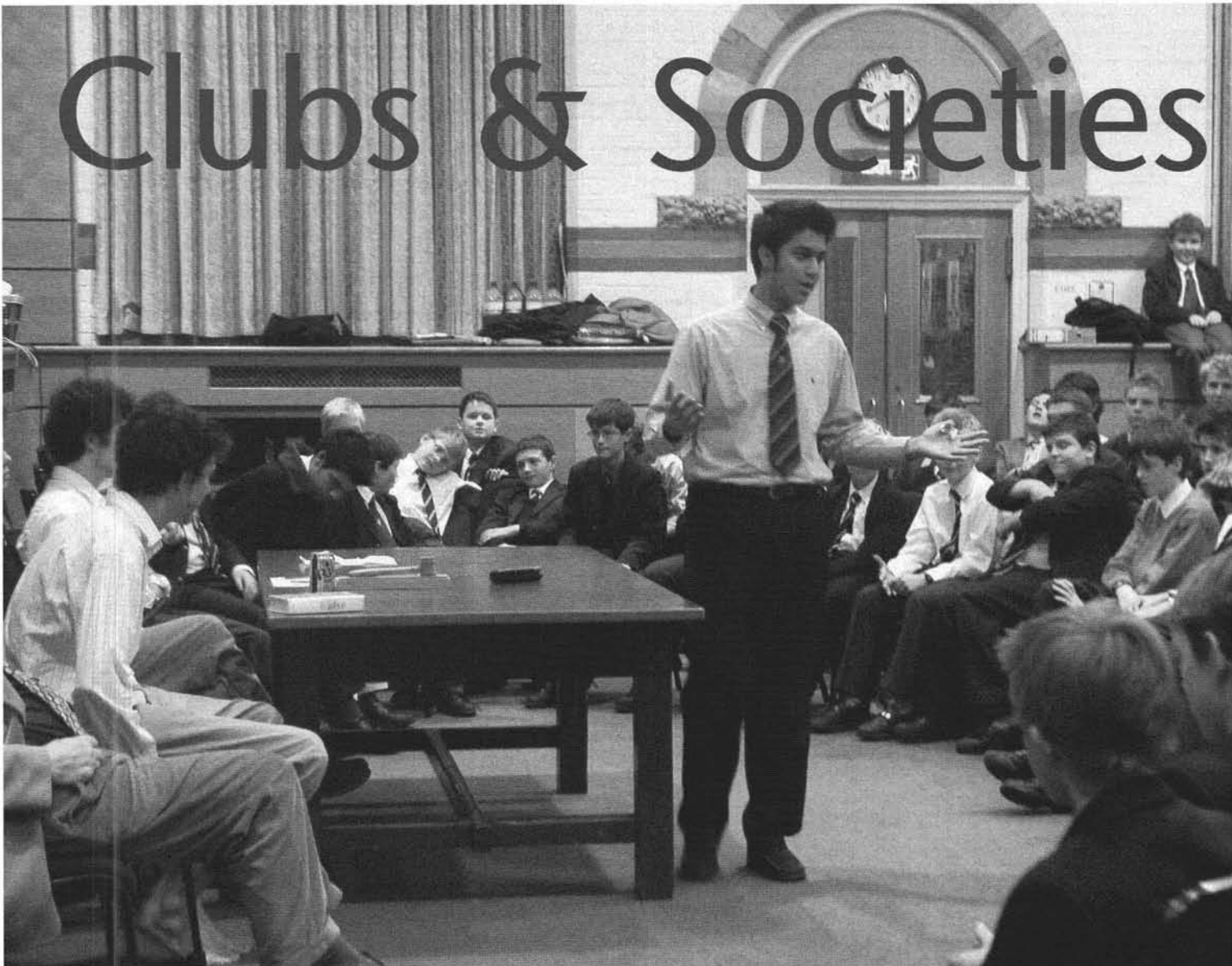


I

KEY:

- A: "Geometric Landscape", oil on board, size A1, H. Abrahall VIWHZ
 B: "Dogs", acrylic & spray paint on board, 250 x 100cm, J. Birkett VIJFB
 C: "Staircase", oil on board, size A1, A. Jack VIJFB
 D: "Flowers", oil on canvas, size A1, H. Green VIBAHF
 E: "Evening", charcoal, size A1, J. Hu VIBAHF
 F: "Figure", acrylic, size A1, W. Bright VIAPS
 G: "Landscape", acrylic on canvas, 250 x 175cm, T. Williams VIWHZ
 H: "Abstract", acrylic on board, 50 x 40cm, J. Hu VIBAHF
 I: "Head", plaster, 80cm (h), C. Steel VIWHZ

Clubs & Societies



Debating

Alex Nash writes: This year, under the regal stewardship of **WHZ**, the Debating Society has continued to flourish. One of the most encouraging aspects of the year was the persistent and enthusiastic interest of the younger boys in our activities, such as the effervescent **T. Finch** and the promising **J. Ridgley**. The Society's three chairmen this year were **T. Vaughan Fowler**, **G. Potter** and **A. Nash**; the secretaries were **N. Shaikh** and **T. Reeves**. The running of the Society, certainly as far as administration was concerned, was handled by **N. Shaikh** in typically 'hands-on' style. **G. Potter** proved a popular and pugnacious chairman, refusing to skirt round the sensitive issues others would not touch. I am sure the Lower School members of the audience will miss his regular pleas to "wait their turn". **T. Vaughan Fowler** brought his own charming and effusive style from the house room to the debating chamber with regular success, often refusing to prepare because "the muse was not with him". **T. Reeves** always managed to entertain, charm, and even inspire on a weekly basis. In many ways, **T. Reeves** could be described as the George Best of the Debating Society: brilliant on his day and always willing to take people on, in any sense of the phrase. The surreal and heavily ironic tone

that he lent to his increasingly eclectic speeches was always appreciated by his peers, if not always by the members of Common Room who attended the debates. **A. Nash**, as the author of this report, must be sparing in his self-adulation: "prolific" best describes my contribution this year, I hope. Finally, a big thank you to **WHZ** and everyone who aided and abetted the Society this year - and best of luck to those carrying on the prestigious mantle.

WHZ writes: As usual the Society debated a wide range of issues. The Society decided that it does not believe in ghosts nor that money can buy you happiness; that it would not be xenophobic; that it would not be pacifist, nor that it would make the CCF compulsory; that it would not give all power to the pupils nor abolish the Conservative Party; that it would not be politically incorrect, nor would it tax fat; it would not abolish itself, nor put security over liberty, nor censor the press; it would not leave Britain, nor restore slavery, nor abolish Classics at the School. The motion that post-war pop music is deteriorating with age was also defeated. On the other hand the Society voted that it would learn to live rather than live to learn; that it believes in a thing called love; that it would negotiate

with terrorists; and that it would abolish the Lower School. The motion that this House would welcome American influence resulted in a draw (20:20 with 13 abstentions).

Dinner debates were also held with the ladies of Wycombe Abbey (the motion 'that marriage is outdated' was defeated), and with the ladies of St. Helen's (the motion that 'it is nice to be important but that it is more important to be nice' was passed, as was the motion 'that this House would do anything for money'!). The Society looks forward to developing further its links with St. Helen's.

Two exciting balloon debates took place. The Christmas balloon debate was won hands down by 'Jesus', ably performed by **A. Macdonald**, who beat 'The Grinch' (**A. Nash**) by 55 votes to 7. The June balloon debate featuring famous musicians was won by 'Johnny Rotten', played in a most sinister and convincing fashion by **B. Phillips** (24 votes); **R. Soames**' stylish 'Thom Yorke' came a close second with 18 votes. Great stars like Frank Sinatra, David Bowie, or Cliff Richard were ejected from the balloon earlier.

Three members of the Society (**B. Cullen**, **N. Shaikh**, and **S. Kapoor**) represented the School at the annual Rotary Club Youth Speaks competition

and spoke on the theme of 'Being Uncool', but, unfortunately, did not get beyond the first round. More success was achieved in the Oxford Union Senior Schools' Debating Competition: the senatorial **T. Vaughan Fowler** and the impish **T. Reeves** represented the School with vigour and sparkle, and got as far as the national finals.

N. Shaikh played a key role in organizing the School's annual Public-Speaking Competition in the Lent term. The winning teams were as follows: Lower School: 2B: **A. Campbell**, **M. Heffernan** (who spoke on 'Monster Crabs'), and **E. O'Neill**. Third Form: Mr. Hamilton's House: **T. Middleton**, **G. Rogers** (who spoke on 'Worst Case Scenarios'), and **M. Halls**. Fourth Form: Mr. Elliott's House: **T. Blakey**, **S. Roberston** (who spoke on 'Does God Exist?'), and **T. Dean**. Fifth Form: Mr. Fishpool's House: **P. Birkett**, **R. Whitworth** (who spoke on 'Virtual TV'), and **E. Wilson**. Upper School: Mr. Spencer's House: **T. Vaughan-Fowler**, **A. Macdonald** (who spoke on 'Village Life'), and **A. Nash**. The Society's new central committee for 2004-5 consists of **B. Cullen** and **O. Zeldin** (the two chairmen), and **P. Rowe** and **S. Kapoor** (the two secretaries). It is clear that the Society is in safe hands.

WHZ

THE ECONOMICS SOCIETY

JOHN INNES FROM THE WORLD BANK ON

“EXPANSION OF THE E.U.”



DAY: THURSDAY 18TH MARCH
 TIME: 19.30
 VENUE: AMEY THEATRE

All Welcome!

Rifle Club

At 5.00am on 7 April, a group of twenty-one boys from the School Rifle Club departed for a week in Germany, to take part in what has now become an annual fixture against Buxtehude, near Hamburg. The party included some OAs as well as a couple of girls from St Helen's.

The team had to defend its close-run victory of the previous year, but sadly this year we were soundly beaten by the Germans, who claimed five of the eight finalist places. First and second places were claimed by German shots, but **P. Wakefield**, OA took third place. Relative novice **A. Hyde** came eighth, producing some excellent shooting despite his lack of experience.

We were received warmly and looked after very well by our hosts, who arranged visits to Hamburg and to an Easter street carnival. The team was lodged in the Youth Hostel in Buxtehude, which was an impressive thatched building, and lived on a staple diet of Bratwurst and Schinken (sausage and ham) from the local supermarket.

Thanks are due to coach **Alan Smith** for his organization, Team Captain **T. Bennelick** for his stalwart leadership, and TASS for financial support. We look forward to hosting the Germans next year for the next round.

J. WILSON 6TCG

Chess Club

We have had a lively year, in which the three practice sessions a week have regularly been patronised by around twenty-five pupils.

In matches against other schools, however, this has been our most disappointing season for ages. Although six players play league chess in the evenings for local clubs, and **G. Morris** and **S. Robertson** have been outstanding, the next

group of players, mainly in the Middle School and so with time to improve, have not been so talented. Internal competitions, however, have brought some youngsters to the fore and over forty boys played in the Inter-House Competition, won by Spencer's. I am most grateful for **G. Morris'** contribution – he has played in over a hundred chess matches for the School, and thank **CB, AJPE** and **JEJO** for all their valuable help.

TJK

26/9	U15 VI v. MCS U15 lost 1-5	10/2	U13 v. NCS won 5.5-0.5
7 /10	1st VI v. Staff won 5-1	26/2	U15 v. MCSA lost 1.5-4.5
11/11	2nd VI v. MCS 1st VI lost 1.5-4.5	1/3	U13 v. MCS C drew 3-3
12/11	Lightning tournament won by TJK	2/3	U15 v. MCS B drew 3-3
25/11	1st VI v. MCS 2nd drew 3-3	23/3	House Chess final
2/12	1st VI v. Bedford School won 5.5-0.5		won by Spencer's House
4/12	1st VI v. Northampton Prep won 5-1	24/3	U13 v. Dragon lost 2-4
22/1	U13 v. MCS B lost 1-5	25/5	1st VI v. MCS lost 1.5-4.5
10/2	U13 v. MCS A lost 0-6	26/6	U15 VI v. MCS lost 1-5

Digital Photography Club

The Club has met on most Friday afternoons this year in the Art Department. There was good interest in this new and rapidly expanding area of imaging technology. The core interest is amongst members of Lower School and it seems right to focus effort here to build up skills and produce 'tomorrow's' experienced members who can pass on their expertise to others. Pupils from other years who have a serious interest are equally welcome.

The move of the Art Department into its new Arts Centre area precipitated a rush of new members who couldn't wait to get their hands on the new computers, complete with graphic drawing tablet and graphic pen, ready to explore the power of Photoshop software. Many sessions have seen all sixteen computers in use and lots of embryonic designers making their first meaningful voyage into the depths of modern graphics.

Despite the ability of modern software to make a silk purse out of a sow's ear, most problems are still avoided if you begin with a good photograph. Time is always found to tutor individuals on matters such as composition, contrast, balance and colour to get the very best out of the excellent cameras which are now available to the amateur.

The creative software available also allows poster and advertising design to be explored, using a basis of photographic imagery, and some members are already showing a keen eye for a strong idea. One very useful offshoot of their interest is an intelligent scepticism now being applied to the advertising imagery which bombards the modern world.

Whatever your interest – design, computer graphics, advertising, desktop publishing, documentary, school project or simply taking better photographs, the Club has something to offer.

CJB

Sailing - Match Racing

During the summer holidays we went to Weymouth for the National Youth Match Racing Championships. The competition was to take place over the bank holiday weekend, and there was training the week before so we could practise using the boats.

The boats we were training on were 23 ft boats which needed a crew of five to sail them effectively. The team consisted of our skipper, **A. Blackmore**, who would steer us to victory, or so we hoped, **A. Radford**, our mainsheet man, Alice Kingham controlled the jib while **A. White**, the bowman, acted frenetically. **O. Bennett**, the gofer, did everything anybody else did not have time or inclination to do. Actually we had a sixth team-mate, **DJB**, who organised everything and passed on his experience. This was our team.

When we arrived in Weymouth, we found the boats practically still in their wrappers! On the first day it required a bit of playing to get used to the boats, though by the end of a windy day we had become fairly accustomed to the shiny new J80s. Two and a half days' training followed with professional coaches and as a result we saw our skills improve

immeasurably. Friday was left for the organisers to put the finishing touches on the boats.

So the big day came – Saturday. The competition started and all the teams arrived, raring to go. The wind was not too strong on the first day, which suited the lighter teams, and although we were a lighter team luck was not with us and we lost our races on the first day. This was not without some close calls!

On Sunday the winds were too strong for us to race at all and we spent the day playing cards and waiting in vain for the wind to drop. The decision as to whether we raced or not relied heavily upon whether the boats would survive. Discretion was definitely the better part of valour on this occasion.

Although after Saturday the race organisers had run enough races to have a result, thankfully Monday brought less damaging weather and so we set off once more. Improving all the time that day and managing some fast starts, nonetheless we were not to realise our dream – this year.

O. BENNETT 5CJB

Sailing Club

For the first time Abingdon has sailed through the winter. This has allowed our helmsmen to train in preparation for the major regattas in the Spring.

We have already competed in regattas at Felixstowe, notable for fierce tides which stopped the fleet from getting back into the harbour. A sub-zero weekend of racing on the Solent followed, which was a gentle precursor to sailing in a force 7 at Plymouth. The south-westerly wind produced very large waves with fast surfing. **A.Blackmore's** boat cartwheeled, throwing him through the air onto

another dinghy. He survived and the rescue crews shook their heads in disbelief.

We have also started training up a yacht-racing crew, spending an activity Saturday learning how to make the boat go fast.

This summer we expect to compete in the National and European Championships, as well as the RYA National Match Racing Championships in yachts.

JT



A.Blackmore's boat
cartwheeled ..



Fencing Club

Every year since I joined in the First Form, I have seen the Fencing Club increase in size, leading to the introduction last year of an extra weekly training session, allowing those more experienced and enthusiastic fencers double the time to practise the sport at School. This year, though, has proved to be an even greater growth than usual.

In the Michaelmas term, we ushered in a large, but not unexpected, group of First and Second Form boys to the Club, as it seems that for some reason, attacking each other with swords is a greatly appealing prospect for the younger members of our School. But we were also able to warmly welcome a second coach, **Mr Alan Knowles**, to work alongside our coach of five years, **Mr Herman Du Preez**: a clear sign of the Club's increasing size.

On top of this, the arrival into the Sixth Form, and the Fencing Club, of **S. Eich** and **M. Engler** from Germany was a welcome example, to some of our more established members, of that to which we should aspire. The outstanding talent they demonstrate with their respective weapons is definitely a sight worth seeing, and although **S. Eich** had to return to Germany at the end of the Michaelmas term, I know that many members of the Club are glad that these two have been fencing alongside us and not against us this year in our matches.

In terms of matches, we were once again struck this year with how difficult it is to find other schools nearby which are equipped for Fencing. It does seem, however, that our match against neighbouring St. Helen's is becoming something of a permanent annual fixture, both for our Senior and Junior Foil teams. Our Senior team, consisting of **M. Engler**, **P. Norris** and **Y. Kim**, were victorious with a score of 7-2, but the Junior team of **J. Woods**, **J. Webb** and **T. Pritchard** were just beaten 5-4. The Junior Foil and Sabre teams were both able to challenge Summer Fields, but each was narrowly defeated. These matches, however, serve as excellent experience for our younger, upcoming fencers.

The Lent term saw even more luck for the Club, reassuring me that this has been one of our greatest seasons, if not in match results then in the Club's prosperity. After extensive negotiation between ICF (who always seems to have some new crusade eagerly to undertake in aid of the Club) and P.E. staff along

with other officials, it has been decided that, as of Michaelmas 2004, Fencing will become an official games option. This is an excellent step forward that we have certainly been awaiting for a considerable time: this development should allow the Club to continue to grow in size, and means that some of the more experienced, older fencers, if they choose, will no longer be prevented from attending training sessions by other games commitments. Additionally, the Lent term also saw us gain a considerable amount of school-owned equipment. Brand new masks, jackets and plastrons mean that only gloves and weapons need to be borrowed from our fencing coaches, and we are most grateful to TASS for their provision of nearly £900 to buy an electric fencing box, which will facilitate electronic scoring as a regular part of School training sessions. With all this in place, we are definitely looking forward to the start of the new season in September, and, of course, the inevitable surge of new Lower School recruits it will bring, as well as some Middle and Upper School boys, one hopes...

In but two terms, the Club has grown immensely, and it makes me sad to think that I have only one more year left to be a part of the improvement – if it continues at this rate, the Abingdon School Fencing Club will certainly soon be a force to be feared!

A. BROWN 6TCG



Lower Sixth Challenge

In what is now a well established tradition, this year's Lower Sixth returned from their AS examinations to face another, if more enjoyable, intellectual ordeal in the shape of the Lower Sixth Challenge, Abingdon's answer to 'University Challenge'.

In the Final, held on Wednesday 7 July in the Amey Theatre in the presence of most of the year group, 6DE (**H. Coules, W. Guast, P. Lyons, and D. Waite**) beat 6TCG (**T. Bainbridge, A. Brown, J. Coleman, and O. Zeldin**) by 480 points to 250 points; it was, by all accounts, a vigorous and exciting clash of minds which did credit to both teams. 6TCG had earlier triumphed over the promising 6DAB (admittedly the latter team was weakened in the Semi-Final by the absence of some key players at a DofE expedition), but on 7 July 6DE led all the way. Near the end of the Final 6TCG tried to rally and did score a clear round of 50 points, but it was too late to alter the balance.

Looking back over the whole competition, certain patterns of general knowledge emerged. The boys were strong on science and the history of science, whether anatomy, botany, computing, chemistry or astronomy; they were strong on the cinema, music, sport, Norse mythology, and the

Bible. Literature was more uneven: they were more familiar with Oscar Wilde and Shakespeare than with Thomas Hardy or Gerard Manley Hopkins. Uneven too was their knowledge of art: Monet and Dégas, yes, but Toulouse-Lautrec and Holman Hunt, no. Medieval and early modern history did not fare well: the battle of Crécy, Henry VIII, Mary Tudor, Sir Walter Raleigh, and the rebellions of 1685 and 1745 all caused difficulties. There were surprising gaps in popular music; it was interesting to see that Jimmy Savile had become old history! There were this year some memorable 'howlers': the national background of the religious reformer John Calvin was described as American and Russian; the Walloons were transplanted to Africa and to South America; while Warsaw was located on the Tagus and Vilnius on the Vistula!

All in all, the 2004 competition provided much entertainment – despite some embarrassing moments – for all participants and spectators. The strongest individual performers will be invited in the Michaelmas term, after some very rigorous tests, to represent the School in the nationwide Schools' Challenge competition. Warm thanks are due to **ADW** for his help in the organization of this event.

WHZ

Foreign Film Society

A darkened classroom. Seven creaking chairs. A ten-minute wait while we try and figure out how to hook up the DVD player to the projector. Another five minutes searching for the control. Finally, the first images of Matthieu Kassovitz's 1995 French film *La Haine* flash up onto a whiteboard still marked with evidence of period 8's French lesson. At first there is a problem: the subtitles – white against a white background – are hard to decipher. Then the pizza and Coke arrives, and no-one seems to mind any more.

Hardly Cinema Paradiso, granted, but nevertheless an important occasion as this is the inaugural screening of the 'French Film Society', later to become the 'Foreign Film Society'. The idea is to show a selection of foreign films from all over the world, from a range of directors, time periods and genres; none should be too well-known or too art-house. The films are provided by the students, the food by the teachers.

Since its creation in September 2003, twelve films have been shown: the gritty violence of *City of God* set off against the tender comedy of *Il Postino*, the low-budget *El Mariachi* side by side with Truffaut's nouvelle vague centre-piece *Jules et Jim*. Open to all, there is no membership – anyone who loves good cinema can come. The number of attendants has reached the soaring peaks of eleven or twelve, and dipped to the embarrassing valley of four, but every Tuesday evening a solace from the drudgery of school routine can be found.

Coinciding with the creation of the Film Unit, the Foreign Film Society confirms that Abingdon is a haven not only for music, art and drama, but also for cinema enthusiasm. With a fresh student leadership for the next academic year, the Society looks set to continue and expand for a long while yet. Many thanks to **VMW**, **EMTS** and the **French Assistants** for all they have done to help.

A. GARTON ASH VI JFB

History Society

The Society met twice this year. Our first speaker, Dr John Ward, a former general practitioner and a distinguished historian of medicine, in a talk entitled 'Not to guess but to know: Medicine's eternal journey', presented a magisterial survey of the main developments in the history of medicine from Impotep, the earliest recorded physician who flourished in Ancient Egypt about 2600BC, to the great medical discoveries of the 20th century.

Dr Ward was erudite, often witty, and impressively authoritative, illustrating his talk effectively with slides; it was a stimulating combination of medical and art history. We were left in no doubt that his heroes were Paracelsus, Semelweiss, and Sir William Osler. It was quite refreshing to be taken away from kings, queens, politicians and wars into the realm of man's physical and psychological condition. Dr Ward's presentation was much appreciated by all those present, both historians as well as prospective medics.

As our second speaker, we were delighted to welcome again Mr Timothy Garton Ash, the Director of the European Studies Centre at St Antony's College, Oxford, who addressed the question 'Is the Channel wider than the Atlantic?'

In his elegantly delivered and well paced talk, Mr Garton Ash explored many aspects of the topical issue of British identity as well as Britain's relationship with our American cousins 'over the pond'. Indeed, he made us acutely aware of Britain's multiple identities: insular as well as oceanic, post-imperial and global. He demonstrated how Britain was linked to the United States by culture, language and security treaties, and to continental Europe through economics, national interests, history and civilization. His lively talk made a great impact on the audience. We are grateful to him for illuminating for us the complex and multi-faceted character of Britain's role in the modern world.

WHZ

Maths Club

Members of the Lower School have met each Tuesday after lessons to solve logic puzzles, mathematics problems, and play the numbers game from the television show, *Countdown*. This has counted towards boys' Baker Awards.

DJD

ABINGDON SCHOOL HISTORY SOCIETY



NOT TO GUESS BUT TO KNOW: MEDICINE'S ETERNAL JOURNEY

by

Dr. John Ward

Friday 3rd October 2003

7.45 pm in the CMR

6.50 pm: Supper for Dr. Ward & Sixth Form Historians
7.45 pm: Talk in the CMR

(Interested non-historians, including members of staff, are warmly invited to the talk)

The meeting will end by 9.30 p.m.

ABINGDON SCHOOL HISTORY SOCIETY



IS THE CHANNEL WIDER THAN THE ATLANTIC?

by

Mr. Timothy Garton Ash

Director of the European Studies Centre, St. Antony's College,
University of Oxford.

Friday 5th March 2004

7.40 pm in the School House Games Room

*6.50 pm: Buffet supper for Mr Garton Ash
and Sixth Form Historians in Avernus.*

(Interested non-historians, including members of staff, are warmly invited to the talk)

Fear

I met fear last week.
 I met him when I was abseiling,
 Or when I wasn't,
 Because I was too scared,
 Because he was there,
 Fear was there,
 Was he?
 Because I couldn't see him
 I could only see a
 Zillion

Mile

Drop...

I met him again.

I met him
 when I was
 climbing
 through
 tunnels,
 Or some
 of the tunnels,
 Because I was a little bit scared,
 Because he was there,
 Fear was there,
 Was he?
 Because I couldn't see him,
 I could only see darkness...

I didn't meet him again.

I didn't meet him when I was walking across the high-ropes,
 All of the high-ropes,
 Because I wasn't scared at all,
 Because he wasn't there,
 Fear wasn't there,
 Wasn't he?
 Because I had just remembered
 I was having FUN

The Tunnel Trail

I knew when I arrived that this would be my weak point. I could cope with heights and water and bugs, but tunnels and that was it.

The first few days were great, I really enjoyed them, but finally the day came when I would have to do the tunnel trail. We reached the tunnels and were told what would have to be done. At first we rolled about on the grass, practising crawling. Then we tried a practice tunnel – it went fine. Next we then queued to enter the small, dark, dingy tunnels.

First Freddie entered and was swallowed by the shadows of the tunnel. Freddie was out in no time and said it was fine. As it came to my turn my heart seemed to fall into my stomach. I was petrified. The thought of being in a cold dark tunnel underground totally freaked me. I entered ...

Memories of the First Form Adventure Trip to Osmington Bay

As soon as I turned the corner, the thought of being alone scared me. I was thinking of being trapped underground and just sat there in my small claustrophobic world. The next tunnel I entered slanted slightly upwards. We were told that we would be able to crawl on hands and knees through it. They were wrong. I tried to crawl the way shown, but my head was hitting the roof. That was when I freaked. But despite my fears I managed to carry on and complete the tunnel trail. I was so pleased with myself.

Beyond bingdon

Rocky Mountains Leadership & Challenge

Every summer thirty-six British cadets are selected to participate in the Anglo-Canadian cadet exchange programme for six weeks. During the summer holidays, I was fortunate enough to be one of these cadets. There are three different courses that British cadets attend and I took part in the most physically and mentally demanding of them – the Rocky Mountain Leadership and Challenge Course.

The course is held at a purpose-built training centre in Alberta, called The Rocky Mountain National Army Cadet Summer Training Centre. The training lasts six weeks and involves twelve British cadets integrated with about 180 Canadian cadets, twelve American cadets (who attend for only two weeks) and usually a handful of either French or German cadets. The platoons were a mixture of Canadian (both English- and French-speaking), British and American.

Most of the training was civilian, in which all the cadets were assessed on their ability, teamwork, leadership, etc... Each platoon completed one cycle of training each week, and then rotated so they did something different for the other weeks. The training cycles were: Glacier, Leadership, Hiking, Mountain-Biking, Canoeing/Kayaking and Rock-Climbing.

My platoon's first week of training was Glacier. We were divided into four smaller groups who all climbed different glaciers in the Rockies. Each group spent the first day sorting kit and planning routes and the next day hiking up to base camp where we cooked our own meals (military rations) and slept in tents. The third day was spent at snow-school – learning how to move on snow, throwing ourselves down ski slopes and learning how to stop ourselves, how to make ice anchors and how to rope up the team. The fourth day was an early start to climb the glacier itself before the sun became too hot and started to melt the snow. The fifth day was the return to camp and return of kit.

Leadership week was next. This involved staying in camp and being taught theories of leadership (by watching videos such as *Crimson Tide*, *Remember the Titans* and *Band of Brothers*) for the first few days. The platoon then did a search and rescue scenario and a citizenship day where the platoon raked up horse dung from a paddock – an interesting lesson for the three Brits in my platoon!

Hiking was a cycle in which the platoon was divided into ability groups. We spent four days hiking in hot temperatures up and down the Rocky Mountains with a sick cadet (we were too far from anywhere to have him evacuated if his condition had worsened) and a cadet who tried to ignore the fact that his feet were two huge blisters. To make matters worse, because of the long, hot summer, many of our expected water sources had dried up. However hellish this cycle was, the sense of achievement at completing the cycle was huge.

The last three cycles were great fun, and only involved camping out for five nights. Mountain-Biking was hugely dangerous, yet massively exhilarating – especially in the fast group. We cycled 80 km

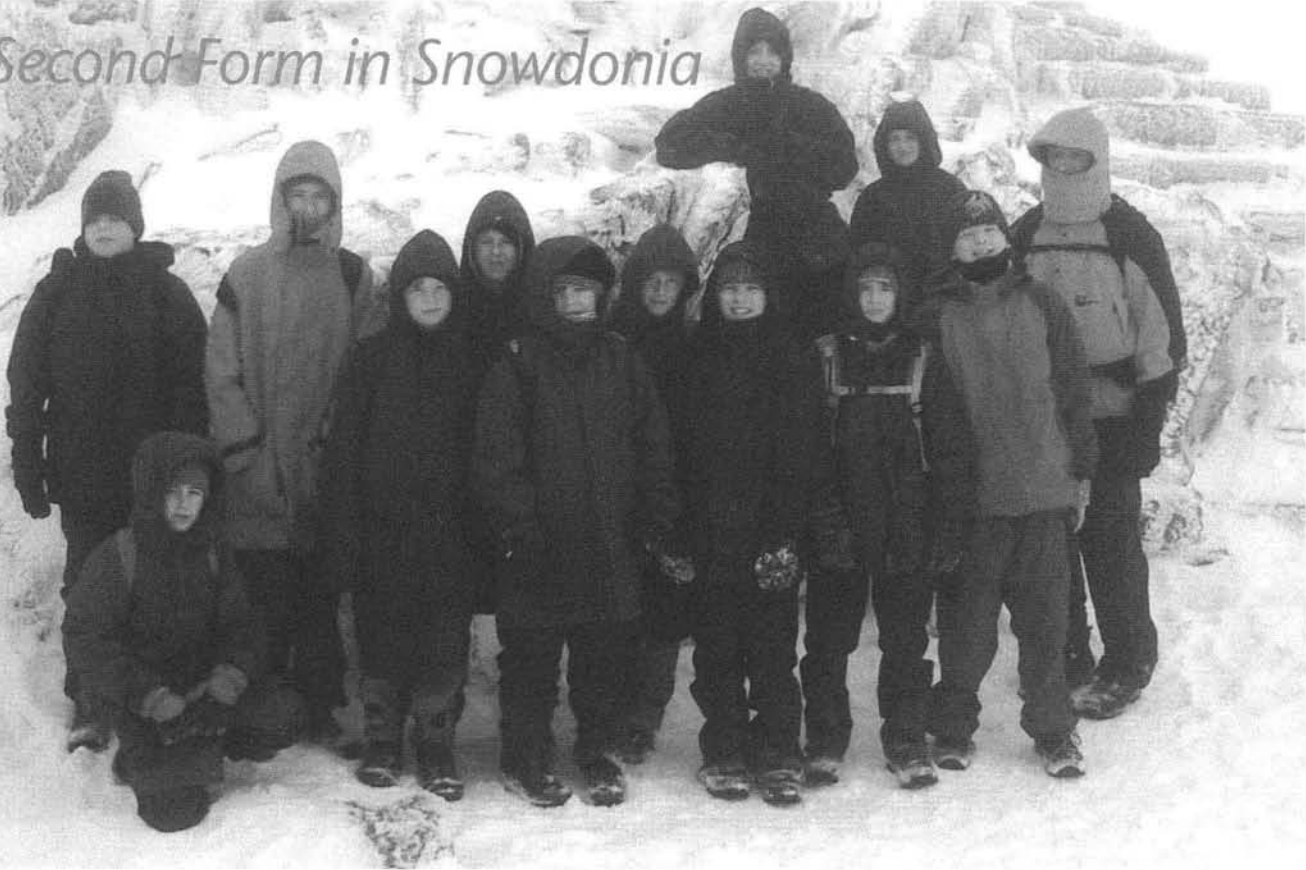
over two days for our expedition, up and down a ridiculous number of hills and mountains. Canoeing (open Canadian style canoes) was great fun as well, on the Bow and Kananaskis rivers, though the water was freezing. To begin with, I was dreading the Rock-Climbing cycle because I dislike heights, yet to my surprise I really enjoyed it. The pinnacle of this final week was the 300 ft multi-pitch climb on the penultimate day – scary but rewarding to finish and with an awesome view. The great thing about these cycles was that in spite of the fact I had never really done any of these activities before (unlike many of the Canadians), I and the other 'beginners' picked up the fundamental ideas rapidly, thanks to support from the instructors and the more experienced members of the platoon.

The experience was a fantastic one, easily one of, if not the, best in my life. Living for six weeks with complete strangers in a different country was daunting and yet by the end of camp none of us could envisage living without each other – waking up at 5.50 am every morning for early morning PT for six weeks brings you very close to people! Even language difficulties were irrelevant after the first week or so – I believe I am now fluent in pidgin French! The Canadians were brilliant and I am still in contact with many members of my platoon.

As the third member of the School in the past six years to have experienced this fantastic course, I am very grateful to the CCF for giving me this opportunity.

J. STANIER VI WHZ



The Second Form in Snowdonia

We arrived at the Centre at about 2 pm and the action began straight away. We all donned walking boots, gloves, hats, scarves, coats and bags of spare clothes and set off on our walk to the campsite amid terrible weather. We spied the tent in the early evening and our instructor and teachers started on the food. Meanwhile, during a break in the weather, we all went to play football.

We woke early the next morning but felt somewhat weary after the very late night. We ate breakfast, made lunch and we were off again. We were walking all over the surrounding countryside and saw some spectacular sights along the river, including old mine shafts, rapids and waterfalls. After a long and hard day's walking in the hills, we finally made it back to the Centre and quickly got used to proper beds.

On the third day, we had to pack a bag of things to keep us going on the walk. We also packed lunch and chocolate bars. Today we were going up Mount Snowdon! The scenery was stunning but the wind was so cold that we could not stop for long. Then it began to snow. The higher we climbed the more it snowed. As we neared the top the snow underfoot was about six inches deep and in the cuttings two or three feet in places! We finally made it to the top and tried to shelter as best we could before we had group photos. Afterwards we made the long journey down by a different path from the way we climbed

up. On arrival at the Centre we set humane traps to see how many different species of rodent we could find in the woods.

An early check on our traps began the fourth day. We had caught wood mice and a vole. We then went back to our dormitories to get ready for our day's climbing. After a minibus journey and another walk, we arrived at the climbing walls. There were three walls in order of difficulty and size and then one to abseil down at the end. Climbing was great and everybody managed to climb at least part way up the easy wall and most managed all three! The walls were up on the top of a very steep hill so when abseiling we felt extremely high up! After climbing we walked back to the minibuses and drove to a wildlife reserve to do some conservation work. We did some orienteering and also planted some plants in a new pond.

The next day we undertook three activities. Raft-building, gorge-scrambling and building water transportation devices kept us busy all day long.

Gorge-scrambling was cold, wet and great fun! We all walked up a river in a gorge and got as wet as possible. There were waterfalls which we could go behind as well and we all got soaked! Raft-building was also really enjoyable. We had to work in teams to design and build a raft out of barrels and wood. Building the water transportation devices was an excellent team-building exercise. We first had to design and make a pulley system for transporting

water from one side of the stream to the other and then had to try and make a pivot system to do the same thing.

On the last day we went orienteering, but instead of collecting symbols, we raced to be the first ones back to a stove and a cup of hot chocolate. The winners were the first to light the stove and make the hot chocolate. After this we packed up and we finally had to leave. Overall it was an excellent holiday. On behalf of everybody I would like to thank the Staff for making it so much fun.

G.BONE 2A



Language Exchanges: Russia

In October 2003 sixteen pupils from the Moscow International Gymnasium arrived for the annual exchange, in conjunction with Oxford High School. They took part in a packed cultural programme of events, including theatre trips, a tour of London and a trip to the Naval Dockyard in Portsmouth. The students entertained an audience at both Schools with a display of Russian singing, dancing and poetry-reading. Abingdon was the grateful recipient of a beautifully carved Muscovite coat of arms, which is currently displayed outside the Headmaster's study.

We returned to Moscow in April to be greeted by some icy weather conditions, particularly on an outing to Sergiev Posad, the seat of the Orthodox Church. We were fortunate to be able to shelter

from -10° temperatures in the beautifully ornate, icon-filled chapels. We had the opportunity to visit the Moscow State Circus and the ballet *Giselle*, which greatly impressed the boys. Our stay culminated in a small show produced by the English pupils, notably a very fine reading of a Pushkin poem by **D. Emerson** and a lively scene from *Blackadder*, involving all the boys. All those who participated in the Exchange found their welcome by the Russian host families very warm and friendly and we received much praise from the parents about the politeness and thoughtfulness of the English students.

Another party of Russian students will be visiting in October 2004 and we hope for similar successes.

VEH



Language Exchanges: Germany



Sixteen Fourth Form Germanists went to Bielefeld in February for almost two weeks with girls from St Helen's School. There was a varied programme which included days in school, visits to Munster, Bückeburg and its helicopter museum, the museum of the universe at Bremen, ice-skating and the ever-popular Abingdon-Bielefeld football match. At the weekend pupils visited places such as Cologne, Hamburg and Berlin with their host families.

B. Lerch writes: On Monday we all had school with our partners. They have roughly the same sort of lessons that we do, for example Latin, Geography, Maths, etc. but also some extras such as Philosophy and Politics. On Thursday we went to Bremen and looked at the huge statue of Roland in the Market Square. The hands-on 'Universum Museum' was really good. We left at 6.00 am on Friday to get back

to Abingdon. We were exhausted, but all agreed that it had been a great experience.

J. Mann reports on the football match: On Wednesday 15 February there was the traditional Abingdon-Bielefeld football match. The Abingdon team looked very professional in the team shirts and there was a good sense of team spirit during the match. **M. Hutchinson** was in goal, with **B. Allen**, **S. Robinson**, **J. Needham**, **A. Hamilton**, **T. Dean**, **M. Watts** and **A. Paxton** giving strong support. In a tense match **M. Hutchinson** excelled with numerous saves, but it took a goal from **B. Allen** to result in a 1-1 draw. **J. Needham** scored in the second match, but we did not quite manage to defeat the giants from Bielefeld. The enthusiastic support of the crowd made this a really enjoyable occasion.

NMR

Language Exchanges: France



Over the Christmas holidays, ten boys from Abingdon School and ten girls from Our Lady's Convent Senior School went on a French exchange to Prades, in the South-West of France. Here are their thoughts about the trip:

The school the Exchange was with is a small semi-independent school. We spent the week-end with our partners, getting to know them and their families. During the week, we took part in trips as a group. The area is part of Catalogne and all the road signs are written in both Catalan and French. The area is quite traditional, with festivals, etc. The food is excellent and my partner's mother was a great cook. The trip was good fun and great for our French skills, as many of the French children spoke little English.

A. PEARCE 4JPN

In France, my exchange partner was called Maxime. At the week-end, we were at our partners' houses and didn't see any English people at all. My partner had lots of animals at his house, one of which was a horse. I've never ridden one before but they let me have a go!

G. FISHER 3JPGB

The French Exchange was a great experience that was fun and worthwhile. It gave us a chance to improve our French language, learn more about French lifestyle, and socialise. Some of the trips we went on were really good. My favourite was a trip to the caves in the Pyrenees mountain range.

R. MORRIS 3JEJO

"On the way there, my mind was racing, anticipating the French Exchange and whether I could speak the language well enough. But the biggest question in my mind was what would my French person be like. When we arrived in France, we were introduced to our French partners. My partner seemed quite cool.

When we got home, I breathed a sigh of relief because everyone

in the family had been so nice and understanding when I could not understand colloquial French. The whole Exchange went much better than I thought it would and I am really looking forward to Max coming over here and perhaps returning to his house in the summer."

A. MUGNAIONI, 4RGH

We went to Perpignan, the largest city in the local area, where we were allowed to go shopping. We had a great day. On the Wednesday morning, we went to have a look at a beautiful cave network. It was filled with stalagmites of all shapes, size and colour. It was just amazing.

I. VERMES 3ALP

I didn't know what to expect from this trip. I just hoped it was going to be fun and that I would have a nice partner.

We flew back from Perpignan airport. It was a very small airport. It was A. Mugnaioni's birthday that day and it was up to me to get him something. We'd bought him a card but we needed to get him a present. So when we got on the plane, I asked if they would announce his birthday. Halfway through the flight, they did.

It had been great fun in France.

J. BLAIR 4VMW

All the boys were very well behaved and had a good attempt at speaking French with their exchange partner. Some boys were even able to do a bit of skiing. The weather was fantastic and the area gorgeous. ... On 23 March, we welcomed our French partners to Abingdon. They were very impressed with our School, as theirs is much more modern. They stayed with us for a week, during which they visited a number of tourist locations, including Bath and Warwick Castle. The boys again had plenty of opportunity to practise their French with their exchange partner. Everything went very well and we look forward to our next French exchange. Well done to all those who participated.

EMTS

Classics Trip to Turkey

In the October half term thirty-seven boys, along with five members of staff (including **Mr Hullis** of Winchester College and **Miss Radice**, who has since been appointed to the same school), went on the 2003 annual Classics trip: this year to Turkey. The trip lasted a week, and over this period of time, a large number of excellent classical ruins and other places of interest were visited, predominantly on the west coast of the country. Throughout the tour, we were accompanied by a friendly guide, going by the name of 'Izzy', whose ever-cheerful demeanour provided much entertainment over the course of the week, despite his regularly apparent shock at the fact that anyone might want to spend more than one hour looking at some of the most fantastic remains in the country.



Byzantine Church of St Sophia

Having arrived at Istanbul on day one, we enjoyed a brief respite in the form of a free evening in the Baron Hotel, before retiring to bed. On the next day, we travelled south by coach for what seemed an inordinate amount of time, in order to arrive at Gallipoli. Gallipoli, although not the sort of classical site you and I would think to feature on a tour of this nature, was certainly worth a look, if only for the steep cliffs, the landing beaches, the trenches, and the cemeteries. As did the war museum located nearby, these served as a grim reminder of the Allied assault of 1915. Thenceforth we continued south and took what proved to be a thoroughly enjoyable evening ferry-journey across the Dardanelles to the pleasant coastal town of Canakkale, where we spent our second night.

On the third day of our visit, we set off early from Canakkale, having endured what seemed to be something of a thunderstorm during the night, to continue our journey south, stopping off at two sites. The first of these was Troy. Troy itself, as one might expect, was perhaps the one of the most memorable points of the trip, to the extent that in the eyes of some of the members of staff it seemed even to be something of a pilgrimage. Although the Turks, as well as many of the pupils, may consider a reconstructed wooden horse to be the high point of the area, the ruins themselves were in reasonable standing, and gave good indication of the many different periods of set-

tlement around the site. Following on from Troy, we drove on to Pergamum, which too was an astonishing stop; after all, it is one of Turkey's finest archaeological sites, with a gymnasium, as well as an altar to Zeus, and an ancient health centre – all



Theatre at Ephesus

of which were in excellent stead. Finally, we continued south to reach what would be our home for the next few days – the Grand Ozcelik hotel in Kusadasi.

On the Wednesday we deservedly spent a whole day on the site of Ephesus, perhaps one the greatest of the ancient cities, which in its time served as the Roman capital of Asia. This city not only housed a theatre to seat 25 000 (from which St Paul is said to have addressed the citizens), but also was a home to the remains of the Temple of Artemis, one of the seven wonders of the ancient world. Once more our guide was shocked at our interest in the ruins, yet we all persuaded him that we genuinely enjoyed our time spent in Ephesus, as we did.

After spending our second night in the hospitable Grand Ozcelik hotel, we set off in the morning towards Pamukkale on a full-day excursion. En route we stopped to visit the city ruins of Aphrodisias, at which we took advantage both of the impressive temple of Aphrodite, as well as one of the best preserved Roman stadiums in the classical world (and, as it ever the case, a race ensued amongst the boys – won, in spirit if not in body, by **Harry Green**). Here, when the unpredictable weather got the better of us, we were able to direct our attention to the museum, where many fine sculptures and statues were displayed. After lunch, we drove up to Pamukkale itself. Pamukkale, one of the most popular and renowned visits among tourists to Turkey, is located high in the hills, and, built up over a period of tens of thousands of years, a series of calcium deposits have created terraced pools, themselves fed by warm thermal water. Here, despite dubious weather conditions, many of the boys (as well as some Staff members), felt they could not refrain from taking at least a brief paddle around the pools. It was here, in Pamukkale, that we also had the welcome opportunity to visit the remains of Hieropolis and its impressive amphitheatre. The ruins at Hieropolis, which in its time held imperial favour,

(Nero provided help to repair it, following earthquake damage in 60 AD) also provided a chance to see some excellent remains of a necropolis – one of the largest cemeteries in Asia minor, containing tombs ranging from the Hellenistic period to the early Christian era.

On the Friday of the trip, blissfully we were saved the prospect of travelling by coach all the way back up to Istanbul, hence we took the coach to Izmir airport, where, following some free time, we took an internal flight up to Turkey's most north-westerly city. From the airport, we were transferred to the Baron hotel, where we enjoyed a relaxing afternoon.

For the penultimate day of our trip, and what was to be our last full day in the country, we were given a guided tour of old Istanbul, which included visits to some of the most beautiful buildings ever constructed. First, we went to the Byzantine Church of St Sophia, followed by the Topkapi Palace and the Blue Mosque with its fantastic mosaic works. The Topkapi Palace was built in 1462 and was the ancient residence of the Sultans of the Ottoman Empire. Here we saw a dazzling array of jewellery, as well as many of the treasures and artefacts acquired by the Ottoman Sultans throughout their period of reign. In the afternoon, our guide took us to the covered bazaar. This bazaar, with sixty-six streets and alleys, over four thousand shops, numerous storehouses, moneychangers, and banks, a mosque, a police station, private security guards, and its own health centre, is said to be the largest covered bazaar in the world. In this respect it provided us all with

an excellent opportunity both for spending all our money as well as getting very, very, lost. This packed day finished with a visit to the Yerebatan Saray underground cistern, from where water was gathered in ancient times. Here we were able to view the very eerie underground area, facilitated by constructed walkways. It was the sheer magnitude of the cisterns that stunned us, not to mention the fact that they had been used in a film starring a certain Mr Bond.

On the final day of our tour of Turkey, we packed our luggage, before heading into the centre of Istanbul. Hence, having been given a final opportunity to rush around stocking up on boxes of cheap Turkish Delight with which to feed our loved ones on returning home, the whole group boarded a private boat in order to enjoy a morning boat cruise along the Bosphorus – the sea which separates European Turkey from that of Asia. This trip was an excellent way to finish our visit, and, with the atmospheric sound of the call to prayer echoing from the mosques in the background, it was the Bosphorus that really made Istanbul what it was, despite Izzy's dubious intentions in letting some of the boys steer the boat.

In all, this year's Classics trip was an overwhelming success, both in terms of knowledge taken in, as well as enjoyment had by the boys. In this way it served as a real eye-opener to all who were present, and I am sure all of us will be ready to recommend Turkey to friends and relatives as an excellent tourist location.

S. WITHNALL 6NMR



Temple at Pergamum

Moldova

Shortly after the end of the Summer term, ten boys and two teachers from the school embarked on a ten-day visit to Romania and Moldova. Abingdon has for a long time worked with *Agape* – a charity that operates in the area, which offers amazing opportunities in life for children with little hope. I am sure **AJJ** and **JT** knew to an extent what to expect, but am certain that none of the pupils did.

We flew with BA to Bucharest, the captain of the plane entertaining us with a dodgy take-off. On arrival it was obvious that the Romanian government was spending a lot of money on infrastructure: the airport was new, smart and modern and the roads had recently been relaid. One could see that some of the older buildings and architecture were quite beautiful near the city centre, while there also remained ugly, unfinished high-rise blocks left abandoned since the collapse of the Soviet Union. We tried but were too late to visit Ceausescu's Palace – one of the biggest buildings in the world – it was both impressive and controversial. Our guide from *Agape* then showed us around the cemetery dedicated to those who had died in the 1989 revolution. It was very emotional as we learnt about some of the tragic stories of the people who had tried to overthrow the harsh Communist regime.

Soon, however, we were leaving Bucharest. We were awoken by Moldova's version of passport control. They carried guns and did not seem to be in the mood for a chat about the weather or one of **JT**'s jokes. On the Moldovan border our train's wheels were changed as the trains here used a different gauge.

Tired after two days of travelling, we arrived in Moldova for a three-day stay. We received a very warm welcome. It was here in the Alevi region that we would stay with a number of Moldovan families – some having room for one, others for three – all of us having a really enjoyable time and never having been fed so well. Experiences ranged from milking the family goat to playing traditional Moldovan games as well helping the children with their martial arts practice. The family I stayed with were in the process of refurbishing their house. It was quite spacious inside and well furnished.

The daughter – Carina – spoke very good English and on several occasions acted as translator between the Moldovan and English contingents. Ivan and his brother enjoyed football and we spent hours at a local pitch. What became very apparent was that the land was not very well zoned in Moldova but it added to the amusement of the games. Half

the time was spent fishing the ball out of a river or climbing over a wall into a warehouse, cautiously retrieving it from a slightly malnourished German shepherd dog. The local people seemed quite happy to see us – most notably Peter, – who worked in the warehouse. He came out in the pouring rain to meet up and warmed us up with three glasses of wine. The Moldovans, like many Europeans, appeared to like their alcohol. Every meal we had with the family we were treated to their produce and got the seal of approval from our expert (**H. Cook**), too. On one of the days we drove to a wine cellar – the biggest in Europe. We paid \$30, a princely sum in Moldova, to go in. We were all impressed by the millions of bottles stacked sideways and even more so by the tasting session. It was quite coincidental to learn that Prince Charles would be visiting here within the next few days.

Aurely, who worked for *Agape*, helped get everyone organised and without her the expedition would not have been so successful. She arranged our appointments, and what was very memorable to me were the visits we made to the school and Charity which Abingdon has supported for many years. It was brilliant to see that the money we raised was going to such good effect. On one day we visited the *Agape* children's club. The building had not been open long but was packed with smiling children who were around 7-10 years old. Here they could get a decent meal, an education and interact with the other children. It was disconcerting to learn that for some of them, however, this was only a retreat, an escape from a pretty grim domestic life. We also visited No. 4 School, named very impersonally in Soviet times. The school was empty as it was the holidays, but we got an impression that the pupils received a challenging education as they were tested in over twelve disciplines. A lot of repair work was going on at the time, most of it being carried out by quite elderly women: walls were being shored up and leaks fixed.

We were given the honour and privilege of meeting the Headmaster of the school twice and the Mayor once. We pitched questions about the school and what the future held for Moldova. The Mayor, who was an independent candidate, seemed quite downbeat about the situation in his country. Most areas in the country were controlled by pro-Communist politicians, because in the years of the USSR Moldova had been given quite a lot of aid and financial support by the Soviets as it was part of its territories. The older people tended to hark back to a golden age of prosperity when Communists were in control. However, according to the Mayor, party politics was very dirty and quite corrupt – with

the Mafia playing a major role in its functioning. As a result, Moldova is the poorest country in Europe and the tenth most corrupt in the world.

Despite the dire situation of the country, all the children and people we met were on the exterior quite happy and appeared to be enjoying life. Unfortunately, we soon had to say goodbye to our fabulous hosts, who had looked after us so well. Many of the children we had stayed with embarked on the very long bus ride with us to Lacu Rosu (the Red Lake), an alpine resort in Romania. The journey went fairly quickly as the Moldovans were not shy in talking to us. We arrived at what became known as the 'cabana' – which was situated in the bosky mountains. It was run by Nicku – an extremely benevolent man – who was instrumental in providing the opportunity for the Moldovan children to get a holiday.

Soon after arrival, ice-breaker activities were arranged so that we could learn about each other. These were good fun as well as embarrassing! Over the next few days we would spend a lot of time in a big group of around forty, climbing mountains, visiting different places and, most memorably, playing football. The football match deserves special mention, for national pride was at stake. England was considered the underdog against a mighty Moldova side, who had thrashed us just twelve months ago. It was a combination of a resolute defence and some pace up-front which saw England go 2-0 up at half-time. The Moldovans, scared of an upset, brought on their secret weapon: a former semi-professional, the son of Nicku. Soon they drew level although we thought we had won with minutes to go, for some awful keeping from Vlad 'the riddler' allowed us to score from close range. Controversy surrounded the rest of the game: two minutes of injury time elapsed into ten, the referee refusing to blow the final whistle until Moldova scored. And did they? **H. Cook** remains defiant

that the ball never actually went in, but the result was a draw and the match an epic: Moldova 3-3 England .

A lot of time was spent mountain-walking. The scenery is superb and from the peaks we gained splendid views of the surrounding area, as well as catching glimpses of peregrine falcons in full flight. The walks gave us the chance to talk to the Moldovan children, who had similar interests and hobbies to many of us. I think they also enjoyed the opportunity to practise their English with us, which improved throughout the week. Interesting trips were also arranged, which included an excursion to a salt mine and a monastery. Every night social events were planned and enjoyed by all. On one of the last nights we divided into groups and performed something. This was highly amusing: AJJ got the whole group to sing *London's Burning* in harmonic style, whilst JT entertained the crowd with some mime. Songs were sung and plays performed – the cabana proving to be for that week a place of great laughter and entertainment.

By the end of the week we had grown attached to our Moldovan friends. They had taught us a lot, and although they did not have much they still appeared to enjoy life. The trip was quite emotional and very memorable and we will never forget the kindness of the Staff who worked at the cabana, the commitment of Nicku and the kindness of Aurely. We all have received e-mails from the new friends we made out there, and are keen to keep in contact. I would recommend to any Abingdonian thinking of making the trip that it is really worthwhile, for one not only learns about a whole new culture but about oneself. All the boys are very appreciative of the hard work and enthusiasm of JT and AJJ, whose dedication made such an exciting and pleasant trip possible.

J. DINGWALL 6 NAFF



World Challenge expedition to Mongolia

Travelling to such a remote part of the world is something that is always likely to stir up a little apprehension. It was certainly a once in a lifetime opportunity for me, and leaving both Renchulum and Ulaanbaatar evoked a strange sense of loss. The lifestyle of the Mongolians is so simple and so uncomplicated that one really starts to question the complexity of modern society.

It made an interesting start to the expedition when **A. Verdin** broke his finger before we even left the School site. Fortunately not an omen of things to come! With a smooth flight and an easy rendezvous with **I. Chau**, we had a short drive through to the centre of Beijing to rest in our hotel. The manager took a liking to us and proceeded to produce plate after plate of dumplings, much to the group's delight.

Sunday saw an early start for our transfer to Ulaan Bataar. Again, a pretty smooth affair! After a relaxing flight and bartering with taxi drivers, we arrived at the Mongolianways Backpacker. We went to see the Nadaam Festival, the biggest event in their sporting calendar, which involves competition in the three 'manly sports' of wrestling, horse-riding and archery. Later in our travels, we were to be educated in the niceties of wrestling by the ever-willing Gumba and his side-kick Nyamjo. The next day was a little rushed as we prepared ourselves for the long haul north to Renchulum in the far northern region of the Darkhad Valley. Buying food supplies, maps, pots and pans, train tickets, etc., was all made easier by the presence of Shinee, our interpreter, who was to spend the next three weeks with us.

The overnight train journey to Erdenet passed uneventfully with the team having time to relax and enjoy the scenery along the way. The first real challenge was negotiating transportation to Murun. After much discussion and a great deal of frustration, we set off. The vehicles used were the Russian-built 4x4

Forguns, a combination between a minibus and a Land Rover. The journey took us through some spectacular scenery, little villages, mountain passes and rivers. The equivalent of our British motorways was nothing more than a single-track dirt road, which wound its way north with no apparent structure. After three tiring days we arrived in Renchulum, a little village in an extremely remote part of the country. Reality struck home!



The four days of project work opened everyone's eyes. Considering that the average temperature in winter is a cool -25°C, the dormitories and ablution facilities were somewhat spartan, to say the least. The ablution block was 200m from the main building, nor had it doors or running water. We found ourselves short of tools with which to complete the task.



The team had the responsibility of re-plastering and painting the dormitories, a mammoth task, considering the state of them. After a little organisation we set to work and after four days the finished product was amazing. There was a real feeling of accomplishment, knowing that we had made a significant difference.



The three-day horse trek started on a drizzly day and by the time we reached the camp site that night it was raining very heavily, so cooking on open fires was very difficult. The next day the worst happened as **D. Boardman** toppled backwards off his horse, his right boot stuck in the stirrup. The horse bolted and ended up dragging him some 30m before his foot popped out of his boot. A thorough examination showed some minor bruising and a state of shock. He continued in the support vehicle for the rest of the day, but was back on his horse the next day. The trek took us northwards along the west side of the mountain range. Each day brought views that rivalled the previous in terms of beauty. After three days we traded our horses for hiking boots. This brought about relief for the saddle-sore Abingdonians.



We continued on foot for the next eight days. The mountain passes and lakeside paths provided a feast of visual delights. The weather was variable with a few very hot spells, interspersed with rain showers and a few nights when the temperature dropped to freezing-point. Bogs and blisters provided reasons to grumble. During the course of the trek, the team became ever better at preparing the evening meal. Unfortunately, the same cannot be said for the burnt rice pudding that we endured for breakfast. Rhubarb, to our delight, grew wild in the mountains alongside the lake and made a welcome addition to the evening meal. The boys coped brilliantly with the trying conditions. Cooking in torrential rain after a long day on foot is no pleasant or easy task.

The trek was wonderfully rounded off with lunch being hosted by Gumba and his wife Puji in their family ger. Cheese, biscuits, bread and cream for starters, followed by mutton and noodle soup, followed by yogurt and 'aireg' (fermented mare's milk), made for a hearty meal after eleven days on the move. Such warm and generous hospitality was truly humbling. We enjoyed a day of rest at the Saridag Inn in Renchulum before departing on our long journey south. Our wranglers came and joined us for the day: a nice lazy day just playing some cricket, volleyball and of course wrestling. It was with some sadness that we left Renchulum and the wonderful people of the Darkhad Valley. The lives of all of us had, in some way, been touched by the spirit of the people and the valley.

The journey back to Ulaanbaatar was challenging with a number of the group suffering from bouts of vomiting. It was good to get back to civilisation, again having spent three days cooped up in a Forgun. Ulaanbaatar and Beijing provided a great opportunity to relax, recover and reflect on the experiences of the previous weeks. With twenty-four consecutive nights under canvas it was good to sleep in a bed again.

Having done very well with the budgeting, the opportunity was there for us to indulge in few big meals, notably the Mexican Restaurant, *Los Bandidos*, in Ulaanbaatar and the *Peking Duck Restaurant* in Beijing. That, together with a day trip through Tiananmen Square and the Forbidden City, gave us the perfect cultural conclusion to an unforgettable trip.



Like any expedition of this nature, it had an immediate and lasting impact on a number of the boys, but for others it will take time and a great deal of thought before the true extent of their experience dawns on them. For me the lasting impression is the generosity and hospitality of the rural Mongolians. They are a people who have so little in terms of material possessions, but yet give so much. They live a very simple life, which revolves around the family, unaffected by the selfish and greedy lifestyle to which we have become so accustomed.

ASH



A Gap Year in Argentina

The Abingdon School Society awarded **Ben Hayes**, OA a travel bursary in 2003 which helped him take a Gap year in Argentina. This is his account of a fascinating year:

To call Argentina a country of contrasts is a bit of an understatement. Walking down the main road, I was surprised to see a Mercedes Benz sitting alongside a horse and cart at a set of traffic lights. In one house there may have been cable television and next door they may have been having to raise goats and chickens in the garden to get some food. I have to admit that at first it was really strange to see people collecting unwanted cardboard from the side of the street to sell on and get just enough money to feed their children.

Surrounded by so many unknown and new things, I began to settle in with my host family and my two jobs of teaching in an English Language Institute and working at a Catholic School. My students ranged in age from 7 to about 57, so I had quite a spectrum of Argentinians. After the previous eight months of servicing and restocking coffee machines to earn some money, flying off to a country of juicy steaks, passionate football and stunning women dancing the tango was just what I needed. In fairness, after that mind-numbing job, I would have settled for six months in Skegness, just to get me away from sachets of Decaf and Rich Roast: as long as my placement kept me as far away from coffee as possible, nobody was going to get hurt.

So with my basic knowledge of Spanish, (please and thank you as much as I had learnt) I began my journey out to South America. I went with seventeen other Gappers from my organisation and in March we began our three days of travelling from the United Kingdom to Mendoza in West Argentina for an orientation course on Argentinian life. We were yet to discover what we were supposed to be doing and generally how we were going to fit in, since most Argentinians have dark skin and black hair, and we were all gringos with white skin, different hair colours and a reasonable sense of fashion.

After a few days there, getting used to everyone in the streets stopping and staring to see what such a huge group of youngsters was doing in their country, we all travelled off to our individual placements. Early one morning I trooped off to the coach station with the two other Gappers who were going to be in my province, to be swindled on the price of bus tickets and generally get really lost and confused.

But Lady Luck must have shone on us and she helped us to find our vehicle, which then had a propensity to break down every fifteen minutes, thus making our six-hour journey into a bit of a marathon. After the other two Gappers had got off in their town, I sat for another 130km to get to my placement. Nervous of what was to come, I continued to Villa Mercedes, the place I would call home for the next five months. I got off the bus and unsurprisingly (as I learnt later) the person who was supposed to be meeting me was not there. So I sat down on a bench surrounded by my bags, resigned to the fact that this, owing to my lack of language skills and not knowing where I could find a hole in the wall to get money from, would perhaps be a bit of a blip along the road to Gap year bliss. It turned out that he was just sitting in his car listening to the football, because Boca, his favourite team, was playing in a big match. Perhaps not the welcoming committee I had thought would embrace me?

I managed to settle into both jobs straight away, so much so in fact that they stopped asking me why I was always late, just accepting that I had become a true Argentinian and that tardiness was a way of life. Life was so relaxed and laid back. "Perhaps this explains their economy?" I wondered. "People take their time with everything, no matter how important it is. If it is going to be done, it will be done so don't fret about it." I think all of us who spend our lives rushing about, stressed to the eyeballs day in day out, could really learn a lesson from them. It took a while to get used to the flexible pace of life that is taken in Argentina. Their priorities tend more towards being slightly late, because they might stop a friend in the street to see how he is and give him a hug.

I did not truly know the meaning of kindness until I befriended some of the locals. Talking is a religion practised by everyone. It became common practice to sit around with friends, for a special social tea and chat for hours. One of the best things about being male in Argentina is that it makes you automatically correct. That sounded about right to me!

On long weekends I would travel off with friends, including a visit to the capital Buenos Aires,

the most captivating, beautiful and lively city I have ever visited. Life never stops there and to call the women beautiful is not telling half the story. At no point of night or day does the city stop bustling. No visit to South America is complete without a visit to Buenos Aires.

Having finished my four months' teaching, I packed up my rucksack with a fellow Gapper and we began our Indiana Jones adventure into the midst of deepest, darkest South America, taking in Uruguay, Peru, Bolivia, Brazil and Chile, experiencing

everything from Rio night life to the lost Inca city of Machu Picchu, and seeing so many of the most memorable sights. Returning home a typical Gap year tragedy, with long hair and a dodgy beard, I had learnt so much. Especially from living as a native Argentinian, I learnt about the local people, their values in life, their hospitality and contentment with whatever they had, sometimes even the most basic form of simplicity, and have come back with my eyes opened. Cheesy, you say? True nonetheless.

B. HAYES, OA



Kayaking in Norway

Twelve boys spent two weeks kayaking the big booming rivers of Norway under the watchful eyes of Mike Devlin (Director of coaching of the British Canoe Union) **AJM**, Ben Gunn and **TCG**.

After a long train journey from Oslo to Mo i Rana, almost on the Arctic Circle, the group was met by the minibus and Land Rover with the trailer of kayaks.

Paddling began on the Ranaelva ('elva' being Norwegian for 'river') and boys were soon finding out just how unforgiving the rapids can be. The instructors were busy rescuing paddlers and kayaks from the cold waters of the Ranaelva.

We operated in two groups, one run by Mike Devlin and Mike Holman, and the other by TCG and Ben Gunn. The Ranaelva runs almost alongside the main road (the E6) from Oslo to Nordkapp, and much of the river can be scouted from the road. Unfortunately, the one part we could not see contained a difficult waterfall, which forced an hour's hauling of kayaks up into the trees and through the forest before descending to the river again. Not much fun, but no one accepted TCG's suggestion of walking through the short railway tunnel on the far side of the river. There aren't many trains, are there?

After a few days on the Ranaelva, paddlers became more confident and swam fewer. The groups began to tackle some of the larger rapids and enjoyed the thrills of bouncing over big wave trains down the centre of the river. The weather improved, and we had a visit to the Arctic Circle Centre, and sent the obligatory postcards home. Even in mid-July there was still much snow on the hills and lit-



tle vegetation above the road level, so far north were we. The constant daylight gave problems sleeping, and everyone became very tired indeed with camping, kayaking and no night to enforce sleep!

From the Ranaelva we headed south to the Bua just south of Trondheim. One camp by a lake en route gave everyone a much needed rest, and the group enjoyed a look round the old city of Trondheim with its cathedral and old waterfronts. The Bua proved to be a river too far, and was very low, which meant

many more rocks were showing and had to be avoided. Mike's group managed a couple of runs on the lower section, but most of TCG's group had to exit the top of the gorge as the steep rocky sections were simply too difficult. In the end three paddlers emerged tired and cold from the gorge, with two more almost making it! The Bua showed everyone just how much training is needed to be

confident on grade three water, and emphasised how difficult it is to ensure high levels of technical skills with the limited paddling time allowed by the School timetable.

From the Bua it was a short drive to the Otta and Sjoa systems, which some of the group remembered from two years ago. Here there was water for all levels of skills, and the Otta gave us a superb introduction to big, safe white water. There were still some swimmers, but fewer.

The Sjoa was conveniently low and this enabled us to end the trip on the 'play section' which is not too



difficult. There is a video of spectacular pile-ups in one stopper, and the manic rescues of five paddlers and their kayaks at once below it! Nonetheless, the whole team thoroughly enjoyed the Sjoa, and in

many ways it was the highlight of the trip.

The last night saw us all in the Otta Hotel enjoying an 'eat as much as you like' meal of smoked salmon and other Nordic delicacies. I don't think the hotel made a profit out of us! A very early start on the last morning enabled the group to check in at

Gardemoen Airport and then visit the city of Oslo to see the Fram, KonTiki and the Viking ships before flying home in the late afternoon.

All in all a very successful trip, and we look forward to the Alps next July.

TCG

Economics in Budapest

We gathered on early on Sunday 15 February for what would be an informative trip to a new addition to the EU. We landed in Budapest at about 1.00pm, and after some trivial hiccups with the immigration formalities, we were taken for a sightseeing tour of the town centre. Here our travel coordinator briefly ran us through the history of Hungary. The ornate buildings were themselves an indication of Hungary's culturally rich past. We also visited the Fisherman's Bastion and the Matthias Church, where we were exposed to yet more opulent architecture.

On Monday we visited a train factory. Here we learnt about how communism had affected the industry. The organization employed around 700 people and sold (and repaired) trains for Greece, the Czech Republic and Germany. Our guide spoke of the constant demand for their goods and services under the Communist regime, but the free market system meant that demand was lacking, and supply quite simply exceeded demand.

We also visited *Interspar*, the equivalent of *Sainsbury's*. The implication of the free market economy is something that we met once again: the firm was not used to such stringent competition from other competitors. We understood the various ways that the firm tried to gain a competitive edge: by focused and goal-driven marketing strategies and extensive market research. The increased choice and variety available to consumers is clearly something that was lacking in the Communist system and has been welcomed and relished by the citizens of Budapest: this is evident in the fact that their consumer base grew by more than 20% each year for the last two years, and the average expenditure has increased by 17.5% for the same period.

Monday evening was spent in Budapest. We sampled traditional Hungarian cuisine, with positive results. Eating out in Hungary was an experience: learning about the food and seeing the way in which

it is served and eaten is very different from the UK: not necessarily better or worse, just different.

On Tuesday we visited the Dreher Brewery, the oldest and largest in Budapest. The firm produced beers such as *Korona*, *Dreher* and *Bak*. Here we saw in practice the concept of 'just in time' production. The prolific and industrious nature of the firm was obvious: the majority of the turnover originates from its brewing interests and amounts to about \$3 billion. The method of production was particularly interesting: we learnt the importance of precision in the production of beer and immaculate cleaning and sanitising standards also played a part. Corporate social responsibility was also an important part of their firm: it paid over 10 billion HUF in tax, our tour guide gloated. They believed it was essential for them to contribute to a better quality of life for all.

As well as visiting the Danube Bend, we visited *Caprice*, a jewellery manufacturer. *Caprice* prided itself on excellent consumer care and an extensive range of products available. There were more than 4000 different and unique types of diamonds that were cut specifically to suit annual fashion trends. Perhaps their principal claim to exclusivity was the fact that no *Caprice* product remained on the shelf for longer than eighteen months, or it would be either reduced for sale or dismantled. Much to their disappointment, none of us succumbed to buying any diamonds! When the opportunity presented itself, however, many of us indulged in a snow-ball fight, initiated by **T. Oberhoesel**, and many of the old scores were settled.

In conclusion, the whole trip was a huge success. It was in Budapest that the Economics Society was established, and since then we have hosted a range of lectures and visits. The boys thoroughly enjoyed the trip, as well as each other's company. **JT** and **DE** must also be thanked for arranging the trip and their good humour throughout it. We very much look forward to Strasbourg next year!

S. KAPOOR 6 NAFFP

A2 Geography Trip to Sierra de Gredos, Spain

At the end of one of the worst British summers on record, it was safe to say that everyone was looking forward to a week in Spain. We left on a mild Saturday morning, and within a few hours after take-off landed at Madrid's premier airport. We were met with a pleasantly humid climate upon leaving the airport, and boarded the coach that was to take us the 250km drive to the Centre. Upon arrival, the sun had set and the centre we were to call home for the next week was shrouded in darkness – at best it looked rustic, but also had a certain warmth about it that was no doubt enhanced by the friendly greetings we received from the Staff. Each dormitory had space for eight people, so there was never a dull moment, although it did ensure that each room had its fair share of scorers!

In the morning, we got to see the Centre in daylight for the first time – its charm was still there, and was even increased by its situation in the idyllic setting of the Sierra De Gredos mountain range – we were surrounded by hills with clouded peaks, coniferous forests and the river Tormes flowing between the two. For the first couple of days it was this river that we used to collect data for the coursework element of our A2, measuring variables such as its depth and velocity at various points along its course through the area. This in itself was enjoyable, with swimming sometimes becoming a necessity (not that anyone minded!). The river formations in the granite section of the river, including waterfalls and potholes, created the perfect location to go swimming in the evenings.

When we had finished collecting the data needed for our projects, we began to relax more. About half-way through the week we divided into two groups and alternated between mountain-biking and horse-riding to a bar in the mountains, where we would be served paella (which was in itself an event – the chef was apparently an expert at the dish, and certainly didn't disappoint). I donned a crash helmet and left with our conservationist, Juan Francisco, who had accompanied and aided us in most of what we did for the week. A few hours later we arrived at the bar, after a particularly exciting trip downhill – the other group on horseback were to take longer, so we filled the time swimming in the nearby lake, a body of slow-moving mountain water which was consequentially icy cold.

After having lunch, it was our turn to ride horses, this time back to the centre. I was dismayed at first to discover my horse was the slowest during the morning shift, but was encouraged to learn he had obviously changed attitude during lunch. SPGS's horse (Marco) insisted on eating every twenty-five yards, while others just wanted to be lazy and dawdle at the back of the line. My horse provided a few laughs when he decided to get into the pond we had

stopped at, rather than drink from it as others did. He also began bucking, to add insult to injury. This disobedient streak was repeated later when three people were thrown from their horses, but luckily nobody was hurt and we could laugh about it afterwards.

A few days after this, we had been scheduled to do a series of adventure activities – zip-wiring across a gorge was particularly fun, although the abseiling felt a bit too precarious to me. Crossing the waterfall via two ropes was also amusing, particularly for those watching. Arguably the highlight of the trip, however, was the session of paint-balling that occurred near the end of the week. In two teams (the browns and the greens) we were handed guns each. Typically, mine began hissing with gas shortly before we began and had to be replaced. Each team was given a coloured flag, and had to protect it against the opposition – the winning team was the side that stole the enemy flag. If you were shot you were out of the game. My team lost each of the three games to the browns, although I managed to survive two of them! We also planned to travel up to a glacier later in the week, but were prevented by poor weather conditions at the intended destination. Ultimately we travelled half-way there, and returned to the centre to have an extended lunch.

When our time had come to an end at the Centre, we said goodbye to the Staff and each individually signed the guest book. One of the best things about the Centre was the food – each meal was home-made, and they took an approach to seconds reminiscent of meals back home. Noodle soups, meat dishes, chips, salads, and even popcorn on the penultimate day! It was a shame to be going, but we were also interested in the prospect of spending an afternoon and a night in the Spanish capital.

We took the coach from the Centre back to Madrid, and stayed in a hostel that was much nicer than we had expected. Madrid was less enjoyable than the Centre, simply because there didn't seem to be anything to do other than shop – on the other hand, the afternoon spent window-shopping came in handy for the evening when we were visiting various bars! For dinner a small group of us found a restaurant selling paella, and enjoyed various types, including seafood and meat varieties. The evening was enjoyable and a fitting end to such a fantastic holiday (made better by the fact that England was experiencing the beginnings of a small heat-wave upon our return on the following Saturday). Judging by the comments left in the Centre guest book, I imagine everyone enjoyed the trip as much as I did. I would recommend it to those considering continuing Geography to A2 level.

T. EVANS 6 NMR

CCF Training Weekend

Whilst everyone else was enjoying the start of halfterm, nearly fifty NCOs and recruits from the CCF spent a training weekend on Salisbury Plain. The aim of the weekend was primarily to improve the recruits' skills and get them all up to a similar level, ready for

experience of night-time work. The other part which was particularly enjoyed was an Ambush which the recruits laid on a group of 'unsuspecting' NCOs. This gave them their first opportunity to fire blank rounds (after stoppages had been cleared) and proved very successful and enjoyable.



Recruit Camp in the Easter holidays. The recruits did numerous different activities from Basher- (Shelter) Building to Camouflage and Concealment, ably taught by some Senior NCOs and some members of Oxford University Officer Training Corps. But there were two popular favourites. The first was a night patrol exercise where they performed a reconnaissance mission on a rather conspicuous group of cadets acting as Enemy (of many changing nationalities), providing the recruits with their first

experience of night-time work. The other part which was particularly enjoyed was an Ambush which the recruits laid on a group of 'unsuspecting' NCOs. This gave them their first opportunity to fire blank rounds (after stoppages had been cleared) and proved very successful and enjoyable.

The cadets who were not involved with assisting recruit instruction carried out some training with two Lance Corporals from our parent regiment, the Royal Gloucestershire Berkshire and Wiltshire Regiment. This involved some more advanced infantry skills including a Sniper Hunt (try-

ing to approach a watcher without being seen), and a Section Attack Demonstration, which was put on for the recruits on Sunday.

Overall this weekend was a tremendous success and everyone who attended gained a tremendous amount. As ever, though, this weekend would not have been possible without the hard work and effort put in by the adult Staff: **Major Carson, Flt Lt Hullis, 2nd Lt Williams, 2nd Lt De Wilde**, the

members of Oxford University OTC and L/Cpls Deacon and Maplethorpe from 1 RGBW. Particular thanks go to Flt Lt Hullis, and 2nd Lt De Wilde who returned from Winchester College and Deployment in Germany respectively to assist on the weekend.



P. ROWE 6 DF

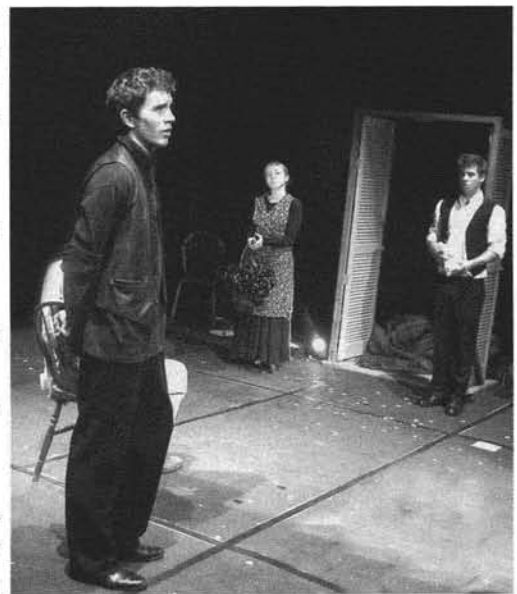
Drama



The year's drama programme began in August more than three hundred miles north of Abingdon, with six performances of John Clifford's *Ines de Castro* at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe. Although a short account of the production was squeezed into last year's *Abingdonian*, there was not space to do justice to the predominantly Sixth Form cast of **J. Donnelly**, **J. Mugnaioni**, **A. Nash** and **G. Potter**, who played the main roles with skill and sensitivity alongside the equally impressive Sasha Brown and Holly Thame from St Helen's. **M. Heffernan** contributed a fine supporting role and **T. Bennelick** in his second visit to the Fringe, was simply outstanding as the technical genius who made everything happen, albeit with sterling support from Freya Dolby of St Helen's.

Abingdon's previous trip to the Fringe in 2000 was with a full-length show (*Sweeney Todd*) that involved nearly a hundred people, but *Ines de Castro* was a more typical Fringe production, since it entailed a handful of performers renting a period of time each day in a small 'managed venue' that was shared with other shows. The contract allowed us a few minutes before each show to set everything up, and a few minutes afterwards to clear it away before the next group moved in. This cultural production line brought many advantages, such as a dedicated press team, an independent box office and a certain amount of passing trade. Yet it also presented a few challenges that

added spice to the business of performing. After the daily search for a parking space near our venue (the fashionably named *Roxy Art House*), cast and crew tackled the timed assault course that was 'the get in'. This meant carrying the set and props up flights of stairs from dressing room to stage. The dressing room was one of those places you either loved or hated: a clutter of people and strange objects struggling to keep within the tiny bays, marked by tape on the floor, that had been allotted to each show. Sticking to the narrow path of masking tape was essential for avoiding accidents, let alone awkward encounters with performers from other companies, such as the pair of elderly



American gentlemen, dressed like tramps, who muttered to themselves in a corner about misplaced props; or the mink-clad lady of a certain age who always seemed to be trying to extricate herself from her underwear without anyone noticing, in the same way Peter Sellers used to relieve Harry Secombe of his braces. At times one wondered where the real show was. Had we stumbled on some new work by Beckett, or was this simply life backstage at the Fringe? However one viewed it, reality always arrived with a thud as soon as our show ended, when a troupe of South African drummers crashed, banged and walloped their way past us on the stairs as we tried to clear the stage for them in a hurry. Yet a few quick changes later, the frantic haste could be forgotten for another day as we emerged into the Edinburgh sunshine, fed the parking meter and relaxed for a moment or two before our next engagement of the day – an open air performance on the High Street at which leaflets were distributed and potential punters wooed.

It was hard work, of course, but also great fun, and the cast's efforts were rewarded with appreciative audiences and a four star review in *The Herald* that concluded: "With compelling performances from all the players, the young company displayed a deep understanding of the work and a real talent for the craft. A beautiful and delicate piece, *Cutting Edge* is a gifted company with a bright future ahead." That would have been enough to set the seal on a happy and successful week, but another highlight came when the play's author, John Clifford, attended one of the performances and held a post-show discussion with members of the audience that afforded a fascinating insight to the creative process. We were enormously grateful to him, and to Jo Watt, Director of Drama at St Helen's, for her help with all aspects of the trip.

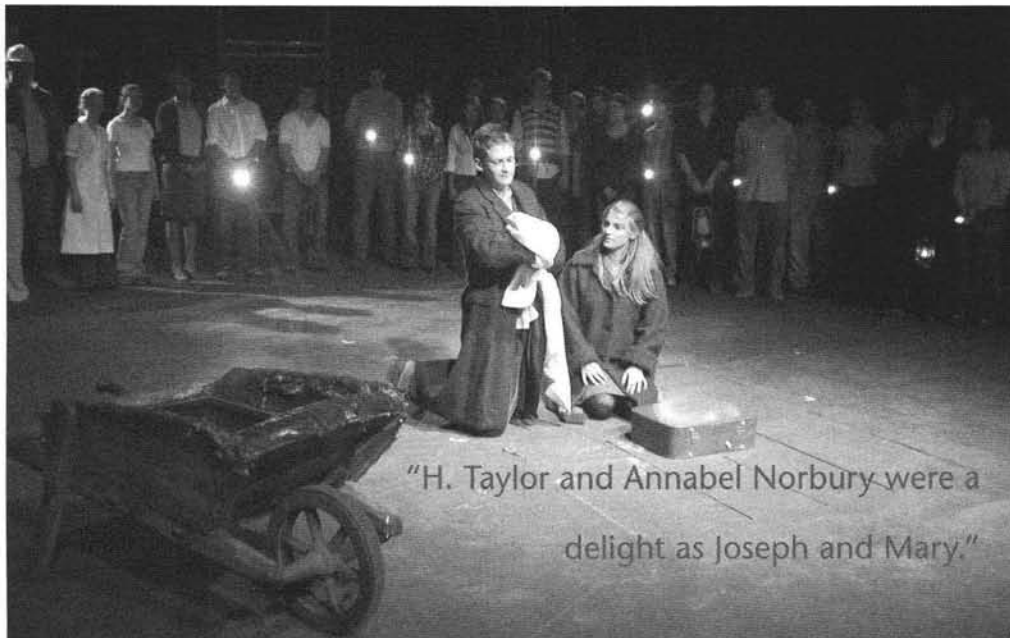
After the Fringe, we embarked on the academic year in September with the invaluable assistance of two Old Abingdonians in new roles. **A. Verjee** (OA 1997) had been appointed as the first director of technical theatre at St Helen's, whilst **L. Fowler** (OA 2003) joined the Abingdon Drama Department for a gap year role as Drama assistant. It was not long before both were in action. November saw the start of the year's curricular drama productions, with two pieces of devised work by Upper Sixth A Level Theatre Studies students, many of whom had been in Edinburgh only two months earlier. A2 Devised Pieces offer students the chance to follow their own interests, and this year, an awareness that they were reaching the end of their School careers seemed to play a significant part in determining the themes of the two plays, since both reflected a concern with choices and endings. The first saw a group of representative characters in competition with each other for the final place in Paradise, whilst the second looked back over the lives of two men who'd been friends at school before growing apart for reasons that neither understood.

Presented in the temporary Drama Studio at St Helen's, both plays featured strong performances. In *The Last Place in Paradise*, **G. Potter** was in characteristically persuasive form

as Satan who, in partnership with God (Cara Cummings), interviews four hopeful, albeit recently deceased candidates. **A. Garton Ash** had been a clean-living, God-fearing American whose confidence was based on a life of good deeds and bible study, whilst **J. Donnelly** was an Irish Catholic priest whose idea of the good life was a little more colourful, and a lot more compromising. Holly Thame's character had endured hardship and might have been most people's idea of the deserving poor, but it was **J. Bishop**'s businessman, whose bland life had ended in the company of a prostitute, that finally inherited the kingdom, and so articulated the play's conclusions that preparation counts for little, those who claim the moral high ground may be heading for a fall, and all choices and rewards are uncertain. *At the End of the Road* also explored the idea of rewards, but in the context of this life rather than the next. The play used flashbacks to review the lives of two old men, Chris and Anthony, played with delicacy and attention to detail by **A. Nash** and **J. Ancell**. As they lay on their deathbeds in the same hospital ward, episodes from their shared past rose up before them, enabling us to examine the decisive moments that shaped their lives. There was the entrance exam that saw Chris cheat his way into public school and a life of high-earning but unattached privilege, while honest Anthony headed for the low-key comforts of marriage and a poorly paid job. In these flashbacks, **J. Mugnaioni** (Chris) and **A. Macdonald** (Anthony) were brilliant as the younger versions of the main characters. Their comic interplay was marked by excellent timing that not only secured laughs but also allowed the painful elements of the story to emerge. They received fine support from Sasha Brown and Alice Buxton in a variety of roles.

A couple of weeks after these productions, the Amey Theatre was the venue for the main extra curricular play of the year. *The Nativity* is the first of three plays by the Yorkshire poet, Tony Harrison, based on the great cycles of medieval plays known as the *Mysteries*, owing to their original performances on open air carts by members of 'mysteries' or guilds of tradesmen. The Mercers' Company, whose support for the building of the Arts Centre had been so important, was one of the earliest 'mysteries', so it was appropriate that the first production in the newly refurbished auditorium should honour their origins, as well as the efforts of the architects, builders and craftsmen who undertook the work. Besides, a play that begins with God's creation of the world and takes us up to the birth of Christ was not a bad choice for the opening of a new facility on the eve of Christmas. Yet, as every mother knows, birth can be a mixed event. The delight a new arrival brings is tempered by the discomfort that attends its delivery, and so it was for much of the rehearsal period as we found access to the theatre limited by the contractors' frantic attempts to finish the building in time. Nevertheless, the frustrations were eventually overcome, and the large cast, manipulated to include an equal number of St Helen's girls and Abingdon boys, took to the stage in December on an array of scaffolding, forklift trucks and other paraphernalia of a building site.

Among the many fine performances, several were par-



"H. Taylor and Annabel Norbury were a delight as Joseph and Mary."

ticularly striking. **J. Barclay's** substantial presence was always going to afford the role of God the necessary *avoids*, yet he overcame 'flu and relative inexperience as an actor to deliver a memorable characterization. **E. Wilson** needs no encouragement, of course, and his portrayal of Satan as a lithe cockney lothario was both entertaining and effective. Many of the scenes involved pairs of characters. Of these, **G. Stern** and Christina Windle were an attractive Adam and Eve, **A. Nash** and **G. Cowie** were strong in the roles of Cain and Abel, **J. Donnelly** and Sally Geake brought some knockabout fun to the parts of Noah and his Wife, **J. Mugnaioni** and his younger brother **A. Mugnaioni** were an affecting Abraham and Isaac, whilst **H. Taylor** and Annabel Norbury were a delight as Joseph and Mary. Comic highlights were thick on the ground. **H. Green** literally dazzled as King Herod, the master of 'bling', whilst **M. Rothkopf** played his Son with an outrageous northern accent that worked well. **A. Macdonald**, **N. Turnbull** and **T. Swarbrick** were excellent as the dim-witted shepherds who fall foul of the sheep-stealing Mak and his wife, played here to great effect by **G. Potter** and Cara Cummings. Yet perhaps best of all was the trio of female 'Kings', played as batty C of E women by Hannah Berhanu, Laura Burns and Nicola Hemsley. Few will forget their attempts to master their unruly camels. Many others contributed to the success of the production, whether in supporting roles on stage, or as musicians led by the effervescent **SRW**, or as members of the technical and backstage teams. Of these, **T. Bennelick**, **CJB**, **RJS**, **SW**, Deirdre Trundle, **L. Fowler**, **A. Verjee** and Jo Watt were particularly important members of the production team.

Christmas is usually the time for a break, but part of the holiday was devoted to moving the Department's resources into the new accommodation on the top floor of the Arts Centre in time to face the demands of the coming term. Ever since the advent of the new A levels, the Lent term has been dominated by small-scale drama productions designed to meet the requirements of examinations. This year saw more of these than ever before, as two Fifth Form GCSE sets, two Lower Sixth sets and an Upper Sixth set all presented work within a

three-week period in March. The Fifth Form classes produced eight pieces of devised work during a marathon afternoon and evening session in the Charles Maude Room that completed the practical part of their course. These fifteen minute productions, too numerous to describe in detail, nevertheless featured a number of excellent performances that augur well for the future.

The following week, Lower Sixth sets appeared in two shortened versions of plays by Shakespeare that had the honour of being the first productions to take place in the magnificent new studio theatre at St Helen's. *Antony and Cleopatra* is one of the bard's longest plays and has one of the largest casts, yet here it was presented in little over an hour by seven actors. The role of Cleopatra, the legendary beauty and queen of Egypt, was shared by three actresses in an attempt to make real the "infinite variety" attributed to her by Enobarbus. Annabel Norbury, Christina Windle and Sally Geake excelled in this difficult task, and presented a sumptuous picture of the exotic queen's charms in their richly coloured saris. **N. Turnbull** undertook the role of Antony with a strong sense of the character's combination of colossal stature and human failings, and rendered both very effectively. **T. Swarbrick** was outstanding as Octavius Caesar, and in his other roles as Soothsayer and Clown, to which he brought contrasting physical and vocal techniques that were impressive. **P. Stern** and **M. Jarvis** were strong in their main roles as Enobarbus and Lepidus respectively, yet also shone in the almost bewildering variety of supporting roles they were required to play in order to make the cuts to the play work. *Twelfth Night* followed *Antony and Cleopatra*, and provided an enjoyable comic contrast that owed much to the larger-than-life performances of **B. Phillips** as Sir Toby Belch and **J. Garrett** as Sir Andrew Aguecheek. Their double act was a highlight of this excellent production, along with the unsettling presence of Hannah Berhanu's Feste, and **E. Rowett's** wonderful Malvolio. Amy McGavin exuded a youthful charm as Viola (disguised as Cesario) that made Orsino's awkward interest in him/her, delivered in accomplished fashion by **C. Francis**, all too believable. Beatrice Bazell was an entertain-



ingly hot-blooded Olivia whilst **A. Hall** showed considerable skill in doubling the roles of Fabian and Sebastian, and Julia Callaway was a musically gifted Maria.

In the last week of term, the Upper Sixth students were on duty again at the St Helen's studio, this time in abbreviated versions of plays they had chosen and directed themselves. **A. Nash** played Stanley to **J. Donnelly's** Goldberg and **A. MacDonald's** McCann in an interesting take on Pinter's *The Birthday Party* that cast the two new arrivals at the boarding house as television presenter and cameraman, and likened their intrusive behaviour to the bullying tactics of the modern media. Cara Cummings and Holly Thame played the other parts. **G. Potter** and **J. Mugnaioni** combined with Sasha Brown and Alice Buxton in *The Shape of Things* by Neil Labute, a modern play in which a woman decides to treat her boyfriend as her next work of art as a way of examining our preoccupation with appearances. The last of these short plays was a version of *Oedipus Rex* by Sophocles that saw **A. Garton Ash** as the doomed king with **J. Ansell** and **J. Bishop** as the Chorus. This was a wonderfully effective adaptation, pared down to the barest essentials, and made for a most compelling piece of theatre.

By this time, one might be forgiven for imagining that there

12 Angry Men

Towards the end of the Lent term the Boarders performed *12 Angry Men* by Reginald Rose. The play is about a twelve-man jury which is sent to begin deliberations in the first-degree murder trial of a sixteen-year-old boy who is accused of stabbing his father to death.

All jurors described in the play possess complex personalities, preconceptions, backgrounds and interactions which made this performance a real challenge for the actors, but one which they overcame to a man. In particular, the fact that each actor maintained his character effectively throughout the long performance on one unchanging set in a hot and stuffy room impressed this reviewer.

had been enough Drama for one term, but that would be to overlook the School's boarding community, from whose ranks many of Abingdon's most talented actors have emerged. And so, to prevent such an omission and extend an opportunity to those outside the curricular drama sets, **FAD** and **DER** staged Reginald Rose's classic, *Twelve Angry Men* with a cast of boarders and presented it over two evenings in the Charles Maude Room at the very end of the Lent term. This was a play that relied entirely on dialogue, especially the cut and thrust of argument, to achieve its impact, and so it was a tribute to the work of all concerned that the text and its meaning were delivered in unmistakably clear, committed fashion by all the protagonists, amongst whom **H. Taylor** was particularly notable.

The Summer term saw two further drama productions. Both gave opportunities to the junior pupils. *Ernie's Incredible Illusions* (Alan Ayckbourn) was performed by one of the Third Form drama classes in the Amey Theatre as part of a programme that included live jazz music, whilst the Lower School Drama Club showed tremendous staying power in delivering their performances of Orwell's *Animal Farm* on the last two evenings of the academic year. Both of these productions were directed by **FAD** whose work with the younger boys was greatly appreciated.

And so the curtain descended on a long and momentous year for Drama at Abingdon. It was clear that 2003/4 would go down as the year in which our dramatists acquired a home of their own for the first time, and one that placed them conveniently alongside the kindred spirits of Music and Art. There are many people to thank for this, of course, but perhaps one who deserves special mention here is **David Taylor**, Abingdon's Head of Drama until 1997, who campaigned tirelessly for the subject over many years, and helped to persuade those in authority to take the idea of a dedicated space for Drama seriously. The new building still has a few snagging problems, to be sure, and there are still several items of equipment to install, but the general improvement in the provision for Drama is considerable. What a difference a year makes!

JHT

It was fairly miraculous that such a good performance came about, for three days before, the cast still did not know its lines! But the motivation and encouragement of the directors **FAD** and **DER**, was clearly effective and the cast was very grateful for it.

The cast was also very grateful to the entire boarding community, which lent its support with an excellent turnout on the night of the first performance, and thereby gave the actors the confidence to perform at their best. All who watched this play enjoyed the experience and it was universally deemed a great success.

M. PLUCK 3 VEH

An interview with a Drama student

The Abingdonian meets **E. Wilson**.

TA: How long have you been a keen thespian?

EW: I have always liked acting – my first part was as Macbeth in my primary school. Now at Abingdon I have been able to develop and learn new skills.

TA: Which of your roles have you enjoyed most?

EW: Definitely Lucifer in *The Nativity* last year. I loved playing a bad guy!

TA: How does leaning Drama compare to the more academic subjects?

EW: It is quite different. Personally I prefer it – I enjoy the interaction – you get to move your legs a bit and performing can be really fun. But this doesn't mean it's easy – because it's not.

TA: How well do you feel the groups work together?

EW: The teamwork is generally very good. You can always get a bad egg that doesn't turn up to rehearsals, doesn't learn his lines and spoils it for the group. But working with your friends makes it a really enjoyable subject.

TA: Do you believe the facilities are here at Abingdon for you to excel?

EW: Not when I first joined, as there was very limited space to rehearse.

TA: Eddie, are you looking for a career in acting?

EW: (Laughs) Well, yes, I really would like to: I am going to drama school in my gap year before university.

The Abingdonian would like to thank **E. Wilson** for his time and insight.

J. DINGWALL 6 NAFP

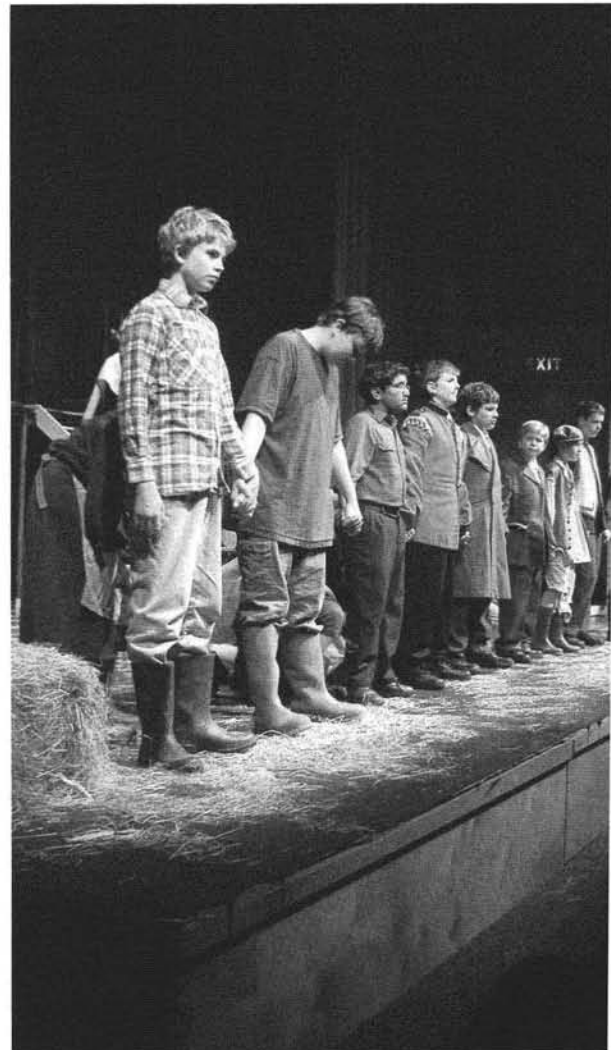
Animal Farm

I really enjoyed *Animal Farm*. It started off as Junior Drama Club where we had fun and games. Then, given a choice of plays, we chose *Animal Farm*. We read through the script and FAD cast us. Some boys opted out so they could play cricket. I got the part of Clover, a "stout, motherly mare". I was thrilled as this is one of the main roles. We went through the script again, then we started to block the scenes. In the Summer term we moved into the Ingham Room and had to re-block most of the scenes to fit the stage, rather than the CMR. It got more and more frantic as the term drew on.

After half term we moved into the Amey Theatre itself. Despite having two or three weeks to go, many of us did not know our lines. Whatever knowledge we lacked, we made up for in acting. We knew pretty well all the scenes, just the words posed problems. After Prize-Giving on stage the set was constructed. The next day we came in for a rehearsal and used the set for the first time. We were meant to be off script on Tuesday, but there was no chance. We learnt our lines at every available opportunity after the Tuesday rehearsal.

We finally cracked it in the Wednesday all-day rehearsal. The first performance went well, with only a few uneasy moments. We had a small snag on Thursday, and then it was a last performance. The two highlights were **L. Abbot's** "Because..... It is..... Wrong" (it was meant to be a dull and tedious speech), and when the pyrotechnics failed to detonate, followed by **N. Howe's** "Er, Bang?" Despite these errors, it was memorable for all. I really enjoyed it and would love to do it again next year.

T. FINCH 1S



Play Review

I'm sure if you were asked whether you wanted to see a play with 'real' characters, dialogue and seemingly no story you would answer (politely) that you'd rather not. Welcome to the world of Harold Pinter. After his first brush with success in the 1960s, the British playwright has continued writing plays brimming with tension and intrigue until today. The English A level syllabus includes Pinter as a playwright to be studied in detail, hence the trip to the Oxford Playhouse for the Lower Sixth in late February.

Having read a few pieces written by Pinter at different stages in School, I was not exactly his biggest fan before watching the play. Nevertheless, my views changed after seeing a lively and entertaining production of *The Dumb Waiter* (1960) alongside various shorter sketches written for only two characters. The latter were often funny, poignant and thought-provoking, brilliantly played by **Toby Jones**, OA and Jason Watkins, at times even appearing in drag!

The entire first half of the two-hour show was devoted to these short and snappy sketches; the second half was the

centrepiece of the evening, concerning two hitmen anticipating their next job in a seedy, windowless basement of a block of flats. Although on paper (and perhaps in television productions as well) such dialogue can seem forced and at times bland, the real driving force behind this performance was the way these actors played the roles of Ben and Gus. There was a darkness and sense of humour that I had not seen before, that are not easily detectable by reading the scripts alone.

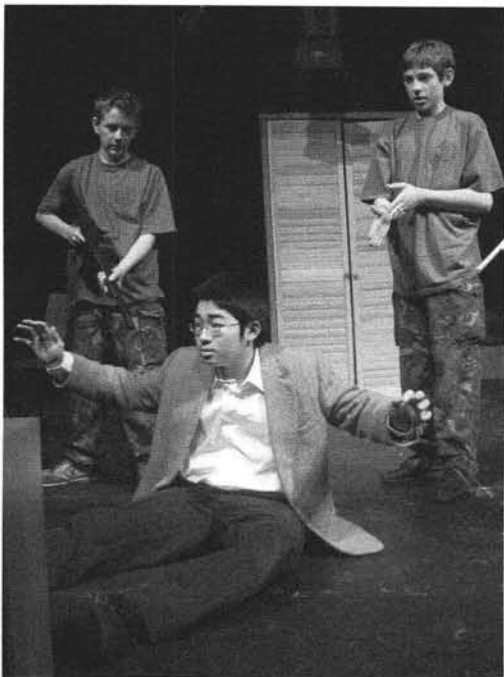
As I have said, there is no real story behind the play and in this sense it mirrors reality – Ben and Gus read the paper, look at photographs on the wall, and even leave the stage to visit the toilet during the action! It is not what is said or done however, more the Pinteresque pauses littering the play that tell us what the characters are really thinking. There are twists and turns, and some very dark and funny moments in the play, and it is certainly something to be experienced rather than thought about.

The Dumb Waiter – and other pieces

From Thursday 26 February at the Oxford Playhouse

T.EVANS 6 NMR

Ernie's Incredible Illucinations



The crowd went wild, somewhere in the distance a dog howled, the curtains opened to show... a doctor's waiting room!?

This was the beginning of what was to be an excellent rendition of Alan Ayckbourn's *Ernie's Incredible Illu-*

inations, a twisted tale about a young boy who can make things happen just by thinking about them, and the trouble this unusual gift stirred up. It starred **A. Kearly Shiers** as Ernie. Each actor managed to remember his lines and no-one was hurt. **R.Lai** proved that it is possible to burst eardrums with a scream loud enough.

After the interval, three figures walked onto the stage. One

was nervously twiddling drumsticks about, one was adjusting his glasses and tuning his guitar and one was wearing a bowler hat much like the one featured in the play. As they settled down to tuning their instruments, suddenly a huge voice filled the room. "ARE YOU READY TO ROCK?" "Er ... yes," replied the crowd feebly. "I SAID, ARE YOU READY TO ROCK?" The lights came on. Much to the amazement of the crowd, the owner of the voice was a much amplified **G. Rogers!** This was followed by an excellent heavy metal song, known to all as *Burn*. This band was called *Shoot The Dog*, and it consisted of **G. Rogers** on guitar and backing vocals, **R. Wartke-Dunbar** on bass and vocals and **S. Howard** on drums.

Next they played *Stroll in the Night*, during which the audience started clapping in a pause in the middle. Finally, there came *The Monster Mash* by *The Misfits*, featuring a guitar solo by **G. Rogers** and a drum solo by **S. Howard**. Next, to cool things down a bit, a jazz band called *The Park Roaders* played an excellent set, of which the highlight, in my opinion, was **P. Statham** singing *I Feel Good* by James Brown. There was also an excellent performance of Jimmy Hendrix's *Purple Haze*. Mention should be made of the incredible saxophone skills showcased by **H. Graham** during the outstanding version of *Baker Street* by Jerry Rafferty. Though I fear I may have left some names out, my congratulations go to everyone who took part in both the Drama and the Music and thanks to the audience for attending and enjoying it all so immensely.

S. HOWARD 3 GRM

AS Drama performances at St Helen's



The first play put on in the new drama studio at St. Helen's School was the epic tragedy, *Antony and Cleopatra*. The play itself was adapted from its original format so that two plays could be shown on the same night. While this meant some of the more intricate, character-developing scenes were lost, this detracted not at all from the play, primarily owing to the talents of the actors and actresses. The tangible scenery was sparse, but the use of vivid lighting, scenes of tableau and other techniques, meant that the space available was used very well. Antony himself, played by **N. Turnbull**, was on top form, with scenes of touching vulnerability as well as warlike machismo. The enhancing effect of his faithful and ultimately dead servant, was transmitted masterfully by **M. Jarvis**, who brought a comforting but slightly homoerotic slant to his scenes, which added so much to the moving scenes towards the end of the play. The purposeful and ruthless Octavian and his second in command Enobarbus were played very well by **T. Swarbrick** and **P. Stern**, who brought a stern sense of honour to their performances. This created a sense of ambiguity concerning the direction of the audience's

sympathies. Cleopatra and her servants were played by three very talented actresses: Annabel Norbury, Sally Geake and Christina Windle. The disorientating rotation of Cleopatra's role between these three on a scene-by-scene basis may have been intended to create roles of equal magnitude, and whilst it did so, it became very hard to establish any kind of emotional bond with the character portrayed, even creating confusion among the audience as to who was Cleopatra at any one time. Despite this, the scene of Cleopatra's death was touching and extremely poignant. This performance was a definite success.

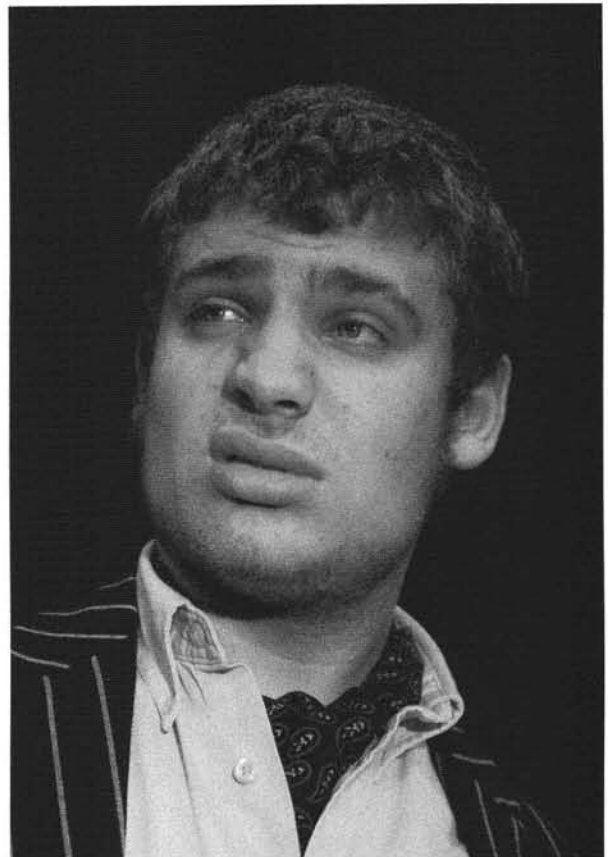
After such a mournful and emotionally draining play, it was the perfect time to indulge in some silly and flamboyant comedy in the form of Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*. There was little effort needed on behalf of the audience to keep up with the play, (which came as a welcome relief after *Antony and Cleopatra*.) This made the atmosphere in the theatre more light-hearted and upbeat. The play had been cropped for time purposes but, as with *Antony and Cleopatra*, this did not make it any less enjoyable.



The stage had slightly more decoration and scenery, but there was a sense that more of a recognisable backdrop would have meant the audience would have felt less like an audience in a theatre and more like onlookers to the drama in progress. Despite this, the play was excellently performed, with all the quirkiness of the characters brought to the fore. The hilarity of **B. Phillips** playing Sir Toby Belch, with a false paunch, loud, slurred voice and an ever-present hip flask, combined with the posh-accented, tremulous voice of **J. Garrett** as Sir Andrew Aguecheek, filled the theatre with laughter. The part of Feste the fool was filled by Hannah Bruhani, who brought a fun-loving, but slightly aloof side of Feste to the fore. **J. Garrett** performed songs in the play, which were immensely impressive, as well as the pieces of guitar music played by **J. Garrett** and the piano introduction played adeptly by Julia Callaway. Beatrice Bazzell as Lady Olivia brought an aloof but melancholy serenity to the play, as did **C. Francis'** Lord Orsino, which was complemented by the naïve but charming roles of Sebastian/Fabian and Viola/Caesario played by **A. Hall** and Amy McGavin respectively. The highlight of the evening was reserved for one actor, however: **E. Rowett** as the bitter, cantankerous Malvolio, cavorting about on the stage in the most awful yellow stockings and trousers. The audience was in shocked silence as soon as he leapt on to the stage, but quickly dissolved into uncontrollable laughter, not at all lessened by his ridiculous mannerisms.

It became obvious by the end of this marathon of theatre that the AS Drama groups, although the plays they performed this year were too different to invite comparison, were united in their excellent depictions of Shakespeare's masterpieces.

M. STOTT 6 NMR





Highlights of an auspicious musical year

At the Leavers' Service **G. Potter** sang, "It was a very good year", a phrase which could be interpreted to refer not only to the talented group of Upper Sixth musicians who were about to depart but also to the academic year that was drawing to an end. In fact, a scan of the year's Concert Programme Archive suggests that it was an auspicious and memorable year for a number of reasons.

Perhaps, most importantly, it was the year that saw the move back from 'Sibcas City', our temporary Portacabin home on the tennis courts, to the Music School in the Amey Theatre Arts Centre. Although Sibcas had been a perfectly adequate solution for four terms, it had felt like camping to an extent, and the proper establishment in the new building, with all our musical resources available, was much anticipated. Despite the official opening at the School's Open Day on 11 October and the Opening Gala Concerts on 6 December, it was not until the very end of term that the move actually took place – and that was just as well, because it minimised the period when instrumental teaching and departmental administration were happening at opposite ends of the School.

A further notable feature of the year was the rise to prominence of our jazz musicians, a group

much in demand at functions throughout the year, including an event in November at Dalton Barracks, bringing officers and their wives together with members of the local community and, at the end of the year, the Griffen Ball. Last year had seen the departure of jazzers **J. Herford**, **M. Gardner** and **M. Hardy**, but **N. Hawken** (saxophone), **M. Chilcott** (bass), **N. Shaikh** (guitar) and **G. Potter** (vocals) remained and formed themselves into a most effective quartet, sometimes combining with older and more experienced players who travelled far to play with them, so highly did they rate their musicianship. We were all delighted but not surprised to hear that **N. Hawken** won a coveted place on the jazz course at Trinity College, London. These leading young musicians were one of the reasons that the Big Band reached so high a standard this year – and it was due to their enthusiasm and expertise, together with the obvious benefits for the band, that we accepted a generous invitation at short notice to do a concert in Argentan, Abingdon's twin town in Normandy, over the long May Bank Holiday weekend.

The Chapel Choir, under **SRW**'s expert and charismatic direction, also reached unprecedented heights, with a fine group of young trebles, including **A. Lo**, **T. Bennett**, **P. Statham** amongst others. The lower voices also boasted some fine young sing-

ers in **T. Gatten**, **A. Mould**, **P. O'Donovan** and **E. Mitchard**, all A level musicians, the first three with Choral Award offers from Oxford or Cambridge. The Choir sang some wonderful and uplifting services throughout the year and we celebrated not only the confirmation of Oxford Choral and Organ Awards respectively for **P. O'Donovan** (bass, Queen's) and **E. Mitchard** (Pembroke) but also purchased an excellent Compton digital organ, an idea inspired by the dogged enthusiasm of our two senior organists, **E. Mitchard** and **J. Dyer**.

Another great cause for excitement was the arrival in September of a particularly fine and promising group of First Form musicians. **A. Lo** (violin), **A. Ereaut** ('cello) and **N. Ereaut** (double bass) quickly formed themselves into a trio, winning through to the finals of the National Chamber Music Competition in March. Abingdon's ensembles have now succeeded in this for four years in a row. **J. Mason** (horn) and **A. Lloyd** (flute) have also made their mark, and this is not to mention several others who are motoring close behind! It promises exceptional things to come in the years ahead.

It is a sad sign of the times that the grades of our Upper Sixth leavers were greatly changed, after appeal, from 7As, 1B and 2Cs to 8As and 2Bs, results that were pleasing from this very able set and sufficient to send three to read Music at Oxford: **M. Gardner** (Christ Church), **M. Hardy** (Merton) and **L. Berryman** (Magdalen), and **J. Herford** (Gonville and Caius) to Cambridge on a Choral Scholarship. This year's crop of Upper Sixth promises equally good things ...

Despite our accommodation in Sibcas and an ongoing building site around it, it was good to see the Amey Theatre in early use for two musical events, a joint concert given by the School's Wind Band and the Band of the Royal Logistics Corps. This concert was a fund-raising effort with proceeds shared between the Army Benevolent Fund and the Arts Centre Appeal. Quite apart from the financial side, the benefit to our young

musicians playing alongside the professionals in the second half of the concert was incalculable and it was fascinating to see the contrasting direction and conducting styles of Major Jim Taylor and our own inimitable **Fiona Parker**.

The House Singing Competition was reinstated with much enthusiasm this year with all the Houses taking part. Andrew Morris, a distinguished Director of Music at Bedford School, returned to give us a most entertaining adjudication, the winners being Aitken's House with *Can You Feel the Love Tonight?*, a worthy result for the main 'mover and shaker', **N. Shaikh**, who had done so much preparation and rehearsal in order to inspire the other members of his House. We look forward to this regular fixture on the eve of half term from now on.

It was also good to help the Boat Club celebrate the opening of the wonderful new boat house, with a performance of movements from Handel's *Water Music*, given from a balcony overlooking the Thames, nearly 300 years on from its first performance on a fleet of Thames barges in 1715.

The Gala Concert for the Arts Centre Opening replaced the customary Christmas Concerts, and it was given twice with an afternoon matinee and a more formal black tie and champagne event in the evening. First Orchestra, Chapel Choir, Chamber Orchestra, Brass Band and Big Band all made appearances. The concert opened with Gordon Jacob's

"The Chapel Choir ... also reached unprecedented heights ..."



exciting arrangement of the *National Anthem* with trumpet fanfares performed to stunning effect from the new raised balconies at the rear of the stage, and it concluded with Elgar's *Pomp and Circumstance March No. 1*, in which the audience participated again by singing *Land of Hope and Glory*. But the undoubted stars of the show were **G. Potter**, singing a funky *Superstition* by Stevie Wonder accompanied by Big Band and **P. O'Donovan** playing Gershwin's *Piano Concerto in F*, a challenging piece but hugely effective when played with such style and flair as on this occasion. A retiring collection at both concerts raised a marvellous £800 for the Elgar Birthplace and the Sargent Cancer Fund Appeal.

It is the Lent term which offers the annual concert with the National Competition of Chamber Music and the Choral Society Concert as its principal points of focus, but we cannot forget the New Year Concert which got things off to a good start after the mock examinations. Second Orchestra and Wind Band featured, with solos by **A. Lo** (violin) and **N. Ereat** (piano). Second Orchestra played Beethoven, some arrangements of *Swan Lake* and *Trepak* with a promising sense of ensemble; Chamber Orchestra captured the bleak and empty space conjured by Gorecki's *Three Pieces in Old Style* with great control, and our massed 'cellos played two songs from Bernstein's *West Side Story* in a sumptuous arrangement.

The Chamber Concert was held this year in Oxford's Holywell Music Room, the oldest concert hall

in Europe and known both to Handel and Haydn. Its special atmosphere enhanced a wonderful evening with a great variety of ensembles – highlights included Turina's *Oración del Torero*, in a great evocation conjured by the Fourth Form quartet of **D. Ridley**, **A. Kingdon**, **H. Scarlett** and **T. Barrow**. The first part of Britten's *Billy Budd*, not chamber music but an opera scene, presented fifteen of the School's singers, accompanied by their teacher **Andrew Yeats**, bringing to life the dramatic opening part. This was a most enthralling experience and sung with convincing style and confidence.

The great annual choral endeavour on 6 March was J.S. Bach's *B minor Mass*, performed with a Joint Choral Society and Orchestra of pupils from Abingdon and St Helen's School, together with parents and Staff under the baton of **RSE**. This was a tremendously successful occasion with some outstanding professional soloists and the contribution of professional oboe d'amore and baroque trumpet players. This group of over two hundred performers did exceedingly well to bring off a performance of such high quality and it is a tribute to RSE's enthusiasm and dedication in rehearsal and musical flair that this fine performance was achieved.

In addition to several informal Scholars' and mock A level recitals, the concert fare this term included a marvellous piano duet recital, on 17 March, by **Joseph Tong** and **Waka Hasegawa**, a husband and wife team and both on the visiting Music Staff. This pair enjoy an international performing career

so we were delighted that they agreed to play for us in a programme that included duet and duo (the Kawai grand from the Ingham Room was wheeled through to join the Steinway) in music by Mozart, Schubert, Ravel, Britten and Rachmaninov.

And so to the Summer, a term in which we now have to celebrate the achievements of our bands and orchestras in the first half to avoid the revision leave which dominates the second. We got off to a ferociously quick start with the Big Band rehearsed and hasty arrangements in place before setting off

"The great ... choral endeavour on 6 March was J.S. Bach's *B minor Mass* ..."



for Normandy at the start of May. Inspired by the enthusiasm and proactive help from senior musicians, **MAS** managed to direct without the expertise of the customary leader **Simon Currie**, who was away in Australia touring with his band, *Manfred Mann*. It was a very happy and enjoyable two-night tour with a fantastic concert in Argentan's Salle des Fêtes, given to a large and enthusiastic audience. Almost all the boys played solos but particularly notable ones were given by **N. Hawken** (*Lil' Darlin'*, *Just the Way You Are*), **A. Macdonald** (*Sunflower*) and others from staff members **JHT** (incredible vocals in *I Feel Good*) and **JFB**. Special mention should be made of **KJS'** ever stylish and convivial company.

Partly as a result of the tour, Big Band was in particularly good form in the Bands Concert on 14 May. Dr Julian Faultless stepped in to replace **Fiona Parker**, who was recovering from successful but unexpected hospital attention to her back. Thankfully, she continued to make an excellent and speedy recovery through the remainder of the term. A highlight for the present writer was the performance by **M-L. Jones** and **T. Gatten** as clarinet duettists in the theme from *Schindler's List*, both making a lovely liquid sound as they interwove their melodic lines, exploiting the full range of their instruments.

The Orchestral Concert on 21 May gave concert opportunities to three soloists: **D. Chung** in Rodé's *Violin Concerto*, **W. Lea** in Albinoni's *D minor Oboe Concerto* and **E. Mitchard** in Elgar's sublime *Cello Concerto*. **D. Chung** coped masterfully with the virtuosic demands of this concerto, and **W. Lea** gave a beautifully controlled account of this well known baroque concerto. **E. Mitchard's** performance was exciting and accomplished, the soloist confronting the enormous technical challenges of this work with his customary intellectual stamina and determination, a remarkable achievement ... and for the orchestra, too, who rose to the challenge. The Second Orchestra performed well also, with some spirited and accurate playing in works by Wagner and Leoncavallo, together with the

catchy theme from *New York, New York*, a favourite of Sinatra aficionados.

The rest of the programme was a tribute to Scandinavian Nationalism (if one takes account of Holst's Swedish forebears), including Sibelius' *Finlandia*, Grieg's *Peer Gynt* and *Mars* from Holst's *Planet Suite*.

The Staff Concert on 23 June played to a good audience and included many of Abingdon's illustrious visiting teachers, including some of our international pianists: **Chaiporn Pookhaothong**, **Mami Shikimori**, **Joseph Tong** and **Waka Hasegawa**. A good sum was raised towards the funds to finance the new digital organ, already much in use by Abingdon's host of young organists.

In customary fashion, it was the Lower School which brought our year of performances to a close, on 2 July, with a medley of solo performances interspersed with ensemble items: Wind Band, Lower School Strings, First Year Choir, Horn Quartet and Piano Trio. Highlights included *Eye of the Tiger* and *A Little Latin* from a young band of great potential (and they revealed what they could achieve if they all attended regularly!); **A. Lo's** *Praeludium* by Kreisler, **N. Ereaut's** *Walderauschen* by Liszt, the Piano Trio's *Miniatures* by Bridge and **J. Mason's** *Rondo* by Cooke reminded us all of the exciting musical times that lie ahead.

MAS

"as a result of the tour, Big Band was in particularly good form"



The new Digital Organ

The organists of Abingdon School are an elusive group, a tiny minority in a large School, who know each other's names only through chance meetings in the organ loft. However, the number of organ students has continued to grow, until in the Lent term of this year they numbered an incredible eight: 1% of the entire School now learns the organ. Though this is fantastic in many ways, it did exacerbate the ever-present problem that one organ, however high its quality, can never be enough to allow eight organists to practise and have lessons during the school week. In addition, since the organ's location is at the heart of the School, all practice and lessons on the instrument have to cease for much of the Summer term for oral examinations in the Modern Languages Department or written examinations in the CMR.

The simple fact was that another organ was needed; but organs are large, expensive and noisy instruments, so finding a place to put one and someone to foot the bill seemed an impossible task. I submitted a petition, signed by all the organ pupils, directly to the Headmaster, outlining the problem, and suggesting a solution. It seemed that even the smallest of pipe organs was going to be too expensive to buy and maintain, so the obvious answer was to buy a digital organ which, without the need for any pipes, blowers or wind-chests, could be very small, economical, and could be practised on silently with headphones. Such an instrument could easily be moved, enabling organists to perform at Scholars' Concerts, and allowing services and even organ

concertos to be performed in the Amey Theatre on School occasions. More research was done and the matter was left to ferment for most of the term, until I received an e-mail from *Compton Organs*, one of the firms that I had contacted for brochures and the third largest manufacturer of such instruments in the UK, to say that they had a customer who wished to sell his three-year-old three-manual organ quickly. The price was much reduced from the original selling price and, as it was a private sale, no VAT was payable. This was an opportunity to buy a far better organ than we had initially thought possible, for a lower price than we might have paid for an inferior one.

With the support of the Headmaster, the Director of Music and the Bursar, we agreed to buy it within a week, the Bursar very kindly providing an interim loan, and it was delivered for the start of the Summer term. It really was perfect, with more stops than the organ in Chapel and a plethora of buttons, as well as being pleasant to look at, being made with real oak. It has already had a considerable amount of use and its current location in a Music practice room has enabled the organists to be able to play it undisturbed to their hearts' content!

There is still, however, a considerable amount of money (about £3000) that needs to be raised to pay for the instrument. The Staff concert on 23 June raised some money towards this target, but any donations would be greatly appreciated!

E. MITCHARD VI JFB

A St Valentine's Day concert

What could possibly be less appropriate than the eve of St Valentine's day falling on Friday the thirteenth? I can answer that: a rock and roll concert on the same night in School. There's inappropriate!

Place Above is a four-piece rock band from Abingdon School. Having been together since the early Fourth Form, they have been causing waves of interest and excitement in and around the School, being awarded a place in a 'battle of the bands', but unfortunately not being able to play on that date. This robbed them of a chance to win some recording time in a studio. After their last show received a rapturous reception, I was certainly looking forward to hearing them play at the St Valentine's Ball. They opened with the ubiquitous *Brown-eyed Girl* by

Van Morrison, which went down very well with the audience. The main highlight for **R. Mallett** (drummer) was *The Monkeys - I'm a believer*. "It has the best drum part," was the explanation he gave for enjoying playing this timeless 60s classic.

They closed with the comical socio-political stylings of *Electric Six's Gaybar*, which, having gained them a reputation for being more than a one-sided Indie-rock band at their last performance, returned them as a crowd favourite, coming up trumps once again.

If you wish to find out more about *Place Above*, please visit their website at www.placeabove.co.uk

E. COTTRELL 6 TCG

Big Band Tour to France



The Big Band, led by MAS, was invited by Pierre Silliere, the twinning officer, to give a concert in Argentan over the bank holiday weekend. Our director Simon Currie was touring Australia at the time and so we were led by MAS.

The trip started very early on Saturday morning from School. We went to the Omaha beach at Arromanches, to the scene of the fierce fighting in the 'Falaise pocket' at Chambois near Argentan and to the cinéma circulaire in Arromanches. JFB, who joined us on the tour, gave excellent explanations of these sights. We arrived in Argentan late in the afternoon and were then handed over to families who lived in and around the town who had agreed to look after us for the weekend.

Our host families took us into Argentan the next morning so that everyone could meet up for the day. We went to a fair in the town and then back to our host families for lunch. Sunday afternoon was the afternoon of the concert. After lunch with our host families the band met at the town hall in Argentan for a final rehearsal before the concert.

The concert began with *Chameleon*, with solos from H. Green and W. Statham. A magnificent performance of *Sunflower* followed, which featured A. Macdonald on the trombone. The second half set off with the *Big Band Jive*, then came an outstanding guest performance of *I Feel Good* by James Brown sung by JHT. N. Hawken featured in *Just the Way You Are*, a very cheesy jazz number with solo saxo-

phone. The repertoire also included *Mincer*, a piece written by A. Macdonald. *Rock Around The Clock*, with solos for all instruments, was also played during the second half. And the band's favourite piece, *The Chicken*, was played to finish off with a solo at the start for bassist, M. Chilcott, who played a superb cadenza in the style of Jaco Pastorius, the composer of the piece. However, even after this deafening performance of *The Chicken*, the crowd still wanted more. The Band played our starting number, *Chameleon* once again but there were cries for another encore and N. Hawken, G. Potter and M. Chilcott gave the people of Argentan what they wanted with a juicy performance of *Fever*.

The Big Band have had a fantastic year with N. Hawken on alto sax, M. Chilcott on bass, J. Findlay on baritone sax, G. Potter on tenor sax/vocals, N. Shaikh on electric guitar and T. Bennellick on percussion.

Special thanks should go to all the masters who went on the trip: JFB who played sax and explained the two significant World War II sites which we visited and JHT who sang and played the trombone in the band and, along with KJS, also helped in the making of a film. RSE assisted MAS in helping make sure that the tour was a complete success and that it all ran smoothly. MAS, although not an experienced Big Band leader, was pleased to have lots of helpful hints and encouragement from senior members of the Band and did a superb job of directing one of the best Big Band concerts ever.

W. STATHAM 5 CJB

Sport

Seniors Rowing

This year's rowing was always going to be phenomenal. **N. Brodie** had just returned from coxing the Junior GB VIII to victory, while **I. McKenzie** and **T. Williams**, who were both disappointed to be left out of the 2003 Henley 1st VIII, were determined to make it this year. But we still all had to work through the training: no crew can just be good, months of training has to come beforehand, and so we started in the Michaelmas term.

For a change we trained more and more in single sculls, which in the winter months are depressingly slow, especially when it is cold, wet and all you want is to get back and have a cup of tea. We also spent time working in the bigger boats and attended some Heads, doing well in all of them. Performances of note came at Wallingford Head, from the Senior 3 coxed four, and Peterborough Head, when the 1st VIII finished third overall and first in the School Vllls category. A week after Peterborough Head came the first real trial for Great Britain in Lincolnshire. Abingdon took four pairs, **I. McKenzie** and **J. Fyne**, **G. Clarkson** and **H. Lester**, **M. White** and **T. Williams** and **N. Turnbull** and **H. Green** standing in for **B. Cullen** who was ill. Only **M. White** and **T. Williams** made it through to Spring Assessments at Easter.

But we all had to race at the Schools' Head of the River. In our preparation for this we raced at Reading University Head. The 1st VIII came close to winning the Senior 2 event in the morning and was only a minute or so from our target, the Blue Boat's pace. In the afternoon the 1st VIII won the School VIII event. So we were obviously ready and on the big day the 1st VIII started third behind Pangbourne and St Paul's, behind whose wake we tried to row. At the end we were disappointed to hear that we had come second. The 2nd VIII also finished second in its category, overtaking several schools' 1st Vllls and Shrewsbury's 2nd VIII, who started ahead of us. We finished just one second behind winners Hampton, but were happy. This was mainly because we were faster than Radley, the crew who had comfortably beaten us only two weeks before.

We went away from Schools' Head knowing that both crews had to make up time on the opposition. So we went on our training camp in France, intent on doing this. On the last day of the camp we met up with Shrewsbury's 1st VIII and showed off our newfound pace, for both the 1st and 2nd Vllls showed them the way home. **T. Williams** managed to secure himself a place in the GB coxed IV alongside **N. Brodie** at the Munich Regatta.

Wallingford Regatta was the first chance for both crews to show their training had paid off. But in the first race **T. Woods** managed to destroy his blade, and in the second, now being one blade short, the 2nd VIII borrowed the J16's blades, which were

set on a lighter gearing so that the crew did not go as fast as necessary. The 1st VIII did however win both the J18 Trophy and Senior 2 Trophy and beat Hampton by a length with a sub aboard for **T. Oberhoesel**, who had an injured wrist.

After this the 1st VIII opted to stay home and train, whilst the 2nd VIII went to Bedford Regatta and raced very well, only to be knocked out by Radley, who won in one of the fastest times of the day.

Then came the National Schools' Regatta in Nottingham. Both crews were confident of success, especially the 1st VIII after inspirational talks on the water from **MDM**. Both won their eliminators and progressed to the final in style. However, the 2nd VIII finished a disappointing fifth. Then, at 7.00 pm, the crews took the start for the blue-riband event, the Championship Vllls. Abingdon, having secured centre lane, powered off to a commanding lead. They held this early lead and won by over a length, with Canford coming in second and Radley third. The next day the Championship coxed IV from the 1st VIII won silver in a very hotly contested event.

The rest of the season went swimmingly. Both crews raced well against tough opposition at the Reading Regattas, taking away a large amount of silverware. Early morning sessions amid exams and hard race-training put the 1st VIII in perfect form for Henley Royal Regatta.

The 2nd VIII qualified for the Temple: no mean feat for a schoolboy crew. After qualifying they met Bristol University's 1st VIII on Wednesday and lost by two lengths. Abingdon suffered at the hands of a strong headwind, favouring the heavier Bristol crew.

Meanwhile the 1st VIII was able to use its power to brush off early challenges from Oundle and Cheltenham in the first and second rounds. They then had a blistering row against Hampton (winners of the Schools' Head), winning by over three lengths. This speed helped them comfortably push past the South African national champions and they danced their way into the final.

Sunday brought our boys against the pride of the USA, St Paul's, Concord. This unbeaten crew powered off the blocks to a canvas lead, which they kept for the first half of the race. Abingdon then stepped up a gear to draw level. As the crews raced past the Abingdon supporters, the 1st VIII looked as if it could forge ahead. Unfortunately, St Paul's, able to summon more energy for the race past the enclosures, finished a length up on us. Although frustrated to have been denied at the last hurdle, Abingdon School's 1st VIII was still clearly the fastest Junior Crew in Britain.

Congratulations to **T. Williams**, **N. Brodie** and **B. Cullen** for being selected for the Junior World's GB team and to **N. Turnbull** and **M. White** on being selected for the Coupe de la Jeunesse. **I. McKenzie**, **C. Kennedy**, **J. Prinold** and **A. Paxton** represented England at the Home Countries competition.

Many thanks to **MDM**, **PRW** and **RSS**, without whom this successful season would not have been possible.

H.LESTER 6 NMR & M.WHITE 6 RSS

J16 Rowing

The J16 oarsmen of 2004 started just before Christmas, visiting Henley for the Upper Thames Pairs and Fours Head, and Wallingford for the Fours and Eights Head. Both races produced encouraging results from mixed crews.

After Christmas we settled into a six-times-a-week training schedule: two sessions were spent on the river, Thursday evenings doing steady 5km ergos in the fantastic new boat-house, and remaining sessions in the school gym or running around Abingdon. RSS monitored our progress, and selected crews for our first 'friendly' race at Dorney Lake.

A top coxless IV was chosen: **C. Edson, M. Nurton, N. Jurgens** and **T. Raftery**, as well as an VIII coxed by **W. Statham**. A strong head wind made the water very choppy for the four 1500m Head races. The VIII raced well against our J15s and other strong VIIIs. Competition for the IV- came from Eton's J16s. We gathered some of the fastest times of the day, beating Eton and most of the VIIIs each time. In the second of the IV races, the IV- was the fastest crew of all the competitors.

Three weeks later, we spent the weekend at Worcester Head. We raced five boats down the 4.5-mile course. The J16 IV, Novice VIII and Novice IV all won their divisions. The J16 VIII and Senior IV both came second. An excellent set of results, and most of us left with two medals.

The week before our trip to the Tideway, we raced at Radley Head. We went off second from last in front of Eton, leaving them to row through our puddles, while we slowly reeled Radley into our reach! We gained an overlap, but didn't have the space to pass them. We rowed confidently back to Abingdon, meeting our parents with the news of our win. The BVIII raced in their division and came in second, behind Eton, convincingly beating Radley.

At the Schools' Head, the conditions were good and water quite flat for the 6.5km race. As we

passed under Hammersmith Bridge and the crowds of Abingdon supporters, the conditions worsened, with



rough water and a severe headwind. We laid back into the wind to finish just before Putney Bridge. As we rowed back to our boating area, we saw the other competitors finish, including our two coxed IVs. A phone call on the journey home confirmed the results. We had won! Eton was beaten by 17 seconds, the longest margin ever recorded. RSS had coached the winning crew for the second year running! Our two coxed IVs came sixth and eighth in their division. The winning VIII was, from bow: **M. Williams, C. Halls, N. Jurgens, O. Turner, C. Edson, M. Nurton, N. Houlsby, T. Raftery**, and cox **W. Statham**.

We spent a week of the Easter break on a training camp in the South of France. The eight was joined by **B. Carter-Fraser, A. Locatelli, M. Beevor** and **T. Stanier**. We enjoyed a week of good food and some excellent rowing. Spending a lot of time with the 2nd VIII, we saw ourselves improve greatly, averaging around 20km a day, nearly double our efforts in a week in Abingdon.

Our first race of the regatta season was Wallingford, held at Dorney Lake and a perfect practice for National Schools'. The IV from France, coxed by **A. Gordon**, raced in the semi-final and came second. They raced well in the final, but finished





without medals. The VIII won comfortably. At the start of the final we jumped ahead for the 2000 metre race. Radley challenged us towards the finish, but our trademark last thirty-stroke push held them off. We returned to School with a pot each, and the trophy.

After weeks of hard training, National Schools' finally arrived. The VIII's race wasn't until late afternoon on Saturday, so we went for a paddle on the nearby river. We were entering the competition as one of the favourites after our momentous wins on the Tideway and at Wallingford. Our heat went very well and we came in first. We were all quietly confident about the final, but it wasn't to be. Shiplake took an early lead and held it. We were left to fight it out against Eton and Pangbourne. Unfortunately, we narrowly missed a bronze medal. We all felt disheartened and nobody really wanted to stay overnight to race on the Sunday, but by morning we really wanted to get out and race our best. The coxed IV, coached by Australian gap-year student **Charlie Boyle**, raced well in the eliminator, beating Pangbourne. It was less fortunate in the semi-final and lost to stronger crews.

C. Halls and **N. Housby** raced early in the morning and made it to the final, but finished without medals. The BIV-, **O. Turner**, **M. Williams**, and 15s, **K. Woodley** and **A. Freeland**, made the semi-final, but lost out to bigger crews. The AIV-, now bow-rigged with **N. Jurgens** at stroke, **T. Raftery**, **C. Edson** and **M. Nurton** steering, had an eventful journey to the final. We had taken our usual boat to Nottingham, but left the riggers

at Abingdon. This resulted in our sharing a boat with the Seniors. We made it through the two heats, winning the first and coming third in the second. In the final we fought from the start for first place with our biggest rivals, Eton. As we passed the line the beeps were inseparable and we had an anxious few minutes before the results were announced. Eton had won by 0.18 of a second. As we came off the water with our silver medals, the two crews congratulated each other on what was one of the best and closest races of the weekend.

At Reading Amateur Regatta we raced in the Senior VIII's division. We beat Southampton University comfortably in the heat, but came two-thirds of a length behind Bedford Modern 1st VIII in the semi-final.

Our last chance to race Eton and Radley was at Marlow Regatta. Despite the pouring rain, we left the start well and were leading for the first 1500m of the course. In the last 300 metres, the curse of Marlow and effects of three weeks of little training returned, and Eton pushed ahead.

The day after at TVP Reading, we won J16 VIII's beating St Paul's and Dulwich, and the Senior VIII's race, beating Reading University and King's, Canterbury's 1st VIII. The coxed IV, stroked by **M. Beevor** made it to the semi-final. At the start they were leading Hampton and Reading, but a seat problem half-way forced them to stop. They fought back and came second by under a length.

The weekend after at Reading Town, **A. Locatelli**, **B. Carter-Fraser** and **T. Stanier** joined the VIII. We beat Pangbourne by three and a half lengths. The coxed IV raced Buckingham School, USA in a straight final, and after leading at half-way, lost by half a length. The second coxed IV won its heat by a considerable distance, but was outpaced by RGS, Worcester in the final.

To end the season, we entered the Franco-British trials to represent Great Britain at J16 level. All seven qualified, with **T. Raftery**, **C. Edson**, **M. Nurton**, **M. Williams** and **A. Fogg** in a coxed

IV, and **O. Turner** and **N. Houlsby** teaming up with Shrewsbury and St George's Weybridge for the GB VIII.

The whole squad is very appreciative of all the hours **RSS** has contributed over the season. Our shelves bursting with pots and medals are evidence of his outstanding coaching methods and determination and enthusiasm to get the best from everybody. His good-humoured advice from the coaching launch and riverbank has motivated us throughout the most successful J16 season for many years!

M. NURTON 5 DJB

J14 Rowing

The Third Form rowing season was extremely enjoyable. Everyone in a team got the chance to represent the School competitively. The first event involving the A crew was against five Radley crews in a time trial at the Radley end of the river. In their first competitive event the A crew managed to gain a well deserved second place.

After much training and organisation of crews the AIV, BIV and CIV all travelled to the Bedford Regatta and gained valuable experience racing against other crews. Notably, the A gained silver medals, only just missing out on gold, which went to St Edward's. The next event was Wallingford Regatta and the first chance for the A and B crews to compete and represent the School along with the 1st VIII and other crews. However, it all ended in a slightly embarrassing defeat after unfortunate accidents occurring in both boats!

The next week the A and B crews were back to try and find more success in the 'Basher' Head. Conditions were appalling: Dorney lake was covered in white horses. However, the two crews had an enjoyable race with two good time trials resulting in the As going through to race against St Paul's A crew. It was a comfortable win and we qualified for the final. The B crew beat St Paul's B crew and that put them through to the semi-final. However, the crew lost out to Eton's J15 D crew but was put in a final against Eton's J15 C crew. **S. Dent** managed to stroke them to victory in the final. In the A crew final we took on our very own J15 B crew and in a thrilling race managed to win by a small margin. **T. Gower** was stroke in that victory. Both crews then went on to finish fourth in their sprint events.

After much training on the river we managed to send three crews to the National Schools' Regatta. The A crew went up on the Friday and divided to

produce two IVs. In the B IV **A. Fogg** coxed **T. Gower**, **M. Nagi**, **J. Buckley** and **M. Rossiter**. The IV fought bravely for a place in the semi-finals but just missed out in fourth position. The A IV, composed of **O. Cook**, **J. Turrill**, **S. Edwards** and **E. Hallett**, and coxed by **P. Appleton**, managed to gain a place in the semi-final.

The next day the B and C crews arrived and rigged up their boats for racing in the Vllls. The Cs enjoyed the experience and with stroke **D. Walker** and cox **O. May** fought bravely against fierce competition. Unfortunately, they were knocked out. The Bs in a semi-final just gained fourth place. However, the A crew managed to qualify in first place in their heat but again miserably just lost out in the semi-final against three extremely good sculling schools: Radley, King's, Wimbledon and Windsor Grammar School. It was a fantastic weekend away and a great experience for all the crews.

The next event after half term involved the B and C crews taking part in the Thames Valley Regatta. Unfortunately, neither crew succeeded. The most successful regatta for the A crew was at Bedford. They beat St Edward's comfortably, going through to the final against a strong Kingston Grammar School crew who were eight seconds faster than us in the semi-finals. The crew rowed exceptionally well and with the addition of **S. Dent** managed to win a fantastic race. We earned our first piece of silverware.

Unfortunately, the final regatta of the season resulted in losses for the A and B IVs and Vllls, with the sole consolation that **O. Cook** managed to win a silver medal in the single sculls. All in all it was a good solid season for every crew taking part and was much enjoyed by all.

P. APPLETON 3 JEJO

Rugby



RESULTS - 1st XV

Radley	W 16-
Stowe	W 20-
Bedford Modern	W 30-
Pangbourne	W 32-1
Warwick	L 8-1
MCS	W 17-
St Edward's	W 13-
Bloxham	W 17-0



1st XV

The year began with our pre-season training camp in Treviso, Italy. The week culminated in a game against a combined regional Treviso U19 team. Our bigger and very physical opponents took an early lead, but the team managed to hit back with a well worked try, **J. Donnelly** going over in the corner. We then extended our lead with a superb individual effort by **R. Muirhead**. **A. Paxton** and **B. Harris** had to leave the field with concussion.

In the second half we started to relish the physical challenge and some big hits went in from the midfield, and the support of the 2nd XV and Senior Colts gave us the edge. Another converted **R. Muirhead** try drew the scores level. After a sustained period of Abingdon forwards' pressure, the backs managed to work an overlap and **T. Vaughan-Fowler** scored. Some last gasp tackles kept our line intact, and a **R. Muirhead** drop goal sent us clear. It was an impressive team performance, with both backs and forwards excelling in defence and attack. **R. Muirhead** was deservedly named Man of the Match.

Our first game was the daunting prospect of Radley away, as our pitches were still too hard. We did however bring our fans with us – all 200 of them and their support was warmly received by the team. The game was played at a very fast pace. We settled into the game quickly, scoring first via an **A. Marsh** penalty. Radley began to look dangerous out wide and had their winger held up over the line before he could touch down. A missed tackle was all that was needed for them to score and we went in at half-time 3-5 down. We regained the lead after another successful penalty but it was only short-lived as Radley scored again and converted. Our forwards started to attack the Radley pack with a series of driving mauls. From the resulting 5m scrum, the forwards turned the pack and **A. Marsh** managed to squeeze over for a converted try. A successful penalty extended our lead, before Radley added a penalty, leaving the scores at 16-15 in our favour. We did enough to hang on to a glorious win.

The next game was an away fixture against Stowe. We started well and moved ahead with two early penalties before our forwards produced an excellent catch and drive for **N. Patterson** to score. The second half showed the strong character of the team – we spent our time camped in our half, and only excellent defensive work prevented them from scoring. Special mention should go to **W. Poole**, **N. Turnbull**, **S. Jackson** and **C. Moger**. The win was secured after a mid-field break gave **A. McKenzie** space enough to finish well in the corner, the try also being converted.

St Paul's had a well drilled team, who simply wanted the win more than we did and they punished us out wide where there was some particularly lax and non-apparent tackling. The final score was 10-25, **H. Cole** scoring a good individual try.



Against Bedford Modern, another new team, and playing our first game at home, the team was eager to impress. At half-time we were 8-11 down, after a lacklustre first half, as we allowed them a try when a simple tackle was missed at the back. **H. Cole** kept us in the game with a well taken try. We turned to our forwards who were outstanding and played a less entertaining but highly effective tactical kicking game. The game ended with **J. Barclay**, **N. Patterson**, **R.**



Muirhead and **A. Marsh** all crossing over for tries in the 30-11 victory.

The Pangbourne game was the most enjoyable to play in, as it was our most complete team performance.

H. Cole won another try, a penalty extended our lead and **J. Hopkins** then scored after excellent support work. Pangbourne worked its team back into the game after a penalty and a converted try – the result of further missed tackles. The forwards provided the backs with quality possession to secure the win. **J. Hopkins** scored again after taking a cross kick well and dragging tacklers over the line. **S. Jackson** then ran the length of field only to be tackled 2m short of the line, offloading well for **N. Patterson** to score. **R. Muirhead** scored in the last minute after running an intelligent line – his contributions would be sorely missed for the remainder of the season as he injured a shoulder during the game.

Next was Warwick, which we anticipated to be a very confrontational and physical game. This turned out to be the case, for after dominating them in the opening ten minutes, our game plan was disrupted by injury which meant the backline had to be moved around. We failed to recover and went down 8-12 in a scrappy and poor game. Injury prevented **A. Marsh** playing again and changes were made in the back line.

After the dismal performance against Warwick, the team was told a few home truths and questions were asked of the senior players before the rearranged fixture against MCS. We managed to win 17-7, **A. Mak** and **N. Patterson** scoring the tries and **A. McKenzie** slotting two conversions and a penalty. A win is a win but it was a poor performance.

After two very low-key and poor performances, St Edward's was the next team we were due to play and our biggest test of the term. Full credit must go to the team who managed to grind out a result against a good St Edward's side: the forward pack was immensely successful, and **H. Cole** scored two tries, both as the result of blindside breaks, one by himself from inside the 22m and one from **J. Hopkins** from within our own half.

The final game of the season was against Bloxham. In difficult conditions the team again managed to get a positive result, winning 17-0. The forwards saved the game for the team with some devastating driving mauls, **D. Stalker** scoring from one such play. **H. Cole** again scored two tries. **C. Kirkland** made an impressive debut after a successful season with the 2nd XV.

Overall I feel it was a largely successful season: our win/loss record equalled the School record, but admittedly against a weaker fixture list. Although the results were good I still do not think that this team performed consistently to its potential, but this could not be helped owing to injuries to two senior figures in the backline and it was left to the forwards to battle out results. Full credit should be given to them. Our one complete team performance was against Pangbourne, which showed how good we could have been if circumstances had been different.

Thank you to the coaches **RSH** and **ADW** for all their time and effort during the term.

A. MARSH VI WHZ

2nd XV Rugby

RESULTS - 2nd XV

Radley	L 3-39
Stowe	W 16-10
Pangbourne	W 22-7
Warwick	W 18-16
MCS	W 14-5
St Edward's	L 11-22
Bloxham	W 51-7

Our season was given a huge kick-start by the extremely successful pre-season tour to Italy. It enabled the team to bond and to go into our first game against Rendcomb with confidence. We came back from Italy in good shape and were able to field our strongest side against Rencomb and ran out easy winners. Elusive running by **J. Hopkins** meant that strong forward play led by **C. Kennedy** was converted into points.

We lost momentum against Radley when we were simply not good enough on the day. We were well and truly beaten. However, **A. Mak** played an excellent defensive game and saved us going down by more points.

A good win away at Stowe showed **S. Florey's** incredible talent at penalty kicking, which was an extremely useful weapon throughout the duration of the season.

Losing to St Paul's was a disappointment but at least the rather disjointed first half of the season came to an end with the 2nd XV having matured as players and grown stronger as a team.

After half term the squad really became determined and motivated enough to win four of our last five games. We beat a weak Pangbourne team with an amazing individual try by **J. Donnelly**, who finished as the top try-scorer.

Two great wins followed against Warwick and MCS. The game at Warwick was particularly pleasing as the match could have gone either way. A smooth move off the lineout, orchestrated by **C. Dixon**, led to a try by **D. Sullivan** which won the match.

The only loss of the season came against St Edward's. We were ahead and in control of the game, but we threw it away before the end with some sloppy defence. Special mention should go to **P. Jones** for his pinpoint accurate drop kicks and exquisite left-handed passes.

The last match of the season came against Bloxham. There was exquisite jumping in the line-

out by **J. Mugnaioni** and some great running rugby and many tries were scored as a result. This was an excellent end to the season. The flowing rugby produced had been a result of hard work throughout the term.

Particular thanks should go to **JDEDH** who was a brilliant coach once again. The success that the team enjoyed was definitely brought about by him and he encouraged in us an attractive style of rugby which was enjoyable to play and watch. I would also like to thank the whole squad for making my job a very easy one. It has been both an honour and a pleasure to captain the 2nd XV.

J. KELLY VI APS

3rd XV Rugby

During the first training session of the year, **TJCG** turned to me and summed up our team's physical attributes with three words, "They're small." After the first tackle practice of the season I turned to TJCG and summed up their mental attributes with two words, "They're ferocious."

Confidence came with an easy win against Rendcomb although it was probably a mismatch this year. Against Radley we tackled hard throughout but were not drilled enough at this early stage of the season to provide adequate protection for our scrum-half from our own set plays and found it difficult to get out of our own half. Radley was as usual quite predictable: a team must be well drilled and willing to match their determination and pride in order to beat them.

Against Cokethorpe we were able to unleash **C. More** (12 points) on the opposition. With the ability to pass from either hand, to kick the length of the field and to accelerate into scoring positions, we had someone who could turn defence into attack at any time and, more importantly, he was a team player. Their equaliser in the last minute of the game felt unjust but it was probably a fair result.

Against a well drilled St Paul's side we were under strength in key positions especially in the backs and were well beaten, although **J. Dingwall** tried to rally everyone else with two tries.

After a poor start against Pangbourne, the opposition crumbled and individuals imposed themselves in the rucks and in the backs.

The best team performance was against Warwick. A high intensity approach was the key, and **R. Gray** and **C. Ezenwa** were examples to follow. Good use of the tactical kick by **C. More** to relieve pressure and a good discipline in defence allowed us to go forward in numbers and we gave excellent passes when inside the opposition's 22. Our height deficit was a problem in our line-out.

St Edward's always had bigger and stronger players in the scrums and rucks. This was the only difference between the sides in a very good contest. It was very close until the last fifteen minutes when we tried to win using individual skills. This did not work out and they scored two easy tries to seal their victory.

Abingdon finished the season with an impressive win over Bloxham. The score could have been much greater were it not for poor final passes. Bloxham contested well in the forwards but we were faster everywhere else. **C. More** scored four tries with **S. Hughes** and **L. Simpson** getting one each.

Four wins, three losses and one draw added up to a very good season, bearing in mind our small squad and the absence of an experienced scrum-half. Great thanks should go to the Upper Sixthformers who have shown real commitment to Abingdon 3rd XV rugby over two years: **T. Sheppard**, **S. Hughes**, **M. Last**, **A. MacDonald**, **J. Dyson**, and **B. Bowie**. They also go to TJCG for his enthusiasm and dedication to the 3rd XV.

RESULTS - 3rd XV

Radley	L	3-44
Pangbourne	W	29-0
Warwick	W	22-0
St Edward's	L	11-26
Bloxham	W	31-0

MS

Senior Colts A XV

RESULTS - Senior Colts A XV

Radley	L	12-17
Stowe	W	5-0
St Paul's	W	15-14
Bedford Modern	W	21-10
Pangbourne	W	21-12
Warwick	L	8-15
MCS	L	5-10
St Edward's	L	0-26
Bloxham	W	15-5

After an awesome build-up in Italy on the pre-season tour, the side came back ready to take on the world. Unfortunately, the first two matches were cancelled owing to hard pitches. Radley was the first up and the boys were ready to unleash themselves in fine style! Having not scored a single point against them in two years, a well timed pass put **T. Davie** over to give them a dream start. Passion and intensity reigned supreme and with eight minutes to play, Abingdon was 12-10 up. Unfortunately, an error, deep inside our territory, gave Radley a try and the match.

After this major disappointment, the side put a great run together, beating Stowe, St Paul's, Bedford Modern and Pangbourne. The season was back on track and looking good. Complacency edged in and Warwick stole a victory. MCS should not have beaten us, but a lack of focus led to our downfall, the only Abingdon side to lose to MCS! Then a well drilled team from St Edward's showed their ability. Ironically, this was some of the most consistent defending and attacking rugby played all season. The boys were determined to finish the season with a victory, which they won against Bloxham. After a difficult first half, we decided to play the ball wide and put **S. Wylie** in for a try on the right, and **T. Davie** on the left. This was a game in which the team played some tremendously exciting rugby, by running the ball at every opportunity.

The highlights of the season from a coaching point of view were the tremendous improvements and success of the line-out and scrummaging. The forward unit developed amazing cohesion. Not only did they dominate our own ball, but stole countless possession from the opposition. It was a tremendous sight seeing the lanky figure of **C. Edson** towering above the opposition. I have no doubt that the members of the squad will go on to enjoy their rugby at the senior level.

Rugby is very much a team game and one is always loth to single out individuals, although **M. Halford** was an inspirational captain, leading by example with an untiring work rate and an awesome tackle count. **S. Henley** has been nominated as Most Valuable Player due to his versatility, having played front row, back row and in the back line. The Most Improved Player of the season is someone who looked completely off the pace in Italy, but owing to a superb attitude and dedication to fitness, his game improved hugely. **A. Muir** was the worthy recipient.

Team Squad: **A. Muir, D. Graham, O. Waite, C. Edson, F. Gater, S. Henley, C. Fraser, M. Halford, T. Roche, E. Jones, C. Halls, O. Burnham, S. Wylie, T. Davie, A. Grant, R. Wheeler, A. Cole, E. Wilson, C. Thomas, T. Raftery.**

A. MUIR 5SEB

Senior Colts B XV

RESULTS - Senior Colts B XV

Radley	L	0-25
Stowe	L	7-12
Pangbourne	W	38-5
Warwick	L	0-27
MCS	W	20-0
St Edward's	W	15-5
Bloxham	W	54-0

The hard pitches, as a result of the exceptionally hot summer, meant that all matches up to half term were to be played away from home. The first game against Radley was encouraging in performance, but not in results, as we went down by 25 points to nil. Considerable effort was forthcoming and fitness levels, as a result of pre-season training in Italy, were excellent.

The next away match at Stowe was a close-fought defeat by 12 points to 7 and was marred by several injuries and the subsequent disruption caused. This was a match that should have been a comfortable victory, and the lesson learnt was that against inferior opposition we must play our own way and not be dragged down by disruptive tactics. Despite these set-backs, **T. Raftery** and **S. Thakore** were outstanding in performance.

Our next match at Pangbourne was a very comfortable win by 38 points to 5, in which the creativity and pace of the backs shone through,

A. Cole being the inspiration behind the pack. Losing ways returned at Warwick, when against a strong and powerful side, we rightly went down by 27 points to nil, despite brave and powerful tackling by **I. Marsh** and the rest of the back line.

St Paul's away was not a good place to go with a much weakened side. Despite four defeats early on in the season, team spirit was high and the ambition to turn things around after half term even greater.

On receiving promotion to the A team, **E. Wilson** left us and with a new captain in **S. Thakore** in place, the season took a turn for the better. Against MCS a comfortable 20 points to nil win was secured as a result of the forwards working together and the backs concentrating on their running lines, allowing them to break down the defence with relative ease. Having lost to St Edward's in previous years, we knew that a tough away game lay ahead. We prepared thoroughly, working on all aspects of the game and

were rewarded with a 15 points to 5 win, despite over nine minutes of added-on time in an injury-free game. The tackling throughout was outstanding with **I. Marsh** and **R. Wheeler** providing solid defence and making good decisions.

The last game of the year was against Bloxham, whom we beat by 54 points to nil. An outstanding team performance ended the season with three

Junior Colts A XV

A disappointing season in terms of results but I was delighted with the team spirit and determination to improve shown by these boys throughout the term. The first half of the season (no points scored, plenty conceded) could have knocked the stuffing out of a lesser group and I was very pleased that the boys were able to win against Pangbourne and Bloxham to reward them for their efforts. The excellent team spirit reflects well on **R. Bucke**, the captain, and **C. Checkley** and **N. Li**, his deputies, who led by example in every game.

Our main problem was our failure to convert territory and possession into points. We were comprehensively beaten by both Radley and St. Paul's but in other matches (notably against Stowe and MCS) plenty of chances went begging. Hopefully the team will have learned some harsh but valuable lessons about ball retention, support play and decision-making under pressure and they will be calmer and more clinical next season when the try scoring chances arrive.

Our inability to look after the ball in the big games meant that we spent a lot of time defending, much to the delight of **J. Hughes** who tackled his heart out in every match. Unfortunately, too many one-on-one tackles were missed and we were on the

Junior Colts B XV

The B XV recovered from a rather inauspicious start to play champagne rugby in the second half of the season, particularly in crushing victories against MCS (51-0) and St Edward's (36-0). These results showed that there is plenty of depth in this year-group, a fact borne out by the number of boys invited on the pre-season tour to Italy in 2004. There were also some excellent performances during training matches against our talented U14A XV, matches that helped to toughen the boys up for the weekend fixtures.

consecutive wins and only 5 points conceded. We felt that if we had started the season as we ended it we really might have had an exceptional sequence of results.

Many thanks to **DE** for his coaching and to everyone who participated in the Senior Colts B.

S. THAKORE 5MRG AND E. WILSON 5JHT

receiving end of some heavy defeats as a result. Improved communication would not only have helped us to plug defensive gaps but would also have made us a more potent attacking force. This group would do well to remember that silence is for the Library, not the rugby pitch! On the theme of 'keeping silent', discipline throughout the season was exemplary.

Our most consistent performers were **R. Bucke** (c) and **C. Halford** in the forwards and **C. Checkley** and **J. Hughes** in the backs. The most improved players were **Z. Dong**, **R. Marsh** and **H. Parmenter**, all of whom did very well to force their way into A team contention by the end of the season. Special mention should also be made of **M. Watkins**, whose return to rugby made a huge difference in the second half of the season and who will undoubtedly have a major role to play next year.

I really enjoyed coaching this determined and hard-working group of boys and I was delighted by the way in which they improved individually and collectively as the season progressed. The pre-season tour of Italy should help to develop them further as rugby players and I have a feeling that they are in for a much more successful season on the pitch next year.

SPGS

RESULTS - Junior Colts A XV

Radley	L	0-48
Stowe	L	0-7
Pangbourne	W	24-5
Warwick	L	0-29
MCS	D	12-12
St Edward's	L	0-26
Bloxham	W	17-5

T. Dean captained the side superbly and several players showed A team potential. Among the backs **D. Mills** really stood out and the pack improved dramatically as the season progressed, with players like **J. Blair**, **H. Parmenter**, **K. Cruickshank** and **R. Marsh** showing both determination and ability.

Many thanks should go to **GRW** for his enthusiastic coaching.

I look forward to watching the progress of this excellent squad in the future.

SPGS

RESULTS - Junior Colts B XV

Radley	L	0-29
Rendcombe	W	42-0
Pangbourne	W	62-0
Warwick	L	15-20
MCS	W	51-0
St Edward's	W	36-0

Juniors A Rugby

RESULTS - Juniors A XV

Radley	L	5-22
SACS Cape Town	L	12-40
St Paul's	L	0-27
Pangbourne	W	40-0
Warwick	W	19-0
MCS	W	31-0
St Edward's	W	31-5
Bloxham	W	78-0

The Juniors AXV did not get their season under way for a few weeks, owing to hard ground both at Abingdon and opposition schools.

Our first game was against Radley, the day after the historic 1st XV victory. We were beaten 22-5, probably a harsh scoreline although we deserved to lose. Considering it was the team's first game together, we performed reasonably well – with strong defence from **R. Woods** and **J. Buckley** in particular. Our one try came from captain **S. Edwards**, after a quick tap penalty. The next game was versus SACS, a South African touring side. It had been arranged the day before so came as a bit of a surprise. We played at Moulsoford, where they were staying. SACS were a pacy, skilful and well prepared side. We were defeated 42-12, a crashing scoreline. Some individuals performed well: **S. Edwards** got another try after a clever move with **T. Clee** and scrum-half, **S. Wilson**, also scored a try.

Our final game of the half term was against St Paul's. They were a big, strong side who had won all their previous games this year. We knew our defence would be vital, and overall it was good. Their tries came from missed tackles, our only ones in the game. We lost 0-27.

By half term, we had played three and lost three. It was quite demoralising – but we knew how much more strongly we could perform. So after half term, we did. Pangbourne was next, and we won 40-0. They had quite a weak team, but we still played well, with tries from **T. Clee**, **J. Buckley**, **D. Tejuoso**, a third for **S. Edwards** and two from **R. Woods**. Fly-half **M. Rossiter** got five from six conversions and there was a great forward performance from **S. Fletcher**.

Our game against Warwick was perhaps the highlight of the season. Warwick had a good side, and it took a fantastic team performance to beat it. Our defence was flawless, particularly when we were under pressure. Winger **D. Tejuoso** scored two early tries and at half time the score was 12-0. We took our foot off the pedal somewhat in the second half but got a third try after a chip and chase for **T. Clee**. We won the game 19-0, but it was marred by the injury to **O. Cook**, who dislocated his thumb and would be unable to return that season. **O. Cook** was playing well and would be missed, but **J. Rhodes** filled his boots in the back row.

The next match was the rearranged fixture against MCS. It was the third home game in a row and we were feeling confident. We won 31-0,

with tries from **J. Bayfield**, **H. Graham** (from a breakaway) and **J. Buckley**. Our other tries came from a forwards' drive and **W. Stockwell** dived over, and a fourth for **D. Tejuoso**. **J. Warlow** and **J. Rhodes** performed strongly.

We maintained our winning streak with a great away performance at St Edward's. **D. Tejuoso** scored two more tries, **S. Edwards** scored straight after a restart; **J. Warlow** and **S. Fletcher** scored well deserved tries. **M. Rossiter** slotted over three conversions. The outstanding performance in this game was from the prop, **J. Warlow**.

We rounded off the season at home against Bloxham, a poor side, who were easily overcome. **J. Buckley** scored three, as did **D. Tejuoso**; **R. Woods** scored two, **S. Fletcher** and **S. Edwards** one each. **J. Bayfield** also got a brace. We controlled the game and kept the ball for twenty minutes, and the nearest Bloxham came to points was a drop-goal attempt that hit the post.

Our season was very much a season of two halves. In the first half we played three very strong teams and lost all of them. However, we refused to get downhearted and came back strongly after half term. We won four straight games, and did not concede a point at home. Our team spirit was good throughout and we had an overall good season.

T. CLEE 3 DJH, S. EDWARDS 3 SRW AND D. CLIVE 3 ALP

PS from the Coach:

Many thanks to the boys for their efforts through the season - which has certainly finished better than it started. All the players are to be congratulated on the way they have stuck to the task after the disappointments of the first few games (which was a bit like a tough pre-season tour). Finally, the potential that was obviously there in the team came through in the second half of the term, which saw five straight wins and a total of 199 points scored and only 5 conceded. Some really exciting, quality rugby was played at times and some scintillating tries scored. Many thanks to **BAHF** and to **D. Puri** for their coaching assistance and especially to **D. Puri** for his excellent warm-up routines on match days. Very many thanks, too, to the parents who have been so loyal in their support. I am glad that, increasingly, there were some good things to cheer about.

They are a very talented squad, as talented as I have seen come through the ranks over the last few years. I am sure they will all continue to enjoy some very successful rugby as they progress through the School.

SAE

Minors Rugby

The exceptionally dry summer delayed the start of our season until after half term, which gave us an excellent opportunity to get in some hard training and work on our team-building. By the time the first match of the season came along, we were all raring to go and we recorded a convincing victory over Cokethorpe in the beginning.

We went from strength to strength and had a successful season, recording six victories, a draw against Moultsford and only three losses at the hands of very strong opposition from St John's Beaumont, Warwick and Summer Fields.

Highlights of the season included comfortably winning the local derby against MCS (26-7), drawing

5-5 against a strong Moultsford side in a tough encounter on a wet and miserable day, and winning the Plate Competition at the Berkhamsted Sevens Festival, which included many of the top rugby schools in the country. We beat Colston's 31-0 in the final.

The whole squad worked hard throughout the season and team spirit was good. Special mention should be made of **T. Green** and **S. Sam-Sadeen** for their consistent performances all season and also of **N. Watkins** and **C. Redman**, who came from the First Form to add real strength to the squad.

M. PURSELL 2A

RESULTS - A XV

CCCS	W	17-0
Cokethorpe	W	52-10
Josca's	W	17-5
Warwick	L	0-20
MCS	W	26-7
Cothill	W	33-7
Summer Fields	L	15-22
St John's	L	10-15
St Andrew's	W	43-5
Moultsford	D	5-5



1st XI Hockey

RESULTS - 1st XI

KES, Southampton	L 1-5
St Edward's	W 4-0
Pangbourne	W 4-2
Warwick	W 4-3
MCS	W 3-1
Shiplake	W 2-1
Dean Close	W 6-4
Stowe	W 4-1
Bloxham	W 4-3
Merchant Taylors'	W 4-2
Old Abingdonians	W 5-2
Rendcomb	W 7-0

Played	12
Won	11
Lost	1
Goals For	48
Goals Against	24

The 1st XI enjoyed a superb season. After the initial disappointment of losing to King Edward's, Southampton, the team showed tremendous spirit, which led to success. Extraordinary self-belief and commitment were the defining factors during the course of the season. Individuals were prepared to play through injury, and sacrifice personal commitments for the sake of the team.

The highlight will undoubtedly be the victories against St Edward's and the nationally recognised Dean Close, performances which epitomise the character and strength of the team. As a Coach there are certain moments or performances which define a season. This year it was a conversation that took place at half-time during the Dean Close encounter. Early in the first half, **A. McKenzie** had taken a heavy blow just above his shin pad. The wound was gaping and clearly needed attention, so I suggested that it be strapped for the second half. He would have none of it. "Don't worry sir, I'll score a couple of goals and the pain will go away!" True to form, he had scored two goals within the first five minutes of the second half, bringing us level at 3-3.

This type of attitude permeated the entire team. They worked tirelessly in every match to achieve their goal. Some performances were better than others, but it is always said that the sign of a good side is that it can still win when playing badly. The team believed in winning, and despite being a goal down on more than one occasion, produced the required results.

Individual players whose prowess should be mentioned are **A. McKenzie** for his unbelievable confidence in his own ability to score goals (he notched up 23 during the season); **D. Roche** for being the pivot and leader of the team; **H. Cole** for his determination, and **M. Woodward** for his superb goalkeeping skills. Special mention must also be made of **J. Barclay**, for deputising for **M. Woodward** in his absence. He worked extraordinarily hard in training to develop his skills, and as a result his performances were first-rate.

Not only were they a talented group of individual players, but they possessed many disparate characters. The combination worked well, playing to each of their strengths. The team will take a great deal of re-building, but will revolve around the U16 trio who acquitted themselves so well during the course of the season. They showed a very mature approach, playing with composure well beyond their years. The most improved player of the season was **C. More**, who used his knowledge of football to create a tremendous amount of space up front. This is a skill that comes very naturally to him.

Team Squad: **M. Woodward, J. Barclay, D. Roche, G. Potter, D. Sullivan, W. Poole, H. Cole, A. Cole, T. Roche, A. McKenzie, J. Kelly, C. More, R. Wheeler.**

ASH



Under 16 XI Hockey

A small group gathered for the first training session at Tilsley Park and the Coaches realised that their first job was to find enough boys for two teams, even before training could begin. Nevertheless, an extra week at the beginning of the season meant that two good teams drove out to St Edward's for their first match.

Confidence and courage were running high and the first half was very close. Abingdon scored first and looked the better team with complete control of the middle of the field by the trio of **C. Cowan**, **C. Evans** and **E. Brooke**. However, the goals did not come as fast as might be hoped and when they got a fourth goal inside ten minutes, we began to look very shaky at the back, with even the midfield ceasing to pass the ball, and so losing control. An Abingdon 2-7 defeat was over-generous to the hosts, but reflected some distinct weaknesses in our line-up.

So a reformed team, with a return by **M. Halford** to the backs and other minor adjustments, went out with mixed emotions against Pangbourne's 3rd team. We knew we should win, but were smarting from St Edward's. The first few minutes were hard-fought, but as soon as we got the first goal, Pangbourne looked beaten and thereafter the goals came steadily, only slowed by weariness and the odd unforced error creeping in. The score of 7-0 seemed almost low.

The experience at Pangbourne set the team up well for another 3rd XI match with Warwick. The goal tally of many of the forwards and midfield players was increased, usefully giving confidence in front of the net. A late goal by Warwick was a consolation for their unstinting efforts and was well deserved as we lost concentration in the dying minutes. A score of 6-1 was good but still left much to work on.

We knew all along that the match with MCS would be hard. But we had not known that the challenges of hockey would be insignificant compared to the challenges of the weather. We watched the 1st XI score into a net as it was blown over and knew that the wind was rising and the rain falling harder. Attempts to anchor the goals were in vain so that MCS' Coach spent the game propping up the goal or pushing it back when it blew away. The hockey itself was very hard-fought. Our weak defence of the game against St Edward's proved our strength here and like Greece we kept a clean sheet. A few late chances near their goal were just turned aside leaving the unusual final score as 0-0.

Next came Dean Close, always a tough side to beat. In the first half they made inroads into our defence, putting themselves well into the lead. After half-time, a rearranged and invigorated team set about clawing its way back but just did not score enough, leaving a full time score of 4-5.

Only one match was really disappointing and that was against Stowe. We were clearly better, passing and tackling well throughout the match, showing superior skills in all areas. But their determination, speed and power were unstinting. Although we held them off well, we suffered from tactical confusion just after half time and let in two soft goals. Goals were frustratingly always just beyond our reach and we went down 2-3.

The next week was a time to try some new training regimes. Extra coaching and a new vision set us up for a good victory against Bloxham (4-0) and prepared the way for the greatest challenge of the term, Merchant Taylors'. Watching the 1st XI play inspired us and we went on the pitch ready to give our all. We were slightly shaken to see three 1st team players remain for the U16 match, but determined to demonstrate we were better in all areas of the game.

It was an astonishing match to watch. Both teams played with a high level of skill. Every moment was hard-fought with no let-up. We demonstrated an ability to control the play by passing even when their players seemed to have more pace and skill. A goal each end left the score 1-1 with seconds to play, when a short corner was blown. The whistle blew but the short had to be played. No goal was scored from the shot but the ball had not left the area when **T. Rutland**, our ever-ready right back, came flying through and slipped the ball in the net. It was a memorable victory and a great end to a good term's hockey.

Those who played regularly were: **D. Graham**, **T. Rutland**, **M. Coffey**, **A. Francis**, **M. Halford**, **F. Gater**, **T. Brooke**, **C. Cowan** (captain), **C. Evans**, **S. Johnson**, **J. Canlan-Shaw**, **S. Wylie**.

My thanks extend to **DGA** for unfailing support and my congratulations to the B team on their excellent unbeaten season.

GRM

RESULTS - U16 A

St Edward's	L	2-7
Pangbourne	W	7-0
Warwick	W	6-1
MCS	D	0-0
Dean Close	L	4-5
Stowe	L	2-3
Bloxham	W	4-0
Merchant Taylors'	W	2-1

Under 15 Hockey - Junior Colts A

RESULTS - Junior Colts A

KES, Southampton L 2-6
 St Edward's D 3-3
 Pangbourne L 1-2
 MCS L 2-3
 Shiplake W 3-0
 Dean Close W 4-3
 Bloxham W 5-2
 Merchant Taylors' W 4-2

There was much improvement in the Junior Colts Hockey season. New recruits to the team have given us a huge bonus: **Z. Dong** from Reading School and **C. Halford** who had transferred from rowing. We must remember that our season last year brought in 2 wins, 9 losses at an average of 1-5 lost!

To start our season, with little time to prepare, there was a very difficult game with King Edward's, Southampton, a renowned hockey school. Although we had lost 2-6 last year, we noticed that the opposition had only ten players on the pitch! Fighting very hard gave us a goalless half-time. We suddenly felt the urge to get two goals from **M. Watts** and **N. Li**. In the last ten minutes, we were careless and gave away goal after goal after goal, giving KES six goals! We had to learn from our mistakes and could not let this ever happen again.

Our anxious coach, **JDEDH**, said, "You are not to play hockey again unless you wear astro boots for matches and training. Without those boots, it would be like skiing in slippers!"

After the previous poor game, we were geared up for a local rival derby against St Edward's. This was an exciting game, with **R. Parker** scoring the first goal, **A. Paxton** giving us a 2-0 lead but again we failed to keep a stable defence. After St Edward's had scored three goals in the final minutes, **M. Watts** scored a well deserved goal, giving us a draw.

The next game was against Pangbourne. We had a static team with no communication, and we failed to dominate, although there was a consolation goal by **G. Salmon**. Our excuse in **JDEDH**'s words: "The ball was not round and we found it hard to play with!"

The approach to our local rivals MCS was quite different. We were using the flanks, talking, moving and passing accurately. This was what we had sought from the start of the season. Although they were better than we were, we put a lot of pressure on MCS, and the score might have gone either way.

We did not want to slip up at Shiplake, as we had at Pangbourne. We dominated this game throughout and there were goals from **G. Salmon**, **A. Paxton**, and the goal of the day from **T. Blakey**, who sent an outrageous reverse chip into the goal. This game gave our confidence a big boost.

Dean Close was a tough match in which an opposition player received a yellow card and **A. Paxton** suffered an injury. We scored in the first few minutes, and this disrupted the opposition. **H. Freeland** replaced **A. Paxton**, was influential and played a great game. Huge hits from **C. Halford** helped **G. Salmon** score. When the Dean Close player was sent off, we rose to the opportunity and more goals were scored by **T. Blakey**, **C. Halford**, and **M. Watts**. Our defence had a great game, especially **A. Hamilton** and **S. Robertson**, who were always determined and tackled hard. But in the last five minutes, we returned to the first matches of the season, when our defence work was poor, and we let them score three goals. We were ecstatic when the final whistle went and we discovered that they had not been beaten for two years.

Bloxham had another hockey team that was always going to be hard opposition. We kept the ball well, and took advantage of all the 50/50 balls. Goals came from **N. Li** (two), **C. Halford** (two) and **G. Salmon**, giving us an emphatic win.

Although Merchant Taylors' is known to be a very good hockey school, we nevertheless maintained pressure on their team throughout the next match, and gave our all, resulting in four victorious goals from **N. Li** and **T. Blakey**.

The team has improved immensely from a defensive posture to an attacking one. Many thanks go to **ASH** for the hard training sessions, **PJW** for umpiring all our home games, and our Coach who wore different hats to every training session, **JDEDH**. He taught us how to communicate, use the flanks, gave us courage and a belief that we could win games and should always wear astro boots!

Our team: **Z. Dong**, **C. Halford**, **A. Hamilton**, **C. Quarterman**, **S. Robertson**, **T. Blakey** (vice capt.), **M. Watts**, **R. Parker**, **N. Li** (capt.), **H. Wimborne**, **G. Salmon**, **A. Paxton** and **H. Freeland**.

C. Lester and **J. Gerard** were always prepared to be moved up to the A squad and played very well in matches when substituting for missing players.

N. Li 4 MMH

Under 15 Hockey - Junior Colts B

P 8, W 4, L 3, D 1.

Goals scored 18, goals conceded 11.

The B team achieved a well deserved winning season with the only losses coming in tight games against quality opposition from St Edward's (0-2), Magdalen College School (1-2) and Dean Close (1-2). Some of the hockey produced in the victories against Pangbourne, Shiplake, Stowe and Bloxham was wonderful to watch and the defensive unit also did a superb job all season, reflected in the low number of goals conceded. Having coached this group of boys for the past two seasons, I must compliment the entire squad for their excellent attitude and for the improvement in both their individual skills and in their team play in the 2004 season. The turnaround in both performance and results was remarkable and bodes extremely well for the future.

The following boys played for the B team on at least a semi-regular basis in 2004: **S. Sethi** (GK), **P. Hatzis**, **M. Hutchinson**, **J. Blair**, **W. Henley**, **A. Withnall**, **E. Pattison**, **H. Freeland**, **W. Stephenson**, **J. Garrard**, **S. Hosking**, **J. Ambler**, **O. Morrison**, **C. Lester**, **C. Tucker**, **A. Bell**, **C. Checkley**. The team spirit throughout the season was excellent and it was wonderful to see the players getting on so well and working so hard for each

other. This team spirit was a key factor in the way the team was able to overwhelm some of the weaker sides on the circuit while proving very difficult to beat for some of the more renowned hockey schools. The close match against Dean Close, a team that had soundly beaten us in 2003, was a fine example.

In any team there will always be players who stand out and I think the following boys deserve special mention: **S. Sethi**, who never let anybody down on matchdays and produced some exceptional reflex saves for a player new to the role of goalkeeper; **P. Hatzis**, **M. Hutchinson** and **J. Blair**, whose strength, pace, calmness under pressure and resolute attitude made our defence so difficult to crack and added an extra dimension to our attacking play when they pushed forward; **J. Garrard** and **H. Freeland**, both perhaps more accustomed to A team hockey but who played their hearts out when selected for the Bs, and finally **C. Lester**, a skilful forward with a poacher's instincts whose lack of pace and slight stature may hinder his progress but who proved himself indispensable at this level.

I have thoroughly enjoyed working with all the boys in this year group over the past two seasons and I wish them the very best of luck with their hockey in the future.

SPGS

RESULTS - Junior Colts B

Bloxham W 4-1
 Merchant Taylors' D 1-1
 Stowe W
 Dean Close L 1-2
 KES, Southampton L 2-6
 St Edward's L 0-2
 Pangbourne W
 MCS L 1-2
 Shiplake W



Under 14 Hockey

RESULTS - U14

KES	L 1-7
St Edward's	W 4-1
Pangbourne	W 5-0
MCS	D 2-2
Shiplake	W 5-1
Dean Close	W 2-0
Bloxham	W 3-2
Dragon	W 2-1
Merchant Taylors'	W 4-0

The U14 Hockey teams had an extremely successful season. The A team was unbeaten after the first game of the season and the B team obtained some excellent results. After the initial 'blip' against KES, Southampton, the A team went from strength to strength with a strong team ethic and some brilliant individual performances. As **R. Cadman** explains:

The team started the season badly with a very early game against KES. We lost 7-1. However, we bounced back to win the next two games convincingly, beating St Edward's 4-1 and Pangbourne 5-0. Our next match was against Magdalen College School. This was a close game and ended in a 2-2 draw. The following game was a 5-1 defeat of Shiplake, and **W. Cullen**, who joined us from the B team, gave a notable performance in this match and scored a goal.

The A team won our next two games, playing extremely well to beat Dean Close 2-0 and returning from 2-1 down to beat Bloxham with a hat-trick from **R. Cadman**. We ended the season with a 4-0 win over Merchant Taylors' and beat the Dragon U13A team 2-1.

Notable players throughout the season were: **C. Newman** (captain), **A. Plint** (most improved player), **R. Cadman** (player of the season and top scorer with fifteen goals) and **T. Clew** (who missed half the season with a cracked rib but supported the team at most games). From the B team **H. Hole** (for his noticeable improvement as goalkeeper), **W. Cullen** (top scorer) and **P. Shephard** (who worked very hard for the team).

JEJO AND R.CADMAN 3 JEJO

Under 13 Hockey

RESULTS - U13

Radley	As	D 1-1
	As	L 0-1
	Bs	L 0-3
NCS	As	W 1-0
	Bs	W 1-0
MCS		W 2-1
Junior Bs		W 3-2
CCCS	1st Form	W 6-2

After some tough pre-season training, the Minors A team was relishing the opportunity to notch up a win against Radley in our first competitive match of the season. **R. Copus** set us on our way by scoring early in the first half, but unfortunately Radley equalised and although constantly on top, we were unable to get a winner and had to settle for a draw. Having been robbed of victory in our previous match, it was clear the players were still feeling the pain and this was reflected in a poor performance against Radley U14 Cs, which saw the side defeated 1-0.

Keeping our spirits up, we searched for that elusive first victory and our next game was against New College School. A brilliant performance from the whole team, in which **R. Copus** scored in the opening minute and we dominated throughout, led to a comfortable win, even if the 1-0 score line does not suggest this.

Having tasted success, we were keen for more and next up was MCS. A goal from **N. Watkins** cancelled out an earlier breakaway goal from MCS before a great goal from **J. Smith**, made possible by his blistering turn of pace, secured a well deserved 2 - 1 in the dying seconds. Special mention must be made of **A. Partridge**, who made several spectacular saves in the second half when we were pressing for victory, and was deservedly the man of the match.

In search of higher competition, a match against the Junior Bs was arranged at Tilsley Park. The whole team improved its game and the opposition was soundly beaten. A couple of late goals made the game appear close, but we finished victors with goals from **J. Smith** (two) and **F. Howe** against the Junior Bs' two.

The Minors B team had a mixed season, beginning disappointingly with a 3-0 loss to Radley. Nevertheless, gradual improvements throughout the season were eventually rewarded by a 1-0 victory against New College School in the final game, with the goal scored by **E. O'Neill**.

The Firstformers also played one game against Christ Church Cathedral School on the grass of War Memorial field. Our team dominated from start to finish in an exciting game of many chances and eventually won 6 - 2 with goals from **A. Veale** (three), **J. Smith**, **F. Howe** and **D. Robinson**.

It has been a successful season for all the Lower School teams this year and many players have shown great promise for the future on the hockey field. I would like to thank everyone who played this year for a thoroughly enjoyable season, but especially **AMB** and Miss Omell, who have both helped us improve and develop our skills and overall game enormously throughout the season.

P. RABINDRAN 2X

1st XI Cricket

2004 was the most successful cricket season for many a year at Abingdon and watching this talented, hungry and enthusiastic group of winners playing so well as a team proved very rewarding for Coaches and parents alike throughout the summer. In only two matches were we outclassed and we won comfortably against several very good teams. The victories that will prove to be most memorable will be those over St Edward's and Birkenhead, but in a summer so rich with success there were far too many highlights to list in full here. It should also be mentioned that the defeat against RGS, High Wycombe was an incredibly exciting and impressive game of cricket and that, even though the boys lost, they fought as hard as any team could have done in that situation to win the game. Recognition should go to **Gary Palmer** for all the work that he has done in improving the skills and the confidence of these players over the past two seasons. No other team seemed to enjoy their cricket, and each other's company, as much as the Abingdon 1st XI. This excellent team spirit was undoubtedly a key factor in a number of our wins this season, especially in the close matches, and this was a reminder of how valuable last season's tour of the Caribbean had been for the players involved.

Such a sense of togetherness would not have been possible without an outstanding captain. **J. Mugnaioni** should be very proud of all that he achieved through the course of the season. Personal highlights for him included his team-leading total of 35 wickets at an average of 12.49, a total of 319 runs at an average of 35.4, a superb five-wicket haul against local rivals St Edward's and his first half-century for the School against KEQMS, Lytham. He went on to score 85 in that match and he obviously enjoyed scoring all those runs as he followed that with 68* the very next day against Birkenhead. Captaincy is about much more than one's own exploits with bat and ball, however, and he worked very hard to ensure that the other boys always played with plenty of passion and a harder, more determined approach than some have been used to in the past. He led by example with athletic and aggressive fielding and I was also very impressed by the way the senior players gave plenty of encouragement to younger players and those making their debuts, so that everybody involved in the 1st XI matches this season felt welcomed and respected.

J. Mugnaioni was awarded full colours at the end of the season, as were four other players. **G. Stern**, the vice-captain, scored 395 runs at an average of 28.2 and also took 25 wickets at 17.68 with his left-arm spin. His magnificent knock of 65* against hostile, fast bowling in the '20s' semi-final against

Dulwich helped to see us through to the final and I hope that all the boys involved in that great day out at Edgbaston will always be grateful to him for that innings. He has been a regular in the 1st XI for three seasons and has made a massive contribution to Abingdon cricket during his time at the school. He will prove very difficult to replace, as will **A. McKenzie**, the spearhead of our bowling attack. He is a gifted natural athlete but he has worked very hard at both his bowling and his batting and fully deserved his personal success this season. He took 31 wickets at an average of 14.71. His raw aggression as a bowler led to a lot of praise from spectators, and a degree of fear from batsmen at the Lytham festival, and I have never seen a middle stump cartwheel in such spectacular fashion as I did this summer at St Anne's Cricket Club. As well as his cricketing talents, we will miss the winning mentality that **A. McKenzie** brought to the team but I will not miss my regular visits to the hedges of War Memorial Field to retrieve my ball during practice time: when he hits a ball, it stays hit! **A. Rehman** was our other opening bowler, taking 18 wickets at an average of 23.44, and he has represented the 1st XI with distinction for several years. He set the tone for our season with a superb opening spell against Eton and his relentless accuracy and brisk pace gave batsmen problems throughout the summer. Other bowlers took some of their wickets as a result of the way in which **A. Rehman** kept things so tight at his end. He finished on a high note with an excellent spell and a wicket at Edgbaston and finding a bowler as reliable to replace him will be difficult. The final recipient of full colours, and the only one who will still be playing in 2005, was our very own run machine, **P. Stern**. His haul of two centuries will compare very favourably with the statistics of the leading players at the leading cricket schools when *Wisden* is published later in the year. Those of us who watched his innings of 151* against Birkenhead will never forget that afternoon and I was so delighted for him that his third century for the school was in a winning cause at last! We relied heavily on him for a large percentage of our runs this season and he rarely let us down. I hope he will be hungry for more runs next year.

Half colours were awarded to **A. Nash**, **H. Cole** and **W. Poole**, all of whom have made a very important contribution to cricket at Abingdon over their years at the School. **A. Nash** endured 'one of those seasons' on a personal level but his good humour and commitment to the team ethic brought out the best in others. **H. Cole** must have felt frustrated by his lack of opportunities with bat or ball but always gave his best for the team. He set a fine example in the field and the season began and

RESULTS - 1st XI

P 17, W 13, D 1, L 3

Eton	Won by 5 wks Abingdon 107 for 5 Eton 106 all out
Oratory	Won by 2 runs Oratory 145 for 9 Abingdon 147 for 7
Bloxham	Won by 3 wks Bloxham 126 for 8 Abingdon 130 for 7
St Edward's	Won by 6 wks St Edward's 151 all out Abingdon 154 for 4
Lord Williams's	Lost by 82 runs Lord Williams's 194 for 4 Abingdon 122 all out
Berkshire Gents	Won by 5 wks B. Gents 179 for 7 dec Abingdon 180 for 5
Pangbourne	Won by 5 wks Abingdon 124 for 5 Pangbourne 122 for 8
High Wycombe	Lost by 14 runs RGS 265 for 7 Abingdon 251 all out
MCC	Won by 5 wks MCC 140 all out Abingdon 141 for 5
KEQMS	Won by 5 wks Abingdon 171 for 5 KEQMS 168 all out
Birkenhead	Won by 8 wks Birkenhead 261 for 7 Abingdon 262 for 2
Univ. College	Won by 54 runs Abingdon 223 all out UCS 169 all out
Dauntsey's	Match drawn Dauntsey's 96 for 9 Abingdon 96 for 9 Rematch won by 36 runs Dauntsey's 96 for 8 Abingdon 132 for 6
Shiplake	Won by 3 runs Abingdon 147 for 7 Shiplake 144 for 7
Dulwich	Won by 5 wks Dulwich 125 all out Abingdon 126 for 5
Felsted	Lost by 67 runs Abingdon 107 for 9 Felsted 174 for 4

ended with superb run-outs as a result of his top-class fielding. **W. Poole** has worked hard at his batting over the last two years, widening his range of shots and learning the value of patience. His reward for his efforts will be an entry in *Wisden* this year for scoring more than 150 runs in total. His fielding has also improved and he held some very difficult and very important chances this year that might have gone to ground in previous seasons.

Other players who represented the 1st XI on a regular basis this year were **S. Florey** and **J. Canlan-Shaw**, both of whom are very talented players who will have a major role to play next season. **S. Kapoor**, **A. Verdin**, **D. Sullivan**, **A. Cole**, **A. Wimborne**, **M. Halford**, **C. Halford**, **A. Hall**, **T. Roche**, **E. Antysz**, **T. Swarbrick** and **J. Swarbrick** never let anybody down when they played for the 1st XI this season and the younger players among this group will have gained valuable experience for next year. **C. Halford** in particular deserves special mention for his exceptionally mature innings of 68* against KEQMS, Lytham. Chasing 169 to win, we were wobbling at 13 for 3 until he shared in a stand of 152 with his captain to swing the match our way. Next year's XI will have a tough act to follow but I hope that the winning mentality that led to so much success this season will continue.

In amongst the success stories there were some disappointments as well. Losing the final of the '20s' tournament at Edgbaston was a blow but looking back at the game we have to be honest and accept that we were up against a very good side indeed. We enjoyed the day out and we did extremely well to get to the final in the first place. The manner of the loss against Lord Williams's was more disappointing. We just did not compete in that game and we were on the receiving end of a hiding! Finally, we were unable to retain the Holmwoods six-a-side trophy that we won last year. This summer we were only able to finish fourth in the tournament at Hampton School. We

2nd XI Cricket

RESULTS - 2nd XI

Eton	Won by 5 wickets Eton 140 for 9 Abingdon 146 for 5
Bloxham	Won by 143 runs Bloxham 74 all out Abingdon 217 for 3
St Edward's	Match drawn St Edward's 188 for 5 Abingdon 97 for 8
Pangbourne	Won by 71 runs Pangbourne 112 all out Abingdon 183 for 4
Stowe	Won by 3 wickets

wing to the wet summer the season was shortened by too many washouts. The matches played, however, made up an excellently successful, unbeaten season for the 2nd XI. Whilst it owed its success to its strength as a complete team, there were also individual performances that augured well for the future of the 1st XI.

The season started well with a victory over Eton by eleven balls, largely following **T. Roche**'s excellent five wicket haul. The match was won in cavalier style (and non-regulation trousers) by **T. Swarbrick** with a mighty six, when it was beginning to look a close-run affair. One of the highlights of the season was **A. Verdin**'s century against a Bloxham side that was wounded by an opening partnership of 156, and comprehensively defeated by seven wickets. Thanks to a gritty lower order batting performance, we managed to hold on for a draw against St Edward's, which we

hope to put up a better showing in this competition next year. Out of our hands, but disappointing none the less, was the cancellation of the fixtures against Magdalen College School and Stowe owing to the weather. For various reasons, the boys were particularly looking forward to these matches but the rain spoiled our best laid plans and these crunch games will have to wait until next year.



I would like to conclude my report by acknowledging and thanking all of the staff who were involved in cricket in 2004. First of all, the teachers who spent so much of their time this summer coaching, managing and umpiring: **RSH**, **JEJO**, **WTP**, **RGH**, **AMB**, **JFB**, **AJM**, **JDEDH** and **CB** have all worked extremely hard to make the 2004 season so successful across all the age-groups and I hope very much that their efforts have been appreciated by the boys. Special mention should go to **RPF**, who will be very difficult to replace as Coach of the Juniors A XI. His contribution to Abingdon cricket over the years has been enormous and he will be sorely missed by us all. Secondly, **Paul Robson** and his team of groundsmen deserve to be mentioned for the work they have done in preparing the pitches and the outfield, work that is hugely important but often taken for granted. Finally, I would like to thank our three scorers: **D. Emerson**, **J. Lillycrop** and **C. Lillycrop**. Scoring is an unglamorous but essential part of cricket and all three did an excellent job with the book this year.

SPGS

were fortunate to secure. This was the low point of the season. Of the batting highlights **A. Cole**'s half-century against Pangbourne and **A. Hall**'s invaluable contributions to the side throughout the season deserve particular mention. These provided the platform for success time and again. Best bowling performance of the season was claimed by **A. Wimborne**, who took six wickets for just sixteen runs against Pangbourne, while his brother **H. Wimborne** turned in a remarkably mature debut at senior level, by taking four wickets against Stowe.

As captain I was immensely proud of the achievements of this season, for it combined a sense of enjoyment with a keen desire to win. The team was great fun to play in and I am indebted to 'Senior Pros' **S. Cataldo-Francis** and **E. Antysz** and coach **CB** for their support and advice, both on and off the field.

M. DUHAN 6 RSS

Junior Colts Cricket

The season started in glorious sunshine away at Eton. Some tight bowling, particularly by **S. Sethi**, restricted them to what seemed a very modest total. We struggled in reply and all looked lost, but a couple of fortuitous dropped catches gave us renewed hope and **C. Checkley** and **G. Salmon** put together an excellent partnership before **C. Checkley** took us to victory (completing his 50 in the process) with 10 balls to spare.

After the cancellation of the Oratory and Stowe games because of bad weather, next up was Bloxham. Some good bowling, particularly by **N. Li**, saw the opposition dismissed for a mere 77 and although we stuttered in reply initially, **C. Halford**, with some elegant stroke play, and **C. Quarterman** guided us through to a comprehensive 8 wicket victory.

Then came St Edward's. The opposition got off to a steady start, but a fine spell of bowling by **H. Wimborne** and a crucial catch by **C. Quarterman** on the deep mid-wicket boundary dismissed St Edward's for 129. We lost a wicket to the second delivery of the innings, but the early batsmen withstood a hostile opening few overs before **T. Blakey** and **C. Halford** were able to open up and lead the team to a comfortable and well deserved victory by 8 wickets.

The following game was against Pangbourne. Steady, accurate bowling from all the bowlers, spectacular catches from **D. Mills** and a comical run-out after a no-ball meant they could only muster 92. This proved no target for our batsmen as **S. Sethi** bludgeoned the opposing bowlers to all parts of the ground on his way to a rapid 64, which saw us reach victory in little more than 10 overs!

The final game proved to be away at RGS High Wycombe, since the MCS match was another one lost to the weather. Despite the quality of the batsmen, an excellent opening spell from **G. Salmon** and some fine catching once again reduced the opposition to 40 for 5. We were unable to finish quickly though and RGS scored about 30/40 runs more (which was to prove costly) and posted a challenging total of 159. We were without the bulk of our regular middle order batsmen owing to a kayaking trip, so the early loss of a few wickets set us back badly and we were well behind the required rate, needing a further 100 runs during the final 12 overs. But the side had developed a fighting spirit and the tail wagged ferociously: a quick-fire 43 from **H. Wimborne** and useful cameo appearances from **N. Li** and **D.**

Mills took us to within sight of an unlikely victory, but unfortunately the final pair couldn't squeeze out the 4 runs required.

If you had glanced back at this team's record from last year, you would have been forgiven for thinking it was going to be a challenging season – but far from it. There was a buzz and enthusiasm about the squad from the outset and they trained hard on their basic skills during the early part of the term. Most have begun to realise the need to think about how they play the game and adopt a strategy for approaching and dealing with different situations during a match. There has been a willingness to learn and a good sense of team spirit within the group all season. Particular mention must be made of the captain, **G. Salmon**, who has done a tremendous job leading his side on the field.

This has turned out to be one of the most enjoyable groups of boys I have worked with on the cricket field in recent years, as well as the most successful one. To win all but one of their games - and that defeat by the narrowest of margins with a depleted batting line-up - is an excellent achievement of which they can rightly feel proud.

There is plenty of ability within this squad and provided they keep their feet on the ground and continue to apply themselves and work hard at developing their game, they should gain much more success in the future.

AMB

RESULTS - Juniors

Eton	Won by 4 wickets Eton 114 for 5 Abingdon 115 for 6
Bloxham	Won by 8 wickets Bloxham 77 all out Abingdon 78 for 2
St Edward's	Won by 8 wickets St Edward's 129 all out Abingdon 130 for 2
Pangbourne	Won by 9 wickets Pangbourne 92 all out Abingdon 96 for 1
High Wycombe	Lost by 2 runs H. Wycombe 159 all out Abingdon 157 for 9



Badminton

RESULTS:

Bloxham	Won 8-1 Won 9-0 Won 9-1 Won 9-1
Oratory	Lost 2-6 Lost 4-12
Radley	Won 8-1 Won 9-0 Won 7-0 Won 9-0
Stowe	Lost 4-5 Lost 4-5 Won 6-3 Won 6-3
Malvern	Won 8-0 Won 8-1
Cheltenham	Won 5-3 Won 10-6 Won 8-1 Lost 4-5
Wellington Rugby	Won 13-2 Won 8-1 Won 7-2
Millfield	Won 8-1 Won 7-2 Won 5-1 Won 5-1 Won 6-0 Won 4-2
Witney	Lost 1-6 Won 6-1 Lost 0-8 Won 6-3 Won 4-3 Won 6-3
King Alfred's John Mason	Won 5-2 Won 7-0 Lost 2-5
Wood Green	Won 7-0 Lost 2-5
Icknield	Won 7-0 Won 4-1 Won 5-0
Bicester	Won 5-2 Won 7-0
St Anne's Oxford	Won 12 - 4

We started the Michaelmas term with reasonable confidence because most of the stalwarts of 2002/3's successes were still with us. Almost immediately came the news that **N. Gardner** had sustained what would prove to be a long-term injury to his right wrist while playing tennis; this was to mean that his promising partnership with **I. Cheng** would develop no further and that we would have to experiment before finding another reliable combination. During this period we lost to Oratory and Stowe. The rest of the term was quite successful and December saw a gratifyingly heavy defeat of Millfield. A fresh initiative was the match with St Anne's College, Oxford, masterminded by **A. Lui**, OA. This followed only minutes after the match against Bloxham on 19 November so the team was nicely warmed up and impatient to get the job done: the result was a 12 - 4 win.

With the exception of Radley, participants in the Oxfordshire Schools' Badminton League were reluctant to play matches until the Lent term. This resulted in a packed and somewhat lumpily distributed fixture list. Some of the congestion resulted from our combination with the School of St Helen and St Katharine to field mixed teams in the U16 and U19 competitions. The U14s enjoyed a steep OSBA learning curve and several successes after losing to Henry Box School in January, while the U16s and U19s went relatively efficiently about the task and got to the finals without too much drama. Our participation in the mixed competition was not

always the slickest thing on the face of the planet but again we ended up in the finals in both the U16s and U19s. Outside the OSBA competition we had a mystery loss to Oratory but Malvern, Cheltenham and Millfield came and went.

While it would make good sense to play the final of the OSBA leagues in March when everyone is in practice, this has proved to be tricky to organise and the finals are played early in the Summer term. Lack of match sharpness nearly sank the U16s v Wantage School, but the good sense and determination of **A. Boxell**, **H. Dawkins**, **H. Park** and **T. Chu** got us through the doubles unbeaten and hence overall winners 4 - 3. In the U19 boys' final **S. McMahon** lost a singles game, rather to his surprise, but **C. North** won his quite easily and **J. Li**, **I. Cheng**, **H. Chi** and **A. Mak** polished off the doubles and thus paved the way to a 6 - 1 victory over Henry Box School.

In the finals of the mixed league Abingdon and St Helen's U16s were runners-up to Henry Box School, and our U19 mixed forces beat Henry Box School 6 - 3.

Farewell time

C. North has played with style, guile, force and a little showboating for the last five years and more. There is almost always a senior player for the rest to copy or attempt to beat and this has been Chris. Without him at the sharp end we would have been much the poorer; certainly masters from other schools have taken to asking when he will be leaving! **S. McMahon** has more than once reminded me that he failed his first badminton trial - so what do I know?! Despite the occasional fall, he has played with tireless sense and good humour as well as considerable skill and cunning. He is especially dangerous at the net, as many frustrated opponents will testify. I have been very grateful for his efforts as secretary and navigator. **H. Chi** has played for teams right through the School. Latterly, he has stamped his authority on many a doubles match (and many a sports hall floor!). He will chase down a shot that others might despair of and brings competitive relish, to say nothing of polychrome kit and breezy good humour, to every point. **B. Zhao** and **C. Turner** have been a team manager's dream - happy to play when asked (even at short notice in a crisis) competitive, modest, cheerful and civilised. We shall miss them all. The captains for 2004/5 will be **T. Rippon** and **J. Li**; the secretary will be **N. Miles**.



Lost and Found

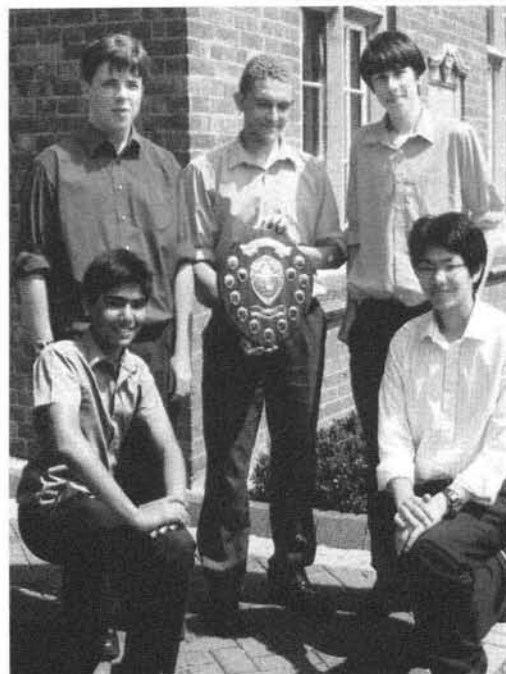
Discovered in the cellar of Waste Court during the clearances of summer 2004 was the Bayley Cup, first awarded to Blacknall House in 1949 and recycled as the Badminton Doubles Competition Trophy in 1985. It was last won in 1993 by **R. Haynes** and **A. Mills** and evidently went underground thereafter. We hope to revive the competition next year now that there is something to award. If this news prompts one of our OA readers to realise that he has held the Badminton Singles Cup for over a decade I hope that he will feel moved to return it.

Archives

In a fit of tidy-mindedness I have gathered together the paperwork of more than a quarter of a century's Abingdon Badminton in a reasonably systematic way and handed it over to the School

archives, together with some trophies and almost all the team photographs for that time. Earlier players and/or historians now have a block of badminton material to consult if they are driven by nostalgia or curiosity. I am very grateful to TRA for helping me to put names to most faces in the 'yellowing, dicky-bird-watching' pictures. Corrections to the best guesses of two ageing memories will be gratefully received.

IAMcD



As our results show, the Tennis Club had a demanding fixture list, with matches against lesser opposition cancelled by rain, and the discrepancy in resources of players and courts all too evident against schools like Radley and Eton. When a pupil from an opposing team steps off the bus and declares, "This is a bit squalid.", it feels satisfying to thrash that team and send them back with tails between legs. Sadly, the visiting player had the last word on court as well as off it, and will continue to do so until we have sufficient courts for more players to practise more often.

Nevertheless, under the coaching of **Phil Warr** the Club has made some progress towards building a stronger group of players for the future. Phil has an enthusiasm bordering on the obsessive, as he ploughs the veterans' circuit in pursuit of ratings points, conveying the excitement and techniques of competitive tennis to the players. He has identified some talented players in the Middle School and Upper School, and will hope to build enthusiasm and achievement around them over the coming years. Among that group are the four who won the Oxfordshire U15 Independent Schools' Cup (**O. Raban**, **A. Bell**, **P. Collins** and **J. Robinson**), and **D. Robinson**, who with **S. Montgomery** won the U12 Oxfordshire Cup.

Among the Seniors the outstanding player was undoubtedly **M. Watkins**, who formed an impressive first pair in the 1st VI with captain **J. Kelly**. Together they lost only a handful of sets in the season, two of them to an Epsom pair who went all the way to the final of the Independent Schools' Tournament at Eton. **M. Watkins** deserves special mention for the patience and humour with which

he carried the responsibility as the top player in the School, despite being still in the Middle School. Next year we hope to develop the Club further with a longer trip to the Windmill Hill training centre in Sussex. Plans for an overseas trip to Ali Bey in Turkey the year after are already afoot.

Thanks to all the players who trained and played with enthusiasm and commitment this season:

1st VI: **M. Watkins**, **J. Kelly** (captain), **J. Nicholls**, **C. Dyer**, **G. Potter**, **T. Vaughan-Fowler**, **H. Poultney**, **P. Jones**, **A. Bell**, **O. Raban**.

2nd VI: **P. Wong**, **H. Poultney**, **P. Jones**, **P. Dean**, **J. Evans**, **T. Reid**.

3rd VI: **W. Teddy**, **I. Chau**, **B. Zhao**, **J. Lillycrop**, **M. Haste**, **J. Garrett**, **J. Coleman**, **R. Mallett**.

U16s: **H. Park**, **D. Lam**, **J. Innes**, **P. Birkett**, **R. Woolley**, **B. Shelton**, **S. Crowther**, **A. Grant**, **S. Johnson**.

U15s: **A. Bell**, **O. Raban**, **M. Watts**, **M. Sutcliffe**, **W. Henley**, **D. Fry**, **D. Ridley**, **H. Richards**, **J. Michelson**, **A. Hamilton**, **H. Freeland**.

U14s: **M. Derbyshire**, **G. Collier**, **T. Middleton**, **R. Cadman**, **K. Cheung**, **W. Cullen**, **T. Ojo**, **H. Lee**, **D. Robinson**, **E. Campbell**, **A. Kempell**, **S. Montgomery**, **S. Lonergan**.

BAHF

Tennis

RESULTS

1st VI	
Radley	Lost 7-2
Oratory	Won 5.5-3.5
St Edward's	Lost 4-5
Eton	Lost 6.5-1.5
Stowe	Lost 4-5

2nd VI	
Radley	Lost 0-9
Oratory	Won 9-0
St Edward's	Won 7.5-1.5

U16A	
Oratory	Lost 4-5
St Edward's	Lost 1-8
Eton	Won 5-4
Stowe	Lost 1-8

U16B	
Eton	Lost 2-7

U15A	
Radley	Lost 2.5-6.5
Oratory	Lost 4-5
St Edward's	Won 7.5-1.5
Eton	Lost 2.5-6.5
Stowe	Lost 4-5

U15B	
Radley	Lost 4-5
Oratory	Won 9-0
St Edward's	Won 7-2
Eton	Lost 3.5-5.5

U14A	
Radley	Lost 6-3
Eton	Lost 0-9
Stowe	Lost 3-6

U14B	
Radley	Lost 7-2
Eton	Lost 0-9

U14C	
Eton	Lost 0.5-8.5

Cross-Country



The first fixture was at Dr Challoner's Grammar School in November, the teams captained and led by **A. Mould**. Abingdon sent two teams to take on the 'Big Dipper' – a series of hills steep enough to slow anyone down to a canter – and the 2.7km course. The 1st VI came 17th and the 2nd VI came 24th with **N. Gardner** (10:26) and **W. Cullen** (10:54) running well.

After Christmas, at the Vale of the White Horse Championships, several teams represented the school around the Radley course. Sleeting rain, a raging stream and knee-deep mud greeted the U13, U15 and U19 teams, each of which nonetheless produced excellent performances. The U13 team finished second, and **F. Howe** won the individual race. In the U15 team **A. White** did well to finish 8th and **L. Williamson** came in an admirable 9th. The U19 team came third (with a good run from **A. White** 7th) but with improved tactics overcame the European School the following week, to come second in the County Championships, just behind the host team of Radley. **A. White**, **L. Williamson**, **J. Stanier** and **R. Guast** all qualified to run for Oxfordshire in the National Championships. The U15 team ran well at the County Championships too and came fourth overall.

At Stowe **A. White** (31:53) led the shivering team, sporting only their Abingdon Cross-country vests, around a 6.9km course in the driving rain, and at Harrow, in even more serious mud, **A. White** and **L. Williamson** ran well in the Seniors category (both 33:55) over 5.2 miles and **R. Walker** (15:56) and **L. White** (15:57) ran well in the Juniors category over 2.6 miles.

There were notable performances, too, from **E. Mitchard** and **T. Mitchard**.

This year, as usual, saw us enter several relay races on Wednesday afternoons: the 1st VI entered a highly competitive event at King Henry VIII School, Coventry, finishing in 32nd place despite a blizzard! **R. Guast** recorded an excellent time (14:32) over the two-mile course before the snow began. **W. Bright** also had a very good run. The team finally found some sunshine on Christ Church meadow in Oxford for the Tortoises Relays, and in this race **L. Williamson**, **A. Mould**, **W. Guast** and **R. Groves** won medals as members of the fastest team from Oxfordshire. **A. Mould** led the team with an excellent time of 10:00 around the 1.5 mile course and **H. McKend** ran well too (10:21). Shortly after this in the race at St Albans, with thanks to **Roger Baker** for driving us there, the team produced an excellent performance, all running very well to come 20th in another very competitive race. Spikes were not necessary this time as for once it was not raining: instead the temperature was dropping and the wind-chill factor had increased!

R. Guast and **L. Williamson** have both represented Oxfordshire this season, and **A. White** and **A. Mould** have shown outstanding commitment to the Club as captains. These four were awarded full colours in recognition of their achievements. We would like to record our thanks to all who have helped us train for this successful season and organised the fixtures and events: to **ACWB**, to **EMTS** and to **JMB**.

ACWB AND A. WHITE VI WHZ

Destinations of Leavers 2004

Jones S	Geography	Aberystwyth	Barclay JJ	Medicine	Newcastle
Ranscombe CH	Innovation & Engineering Design	Bath	Bright WD	Architectural Studies	Newcastle
McKeown T	Mathematical Science and Study in Europe	Birmingham	Gater TC	Geography	Newcastle
Stern GWA	Geography	Bristol	Gordon SW	Ancient History and Archaeology	Newcastle
Blackwell SJ	Engineering Mathematics	Bristol	Morton RC	Biology	Newcastle
Kelly JB	Aeronautical Engineering	Bristol	Antysz E	French and History	Nottingham
Kirkland CJ	French and German	Bristol	Ejikeme CCC	Mathematics and Economics	Nottingham
Potter GF	Philosophy	Bristol	Groves RAH	Mechanical Engineering	Nottingham
Sheppard TW	Veterinary Science	Bristol	Hooper TA	Ancient History and Archaeology	Nottingham
Teddy WP	French and Spanish	Bristol	McKenzie IA	Geography	Nottingham
Turner CA	Veterinary Science	Bristol	Swinn MA	Physics with Theoretical Physics	Nottingham
Webber RJL	Biology	Bristol	Vasudev R	English Studies	Nottingham
White AJ	Physics with Industrial Experience	Bristol	Livingstone D	Sports Science	Ohio State
Green H	Computer Visualisation and Animation	Bournemouth	Anderson JR	Physiological Sciences	Oxford
Hough A	Law	Bournemouth	Berryman L	Music	Oxford
Chilcott MR	Philosophy	Cambridge	Bickerton PJ	Biological Sciences	Oxford
Cullen MJ	Geography	Cambridge	Brodie ND	Geography	Oxford
Gardner NB	Law	Cambridge	Chung DCH	Engineering	Oxford
Hermes AC	Natural Sciences	Cambridge	Ezenwa CN	Engineering	Oxford
Huzzey AJ	Economics	Cambridge	Garton Ash A	English	Oxford
Jones M-L	Medicine	Cambridge	Mitchard ETA	Biological Sciences	Oxford
McMahon SO	Natural Sciences	Cambridge	Morris G	Mathematics and Philosophy	Oxford
Nash AFC	English and Drama with Education Studies	Cambridge	O'Donovan PJ	Music	Oxford
Patterson ND	Geography	Cambridge	Peychers AJ	Modern History	Oxford
Waller DR	Natural Sciences	Cambridge	Stanier JM	Modern History	Oxford
Allen JM	Religious and Theological Studies	Cardiff	Sui Sing H Ho	Engineering	Oxford
Cole HDR	Medicine	Cardiff	Sullivan DJ	Modern History	Oxford
Guast R	Mechanical Engineering	Cardiff	Williamson LD	Medicine	Oxford
Hughes SR	Chemistry with a year abroad	Cardiff	Futagami M	Law	Oxford Brookes
Muirhead RJ	Religious and Theological Studies	Cardiff	Khan MSJ	Business and Management	Oxford Brookes
Wilcox J	History and Sociology	Cardiff	Buchan JW	Business Economics	Plymouth
Woodward MTL	Marine Geography	Cardiff	Jack AF	Product Design & Materials	Portsmouth
Hu J	Business Studies	City	Livingston A	Medicine	Queen Mary, London
Brewerton T	Business Economics	Coventry	Brooke JMH	Mgmt and Business Admin.	Reading
Smith G	International Disaster Engineering Mgmt	Coventry	Davis AJ	Building Surveying	Reading
Donnelly JL	Psychology	CUWIC	Sanders O	Biochem with Science	Royal Holloway
Gallard J	Philosophy, Politics and Economics	Durham	Bishop JRG	Creative Writing and Drama	Rochampton
Lea WP	Biomedical Science	Durham	Innes GJA	French and Internat. Relations	St Andrew's
McGeehin WJ	Engineering	Durham	Lewis JP	Economics	St Andrew's
Mould A	Anthropology and Archaeology	Durham	Vaughan-Fowler T	English and Philosophy	St Andrew's
Thompson Cheel O	Mechanical Engineering	Durham	Coppock MG	Geography	Sheffield
Jackson SJ	Medicine	Edinburgh	Fiennes TG	Politics and Philosophy	Sheffield
Newton R	Computer Science	Edinburgh	Bennelick TR	Electronic Engineering	Southampton
Clegg RJ	Mathematics	Exeter	Shaikh AK	Music	Southampton
Hall CJ	English	Exeter	Steel CM	IT and Organisations	Southampton
Nicholls JM	Law	Exeter	Ansell JB	Psychology	Surrey
North CP	Economics and Stats with European Studies	Exeter	Abrahall HJ	Computer Games Design	Teeside
Paxton AG	Biology	Imperial	Calnan JF	Economics and Politics	Trinity Coll, Dublin
Prinold JAI	Mechanical Engineering	Imperial	Chau JF	Biomedical Sciences	UCL
Teh BH	Medicine	Imperial	Huang J	Chemistry with Mgmt Studies	UCL
Zhao B	Electrical and Electronic Engineering	Imperial	Ivanov G	Russian and French	UCL
Sanderson I	Drama and Theatre Studies	Kent	Marsh A	Geography	UCL
Riaz BA	Accounting and Economics	Lancaster	Poole WEC	Medicine	UCL
Huddleston JJ	Human Resources Management	Leeds	Qureshi MA	Economics	UCL
Hunt CJ	Accounting and Finance	Leeds	Rehman AU	Economics	UCL
Macdonald ADD	English	Leeds	Shao K	Economics	UCL
Ding JJ	History	Leicester	Taylor BN	Psychology	UCL
Sharp OE	Economics and Law	Leicester	Williams TA	Geospatial and Environment Info	UCL
Cataldo-Francis SM	Geography and Biology	Liverpool	Findlay JS	Biological Sciences	Warwick
Dyson JW	Zoology	Liverpool	Last MG	History of Art & French Studies	Warwick
Gould MC	Geology	Liverpool	Lillycrop JCD	Computer Science	Warwick
McKenzie A	Integrated Engineering	Liverpool	Gould AM	Horticulture	Worcester
Sun KCW	Government and Economics	LSE	Chi Hu J	Psychology	York
Wong PCH	Management	LSE	Cole JA	Economics	York
Dyer CM	Economics	Manchester	Harrison W	English and History of Art	York
Monsell HW	Psychology	Manchester	Townsend MS	Economics and Sociology	York
Johnson MO	Accounting and Finance	Manchester Met.			

