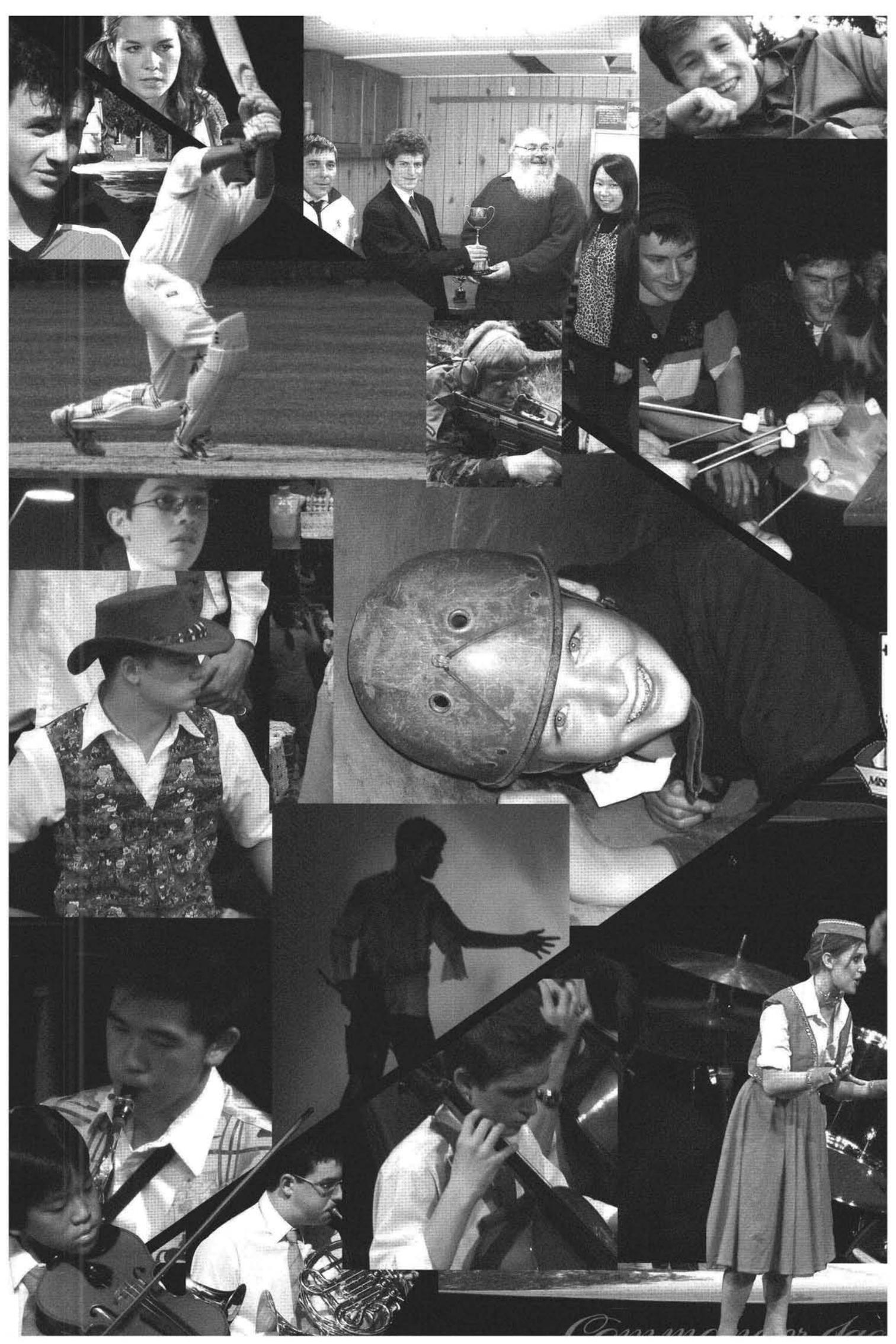




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Editorial



Members of the 2005-06 editorial team, L to R
Dan Buttar, Alan Beaumont, Neil McFarlane, Thom Lodge, Tom Carpenter,
James Wartke-Dunbar, Anthony Preston, Anthony Chan

It is a strange feeling to be writing history, or at least to be editing it, yet as the Editor of *The Abingdonian* that is what I know I'm doing. The Headmaster's foreword refers to the speed with which last year's achievements "slip into the annals of history", but once they have been recorded in the pages of *The Abingdonian*, they are history and are numbered as such with a unique identifier, in this case – Volume 24, Number 6, Issue 309.

The first issue of *The Abingdonian* appeared in December 1890 and, as the School's archivist, I am more familiar with the early volumes of the magazine than with the recent ones. It is in their pages that I will find the answer to many of the questions that people ask: can you tell me anything about my great-grandfather? did Abingdon support the Duke of York's camps in the 1920s? what was the first motion of the Debating Society? It is from their pages that I can see that electric light was installed throughout the School in July 1925, that a party of boys was invited to represent the School at Winston Churchill's lying in state in 1965 and that Thom Yorke used to be a member of *The Abingdonian* committee.

The ancient back numbers can make melancholy reading since every boy, whether he's leaving the Upper Sixth in clouds of glory or arriving in the First Year in fear and trepidation, is now dead. It has been a much happier task reading through the activities of this present generation and getting to know the names of boys who still have many years to go.

My own children are always annoyed when I remind them of the maxim that the more you put into something the more you get out of it, but I am struck by the fact that many of the boys whose names appear frequently in these old copies of *The Abingdonian* are of those who go on to make a name for themselves in later life. **Sir George Sinclair**, whose obituary appears in this issue, is a case in point. He threw himself into the life of the School and when he left he was Captain of School, Captain of Rugby and Captain of Boats, one rugby report stating, "It would be difficult to imagine a keener captain or a better one".

'Pereunt et Imputantur' is written on the face of the clock in the Library, given to the School in 1742 by the then Headmaster, Thomas Woods, – the hours may pass away but they are still charged to our account. Our school days also pass away but in the pages of this *Abingdonian* we can read of the good use many boys still make of them.

Sarah Wearne – Editor

The Abingdonian 2004-05 Editorial Team

Sam Withnall, Edward Cottrell, Andrew Cruickshank, Tom Evans, Matthew Stott, Koel Ko, Anthony Chan, Thom Lodge, Neil McFarlane, Cameron Dwyer, Anthony Preston, Alan Beaumont, Tim Dawson, Tom Carpenter, James Wartke-Dunbar, Dan Buttar



Members of the 2004-05 editorial team
Back left clockwise
Sam Withnall,
Matthew Stott,
Edward Cottrell,
Tom Evans



The Abingdonian

Michaelmas 2005 Volume XXIV No. 6 Issue 309

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Headmaster's Foreword



I always find that one of the milestones in the cycle of the academic year is that moment when, with the routines of the new year established, I have the luxury of a little time to give in to nostalgia and to review the previous year's achievements. So much is invested in events at the time that it is amazing how rapidly they all slip into the annals of history. Memory gradually summarises each year and it becomes associated with a single significant event: 2002 was the Arts Centre, 2003 the opening of the Boathouse and I think it fair to say that as 2004-5 recedes in our memories it will be known as 'the year of the Inspection'.

It would be no exaggeration to say that the year was dominated by our septennial inspection. Despite the fact that the first six months were spent in preparation, when the time arrived the presence of thirteen inspectors in School for an entire week was enough to quicken the pulse of even the most nonchalant. Whilst it provides a very detailed record, any inspection report is necessarily a stills photograph taken from the motion picture that is life at Abingdon School. In the event, we felt that the Inspection Report was a fair comment on the School and a very strong endorsement of all that we are striving to achieve. Generous praise was heaped on the high academic expectation, the excellent depth and breadth of the Other Half, and the relationships between Staff and pupils that form the bedrock of any school community.

2004-5 will also be remembered as a year of considerable achievement. Once again our exam candidates performed with distinction, and our Oxbridge results were excellent. The Rugby Club had a testing season, but the rowers once again consolidated their reputation as one of the best school crews in the country. Some of our most notable sporting triumphs were recorded at the

lower end of the School, with the Junior B rugby side and Junior A cricketers both earning the rare accolade of an undefeated season. The cultural and musical life of the School has flourished as we have settled into and enjoyed the full benefits of the Arts Centre, and the Film Unit has enhanced its reputation for creative innovation.

Behind the scenes, demand for places remains high and this has provided us with the confidence to push on with the planning process for a major new sports hall. We hope this will move closer to fruition over the next twelve months.

Many would say that a school is the sum of the personalities within it. This year we have said farewell to a number of Abingdon 'big hitters'. I would like to mention our Bursar, Rory Jackson, who retired to the South Devon coast after ten years of sterling service, and Dr Tim King, who as a pupil, teacher and Second Deputy Head made a colossal contribution to Abingdon life. I hope you will read the full tributes that have been paid to them elsewhere in this magazine.

I congratulate the Editor and her team of reporters, who have sifted through the complexities of Abingdon life and drawn together disparate threads to produce in *The Abingdonian* a magazine that records the full richness of a year at the School.

In conclusion, I trust that you will find this edition to be informative and a worthwhile historical chronicle of all that transpired during the 2004-05 year. More important even than that, I hope that it will convey a little of the essence of what makes Abingdon such a distinctive school.

Mark Turner

Common Room Farewells

Tim King

Tim King's links with Abingdon go back nearly fifty years to when he took his place in the First Year at the School then run with such idiosyncratic flair by James Cobban. Eight years later, having represented the School at cross-country, tennis and chess, he followed a well trodden path for Abingdonians to Pembroke College, Oxford, emerging with his doctorate in biology in 1972, and going to teach at Westminster School where he became Head of the Biology Department. With his roots so firmly planted in Oxford, it was no surprise that he took the first opportunity to return, teaching at Magdalen College School for nine years (where he was Head of General Studies) before moving to Abingdon as Director of Studies in 1986. He then became Second Deputy Head in 1996, and was also for a time Acting Registrar.

Tim's scholarly instincts informed his teaching of biology where he was at his happiest with like-minded boys whose scientific horizons he could broaden so effectively. Throughout the time he was school-teaching he was also contributing research papers – too numerous to count and ranging over wide areas, with anti-hills a recurring theme – to learned journals such as *Nature* and the *Journal of Ecology*. Well regarded school textbooks flowed and were reprinted many times, bringing his clear style and academic rigour to a wider audience; his *Ecology* was even translated into Icelandic. And he was justifiably proud of his election to a Fellowship of the Institute of Biology, for services to ecology and biology teaching.

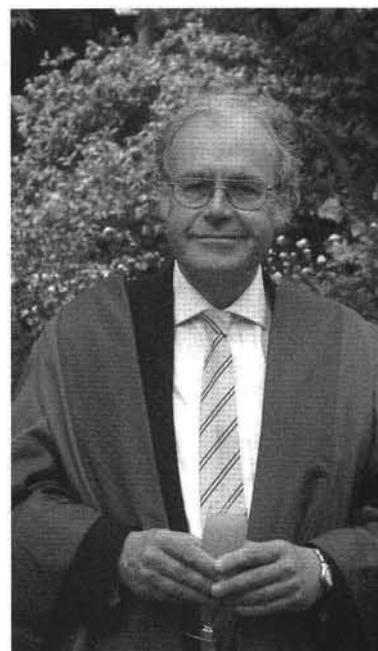
As Director of Studies and mastermind of the timetable, Tim was in his element. The brain that was so good at chess (he was in the Oxfordshire team for twelve years and took over 350 matches at the School) revelled in devising timetables and curricula that would satisfy the brightest boys who enjoyed being stretched by accelerated programmes yet he never forgot the more ponderous. New national educational initiatives were subjected to his forensic scrutiny, then detailed memos issued from him, initially rigorous in their disinterested analysis but skilfully leading the reader to a desired conclusion. Tim was not alone in disliking the introduction of public examinations in the Lower Sixth, seeing it as narrowing horizons for many. He was a passionate promoter of breadth, especially in the Upper School, via a vigorous, well taught General Studies programme. Indeed, some of his time spent at Cambridge on schoolmaster fellowships was devoted to writing a series of essays for the general reader.

Tim positively enjoyed committee work, and as a chairman was a good judge of allowing everyone a voice yet retaining a tight enough rein to keep minds focused on the agenda. Always quite a political animal, he could puncture heated debates with disarming, self-deprecating candour; and he had a clear, confident mastery of his brief, with no instinct to flannel. A near perfect recall of all the intertwining threads of a discussion made him a valued taker of minutes that, in addition to being literate, were always more detailed than seemed possible from the brevity of his notes.

Tim's input into the planning of the School's last two major buildings – Mercers' Court and the Arts Centre – was invaluable.

So too was his oversight of the developments in the use of audio-visual equipment and in ICT. He helped shape the School's recent prospectuses, drafted development plans and willingly took on the burden of organising and ultimately producing the hugely weighty and extensive paperwork required in advance of the two recent inspections. That Tim cared passionately about Abingdon School – its past, present and future – cannot be in doubt.

He has always found it difficult to be idle, and when he has not been engaged on his many interests he has thrown his energies into charitable work, especially the Home Farm Trust. During his seven-year chairmanship of the Oxford Friends of the Home Farm



Trust, £200,000 was raised, some of which came from packed concerts in the Sheldonian Theatre where celebrities such as Judi

Dench gave their services. He has also done much to foster the Old Abingdonian Club, as Secretary spending hundreds of hours setting up its first database and later becoming its President.

There has always been some debate as to whether the aura of genial vagueness that Tim can display is no more than a clever disguise. An incident reported by his family may shed some light. Heather had baked a large chocolate cake for a charity event, which she handed to Tim. He rested it on the car; she was to follow later. Before she left she had a call from Tim saying the cake was no longer with him: had he really taken it? Indeed he had – confirmed when Heather, driving up the Woodstock Road, spied the cake in the middle of the road with a wide tyre-mark bisecting it.

The sharp restless mind and capacity for activity across a broad front that so characterises Tim will serve him well in his retirement to the Oxford he loves for its academic and cultural life and its neighbourly side in the St Margaret's area that has been his and Heather's home for over thirty years. Heather, perhaps, can look forward to his long-promised clearing of a generation of accumulated papers from their cellar.

Tom Ayling

Rory Jackson

With the 200th anniversary of Trafalgar on October 21 there is, naturally enough, a wave of national nostalgia for all things nautical. Many would say that amongst our naval treasures should be included our recently retired Bursar, **Commander Rory Jackson**. Rory's exposure to things nautical and military started at an early age when he was sent aboard Pangbourne College, an experience that caused frequent comparisons to be made with Abingdon, which he regarded as rather liberal and dissolute compared with the spit-and-polish discipline of his Alma Mater. In fact, the perceived thuggery of Abingdonian rugby players, of which he was on the receiving end as a schoolboy, left a lasting impression.

From Pangbourne Rory moved seamlessly to Britannia Royal Naval College and to sea, where in several appointments his crisp efficiency, strong work ethic and keen sense of duty brought significant material benefits to those with whom he served. Rory may well have dedicated his whole life to the senior service but after years of itinerant living he and Cherry decided to 'settle down' – luckily for us into bursaring via a job at Trinity School, Teignmouth.

At that school Rory quickly introduced rigorous cost control, boosted income and in many ways helped to raise the profile of a small school that was able to launch an ambitious development plan on the back of steadily rising pupil numbers. After a few years it was time for a bigger challenge.

Some would say that one of Rory's biggest achievements at Abingdon was to reach the age of retirement at all. Joking apart, it should be recorded that his two immediate predecessors had died in post. This meant that Rory enjoyed no real handover and he took over a Bursary that had been stretched to the limit on a skeleton crew. In that context Rory's experience, zeal for efficient systems and briskness in decision-making yielded significant and immediate dividends. Thus started a decade that will be remembered as one of the most dynamic in Abingdon's history.

It is often said that Bursars can be judged by the buildings that are planned and constructed during their watch. During Rory's watch, finances were consolidated after the building of Mercers' Court, Josca's was incorporated into the Abingdon Foundation, causing a huge increase in the work and complexity of the Bursary operation, and the Arts Centre was completed. In addition, the boarding facilities were upgraded, Lacies Court totally redesigned and refurbished, and plans for a new sports centre initiated. Probably the project that best illustrates Rory's ability to make things happen was the Boat House.



Rory and his wife, Cherry, are rowed away from the boathouse following their farewell party on 18 August

He saw the enthusiasm that swelled in the aftermath of the all-conquering, triple-winning 1st VIII of 2002 and effectively harnessed burgeoning 'parent power' to build a magnificent new Boat House, which has since been heralded as an example of what can be achieved when all the constituent parts of a school community pull in the same direction. The project was delivered from conception to completion within twelve months, to budget and on time – a remarkable example of flexible planning.

Those who knew Rory well were aware that he suffered from partial deafness. Whilst I do not seek to make light of this particular affliction, if you are a Bursar, partial deafness is a very useful quality, used by Rory to excellent effect when Common Room requested increases to budgets. In fact, budgeting discipline was one of Rory's strongest suits; the accumulation surplus that he built up during his period of office has provided a wonderful foundation for rapid development over the next few years.

Outside of Abingdon, Rory was also active, becoming Chairman of ISBA, the Independent Schools' Bursars' Association, in 2003 and Secretary to the Worshipful Company of Chartered Secretaries in 2005.

Although Rory was capable of being mean when a Bursar's duties required it, he will be remembered for being exceedingly generous of spirit. He and Cherry often dispensed wonderful hospitality, which I enjoyed to the full on frequent visits to Abingdon during the autumn of 2001. A strong sense of natural justice meant that he fought tirelessly for full recognition of the roles of 'his team', the numerous unsung heroes whose work sometimes goes unnoticed, and developed a strong sense of loyalty, which was warmly applauded in the Inspection of 2005. Rory and Cherry contributed massively to the overall progress of the School over a fast-moving decade. They can enjoy their retirement, which most appropriately for an old sea dog is to be within the smell of the sea in South Devon, in the confident belief that they left Abingdon School a much better place than they found it. Rory was most certainly true to that Nelsonian command, 'England expects'. We wish them both well.

Mark Turner





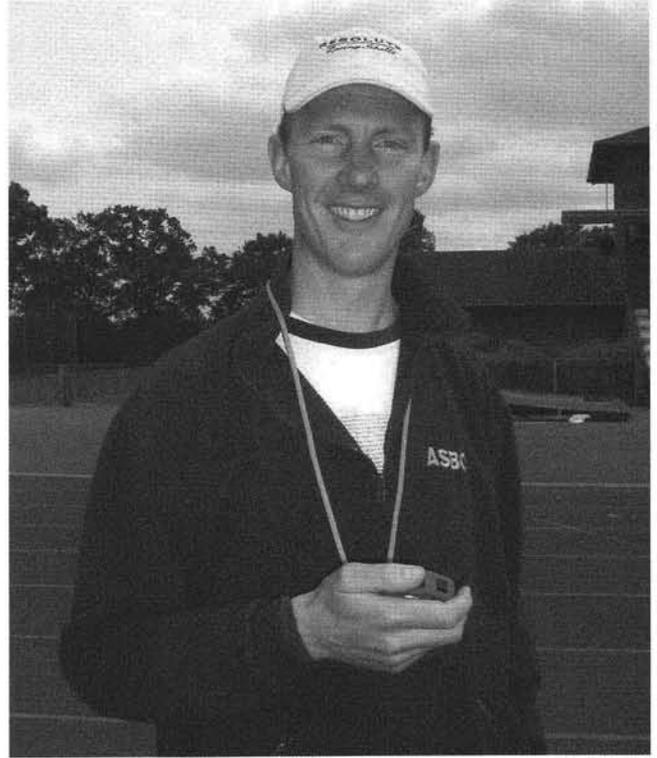
Robert Strawson

Robert taught physics at Abingdon for seventeen years, most spent as the hard-working, meticulous and influential Head of Department. Yet his influence spread much more widely within and beyond the school: into the Academic Committee, sailing, charities, astronomy, the British Physics Olympiad and, in particular, in master-minding audio-visual equipment across the whole Abingdon campus. His utter reliability and willingness to ensure that events ran smoothly were epitomised in his role in organising the stage crew in the Amey Theatre, which was the basis of numerous concerts, lectures, dramatic rehearsals, drama coursework and plays. It is a role that has increased in importance so much that we have now had to appoint a full-time technician to replace him.

Robert's particularly wide range of scientific and educational experience ideally prepared him for these roles. A scientist through and through, he was one of Oxford's first metallurgy graduates, and revelled in an intuitive feel for all things practical, physical, chemical, mathematical and computational. His wide intellectual interests, high standards and encyclopaedic knowledge benefited generations of high quality A level and Oxbridge physicists. He is also widely travelled – after Makerere University, Uganda, Robert taught at Malvern, Cranleigh, and Peterhouse in Zimbabwe – he claims to be one of the few people to have shaken hands with both Idi Amin and Robert Mugabe! With this background, Robert, displaying sound common sense, coped with ease with negotiations with Heads of Department over audio-visual equipment, proving a shrewd judge of character and driving a hard financial bargain. Under Robert, the Physics Department was also a particularly happy one, displaying the positive benefits of teamwork.

We wish Robert a long and happy retirement, knowing that it could not possibly become an idle one, and feel sure that he has made such an emotional investment in the school that he will be back from time to time.

Tim King



Thomas Garnier

Thomas' first career was as a Naval Officer but perhaps they no longer make ships tall enough and so in 1994 he was lured away from a prospective posting to HMS Britannia to train as a teacher at the Oxford department of Education. After a teaching practice in Wantage he joined the Staff at Abingdon to teach physics. This he did with characteristic clarity to a wide range of abilities. It soon became apparent that his abilities went much further than that. Initially this was as a rugby coach but his real love was rowing. Three years ago he coached two J14 sculling VIII's (octuples) to meet in the final of Reading town regatta laying the foundation for this year's very successful senior VIII's. When the number of Dayboy Houses was expanded, Thomas was appointed to start one of the new ones and his keen interest in the welfare and interests of the boys as well as his attention to detail turned the house room into an effective social area and welded the house together in many ways including House pantomimes. Three years ago he and **Alex** took over Crescent House where he tackled the problem of running a Boarding House in three buildings with characteristic energy and effectiveness. It was clear that it could not be long before Thomas was persuaded to apply for headmaster's posts and it was with great regret, but no surprise, that his appointment to Pangbourne was announced. We wish Thomas and Alex all the best in their new challenge.

Robert Strawson

Russell Slatford

When **Russell Slatford** arrived at the School in 1995, after a short period of time working for a geological consultancy firm in London, it became very apparent that he had the talent to be a fine schoolmaster. He could turn his hand to a multitude of tasks, was a natural communicator in the classroom, had a pastoral touch that worked well with all year-groups and, perhaps most importantly of all, was always prepared to give generously of his time to the boys in his charge. He had a short spell as resident House Tutor in School House, under the watchful eye of Frank Burrow, after which the Headmaster recognised Russell's potential and appointed him to be Lower School Housemaster in 1998, a post he held until 2001. It was during this time that he saw the need for closer liaison with local primary schools: pioneering work which today is well established and managed by his successor, Adam Jenkins.

Always with an eye to travel and pastures new, it was no surprise that Russell arranged a twelve-month exchange with Dr Phil O'Brien at Brisbane Boys' College, Australia. Returning to Abingdon in 2002, Russell effortlessly took up the reins as Head of Department for the next three years. During this time the departmental results improved year on year at both GCSE and in the Sixth Form. He also found time to write an article for *The Geography Review*, following a field trip the Department had made to India a few years earlier. But a real hallmark of his tenure as Head of Department was the time and effort he spent with so many boys to ensure that their coursework was completed to the best of their ability, often coming into School during the evenings to help the boarders. To many of us within the Department this really did seem to be above the call of duty. This natural generosity extended into his Sixth Form pastoral duties as well; he dedicated huge amounts of time to help those boys who needed extra time and understanding.

Another important side to Russell was his interest in charity work. Many will remember the 'sleep out' he arranged with his tutor group to heighten awareness of and to raise money for the homeless in Oxford. His interest in charity also extends overseas – he is an active trustee for a charity that retrains landmine victims and disabled people in Cambodia. During holidays he managed to juggle the demands of the Boat Club with visits to Cambodia to see the work of the charity at first hand.

Russell leaves us to take up well deserved promotion on the Senior Management Team at Reading Blue Coat School. Luckily for us, his wife, Estelle, remains at Abingdon and we will not lose touch with Russell, I am sure. We wish him every success in his new and challenging post.

Ian Fishpool.

Ben Figgis

It is seldom possible to say farewell with justice to members of staff who depart in the middle of the academic year. I am delighted therefore that this article gives me the opportunity to elaborate rather more fully on the debt of gratitude we owe Ben and Jo Figgis.

When Ben arrived in 1996 there was a certain inevitability that he would enjoy a meteoric career at Abingdon and move on before he had time to acquire too many grey hairs. An extremely social and successful time at Cambridge, during which he also studied some History, was followed by a spell at the BBC where he most probably would have carved out a successful career for himself were it not for the nagging call of teaching as a vocation.

On taking up his appointment at Abingdon, Ben was described as an 'all-rounder', and that quickly proved to be the case. As a

Mike Martin writes:

Russell arrived to join us in 1995, straight from coxing Cambridge to victory in the University Boat Race. Russell should have had two Boat Race wins under his belt by that time but he had been cruelly replaced as the cox the previous year just a few weeks prior to the big event – he was, apparently, too driven and aggressive for the event.

Many of the boys who have been coached by him will recognise these traits and would be able to tell a few stories themselves about 'Big Russ'. He stuck with the J16 squad for many years, converting adolescent lumps into lean mean fighting machines – much in his own image – at least in his mind's eye. He hustled, hustled and harried. He pushed, prodded and cajoled. He also encouraged and inspired. He got his crews to win many medals – Schools' Head Race two years in a row, J16 coxless IVs at the National Schools' Regatta, regattas at Wallingford, Reading, Worcester, Ghent, Nottingham, Bedford – wherever we turned up, in fact. Abingdon's J16s provided the backbone of the GB team selected to compete against France (not a chance of divided loyalties there) and had boys selected seven years in a row – actually eight boys in 2004.

For ten years he has put up with both the hassle and the enjoyment. You may think it is time for a rest but already at Reading he has his eyes set on a top five finish at the Schools' Head and a medal at National Schools' Regatta. I would not bet against him achieving it. The Boat Club salutes him and we all wish him well.



teacher of History he was able to communicate his own enthusiasm most effectively. As a rugby coach and referee he contributed in a way that illustrated exactly why he had been elected as captain of his college 1st XV. Other skills that were occasionally glimpsed by Abingdonians were a talent for acting – surprisingly Ben was normally cast as a mug or a fool – when a member of Cambridge Footlights, he was also a Grade 8 trumpet player and a fluent German speaker.

After only five years at Abingdon Ben was appointed as Housemaster of School House. As a former boarder himself, Ben knew how to cultivate a boarding community: when to console, encourage, remonstrate or growl. It is probably fair to say that initially he found Abingdonians to be a little prosaic, but living cheek by jowl with more than fifty of the best of them he quickly came to recognise their diversity and their many qualities, and to

enjoy the richness of life as a Housemaster. In his turn Ben came to be appointed as Senior Boarding Housemaster and Child Protection Officer. He successfully steered the School through to an excellent Social Services Inspection report in 2003 that paid warm tribute to the strong sense of community that has been built up in the boarding houses. It was perhaps no surprise that such public acclamation would attract the attention of the scouts in the boarding housemaster market. We wish Ben, Jo and their family every success as Ben takes up fresh responsibilities as Deputy Head at Oakham School, and they know they can take with them the thanks and appreciation of the Abingdon boarding community they worked so hard to build up.

Mark Turner



Edward Towne

The epitome of a gentle giant, **Edward** quickly won the admiration and affection of the classes he took over from Ben Figgis, who left Abingdon in December 2004. Struggling pupils in particular welcomed his calm, reassuring presence, and all benefited from his three decades of teaching experience, one of them in harness with the present writer at Bristol Grammar School. His willingness to shoulder burdens and his sheer versatility came as no surprise to witnesses of his work at BGS: his cameo performances as Henry VIII and Elizabeth I in street pageants spring readily to mind, together with his role as Miss Czechoslovakia in 1975's staff play. Raconteur, wit, ornithologist, serial *Mastermind* contestant, he became part of the fabric of Abingdon School, no mean feat in view of his temporary status, filling the two-term gap separating Ben Figgis from Will Phelan: debating, Schools Challenge, the Roysse Society, non-team games, the boarding section, all profited from his contributions. Now teaching part-time in Kent, he left in July with our thanks and very best wishes for the next stage of a retirement (2000) that never was.

Richard Hofton



Kris Spencer

Kris joined Abingdon in September 1997 as Head of Geography. He came here from St Paul's Girls' School, having also previously taught at Westminster and St Edward's School, Oxford. If that all sounds a little too geographically unadventurous, then time spent at the universities of Hull and Cincinnati (not to mention at Jesus College, Oxford) gives



us the dash of exoticism unsurprising to those who know Kris. He made an immediate mark here with his friendliness and charm, his enthusiasm for his own subject but also for much beyond, and his willingness to get involved effectively and energetically in a huge variety of activities at Abingdon. But, most importantly, throughout his time here he showed genuine interest in and huge respect for every group of people he worked with – colleagues, pupils and parents.

During his five years as Head of Geography that department flourished in an atmosphere of obviously friendly co-operation – and not simply as a result of a rapid introduction of textbooks Kris himself had written. The increasing popularity of the subject in the sixth form led to much Oxbridge success at the top end, but purposefulness, academic rigour and great enthusiasm throughout all year-groups were the hallmarks of Spencer's Geography Department. Ironically, given the present clear-out of geographers, so was stability...

In September 2002 Kris moved across to take over from **Thomas Garnier** what immediately became Spencer's House. The House members soon learned that they had a Housemaster who was very much on their side. It also became apparent to them that behind the witty, relaxed but ever-stylish exterior, they were dealing with a man of integrity and humanity, one who would expect high standards of them. Fellow Housemasters recognised a colleague with great ambition for his House, and as well as coming to expect regular telling contributions to Housemasters' meetings, tickets to Spencer's House pantos became very sought after, and House Singing Competitions would not have been what they were without the latest innovation from the boys in the royal blue ties. All his boys will remember him with great fondness.

If we value so highly the other half involvement of Abingdonians, then the School relies on teachers such as Kris, who are prepared to lead by example, by seeking variety, novelty and commitment. There is much to be admired and appreciated – his majestic performances in the road relay, the smooth running of sports day, his contribution to the film unit and support of trips – most recently and uppermost in my mind, a joint study trip to a very wintry Berlin – and a whole lot more. As the Headmaster said in his speech about Kris at Prize-Giving, "I have had to be selective."

Kris's reference from the then High Mistress of St Paul's referred to him as "a cultivated and interesting (colleague)". Those who have enjoyed his company in the Common Room, particularly those who have enjoyed the tremendous hospitality at Spencer Mansions, will recognise those qualities and remember his eclectic tastes and the unpredictable, wide-ranging nature of his conversation.

Kris leaves Abingdon for promotion to take up the position of Deputy Head of the Middle School at Latymer Upper School. It is with great confidence that we wish him success in his future career, and with great gratitude that we salute him for all he has done during his time at Abingdon.

Douglas Aitken

Sean Spratling

Sean was recruited to the Geography Department fresh from a PGCE course. At six foot seven, and increasingly broad with it, he is physically impressive. In the Department we were further impressed by just how quickly he settled into what was a pretty gruelling routine for a NQT. We realised within weeks that he was the man to turn to if we had a question about the content of syllabus. Just as importantly, he proved to have some excellent ideas as to how we could move on as a department. He continued to develop to become in many ways the pivotal member of the Department. A teacher of tremendous rigour, the boys he taught have always felt secure that Mr Spratling would get them through their exam years with every chance of a top grade. Indeed, his classes achieved some of the best results in the whole School, year in year out. More than this, his classes enjoyed geography. The take-up for GCSE and A-level from his classes was always very high. A measure also of his popularity was the genuine disappointment felt by the boys when they heard that he was leaving: an incredulous "Spratters, no way!" being a typical response.



Sean also made important contributions on the games field. Such was his presence (and no offence to Andrew Hall here) that a boy in one of my Third Year classes asked what the School would do without the Head of PE on hearing that he was going. I can certainly bear testament to his skill as a rugby coach. I shared a pitch with him for a couple of years. Sean's Junior Colts A teams were marked by their fitness and their willingness to train to get to fitter. As a coach, his approach was to make the better players not just fit and motivated but also armed with the core skills which would allow them to harness and develop their natural abilities as players. Abingdon rugby will continue to benefit from his input for years to come.

He will also be remembered as a cricket coach and as master in charge of cricket. Anybody involved in the game will realise the tremendous time and effort involved in running a cricket club in a school the size of Abingdon. Pitch allocation, reluctant umpires, transport and teas to a number of different locations, not to mention making decisions about whether games should be called off because of rain, all call for a cool head, excellent planning, sure-footed man-management and considerable flair. Sean has all these attributes in spades. He leaves the Cricket Club with an impressive fixture list, an improving base of facilities and some very well motivated boys and coaches.

Sean is a lively, engaging, intelligent and good-humoured young man with all the attributes of an outstanding schoolmaster. He moves on to Manchester Grammar School to polish these skills even more. Needless to say, Abingdon will miss him.

Kris Spencer

Audrey Méchard and Cecile Pottier

Audrey Méchard and Cécile Pottier joined the Modern Languages Department in September 2005, the latest in a long line of students from the University of Caen to work as assistantes at Abingdon. As well as helping boys in all year-groups to improve their spoken French, they have made significant contributions to the work of the Department in a variety of ways. Both have proved adept at producing attractive wall displays and keeping Sixth Form boys well informed of current affairs in France. As exam time approached, they have been generous with their time, patiently responding to pleas for help from anxious Sixth-formers. They have helped in Boarding Houses on a voluntary basis and have generally involved themselves wherever possible in the life of the Common Room. Particular mention has to be made of the delicious cakes made by Cécile for those attending the Film Society! The Department is very grateful to them for their help and we wish them every success as they move on, in Cécile's case to a PGCE, and in Audrey's case to the preparation for a competitive exam in France.

Estelle Slatford



L to R Cecile Pottier, Audrey Méchard, Bettina Fenniger

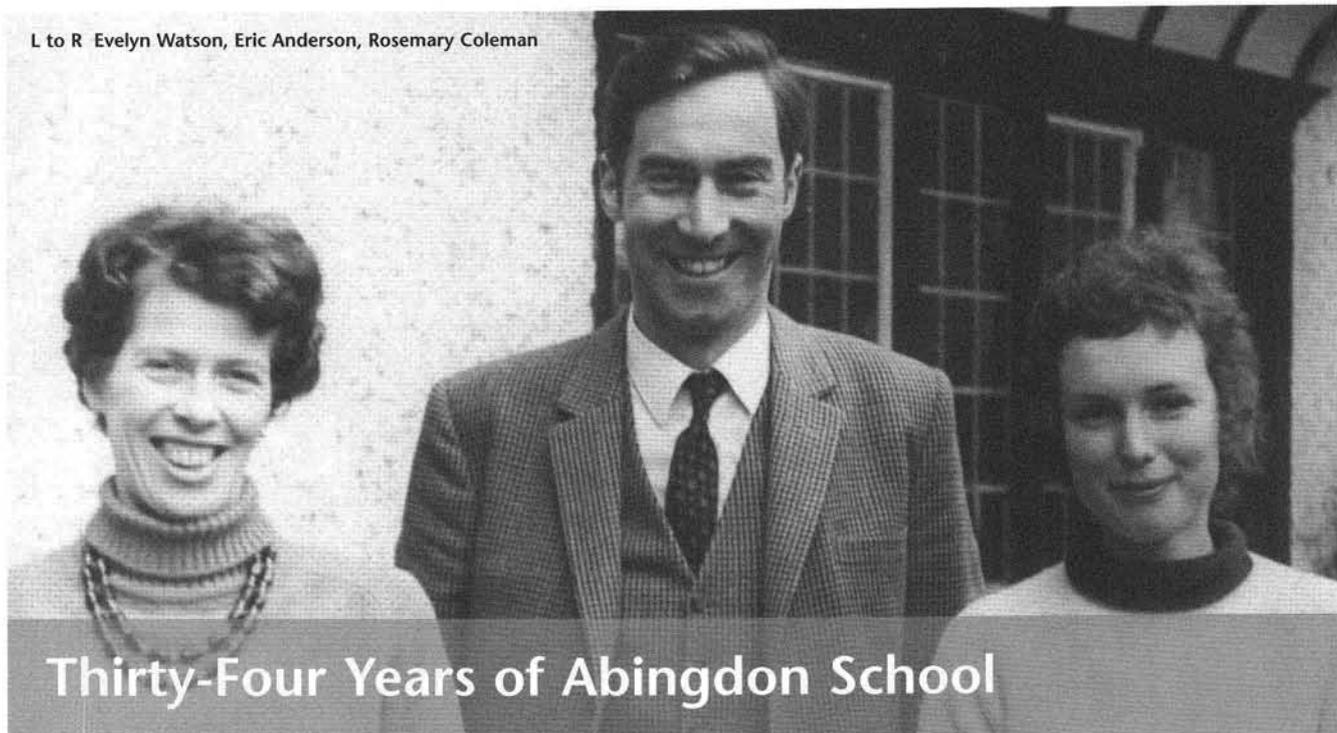
Bettina Fenniger

Once again we are extremely fortunate in our choice of German assistant; Bettina quickly settled in to the school routine after arriving from deepest Bavaria, and it was soon apparent that she was a capable individual who was going to make a valuable contribution to the Modern Languages Department. She was determined to be as professional as possible, and was intent on taking the job very seriously, being dependable, enthusiastic and always sensitive to the individual needs of the pupils and their different personalities. She rapidly established a good rapport with those she taught. She was sympathetic in her approach, yet was not afraid to be firm, honest and critical if necessary when giving advice. The boys responded positively, particularly those in the Sixth Form, to whom she offered effective guidance and unstinting support in their preparation for the oral components; much of the credit for their success must go to Bettina. As a colleague, her willingness to offer help with research, her extensive work on the IT front and her readiness to provide teaching material were greatly appreciated, as were her good humour and pleasant manner.

Bettina has set her sights on the teaching profession, a most appropriate choice given the qualities mentioned above and her genuine love of foreign language and cultures. The Modern Languages Department and Common Room enjoyed her company very much, and we wish her well for the future.

Nick Revill

L to R Evelyn Watson, Eric Anderson, Rosemary Coleman



Thirty-Four Years of Abingdon School

In the winter of 1970 I spotted an advertisement in the *North Berks Herald* for a part-time assistant secretary in the Headmaster's Office – three half-days a week. I decided to apply. Thirty-four years later I left Abingdon School, having worked for three Headmasters: **Eric Anderson, Michael St John Parker and Mark Turner.**

When I arrived, Rosemary Thompson was the Headmaster's secretary and we worked in the Radcliffe Room in Lacies Court. One of the rooms next door was a classroom, and the other a recreation room for the eight boarders who left their own Boarding Houses to spend a term in the Headmaster's house.

Shortly after my arrival, just as the results of the First Year entry examinations were due to be despatched, a postal strike was called and the task had to be undertaken by telephone. Fortunately, the number of such contacts was reduced by 42 – the places taken up by the LEA on the results of the eleven-plus.

Following her marriage to Richard Coleman, Rosemary left and Ailsa Watson (no relation) took her place. We enlivened our mid-morning break with attempts to provide answers to the crossword while Mrs. Anderson kindly provided the coffee!

Ailsa stayed until soon after Michael St John Parker's appointment as Headmaster in 1975 and I evolved into her job with Doreen Taylor, then the Bursar's secretary, joining me. When she left, the Headmaster decided that her replacement should be designated admissions secretary. Thus, in 1980, Kay Porter came to the School where she stayed for nineteen years. An additional post of part-time Registrar was created in 1990 and Roger Medill, retired Headmaster of Rendcomb, also came to work in Lacies Court.

Our office equipment also evolved over the years – from manual typewriters to daisy wheels then electric typewriters, before finally becoming 'computerised' in 1997. In the early days, duplicating anything was a very messy business: squeezing a tube of treacly ink into the machine, putting a wax stencil onto the roller without wrinkling it and then turning the handle for however many copies were required. The tricky bit was removing the stencil, when the backing sheet had to be replaced without creases, so that further copies could be made if necessary. We had great hopes of the

new copier that we acquired – a 'rabbit' photocopier – but when we checked a document that had been copied a few months earlier the print had almost passed into oblivion!

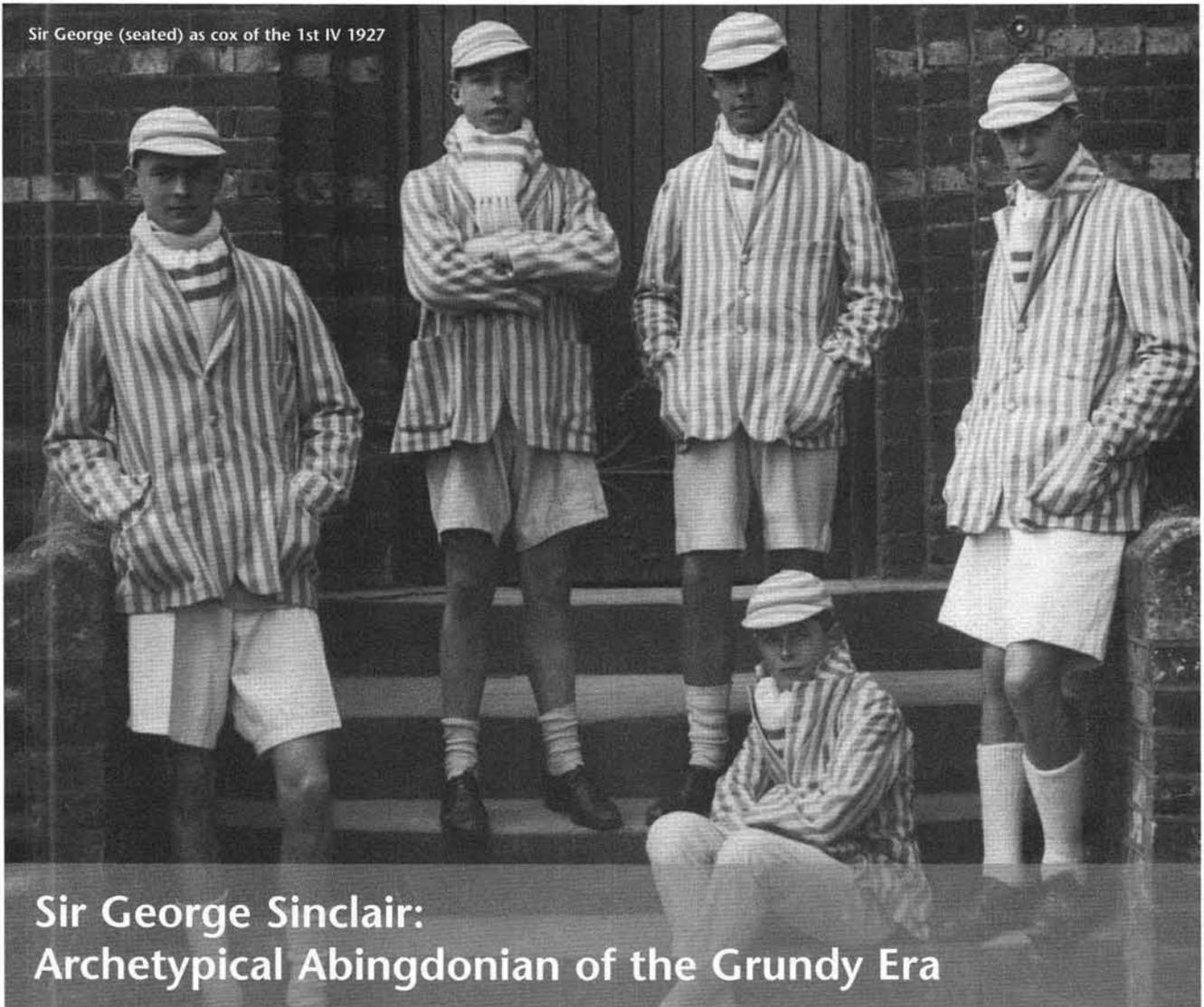
By 1977 I was installed in the room overlooking the garden, the old recreation room becoming another office and the Radcliffe Room being used for meetings. We stayed like this until 1995 when the administrative area of Mercers' Court came into use, housing the Headmaster, a secretary (Elsa Jones from 1997), a full-time Registrar, admissions secretary and receptionist. However, the Headmaster retained an office in Lacies Court, so the assistant secretary, Ann Davies, and I stayed there too. The Headmaster became peripatetic, dealing with the morning mail in Lacies Court, then going to Mercers' Court for meetings, and returning to Lacies Court after lunch.

All this changed on New Year's Day 2002 when an army of porters, maintenance and grounds staff moved the contents of two offices to Mercers' Court in one day in readiness for the arrival of the new Headmaster, Mark Turner, and the beginning of the new term.

Memories recalled at random are the flood in Lacies Court when we all had to up brooms and sweep water down the grille in the hall floor; the hot summer days when I used to take dictation from MStJP in the garden – both of us wearing straw hats and being distracted by birds, bees and squirrels; being shown a magnificent collection of plate under conditions of the greatest security at a lunch in Mercers' Hall for the secretaries of Headmasters of Mercers' Cluster Group schools; the support and friendship of all the secretaries, members of Common Room, Bursary staff, laboratory technicians, porters, maintenance, catering and housekeeping staff – not forgetting the wonderful Olive Cameron who kept our offices in Lacies Court clean and tidy for so many years – all of whom helped to make working at Abingdon so enjoyable, rewarding and, frequently, such fun! As did all the three Headmasters who employed me!

Evelyn Watson

Obituary



Abingdon was a small school in the years between the two World Wars – its roll usually listed fewer than 150 boys, and the facilities would strike today's eyes as rudimentary. But this modest establishment produced a remarkable number of talented personalities; a tragically high proportion of these 'Grundy boys' lost their lives between 1939 and 1945, but among those who survived to win distinction in later years was perhaps the brightest star of all, **George Sinclair**.

Sinclair has been described as "one of those Scots who manned the ramparts of the empire", but, proud though he was of his origins, it is doubtful whether he would have acknowledged so grandiloquent a label. His father was a manager with *Cable and*

Wireless, whose work took him to Ceylon and India; George's older brother, J.F., who also attended Abingdon and served as a Governor of the School in later life, became general manager of *Burma Shell*; George's own career fitted the family pattern of enterprising, practical service and leadership.

George Sinclair was born on 6 November 1912. He joined Abingdon in the summer of 1923, and within months he was coxing the 1st IV (the School had no Vllls at that time), and had begun to collect the academic prizes which came his way in profusion, particularly in Greek and Latin, over the years that followed. By the time he left in the summer of 1931, he was Head of School and of School House, Captain of Boats, Cricket and

Rugby (having been a pioneer in the reintroduction of the game to Abingdon), with Colours in all three sports and also in Athletics, a first class shot, and Editor of *The Abingdonian*. He had carried off the School's academic blue riband, the Pembroke Scholarship, at an early age but was persuaded to stay at Abingdon until he was 18. The happiness of his school days left an indelible print on his personality, and he was keenly interested, to the end, in the doings of successive younger generations of Abingdonians. There was something more than nostalgia in this; Grundy's regime had fired him with ideals which burned strongly throughout his life, and he was passionately keen to see them passed on to others.

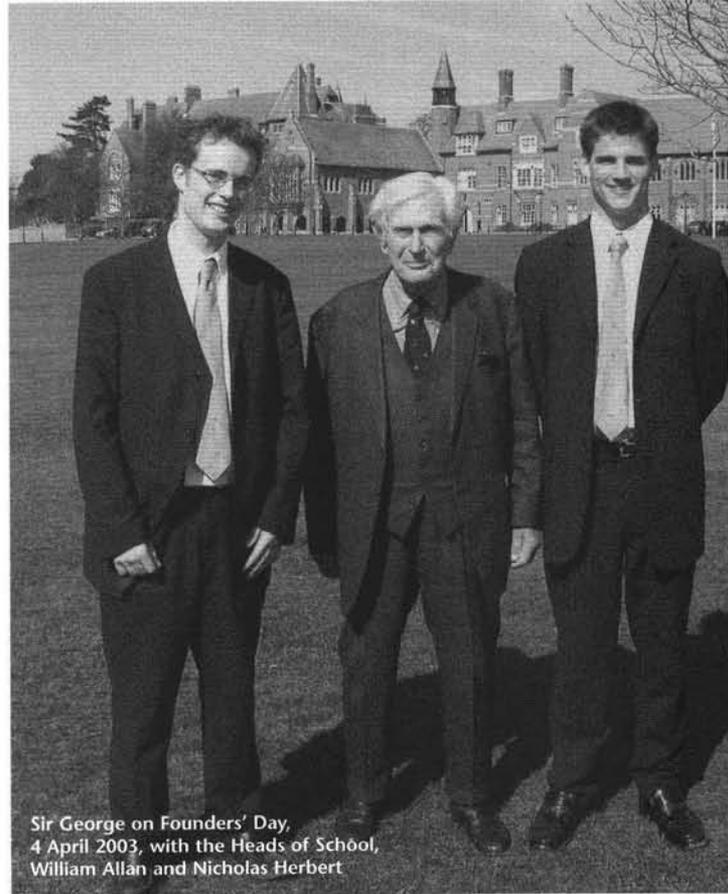
Pembroke, where he was similarly successful, provided another focus of lasting loyalty, which was reinforced by his election in due course to an Honorary Fellowship. He was always willing to see Abingdon and Pembroke as two parts of one common foundation, and worked persistently to foster relations between School and College.

From Oxford Sinclair joined the Colonial Service, and was posted to Ashanti in West Africa, where he laid the foundations of a proficiency in the native languages which he later delighted to exercise at moments when it would surprise his hearers. He saw active service with the Royal West Africa Frontier Force in the Second World War, before being drafted on to the secretariat of an influential commission which patterned much of the approach to education in British West Africa after the war. Humanitarian and welfare issues, and education in particular, can be seen as the enduring preoccupations of his career thereafter.

A further spell of successful service in West Africa between 1945 and 1955, during which he had the duty of arresting the future President of Ghana, Kwame Nkrumah, marked Sinclair for promotion to a post of critical responsibility. Appointed as Deputy to the Governor of Cyprus, he found the island racked by violence at the hands of competing Greek and Turkish nationalist factions; his superior was frequently called to London, and Sinclair often bore the full burden of maintaining order and justice – with a price publicly set on his own head by the terrorists. Being thus compelled to assume a directing role, he identified warmly with the British army and its needs, looked with more kindness on the flexible Turks than on the uncompromising Greeks, and arrested the future President Makarios. He was knighted in 1960.

Sinclair retired from the Colonial Service in 1961, and engaged in politics, first at local level in Wimbledon and then as Conservative MP for Dorking from 1964. To the surprise of those of his constituents who had failed to notice his earlier record as a philanthropically minded administrator in Africa, he gravitated to the liberal wing of his party, and was an active campaigner on human rights and environmental issues, and on matters such as family planning and abortion. He deplored Enoch Powell's 'rivers of blood' speech, and supported sanctions against Ian Smith's regime. At the same time he advocated a stiff military stance against the communist threat. In short, he was a maverick Tory. His constituents at one point considered deselection of him, and he had to be rescued by an intervention from the greatly respected Bill (later Lord) Deedes. Though a follower of Edward Heath, he was not given office in the Heath Government of 1970, and subsequently enjoyed the fresh lease of life which Margaret Thatcher's leadership brought to his party. He retired from Westminster, but by no means from politics, in 1978.

Abingdon supplied a major preoccupation for George Sinclair during his later years. He joined the Governing Body in 1969 and served as Chairman from 1972 to 1980. During that time he supported the School's rapid growth and development, and promoted its interests at national level, both as an MP and through his activity in the Governing Bodies Association, of which he was Chairman for several years. As an advocate both of educational opportunity and of minimal state controls, he took a leading part in the promotion of what became the Assisted Places Scheme, in



collaboration with James Cobban and the then High Master of Manchester Grammar School, Peter Mason.

Sinclair trod with delicate care in his role as Chairman of Governors. In his dealings with two successive Headmasters, he was always notably accessible and sympathetic, but never a mere cipher. He was active in helping to cultivate relations between the adult parts of the school community – OAs, TASS (in each case as President) and Common Room – showing a politician's wiliness at times, as well as a real breadth of understanding. He was tireless in conciliating opinion and seeking benefits for the School, and felt no embarrassment about the exercise of influence and, on occasion, patronage, on behalf of an institution which he saw as operating for the public good.

George Sinclair was a warmly courteous man, deeply attached to his family, and readily interested in people. His paternalistic style was well matched by his scrupulous attention to the niceties of communication and the detail of administrative efficiency. His manner had nothing of the dourness sometimes attributed to Scots; a mischievous sense of fun lurked very close to the surface, sometimes in sudden alternation with bursts of disconcerting hauteur. His appearance conveyed an air of handsome distinction, which endured into extreme old age.

He married Katherine Jane Burdekin in 1941 and they had a son and three daughters. After the death of his first wife in 1972 he married Mary Violet, widow of George Sawday. He died on 21 September 2005, aged 92, and is survived by his second wife and four children.

Michael St John Parker

The School

Academic Matters

U to R Back row Dan Boardman, Christopher Kennedy, Benjamin Sapsford, Patrick Stern, Thomas Woods
Front row Matthew Duhan, Andrew Brown and Charles Moger with their A level results



*“Now what I want is facts ...
facts alone are wanted in life.”*

Mr Gradgrind’s words are as apposite to the discussion that today rages about the content of education as they were when Dickens wrote them a hundred and fifty-one years ago.

Scarcely a day goes by without there being some discussion about the primary, secondary or tertiary sectors of education. The BBC news website has a permanent education section on its main news pages, giving ready access to the latest proposal, research finding or controversy. Issues of funding, fees, staffing, quality of teaching, changes of curriculum content and certification have all frequently arisen.

Facts are indeed important, but so are many other aspects of school life. It was very encouraging that the Independent Schools Inspectorate team commented that the Abingdon School “develops well-rounded, assured and articulate young people”. The team commented that “in the classroom, pupils are able to reason, solve problems and apply knowledge effectively” which is, of course, much more important than just the absorbing of facts.

Academic results at Abingdon have continued to rise over the last four years. At A level a frequent measure is the proportion of grades awarded at A or B, and at Abingdon this has risen from 68% in 2001 to 81% in 2005. At GCSE the proportion of A* and A grades has stayed at just under 70%, though A* grades increased to 31% in 2005.

Mike Tomlinson’s review of 14 to 19 education was published in October 2004 and recommended the implementation of diplomas at different levels, the reformulating of A levels to reduce the amount of assessment and the provision of greater differentiation within A levels. Though widely applauded by many, his report was swiftly followed, just before the General Election, by a government White Paper proposing the retention of GCSE and A levels, within a framework which recognises the importance of other qualifications, too. More has yet to be decided on this, and Abingdon will consider carefully any future suggestions. Though public examinations provide a considerable constraint they do not, to my mind, prevent teachers from creating vibrant lessons,

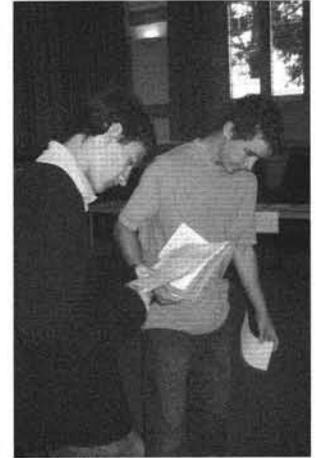
which challenge pupils and, if appropriate, stretch beyond the bounds of the specified syllabus.

Hugely encouraging has been the recognition by politicians, education experts and the press that learning and development takes place beyond the classroom too, and that extra-curricular activities should be central to the experience of pupils. This is fundamental to the philosophy of Abingdon and, in the past few years, steps have been taken to ensure that all boys take part in the wealth of activities outside the classroom not just, for example, by making all Third Years engage in a Tuesday afternoon activity, but by careful follow-up when boys are absent from commitments they have made.

Within the academic curriculum the recent innovation of optional Spanish in the Third Year has proved very popular, with some forty boys pursuing the subject to GCSE. Abingdon boys continue to choose a broad range of subjects at both GCSE and A level, which helps ensure they develop a range of skills, and avoid early specialisation.

The academic development of Abingdon’s pupils is only possible with the co-operation and enthusiasm of teacher, pupil and parent and I would like to pay tribute to those who work hard to ensure progress is made.

David Dawswell



James White and Stuart Robertson with their GCSE results

Arkwright Scholarship

Marcus Nurton was presented with an Arkwright Scholarship certificate and a cheque at the Institute of Electrical Engineering in London on 29 October 2004. Arkwright Scholarships are designed to encourage appropriately talented students to pursue a career in engineering and technology. Marcus’s name was put forward for the award by Mr Mansfield.

Sarah Wearne



Prize Winners: Lent Term

Prize Winners – Lent Term

Ancient History	William Guast
Art	Tom Reid
Biology	Benjamin Harris
	Koel Ko
Chemistry	Koel Ko
Classics	William Guast
	Richard Kaudewitz
Economics	Siddharth Kapoor
	Peter Rowe
Business Studies	Elliot Jones
English	Hugh Taylor
Geography	Benjamin Harris
	James Innes
History	Brian Cullen
Mathematics	Ralph Morgan
French	James Cundell
Russian	Alexander Mckend
German	William Guast
Music	Jonathan Coleman
Physics	Oliver Zeldin
Religious Studies	Thomas Swarbrick

5th Year Prizes – Mock GCSE Results

School House	Timothy Chu
Crescent House	Christopher Halford
Older's	Christopher Checkley
Elliott's	Stuart Robertson
Fishpool's	Jason Davison
Hamilton's	Arjun Kingdon
Phelp's	Anthony Chan
Spencer's	Philip Hatzis
Townsend's	David Rawcliffe

Prize-Giving: Summer 2005

Lower School Academic Prizes

1A	Joshua Bradlow
1D	Christopher Moore
1M	David Mears

Middle School Academic Prizes

Elliott's:	Tomer Faraggi	Samuel Fletcher
Fishpool's:	Gregory Craven	John Colby
Hamilton's:	Fergus McIntosh	Timothy Middleton
Older's:	Felix Wood	Michael Coldwell
Phelps':	Kris Cao	Joseph Delo
Spencer's:	Ian Houlsby	Christopher Newman
Townsend's:	Timothy Deeks	Maximilian Gander
School:	Barry Tse	Michael Chan
Crescent:	Christopher Davis	Mephis Ko

Music Prizes

Giles Lewis Memorial Cup for Woodwind	Henry Carter
	William Statham
Music Society's Prize for Strings	Adrian Lo
Music Society's Prize for Brass	Benjamin Sapsford
Music Society's Prize for Organ	Tristan Mitchard
Sawbridge Choral Prize	Freddie Howe
	Nicholas Ereaut
Sheldon Peach Prize for Pianoforte	Timothy Chu
Paul Comber Cup for Creativity	Henry Scarlett
	Matthew Smith
Ward Trophy for Achievement	Jonathan Coleman
Aitchison Cup for Musical Versatility	David Emerson

Drama Prizes

Drama Cup	Benjamin Phillips
North Drama Prize	Timothy Dawson
David Taylor Drama Prizes	
Upper School	Thomas Swarbrick
	Nicholas Turnbull
Middle School	Max Hutchinson
	Christopher Halford
Larkhill Trophy	Thomas Stanley

Reading Prizes

Layng Reading Prize	
Upper School	Edward Rowett
	Hugh Taylor
Middle School	Oliver Fóster
Lower School	Nicholas Acutt

Subject Prizes

Ancient History	William Guast
Art	Edward Cottrell Christopher Kennedy
Biology	Koel Ko
Business Studies	Matthew Haste Peter Minch
Chemistry	Koel Ko
Design Technology	Ross Thompson
Economics	Peter Rowe
English	Edward Rowett
French	Tristram Bainbridge
Geography	Edward Given
German	Richard Soames
Government & Politics	Harry Cook
Greek	Samuel Withnall
History	Brian Cullen
History of Art	George Cowie
Latin	Richard Kaudewitz
Mathematics	Koel Ko
Music	David Emerson
Physics	Koel Ko
Religious Studies	Simon Moulds
Russian	Alexander McKend
Theatre Studies	Edward Rowett

Sports Prizes

Slingsby Cup for Outstanding Sporting Achievement	Patrick Stern
Wintle Cup for Contribution to School Sport	Nicholas Turnbull
Rugby 1st XV Trophy	Matthew Duhan
Richard Anderson Trophy	Christian Davies
Chris North Badminton Cup	Timothy Rippon
Shooting Cup	Alexander Hyde

Travel Awards

TASS Travel Bursaries	Patrick Stern Edward Hofman Peter Jones Richard Mallett Richard Soames Nikhil Wilmink Oliver Zeldin Nicholas Turnbull
Tappins Coaches Travel Awards	Christopher Dixon Hugh Taylor
Griffin Travel Scholarship	James Cook

Academic Prizes

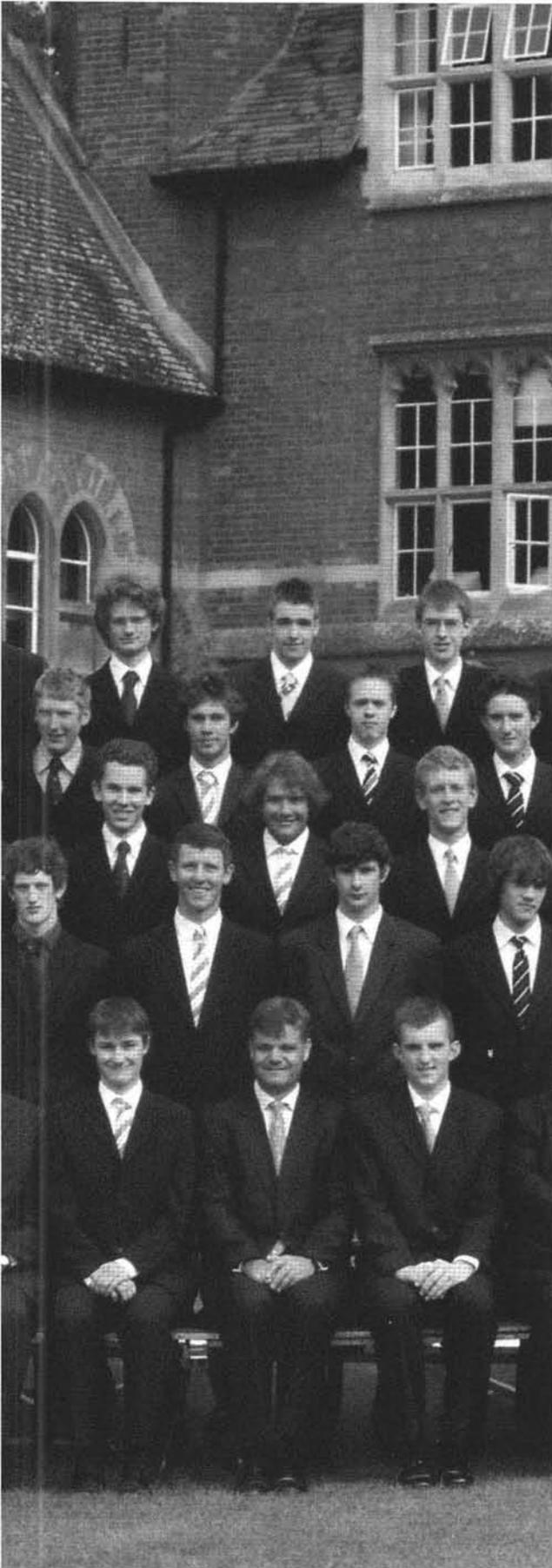
Mercers' School Memorial Prize (Merrett Bequest)	Matthew Duhan William Guast Koel Ko
St Catherine's College Prize for Intellectual Initiative	Samuel Withnall
Wheeler Cup for Outstanding Academic Effort	Andrew Cruickshank
Science Times Cup	Robbie Hand
Griffin Cup for Craftsmanship	Marcus Nurton
Dr James Molloy Prize	Craig Fraser
Judge Medd Prize	Peter Rowe
Hadland Cup for electronics	Yuan Gao
Williams Art Prize	Nathan Hughes
Local History Prize	John Coleby Joseph Delo James Lloyd

Service Prizes

David Barrett Cup	Peter Rowe
Freeman Prize for Service	William Guast Jonas Muir Wood
Mayor's Prize for Service	Edward Given Adam Cornish
Royse Citizenship Award	Thomas Astley
John Royse Lodge Memorial Prize	Oliver Margetts
Amey Theatre Service Prize	Philip Norris
Duxbury Ties	Andrew Brown

Special Prizes

HM Prize	Edward Given Anthony Mak
Mitchell Seward Cup for Debating	Brian Cullen Oliver Zeldin Peter Rowe
Older Cup and Prize for Initiative	Tristram Bainbridge
Hester Tankard	Benjamin Phillips
The Clifford and Jane Ellis Prize for Character	Benjamin Phillips
Richard Turner Memorial Prize	Thomas Keogh
Cobban Prize	Matthew Halford
Leadership Prize	Peter Rowe
TASS Quatercentenary Prize	Matthew Duhan



University Places – 2005/2006

Aberdeen

Francis C D History 05

Bath

Cornish A Modern Language & Euro St (French & German) 05

Florey S M T Biology 06

Poultney H G Biology 05

Rabovolenko I Internet Mgt & Modern Languages – German 05

Woolford A P Biology 05

Bristol

Cundell J L Medicine 05

Fyne J Aeronautical Engineering 06

McKend A German and Russian 05

Mills J F Electrical and Electronic Engineering 06

Pinner M C Economics and Management 05

Bristol University West of England

Simpson L C W Real Estate (Valuation & Management) 05

Cambridge

Bowie B G H Social and Political Sciences 05

Brown A Engineering 05

Cullen B M History 05

Given E A Geography 05

Kennedy C Architecture 05

Ko K Natural Sciences 05

Lau T Y T Economics 05

Rowe P E C Law 05

Rowett E English 06

Swarbrick T L Religious Studies with Education Studies 05

Cardiff

Dean P English Literature 05

Hughes N J Psychology 05

Minch P B Business Management 05

Wood J M Religious and Theological Studies 05

City

Williamson D H Banking and International Finance 05

Courtauld Institute

Bainbridge T M History of Art 05

Durham

Dixon C Economics and Politics 06

Engler M Business 05

Jepson D R D Classics 05

Lester H R K Zoology 05

Rippon T M Geography 05

White M W General Engineering 06

Wimborne A J Economics 05

East Anglia

Wilink N International Studies 06

Edinburgh

Blackshaw W B Medicinal and Biological Chemistry 05

Cowie G E M History of Art 05

Fox T J Biological Sciences 05

McCormick M Pharmacology 05

Exeter

Coster R Biological Sciences 05

Garrett J P Geography 05

Hall A D W Classics 05

Moger C O Philosophy and Political Economy 05

Imperial, London

Diamond O T Physics 05

Karim Z Chemical Engineering 05

Wang K Chemical Engineering 05

Kent Institute of Art and Design

Jarvis M R Video Media Arts 06

Kings College, London

Alder M J Electronic Engineering Systems 06

Cook H T Philosophy 06

Leeds

Roche D A Classical Civilisation 05

Leicester

West C Ancient History and History 05

Liverpool

Stern P T R Ancient History and Archaeology 06

London South Bank

Evans T Digital Photography 06

Loughborough

Haste M B Information Management & Business Studies 05

London School of Economics

Cheng I K Business Mathematics and Statistics 05

Ng S Y S Accounting and Finance 05

Manchester

Evans J R Aerospace Engineering 05

Gray R Management 06

Turnbull N Archaeology and Anthropology 06

Wilkinson C Computing for Business Applications with Ind Exp 05

Newcastle

Hopkins J A Ancient History and Archaeology 06

Reeves T P History 05

Nottingham Trent

Hoyle J R Real Estate Management 05

Nottingham

Brook D P Architecture 05

Coleman J M Music 05

Glover W R Electronic Engineering 06

Kapoor S Economics 06

Oxford

Coules H Engineering 05

Duhan M H Philosophy, Politics and Economics 06

Gao Y Engineering 05

Gatten T P Human Sciences 05

Guast W E Classics 05

Jones P H Biological Sciences 06

Kaudewitz R Classics 05

Li F J Engineering 05

Reid T M Biological Sciences 05

Rothkopf M T Biological Sciences 06

Withnall S J Classics 05

Zeldin R O B Physics 05

Portsmouth

Blackmore A J Marine Environmental Science 06

Reading

Dingwall J W Land Management 05

Phillips B J L Theatre Arts Education and Deaf Studies 06

Royal Holloway, London

Cork S J History 05

St. Andrew's

Taylor H B History 06

Sheffield

Boardman D G Civil Engineering 06

More C Accounting and Financial Management 05

Sheffield Hallam

Fisher R L S Construction Management 05

Southampton

Clarkson G Biology 05

Foyle J A Physics 06

Lyons P M Physics 05

Mak A Medicine 05

Swansea

Mugnaioni J E International Business Management (Language) 05

University College London

Mallett R W Environmental Geography 06

Scopes M J Geography 05

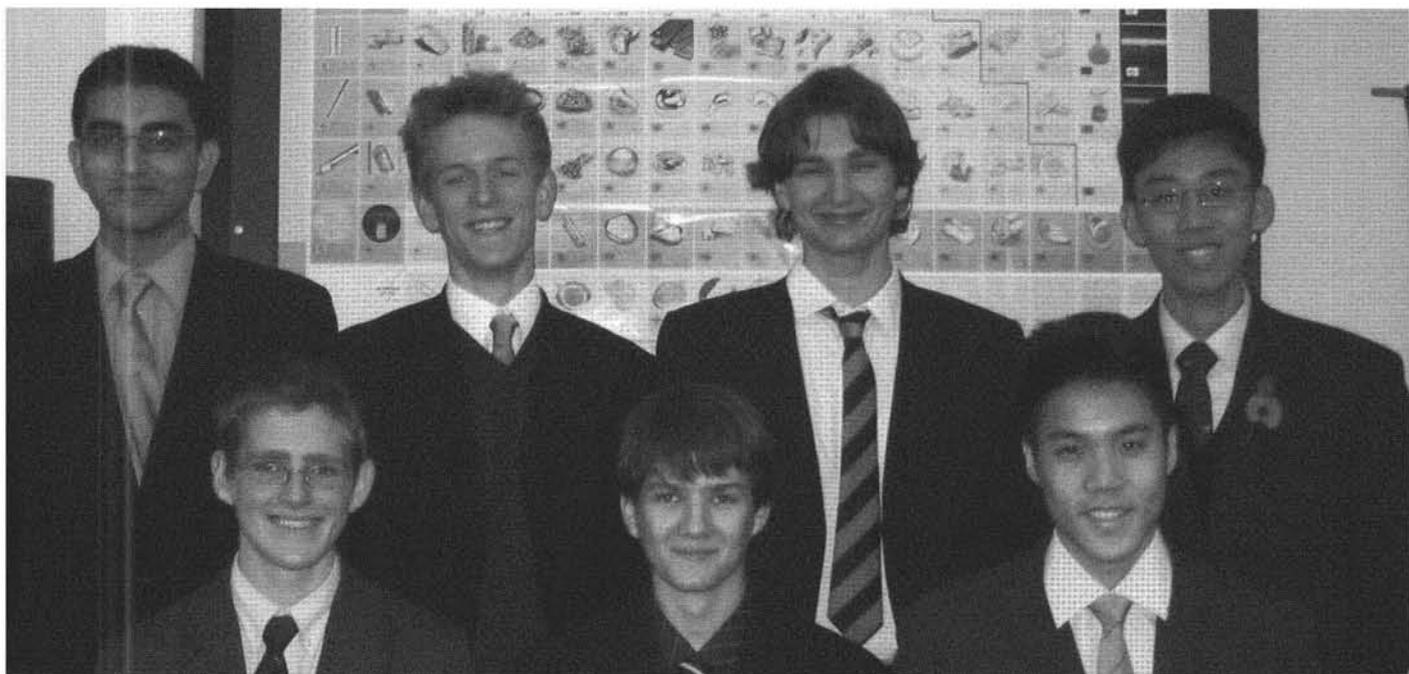
Soames R D German and Italian 06

Warwick

Astley T P Engineering 06

Cottrell E A English Literature 06

Hallett B Computer Science 05



L to R Back row – Zahid Karim, Andrew Brown, Oliver Zeldin, Koel Ko. Front row – Dan Boardman, Tom Astley, Tony Lau

Chemistry Quiz

Four Abingdon pupils, led by **Mr Schofield**, participated in a Chemistry Quiz at Radley College on 11 November to mark *Chemistry Week 2004*. In the competition, Abingdon competed against Oundle, Winchester and Radley. On the way to Radley, after a brief discussion by the team members, **Anthony Chan** was elected as the team captain. But later in the competition, it was **John Morgan** who showed great general and specific knowledge and became the key person in securing our win. **Jason Mann** and **Timothy Middleton** also contributed well to our success.

The competition followed the *University Challenge* format with a starter question followed by bonus questions. Each round lasted 15 minutes. For the first semi-final, Abingdon beat Winchester with a more than comfortable gap – 440:220 points. Our team was quick, focused and impressively knowledgeable. Compared to other schools, we were also exceptionally swift on the buzzers at the starter questions, which turned out to be one of our winning factors. Abingdon then went on to the final against Radley who had defeated Oundle in the semi-final by a close margin – 150:140. Against Radley, we won 420:130 points, more than tripling the score of the opposition. In the competition, all team members showed great spirit and energy. We thank Mr Schofield for giving us this opportunity to compete and for driving us to Radley.

Anthony Chan 5 FAD

Lower Sixth Challenge

This well established general knowledge competition provided the Lower Sixth with an enjoyable and, at times, exciting attraction after they returned from their exam leave in June.

The final was held in the Amey Theatre on Wednesday 29 June in the presence of the entire Lower Sixth. The winners were 6 DRM (**David Emerson**, **Christopher Lillycrop**, **Samuel McKenney** and **Ralph Morgan**) who beat 6 DJTF (**Edward Allen**, **Oliver Bennett**, **Andrew Cole** and **Andrew McGrath**) by 480 points to 400 in a closely fought match. 6 DRM had already shown

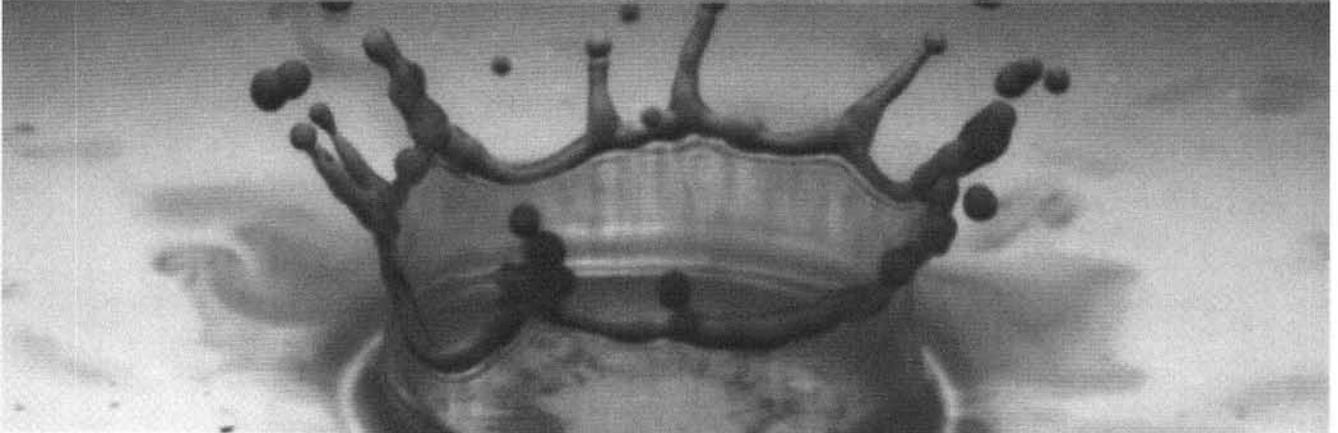
their star qualities in the earlier heats of the competition and they maintained their lead quite comfortably in the final. However, there was a brief period in the middle of the final when 6 DJTF got into their stride and looked as though they might catch up; but it was not to be. It is only fair to add that both teams showed a high standard of general knowledge.

Looking back at the whole competition, it was good to see that all the participants (thirty-six boys, nearly a quarter of the entire year group) were able to contribute to their teams' efforts and to tackle a wide range of questions. Current affairs and politics were well answered, as were sport, most science questions, including astronomy, geography, music, films, world religions and foreign loan words in English. Some of the contestants were on less sure ground when dealing with children's literature (poor old heffalump), saints, medieval English kings, some aspects of chemistry, Roman numerals (what does DC represent?) and the works of John Buchan and Thomas Hardy.

The strongest individual performers in the Lower Sixth Challenge will be invited, after some rigorous and demanding tests, to represent the School in the Schools Challenge, which is played nation-wide. We very much hope that with the talent in our current Lower Sixth, we can maintain our strong national position in 2005-6. Our 2004 team, **Peter Lyons** VI DE/JT, **Harry Coules** VI DE/JT, and the two juniors **Ben Hollins** 4 JPCB/RSG, and **John Morgan** 4 EDT/WTP did well this year. They secured a most impressive victory (900-140) over the Mount School, London, before vanquishing Radley (730-570) in a somewhat tougher competition. Alas, in the regional final we were toppled by Bedford School (1140-470). Yet this was no dishonour: Bedford fielded a formidable team and went on to reach the National Final where they lost to Westminster. Our two Fourthformers showed great promise during all our matches and will, I am sure, make their mark representing the School in the future. Very warm thanks are due to **Mr Edward Towne** (a veteran of School's Challenge) who accompanied us to Radley and acted as quiz master for one of the matches.

Hubert Zawadzki

National Science Week



© Peter Parks

National Science Week, a countrywide, annual event, is designed to emphasise the importance of scientific thinking through a programme of lectures, exchange activities and experiments. Abingdon School marked National Science Week with three days of lectures aimed at a variety of audiences.

On 15 March, there were three lectures designed to show, from a personal perspective, science at work in modern society. The lecturers also managed to show their Sixth Form audience the enthusiasm and dedication with which they carry out their everyday work.

Professor Hugh Dickinson, from Plant Sciences, Oxford University, opened the day with a revealing talk on genetically modified crops. His explanation of the attributes, methodology and advantages of GM crops was lucid and free from scientific jargon. He drew a thought-provoking analogy between GM crops and the serpent of Eden and he highlighted the media's role in igniting altercations between the proponents of differing views. He also displayed some challenging statistics on global problems that might be solved if GM technology were to be widely used. Professor Dickinson closed his talk with the alarming statement that, with regard to the uses of science, 'ignorance, fear, self-interest and greed' are the four roadblocks to the progress of human society.

The second lecturer, Mr Gregory Rasmusson, is an active conservationist in South Africa working on the protection of an iconic endangered species – the Painted Dog or African Wild Dog (*Lycaon Pictus*). In his mesmerising talk, he gave an anecdotal background to how he started his monumental project of saving the Painted Dogs, who are victims of widespread poaching. His biological analysis of the status of these unique predators of the African savanna, stressed the incredibly strong social bonds that exist throughout the pack and highlighted the implications this has on the conservation of the species since their altruistic behaviour has led to a large number of massacres. Mr Rasmusson also illustrated the success of his team in providing medical care for the dogs and showed how, by educating children and adults and by providing employment, he has been able to dig into the roots of the problem and reduce the human threat to these precious mammals. Now, hopefully, as a result of these conservation measures, Painted Dogs will be able to flourish in their homeland.

The third lecture featured Dr Mike Watson of Leicester University, who introduced the audience to the world of the 'Invisible Universe'. He gave a flavour of astronomical studies and described what modern astronomy offers now that electromagnetic radiation, of non-optical wavelengths, has begun to reveal what is

out in the night sky. He detailed several different types of X-ray-emitting bodies in the faraway galaxies and went on to explain the concept of the virtual observatory. This, an astronomical database, that can be accessed from the internet, will greatly facilitate the transmission of information to interested parties.

In the evening, a renowned wildlife photographer and engineer, Mr Peter Parks, enlightened a huge audience with his exquisite, high-magnification photographs of organisms, micro-organisms and drops of water. He exhibited a series of blueprints for cameras and other gadgets that have been designed to facilitate his photographic work. His work filled the audience with admiration and amazement.

On Wednesday 16 March, one hundred and twenty pupils from local primary and prep schools came to Abingdon to participate in a scientific experiment to 'weigh a grain of rice'. The simple title of the task belied the complexity and intellectual stimulation that it required. After this, Dr Averil MacDonald spoke on 'Fantastic Plastics', giving an enchanting and informative explanation on the uses and properties of this ubiquitous material.

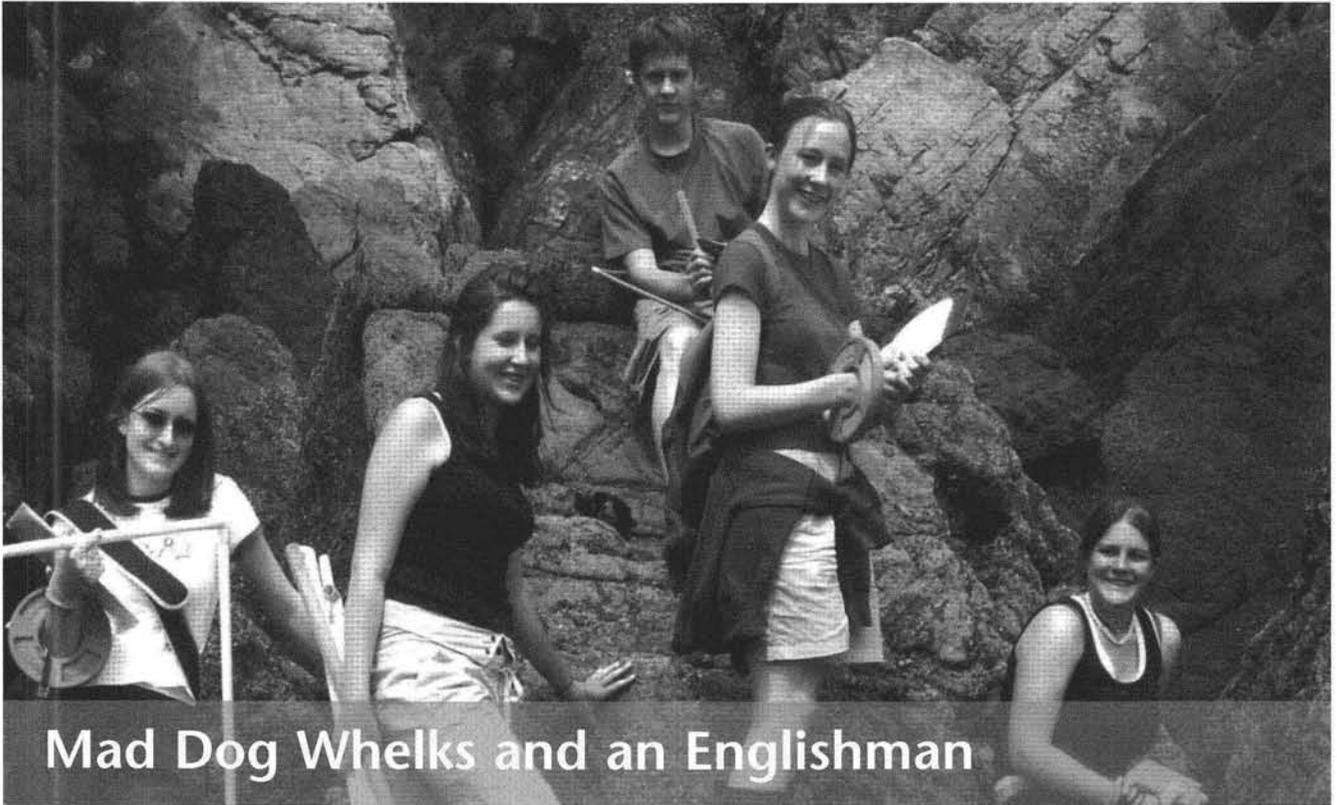


© Peter Parks

The week closed with Dr David Jones, a research sports engineer, who successfully merged several interesting aspects of his work, such as gravity and aerodynamics, with elementary physics, when he delivered a light-hearted and coherent talk to an audience of Third Year students from Abingdon, and visitors from John Mason School and Canford School.

All the Science Week lectures were of an excellent quality and students who attended found it a very informative and exciting experience. I would like to thank all the Staff involved for their time and effort in organising such a memorable event.

Koel Ko VI DF



Mad Dog Whelks and an Englishman

An Abingdon Boy on a St Helen's Biology Field Trip

Very few things can adequately describe the trepidation (gradually turning into resignation) with which I entered my very first biology lesson. I was the only boy in the set. This feeling showed no signs of abating as we departed on our field trip to remotest Wales. The journey passed without incident, save a brief spell of existential distress brought on by an unwise first-time read of *Cosmo* (My thought processes: "No one could ever write this, right? And even if they did, nobody would buy it, surely?" "But you're reading it." "I can't be! No! I refuse to accept anything like this could exist!" "But it's in your hands! If it's not there, then neither are you." "Oh.") In the end it was considerably less painful to deny my own existence than to accept it and consequently accept the evidence that I was, in fact, reading *Cosmopolitan*.

The moment we arrived we were immediately thrust into fieldwork. Nihilistic inclinations subdued for the time being, I identified my quadrat in the salt marsh where we were to quantify the species of plant life. To reach the area necessitated crossing what our guide described as a "deeply dangerous ravine", but which turned out to be a muddy gully with steep sides.

We soon found ourselves at Dale Fort – resembling a mix of Youth Hostel and, fittingly, Alcatraz, thanks to its position on a peninsula with surrounding steep cliffs. The accommodation did little to shatter this perception. Belonging to the male gender, I was granted a private room in a 60s accommodation block, while the girls were consigned to the depths of the old fort, built to ward off Napoleon. It amused me to learn that their rooms had once been prison cells, complete with the ghost stories this demands.

Our next fieldwork was on the beach named the Frenchman's Steps, owing to another ghost story, apparently involving two Frenchmen, an Italian and a murderous prostitute. I didn't ask for details. Having catalogued the wildlife from the top of the beach to the shoreline, we returned to the Fort and our classroom

for another few hours' tuition. It heartened me to read messages scrawled on the desks, such as, "What did I do??" and others written by people who had come to terms with their existence at Dale Fort and naturally resolved to end it in the most ironic ways possible. I was a little disappointed by the lack of diagrams.

Another item on the fieldwork menu was a mark and recapture exercise on sand hoppers. Sigh. At times like this, I wished for some male company. Males, with some notable exceptions, scream less frequently than females, and this, given the nature of these nasty jumping critters, would have been a blessing. Admittedly, I allowed myself a cry of "oh p*** off!" when one freshly painted sand hopper decided to jump onto my trousers, thereby decorating them with yellow acrylic.

The day for our coursework was soon upon us. Most of the group, myself included, opted to study the size-to-aperture ratio of dog whelks on exposed and sheltered shores. Complete with callipers, we set about first picking these predatory snails (you heard me) from their rocks and then measuring their lengths and the lengths of the shell openings through which they seemed to do everything. Their prey consisted of mussels and barnacles; they weren't ferocious by our standards (though distressingly oozed over whoever picked them up). Learning this merited the gratuitous impartation of the fact that barnacles can grow penises very many times longer than themselves – the length between them and their nearest mate, in fact. I went to bed feeling humbled, but comforted myself with the knowledge that I could take down any predatory snail that tried to make a meal of me.

A vital part of our coursework completed, and with more knowledge about shore life than anyone would want to possess, we began the long passage back to Abingdon. Once again the boredom tempted me to *Cosmo*, but having gradually been convinced of the absurdity of the universe by our field studies, I realised that *Cosmopolitan* wasn't all that improbable. Confident in my existence, I settled down to read.

Tom Carpenter 6 MS

Boarders From Hong Kong

Among the boarders at Abingdon this year there are twenty-four from Hong Kong and the number increases to thirty-eight if all the boarders from the Far East are counted. People are often curious about the position of foreign students within a Boarding House, wondering how they get on with the indigenous boarders and what they think of their time here and how it compares with schools in Hong Kong.

The exchange of cultures that takes place within the Boarding Houses is very important to foreign students. Those from Hong Kong in particular are very proud of their culture as we have a unique history that enables us to appreciate both Western and Chinese ideas. Education in Hong Kong values hard work, the development of the ability to think logically, discipline and good manners. We value the multi-national exposure that comes from studying abroad and we find that in a boarding community one is forced to make an effort to interact with other housemates, which encourages us to review our personal values and interpersonal skills.

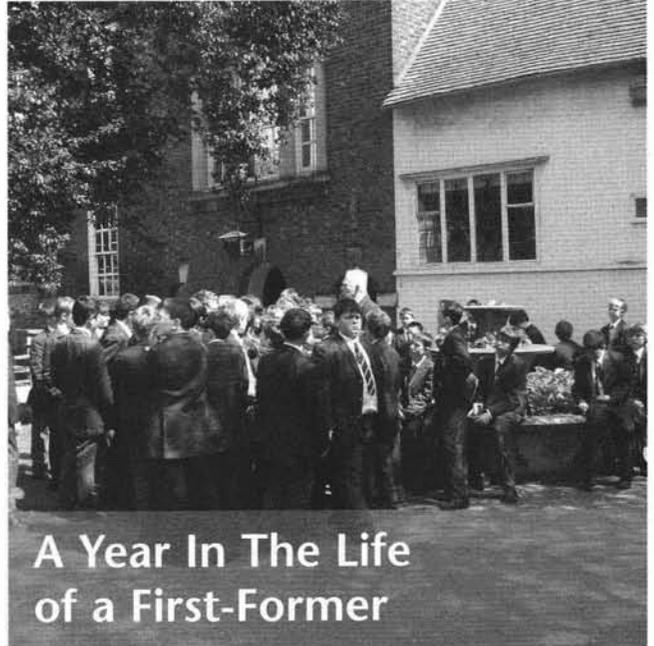
British schools strike us as being especially spacious and atmospheric and we find that their architecture and history appeal to us in a subtle manner. At Abingdon, teachers stay in their own classrooms to teach while in Hong Kong it is the teachers who move around the school. This means that in Abingdon students can make better use of the stationary educational facilities, such as laboratories, and reference libraries for history, classics and the languages. Abingdon also stresses the Other Half, a programme of extra-curricular activities. Hong Kong schools promote the work-life balance to a much lesser extent. Many Hong Kong parents are aware of these essential differences when they consider sending their children overseas to school.

Much of the success of the Boarding Houses, in integrating the foreign students, is due to the dedicated work of the Housemasters. They invariably prepare a good range of House activities in which all can participate, which encourages the strengthening of bonds between House members. Other teachers also contribute much by treating all students on an equal basis. This is of immense value to the integrity of the School and is what makes Abingdon so valuable to its students.

Koel Ko VI DF



Koel Ko, centre back
with some of the Oxbridge candidates



The Michaelmas Term

This is the first year and it is difficult to get used to. It seems that you're just a little fish in a big ocean. Finding the rooms is hard at first and our class had trouble and missed the first 15 minutes of a lesson.

We found out about things like 'PREP' which some of us weren't used to. But soon after a couple of weeks you get into the stride of it all and everything comes as second nature.

We also got used to the life of boarding which is completely different to anything. However, going through the same routines everyday makes it feel more like home. It was hard to get used to, but we got there in the end.

Lots of the Other Half activities were also new to us and we were able to try out such exciting activities as drama productions, shooting, fencing, and sports.

The charity walk was an event that occurred in the Michaelmas term when we went through a ten-mile walk along the River Thames. We walked for about four miles and stopped at a boathouse to consume hot dogs, burgers and drinks for the cheap price of only one pound (which went to charity). This term Lower School raised a fantastic amount of money for lots and lots of good charities.

The Michaelmas term was great fun for us new First-formers and was a good start to our Abingdon School careers.

Tope Alakiu-Marquis and Oli Davies 1A



The Lent Term

We had finally learnt, as it was our second term, how to find our way round the school. We had also by now got used to most of our teachers and subjects.

In the Lent term many things happened like the Charity Football Tournament. There could be a maximum number of six people in a team – five people on the pitch and one reserve. Each player had to pay £3 and all the money went to the Tsunami Appeal.

There was the road relay where many people took part and ran around Albert Park to try and set a new record. The fastest First Year was **Tom Foxon** of 1D.

There was the Inter-Form Hockey Tournament, where each of the tutor groups put forward a team and engaged in an exciting hockey tournament, which was eventually won by Form 1A.

Oli Jackson 1A

The First Year Adventure Trip to Osmington Bay

The weather was very warm, the beach was big, the place was huge and the people were nice. When our coach drove in to Osmington Bay, I saw a basketball court, a football pitch, high ropes, and low ropes to name but a few of the exciting activities that we would participate in, in the coming few days.

When I got off the coach, I was holding my luggage excitedly. We were split into activity groups of ten. We got our keys to our dormitories – in each dormitory there were three of us. We were unpacking until 6 pm, then we had to go and have dinner. We went to bed at 9.30 pm, but before that we had an exciting activity. We were to do these activities all together. On the first evening, Shipwrecked was to be our activity; we had to build a shelter out of wooden poles and tarpaulin. When we had finished, the teachers threw buckets of water at us in our shelters to find out how well we had built them!

Over the next few days we participated in: climbing, a blindfold trail, aeroball, quad-biking, abseiling, basketball, volleyball, high ropes, a tunnel trail, low ropes and archery.

We kept on doing these different activities for five days. On the last day, we packed our luggage and did our last activity before we left.

I really enjoyed this trip to Osmington Bay because the activities were very interesting. My favourite activity was quad-biking because it was great fun. I hope next year's First Year will have as good a time as we did.

Mohsin Zahir 1A

The Summer Term

The Summer term has been an enjoyable, fun term. The end-of-year exams gave us a valuable experience of what school life consists of, although it was occasionally tense and grim as we went through numerous exam questions. Personally, I found exams truly tiring because they lasted for the whole three days. It was hard and long with no fun, but it will always be a precious memory and a good exercise!

A day after we finished our exams, we had the highly anticipated field trips. Three trips were organised, one of which was to @Bristol. It was a very entertaining trip and we had a very

enjoyable day that included a trip to a 3D Imax cinema and an *Imaginarium*. At the Imax cinema we saw a 3D film called *Safari*. In *Safari* we were transported to South Africa and we went in search of wild animals. In the *Imaginarium* we went through a ride exploring the planet, Mars. Overall @Bristol was amazing!

During the Summer term there have been two main sporting events: the Swimming Gala, which was won by Form 1A, and Sports Day. Sports Day was highly competitive and included among the sports the discus, shot-put and javelin. As few of us had done these events before, we were very excited about competing in them.

There was also a Lower School drama production of *The Lord of the Flies* in which we got to see our First and Second Year friends doing what they do best – being savages!

Overall – the Summer term has been very enjoyable with many fun activities going on. I will never forget my first year at Abingdon.

Nick Acutt and Tim Shin 1A

Life as a Lower School Boarder

Having stayed in the Boarding House for a year, we had experienced much and were ready for the second year of our boarding life at Phelps' House. This year was a remarkable year. We did several unforgettable things, which made this year special in our school career.

Compared to last year, this year was much busier. We found the preps were more time-consuming and that we had less time to play sports. We also found that we had more commitments and responsibility than we did before.

Sports have been very important in our boarding life. We play many kinds of sports not only at the weekends but also in our compulsory sports period on Tuesdays, which is organized by the Gap students who moved into our House at the beginning of the year. On Tuesdays we can choose to play cricket, football, tennis or even croquet. The croquet set has been bought by Mr Phelps just this year. We play croquet on the lawn of Waste Court and therefore it is very convenient for us. The whole House has improved rapidly!

Phelps' House has always been a special House because it is a combined Lower School and Upper School House. The Sixth-formers have been nice to us and we get on with them easily, maybe because of the age difference.

Being a boarder is a big advantage because you get more time for activities, sports, school concerts and drama productions. There are many events that are only provided for boarders not for dayboys such as: the Christmas Dinner (a delicious meal which all boarders wait for during the Michaelmas term), the trip to Thorpe Park, a walk around the White Horse Hill, the boat show in Southampton and our weekly cinema visit. Duty masters always try to make our lives more interesting, active and exciting.

Waste Court has always been a big community which feels like a big family. Being away from home for a long time really helps you to grow up and to become more mature. We learn how to take care of ourselves and also how to make friends.

Adrian Lo and Max Makarov 2W

OISSP: Oxford Independent State Schools Partnership, Learning Through Creativity project

The aim of the OISSP is for the independent and the state sector to work more collaboratively in order to enhance the educational experience of young people. Abingdon has been actively involved with the OISSP for three years now and the current project, Learning Through Creativity, involves pupils from various schools working together, through a number of Arts-focused workshops, with professional artists, in order to create a performance of our own. This took place at the School of St Helen and St Katharine on 22 June 2005. Fifteen Third Year boys were selected to take part in this project.

Estelle Slatford



Taking a bow after the performance at St Helen's

George Bone writes about his experience

A group of about sixteen of us who were drawn from independent and state schools in the local area and who have shown talent in a variety of different areas in the Arts, were picked to go on a Creative Arts course at St Helen's.

The course was split into four days. The first day consisted of a series of workshops in which professional dancers, story-tellers, dramatists and musicians came to the School and performed a number of activities with us. We were to use these skills later in the project and it was great fun seeing them being put into effect.

Each group had to present an annual event based on a different culture, such as the Chinese New Year or South American Mardi Gras. We all approached the task from different angles and spent the next three days putting together our presentations for a performance to the public on the final day of the course.

All of the groups got on really well and had some great ideas. The final show was a success and there was a huge cheer at the end of each act. We would all do it again if we could because it was such a good experience.

George Bone 3 MRG

Young Enterprise

Young Enterprise is a registered charity. Students who want to try their hand at setting up a company, and earning their first share of profits, can join the scheme. It is an extra-curricular activity that requires the members of the company to work effectively as a team.

In January 2005, a group of six Abingdon students set up *Blutech Computer Accessories*. Their commercial activities centred on importing computer products from Hong Kong and selling them in the vicinity of the ICT centre, Big School and the Boarding Houses.

"The most difficult part of all this is to get the team to meet together regularly," **Anthony Chan**, the Managing Director of *Blutech*, commented. "We learnt a lot about what teamwork means and how we should treat customers in real business."

Companies from the south-east Oxfordshire region can take part in a competition that requires the teams to set up a display stand, compile a professional company report and carry out a business presentation to a substantial audience. This year the Abingdon team took up the challenge and attended the competition at Unipart House in Cowley on 27 April. The excellent interview they gave at their display stand and their outstanding company report took them through to the County Finals.

These took place at Culham Science Park on 4 May. *Blutech* members received positive comments from the judges about their choice of products and their approach to solving problems such as import duty, location of the shop, marketing and advertisement. The presentation went smoothly and the judges encouragingly commented on *Blutech's* potential in high technology trade fairs.

As a result of the competition, *Blutech* won the Best Company Report Award but didn't win through to any of the higher-level contests. However, the members of *Blutech* thought that the experience was extremely eye-opening and they took pleasure in establishing business partnerships with other teams, exploring the possibility of trading with other companies to broaden their range of products.

Blutechers are positive that their participation can encourage others to follow suit over the coming years, and that their enjoyment in the experience can promote business awareness in the School. On behalf of the company we would like to thank **Mr Evans** for being a supportive link teacher.

Koel Ko VI DF



East St Helen's Street and County Hall by Oswald Couldrey
Copyright Abingdon Town Council



Edmund Ross-Barker

Three Early 20th Century Abingdonians of Literary Talent: Oswald Couldrey, Willoughby Weaving and Eric Dickinson

Three young men at Abingdon during the headmastership of the **Revd Thomas Layng** (1893-1912) set a stamp on the school for creative, artistic and literary ability becoming variously distinguished during their careers in the realms of education, poetry, writing and watercolour painting. They succeeded each other at the School, their careers just overlapping in what was then a small, tight-knit community.

It is probable that the intellectual stimulus for these men belonged to **Edmund Ross-Barker** (Master 1899-1905 and 1918-1943), who spent the period between his double innings at Abingdon teaching at Reading School (1905-07) and Loretto (1907-18). At Loretto, Ross-Barker became a classics colleague of **William Mitchell Grundy**, Headmaster of Abingdon 1913-1947, who, in 1918, succeeded in coaxing Ross-Barker back to the School.

Willoughby Weaving (1885-1977, at Abingdon 1898-1977) was also from an old North Berkshire family and he too was a scholar of Pembroke College (1905).

During the Great War, in which his brother was killed, he served with the Royal Irish Rifles and was invalided home in 1915. After this he became joint Headmaster of a successful preparatory school in Ulster. Weaving produced a number of war poems between 1915 and 1917: *The Dead* (1915); *Ghosts* (1915); *Progress* (1917); *Dies Irae* (1917); *Between the Trenches* (1917); *Birds in the Trenches* (1917) and *Warrior Month* (1917). These were followed after the war by several books and collections of verse.

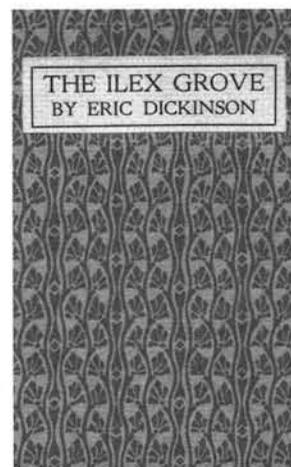


Oswald Jennings Couldrey (1885-1958, at Abingdon 1892-1901), was from an established Abingdon family, whose ancestors had been successive writing-masters at the School under **Dr William Strange** (Headmaster 1840-68). A scholar of Pembroke College (1901), Couldrey dedicated his *Mistaken Fury* (1918) to Willoughby Weaving and *Troillets and Epigrams* (1948) to Ross-Barker. Likewise, Eric Dickinson dedicated *A Tavern Lilt* (1918) to Willoughby Weaving. There was clearly an artistic fellow-feeling between them. Couldrey entered the education branch of the Indian Civil Service and became a writer, poet and watercolourist of distinction.

Eric Charles Dickinson (1892-1951, at Abingdon 1903-1907) came from Appleford and later lived at Ilex Grove Place, Oxford.

He became an art teacher at Oxford City Technical College (1914) and entered Exeter College, Oxford (1919). He wrote numerous sonnets and poems both before and after the War and in 1919 published *The Ilex Grove*. In due course he became professor of English at Aligarh University, India and then principal of Saddiq Egerton College, Bahawalpur. He was an expert in Indian art and in Kishangar painting. In 1952, the Oxford printer, Hall's, posthumously published *The Eric Dickinson Anthology*. *Kishangar Painting* was published in 1959.

Nigel Hammond OA 1957,
MCR 1967-1993



The Ilex Grove published by Blackwell's in 1919



The new east window in the Chapel, dedicated by the Bishop of Oxford, 7 October 2004

Chapel

It was another busy year of services. 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.

A large number of former colleagues and friends attended **Joe Talbot's** thanksgiving service on 6 November. A commemorative plaque to his memory has been placed on the south wall. **Keith Hasnip**, Mayor of Abingdon, gave the address.

A service for First Year boys and their parents began the year and an Act of Remembrance took place on Remembrance Day.

At St Helen's Church, school services were held for the start of the school year, Christmas and Commemoration, when the preacher was Michael Wilcockson, Head of Divinity at Eton College. St Helen's was also the venue for the confirmation of **Nicholas Acutt, Rex Carter, David Emerson, Thomas Finch, Oliver Morrison, Toby Roche** and **James Wilder** by the Right Reverend Ronald Gordon. Confirmation preparation included visits to Iffley and Abingdon churches.

A varied type of services, incorporating drama, art and music, takes place on Thursday evenings for boarders.

The visiting preachers were:

Canon John Ratings, Vicar of Wargrave; the Reverend Mark Butchers, Chaplain of Keble College, Oxford; the Reverend Dr John Polkinghorne, KBE, FRS, Cambridge; Monsignor John Nelson, Roman Catholic Parish Priest of Abingdon and East Hendred; Professor Russell Stannard, Church of England Reader and former Professor of Physics, The Open University; the Reverend Professor John Barton, Professor of the Interpretation of Scripture, Oxford; the Reverend Joe Kennedy, Curate of St Michael's and St Nicolas' Churches, Abingdon; the Reverend John Wesson, Abingdon.

In January, in memory of the tsunami victims, candles were lit and prayers were said and a book was available for signing.

The Chapel Choir sang at Eucharist for All Saints' tide and Ash Wednesday, as well as at an Advent service, a Lenten service with Compline, and a Choral Evensong.

Boarders also attended the Ascension Day Service in St Helen's Church, and each year-group of boarders attended a Holy Communion service in one of the Boarding Houses.

A choir from St Petersburg sang Russian sacred and secular songs at a memorable concert in the Amey Theatre.

We are most grateful for the music provided by **Richard Elliott, Simon Whalley** and **Peter Willis** and for **Mrs Elizabeth Turner's** flower arrangements.

Parents and friends of the School are most welcome to attend the Thursday services listed in the School Calendar.

Henry Kirk



The Lower Library on World Book Day

Library

The Library has taken several steps this year to further improve both its appearance and its ability to serve the School community. During the summer, the Maintenance Department beavered away to construct a tailor-made library reception desk and new office, based on plans designed by the Head of Maintenance and the Librarian. To enhance the library service, a new computerised system has also been installed which, amongst other features, allows users to browse the library catalogue from anywhere on the network. The downside from the point of view of the administrator was that every user had to be issued with a new library card!

All this activity has not hindered the regular features in the library calendar: in the Michaelmas term we were host to the regional heat of the annual Kids' Literature Quiz with twenty teams from across the region. Although we came second this year, the team that beat us went on to become the national winners and in June, winged their way to New Zealand for the international final where they came a very creditable third.

In March 2005, we were delighted to welcome back Mark Robson, author of the *Darkweaver* quartet and ex-RAF flying instructor. Mark spoke to the Lower School about his books and how he came to write them, via a posting to the Falklands, and to the Fourth Year on his personal motivation, with some useful tips for budding writers. Having originally been unable to find a publisher, Mark not only wrote the books but then published, distributed and marketed them himself – a good testament to his own motivation. His determination has been rewarded and he has received an advance from Simon Schuster, the well known children's publishers, for a new book.

Mark visited us around the time of World Book Day, which the Library celebrated in a very quiet way this year. Boys were encouraged to read both in lessons and at break times and members of staff sat in a delightfully staged 'drawing room' throughout the day, quietly reading with both a cup of coffee and biscuits to refresh them.

The Summer term saw the usual flurry of activity for 'Shadowing the Carnegie', in which Abingdon has now taken part for the six years, sharing the excitement with the five other secondary schools in Abingdon. In May, the shadowing group of eighteen boys walked to John Mason School to take part in a 'Carnegie Tea', listening to Maggie Hartford, Literary Editor of the *Oxford Times*, talk about reviewing and avidly discussing their initial impressions of the short-listed books. In June, a 'Carnegie Quiz' was held at Abingdon and the final event – the Abingdon Carnegie Forum – was held at the School of St Helen & St Katharine.

Gaynor Cooper



Local Schools competing in the Kids' Literature Quiz in the Charles Maude Room

We are pleased to acknowledge the following donations:

From members of staff past and present

<i>Ancient Israel: Life and Institutions</i>	Peter Lewis
<i>Watch me Grow!</i>	George Moody
Collection of history books	Hugh Price
Collection of film-making books	Kris Spencer
Collection of French DVDs and books	Meg Vaughan Fowler

From departments

Collection of French literature	French Department
Collection of geography books	Geography Department
Collection of RS books	RS Department

From friends of the School

<i>The Sun: Hold ye Front Page 1 & 2</i>	John Perry (author & OA)
<i>Advice to Clever Children</i>	Oxford Forum
<i>L'Ouest en Guerre</i>	Twinning Committee, Argentan
<i>Single Spies</i>	G Osborn-King (parent of OA)



The Abingdon 'Shadowing the Carnegie' team

House Reports

School House

Before moving into School House in time for the Lent term this year, I had read in various publications the encouraging news that I was about to start on 'one of the best jobs in education' – being the Housemaster of a boarding house. I took the view at face value, despite the fact that it was put forward either by colleagues who had held such a position for a large part of their working lives (and may have been trying hard to convince themselves), or by those who had, in the meantime, moved on to even greater things. Even if I have occasionally felt a pang of envy watching colleagues leaving the site at the end of the normal school day, even if there have been 'some moments', I am very happy to be the Housemaster of this particular House at this particular time. I would like to thank my predecessor, **Ben Figgis**, for being so generous with his time last autumn in helping me prepare for the task ahead, and also his wife **Jo** for making the handover on the domestic front so uncomplicated.

If the change for my family and me was a dramatic one, then the School House community took the challenge of a new Housemaster very much in its stride. I am grateful for the Upper Sixth for the part they played in keeping things on an even keel, and for usually resisting the temptation to give the new boy a hard time. The urbane **Michael Rothkopf**, this year's Head of House, made sure most things happened when he should, and was the style guru for this, the sharpest-dressed of houses. He was more than ably supported by **Anthony Mak**, who showed as much integrity in the house as he did killer instinct on the sports field. Another great sportsman, **Paddy Stern**, did all he could to dispose of the (admittedly little-known) theory that you need to have a tidy room to be a tidy cricketer. I am sure that all members of this slightly disparate group will be grateful for their tutor, **Mr Hall**, for keeping them somewhere near the straight and narrow. I hope they enjoyed their final few months at Abingdon, and have got to where they wanted to be, and wish them all well.

This year's Lower Sixth was looked after by **Mr Crofton**, and clearly enjoyed his style of doing things. The boys in the group who were new to the school this year had settled in well and become old hands by the time we arrived. Between them they reflected the many talents of the tutor group as a whole. **Keith Cheng's** musicality, **Edmund Lo's** entrepreneurial and PR skills, **Stanislav Urzhumstev's** prowess in public speaking and academic ambition, **Constantin von Hoyningen-Huene's** bloody-mindedness about breakfast, and **Tobias Sodoge's** hockey-playing talents – typical accomplishments of a large, well motivated group of young men. **Constantin** and **Tobias** will not be with us next year and we wish them well back in Germany. Despite this loss, the rest will do a good job as the senior boys in the house, with **Oliver Waite** as Head of House, and **Han Park** as a School Prefect.

The relatively small Fifth Form group made a contribution to school life out of all proportion to their number. Gifted musicians and strong sportsmen, they were also academically highly

motivated to a man, as I am sure their GCSE results will have shown. Life was not always plain sailing for several of them, particularly on the health front, but they have appreciated the kindness and quiet professionalism of their tutor, **Dr Willis**, and will be well set to make a great success of the Sixth Form.

The Fourth-formers in School House this year did what is expected of Fourth-formers and did it with great style.

They frustrated and delighted, they made nuisances of themselves, but then had some great triumphs. There were broken windows and impromptu skateboard ramps all over the place, but also huge amounts of thoughtfulness, loyalty, charm and generosity. **Michael Chan** was a frequent academic prize-winner, **Jamie Graves** a great cricketer, **Joey Chan** and **Kevin Cheung** talented musicians, and **James Cookson** the most enthusiastic and energetic of volunteers. I could not have asked for more as a tutor! We were also sad that **Guillaume Troesch's** stay at Abingdon was so short and hope he thrives back in Paris.

The other new boys to the house, the Third-formers, have already made a huge impact and, even if there are some strong academics, not to mention their other talents, they will forgive me for putting the spotlight on their sporting performances. With a little help from Crescent House they won House Rugby, Swimming and Athletics Competitions, all by big margins, and provided key players in cricket (**Matthew Pursell** captained what has gone down in the records as the school's most successful team ever), rowing and hockey teams. Just as importantly, with **Dr Gibbs'** guidance they have settled down well in the House and will continue to do great things, I am sure.

There have been many highlights of the School House year in addition to what has already been mentioned – our celebration of the Chinese New Year (with **Edmund Lo** officiating), the House concert at the beginning of the Summer term (organised by **Anthony Mak**) and the sixty-man midnight snowball fight (which **Jojo Todd** is still peeved about missing), to name but a few. What matters more than anything is the strong sense of community – the boys play a great part of course, but they will acknowledge the work of the Tutors, and of **Mrs Faulkes**, the Housekeeper and her team, and will have noticed the many hours put into the upkeep of the House by the maintenance team. 'Best job in education' or not – my wife, **Yvonne**, our children and I, are very much enjoying life in School House – and trust everyone else is too!

Douglas Aitken



Robert Rothkopf

House singing competition



Crescent House

Trying to summarise a year's activity in just a few lines always provides a huge challenge, such is the range of activities and events that take place through the year. From my perspective, the year has been a good one!

The House has fared especially well in competition this year: rehearsals for the House Singing Competition began fairly late in the day but were approached positively and our performance of Simon and Garfunkel's *Cecilia* was crisp and energetic, **Hugh Taylor** doing a fine job of conducting. It was a strong corporate effort and the adjudicator was perspicacious enough to recognise our talent, awarding us first place. In the sporting sphere, we won the Senior Table Tennis Cup, the Fourth Year and Staff Road Relay titles, and joined with School House to win the Third Year Tag Rugby title, the Sixth Form and Third Year Athletics titles, and both the Third and Fourth Year Swimming Galas.

House trips have included a visit to London to see *We Will Rock You* and Chinese New Year was celebrated with a meal out at the *Dancing Dragon* restaurant in North Oxford. **Timothy Rippon** and **Zahid Karim** were the force behind our House Revue at the end of the Michaelmas term. The Lower Sixth were awarded title of Best Sketch and, without exception, everyone agreed that **Michael McCormick's** depiction of DF was the finest individual performance. It was a very enjoyable evening, even if one or two people sailed too close to the wind at times. I hope that it will become something of a tradition in the future. Perhaps unique

among the House celebrations were those for **Jung-Hoon Doh's** 21st birthday in May!

The Third Year quickly established a reputation for "character", often up to mischief – of an honest kind, in the main – and causing many of us to marvel at their ability to run around all day and, according to reliable sources, for most of the night also without showing obvious fatigue. Their construction of a house from bricks that "happened to be lying around" (stored there by the Maintenance Department) at the back of Glyndwr attracted many admiring comments before it had to be dismantled. **Christopher Davis** won the Academic Prize for his consistent excellence during the year, although he was in fact out-performed in the end-of-year examinations by **Benjamin Kemp**, who finished well.

Perhaps the most obvious thing about the Fourth Year is that they have grown enormously, both in size (and hence their physical presence has been felt in the House) and also in numbers, with **Joshua Steeples**, **Peter Nikitin** and **Mephis Ko** all joining us at the start of the year. There have been tensions from time to time but this is an extremely promising group of boys and I am sure that by the time they reach the Sixth Form we will be seeing them at their best. **Oliver Cook**, **Joshua Turrill** and **Michael Nagi** all made an especially strong contribution to both rugby and rowing, **Tobi Ojo** continued his success with the county U15 badminton squad and, together with **Alex Lewington** and **Charles Lam**, represented

Abingdon Town Football Club in their spare time. **Cook, Turrill, Nagi** and **Mark Pluck** all performed superbly in the post-exam production of Evelyn Waugh's *Decline and Fall*. **Mephis Ko** was awarded the Academic Prize for the year.

The Fifth Year was incredibly small, made even smaller by **Christopher Halford's** departure at the end of the Lent term. Perhaps not surprisingly, their influence in the House has been slight but that is not to say that they have been idle. **Andrew La Forte** was an effective Lower School Assistant, **Nicholai Jürgens** was a mainstay of the 1st VIII and **Joey Wu** was recorded in the official results of the Road Relay as having run it in less than 10 minutes, a statistic on which he will no doubt dine out, at least until next March!

Some members of the Lower Sixth took time – most of the year, in fact – to show that they understood and accepted the responsibility and self-discipline required for success in the Sixth Form, but as the year drew to an end there were some promising signs of improvement. Almost everyone in the year group has made a valuable contribution to the Other Half, though not always in the limelight. Of particular note: **Matthew Halford** represented the school at first team level in rugby, hockey and cricket, and **Claudius Schramm** was a member of the all-conquering 2nd VIII. Both of these have now left Crescent, the latter to return to Germany, and we also bade farewell to **Thomas Mitchell**. **William Drazin** has made an excellent contribution to the technical side of the Amey Theatre, and **Oliver Turner** has given much of his time to the CCF. **James Arrowsmith** was selected to be a School Prefect and **Thomas Rutland** was appointed Head of House for next year.

The Upper Sixth has been an outstanding year-group. As an example of the all-round ethos of Abingdon, they can hardly be bettered – this year they have all worked extremely hard at their studies without cutting back noticeably on, in the majority of cases, an especially strong contribution to the Other Half. **Hugh Taylor** has been a sympathetic and popular Head of House, ably supported by **Peter Rowe**, whose attention to detail was much valued by House Staff.

The House was well represented at Prize-Giving on Leavers' Day. **Koel Ko** swept the board, winning the prize for each of his subjects: mathematics, physics, biology and chemistry, but what few people knew was how close **Tony Lau** had pushed him, particularly in mathematics. **Peter Rowe** was awarded the prize for economics, and also collected the Mitchell Seward Cup for Debating, the Judge Medd Prize, the David Barrett Cup and the Leadership Prize, testimony to his effectiveness as Head of School, as well as to his all-round contribution. **Hugh Taylor** won the Layng Reading Prize and was awarded one of the sought-after Tappins Coaches Travel Awards. In sport, **Timothy Rippon** was presented with the new Chris North Badminton Cup. **Christopher Halford** won the David Taylor Drama Prize for the Middle School and **Matthew Halford** was awarded the Cobban Prize for the most outstanding member of the Lower Sixth; in spite of his desertion to 'the day side', I am sure that he will make an excellent Head of School!

Preparing to move has made me reflect on what it is that makes Crescent special – and, believe me, it is special. Certainly, our environment of three large houses set in spacious grounds in arguably the most beautiful part of Abingdon is a factor. The 100m from the dining hall to the front door perhaps helps to cultivate a sense of home-from-home, along with the comfortable facilities. But Houses are really about people, not facilities or places, and I count myself very privileged to have been involved with Crescent at a time when the people have been second to none. There is a respect and friendship between age groups that is unusual, and the Staff team of **DF, HF, MRW, KRB, ACC** and our Housekeeper, **Val Edwards**, have been fantastic in their work in encouraging that kind of atmosphere. I hope that the boys realise just how much they do behind the scenes. **Mr Joss Williams**, my successor, is a lucky man and I am sure that he and his family will be welcomed warmly.

Thomas Garnier



Thomas and Alex Garnier with their children



I never fail to be struck by the camaraderie and House spirit of the boys in Elliott's. It is particularly gratifying to see this perpetuated in the current Third Year, and much of the credit for this must go to the senior boys in the house whose hard work I have hugely valued this year. I am especially grateful to **Jonathan Garrett** and **Andrew Brown**, who have provided superb leadership throughout their tenure of office. Also, we have all enjoyed the improved surroundings in the houseroom, in the form of a new roof and the subsequent internal decoration of the building. Our thanks are due to the Bursar and his team.

Looking back, it has once again been a very successful year, and the trophy cabinet remains just as replete as ever. We were all disappointed that the adjudicator of the Inter-House Singing Competition did not enjoy our spirited rendition of *Rock Around the Clock* as much as Crescent House's *Cecilia*. Nonetheless, we resolved that 2005 should be our year! There were no such disappointments in the Inter-House Tag Rugby, however, where the seniors and the Third Year lost only at the final stage, and the Fourth and Fifth Years stormed to victory. As if to vindicate their position in the House, the Third Year followed this by winning the Inter-House hockey trophy. One should also mention the excellent work of the Third and Sixth Years to get to their respective finals of the Public-Speaking Competition, as well as the House's overall victory in the Inter-House Athletics, with **Thomas Meadows** as *victor ludorum* of his year-group.

In the School as a whole the House members played key roles in many spheres, as always. Such is the general level of involvement, it would be almost impossible even to begin to do justice to the boys in the House in this article. I shall therefore confine myself to mentioning only the Upper Sixth leavers, who truly distinguished themselves as a year-group. **Robert Coster** and **James Hopkins** both represented the School in 1st XV rugby and **Richard Mallett**, **Jonathan Coleman** and **Jonathan Garrett** also had excellent hockey seasons in various teams. **Robert Coster** and **Thomas Woods** were both highly motivated 2nd VIII oarsmen, whilst **James Wilson** and **Stephen Cork** proved to be champions of the shooting range.

Tristram Bainbridge was a prominent artist in the School and a power behind *Dark Lights*. **Jonathan Coleman** achieved great success as a runner, whilst **Andrew Brown** helped to lead the emerging sport of fencing, as well as being a leading light in the Library and C.U. **Richard Soames**, **Oliver Zeldin** and **Jonathan Coleman** were all accomplished First Orchestra musicians, **Edward Cottrell** played a key role on *The Abingdonian* committee, and **Oliver Zeldin's** sophisticated film received great praise; amongst others, **Matthew Haste** was a stalwart of the Community Service team to the end of his time.

Elliott's boys work hard, as well as play hard! This was clearly evidenced at this year's Prize-Giving, where the house was strongly represented. Amidst fierce competition, **Tomer Faraggi** and **Sam Fletcher** took the House Academic Prizes. **William Statham** won the Lewis Memorial Cup for Woodwind and **Jonathan Coleman** the Ward Trophy for Musical Achievement. In the Subject Prizes, I was delighted that **Edward Cottrell** won the Art, **Matthew Haste** the Business Studies and **Tristram Bainbridge** the French awards, the last also deservedly picking up the Older Cup and Prize for Initiative, partly as a result of his superb creative project for the *Dark Lights* production earlier in the year. **Richard Soames** and **Oliver Zeldin** won TASS Travel bursaries, and The Mitchell Seward Cup rewarded **Oliver's** excellent work for the Debating Society. **Robbie Hand** was also awarded the Science Times Cup for his literary skills. **Philip Norris** received the Amey Theatre Service Prize amidst warm plaudits for his leadership of the technical crew, whilst **Andrew Brown** gained the honour of a coveted Duxbury tie for service to the School in general and the Library in particular.

It has been an excellent year, one which the house can look back on with pride. Our only sadness is the departure of **Mr. David Franklin**, our distinguished Sixth Form Tutor. His inspiration of the boys and his care for them will be sorely missed. We wish him well in running his own Dayboy House next year.

Richard Elliott



The new houseroom

Fishpool's

The pace of life never seems to slow and this year has been just as busy as any I can remember. Our new houseroom has proved popular and the improved facilities have been greatly appreciated by everyone in the House. Our new quiet workroom, the envy of other Houses, has been well used by the Third and Fourth Years: they have been able to work quietly and effectively in their spare time, relieving pressure on the busy School Library. I just wish that boys could leave their surroundings a little tidier and be more accurate with their aim when using waste paper bins!

As is always the case, there have been many individual achievements chalked up during the course of the year but as a House we appear to have shunned the limelight in this year's calendar of competitions and events!

Back in September **Philip Birkett** and **George Bone** were awarded All-Rounder Scholarships after some fairly intense competition. **Jack Hammett** completed his bronze Duke of Edinburgh Award and **Samuel Withnall** received a prestigious gold award at the Royal Society of Chemistry's International Chemistry Olympiad – excellent achievements at different levels within the House. We have been well represented in senior rowing this year at the top end of the House – **Christopher Kennedy**, **Henry Lester** and **George Clarkson**.

A fair number of prizes were awarded to members of Fishpool's at Prize-Giving this year. House prizes were awarded to **Gregory Craven** and **John Coleby**, who has also received many accolades for his work on a local history web page and was a worthy winner of the Local History Prize. **Samuel Withnall** won both the Greek Prize and the St. Catherine's College Prize for Intellectual Initiative and **Christopher Dixon** was presented with a Tappins Coaches Travel Award. Many members of the House have helped with Community Service this year – visiting the elderly, digging gardens and helping with tea parties. **Adam Cornish**, who has offered many years of loyal service, was a well deserved recipient of the Mayor's Prize for Service. A special prize, the Richard Turner Memorial Prize, was presented to **Thomas Keogh**. **Sam Wylie**, who has been so central to our entry in the House Singing Competition in recent years, and who has blended sporting agility with high academic achievement, has recently been announced as Head of School. Sadly for Fishpool's/Gooding's, he transfers to boarding in September.

With each summer another class moves onto pastures new – university, a gap year, dreaded re-sits or just a change of scenery.

To all the Upper Sixth and departing Fifth-formers, some of whom have had a bit of a roller coaster ride, I wish every success for the future.

Next year the Head of House will be **Philip Birkett**; School Prefects include **Matthew Coffey** and **Tom Raftery**. In addition, I have appointed **Wesley Peile**, **Luke Wilkinson** and **Arthur Verdin** to act as House Prefects.

September brings a new academic year and change for the house. **Mr Jeremy Taylor** will stand down as a House Tutor owing to his heavy commitments to drama and the highly successful Film Unit. He has been an outstanding Tutor over the past few years and I would like to thank him for the support, help and professionalism that he has shown towards the House. I have particularly appreciated his help with recent House Singing Competitions where his undoubted talents and inspirational approach have cajoled the house into action; in hindsight, the challenging music, choreography and a little dramatic licence was probably quite fun, but alas the top prize has eluded us thus far. Many will remember his meticulous, amusing and thorough tutor reports, which if collected and published, would make a very good read indeed.

I will step down as Housemaster in January 2006 when **Paul Gooding** joins the Staff of Abingdon from Stowe School to teach geography and take up the reins as Housemaster. I wish him every success for the future. Finally, I would like to thank all the Tutors, **Mr Swarbrick**, **Mr Revill**, **Mr Nairne** and **Mrs Patrick** and, many others before them, for their loyal support over the years. I wish all the members of the House every success in the future and they can be assured that I will be watching their progress from the wings with particular interest. Gooding's House looks set for continued success in future years.



Ian Fishpool

Ian Fishpool



Hamilton's winning Road Relay team
L to R Matthew Duhan, Michael White,
Charlie Moger, Peter Jones

Hamilton's

Hamilton's House has been as keen as ever to take part in events and this, combined with the high community spirit in the House, has led to a successful year for all the boys involved. The first event was the annual House Singing Competition, which was clearly the highlight of the Michaelmas term for those who took part, allowing the whole House to come together and providing an opportunity to welcome the new boys from the Third Year and the Lower Sixth. Rehearsals began with all the boys squashed into the hoseroom, nervously listening to, and quietly singing along with, Van Morrison's *Brown-Eyed Girl*, whilst worrying about whether this was the best choice of song. However, once **Arjun Kingdon** began to play the accompaniment on the keyboard, and as enthusiasm for the project grew, so did our singing talent and, by the time we had rehearsed the accompanying choreography, we were ready to provide one of the finer moments in the history of the Amey Theatre. However, on the day we only came fourth, despite a special commendation for all the effort we had put in.

The Michaelmas term also provided some fine sporting moments and special mention must be made of **Matthew Duhan** and **Peter Jones** who represented the School in the 1st XV rugby team. In the Inter-House Tag Rugby Competition, whilst none of the year-groups was successful, it was fantastic to see such a high level of participation from the boys and the talent that exists for the future.

During the Lent term, the annual Road Relay gave boys of all sporting abilities the opportunity to get together and participate if only just for the experience and the fun. As it happens, Hamilton's Upper Sixth A team came first overall and the four members of the

team – **Michael White**, **Matthew Duhan**, **Peter Jones** and **Charlie Moger** – deserve our congratulations. **Matthew Duhan's** time was the second fastest in the School.

As exam pressures grew so involvement in Inter-House competitions seemed to provide a welcome distraction and many boys took part in the Inter-House Hockey Tournament. Whilst there were no great victories, the level of participation was very high.

Several members of the House played in School teams: **Matthew Duhan**, 1st XI hockey, **Nikhil Wilmink**, 2nd XI hockey, where he scored some excellent goals and **Michael White** who has now been appointed Captain of Boats – no doubt he will strive to put us in 'oar' of the 1st VIII this year.

With the Summer term both the weather and exam pressure grew warmer but neither daunted the enthusiasm and dedication felt by members of the House towards Inter-House events. Almost everyone turned up to cheer the competitors in the House Athletics Competition, which encouraged several winning performances: **Timothy Clarke** came first in the A Triple Jump, winning twelve points for his year group and **Matthew Rossiter** won the A 1500 metres. Hamilton's came sixth overall with a total of 473 points. Finally congratulations are due to **Nikhil Wilmink** who brought the House Chess Trophy home to Hamilton's cabinet.

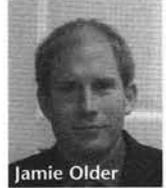
Hamilton's have had a successful year, going from strength to strength in all areas. I have very much enjoyed being involved in the House this year and I'm sure the welcoming and close atmosphere is felt by all members and visitors.

James Wood VI RSS

Older's

By the end of the Summer term I was filled with dread as, having only been Housemaster for two terms, I was asked to write a House report for the *The Abingdonian*. I had already been impressed by the friendly, welcoming nature of the boys and was rapidly becoming aware of their enormous ability. There was excellence in many fields of endeavour: academic and sporting, music and drama. It seemed an almost impossible task to distil the essence of an Older's House boy into a short report. Thus, in my new-found middle-management role, I took the only sensible course of action: I delegated. What follows is life in the House as viewed through a Sixth Form Prefect's eyes, courtesy of **Jamie Innes**.

Jamie Older



Jamie Older



Felix Wood

A new Abingdon Housemaster once likened his transition to a South American revolution. I can't quite imagine why, but as our House has gone through several changes of power, three Housemasters in the last five years, maybe there is some truth in the analogy. What was once Aitken's, which was once Wilmore's, is now Older's House. Every housemaster will inevitably leave his mark, so to a certain extent there has been a level of turmoil in the House over the last few years. Just over a year ago **Mr Aitken** was in charge, and although his stay was a short one we excelled as a House. His easygoing sense of humour and his ability to encourage people to fulfil their potential, contributed to this, as shown by Aitken's success in the recently formed House Singing competition in which we have come first and third in the last two years respectively.

The successes did not end there. With a huge number of boys involved in competitive sports throughout the year, our Sixth Form tag rugby team came runners-up in last year's competition against tough opposition. **Sam Florey** captained this squad, taking the lead by scoring a large proportion of the tries. On the academic front, all years achieved excellent results in public exams and there was much potential evident in the lower years.

Around the Christmas of 2004, rumours began to circulate that **Mr Aitken** was intending to leave us for another position in the School. This was confirmed, and so speculation began over who would succeed him. I don't think many of us knew much about **Dr Older**, and there was a certain amount of confusion over his age. I believe someone guessed that he was between 30 and 50, only to be informed he was in fact younger. It was rumoured that he was also a film star, though I'm not sure what evidence there is for this. Despite all the rumours, Dr Older soon settled

in nicely like a plum. His patient and humorous nature put to rest any worries we may have had about him being a tyrannical Housemaster and has helped us to build the reputation of Older's House as an open and friendly place, where there is always a lot going on. It would be fair to say, however, that the House facilities have become somewhat worn and dated, mainly due to their extended use but this will be remedied during the 2005 Michaelmas half term.

It is often said that it is the people you are with, rather than where you are, that is more important. I think every one in the House has much to contribute, especially as they move up through the School. Our third place success in the Inter-House Athletics Competition was based on the first place achieved by the Fifth Years. I use the word passion guardedly, but it is certainly evident in a large number of individuals. **Felix Wood** has attained the impressive title of National Public Schools' U14 sabre champion, and **Will Stephenson** came first in the County Schools' High Jump Championship. Abingdon School has built up a reputation for rowing excellence, and this is reflected in our House. **Nick Turnbull**, now at university, was Captain of the GB Coupe de la Jeunesse rowing squad and in the very successful 1st VIII boat. **Marcus Nurton**, **Chris Edson**, and **Chris Halls** have also held high positions in the very competitive Boat Club, with excellent performances at the Schools' Head of the River and at Henley. In academic matters, **Anthony Preston** deserves many congratulations for achieving ten A*s at GCSE.

Toby Roche recently completed his gold Duke of Edinburgh kayaking expedition, which involved a hard slog around the coasts of the Inner Hebrides. **Richard Worth** and **Thomas Phillips** also completed a similar silver Duke of Edinburgh kayaking expedition. Indeed, the large number of members of our House who are involved in the Duke of Edinburgh Award should highlight our commitment to a huge range of activities. **Will Peskett**, **Toby Roche**, and **Chris Cowan** have all nearly completed their gold Duke of Edinburgh Awards, which is a very impressive achievement. There are many boys in the lower years who are taking up the challenge and I'm sure will have similar success. Many members of the House have been involved in School drama productions, with **Tom Swarbrick** and **Nick Turnbull** taking lead roles in the major production, *Once in a Life Time*.

Within the Sixth Form there are many individuals with a great deal of talent and commitment. **Marcus Nurton** and **Toby Roche** have been appointed Heads of House, **Will Peskett**, **Chris Cowan**, **Ben Davis**, and **Chris Halls** House Prefects and **Chris Edson** and **James Innes** School Prefects.

On leaving the School it is very easy to become nostalgic, but whoever has been the Housemaster, Older's House has always been a friendly house and the social and pastoral support it has provided is one of the main strengths of Abingdon School. Looking at the people coming through the House I see much potential, which will put the House in good stead.

Jamie Innes 6 JFH



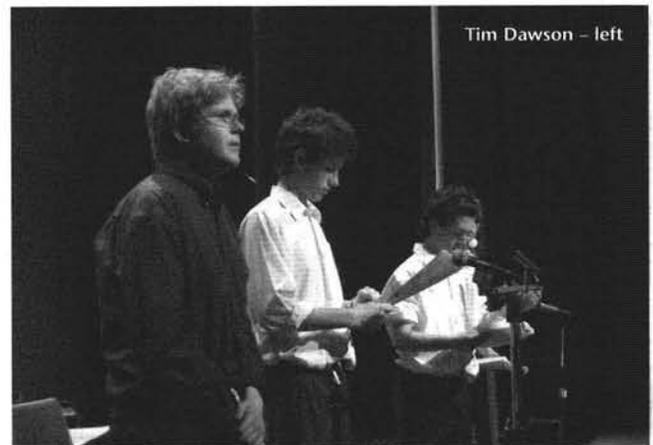
Phelps' House has continued to flourish during the past year, not only in its usual area of academia, but also in the Other Half. All members of the House have embraced all that the School has to offer in an eager manner, participating in as many activities and competitions as possible, demonstrating their considerable talents. As usual, WTP has played a crucial part in the House's success, leading with his customary enthusiasm and encouragement.

Building on the House's tradition of excellence in both the arts and sciences, there were numerous prizes and certificates awarded throughout the year. School prizes were awarded to **James Cundell** and **Ralph Morgan** for French and mathematics respectively, and **David Emerson**, **Ralph Morgan** and **Dan Boardman** were all awarded certificates for their achievements in the Physics Olympiad. In addition to this, the House has worked diligently throughout the year and has accomplished much of what it has desired. In the Upper Sixth everyone has received conditional offers from top universities, including four offers from Oxbridge.

Many in Phelps' have contributed vast quantities of their time and effort to sport and have consequently represented the School at the highest level. In rowing, **Patrick Vickers** has coxed the 1st VIII to numerous victories throughout the year and **Dan Boardman** has been a keen member of the 3rd VIII since he made the transition from coxing to rowing. **Lewis Simpson** has maintained his dedication to the Rugby Club in the role of captain of the Inter-House tag rugby team as well as assisting with the coaching of the Minors A rugby.

There has also been a considerable amount of success beyond the confines of the major school sports. **Malte Engler** has demonstrated his remarkable fencing abilities by coming 26th in the Public Schools' Fencing Competition, and both **Dimitris Doultinos** and **Ross Thompson** have been key members of the football 1st XI, contributing a great deal to help secure the team's numerous victories.

In the Inter-House sports competitions, the Middle School has proved to be a force to be reckoned with. The Fourth Form won their Hockey Competition, and the Third Form came runners-up in theirs. Although the other years did not progress to many of the later stages of the competitions, they still entered every event with a commendable amount of determination and passion.



The House has also been highly successful in many of the other internal competitions. **Chris Lillycrop** was the overall winner in the Bridge Competition, and the Fourth Form convincingly won the Public-Speaking Competition with a team composed of **Finlay Taylor**, **Thomas Metcalf** and **Patrick Appleton**.

Following the success of the Phelps' House revues, **Tim Dawson** wrote and produced *Bang Goes Douglas Smith*. This show contained **Tim's** unique, and brilliant style of comedy. It provided a great deal of entertainment for everyone who attended and raised over £2000 for charity.

The House Singing Competition was bravely led by **Ted Griffith** and **Richard Kaudewitz**, who proved to be an incredibly effective team. After their continuous coaching during the preceding weeks, everyone was pleased with the performance of Billy Joel's *For the Longest Time*, and fourth place was well deserved.

As demonstrated by this extensive, but by no means complete, list of accomplishments that were achieved by members of the House, it is obvious that there is no shortage of talent, especially in the younger years. I am sure that there is still much more that Phelps' can offer and that it will continue to prosper.

Edward Given (Head of House)

VI DAB

Jonas Muir Wood, William Guast and Tom Carpenter among the group who visited Tiananmen Square on their way back from Mongolia



The main whole-House event of the year is the annual house Singing Competition and although rehearsals are always difficult to organise it usually seems to be all right on the night and enjoyed by (practically) everyone. Our entry was a challenging but popular favourite by Queen, *Good Old-Fashioned Lover Boy*, with **Yuan Gao** on the piano supported by **Aaron Lewin** and **Will Glover** on guitars and **Luke Powell** on the drums. **Oliver Diamond** guided us through rehearsals to hand over the baton to **Nick Li** at the last moment so he could join in the singing. We stuck closely to the rules but despite **Mr Whalley's** invaluable encouragement and technical advice we were commended and came equal fourth.

With a wide variety of Inter-House competitions throughout the year we competed strongly across the board but achieved few outright victories. In the athletics we were consistent, coming fourth in each of the three Middle School year-groups: in the swimming pool 4 AMS could not repeat last year's victory but came a creditable second with a reduced team, while 3 PEH finished in a gutsy fourth place in the Third Year Gala. In the Road Relay the team from 3 PEH won convincingly, the runners being **Tim Deeks**, **Edward Stansfield**, **Robbie Stephens** and **Ben Powis**. Elsewhere we were less successful – in the tag rugby and hockey, and even chess, there were many brave, usually defensive, performances. In School teams **Alex Hyde** shot his way to become a county champion whilst 4 AMS with **Joe Buckley**, **Dominic Flint**, **Luke Himpson** and cox, **Max Gander**, provided nearly half the winning crew in the J14 National Schools' Regatta. **Tim Deeks** (3 PEH) has had an excellent cricket season and rounded it off playing two games for the 1st XI, taking two wickets in his first match.

Debating has always been one of our strengths and this year we were noble runners-up in the Sixth Form Public-Speaking Competition whilst the Third Year team of **Nick Croft-Simon**, **William Stockdale** and **Mark Heffernan** gained a sparkling victory in their competition – this is the third year running **Mark** has been in a winning team. After a very convincing start in the Lower Sixth Challenge, a strong team consisting of **Peter Lyons**, **William Guast** and **Dominic Waite** were led from the front by **Harry Coules** but unfortunately they were beaten in the semi-finals by the eventual winners.

If it is the taking part that is important rather than the actual winning, then we have strength in depth. **Jonas Muir Wood**, **William Guast** and **William Glover** have all made much appreciated contributions to the Community Service programme over the years and nine Sixth-formers took part in the Ten Tors and/or silver or gold Duke of Edinburgh Awards. **Chris Hornsey**, **Tom Carpenter**, **Philip Cope** and **Alex Boxell** found their World Challenge expedition to Mongolia a terrific experience in preparing them for the Sixth Form. Nearer to home **Matthew Boxell** and **Theo Hoole** spent an excellent week sailing around the bays of Brittany in the *Jolie Brise*, the first time Fourth Years have been able to cruise in this historic tall-ship. **Harry Dawkins** and **Ian Dorward** combined adventure and community service visiting Moldova and accompanying a group of disadvantaged children on a holiday in the Carpathian Mountains.

On the domestic front, in March we bought a new stereo system. I was slightly apprehensive as it had enough power to destroy the whole building but, hopefully not speaking too soon, I have been very pleased by the considerate and responsible way it has been used. The good news, possibly as a reward for not deafening anyone, was that the house room has been refurbished over the summer holidays. It looks really good and I hope it will stay that way. We have dispensed with the pool table and replaced it with air hockey – a popular choice.

Hal McKend has been an effective and authoritative School Prefect this year and has worked closely with **Charlie Wilkinson** as Head of House. The role of House Prefect has not been particularly onerous but **Jonas Muir Wood**, **Yuan Gao**, **William Glover** and **Oliver Diamond** have all played useful supporting roles.

Each year we have to say farewells but this year it is not only to the Upper Sixth leavers: **Ben Powis** leaves us for Pangbourne College and **Edmund Long** and **Luke Powell**, not going so far, transfer to Boarding Houses. **Mrs Hankey** leaves the tutoring team after seven years with the House, six as a Middle School Tutor and one with an Upper Sixth group – I would like to thank her for the advice and help she has given to many boys during her time with Townsend's House.

Jonathan Townsend



James Dingwall, Iain Marsh, Philip Hatzis and Siddharth Kapoor in the House Panto

Spencer's

This was the last year of the Spencerian Era, and it was as eclectic and characterful as ever. Highlights were the famous Spencer's House Panto and the glorious Road Relay. **Ben Harris** was a superbly energetic and organised Head of House who was ably assisted by his House Prefects. Amongst his many services, **Ben** supplied the following review of the Panto:

This year the pantomime was taken to a new level with **Edward Rowett** and I at the helm. For the first time the Amey Theatre was the venue and a record audience, more than five times that of the previous year, turned up to see *Ring-a-ding-ding: The Motion Picture*. This featured one of the largest and most talented casts in Spencer's House Pantomime history. Notable performances came from **Alex Mugnaioni** and **John Hughes**, who shared the lead, and from **Philip Probert**, who had to bare ALL in front of an enthralled, yet slightly disturbed audience. Everyone involved put in a tremendous amount of effort to great effect and **Mr Pritchard** was no exception to the rule, helping with the creative process and giving a breathtaking performance once again as 'Pritchard' the Dragon. The final total raised by the pantomime (with DVD sales) was around £700 for charity, an amazing total, which is a good target for next year. I would like to say a huge thank you to all involved, and let you know that this year's script is under construction as we speak, aiming to be bolder, better and more outrageous than ever before.

Ben Harris 6 JEF

The Road Relay produced an excellent turnout from the House. Led as ever by their speedy Housemaster, brilliant performances were recorded by **Philip Hatzis**, who broke the nine-minute barrier, and **Neil Housby**, who won the race in 8.35. What will these guys do next year?

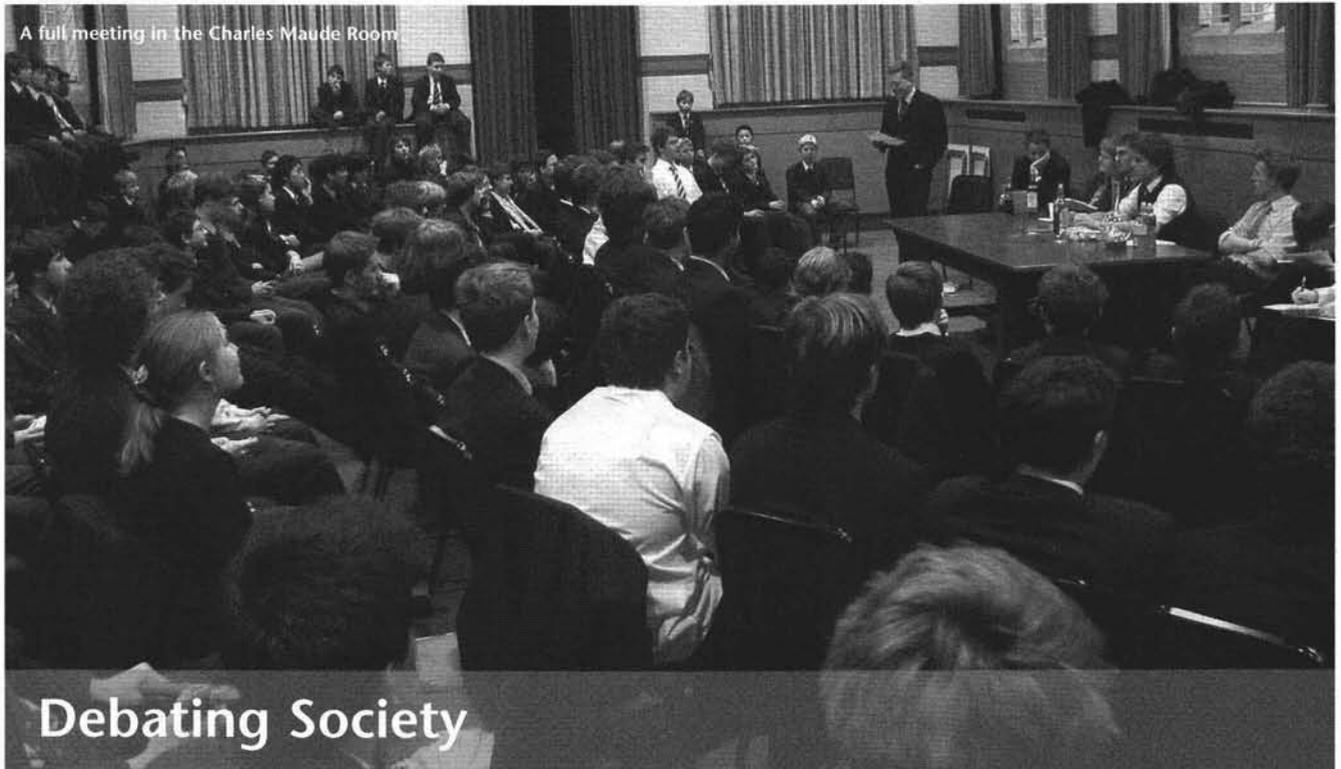
Other honours that went to boys in the House included:

Matthew Smith	The Paul Comber Cup for Creativity
Edward Rowett	Layng Reading Prize
Edward Rowett	Subject Prize for English
Edward Rowett	Subject Prize for Theatre Studies
Simon Moulds	Subject Prize for Religious Studies
Oliver Margetts	John Roysse Lodge Memorial Prize
Ian Housby	Middle School Academic Prize
Christopher Newman	Middle School Academic Prize

It was appropriate that the year was both so enthusiastic and successful since these were the qualities that defined **Kris Spencer** himself. Everyone in the House wishes him well in his future at Latymer Upper School and would like to thank him for all that he did here. **Mr Franklin** has some very small, fashionable and expensive shoes to fill.

David Franklin

Clubs and Societies



We have enjoyed another stellar year of debating, highlighted by a few stunning debates, including black tie dinners and vibrant balloon debates. The new committee took the reins with fervour at the start of the Michaelmas Term and in the first debate the Headmaster argued the case for the superiority of Public Schools. A strong crowd turned out to see an effective debate, chaired with command by **Brian Cullen**.

The term continued with a number of strong motions, **Brian Cullen** sharing the chair with his talented comrade **Oliver Zeldin**. Having progressed deep into the winter months, we were faced with the first dinner debate of the year, held jointly with the lovely ladies of Oxford High School. Our two chairmen squared off against each other on either side of the question as to whether we should place our own morality above the law. A dynamic contest ensued with **Brian Cullen** eventually carrying the crowd in support of morality. The term came to a triumphant close with a massively celebrated balloon debate on the theme of 'beverages'. A packed CMR heard pupils and members of staff argue for their favourite tippie; these included **Mr Boyd** as Pimms, **Mr Martin** as Scotch Whisky (type-casting perhaps...) and **Dr Zawadzki** as his beloved Zubrowka (Bison) vodka. However, the event was won in fine form by **Andrew Brown** with 55 votes, who supported his favoured concoction known fondly as 'schnot'; **Dr Zawadzki's** vodka followed closely with 52 votes.

Into the New Year, we saw a continued series of strong motions being debated in the House. The valiant hard work of secretaries

Peter Rowe and **Siddarth Kapoor** meant that debates ran like clockwork almost every week. **Brian Cullen** and **Oliver Zeldin** took part in the Oxford Union Senior Schools' Debating Competition and fared well against many teams, though their improvised style didn't necessarily impress the judges. The School's own Public-Speaking Competition was also a resounding success, with some powerful performances, the sixth-form final won by **Andy Brown's** speech on 'oranges'! The term was rounded off by another good dinner debate with the girls from St Helen's, as well as a balloon debate on 'Superheroes', masterfully won by **Charlie Moger** (armed with sugar-packed bribes) speaking as Dangermouse, followed at some distance by **Andy Brown's** Gambit.

The Summer term once again saw debating flourish, and we were honoured to partake in the return leg of our debate with Oxford High. A motion regarding philosophy and science was well argued by both sides, though **Oliver Zeldin** managed eventually to carry the motion (with a great number of abstentions). As the Upper Sixth leave school, there is a touch of sorrow as the reins are handed on to a new committee filled with excitement at the prospect of dramatic debates to come. All that remains is to say a massive thank you to **Dr Zawadzki** for his stakhanovite toil and to wish the Society the best of luck next year under the tutelage of **Mr Boyd**.

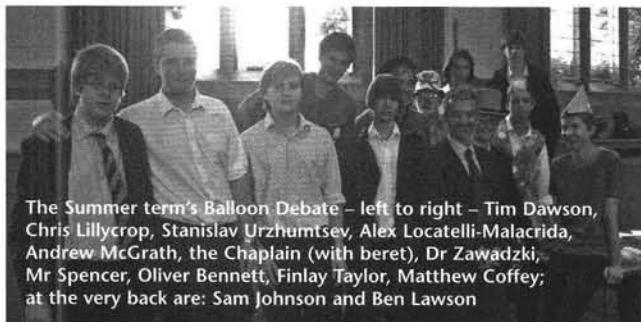
Brian Cullen VI SAE

(continued)



Dr Zawadzki adds:

In addition to the debates mentioned above, it is worth noting the outcome of some of our other regular Friday gatherings. The Society agreed that it would go back in time, that the USA needs a new revolution, that the British Empire should be restored, that it would undo its top button, that it supports the new Labour government, and that celebrities have no right to a private life. On the other hand, the Society rejected the motions that it would be female (overwhelmingly), that Darwin was wrong, that it would stereotype people, that it would accept the ban on fox-hunting, that it would prosecute blasphemers, that it would dress as a Nazi, that it would arm the prefects, that a woman's place is at home, that it would deport chavs, that practising religion in schools is inappropriate, and that Africa cannot be saved. The motion that feminism has gone too far produced a stalemate (8 for, 8 against, 8 abstentions) and was defeated only by the chairman's casting vote! A Lower School motion that British food is better than French was defeated after a bravura performance by **Cécile Pottier**, one of our French Language Assistants. A splendidly cheerful and well attended balloon debate, held at the end of the Summer term and featuring children's literature characters, witnessed the victory of **Finlay Taylor** as Humpty Dumpty followed by **Matthew Coffey's** Peter Pan. The Chaplain's inimitable performance as Noddy also deserves mention. The motion debated with the ladies of St Helen's School in February 'That this House prefers roads to trees' was defeated, despite a swing to roads.



The Summer term's Balloon Debate – left to right – **Tim Dawson**, **Chris Lillycrop**, **Stanislav Urzhumtsev**, **Alex Locatelli-Malacrida**, **Andrew McGrath**, the Chaplain (with beret), **Dr Zawadzki**, **Mr Spencer**, **Oliver Bennett**, **Finlay Taylor**, **Matthew Coffey**; at the very back are: **Sam Johnson** and **Ben Lawson**

Results of the Abingdon School Public-speaking Competition 2005:

Upper School: Elliott's House. Winning team: **Richard Soames**, **Andrew Brown**, **Jonathan Garrett**. Subject: 'Oranges'.

Fifth Year: Spencer's House. Winning team: **Philip Probert**, **Philip Hatzis**, **William Hall**. Subject: 'Rowers'.

Fourth Year: Phelps' House. Winning team: **Tom Metcalf**, **Finlay Taylor**, **Patrick Appleton**. Subject: 'Famous dogs on television'.

Third Year: Townsend's House. Winning team: **Jeremy Stockdale**, **Mark Heffernan**, **Nicholas Croft-Simon**. Subject: 'Is television a bad influence on the modern world?'

Second Year: Mrs. Wigmore's Tutor Group. Winning team: **James Holland**, **James Ridgley**, **Thomas Watkins**. Subject: 'Censorship of music'.

First Year: Mr. Macdonald's Tutor Group. Winning team: **Robert Minshall**, **James Yan**, **Charlie Hall**. Subject: 'Comic Relief'.

Dr. Zawadzki also adds the following communiqué:

After fourteen years (or so), and in view of my retirement from teaching next year, the time has finally come to relinquish my post as master in charge of debating. It has been a great honour and pleasure to be associated with the oldest non-sporting society at the school. It was good to see many budding debaters and public speakers spread their wings over the years and develop into effective and polished practitioners of this great and noble art. The Society has debated great issues of the day as well as numerous light-hearted ones, providing the boys with a forum for discussion, exchange of ideas and witty repartee. I am pleased to see that the Society will be in good hands next year. **Mr Boyd** is a highly skilled debater and a good judge of standards, and I am more than confident that the Society will continue to flourish under his guidance. He will have as his committee a talented and promising group of young men led by **Chris Lillycrop**, **Tim Dawson**, **Andrew McGrath**, **Oliver Bennett** and **Sam Johnson**. Although I shall still be around next year, helping where I can in a lowly capacity, it remains for me to wish the new team all the very best. *Floreat Societas!*

Hubert Zawadzki



L to R – Brian Cullen, Charles Moger, Christopher Lillycrop, Mathew Duhan, Paddy Stern, the Reverend Joanna Jepson, Nick Turnbull, James Woods, Andrew Brown, George Milne-Day

Edmund Society

What is Death? Who is God? Are we alive? All these questions, and more, were to be put to the test when, on 3rd September 2004, a new society gathered for the first time under the auspices of their patron, St Edmund. It was the Edmund Society – dedicated to the discussion of philosophical topics, especially those relating to the modern world – and as its acolytes fell silent to hear the speaker, **Chris Lillycrop**, tell us why ‘Water can’t flow under the same bridge twice’, the pattern was set.

Each Thursday, the Edmund Society would meet, either internally to hear a student introduce a dilemma for consideration, or, externally to welcome an invited, often eminent speaker.

Amongst the students, particular mention must be paid to a speech given by a forthright **Pavel Kogan** – ‘On Time Travel’; whilst those who congregated on that memorable 4 February will undoubtedly recall the always erudite **Chris Hornsey’s** startling suggestions on ‘AI’. Other topics debated included ‘The Asian Tsunami – Was it God?’, ‘Killing People’ and, ‘The Inviability of Polytheistic Religions’. Also worthy of mention are contributions made by the **Headmaster** – ‘War’ – **Mr Franklin** – ‘Atheism’ – and **Dr Zawadzki** – ‘God and Communism’. Despite variable attendance, all meetings were thought provoking and enjoyable. Many thanks to all involved.

The Michaelmas Term saw the first of our three speakers. On 28 September, **Dr Ben Morrison** addressed the Society on the issue of ‘How to answer a question philosophically’; it was an impressive talk, which went some way to cracking open this intricate subject. On 2 November, **Canon Dr Arthur Peacocke**, MBE, asked, ‘Are there any paths from science to God?’ and on 16 November,

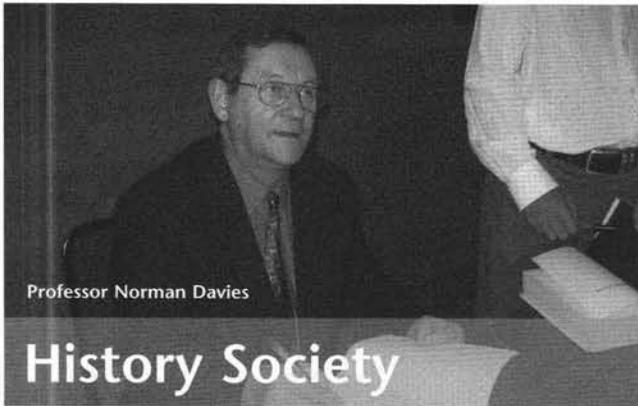
Professor Henry Mayr-Harting, FBA, Emeritus Regius Professor of Ecclesiastical History, spoke on, ‘Uses of Theology in the Age of Edmund of Abingdon’.

The Society convened three times during the Lent term. **The Reverend Dr John Polkinghorne**, KBE, FRS, began proceedings with a talk entitled, ‘Is there anyone there? – Signs of life in the Universe’. His background as both Professor of Mathematical Physics at Cambridge University and a priest has certainly given him rare insight, which he shared with us. His suggestion that the beauty of an equation, for example, can lead to belief in God, was intriguing. **The Reverend Joanna Jepson**, famous for challenging the legality of the late abortion of a foetus with a cleft palate, challenged our attitudes with a lecture called, ‘From Attitudes Our Actions Spring’, specifically relating to the abortion of the handicapped. Miss Jepson was herself born with a jaw defect and has a brother with Down’s Syndrome. The third speaker, **Professor Russell Stannard**, a physicist and author of the Uncle Albert books, is noted for his lucid explanations of Einstein’s theory of relativity to ten year olds. He entertained the audience with a talk on the relationship between Science and Religion.

After Easter the Society met to hear the **Reverend Dr John Barton**, the Oxford Professor of the Interpretation of Scripture, discuss methods of analysing the Old Testament.

After such an auspicious beginning, the Society looks forward to an exciting future. Meetings in the School Calendar are open to all; we hope to see you there.

Andrew McGrath 6 DTJF
Secretary.



The Society met five times during the course of the academic year and offered to those who attended a great diversity of subjects and speakers. First was **Mr Nigel Hammond**, a former pupil and master at the School, who has published extensively on the history of Abingdon and the Vale of White Horse, and who possesses an unrivalled knowledge of our region. His talk, 'Local History and Abingdonians', provided a most interesting account of how the School's pupils in the past were introduced by him to the history of the School, the town, and the district. Sixth-formers even had the opportunity of exploring noteworthy and often forgotten sites of local historical interest. Mr Hammond's enthusiastic talk was enhanced by a wide range of historical documents, photographs and slides.

Our second speaker was **Mr Nicholas Kinloch**, an experienced teacher and examiner, a National Curriculum adviser, and the editor of *GCSE Hindsight*. In 'Napoleon: the Myth and the Man' he presented a stimulating assessment of how Napoleon, and his later apologists, devised myths surrounding his political and military record, and how these were altered with changing circumstances. The talk was richly illustrated with slides, and provided us with a fascinating insight into the use of propaganda.

This was followed by two talks with a nautical flavour. **Professor David Loades**, a retired Professor of History at the University of Wales, spoke on 'The Role of Sea Power in Tudor Foreign Policy'. His scholarly and authoritative presentation left us in no doubt as to the enormous significance of this period in the history of the Royal Navy. The unprecedented involvement of the state in naval matters, the construction of custom-built ships and of new docks, permanent sea patrols, and finally the navy's global outreach, all laid the foundations of England's later maritime supremacy. **Mrs Judith Loades**, who accompanied her husband, also contributed vigorously to the lively discussion that ensued. The scene was thus suitably set for **Mr Edward Towne**, a former Head of History at King's School in Rochester, who gave a richly illustrated and highly informative talk on the *Mary Rose*, the flagship of Henry VIII's navy. Mr Towne joined our History Department for the Lent and Summer terms, to replace Mr Ben Figgis, and provided sterling service in that capacity.

We finished the season with another visit from **Professor Norman Davies** whom we were delighted to host for the fourth time (his first talk to Abingdon historians took place as far back as 1978). With the 60th anniversary of the end of the Second World War freshly in mind, Professor Davies provided us with a magisterial and thought-provoking re-interpretation of that calamitous global conflict. He challenged some widely held Western preconceptions of the war; he focused on the scale and character of the war in the east of Europe, and on the role of the Soviet Union – and certainly made us look with new eyes at the events of those years. It was a privilege to benefit from his formidable historical knowledge.

Hubert Zawadzki

Literary Society

Most of the literature covered in the Literary society is modern and accessible, allowing students to read and discuss literature outside the constraints of the A level or GCSE syllabuses.

This year in the literary society, a great range of books has been covered. We began with Ian McEwan's *The Cement Garden*, and ended with Alice Sebold's *The Lovely Bones*.

My personal favourite from the year, Bernhard Schlink's *The Reader*, is described as a 'brilliant philosophical love story'. It explores the drawn-out relationship between a young man, Michael Berg, and an illiterate woman, Hanna. The book provokes thought not only over the nature of Michael's experience of love, but also over the subject of German war guilt.

Joss Williams

Maths Club

Maths Club meets regularly on a Tuesday afternoon when a small but dedicated group of Lower School boys engage in mathematically related activities of all kinds. Puzzles are the most regular activity. Members have also built polyhedra. They have made the five Platonic solids and started on the truncated versions of these. A new introduction has been the playing of *Go*, a geometrical strategy game from Japan. This game is commonly played in communities of mathematicians, and Abingdon School is no exception. Although no one in Maths Club has ever played before, members are now becoming extremely proficient. The hunt is on for new opponents! Members have also been exploring different types of encryption systems for creating coded messages and have been cracking secret messages for themselves. Finishing with a game of Countdown has become the Club habit: so, are you ready? Using only the numbers 50, 7, 3, 1 and 2 and the four main arithmetic operations, you have 30 seconds to make the number 567. Go!

Vanessa Penrose

Shooting Club

Germany Tour Report

Over the October half term, **Mr Alan Smith** took a party of six boys, and Vicky Liu from St Helen's, on a shooting tour to Germany, where we were hosted by a group of German shooters from the town of Buxtehude near Hamburg. We were able to use the technologically superior German ranges, the one in Buxtehude, where we had a thirty-shot friendly match, being as good as some of the best ranges in England. The match was very close, with Mr Smith getting the highest score by one point. The best performances from Abingdon were by **Edward Allen** and **Wesley Peile**.

Our hosts took us to Hamburg and around Buxtehude on a sightseeing trip. We all had a very good time and we plan to return to Germany in April for a competitive match in which we hope to win back the trophy.

We would like to thank Mr Smith for organising and running the visit, and our hosts for looking after us.

Ralph Morgan VI DRM

Barton Stacey Autumn Exercise

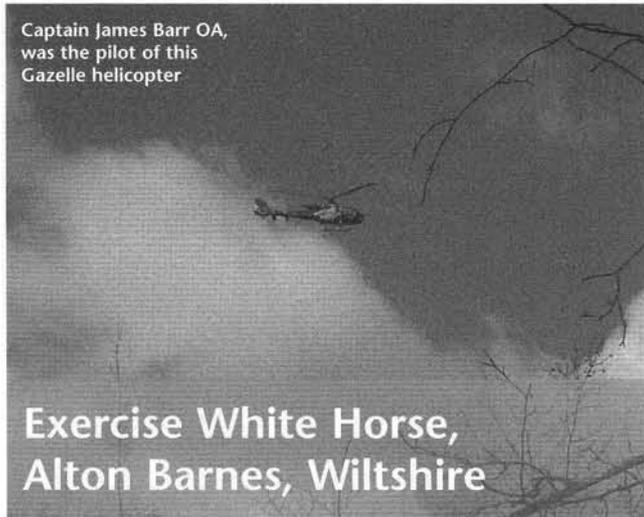
Friday 24 September – cadets, NCOs and officers arrived at Barton Stacey for an exercise devised by **2nd Lieutenant De Wilde OA**. In order to revise the theories behind tactical patrolling, we spent the night on recce patrols, our ‘task’ to destroy the splinter cells behind the terrorist group ‘Al Jafar’.

Saturday 25 September – ‘Stand to’ was at 06 15 hours, after which we were given revision lectures on military skills such as patrolling, section and platoon attacks, camouflage and concealment. After

lunch the exercise began, as did the rain. Having established ourselves in the harbour area, Sections 1 and 2 were given the job of reconnoitring a farmyard and a barn, whilst Section 3 remained at the harbour to protect it. During the afternoon we successfully carried out an attack on an Al Jafar convoy and carried out a close target recce on two enemy positions.

Sunday 26 September – all three sections were involved in assaults on enemy positions, each coming under enemy fire at some point, but ultimately we were all successful in achieving our objectives.

Cpl Henry Scarlett 4 PKHR



Captain James Barr OA, was the pilot of this Gazelle helicopter

Exercise White Horse, Alton Barnes, Wiltshire

On Friday 11 March, about twenty cadets departed for the OC’s farm in Alton Barnes, Wiltshire for our annual Survival Exercise. Three Officer Cadets from Oxford University Officer Training Corps joined us this year as part of the hunter force.

Friday evening was spent being briefed, after which partisans and escapees set up a harbour area in a nearby wood. Members of the Fifth Year joined the partisans later in the night, having been to the Careers Convention. The next day, after eating breakfast, the escapees were captured by the hunter force while the partisans disappeared. After being checked and issued with green overalls by the hunter force, the groups of three were driven away. However, the partisans sprang an ambush and the escapees were free again and set off for the first rendezvous point (RV1) with their survival bergans.

When they arrived at RV1 they were given a word-search to complete in order to get the necessary equipment for the survival stand at RV2. En route to RV2, the escapees were spotted by the hunter force from a Gazelle helicopter from the Army Air Corps, flown by **Capt James Barr OA**, who was delighted to be helping his old school out. This was to test escapees’ skills in camouflage and concealment and in tactical route planning.

Lt Billington and **2nd Lt de Wilde OA** confronted the escapees on their arrival at RV2 (a great surprise for the older cadets was the return of **2nd Lt Williams** who came over from The Oratory on Saturday to help the officers with the exercise). They were then given the task of creating shelters with some rope and a plastic sheet. Once these were completed, and assessed by the officers, the escapees were given a lesson in how to skin and cook rabbit. This proved to be a very popular part to the exercise because it was something new for everyone involved. The escapees’ third task at the RV was to cook a stew with beef, vegetables, a bit of butter and a tin can for use as a pan. The escapees produced a surprisingly good stew though they struggled with making a fire because of the damp surroundings.



Cooking a rabbit

Before they could relax, the escapees were attacked again by the hunter force and had to bug-out to the next RV. On arrival at RV3, they were given a clue about the grid reference of the next RV and were able to make their way to it. In between the two checkpoints the escapees were ambushed and captured by the hunter force. On arrival back at **Major Carson’s** farm, the escapees had to complete a command task – to put up a 12 ft x 12ft tent with only one member able to see. They completed the task after about an hour – a commendable achievement.

Afterwards the escapees and partisans set up a harbour area in a nearby wood to prepare for the next day. In the morning, the group patrolled to the canal bridge for a water-orientated command task. Here they had to float their bergans across the canal with the help of some rope and waterproof ponchos. Once this was completed, the escapees were briefed on the final phase of the exercise – the run to the farm (friendly territory) across enemy lines. Along the way the escapees’ flight was hampered by ambushes sprung by the hunter force, but everyone made it across safely.

Overall the exercise was a success despite there being a deficiency in the number of escapees and an abundance of partisans and hunters. The exercise could not have happened without the dedication of the exercise’s directing staff who gave up their time to run it: **Major Carson**, **Capt J Billington**, **Flt Lt Forster**, **Lt T Billington**, **2nd Lt McGill**, **2nd Lt Williams**, **2nd Lt de Wilde OA**, and Officer Cadets **Rose**, **Diggens**, and **Bevan**. Thanks should also go to **O/Cdt B Rose** for his help in training on Tuesday afternoons throughout this term. He goes to Sandhurst in May and so this was the last time he could join us. The exercise could not have happened, of course, without the training area, which **Major Carson** allowed the CCF to use again, and for that the cadets are very grateful.

Cpl Henry Scarlett 4 PKHR

Recruit Camp and Advanced Infantry Cadre, Wiltshire

Army Cadet Force Camp, Tilshead

25 – 31 March 2005

This year's Camp started on Good Friday with a total of forty-six cadets and eight officers. The Advanced Party of the Adjutant and **2nd Lt de Wilde** OA had taken over the Camp the day before. The main party arrived by coach later than expected (having been delayed by heavy Bank Holiday traffic), just in time for lunch. The main activity of the afternoon was the Orienteering Competition across Salisbury Plain, which went very well, with excellent weather.

The Recruits and the Advanced Infantry Cadre (AI) then went into their individual Training Programmes. The AI Cadre was, as usual, run by **Captain Mark Schofield**, who was assisted by **2nd Lt de Wilde**. The Recruit Training was run by **Lt Toby Billington**, **2nd Lts David McGill**, **John Chapman** and **Paul Williams**, assisted by **Officer Cadet James Stanier** OA.

This was an unusual Camp as we have never been away over the Easter weekend before, so Easter Sunday saw a break in the training to allow us to visit Tilshead Church for its Easter Day Service. We had phoned ahead to warn them that their normal congregation would be slightly enlarged by over fifty, all in uniform. We were warmly welcomed and took a full part in the service, even placing daffodils on the Easter Cross. Church was followed by a curry lunch before training resumed again in the afternoon. During the afternoon the OC discovered that one of the farmyards allocated to us on our Training Area had become the site of an illegal 'rave'. Consultation with the MOD Police suggested that they would be happy for us to continue training as usual, but we decided to keep well clear until the 'rave' was closed down later that afternoon.

Easter Monday turned out to be our best day in terms of weather and also saw **2nd Lt McGill's** father, **Brigadier Ian McGill**, paying us a visit to see what Abingdon CCF get up to. **Brigadier McGill** is the Chairman of the Combined Cadet Force Association and the Army Cadet Force Association, and we were delighted he could spend some time with us. That evening the AI Cadre deployed on the start of their 48-hour Exercise.

Tuesday dawned wet and miserable and got steadily worse. Unfortunately this was the start of the 24-hour Exercise for the recruits, who were all eager to deploy. The recruits showed some excellent patrolling skills, occupied their Harbour Area and set up their Bashes despite the persistent rain. Their morale was raised by a visit from the **Chaplain** and **Mrs Kirk**, who made a special journey to see how the Cadets were getting on. The AI Cadre meanwhile showed dogged determination, despite the weather, and were now about 24 hours into their Exercise. By late afternoon the recruits were being put through Section Attacks, one

section at a time, which went very well, even though the safety staff were feeling very damp. It was however becoming apparent that the Exercise was going to have to be cut short as the Recruits Harbour Area was flooded, and the forecast was for more of the same. It is a great credit to all the officers that all the cadets were returned to camp safe and well within record time. The Exercise aftermath was a sight to behold with wet clothing and equipment drying in every available space.

Wednesday thus became an administration day, with the afternoon being taken up by rehearsals for a low-key Passing Out Parade under the direction of **Officer Cadet James Stanier** and **Colour Sergeant Rowe**. The Parade was held later in the afternoon when cap badges were presented to the recruits and qualification badges to the AI Cadre. The evening saw the traditional skits performed by the cadets, some more amusing than others, with the officers and NCOs becoming the victims of some caustic humour.

Thursday morning was our final day, and involved handing all the accommodation back clean and tidy, having breakfast, and getting on to a coach to be at Bulford Ranges by 0945, which we somehow managed. A good morning was spent on the Range, firing from the 100-metre point. This enabled all the recruits to fire live for the first time, and also gave those LSW qualified AI Cadre Cadets an opportunity to fire live for the first time as well. We were very grateful to **Major Alex Cooper** from 1 Cheshire, who gave up his time to help supervise the range whilst he was on leave. On completion of the Shooting Practice, all that was left was to clean the weapons, eat our packed lunches, and board the coach for our journey back to School.

However, the coach driver had left his fog lights on, resulting in a flat battery, so we were going nowhere. Luckily, the Adjutant managed to get help from the local RMP Unit in Bulford, who provided a mechanic with a 24-volt (Wolf) Land Rover to jump-start the coach. So an interesting week away, and a very productive and hard-working camp for all concerned. As with all CCF activities a huge amount of planning and preparation goes into Recruit Camp and thanks to all the officers for giving up their holidays to make it possible. A special thanks to **2nd Lt Paul Williams**, who returned from The Oratory School, and to our two OAs, **2nd Lt Oliver de Wilde** and **Officer Cadet James Stanier**. The cadet NCOs under the leadership of **Sgt George Scarfe** were as always outstanding, so many thanks to them all.

Recruit and Advanced Infantry Awards were as follows:

Best Recruit: **Chris Dunster**
Most Improved Recruit: **Chris Brash**
Advanced Infantry Best Cadet: **Adam Burniston**
Advanced Infantry Most Improved Cadet: **Michael Coldwell**

Major D J M Carson, Contingent Commander

CCF Central Camp, Longmoor





Summer Camp 2005, Swynnerton and Leek Training Areas

Following last year's successful camp with Oxford University Officer Training Corps, the CCF returned to their annual summer camp. On Sunday 3 July, twelve senior cadets accompanied by **Major Carson**, **Flt Lt Shaun Hullis** and **2nd Lt Oliver de Wilde** OA left school for Swynnerton Training Area.

On Monday we went to a nearby river and had a lesson in watersmanship with the Royal Engineers. We had to build a raft capable of transporting six people using only four barrels, four planks of wood and some cordage and then use it to retrieve a large ring from the other bank and on the way do a 360-degree turn in the middle of the river.

In the afternoon, WO1 Thatcher, the Regimental Sergeant Major, an expert on fighting in built-up areas, gave a talk on the drills to be observed by the ordinary infantry soldier and commander in clearing out an enemy building. This was combined with a talk on how to take a town in an 'all-arms battle'.

On Tuesday, we joined in the training programme of the Royal Artillery Troop with whom **James Stanier** OA, ex-Colour Sergeant and Senior Cadet of 2004, was serving. In the morning everyone was tested on his weapons handling. Afterwards we had planned to have a few attempts on the Obstacle Course, but it had been raining all day and so the course was too wet and dangerous to use so instead we had a brief reminder on ambushes.

Wednesday was Range Day and once again we joined the RA Troop. This was very different from our normal range days as we were able to try such things as snap shooting on the Electronic Target Range (ETR). This was good fun and **Cpl Harry Moore** should be commended for an excellent score (missing only five targets). The rest of the day was spent doing personal administration and battle preparation for the first exercise.

Thursday saw the deployment of the CCF and Infantry Platoons to Leek training area for Exercise Blue Inkerman. The cadets were split in half and merged into the two infantry platoons. The two platoons were deployed in separate locations with the object of setting up a base from which to locate the enemy, without being located themselves. There was a slight twist, however. A

sniper section from the 1st Battalion of the Royal Green Jackets, commanded by Capt A. Horrocks (Recce Platoon Commander of 1RGJ), were deployed to hunt down the platoons and they had the benefit not only of their thorough training but of thermal imaging. The exercise did not go too well for either side, neither of which managed to discover the other's harbour area, which meant that there was no final assault.

The exercise ended on Friday morning. Capt Horrocks told us some of the truths and myths of recce platoons and just trying to lift the heavy bergans that they carry showed us the quality of these soldiers. After this, the platoons practised platoon and section attacks under instruction from the Adjutant and CSM and returned to camp where luckily we were allowed to eat at the REME's barbecue.

We now prepared for the pinnacle of the week: the Final Training Exercise (FTX), which lasted until mid-day Monday and where the ultimate objective was to take a farmhouse in the possession of the OTC. For this exercise the new OC of the army section, **Capt Joss Williams**, who is also the new Housemaster of Crescent House, arrived to meet and get to know some of us.

Endex was called at around 1200 on Monday and the OTC now had the opportunity to ride in a Gazelle helicopter before having lunch at EXCON up. After eating, cleaning weapons and exchanging war stories with the OTC, the CCF returned to Swynnerton for post-exercise admin. Needless to say, everyone slept well on Monday night.

Tuesday was R and R day and proved to be the best-kept secret of the camp – even when the minibus had followed signs to Alton Towers for a few miles we weren't quite sure if we were really going there. We arrived at Alton Towers in such good time that we managed to miss the dreaded long queues for most of the main attractions. The weather was sunny and the day was a good break from being repeatedly shot at.

On Wednesday, everyone on camp went to Bosworth Field for a tour of the site, in an exercise codenamed 'Ex Black Horse Down'. After being split into two groups, we were given a tour of the



battlefield with a guide describing and explaining the events of the 22 August 1485. After lunch, and a chance to go around the site's shop, we were shown the weapons and armour of the battle with an archer/fletcher and an armourer. The day's aim was to show how, although the technology has changed, the principles of tactics and strategy on the battlefield have not changed very much in 600 years.

Thanks must go to the Officers for giving up their free time to make the camp possible. It was good to see Flt Lt Hullis return from Winchester to help the cadets with their marksmanship. Hopefully, Capt Williams isn't wondering what he has let himself in for, but it was certainly useful for the senior cadets to get to know the Army section's new OC. 2nd Lt de Wilde had already attended the centrally run summer camp at Longmoor the week before so it was kind of him to return yet again to provide words of wisdom from his experience in the CCF, REME and TA. Major Carson should be thanked for organizing the camp and enduring it with a badly swollen hand, caused by an insect bite, and for being persuaded to take us to Alton Towers much against his better judgment!

The camp could not have happened without the kind invitation from the CO of the OTC, Lt Col J Herbert, RA, who continued to put his trust in the CCF for a second year. The conduct of the Officer Cadets towards our Cadets was respectful and friendly, and thanks go to them, especially to the RA, for their help at the ranges and also to the Infantry who allowed the cadets to get to know them in minutes, which removed any anxiety we had about the 24-hour exercise with them.

Cpl Henry Scarlett 5 PKHR





Community Service

It has been another busy year for all those taking part in Abingdon School's Community Service programme. Some boys who have come to the end of their time at the School have distinguished themselves by their service to the community: **William Guast**, has been visiting elderly residents in their homes for five years and **Adam Cornish**, **Jonas Muir Wood** and **Edward Given** for four. About twenty Sixth-formers have completed two years in primary schools, helping with football, computers, reading and maths. This work is much appreciated as it extends the primary school curriculum, allows work in small groups and introduces men to teaching.

Throughout their time in Middle School, **Tom Chambers**, **Oliver Foster**, **Oliver Margetts**, **Edward Henderson** and **Philip Probert** have been involved in visiting elderly people and organizing tea parties. Some boys have spent their time helping in charity shops. It is not the most glamorous of jobs but several of them have stuck it out. **Ben Allen** and **Alex Hyde** worked at Oxfam, **Richie Parker** and **Jason Mann** at the Red Cross, whilst **Ben Lerch** has been awarded a British Heart Foundation tee-shirt for his loyal service to that charity.

Third Year community service volunteers have been invaluable in visiting and entertaining the residents of Cygnet Court, Lady Eleanor Court and Old Station House. Among the highly imaginative entertainments that they have devised has been **Jamie Brown's** 'Spot the Intro' musical quiz and **Oliver Bouchier's** golden oldie sing-a-long.

Margaret Hankey

Summer Tea Party

The termly Community Service tea party was held on Tuesday 28 June in the dining hall on a gloriously sunny day. The guests from the Older and Bolder Club, Cygnet Court and Lady Eleanor Court were able to stroll through the flower gardens on their way to and from the event.

Jonathan Webb and **Andrew Phillips** wrote a general knowledge quiz and did a recce for raffle prizes. **Stanislav Urzhumtsev** arrived with his wicker prize basket adorned with ribbons and **Matthew Pursell** distributed presents. **Philip Birkett** was our Master of Ceremonies and kept proceedings moving swiftly along.

As the guests enjoyed their afternoon tea, the Abingdon School Jazz quartet played a medley of tunes, creating a relaxed atmosphere. The customary quiz and raffle followed with the ubiquitous cuddly toys and chocolates as prizes. The boys received many compliments on their organisation and hosting abilities and the tea party was most successful.

Victoria Hicks





Some reports from the volunteers

Easter Tea Party

On Tuesday 15 March, we held a tea party in the dining room for the elderly residents of Abingdon. **Philip Birkett**, the Master of Ceremonies, greeted the visitors. I had great fun talking to those on my table. After the **Reverend Henry Kirk** said grace, we had tea, which everybody enjoyed. There was also an excellent variety of music ranging from the slightly unusual *Chatting Song* by the Abingdon Academicals to the fine cello-playing of the Abingdon Instrumentalists. We had an extremely challenging quiz that my partner and I won! The enthusiastic **Stanislav Urzhumtsev** did a raffle, which was great fun. To end off the tea party we gave flowers to our guests and waved them good-bye.

Rory Spriggs 3 DJB

After-School Football Club

Every Thursday, we take an after-school football club at Thameside School. The club is run by their sports teacher, Mr Gallagher, and we assist him in looking after the children. We begin each session by completing exercises and drills. These help the children to practise and improve various parts of their game, such as passing, shooting and heading. Half of the time is spent on practice, then they divide into two groups and play a game. We split up and each help a team, giving advice and encouragement. It is very rewarding and we have a lot of fun.

Ben Davis and Toby Durant 6 JFH

The Older and Bolder Club

I have been visiting the Older and Bolder Club for a term. It's amazing how much longer it feels than that, but I suppose it's because we have such an action-packed afternoon, and make so many new friends each week. I make up a quiz and am always impressed by how knowledgeable the members are. Even though not one of them is under 65, they have the energy and spirit of people half their age, which I think is remarkable. After the tiring exercises, **Philip Probert** and I make tea, which always goes down very well. Following the clearing up, and a friendly chat (our group do like a good gossip!), we have the quiz, with questions spanning six decades of trivia. After the competition, it's 'home time', though we can tell that everyone is already looking forward to next week!

Edward Henderson 5 RGH

Unicorn School

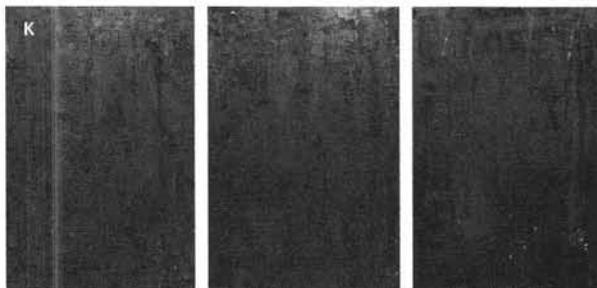
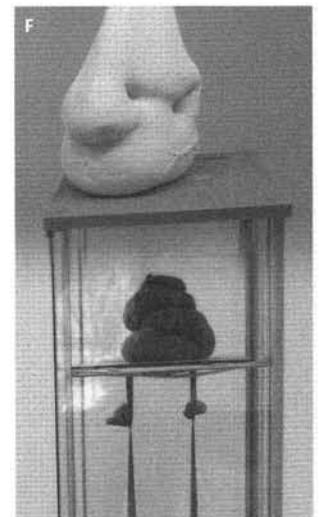
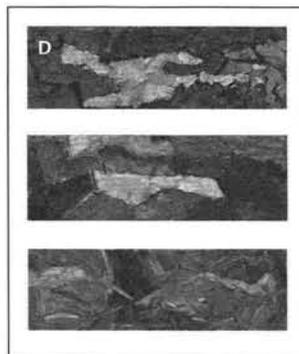
For the past year I have been doing community service at The Unicorn School on a Wednesday afternoon. Since joining I have assisted with sport, art, drama, refereeing at football matches and helping the children with painting and sculpting. Recently I have been doing drama workshops with them. For this I have taught some basic techniques of acting and rehearsal, including the art of mime and fighting techniques. I have directed short performances of stories such as *The Stinky Cheese Man*, *The Three Little Pigs*, *The Brave Little Tailor*, and *The Emperor's New Clothes*. Last year, I was also fortunate enough to play a small part in directing the whole school in a production of *The Wizard of Oz*. This has been a fantastic and enlightening experience for me and I have gained an enormous amount of valuable experience in working with adults and children and using my communication skills. I would encourage anybody interested in taking up a similar post to do so.

Ben Phillips VI SAE

Art at Abingdon

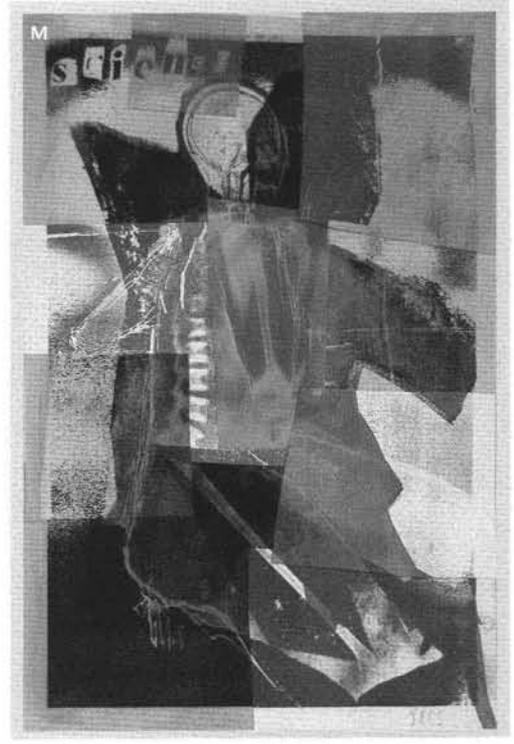
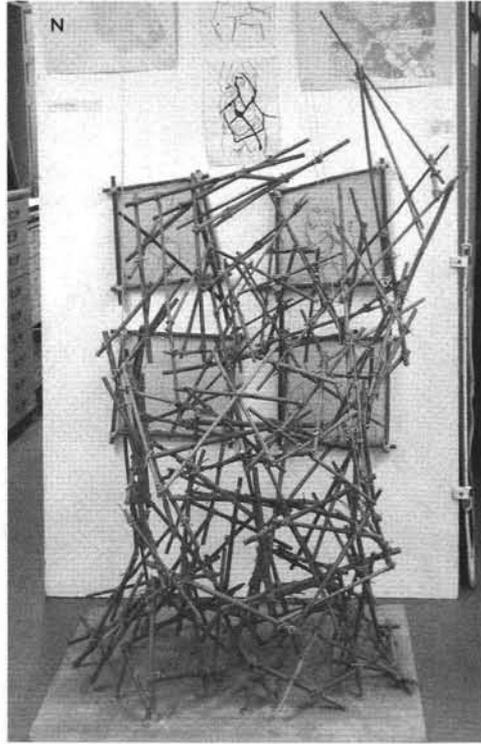
There are four groups of work: Upper Sixth Artists (A2), Lower Sixth Artists (AS), 5th Year Fine Art (GCSE Fine Art), 5th Year Graphics (GCSE Graphics)

Each Abingdon A level and GCSE student is represented in these images by one piece of work. They don't necessarily represent the range of work produced by the Abingdon Art Department. They don't necessarily represent the range of work produced by the individual boys. More examples of work can be found on the Abingdon website at: <http://www.abingdon.org.uk/go/gallery>



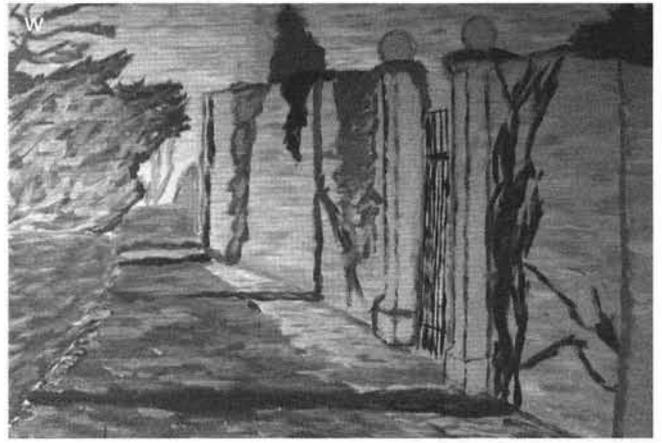
A2 Art

A	Tristram Bainbridge	Still from Dark Lights performance	-	Mixed
B	Tristram Bainbridge	Abstract Relief	A2	Acrylic on Card
C	Alastair Blackmore	Abstract Form	70cm high	Carved Wood
D	David Brook	Three small landscapes	each 40cm x 12cm	Oil on Board
E	Edward Cottrell	Still-life II	100cm x 76cm	Oil on canvas
F	George Cowie	Detail from 'body' installation	2m high	Sand, rice canvas, stockinette, thread, display case.
G	Nathan Hughes	Abingdon landscape	120cm x 80cm	Oil on Board
H	Christopher Kennedy	Installation	2m x 2m x 2m	Mixed media
I	Simon Moulds	Still-life	A1	Charcoal on paper
J	Thomas Reid	Untitled IV (dyptych)	120cm x 80cm	Oil on Canvas
K	Thomas Woods	Three Black paintings	each 120 x 77 cm	Oil on Board



AS Art

L	Paul Antony	Untitled (dead frog)	each 22cm x 30cm	Acrylic on canvas
M	Joe Canlan-Shaw	Imaging the body	A2	Screen print and collage
N	James Gibson	Torso I	130cm high	Bamboo cane, twine, glue
O	Alexander Ingham Brooke	Small Scale Pages from Sketchbook	Each page A3	Mixed media
P	Andrew Kyrios	Colour in the natural environment Pages from sketchbook	Each page A3	Pen and wash
Q	Stephen Lawrence	Still-Life with violin	60cm x 83cm	Oil on Board
R	Bayly Shelton	Reflections	A2	Mixed media box
S	Philip Thomas	Reflections	90cm x 60cm	Oil on gesso relief



GCSE Fine Art

T	Tom Chambers	Garden II	100cm x 66cm	Acrylic on Board
U	William Henley	Window view	A1	Acrylic on Card
V	Kevin Lee	Back of the House	A1	Acrylic on Card
W	Edmund Perou	Walled garden	A1	Acrylic on Card
X	Philip Probert	Self joiner	A1	Photographs on Card
Y	David Rawcliffe	Two portraits	each A4	Monotype
Z	David Ridley	Self portrait	A1	Acrylic on Card
AA	Adam Withnall	Still-life	A1	Acrylic on Card
AB	Richard Worth	Tree	2.2m x 1m	Acrylic on Paper stuck on Cardboard
AC	Joey Wu	Tree	84cm x 64cm	Acrylic on Card



AH



AI



AG



AK



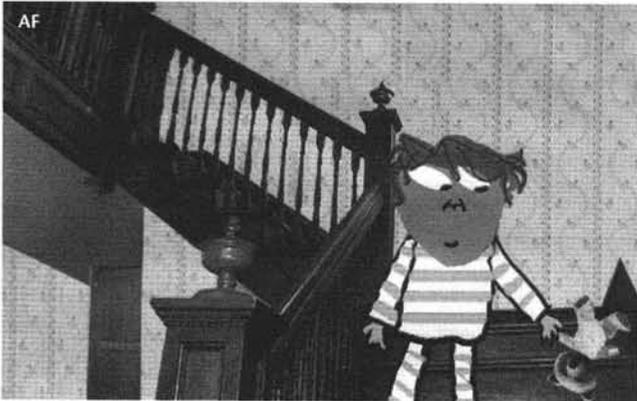
AL



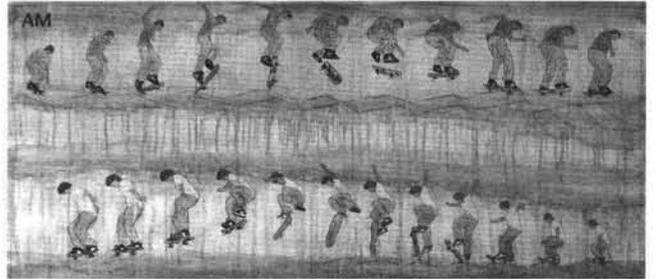
AJ



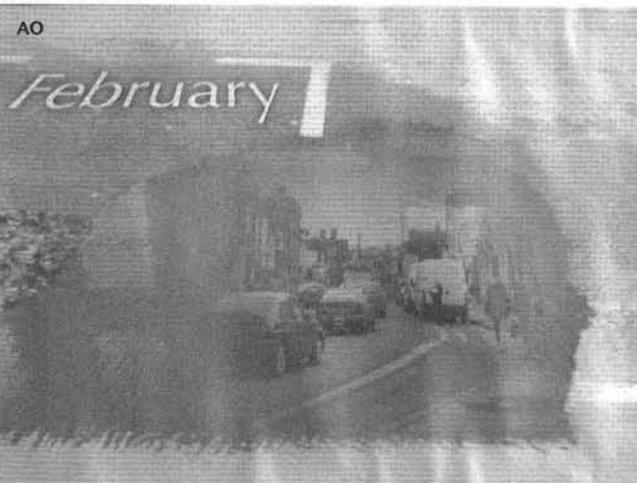
AN



AF



AM



AO



AP



AQ



AE

GCSE Graphics

AE	Jack Addis	Skater	A1	Watercolour on Paper
AF	Ben Chambers	Christopher Robin and Pooh	A4	Digital Collage
AG	James Garrard	Green Eggs and Ham	A3	Ink and Acrylic
AH	Matthew Harris	Calendar Illustration for November	A3	Digital Montage, Photoshop
AI	Hugo Harrison	Not Now Bernard	A3	Pen and Wash
AJ	Jiun Im	Dream World	A3	Digital Montage, Photoshop
AK	Christopher Kerr	Dream World	A3	Acrylic on Paper
AL	Charlie Lester	Digger	A3	Watercolour and Photoshop
AM	James Loraine-Smith	Skater	120cm x 53cm	Pen and Acrylic on Paper
AN	Thomas Meadows	Abingdon Fair poster	A2	Mixed Media Collage
AO	James Needham	Calendar Illustration for February	A3	Digital Montage, Photoshop
AP	Greg Salmon	Tackle Racism Poster	A3	Photoshop
AQ	Kemble Woodley	Calendar Illustration for October	A3	Digital Montage, Photoshop

Drama



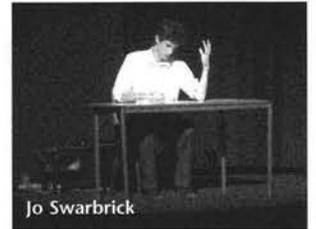
Bang Goes Douglas Smith!

The audience outside the Amey Theatre on 12 November anticipated an evening of comic delights and they weren't disappointed, as their standing ovation at the end of the performance confirmed. **Tim Dawson**, writer, performer, producer and director of the evening, having cut his teeth on Phelps' House reviews, now showed what he was capable of – and that the pun is mightier than the sword.

The revue presented a host of different characters, including mime artiste Monsieur Norman la Verge, greengrocer William Rank, incompetent private eye Rick Melon and Abingdon's own antidote to Ambridge, The Slingers.

There were some wonderful performances: **Eddie Wilson's** powerful stage presence made an impact on every character he played (an eight-year-old member of the audience is thankfully said to be 'making progress'), whether he was sporting the red trousers and fine leopard-skin fedora of Bender, Oscar Wilde's greatest schoolboy fan, or demonstrating what he alone can do with a French leek. **Sam Johnson** alarmed the audience by revealing more than anyone might have cared to see but, when they weren't hiding their eyes for fear of what he was going to remove next, they were wiping away tears of laughter. This has led to rumours that his future career is as a hen-night entertainer – **Sam** has refused to comment.

Jo Swarbrick gave a wonderful tongue-in-cheek performance, showing the world what every headmaster hides behind his desk, whilst **Jessie Liddle** and **Daisy Balsdon** added an attractive female presence to the whole proceedings. In a sketch paying tribute to *Round the Horne*, **Phil Birkett** and **Francis Gater** showed themselves a match for the original team of Kenneth Horne, Kenneth Williams and the eponymous Douglas Smith.



Jo Swarbrick

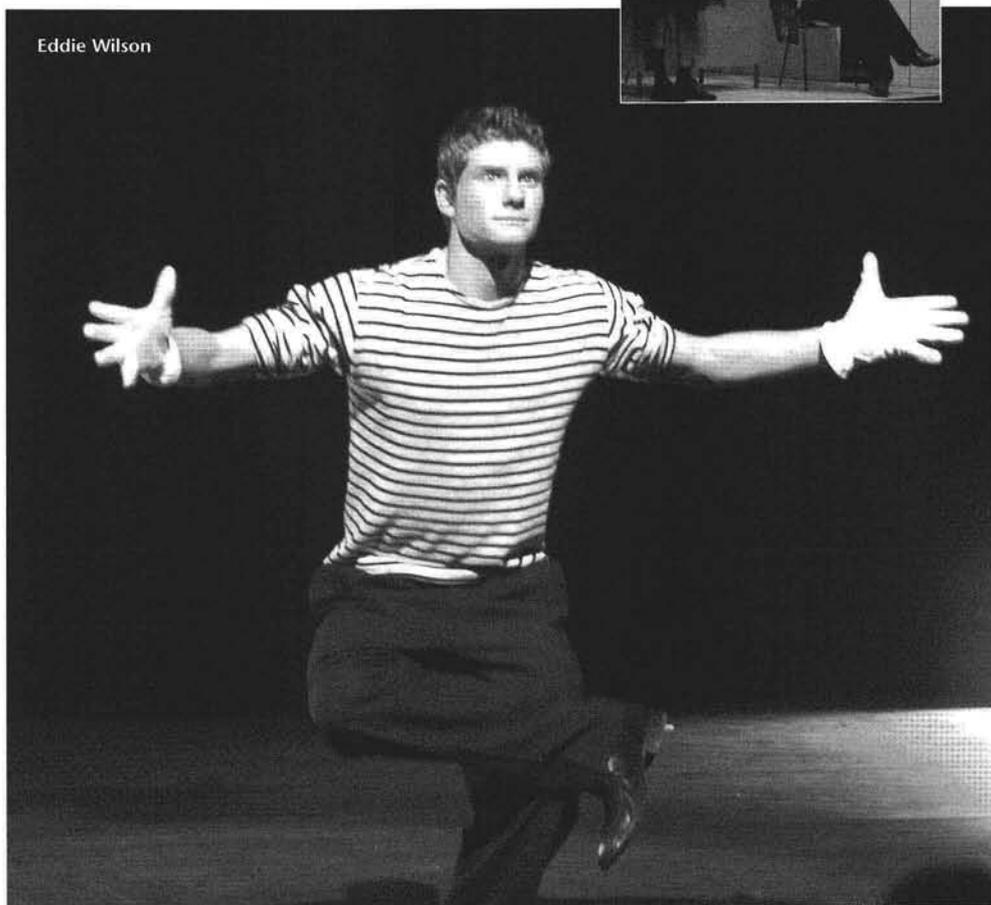
The impressive *Phelps' Band* deserve special congratulations. **Alex Ingham Brooke**, **Matthew Stagg**, **Paul Anthony**, **Bayly Shelton** and **Paul Godsmark** were well rehearsed and well received by the audience and gave an impressive rendition of Jimi Hendrix's *All Along the Watchtower*.

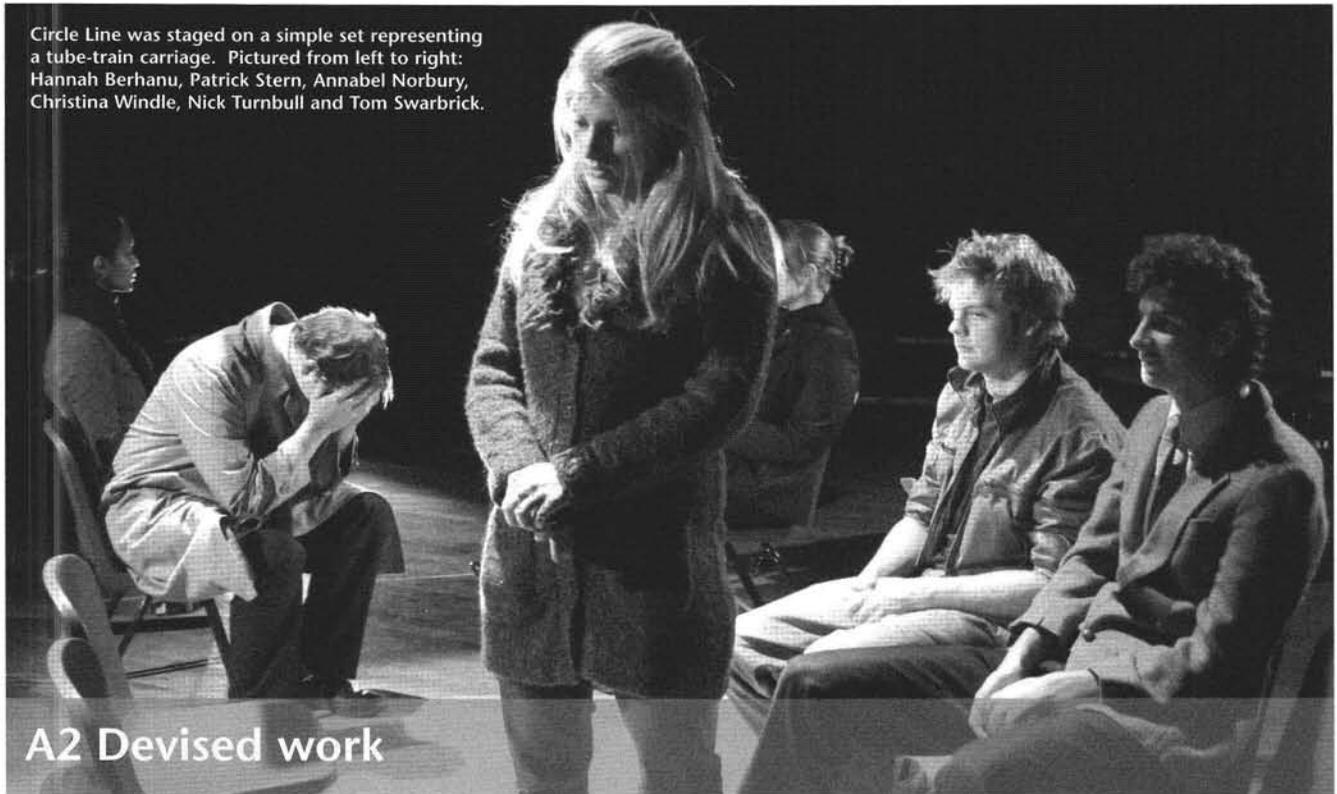
There might be some doubt over **Sam Johnson's** future career, but there should be no doubt that, should he chose to pursue it, a bright future in the comedy business beckons for **Tim Dawson**.

Thom Lodge 6 JEF



Singer Alex Ingham Brooke with Phelps' Band





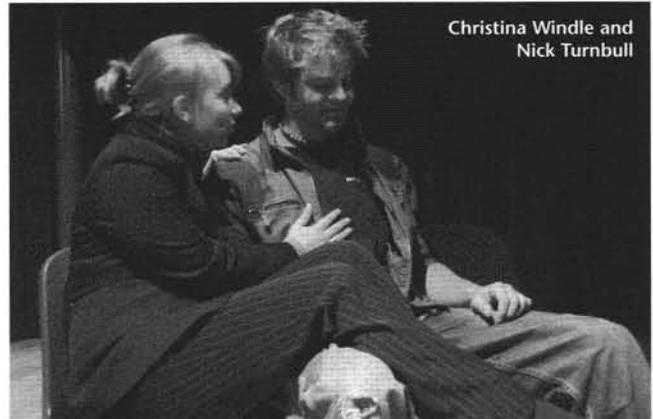
Circle Line was staged on a simple set representing a tube-train carriage. Pictured from left to right: Hannah Berhanu, Patrick Stern, Annabel Norbury, Christina Windle, Nick Turnbull and Tom Swarbrick.

A2 Devised work

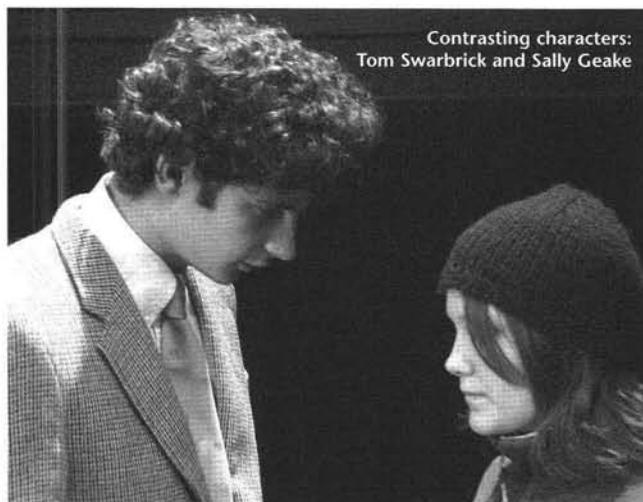
The first part of the A2 Theatre Studies course involves performances of original pieces of theatre created by the students. This year's devised plays were called *Circle Line* and *Porphyria's Lover*. Both were presented in the studio theatre at St Helen's during November 2004.

Circle Line

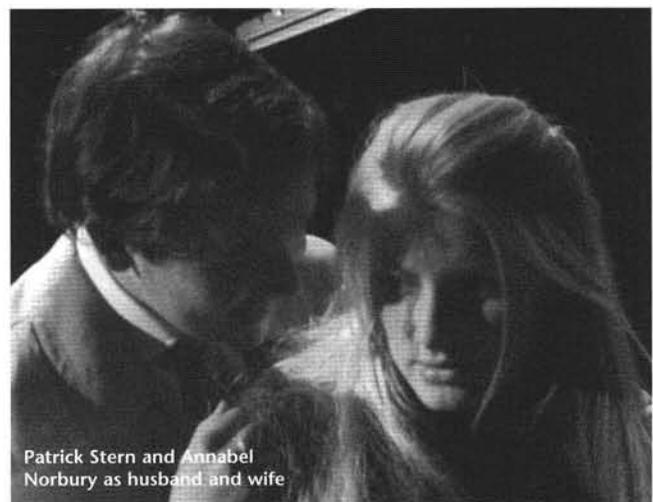
Circle Line was the work of Tom Swarbrick, Nick Turnbull, Patrick Stern, Annabel Norbury, Christina Windle, Sally Geake and Hannah Berhanu. Its starting point was a true story about the discovery of a corpse on a London Underground train. The cast used this as a springboard for exploring the failure of modern society to connect and communicate. Lines from TS Eliot's *Choruses from the Rock* provided another spur: "The desert is not only around the corner, / The desert is squeezed in the tube-train next to you, / The desert is in the heart of your brother."



Christina Windle and Nick Turnbull



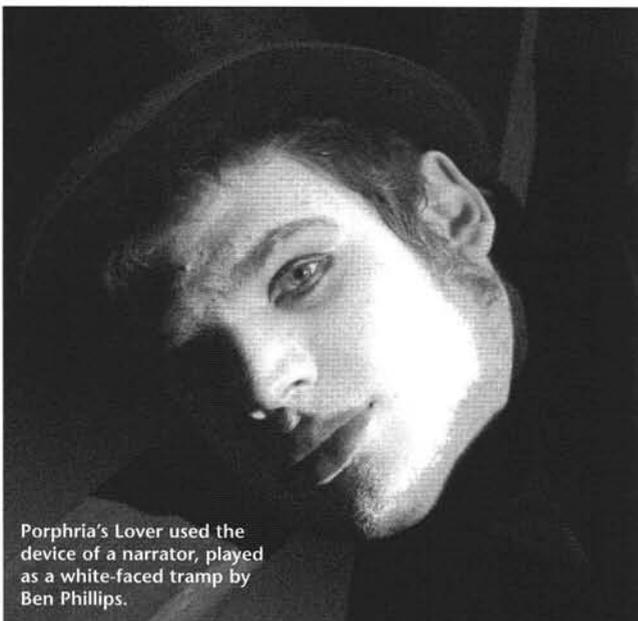
Contrasting characters: Tom Swarbrick and Sally Geake



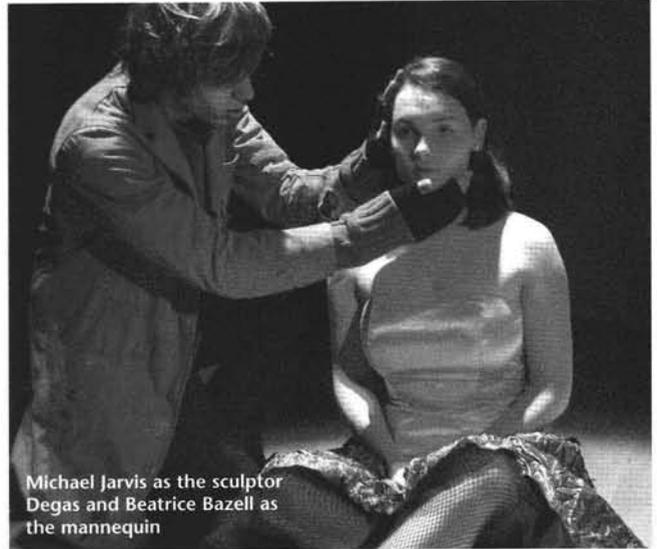
Patrick Stern and Annabel Norbury as husband and wife



Jonathan Garrett is transfixed by the silhouette of the mannequin (played by Beatrice Bazell)



Porphria's Lover used the device of a narrator, played as a white-faced tramp by Ben Phillips.

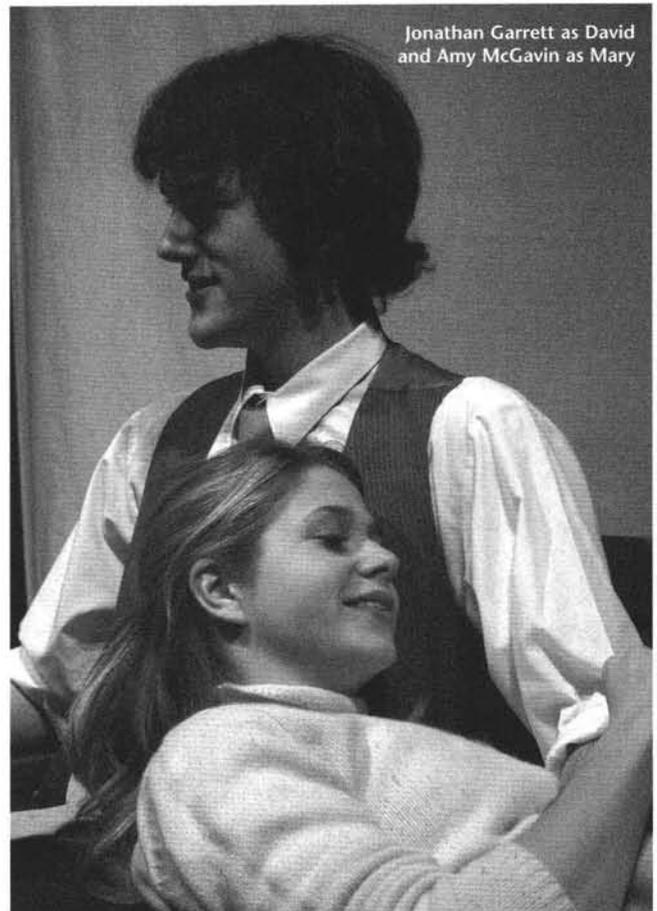


Michael Jarvis as the sculptor Degas and Beatrice Bazell as the mannequin

Porphyria's Lover

Porphyria's Lover was devised by **Ben Phillips, Jonathan Garrett, Edward Rowett, Michael Jarvis, Callum Francis, Amy McGavin** and **Beatrice Bazell**. This time inspiration came from the ballet *Coppelia* by Delibes, in which a man falls in love with a mechanical doll. In this version of the tale, the bewitching beauty of a sculptor's creation caused havoc in the lives of friends and lovers alike.

Jeremy Taylor



Jonathan Garrett as David and Amy McGavin as Mary



Susan's audition for the big time – (left to right): Glogauer (Ben Phillips), George (Nick Turnbull), Susan (Amy McGavin and Kammerling (Edward Rowett))

Once In a Lifetime

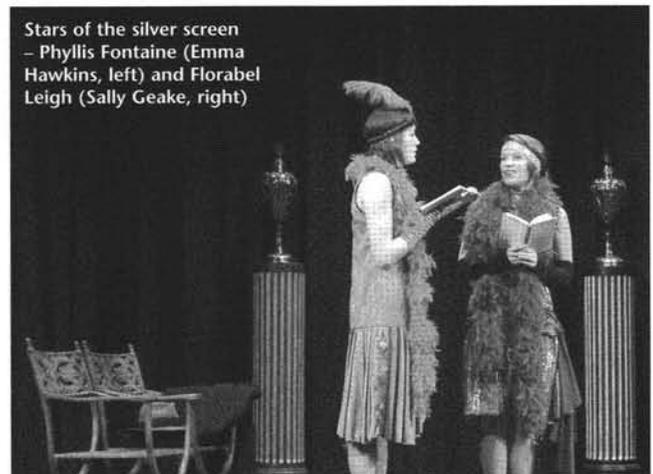
Moss Hart and George Kaufman's *Once in a Lifetime* is set in America in the 1920s and tells the story of three out-of-work vaudeville actors who leave New York for Hollywood to make their fortunes. It is the start of the talking pictures era and May (Hannah Berhanu), Jerry (Tom Swarbrick) and George (Nick Turnbull) masquerade as voice coaches to the stars. Along the way, they meet some of the outside characters that inhabit Hollywood, including movie mogul Herman Glogauer (Ben Phillips), journalist Helen Hobart (Laura Burns) and film director Rudolf Kammerling (Edward Rowett) who, between them, control the destinies of an army of young hopefuls. Prominent among them is a simple country girl called Susan Walker (Amy McGavin) who has come to Hollywood with her mother (Christina Windle) in the hope of landing a screen role. She lacks any discernible talent, but that does not prevent her from winning George's affections, and the lead in a lamentable Hollywood epic. In the best Busby Berkley tradition, all ends happily with George and Susan marrying, and May and Jerry's futures seemingly assured.

Written as an affectionate satire on the excesses of Hollywood in the Howard Hughes era, the play was presented in the Amey Theatre on 2, 3 and 4 December 2004 with a cast of over fifty senior pupils on stage, a band of seventeen singers and instrumentalists in the pit under Simon Whalley's expert direction and a backstage crew of another twenty or so under the management of Phil Norris, all drawn from Abingdon and St Helen's. The sets were designed by Chris Biggs, lighting was designed and operated by Matthew Smith, sound design was by Chris Parker and technical management was by OAs Tom Bennellick and Ash Verjee. Sue Wigmore was in charge of costumes, photographs were taken by James Nairne and the play was directed by Jo Watt and Jeremy Taylor.

Jeremy Taylor

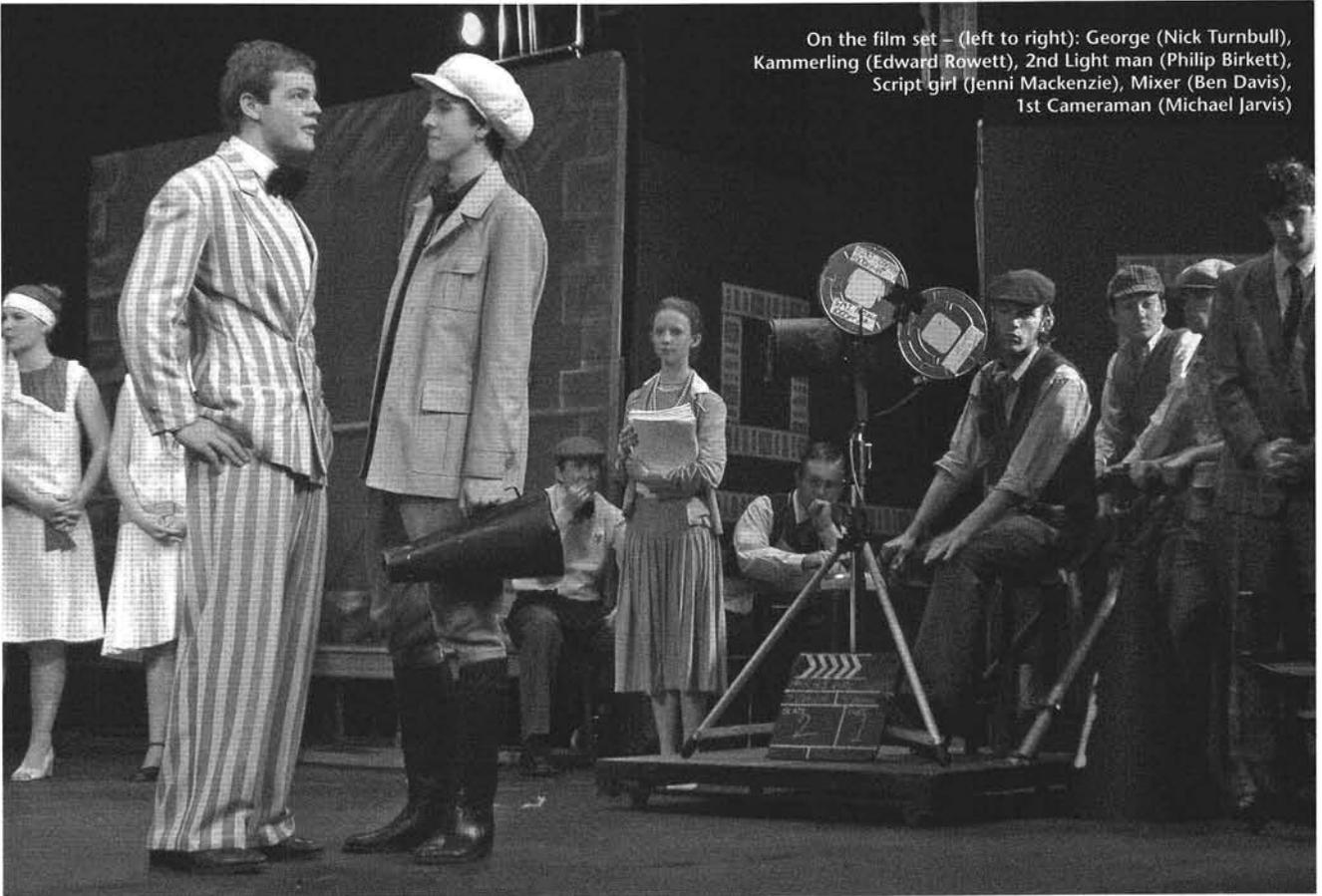


Tempers fray at the studio – Kammerling (Edward Rowett, left) and Miss Leighton (Annabel Norbury)

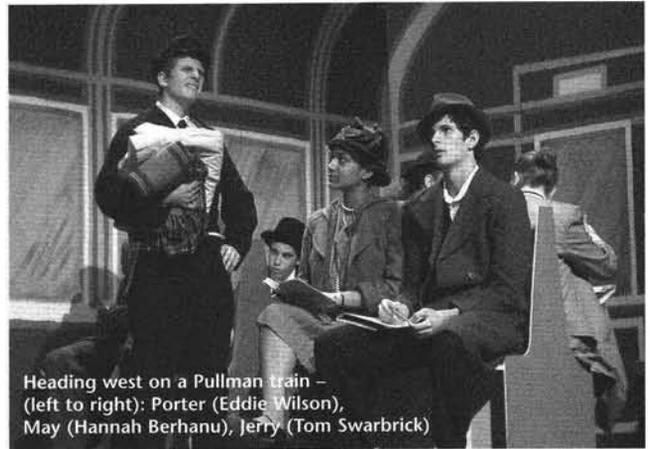


Stars of the silver screen – Phyllis Fontaine (Emma Hawkins, left) and Florabel Leigh (Sally Geake, right)

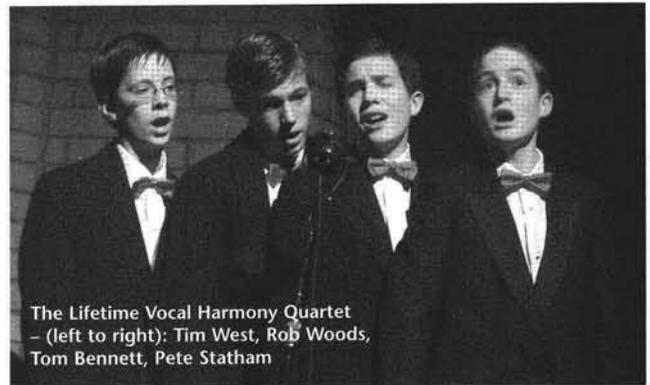
On the film set – (left to right): George (Nick Turnbull), Kammerling (Edward Rowett), 2nd Light man (Philip Birkett), Script girl (Jenni Mackenzie), Mixer (Ben Davis), 1st Cameraman (Michael Jarvis)



Desperate for an interview with Glogauer – Lawrence Vail (George Cowie, left) and Miss Leighton (Annabel Norbury)



Heading west on a Pullman train – (left to right): Porter (Eddie Wilson), May (Hannah Berhanu), Jerry (Tom Swarbrick)



The Lifetime Vocal Harmony Quartet – (left to right): Tim West, Rob Woods, Tom Bennett, Pete Statham

The coming of the new people:
Third Year drama students from
Abingdon perform a 'black light'
sequence from William Golding's
The Inheritors at the start of
Dark Lights



Dark Lights

Dark Lights was an evening of drama, music and fire sculptures inspired by the mid-winter solstice. It took place on 27 January 2005 in the Amey Theatre and on Upper Field and was organised primarily to raise funds for lighting equipment in the new drama studio at Abingdon. It brought together pupils from all year-groups at Abingdon and St Helen's as well as former pupils from both schools.

The evening explored ideas of light and dark. The first half began by immersing the audience in the Dark Ages through an extract from John McGrath's *Border Warfare*, performed as a soundscape created by Ash Verjee OA and Upper Sixth Theatre Studies students. This was followed by part of William Golding's novel *The Inheritors* in a brilliant 'black light' staging devised by Alison Quick with a Third Year drama class performing to music by James Macmillan.

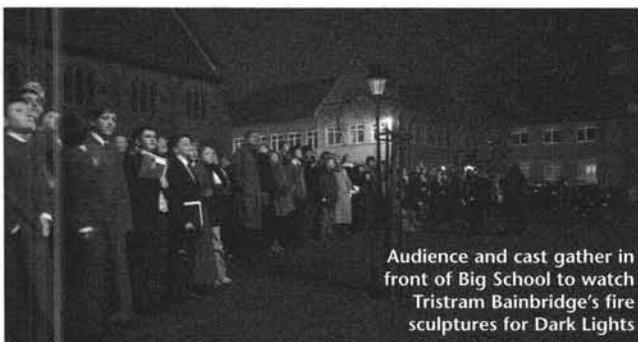
Fourth Year drama classes from Abingdon and St Helen's performed scenes from Carol Ann Duffy's *Grimm Tales*, including *Hansel and Gretel* (directed by Jo Watt) and *Ashputtel* (directed by Alison Quick). The Junior Drama Club presented an extract from *The Tiger's Bones* by Ted Hughes (directed by Finola Donovan) as the culmination of a sequence that linked lines from Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*, a song by the Golden Gate Quartet called *Atom and Evil* and film of the first atomic bomb explosions (edited by Tom Bennellick OA). Throughout the first half, scenes were linked by lines from Shakespeare and the Old Testament performed by Simon Evans OA.

The Chapel Choir brought a ray of light to proceedings as they performed Britten's *Hymn to the Virgin* (directed by Simon Whalley) before Chris Biggs read T.S. Eliot's *The Journey of the Magi*. The audience was then ushered out onto Upper Field by masked Green Men (played by a Fourth Year drama class) to see the highlight (in every sense) of the evening – a brilliant sequence of four fire sculptures with music and fireworks created by Sixth Form artist Tristram Bainbridge.

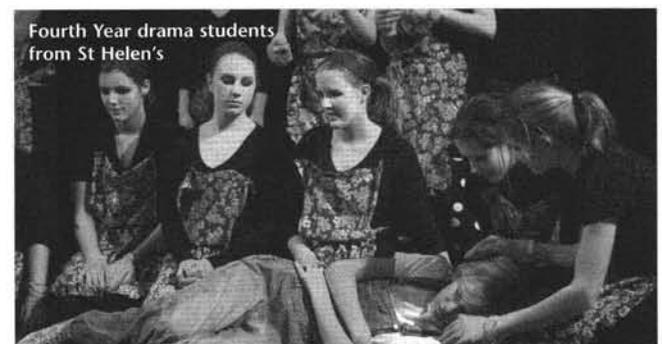
The second half was lighter in every sense. Fourth Year musical sensations *The Park Roaders* kicked off a programme of jazz, gospel, magic and comedy that featured OAs George Potter (vocals), Mike Chilcott (bass) and Simon Evans (magic), as well as former St Helen's pupil Sarah Hoblyn (vocals) with backing from distinguished pianist Alex Hawkins and drummer Ben Robins. Tim Dawson, Eddie Wilson and Ben Lawson performed comedy sketches; we saw film of Martin Luther King's last speech (edited by Tom Bennellick); the St Helen's gospel choir sang *Fields of Gold* and *Oh Happy Day* and Sixth Form Theatre Studies students brought proceedings to a close with an extract from Lee Hall's play *Spoonface Steinberg* called *Finding the Spark*.

The evening raised £1800 which, together with a grant from TASS of £750, enabled us to purchase fourteen new lanterns for the studio theatre at Abingdon. A further sum was raised for the Tsunami Relief appeal. Warmest thanks go to all the performers, staff and parents who contributed to the event.

Jeremy Taylor



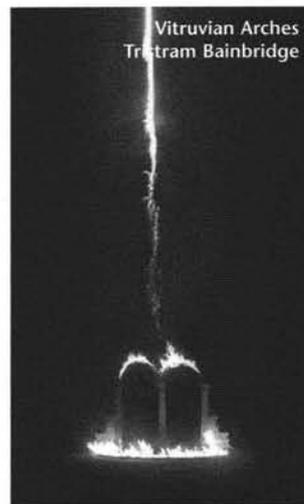
Audience and cast gather in front of Big School to watch Tristram Bainbridge's fire sculptures for *Dark Lights*



Fourth Year drama students from St Helen's



The Dark Lights Quartet (left to right): Alex Hawkins (piano), George Potter OA (vocals), Ben Robins (drums), Mike Chilcott OA (bass)



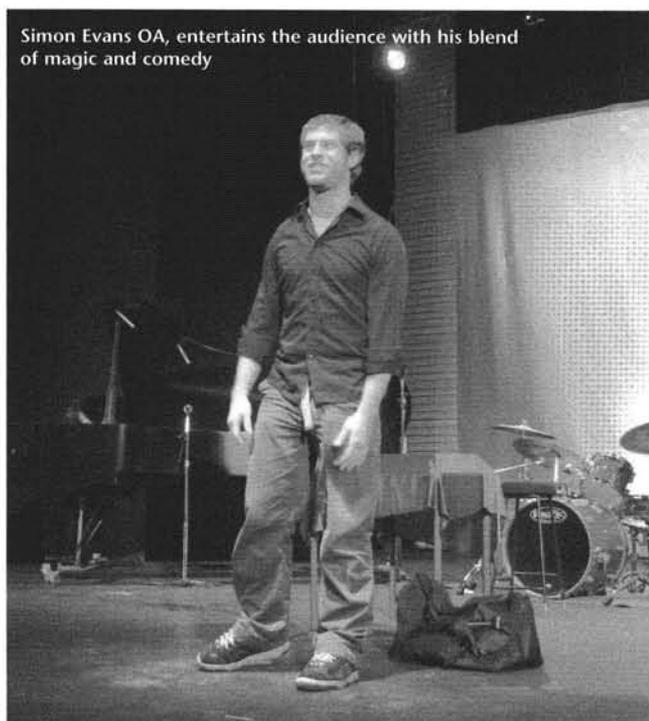
Vitruvian Arches
Tristram Bainbridge



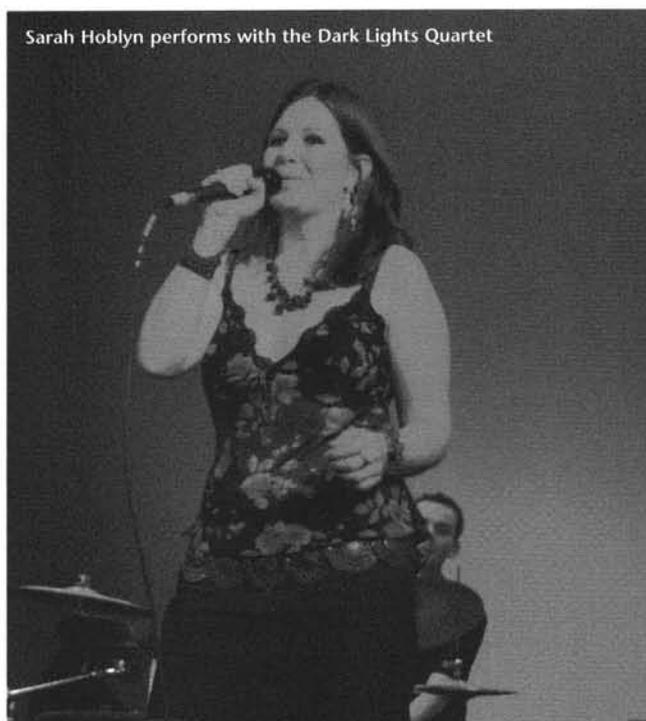
Creation Box – Tristram Bainbridge



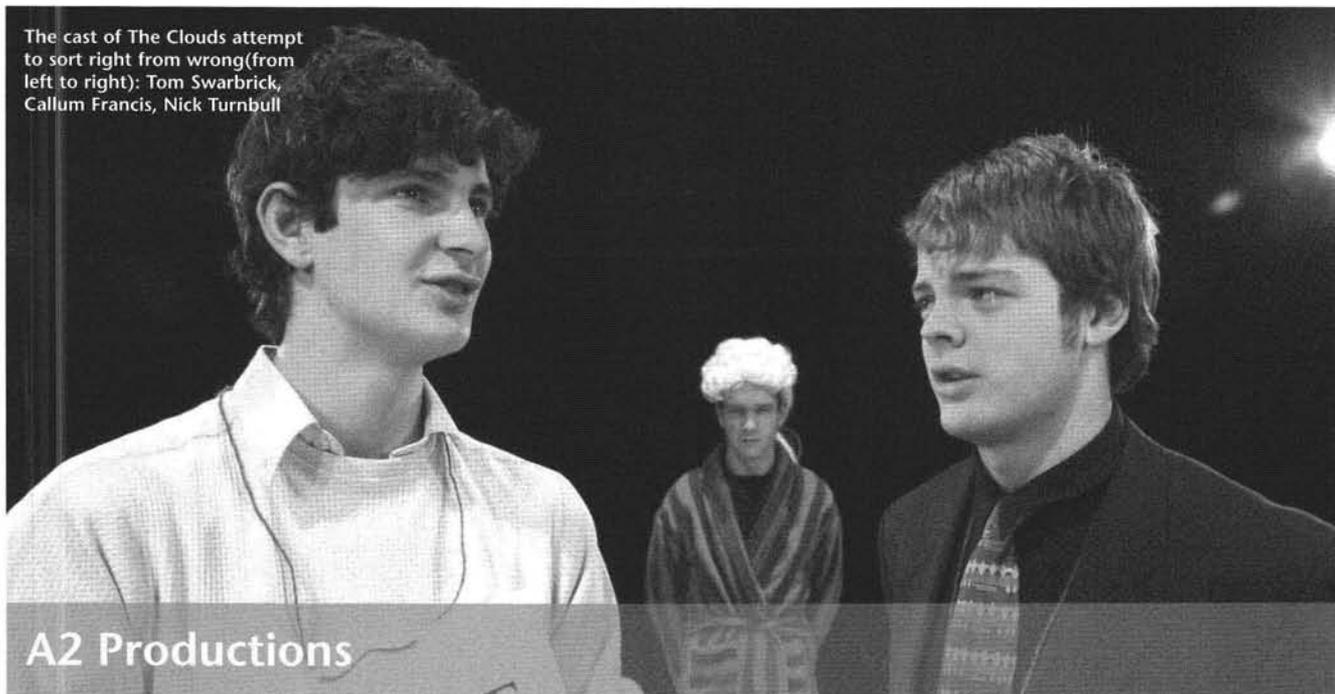
"Hello, Headmaster" –
Ben Lawson takes a call



Simon Evans OA, entertains the audience with his blend of magic and comedy



Sarah Hoblyn performs with the Dark Lights Quartet



The cast of *The Clouds* attempt to sort right from wrong (from left to right): Tom Swarbrick, Callum Francis, Nick Turnbull

A2 Productions

The second part of the A2 Theatre Studies course involves another performance, this time of a shortened version of a published play directed and interpreted by the students. In March 2005, the studio theatre at St Helen's hosted four of these productions – *La Ronde*, *The Clouds*, *The Homecoming* and *Equus*.

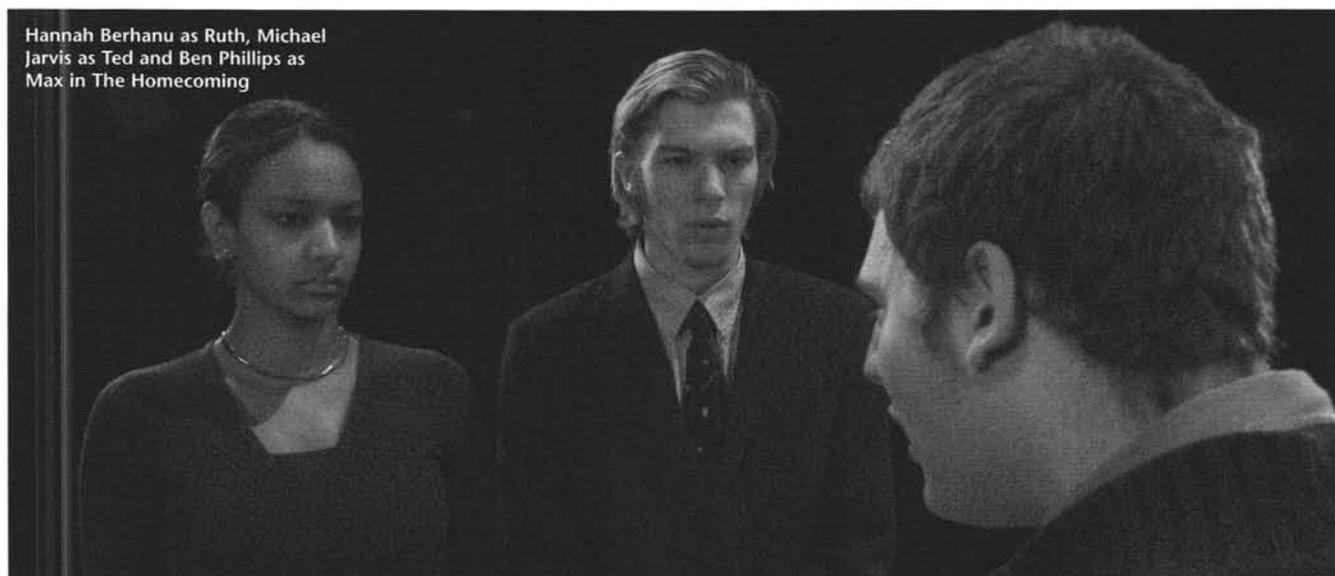
La Ronde is a little-known play by Schnitzler about the infidelities of a group of friends. It was given a highly enjoyable modern dress outing by **Patrick Stern**, **Jonathan Garrett**, Sally Geake and Annabel Norbury, complete with swish laptops, stylish office furniture, well chosen music and state-of-the-art powerpoint slides.

The Clouds is a comedy by Aristophanes that was first performed in 423 BC in Athens. Then it was seen as an attack on 'modern' education and the followers of Socrates. In this version, **Tom Swarbrick**, **Nick Turnbull** and **Callum Francis** made parallels with the 'Americanization' of current political thinking and scored a number of comic hits through their confident portrayal of a range of transatlantic characters.

Harold Pinter's *The Homecoming* lived up to its name by bringing us back to Britain and the story of a son's return to the bosom of his family in the company of his new wife. **Edward Rowett**, **Ben Phillips**, **Michael Jarvis** and Hannah Berhanu gave Pinter's dark comedy a delicious twist by setting the play in a boxing ring to bring to the fore the suppressed violence and verbal sparring that is a constant feature of Pinter's writing.

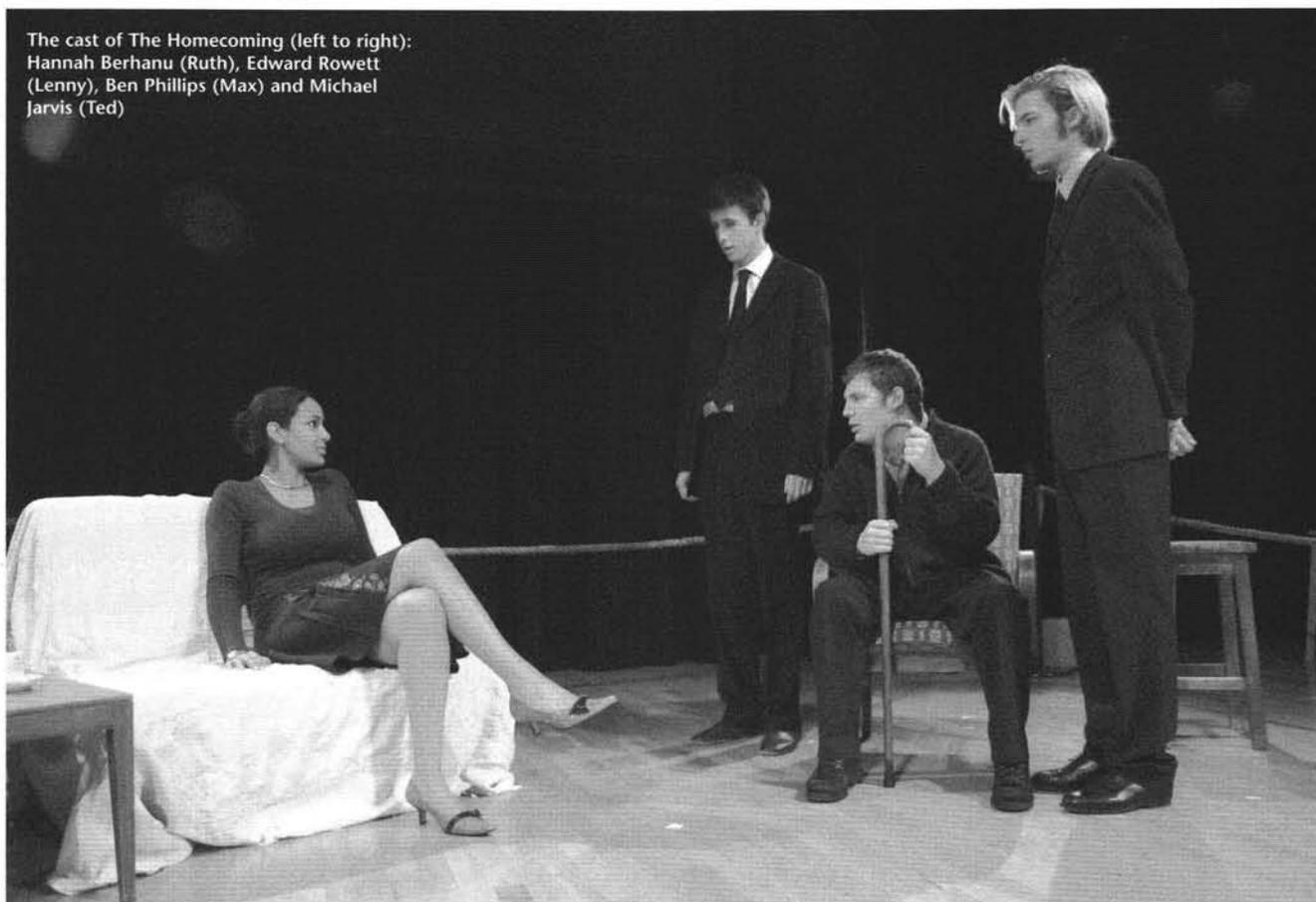
Perhaps the most striking of all the productions was an all-female version of Peter Shaffer's *Equus*, a psychological drama that explores the conflict between rational and instinctive behaviour. Here, pared down to its essential characters – a psychiatrist, a young stable-hand and a parent – the play was revealed in all its searing intensity by Christina Windle, Amy McGavin and Beatrice Bazell.

Jeremy Taylor

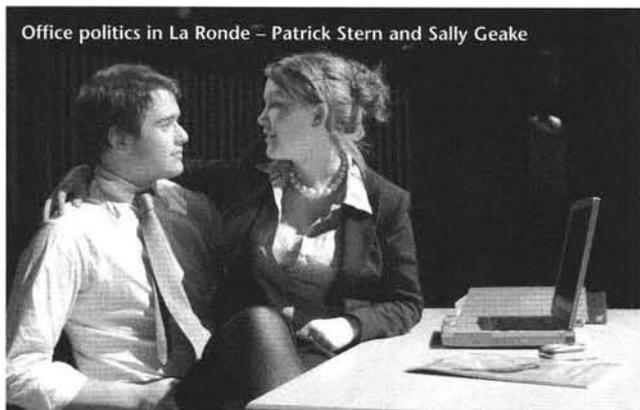


Hannah Berhanu as Ruth, Michael Jarvis as Ted and Ben Phillips as Max in *The Homecoming*

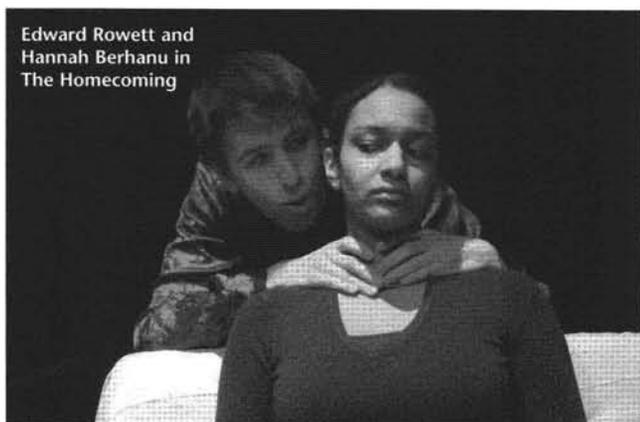
The cast of *The Homecoming* (left to right):
Hannah Berhanu (Ruth), Edward Rowett
(Lenny), Ben Phillips (Max) and Michael
Jarvis (Ted)



Office politics in *La Ronde* – Patrick Stern and Sally Geake



Edward Rowett and
Hannah Berhanu in
The Homecoming



Amy McGavin as
Strang in *Equus*
by Peter Shaffer

Masked onlookers: Tom Mitchell (left) and Ben Lawson (right) in *Blood Wedding*



AS Productions

The first week of May saw performances of four plays involving Theatre Studies students in the Lower Sixth as part of their AS course. Once again, the productions were staged in the splendid new studio theatre at St Helen's and the two performances of each play occupied the best part of two days.

Lorca's *Blood Wedding* opened proceedings with **Ben Lawson**, **Tom Mitchell**, Astrid Gunn, Scarlett Nash, Emily Watts and Helen Wyatt all delivering passionate performances in this hot and intense piece of theatre directed by **Alison Quick**.

The Good Person of Setzuan came next. Brecht's play is a complex parable about the role of goodness in a greedy and heartless world. Directed by Moya Mason, it featured good ensemble work by **Francis Gater**, **Callum Johnson**, **Nick Robinson**, Daisy Balsdon, Emily Craven, Sophie Cumber, Rachel Dent, Jessie Little and Hannah Calcutt.

Durrenmatt's *The Visit* received a wonderfully adventurous staging in a promenade production directed by Jo Watt and Ash Verjee

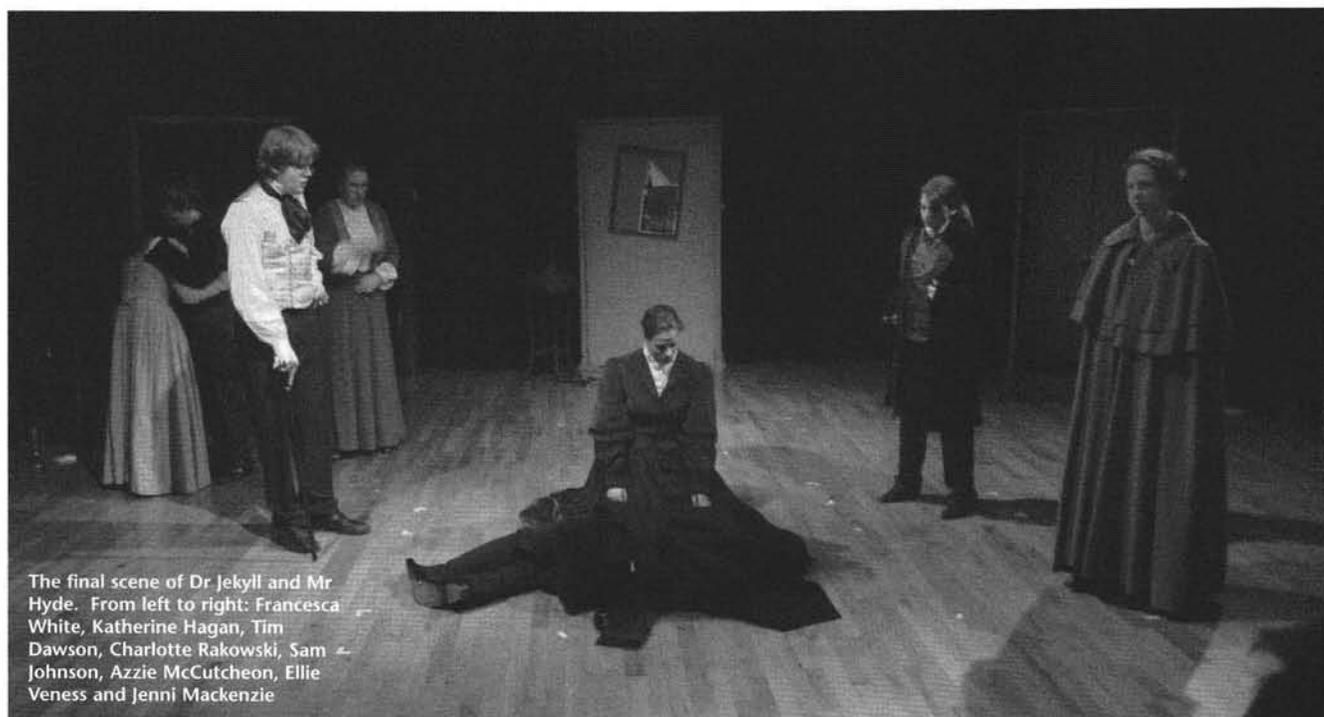
OA that began in the Yolande Paterson Hall, then graduated to a space in the wings stage right before coming to rest in the studio theatre. Excellent performances were given by all members of the cast, which comprised **Bayly Shelton**, **Jo Swarbrick**, **Eddie Wilson**, Lucy Evans, Meriel Flint, Zoe Gardner, Caitlin Nairne, Rachel Pearmain and Kate Shouesmith.

The epic theatrical journey concluded with David Edgar's version of Stevenson's *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*, directed by Nick Rawlinson, OA and **Jeremy Taylor**. The transformation of the central character from respectable doctor to 'fiend of hell' was echoed in this production by a policy of role- and gender-swapping that enabled the predominantly female cast to play a variety of characters. **Tim Dawson**, **Philip Dearlove**, **Sam Johnson**, Katherine Hagan, Azzie McCutcheon, Jenni Mackenzie, Charlotte Rakowski, Ellie Veness and Francesca White all rose to the challenge with gusto.

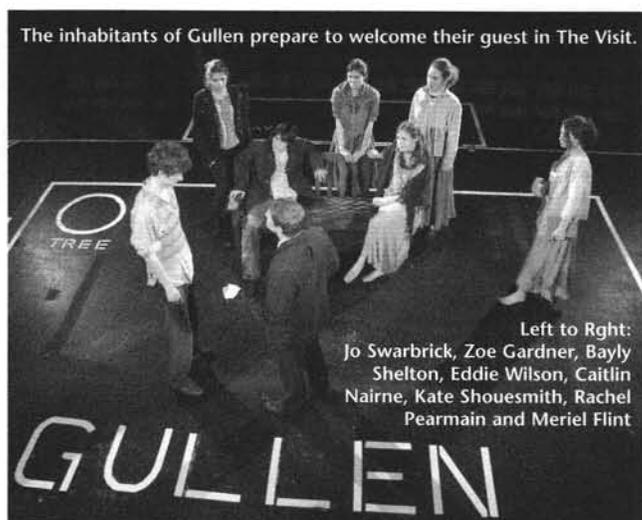
Jeremy Taylor



From left to right: Emily Watts, Tom Mitchell, Helen Wyatt and Astrid Gunn in a scene from *Blood Wedding*

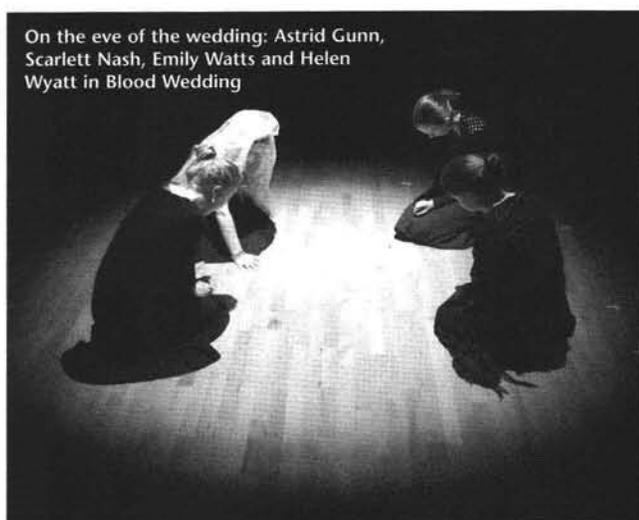


The final scene of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde. From left to right: Francesca White, Katherine Hagan, Tim Dawson, Charlotte Rakowski, Sam Johnson, Azzie McCutcheon, Ellie Veness and Jenni Mackenzie

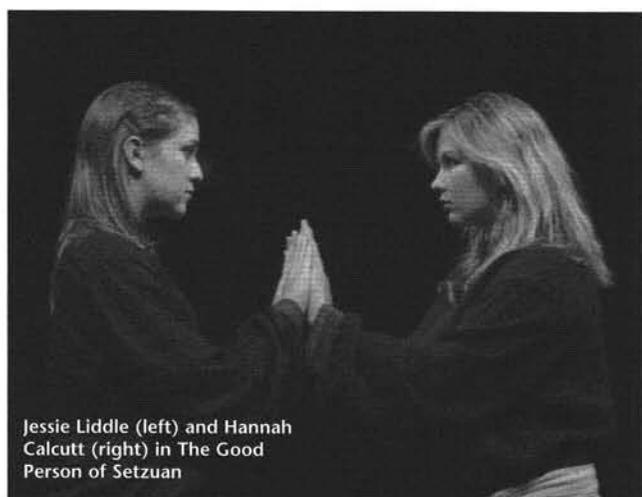


The inhabitants of Gullen prepare to welcome their guest in The Visit.

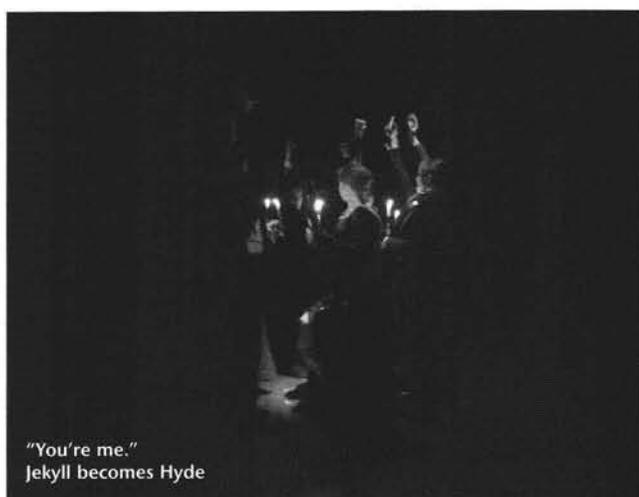
Left to Right: Jo Swarbrick, Zoe Gardner, Bayly Shelton, Eddie Wilson, Caitlin Nairne, Kate Shouesmith, Rachel Pearmain and Meriel Flint



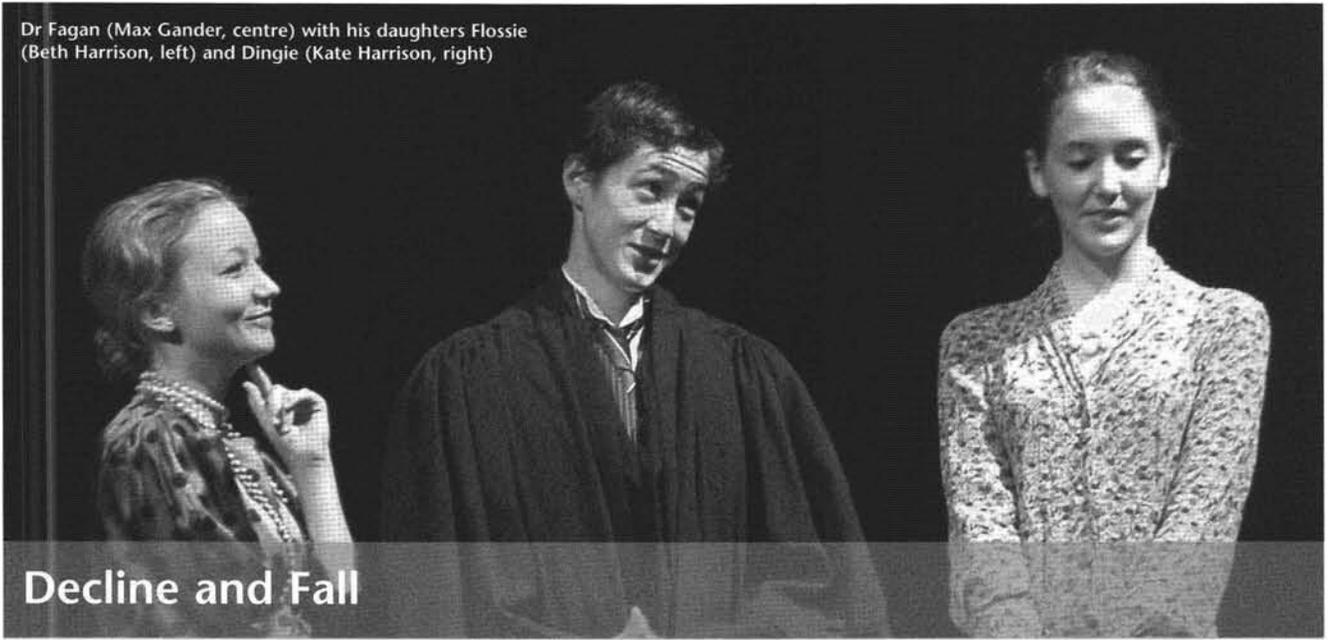
On the eve of the wedding: Astrid Gunn, Scarlett Nash, Emily Watts and Helen Wyatt in Blood Wedding



Jessie Liddle (left) and Hannah Calcutt (right) in The Good Person of Setzuan



"You're me."
Jekyll becomes Hyde



Dr Fagan (Max Gander, centre) with his daughters Flossie (Beth Harrison, left) and Dingie (Kate Harrison, right)

Decline and Fall

With the programme of examination drama completed, the remainder of the Summer term presented a welcome opportunity to return to extra-curricular productions, and the first of these was a new adaptation of Evelyn Waugh's classic novel *Decline and Fall*, which was performed in the Amey Theatre on 23 and 24 June 2005 by Fourth Year pupils from Abingdon and St Helen's.

The large cast was headed by **Joe Buckley**, who gave a tremendous performance as the central character, Paul Pennyfeather. Almost never off the stage, he received excellent support from **Max Gander** as Dr Fagan, **Oliver Cook** as Captain Grimes, **Aidan Thorne** as Mr Prendergast, Camilla Spence as Margot Beste-Chetwynde and **Alex Kearley-Shiers** as her son Peter, as well as the four narrators, played by **Ed Hallett**, **Finlay Taylor**, **Michael Nagi** and **Josh Turrill**.

Comic cameos abounded: **Mark Pluck** was a delight as Mr Postlethwaite, Domestic Bursar of Scone College; **Hugh Graham** was suitably shady as Philbrick the butler; Beth Carter and Kate Harrison caught just the right note as Fagan's ghastly daughters, Flossie and Dingie; **Tom Durrands** was magnificently incoherent as the Welsh bandmaster, Mr Davies; Kashia Kirkland terrified the life out of everyone as Lady Circumference; **Harry Hole** was splendidly weird as professor Otto Silenus, the eccentric German

architect; **Tom Bennett** and **Henry Locatelli-Malacrida** were a scream as the 'flamboyant' socialites, Miles Malpractice and David Lennox; **Pete Statham** was a wonderfully doddering Judge at the Old Bailey, whilst **Josh Wilkins**, **Paddy Gervers**, **Paddy Appleton**, **Rob Woods**, **Tom Metcalf**, **Laurie Havelock**, **Simon Edwards** and **Richard Moore** all caught the eye in a large number of different roles too numerous to mention individually but absolutely essential to the success of the production.

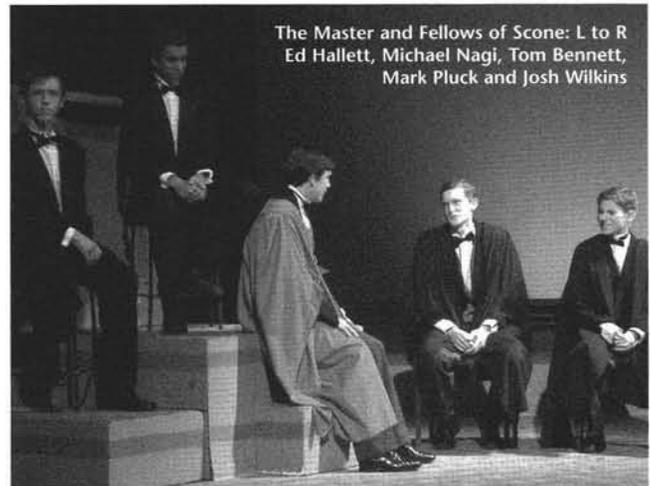
The girls from St Helen's played no less impressive a part, despite the bias of a script that favoured the boys in terms of speaking parts. In addition to those already mentioned, there were valuable contributions from Holly Harris, Chloe Hazell, Taline Hill, Hannah Hufford, Rosie Liddle, Emma Nairne, Lucy Stewart, Rebecca Stewart, Tiffany Wilcox, Nicola Williams and Louise Zuzarte.

Beyond the stage, **Simon Whalley** oversaw every aspect of the play's music with his customary zest and superb attention to detail. **Chris Biggs** ingeniously designed a set that would also serve *Lord of the Flies* a week later. **Matthew Smith**, **Phil Norris** and **Chris Parker** were commanding figures in the technical gallery, whilst **Oliver Aiken** was a useful assistant to the directors, **Alison Quick** and **Jeremy Taylor**.

Jeremy Taylor

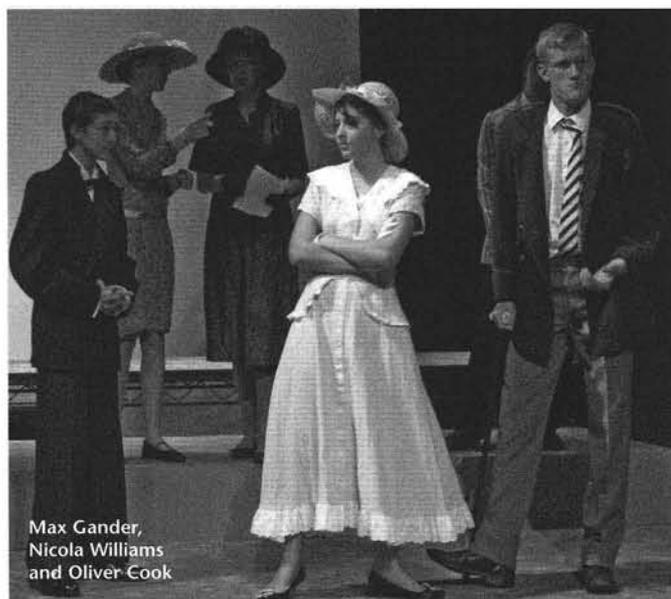


Dr Fagan offers Paul Pennyfeather a job. Max Gander (left) and Joe Buckley (right)



The Master and Fellows of Scone: L to R Ed Hallett, Michael Nagi, Tom Bennett, Mark Pluck and Josh Wilkins

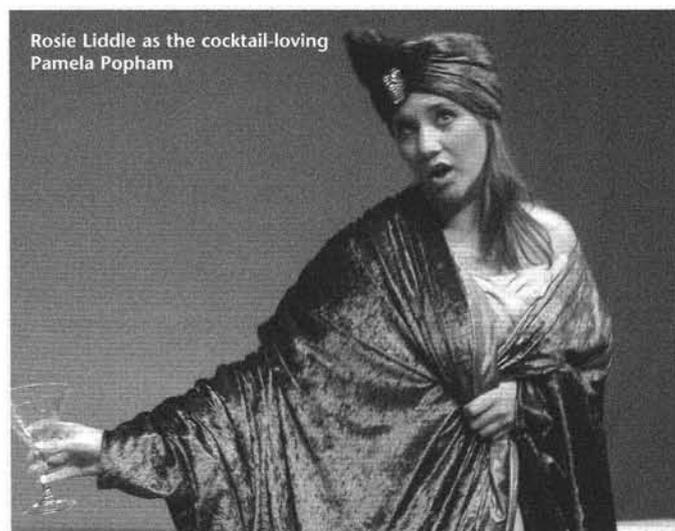
"Gaudemus igitur - let us rejoice while we are young"



Max Gander,
Nicola Williams
and Oliver Cook



L to R Henry Locatelli-Malacrida,
Tom Durrands, Paddy Gervers
and Patrick Appleton



Rosie Liddle as the cocktail-loving
Pamela Popham



The Chorus (from left to right): Michael
Nagi, Ed Hallett, Finlay Taylor and Josh Turrill



Lord of the Flies

Our summer play, *Lord of the Flies* by William Golding, was the pinnacle of the year's work in Junior Drama Club. The parts were cast in the Lent term, and we began to learn our lines. Halfway through the Summer term we were all slightly worried about the performance; some rehearsals had had to be cancelled, and we could not use the Amey Theatre for rehearsal due to the Middle School play rehearsing there. Nevertheless, we all worked very hard during the rehearsal time that we did have and, gradually, the play began to come together. We had great fun 'distressing' and spray-painting our old school uniforms to make our costumes suitable for savages.

We first managed to use the Amey Theatre on the Sunday before the performances. It was difficult to get used to the raked areas at the back of the stage, and Miss Donovan was constantly reminding us about levels and spacing in order to make the view

more interesting for the audience. It was also our first rehearsal with the stage lighting and, although we had to stop a few times, the effect was excellent in the end.

On the night of the first performance we all felt fairly confident. When we got on stage, however, the play did not run as smoothly as we had hoped; we managed to miss out a chunk of the first act, giving Miss Donovan and the technical crew a stressful time. The rest of the performance proceeded with no problem, save a crate unexpectedly falling over straight before the line, "I thought I heard a noise". The second performance was word perfect, and we all felt very satisfied by the end. I speak for the entire cast in saying a huge 'Thank You!' to everyone who supported us, especially to Miss Donovan.

Joe Mason 2W



At the end of the Summer term the Junior Drama Club performed *Lord of the Flies* in the Amey Theatre.

We had a lot of fun rehearsing but it wasn't so much fun having to learn our lines. I played the part of Jack, the bully. It was a great part – but Jack is a completely different person to me. By the end of the performances my throat had nearly packed up because so many of my lines are shouted.

The costumes were interesting. We wore our old uniforms torn up, ripped and bloodstained. We also had to wear camouflage make-up so as to look as though we really had been surviving in the heat of the jungle.

When we got to the day of the actual performance, everyone was nearly dead from nerves. But it wasn't until 6.30, when we were having a run-through in the Ingham Room and someone shouted, "They're arriving", that mine really kicked in.

The performance began at 7 and all went really well – except when we missed out a chunk, but we recovered from that with ease. Nothing else went wrong and at the end of the last performance we were all jubilant. We had not only done it, we had enjoyed it and so, judging from the applause, had the audience.

Luke Abbott 2 SW



Film Unit

The Abingdon Film Unit was formed in September 2003 and enjoyed a remarkable first year under the guidance of **Michael Grigsby** OA, culminating in a programme of six new films at Abingdon and a memorable evening at the National Film Theatre in June 2004, when three of the boys' films were shown alongside some of Grigsby's early work. The Unit came to the attention of the national press, with articles in the *Times Educational Supplement*, the *Times* and the *Independent*.

After this exciting start, the Unit embarked on its second year with a keen desire to develop. As before, boys applied to join the Unit in September. Twenty-five were selected, with a further half-dozen joining a new 'music wing' under the direction of **Simon Whalley** to write and arrange music for the films.

The next development was the decision to explore fiction. Last year's films were exclusively documentaries. Now, a number of boys wanted to try the challenge of creating their own stories. This meant dealing with screenplays and actors. Philip Greenacre, a professional screenwriter, visited us in March to offer valuable insights to the craft of writing films. Actors were a little harder to pin down, but most were chosen from the ranks of the directors' friends, proving that a healthy nepotism remains the first law of film-making.

Another exciting 'first' was the chance to take the Unit abroad. **Douglas Aitken** invited members of the Film Unit to join a party of Sixth Form students on a four-day trip to Berlin during February. For many this was the highlight of the year, as three crews took to the streets of the German capital in search of the contrasts that characterise this great city. Despite the necessarily impromptu nature of the filming, some tremendous footage was recorded, and an idea for three short films emerged, each of which would look at a different aspect of the city. In the event, we managed to complete only one of these in time for the screening in May 2005. *Berlin – Toleranz*, directed by **Harry Cook**, examined the social and cultural differences between the fashionable Unter den Linden district and the predominantly Turkish community of Kreuzberg.

At one stage we hoped to have as many as thirteen new films to present in May. Inevitably, perhaps, the attempt to more than double the Unit's previous output proved too ambitious and some of the 'creative' films could not be finished. Nevertheless, we still managed to screen a programme that included eight new films, and two further shorts that had been made during the year were not included on the night: *The Other Half* was shot during the first weeks of the academic year to show to prospective parents on Open Day, whilst *Days in June* was a seven-minute 'trailer' for a longer film on the subject of four Old Abingdonians who lost their lives in Normandy. It was presented at a special reception and lunch for OAs from the 1927-1944 era, hosted by the **Headmaster** and **Mrs Turner** in December 2004.

Once again, we were incredibly fortunate to enjoy the services of an excellent team of professional tutors. Jonas Mortensen, Mikkel Eriksen and Nikolaj Larsen taught the boys how to use cameras, sound and editing equipment, and together with Michael Grigsby, our guru and mentor, guided the boys in the development of their ideas. We thank all of them for their care and leadership. One final thank you goes to **Kris Spencer** who helped to set up the Unit in 2003. His departure for a deputy headship at Latymer

Upper School in London at the end of the year meant saying goodbye to a much valued friend and colleague who contributed greatly to the success of the Unit in its first two years.

Jeremy Taylor

Abingdon Film Unit Programme, May 2005

1. Extract from *Diary for Timothy*, directed by Humphrey Jennings
2. Extract from *Once Upon a Time in the West*, directed by Sergio Leone
3. Extract from *Three Colours Blue*, directed by Krzysztof Kieslowski
4. *River at Dusk* (training exercise – image only) by Michael Jarvis and Harry Cook
5. *Toleranz* by Harry Cook, George Cowie, Edward Hofman & Ben Hollins

(Interviews translated by Bettina Fenninger)

6. *Facing a Rising Sun* by Paul Godsmark
7. *The Players* by Andrew McGrath, Tom Wakeling & Joel Rogers
8. *A Village Portrait* by Alexander Campbell, Robbie Hand & Edmund Caird
9. *Capoeira* by Ben Hollins, Richard Oastler & Bayly Shelton
10. *You Can't Dip Doritos in Jazz* by Oliver Zeldin, Jonas Muir Wood, David Ridley & Bayly Shelton
11. *Rosie* by George Cowie & Michael Rothkopf

Abingdon Film Unit 2004 – 5

Paul Anthony
Alexander Campbell
Edmund Caird
Harry Cook
George Cowie
Paul Godsmark
Robbie Hand
Edward Hofman
Ben Hollins
Max Hutchinson
Alex Ingham Brooke
Blake Ivinson
Michael Jarvis

Andrew McGrath
Alex Mugnaioni
Jonas Muir Wood
Richard Oastler
David Ridley
Michael Rothkopf
Joel Rogers
Bayly Shelton
Jo Swarbrick
Tom Swarbrick
Tom Wakeling
Oliver Zeldin

Film Unit Trip to Berlin – Der erste Ausflug

The Film Unit's first foreign trip took place in February 2005. We successfully managed to attach ourselves to the Sixth Form German excursion, with the result that at midnight on the 12th we checked into the Generator, a youth hostel that, with its 'fashionable' neon décor and its barrack-style dormitories, gave an idea of what it might look like if the Starship Enterprise crashed into East Berlin. I slept fitfully, vaguely expecting Patrick Stewart to leap from a corner and order us around.

After breakfast eaten under the relentless electric-blue-and-disinfectant-yellow lights that the proprietors had seen fit to deck the dining room with, we set out into the snow. Foolishly, I decided to brave the sub-zero temperature wearing only forty-seven layers. The aim for the morning was to 'recce' central Berlin, and generally see the sights. Happily, our hostel-cum-spacecraft was situated fairly near to Alexanderplatz, the centre of the former East Berlin and the home of the iconic Atom Clock. Throughout the trip, we travelled mainly by the tram system, which lives up to the German stereotype of ultra-efficiency, although the alphanumeric naming system leaves much to be desired in terms of memorability.

We took a brief walk around the Square and marvelled at the Soviet-style architecture in various stages of disassembly, then made our way to the Fernsehturm, the television tower and second largest building in Europe, which affords beautiful panoramic views of the city.

We then trekked to Unter den Linden, Berlin's answer to Piccadilly, at the end of which is the Brandenburger Tor. This magnificent monument was in former times the boundary between the German Democratic Republic and West Germany. We chilled there (literally) for a while, waiting to rejoin certain groups who were following different agendas, then travelled to Potsdamer Platz, a massive commercial centre funded by the Daimler-Chrysler Corporation, for lunch.

That evening we decided to visit the Reichstag and view Berlin in darkness from the glass dome on the roof. Alas, a long queue greeted us as most of Germany seemed to have the same idea. Although the snow impeded the outside view, the glimpses inside the German parliament were fascinating. After that, it was back to the Generator.

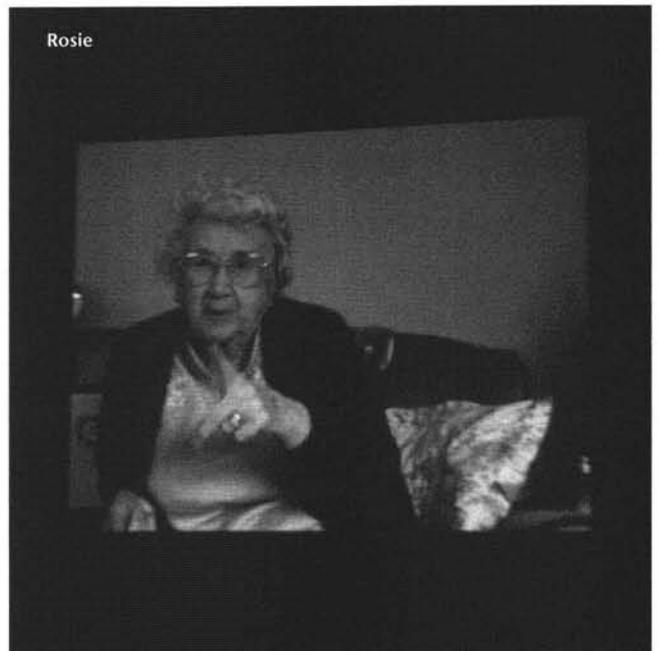
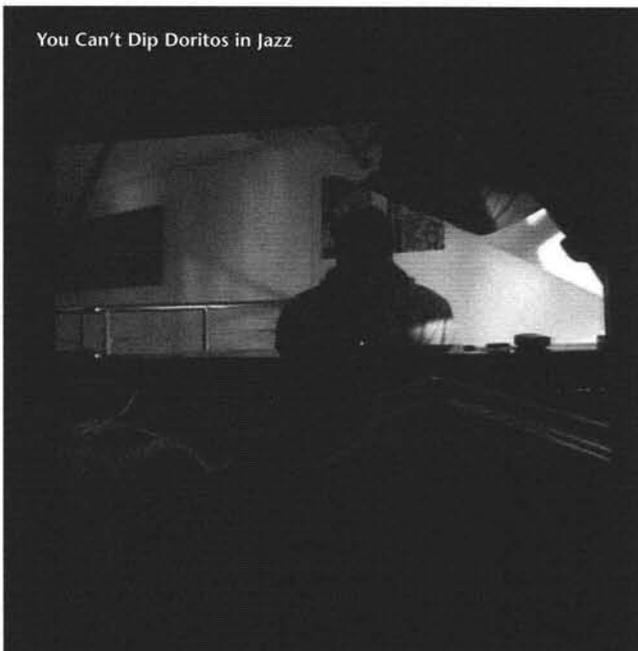
The following day we started shooting for the project. Our brief was to try and find the contrasts in the city. Our group had elected to explore social contrasts in Berlin through food, and the other two parties were examining the divisions between old and new architecture, and the relationship between men and machines. Our group returned to Unter den Linden, where we captured some of the 'café culture' in that part of the city.

On Tuesday we visited Kreuzberg which, to continue the London analogy, somewhat resembles Brick Lane. It is the home of the burgeoning immigrant population, and one hears just as much Turkish spoken there as German. We ate döner kebabs in a diner that was the polar opposite of the cafés we had been filming the day before, then moved back to Unter den Linden to visit the Film Museum where we learned about Marlene Dietrich, Fritz Lang and the rise of German cinema.

Wednesday was our final day, and my group went back to Kreuzberg to capture more of the contrasts there. We were stopped from filming on two occasions, which made it quite exciting, and we were chased after by a girl of Polish origin labouring under the misguided impression that we were from the BBC. She was desperate to be on television and gave us a very good interview about people's opinions on immigration.

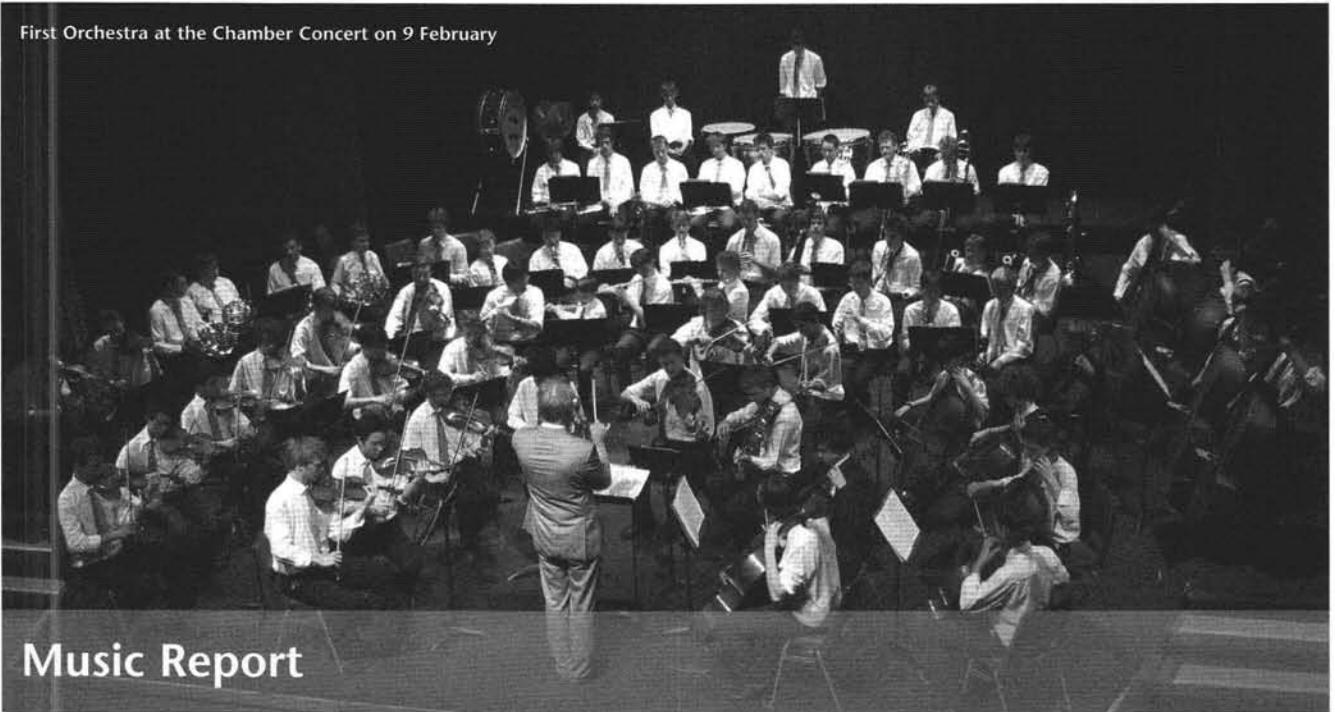
We left for the airport at 4 pm and arrived home in Abingdon at midnight. It was a fascinating experience, because, as well as the clean-cut surface of Berlin, we saw the raw side of the city, which was truly eye-opening.

Ben Hollins 4 JPCB



Music

First Orchestra at the Chamber Concert on 9 February



Music Report

A summary of one of the busiest musical years on record

The particular 'fullness' of the musical calendars was mostly accounted for by the extra start-of-term concerts which are reported elsewhere – they made for a particularly busy year in which the musicians were required to 'hit the ground running', so to speak.

It was good to be able to start the year with the StreetSmart concert and to work again with that very strong Upper Sixth group, now OAs. At the same time it was exciting to see the number of new First-Year musicians rise to over 90% of the whole year (after some judicious recruitment!). These factors accounted for one of the over-riding impressions of 2004-5: that it had one of the strongest groups of Lower School musicians in memory and this manifested itself in an astonishingly strong and enthusiastic Lower School Wind Band, good Lower School Strings and an excellent treble line in Chapel Choir. It promises exciting things, indeed, in the years ahead.

There was much else to celebrate at the start of the year. Some excellent A level and GCSE results greeted our return with 88% A and B grades at A level and 95% A* and A at GCSE. The practical examination results brought the tally of that previous year to high levels – nineteen grade 8 examinations were taken and passed during the course of 2003-4 and six at distinction level. A report on this academic year's music results appears elsewhere.

Another feature of 2004-5 was the discussion and planning for music tours and other celebrations. The main thrust was the exciting prospect of taking the orchestra on its most ambitious concert tour yet – a trip to the Far East, China and Hong Kong in July 2006 when the orchestra should be at one of its strongest peaks of recent years, even rivalling that of the group that toured Vienna, Prague and Budapest in 2002. The tour will be an important one for the School and will take the form of one of the highlights of the events planned to celebrate the School's 750th Anniversary year in 2006. By the end of the year it was clear that it had caught the imagination of parents and pupils, too, with many subscribing to the proposed adventure.

A smaller scale plan to take the Brass Band on tour also came to fruition during July this year and **Matthew Coffey's** report on our excursion to Holland also appears in this issue.

The previous year's crop of outstanding First Year musical recruits continued to cover themselves in glory with **Adrian Lo** (violin) providing the focus for an outstanding group of young musicians who led junior ensembles and played chamber music together. Whilst it was the trio of **Adrian Lo**, **Nicholas Ereaut** and **Alex Ereaut** who gained a finals place in the National Chamber Competition in 2004, this year it was the combination of **Adrian Lo** (violin), **Anthony Lloyd** (flute) and **Joe Mason** (piano) that won through to the finals with an unusual and demanding work by Martinu. Other fine successes included the gaining of places in the National Children's Orchestra by **Joe Mason** (French horn) and, in the first year, **David Mears** (clarinet).

The First Year Choir at the Christmas Concert



It did not, therefore, come as an enormous surprise at our annual Music Award Auditions in February to find that three of the four Music Scholarships offered were won by Abingdonians **Nicholas Ereaut, Adrian Lo** and **Joseph Mason**. The fourth, **Caspian Mitchard**, a New College chorister, is also about to join us as a Scholar – following in the footsteps of brothers **Tristan** and **Edward**. The intake of music award holders in 2005 is the largest on record and includes a good number of other Abingdonians – **Alex Ereaut, Anthony Lloyd, Veeral Manek** and **Aidan Thorne** did well to compete successfully in an exceptionally strong field of candidates.

It was wonderful to be able to start the academic year in our new Arts Centre and Music School, which, after two terms of use, was beginning to feel like home. The much needed acoustic treatment of the large Ingham Room, used for rehearsing the main bands and orchestras, made this a much more music-friendly space. It was much in use from the very start, as we put together the programme for the Town Hall Concert on 29 September (reported elsewhere).

Other early events included a professional cello recital by visitors Charlotte Forsey (cello) and Timothy Sidford (piano) which followed a Service of Dedication for the new east window in Chapel, commissioned from Nicholas Mynheer. The House Singing Competition, having been reinstated the previous year, was again scheduled for the end of the first half of term. A good standard was achieved, which meant Julian Macnamara, Director of Music at The Oratory School, had a challenging job as the adjudicator. After their success the previous year with *Can You Feel the Love Tonight?* Aitken's were clearly keen to give a good account of themselves and covered themselves in glory by choosing the ambitious *Chorus of the Hebrew Slaves* from Verdi's *Nabucco*, sung in Italian. Despite the inspiring charisma of **Mr Aitken**, who brought his House into third place, the Competition this year was dominated by the senior Boarding Houses. **Mr Figgis's** School

House came runners-up with *Alright* by Supergrass and the winners were **Mr Garnier's** Crescent House with Paul Simon's *Cecilia, You're Breaking my Heart*.

There was an excellent display of musical talent at the Music Scholars' Concert on 5 November with new scholar, **Guy Cutting** (piano), giving us a sparkling performance of Debussy's *Dr Gradus ad Parnassum*. There were many other highlights but special mention should be made of **Adrian Lo** (violin) in Wieniawski's *Legende* and **Timothy Chu** (piano) in Brahms' great *Rhapsody in G Minor* which concluded the concert.

The visit on 11 November of an a capella choir, *Voskresenje*, from St Petersburg, was an unusual and thrilling event organised by the **Chaplain**. The Choir had visited his previous school in Birkenhead. They presented a both sacred (Russian Orthodox) and secular repertoire in a concert in which we were struck by their incredibly wide choral range from basso profundo (low bass) to the coloratura high soprano.

The two Christmas Concerts had slightly different programmes on their two nights, 8 and 9 December, which gave different groups of Lower School boys a chance to perform. On Wednesday the First Year Choir sang *Silent Night* and *I saw Three Ships* and on Thursday the Second Wind Band played *Mission Impossible* and *Tequila*. Other items included the Brass Band, the Chamber Orchestra, who played Bach's *E Major Violin Concerto* soloist, **Adrian Lo**, and the Big Band who played *Satin Doll*, *Funk One* and *Night Train*. The final performance was Mussorgsky's *A Night on the Bare Mountain*, characterised not only by the ferocious commitment of the orchestra as a whole but also by the outstanding solos from **John Morgan** (flute), **Robert Coster** (clarinet) and **Philip Birkett** (harp). The concert concluded with a festive rendering of *God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen* from the audience, followed by a retiring collection, which raised a fantastic £800 for Cancer Research UK.

The Big Band at the Christmas Concert



Helena Rakowski, Director of Music at St Helen's, conducting the Joint Choral Choir



The Junior Trio L to R Anthony Lloyd, Joe Mason, Adrian Lo



Hardly had the Lent term started before the Music Department was engaged in two large-scale concerts. Straight after the mock examinations we hosted the orchestra of Scotch College, Melbourne for three days, giving a joint concert with them on Tuesday 18 January (see separate report). Later that week, on Friday 21 January, we fulfilled a promise to do a fund-raising concert for St Helen's Church in Abingdon in aid of their Development Fund (Organ Appeal). It was originally planned that this should take place in the newly created performance space in the Church, but the venue had to revert to the Amey Theatre as the dismantled organ was occupying the space and could not be moved! This was a full-scale New Year's Concert, the items including presentations from Second Wind Band, First Wind Band: *The Acrobat* with **Hugh Taylor** (trombone) and *Pirates of the Caribbean*, and Big Band: *The Chicken* and *Rock Around the Clock*. In the second half the Chamber Orchestra played Bach, the Second Orchestra Dvorak, Mozart and Mussorgsky and First Orchestra concluded with Sibelius' *Karelia Suite* with excellent solo contributions from **Ben Sapsford** (French horn) and **Henry Carter** (cor anglais).

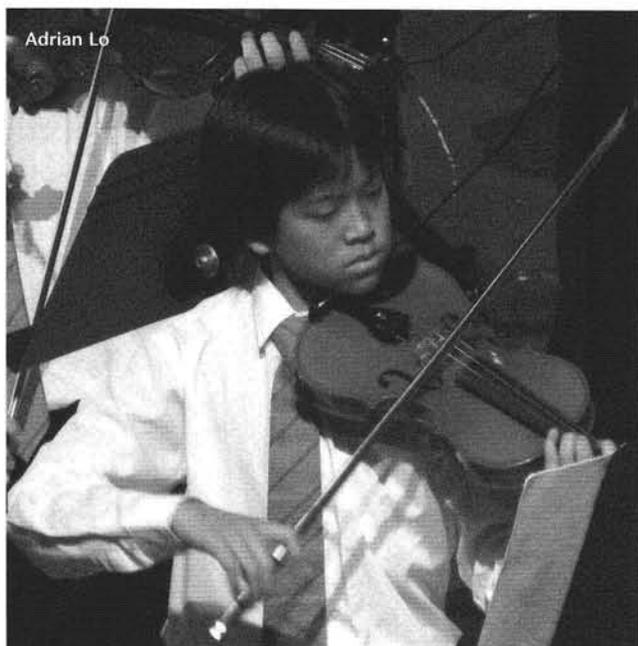
The Chamber Concert on Wednesday 9 February presented us with some wonderful performances involving players of all age groups. Particularly notable were the Senior Trio: **Sam Wylie**, **Oliver Zeldin** and **Timothy Chu** with some Mendelssohn, the Senior Quartet: **David Ridley**, **Arjun Kingdon**, **Henry Scarlett**, **Timothy Barrow** with Beethoven's Op.18, the Junior Trio: **Adrian Lo**, **Alex Ereaut**, **Nicholas Ereaut** with some Haydn and the other trio: **Adrian Lo**, **Anthony Lloyd** and **Joe Mason**, who played some Martinu. It was good to see several groups go through to the semi-finals of

the National Chamber Competition and the Martinu Trio to the Finals Concert on 19 March, securing a finals place for Abingdon for the fifth year in succession! Viva Musica da Camera!

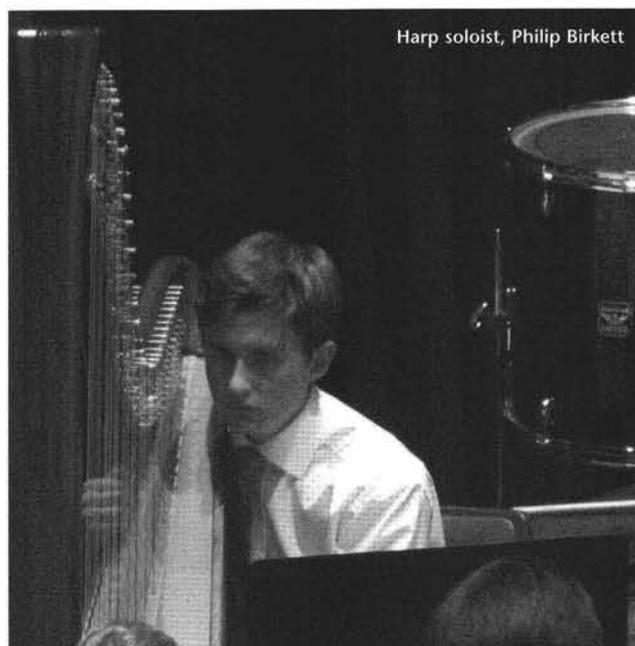
The Scholars' Concert on Friday 25 February was another good occasion; particularly memorable was **Henry Scarlett** (viola) in Schubert's *Arpeggione Sonata* and, again, as a bass in Schumann's *Mondnacht*. **Tristan Mitchard** (violin) also impressed with an extremely musical and moving account of Dvorak's *Romance*.

The great choral endeavour of the year fell to the baton of St Helen's Director of Music, Helena Rakowski. Large numbers of pupils, parents and staff, who had been rehearsing since the autumn, came together on Saturday 5 March for performances of Mozart's wonderful *Requiem* and Purcell's *Come Ye Sons of Art*. A healthy choral sound accompanied by a strong joint orchestra navigated both these works with some excellent solo singing from Harriet Molyneux (soprano), a pupil at St Helen and St Katharine's, Richard Poyser (counter tenor), the Director of Music at New College, **Andrew Yeats** (tenor), who teaches singing at Abingdon and Henry Herford (bass), who is a parent.

Another great highlight of the year on 9 March was the Strings Masterclass, the third visit to the School of the eminent violinist, Emanuel Hurwitz, CBE, a former teacher of our own Head of Strings, **Mariette Richter**, at the Royal Academy of Music. Mr Hurwitz brought his usual rare insights and wealth of experience to the analysis of performances given in a packed Amey Theatre by five of our string players. Many of the region's more eminent string players and teachers were also present in the audience. **David Ridley** (Bach), **Henry Scarlett** (Schubert), **Arjun Kingdon**



Adrian Lo



Harp soloist, Philip Birkett

(Svendson), **Adrian Lo** (Wieniawski) and **Sam Wylie** (Wieniawski) were the performers and a report appears elsewhere in *The Abingdonian*. We are very grateful to Mr Hurwitz and to the Music Society who kindly sponsored this endeavour – the revelations about the history of performances, of string technique and matters of musical projection and performance will linger in the minds of many.

The Summer term was heralded for the School, and for the Music Department, by the Organ Appeal Concert, which is also reported elsewhere. This major concert, on 26 April in the midst of Inspection Week, involved the Second Wind Band, the Brass Band and the First Orchestra in Richard Strauss's *Horn Concerto No.1* (**Ben Sapsford**, soloist) and Schubert's *Unfinished Symphony*.

With the School Inspection 'done and dusted' we resumed the normal pattern with the School Band Concert on 13 May, the annual celebration of the work undertaken by the directors of our Bands, **Fiona Parker** (Brass and First Wind Bands), **Nigel Somerville** (Second/Lower School Bands) **Simon Currie** (Big Band) and **Frank Toms** (Senior Jazz Ensemble). Again, there were many highlights including **Alex Mugnaioni's** euphonium solo, *Little Red Bird*. Big Band in their habitual spirit of unbridled enthusiasm gave us no less than five numbers to send us into the night – *Autumn Leaves*, *Mr Funk*, *Lil' Darling*, *Tuxedo Junction* and *Birdland*.

The Second Orchestra opened the Orchestral Concert on 20 May with strong performances, under **Mr Elliott's** direction, of pieces by Wagner, Mendelssohn and Rimsky-Korsakov. Particularly memorable was the fine horn-playing by **George Bone**, **Felix Wood** and company in the *Nocturne* from Mendelssohn's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

The Chamber Orchestra stole the show with three movements from Shostakovich's telling *Chamber Symphony*, a transcription of the famous string quartet, Opus 110 and 'dedicated to the memory of the victims of fascism and war'. Its extremes of emotion from empty, desolate quiet to a frightening and frenetic race which returns once more to sorrow, sent the audience to the interval in a sombre and reflective mood. The playing was outstanding, coached to a high level by our Head of Strings, **Mariette Richter**. The second half was the domain of the First Orchestra – complete performances of Schubert's *Unfinished Symphony*, Strauss' *First Horn Concerto*, with **Ben Sapsford** in outstanding form again, and McCunn's Overture *Land of the Mountain and the Flood*.

We welcomed a famous jazz saxophonist, Pat Crumly, to the School on 24 June at the invitation of the School's Music Society. He brought with him the 'House Quartet' from Ronnie Scott's Jazz Club in London and entertained a very 'different' audience with outstanding playing in the Charles Maude Room. Luckily, the inclement weather held off sufficiently to enable the audience to picnic in the interval and the event provided a good, social, near-finale to the year.

But the last word (apart from the Brass Band tour) fell, as usual, to the Lower School Gala Concert on Friday 1 July. There were some outstanding items, too numerous to mention in their entirety. At the cornerstones of each half were the longer ensembles: Lower School Wind Band (*Marchus Maximus*, *Eye of the Tiger*, *Pennsylvania 65000*), Lower Strings (Mozart, *Le Fleming*) and First Year choir (*Summer is acumin' in*, *Summertime*). Smaller ensembles included three piano trios, a cello ensemble and a clarinet choir (**David Mears**, **John Mulvey**, **James Yan**, **Jack Tinker**, **James Humberstone**). All of the solo items were of a high standard and it was gratifying to see a cross-section of woodwind, brass and string instruments represented. The **Ereaut** twins thrilled us, as always, with Haydn from **Alexander** and Chopin from **Nicholas**. **Adrian Lo** played a virtuoso piano toccata by Khachaturian and, on the violin, Gade's *Tango Jalousie*. On the brass side, **Nicholas Acutt** (tuba) played *Those Magnificent Men in Their Flying Machines* with great aplomb, whilst **Tom Fishpool** (trombone) entertained us with the theme from the *Flintstones* and received a rapturous reception from his fellows. **Joe Mason** enchanted us with a captivating account of the slow movement of the horn concerto by Franz Strauss. A retiring collection raised a good sum for *Action Against Breast Cancer*.

The Brass Band tour to the towns of Enkhuizen and Alkmaar in Holland, 10-14 July, led by Fiona Parker, was a happy and successful expedition and provided a fitting finale to an extraordinary musical year. There were forty of us in the group and our abiding memories are of a packed town square, a warm reception for some excellent, al-fresco music-making next to the canal in the old Cheese Market, and a very friendly, but competitive, game of football on Noordwyk beach as the sun was setting over the North Sea.

Michael Stinton



Concert for StreetSmart in Oxford Town Hall

Additional Concerts and Events

The musical year 2004-5 saw a significant number of additional important concerts and events which, bolted onto the regular schedule of a typical musical calendar, made for an incredibly busy year. It is customary for School concerts to be given at the end of term when the pupils have practised and rehearsed and can give a polished account of themselves. What was so different and challenging about 2004/5 was that, in addition to these, there were prominent concerts at the *start* of each term, too. They included a concert for *StreetSmart* in September, a joint orchestral concert with a touring orchestra from Scotch College, Melbourne, Australia in January and, in April, a concert to coincide with the School Inspection, just a week into the Summer term. There was a clear rationale for each of these concerts, as follows:

A Concert for StreetSmart 29 September, Oxford Town Hall

The very start of the year provided an opportunity, similar to 2002, when the orchestra that toured Vienna, Prague and Budapest gave a concert in the Sheldonian to raise funds for the new Arts Centre, when we could give a high-profile concert in Oxford to hear our talented musical leavers one more time before they disappeared to university or to Gap years. So the plan was hatched for a Sheldonian Concert on Wednesday, 29 September when the School's leading ensembles could perform and, at the same time, give an important charity, *StreetSmart*, a welcome kick-start for their annual winter fund-raising to help the homeless in Oxford. In addition we wanted to raise awareness of the work of the new Abingdon Film Unit, which had been running for barely a year but had produced a number of wonderful short documentaries, one of them, *Without Shelter* (by **Blake Ivinson**, **Harry Cook** and **Michael Jarvis**) on the subject of homelessness in Oxford. The plan was to show this short film at the end of the concert. Imagine the frustration when, only a fortnight or so before the concert, the Sheldonian announced it had to close in order to undertake urgent restoration work to its ceiling. We had already gone to press! Luckily, we were able to secure the Oxford Town Hall as an alternative venue and this was the scene for an all-day rehearsal

with the musicians of First Orchestra, Chapel Choir and the bands, whilst the rest of the School embarked on their biennial charity walk.

It was a great pleasure to welcome back various gifted OAs to the Chapel Choir: **Thomas Gatten**, **Edward Mitchard**, **Adam Mould** and **Paul O'Donovan**. The concert started with Parry's Anthem *I was Glad* and continued with the First Wind Band in the ballad *Georgia on My Mind* and a march by Holst from his *Second Suite*, the first half concluding with The Big Band in three of its favourite numbers, *Rock around the Clock*, *Lil' Darling* and *The Chicken*. High profile in the last of these were the old team, **Nathan Hawken** (saxophone), **Mike Chilcott** (bass) **Alasdair Macdonald** (trombone), **George Potter** (saxophone) and **Nick Shaikh**, (guitar).

In the second half, the orchestra took to the stage with Holst's *Mars* from *The Planets*, Elgar's Cello Concerto (soloist **Edward Mitchard**) and Sibelius' *Finlandia*. A large audience in the Town Hall was also able to see a hastily arranged screening of *Without Shelter* and to hear a short address from Juliet Marshall, the Director of *StreetSmart*, London. We were delighted that we managed to raise £3,000 for this important charity, a figure that was matched by part of the proceeds of the School's sponsored walk, thus allowing us to present a cheque for £6,000 at assembly later in the term.

Our special thanks to all the OAs who returned and especially to the boys, notably in Lower School, who rehearsed in the morning, did the walk in rainy conditions in the afternoon and returned to the Town Hall for the evening concert!

Joint Orchestral Concert with Scotch College for the Tsunami Earthquake Appeal Tuesday 18 January

John Henderson, the British Director of Music at Scotch College, Melbourne, had brought his Senior Orchestra to Europe exactly ten years earlier in 1995 and it had played a part in the tradition that is now well established for Abingdon groups to give concert tours abroad (there have been seven such since 1995). This

The orchestra of Scotch College, Melbourne



Australian school, like many 'down under', has modelled itself on the English Public School tradition and it has a long foundation. They take their creative lives seriously and have well resourced music departments. This school has a particularly fine orchestra and music department.

The concert had been a year in the planning, not least because, as before, the Australian boys needed host family accommodation, and this billeting of a group of some ninety people was going to take some organisation. Fortunately, this aspect of the event all came together happily, with kind offers of bed and breakfast from many parents and members of staff. We could not have anticipated the terrible tsunami at the turn of the year and were pleased to be able to turn the concert into a fund-raiser for the victims of this natural disaster.

By the time the Australians reached us, they were already a little 'travel-weary' and on the Sunday evening when they arrived were grateful to be met by their host families and despatched to their warm beds. On the Monday they performed in Christ Church, Oxford, did some sightseeing on the Tuesday, and rehearsed and performed with us in the afternoon and evening.

The concert provided a fascinating insight into the different strengths of two excellent school orchestras from different sides of the planet! The first half saw performances by both orchestras, Scotch College starting with Kabalevsky's exciting overture, *Colas Breugnon*, and the Abingdon orchestra in Mussorgsky's *A Night on the Bare Mountain*. The Australian orchestra was perhaps more balanced in composition with large numbers of gifted violinists (many, if not all, of Chinese origin) who made a sparkling sound, with smaller woodwind and brass sections to balance. Abingdon's orchestra really 'took up the gauntlet' and produced a polished and committed account of the chilling Mussorgsky with crashing brass chords and suitably screaming woodwind that could not fail to impress. There was one rather proud Director of Music!

The concert concluded with a most impressive performance of Dvorak's *New World Symphony*, which showed what is possible with such resources of strings and rehearsal time. All in all, it was a most beneficial venture, musically, socially and, of course, from a charitable perspective. Some £750 was made from a retiring collection to add to the School's own fund-raising for the Tsunami Appeal.

'Not the Inspection Concert' – for the School Organ Appeal – Tuesday 26 April

An important School occasion such as a concert can tell an inspection team much about the atmosphere and ethos of a school, quite apart from the quality and aspirations of its music. So, just as at the last inspection in 1999, the Music Department organised a school concert that would show the range and quality of some of its music. The usual pattern of separate band and orchestral concerts in May remained – so it was a question of ensuring that there was sufficient repertoire rehearsed and ready for performance by the end of the Lent term.

Five ensembles were chosen to show the range and depth of music at different age-levels of the School. We started with the Second Wind Band, which under the expert and enthusiastic direction of **Nigel Somerville** has achieved such a huge amount this year. It was a terrific way to start the concert with *Colours of the Wind* and *Pink Panther* showing the wonderful talent that we have in the Lower School. Next we had a somewhat impromptu performance from our new Senior Jazz Ensemble (**William Statham, James Moulds, Aidan Thorne, Edmund Caird and Christopher Parker**) in *Song for my Father*. Big Band, under the inimitable Simon Currie, gave us *Autumn Leaves* and *Mr Funk* to end the first half. Brass Band started off the second with *Barnard Castle*, *Little Red Bird* and *Floral Dance* (a foretaste of the summer tour repertoire – see **Matthew Coffey's** report on the Holland Tour 2005), and were in fine form under **Fiona Parker's** direction. But the star of the show was definitely **Ben Sapsford** (French horn) in the first two movements of Strauss' Horn Concerto No.1. He played with his characteristic assurance and artistry to everyone's great delight. (We were to hear the whole concerto later, in May.) Schubert's *Unfinished Symphony* concluded the concert and showed the orchestra nicely in tune for this early stage of the term.

That the concert was deemed to be a great success was gratifying and the inspectors appreciated the opportunity both to see our fine boys in public performance and to be able to chat informally to some of our parents. In addition, we raised several hundred pounds towards the fund for the digital organ, the loan for which was successfully paid off at the end of term.

Michael Stinton

The Brass Band with Ms Fiona Parker



Brass Band Tour to Holland

Despite the school year ending a mere two days previously, on Sunday 10 July almost 40 Abingdon boys convened at 6.45 am and prepared to endure an eight hour journey before reaching their ultimate destination in Noordwijk, Holland. The Brass Band is made up of boys from the First Year up to the Upper Sixth and we were accompanied on this trip by seven members of staff. After the Dover-Calais crossing and a five-hour struggle through France, Belgium and then Holland, we arrived, enthusiastic, to find our hotel in Noordwijk just a five-minute walk from an eight-mile stretch of beach. Noordwijk seemed to be an archetypal holiday resort, having more hotels than shops, but it suited our needs perfectly. Indeed, on the first night the whole group went bowling and then wandered on to the beach, where some people tried to set up an ad hoc game of American Football, and others, apparently in an attempt to escape giant jellyfish, managed to fall fully clothed into the North Sea.

We had an early start again on the second day, and in traditional Abingdon style, **Ben Sapsford** and **Dominic Waite** managed to turn up to breakfast sixty minutes late. Before the evening concert, **Mr Stinton** kindly organised a visit to a reconstructed Danish fishing village and, after the odd minor miscalculation regarding map-reading (which would be a recurring theme of the journeys), the bus driver, Sam, who had achieved cult status by the end of the trip, dropped us off at Enkhuisen. Maybe it was the glorious weather, or simply realisation that it was the holidays, but the village was actually far more interesting than we had expected. Many seemed to enjoy either the near-death experience of attempting to walk on stilts or, having seen a local man smoking kippers, eating these bone-ridden fish and consequently retching for the next five minutes as they tried to dislodge the bones from their throats. After this, and lunches for those who had remembered to bring them, we visited another museum concerning dykes. Dinner was to be eaten in what seemed to be a medieval keep, and everyone enjoyed the Indonesian meal that was generously paid for by the teachers. The concert that followed went surprisingly well: a large crowd gathered to listen, which was one of the huge benefits of playing outdoors, though we were dogged by a wind that, at times, meant that members from the audience had to hold on to the soloists' music and stands. Considering that there was no interval, and that certain instrumentalists were playing pieces for the first time, we performed admirably.

Next day we set off to visit something quintessentially Dutch: a windmill. Having never quite comprehended what windmills actually did, we found this a novel experience, especially as we were allowed to walk up inside the structure, which have us a

clear view of its cogs and antiquated machinery. Then we drove to Alkmaar, where we were given three hours of free time, after which we prepared for our second concert, which surpassed our first. The venue was again outside, in a square encircled by cafés, and we drew a larger audience. We played our repertoire of over fifteen songs almost in its entirety: highlights included **Matthew Smith** playing the *Concierto de Aranjuez* by Rodrigo – a demanding flugelhorn solo which the band had played twice before; **Alex Mugnaioni's** euphonium solo *Little Red Bird* by Goff Richards, **Will Stephenson's** trumpet recital of *A Special Place*, and **Mr Whalley's** inspirational xylophone improvisation.

Both concerts were a huge success and a great tribute to **Ms Parker** whose patience, skill and good humour have meant that the Abingdon School Brass Band has shown great improvement throughout the year, to the extent that they were able to give an excellent account of themselves abroad. On returning to Noordwyk the majority wandered down to the beach, while a few went to play 'Rolly Golf' (crazy golf). **Mr Taylor**, adorned in full golfing attire, took the glory by shooting a mere +8, while on the beach Mr Stinton showed his sporting prowess in a game of 'beach soccer'.

There were no concerts on our final day, allowing the group time to visit Amsterdam. Our first port of call was to Anne Frank House, a chilling testament to what Europe had to endure during the Second World War. To add to the culture of our trip, and after a lengthy wait for an extortionately priced boat, we visited the Van Gogh Museum, which contained one of Van Gogh's famous *Sunflowers*. After spending about thirty minutes trying to find some boys who had got lost in the vast building, the group split up into year-groups and enjoyed 'escorted' free time around Amsterdam. Some indulged in Dutch speciality pancakes and the local beer, while others cruised lazily down the vast canal system and everyone had fun in perfect weather. Back in Noordwijk the long-awaited beach party never materialised but still the group still enjoyed time on the beach and the opportunity to swim in the surprisingly warm waters.

The tour was a great success and was characterised by a sense of community within the Band, all of whom contributed towards 'thank you' gifts for all the teachers, without whose organisational skills the tour would not have been possible. The younger members of the Band show great promise for the future and we hope it will continue to improve.

Matthew Coffey 6 APS



The Chapel Choir singing Evensong in Gloucester Cathedral

Chapel Choir

The Gala Benefit Concert for the Homeless in Oxford's Town Hall in September began the year in tremendous fashion. It featured an enormous Chapel Choir, which included both new singers and leavers who had been called back to add quantity to our quality. Early in October, the dedication of the new stained glass window in the Chapel gave the Choir an opportunity to sing Evensong, whilst Open Day, later on that month, provided parents with an opportunity to see an open rehearsal. The Advent Carol Service was a delightful demonstration of the benefits of hard work, confirmed four days later at a sung Evensong in Gloucester Cathedral. The week ended on the Friday with a visit to Mercers' Hall in London. The service and following mini-concert of festive carols around the Christmas tree not only brought home to us how privileged we are at Abingdon to have the continuing support of the Mercers' Company, but also showed us just how much we are admired as a choir – we were showered with praise and thanks, not to mention prawn sandwiches. Back at home, the Chapel Choir sang a number of individual items and led the congregational carols in St Helen's Church for the School Christmas Service, and with an orchestra behind us we finished the term in a spirited manner.

After such a hectic term, the Lent term provided the Choir with both new and traditional opportunities. In January, *Dark Lights*, a Drama Department production featured a Mr Whalley favourite: *Hymn to the Virgin* by Britten. New robes from Magdalen College Chapel Choir assisted our theatrical role in the Amey Theatre, after which we processed outside onto the playing fields. On 10 February we sang at a Eucharist to mark the beginning of Lent, and in early March we sang at a service of Compline, both services held in our Chapel. At the annual service commemorating our founders and benefactors, held in St Helen's Church, there was some fine singing by a well settled choir, ending a slightly quieter term on a bold note.

The Summer term was shaped by three main events. Choral Evensong in the School Chapel on Thursday 12 May gave us a good opportunity to practise our repertoire in advance of the visit to Worcester Cathedral, where we were to sing Evensong later in the month. The Leavers' Service was the Choir's final performance of the year. Many of our members were leavers but, with the trebles in particular singing so well, the Choir is well placed for the future.

Many thanks from the entire Choir to Mr Whalley and Mr Elliott for our mellifluous organisation.

Tristan Mitchard 4 EDT

Digital Organ

Much artistic use has been made of the new three-manual digital organ since it was bought over a year ago, with six new regular organists boosting our select ranks! The organ occupies a central position in the School so that practice sometimes disturbs the classes being held around it. Moreover, as the number of organists in the School has grown so it has become increasingly difficult for one organ to accommodate all the organists' practice sessions in the limited time available. This was one of the reasons why the idea grew up that the Music Department might like to get another instrument – this, and the fact that it would mean that we could take an organ into our concerts. So, nearly two years ago, my elder brother, Edward, proposed that the School should purchase another organ for practice in the Music Department.

The size and expense of organs means that they are rarely found in pupils' homes and therefore all practice has to be done in School. This new organ has a greater choice of sounds than the one in the Chapel and it is not only a great privilege to be able to play it but very exhilarating too. I enjoy its sheer volume as well as the delicate sound that it can produce – both at the touch of a button. JS Bach called the organ the 'king of instruments' and, from the increasing use that is being made of both the School's organs, it seems to be attracting many followers.

Tristan Mitchard 4 WTP



The Second Wind Band

Second Wind Band

2004-5 has been a wonderful year for the Second Wind Band both in quality and quantity. Indeed it has been a year of records – more concerts than ever before, the largest band by quite some distance than ever before, and the largest repertoire we have ever covered. Particular favourites have included *Tequila*, *Mission Impossible*, *Pennsylvania 6-5000*, *Star Wars* and *The Pink Panther*.

For many of the boys the Wind Band is their first experience of playing in an ensemble and the skills of playing together whilst

tackling some tricky music can take time to develop. This year has been an exception, and the quality of playing has been very high from the start of the year, something which bodes well for future years in the Music Department. The Band was particularly pleased to be invited to play in the concert given during the School Inspection (a flagship performance for obvious reasons) and acquitted itself with aplomb.

A year of great fun, great learning, and great music-making.

Nigel Somerville

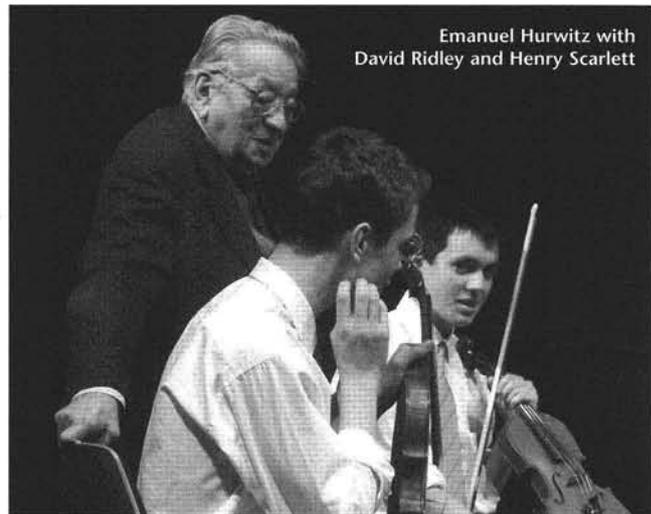
Emanuel Hurwitz String Master Class

Emanuel Hurwitz visited the School on 9 March 2005 to give a masterclass to our top string musicians in front of a large audience in the Amey Theatre.

Emanuel Hurwitz is internationally renowned as one of Britain's foremost chamber musicians. He was born in 1919 and started playing the violin at the age of five. He studied at the Royal Academy of Music and after war service founded the Hurwitz String Quartet. For over twenty years he was leader of the English Chamber Orchestra where he frequently appeared as soloist and conductor. During this time he led the *Melos Ensemble* with whom he made recordings (now on CD) of the major ensemble repertoire.

In 1971 he became the leader of the *Aeolian String Quartet*, which recorded the complete Haydn (Robbins Landon Edition) and the late Beethoven quartets. Emanuel Hurwitz was awarded the Gold Medal of the Worshipful Company of Musicians of London and in 1978 the CBE for outstanding services to chamber music. He was for many years Professor of Violin at the Royal Academy and plays an Amati violin made in 1603.

David Ridley performed first, Bach's *Sonata in E Major*, and **Henry Scarlett** followed with Schubert's *Arpeggione Sonata* on the viola. Mr Hurwitz then gave them advice on numerous aspects of their technique, as well as on musical sensibility. This was not only very inspiring for them but it will also be very helpful as they progress towards their Grade 8 exams. The pieces became progressively more modern as the evening went on. **Arjun Kingdon** played Svendsen's *Romance*, and received tips on how to improve his vibrato. **Adrian Lo**, who is only in the Second Year, played Wieniawski's *Legende*, and was shown how he could improve his technique. After the interval **Sam Wylie**, who was introduced to



Emanuel Hurwitz with David Ridley and Henry Scarlett

the audience as having that day passed his driving test and played a winning rugby match against St Edward's, played Wieniawski's *Obertass* with great joie de vivre. Finally, the Fifth Year string quartet, comprising **David Ridley**, **Arjun Kingdon**, **Henry Scarlett** and **Tim Barrow** played a Beethoven quartet with plenty of panache. Mr Hurwitz managed to sort out the first and second violinists' technique in the difficult runs and make a valuable contribution to the 'cello part as well.

For both players and audience the evening was not only a huge privilege but also very enjoyable. We are very grateful to Mr Hurwitz who gave so much of himself to our young musicians and we hope that he will be able to return in the coming years.

Tim Barrow 5 JPN and Arjun Kingdon 5 VMW

Practical Examination Results 04/05

Associated Board Practical Examinations taken: 180

Distinctions gained: 26

Congratulations to the following who gained distinction in their examinations.

Tristan Mitchard	Viola	7	140
Robbie Hand	Piano	6	137
Tristan Mitchard	Violin	7	137
Thomas Bennett	Violin	7	136
Sam Wylie	Violin	8	136
James Yan	Clarinet	2	136
David Mears	Clarinet	8	135
Tristan Mitchard	Singing	7	135
Tristan Mitchard	Organ	7	135
Jonty Cook	Clarinet	2	134
Alex Corps	Horn	4	133
Arjun Kingdon	Piano	6	133
Anthony Lloyd	Flute	7	133
Henry Carter	Oboe	8	132
Charlie Hall	Piano	1	132
Matthew Smith	Flugelhorn	7	132
James Dyer	Singing	8	131
Thomas Finch	Bassoon	1	131
Charlie Uden	Piano	4	131
Kevin Cheung	Eb Saxophone	8	130
Guy Cutting	Piano	7	130
Anthony Lloyd	Flute	6	130
Oliver Yeatman	Clarinet	1	130

Trinity Guildhall Practical Examinations taken: 30

Honours gained: 4

Congratulations to the following who gained honours in their examinations.

John Mulvey	Guitar	1	267
John Mulvey	Guitar	2	259
Veeral Manek	Drum Kit	4	205
Edward Humphries	Drum Kit	2	203



Emmy Award

Andy Bush, who has taught the trumpet at Abingdon for eleven years, was awarded an Emmy for the score he wrote for the BBC and US History Channel programme, *Days that Shook the World*. The programme chronicles the bombing of Hiroshima, focussing on the lives of the people involved in the mission, including the crew of the Enola Gay. The film used first-hand narratives of the event but there is no archive footage, except of the aftermath. In the absence of images, the judges felt that the soundtrack played a critical part in evoking events as they unfurled.

Abroad

Bielefeld Exchange

In February, Fourth Year Germanists spent ten very enjoyable and instructive days with their partner families in Bielefeld.

The new Headmaster at the Ratsgymnasium, Herr Nolting, talked to us about European history and Martin Luther in the ancient School Library, which now forms part of the University Library. We climbed to the top of the Hermann memorial to meet 'Hermann the German', who conquered the Romans at the battle of Varus. On the visit to Hamelin we followed the Pied Piper's trail and visited the Museum, where there is a large portrait of George I. In Münster the Peace of Westphalia was discussed at length and we saw a five-hundred-year-old astronomical clock that is still in working order.

The boys quickly settled in, as the German party had been with us at School in October and friendships had already been established. On the first Monday we enjoyed some of the carnival atmosphere at an ice-skating party. Early school, with the first lesson at 7.45 am, was quite a shock, but the visits to Hamelin, Münster, Breme and the University laboratory were a welcome compensation. The traditional football match between Abingdon and the Ratsgymnasium was a draw but the highlight of the week was Armenia Bielefeld's stunning 3-1 win against the German giants Bayern München.

This was a highly successful 38th exchange and Frau Jentsch is already planning for next year.

Margaret Hankey



Greek Visit

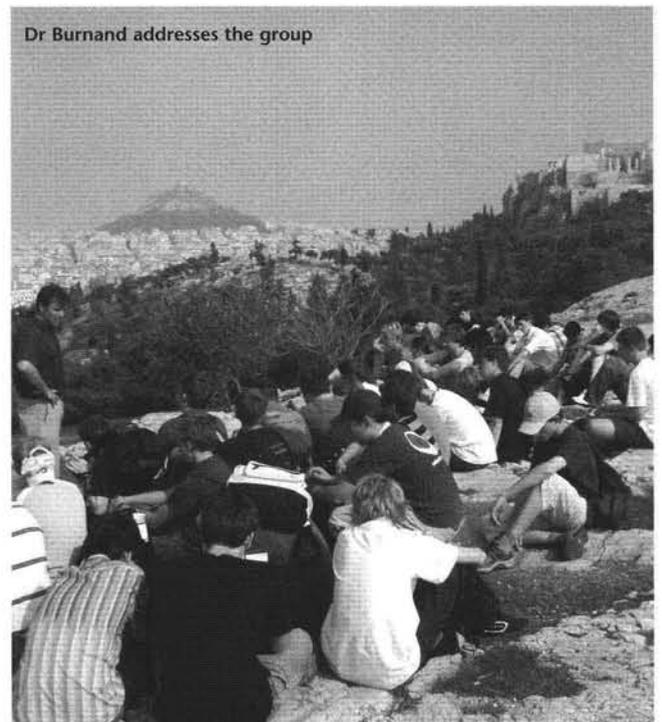
In the October half-term, forty-five boys and five adults boarded a plane to Greece on Abingdon's annual Classics trip to see what were described by the Roman Frontinus as 'the famous works of the Greeks'.

On our first day we went to see the Acropolis. Although many of us had studied this citadel at school, to see it in real life was quite an experience, with the monumental Parthenon providing a fitting centrepiece. From the Acropolis we also had a magnificent view over central Athens and we saw a range of impressive sculpture in the neighbouring museum, including the famous Caryatids.

All told, we spent two days in Athens, also visiting other sites such as the Agora – the centre of Athenian democracy; the Areopagus hill – where Paul preached; and the enormous theatre of Dionysos – where the world's earliest plays were performed. At each site **Dr Burnand** imparted to us his seemingly inexhaustible knowledge and enthusiasm for classics.

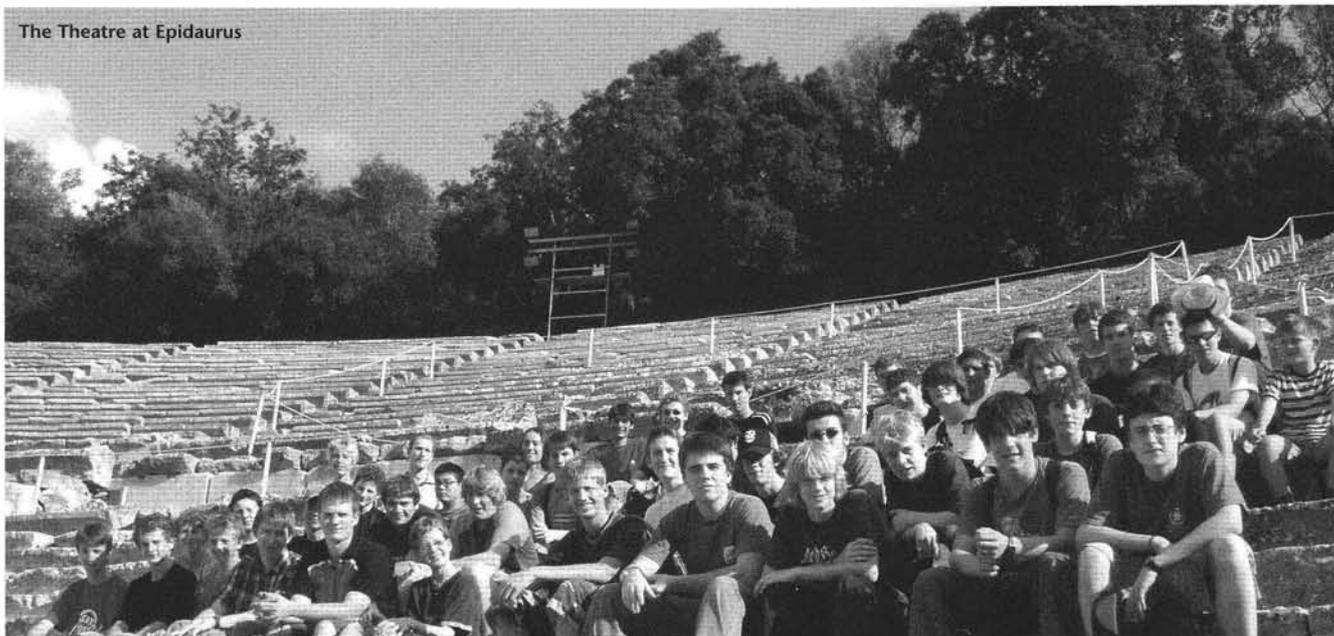
After our four-hour plane journey to Greece, I had assumed that the bulk of our travelling was over, but I was mistaken. Each day required a long coach trip in order that we could appreciate as many classical sites as possible.

After arriving at Delphi and following a night of relaxation and entertainment, we climbed up the slopes of Mount Parnassus to admire some of the most impressive classical buildings that we saw during our visit, and when we finally reached the summit of the site, with its athletics track, a race ensued which was won by **Chris**



Dr Burnand addresses the group

The Theatre at Epidaurus



Hornsey after a controversial start. Delphi was not just famous for its oracle in this period: it was also one of the four sites for the ancient Greek circuit games. These were held at Delphi, Olympia, Nemea and Corinth. After spending the morning in Delphi, we embarked on our coach to the second and most famous of these: Olympia.

At Olympia, the highlights included the columned palaestra, the sculptor Pheidias' workshop (where he made the gold and ivory statue of Zeus which was to become one of the seven wonders of the ancient world), and the impressive ruins of the temples of Zeus and Hera. The real highlight, however, had to be the re-enactment of the ancient stade, or foot-race, in the ruins of the ancient stadium. This was won by **Matthew Pinner**: hence he won the prize of having the 2004 Abingdon School Olympiad named after him. We could not, however, for health and safety reasons, recreate the pankration, their form of no-holds-barred wrestling. This was a disappointment to some of us.

After Olympia, and on the way to Pylos, we stopped off at the palace of Nestor, the best preserved of the Mycenaean palaces from three millennia ago: a pile of mud and stones to the less discerning. That night we stayed at the beautiful harbour of Pylos, where one of the deciding battles of the Peloponnesian War occurred.

The next day we departed our hospitable hotel – generously described as 'off the tourist trail' by one of our teachers – and arrived at the magnificent Byzantine fort of Mistra a few hours later after having passed through some spectacular scenery on the way. It was built into the mountainous landscape and seemed very impressive to us and after a very long climb up the stairway to the top, we appreciated the magnificent scenery of the area. This, however, was slightly spoilt by the rain, which left us thoroughly drenched in the bus after our madcap twenty-minute descent from the top. Luckily, by the time we reached Sparta the rain had stopped, and the sun was out. We therefore explored the modern town where we settled down for a lunch before going off to see what was preserved of ancient Sparta. Though Thucydides was right to say that little would be thought of Sparta if it were to be judged on its buildings, we did get an understanding of what kind of conditions and landscapes the Spartans lived in. From here we travelled to our final hotel, the *Minoa*, where we enjoyed spacious rooms while some teachers and pupils made good use of the opportunity to take a swim in the sea.

The following day offered a trip to Mycenae, then lunch at Nafplion and later a visit to see the theatre of Epidauros. At the bronze-age site of Mycenae, we saw the famous Lion Gate, the palace of 'Agamemnon' and the beehive tombs, most notably the 'Treasury of Atreus', the size of which awed many of us. We had already seen the theatre of Dionysos in Athens, as well as others at Delphi and Sparta, but that afternoon we were all impressed by the state of preservation of the theatre at Epidauros. We were given an impromptu performance of Aristophanes' play, *The Frogs*, by some lower-sixth formers, which was enjoyed by all. The excellent acoustics were further demonstrated by **Mr Price**, who showed us how, from the top seats of the theatre, one could hear a coin drop on the stage! We then retired to our last night in Greece, where to commemorate the trip, a thank-you gift was bought for the Classics Department: a bronze classical head, or, as one member of staff commented, a new head of classics!



A foot-race in the stadium at Olympia

On the last day, as we made our way to Athens airport, we stopped off at Corinth with its magnificent views across the northern Peloponnese in all directions. Having finished the classical leg of our trip, we made one last stop where we saw the rather impressive canal at Corinth which, when it was dug, made the peninsula of the Peloponnese into an island.

The explanatory talks by the teachers made sure that even the sites that we had not previously known about were understandable, and the entire trip was a great success. It was a memorable week and fired us to explore further the world of the Ancient Greeks in all its different facets.

Andrew Cruikshank VI DE



During the Easter holidays, a group from Abingdon made what we are told was the first trip by an English school to Libya. Eager to see the fantastic sites, we comprised six staff and five boys, including two OAs. We were escorted throughout the expedition by our guide, Abdul, and a security guard, but wherever we went, the Libyans around the sites were very welcoming, so much so, that on several occasions we felt like celebrities.

Most of the sites were on the northern coast. These were the areas primarily inhabited by the Greeks and Romans on account of their proximity to the Mediterranean coastline where they served as good landing sites, with many of the harbours evolving into trading outposts in their own right.

The sites in Libya are memorable. One reason for this is that they are beautifully preserved, since the majority of them have not been inhabited since the invasion of the Arabs in the 7th Century. The sites are still deserted since only a small number of tourists visit them, especially when compared to the numbers that visit Rome or Athens.

Our travels took us to two provinces along the Libyan coast – Tripolitania and Cyrenaica – separated by the bay that extends across the shore for approximately one thousand kilometres. The first of these areas, as its name suggests, consists of three, large, cities. These are Sabratha, Oea (now Tripoli), and Leptis (or Lepcis) Magna. The second is in fact a pentapolis, made up of five cities, four of which we visited.

In Tripoli, the weather was hot and although the city itself appeared run-down, being able to stand next to the Arch of Marcus Aurelius (one of the city's few remaining classical

monuments) and hear the call to prayer allowed us to realise that this 'modernised' city was not without its own charm. Whilst in Tripoli we had the opportunity to visit a local school and the market, as well as the excellent museum – a chance to see Libyan life in full flow.

Our first major site was Sabratha, a Punic trading colony that evolved into a largely Roman settlement. It is a large city and we were one of only two or three groups wandering around. The city's coastal location gave it undeniable beauty, even though what used to be the harbour is now under the water. The source of the wealth that allowed the city to become so elaborately decorated lay in the olive presses and the vats for garum (a fish paste made in most of the coastal cities). The most impressive building, however, was undoubtedly the large, heavily reconstructed, theatre. Although the reconstruction did not do justice to the original structure, it nevertheless allowed us really to get an impression of what it would have been like, and its sheer size was truly awe-inspiring.

The other main site in Tripolitania was Leptis Magna – another trading post on the coast. The museum here had a wide range of remains, but a large cut-out of Colonel Gadhaffi was a reminder of why these sites were not as packed as they may well become. Leptis was such a large site that we had to stay in a nearby hotel in order to be able to spend two days fully exploring it. Again a mostly Roman city, the area was filled with huge buildings, ranging from several arches (including the immense arch of Septimius Severus – a Roman emperor born in Leptis) to theatres and fora. The more recent of the two fora was an enclosed space of amazing size. Favourite sites in Leptis were many, including the basilica and

L to R Back row – Katherine and Chris Burnand, Sam Withnall, Abdul, who helped organise and lead the tour, Stuart Gordon, Hugh Price, Adam Jenkins, Jenny Fishpool.
On the floor – the coach driver that day, Brian Cullen, James Horsburgh, Dan Jepson OA



the hunting baths. The hunting baths were especially exciting as, whilst the main door was covered with sand, by exploration we discovered that, by removing some large sticks, we were able to access the baths and see in full view the beautiful wall paintings within. After we had finished exploring the city, we headed off to the amphitheatre and circus. It was amazing; the city had not even finished being excavated.

As we came to the middle of our trip, we took an internal flight (a worrying notion in its own right) to Benghazi, where we stayed before visiting the cities of Cyrenaica.

Cyrenaica, unlike Tripolitania, has a lot of Greek-dominated settlements. Whilst the Roman trading posts of the other region had been large and looming, the places we visited during the second half of our stay were quietly impressive.

Ptolemais, Tocra, and Apollonia had their merits (including the huge cistern of Ptolemais), but were less well preserved than what we had seen so far. Cyrene, on the other hand, was as fantastic as Leptis.

Whilst GCSE Latin students might remember Cyrene and the tomb of old Battus from their Catullus poems, there is much more to be seen in the city. Its agora and necropolis were particularly impressive, but neither to the extent of the temple of Zeus. This temple, built in the 5th century BC, rivals even the Parthenon in Athens in terms of magnitude.

Our trip ended following an internal flight back across the country. Whilst the trip was designed to allow us to see the sites in their full glory, we also had the opportunity to get a feel for a nation that is special in its own right – though some of us were eager to get

back to English cuisine. The weather was pleasant for the majority of the stay, though we just missed the heat from the warm desert wind (or 'Ghibli') that was coming up as we were leaving.

As Libya opens up, more and more tourists will flock to see these magnificent sites; our entire group are just grateful that we were able to see them in such relative solitude, and especially grateful to Mrs Fishpool for all her hard work and expertise.

Sam Withnall VI NMR



The Abingdon/Moldovan party in Romania



Sixth-Form Trip to Moldova and Romania

For the last five years Abingdon School has been working with *Agape*, a charity based in Moldova, the poorest country in Europe. In that time over £15,000 has been sent to *Agape*, with all of the Houses at Abingdon taking it in turns to organise fund-raising events. Initially our donations were used to make improvements to No 4 School in the village of Ialoveni, but more recently we have been funding a wider-reaching range of community projects in the Ialoveni area.

One of the focuses of *Agape's* work is to arrange summer holidays for the poorest Moldovan children who would not be able to afford a holiday otherwise. In 2004 Abingdon School paid for one such holiday and, following the success of the sponsored walk in September, which allowed us to send a donation of over £3000 to *Agape*, this was repeated in July of this year.

At the start of the summer holidays therefore a group of nine sixth-formers from Abingdon, accompanied by four girls from Our Lady's Convent Senior School and three members of staff, flew to Bucharest airport in Romania. We then spent a few hours sightseeing in Bucharest before boarding our overnight train to Chisinau, the capital of Moldova. **Mr Jenkins** and **Mr Townsend**, having experienced this journey twice before, knew what to expect; the rest of the group, however, were somewhat taken aback by the cramped conditions in the compartments, the unopenable windows and subsequent heat, and the fact that Romanian/Moldovan bureaucracy meant that we were woken up several times during the night for passport and visa checks.

On arrival in Chisinau, we were met at the station by members of the *Agape* team and presented with bread and salt, the traditional Moldovan welcome. We then travelled to the homes of our host families in Ialoveni and spent some time settling in. Once again we received a wonderful welcome from these families, who gave so generously of what they had and quickly made us feel at home. Although we were only in Moldova itself for a few days, we had time to visit the sights of Chisinau and also Milesti Mici, a vast underground wine cellar where we felt obliged to taste several of the locally produced wines. We also spent some time in the

Agape offices where we were given a presentation on the Charity's work by **Graeme Innes** (OA 2004). Graeme had come on the first school trip to Moldova in 2003 and, as a result, had decided to spend ten months of his GAP year working for *Agape* – he had immersed himself in the local culture to such an extent that his spoken Romanian is now better than his English!

We also had time to see the *Agape* Community Centre in Ialoveni. When we visited in 2003, *Agape* were looking for land to buy for this project; in 2004 it was just about to open; this time we saw it up and running. The centre caters for school-age children in Ialoveni, many of whom could be described as being 'at risk' for a variety of reasons, and offers them a place to go after school and during the holidays where they can meet and play with other children, do their homework, and receive counselling and lifestyle education from the *Agape* staff. We spent some time with the children, being given a tour round, and also playing games and sports with them. The children were extremely keen to practise their English and made it very clear from the huge smiles on their faces that the Community Centre has achieved a great deal in the short time it has been open, becoming a real refuge for many children and encouraging *Agape* to plan a similar centre in the poorest area of Chisinau itself.

We then began the next stage of our trip and travelled by coach to the Carpathian Mountains in Romania, taking with us over twenty Moldovan children aged between 13 and 17. The long journey passed by quickly as the two groups began to get to know each other, with our stop for passport checks at the border being remarkably smooth as soon as the officials (perhaps keen to ensure EU membership!) spotted some British passports.

On arrival at the cabin owned by *Agape* in the resort of Lacu Rosu, several days were spent walking in the mountains and through the nearby gorge. The scenery was truly spectacular, with Alpine-like meadows full of wild flowers and towering mountains with stunning views. These walks allowed plenty of time for conversation and discussion between the English and Moldovan groups and friendships began to be formed. There was also plenty

Walking in the Carpathian Mountains



of time for sports and games with football being the sport of choice — a highly competitive three-a-side tournament was set up (complete with cheerleaders!) — but we also took it upon ourselves to teach the Moldovan children how to play cricket and rugby. The evenings were spent in communal entertainments involving singing, dancing, and sketches. Highlights included **Deepak Agrawal's** encounter with a Moldovan elephant, **Alex Locatelli** being shaved by **James Innes**, a rather dubious performance of the recent number one hit by *Ozone*, a Moldovan group, and a communal rendition of *Heads, shoulders, knees, and toes*.

Before we knew it our final day together was upon us and we travelled to a scenic spot to enjoy more sports in the open fields. It was soon discovered, however, that a nearby slope had exactly the right gradient required to allow slipping and sliding and before long everybody (including Mr Townsend and Mr Jenkins) was being hurled down at ever-increasing velocities.

Following our last evening meal there was a short ceremony when certificates were presented to all those who had participated in the holiday before the obligatory emotional exchanging of e-mail addresses. We then departed by minibus for Bucharest airport early the next morning, with the Moldovan group heading home by coach soon afterwards.

A trip such as this inevitably makes a big impression — one re-evaluates one's own life and opportunities (opportunities that we in this country so often take for granted) and comes back with a greater sense of what really matters. For me the highlight was watching the students from both sides realise that, although they come from vastly different backgrounds, they have a great deal in common and a great deal to offer each other through their friendships and ideas. Abingdon's link with Moldova is definitely a two-way experience and one that will no doubt continue for many years to come.

Adam Jenkins

Tanks in the town of Chisinau





Middle School Visit to Paris

In the Easter of 2005, the Modern Languages Department embarked on its annual trip to Paris.

At the break of dawn on Tuesday 12 April, sleepy-eyed students, accompanied by their enthusiastic parents, pulled up outside the school gates. We all flooded onto the bus, groaning at the sight of our grinning parents waving at us.

The journey to Calais port was fairly uneventful. People began to perk up once in France and enthused about the forthcoming plans. Once checked into our five-star accommodation, we had our first taste of the French cuisine: a typical baguette with ham.

That night we had a 'guided tour of the panoramic city of Paris', which ended up turning into a confused roam around the city streets. Of course, we cannot blame anybody for the bad map-reading.

It was an early start on Wednesday morning, beginning with a métro trip into the Ile de la Cité. Here we split into three groups, and each set about visiting Notre Dame cathedral, Ste Chapelle and the Conciergerie. These historic places offered an interesting insight into French architecture.

That afternoon we went on a guided tour around the Stade de France – this was certainly an experience. We were taken from the museum to the changing rooms where we stocked up on lots of free mini-Toblerone bars, kindly left there by the sponsors of the stadium.

From there we went to the warming-up room and then out through the famous tunnel, guided by the sounds of thousands of cheering fans (well, it was actually only a tape recording). We then went from players to supporters up in the stands, and took a look at how the stadium can rotate and lower to reveal the

athletics track. This was an experience thoroughly enjoyed by all.

That night we embarked on a tour of Paris given by a French guide. We saw all of Paris, admiring the bright shiny sparkly lights decorating the Eiffel Tower and the pink luminous ones advertising various bars.

Thursday brought about another new day, with us as tired as ever as a result of the antics going on the previous night. We were transported to the Arc de Triomphe by coach, and then we walked along the famous Champs Elysées, a huge street with shops on both sides. Of course the Arc was great, but nothing beats a roam around HMV. Later that afternoon we took a look around the Musée Grévin, which was enjoyed by all, as it gave us an interesting, more practical look at the history of France.

Friday was the most anticipated day, with the trip to Parc Astérix, the famous French theme park. The gods could not have been kinder, producing a hot sunny day and some highly enjoyable rides. There were loop and vertical drop wooden roller coasters, not forgetting the tea cups for the more faint-hearted.

Saturday brought about the end of our five days of fun and experience of speaking and listening to the French language.

The trip was hugely enjoyed by all who took part. It offered the opportunity to practise the French language we had learned already, as well as expanding our knowledge. Thanks to all the Staff who helped set it up and made it run so smoothly. Also, a special mention must go to **Mr Willerton**, who amused us all with his chart-topping rendition of *What's New, Pussycat?* by Tom Jones.

Josh Wilkins 4 ALP



The exchange group at the Kuskovo estate

Russian Exchange

Amid the deep snow and freezing wind, we arrived in Moscow and had to wrap up warmly for our first excursions around the city and to Sergiev Posad, the ancient heart of the Orthodox Church. At the sacred lavra we ate a Lenten meal in the monastery refectory and were introduced to the time-honoured art of icon-painting.

Weekends were spent in the flats of our host families and the boys went to the cinema, bowling, snow-mobiling, took steam baths in wooden banyas and saw operas and ballets at the Bolshoi Theatre.

On Monday we had to perform in a special presentation at the Russian school, where **Gus Raftery** and **Hugh Graham** acted out a scene from Shakespeare, and **James Howell** recited a Lermontov poem. All the boys took part as princes in a humorous adaptation of *Sleeping Beauty*.

The weather was warming up and, ploughing through thawing snow, we saw Kuskovo Palace, St Basil's Cathedral and the amazing Diamond Vault in the Kremlin, where there is a priceless collection of gold and gems. The boys also stopped off for a quick snack at *McDonald's* adjacent to Red Square.

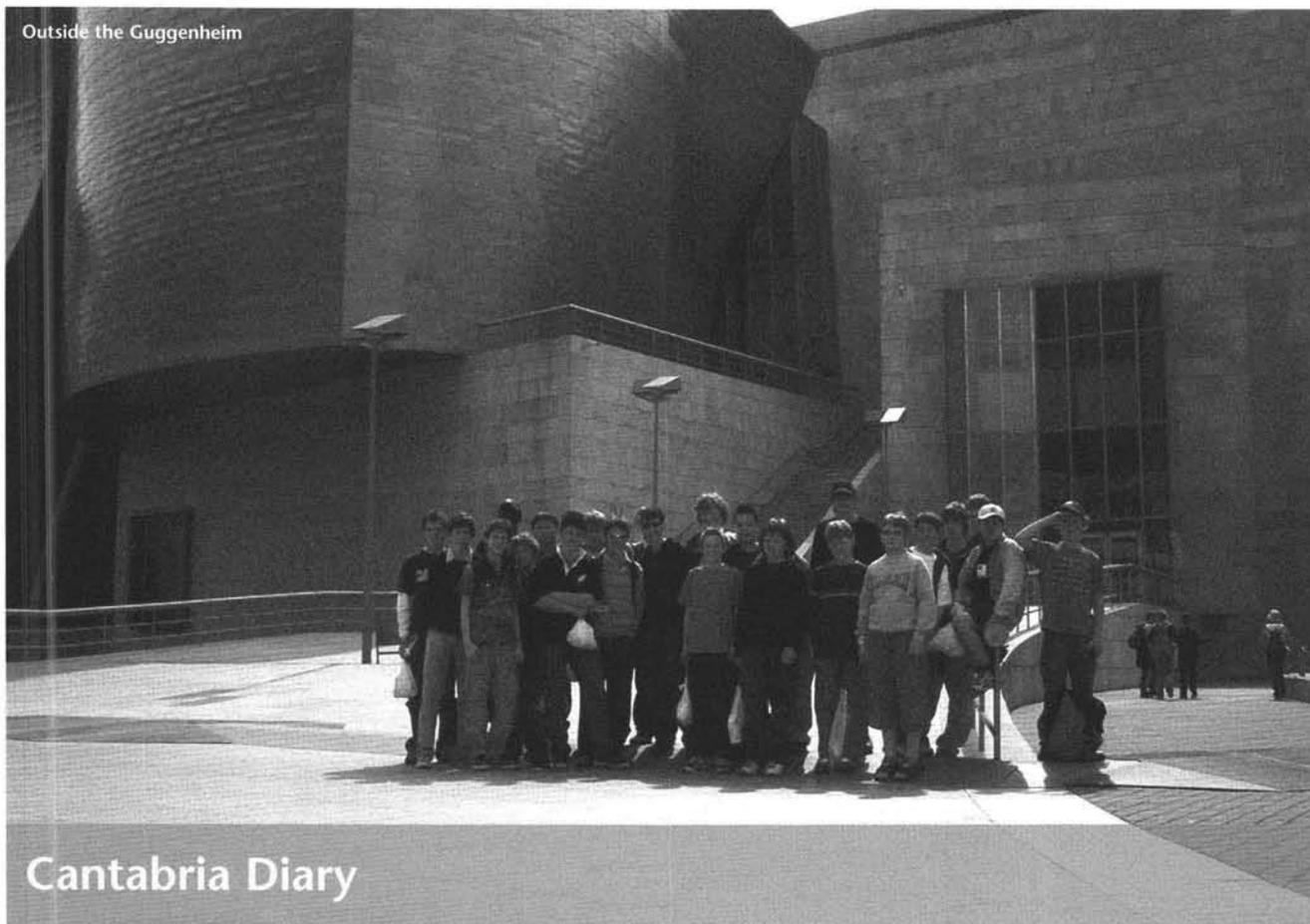
We became more accustomed to travelling in the hustle and bustle of the rapid Moscow Metro and in the evenings we took the train to a Tchaikovsky opera and a performance at the circus with knife-throwers, dancing parrots and poodles.

The English and Russian boys got on extremely well and the Abingdon pupils were very well looked after. One partner's mum dried his hair for him before letting him go out in the cold. We left in surprisingly hot sun with many happy and humorous memories of our time in Russia, and, hopefully, improved linguistic ability.

Victoria Hicks



The church of Spas na Nyarli



The Spanish Department's first foray into foreign climes!

Tuesday 29 March

6:30 am: Twenty-three of the twenty-four Third and Fourth Years turned up at the coach park to set off to Spain! But it was OK – one boy was to meet us at Stansted...

3:30 pm: Arrived at Hotel Cuevas (very nice, two star) in Santillana del Mar. After settling in, a couple of happy hours spent at the fascinating Inquisition Museum, contemplating various instruments of torture – NO TOUCHING ALLOWED!

Wednesday 30 March

9:00 am: Two-hour Spanish lesson began, in a tiny classroom up three flights of stairs! All in Spanish, a frightening-looking lady teacher but – we actually learned a lot of new words and had great fun.

2:00 pm: Altamira Caves Museum. A pity we couldn't see the original, but the waiting list to do so extends to three years, so Mr Pope told us. Why, I wondered? Could it be because the caves were so impressive? Picasso apparently said that after this cave art, all other art was mere decadence! Our guide called it the Sistine Chapel of 15,000 years ago. It certainly was breathtaking and well worth the visit. I loved the way the Spanish cavemen used the contours of the rocky ceiling to fill out the bellies of the animals they drew, sort of sculpture and art combined.

Thursday 31 March

9:00 am: More lessons, but we were ready for her this time. I learned the word for Post Office so I could send my Mum a postcard, and enjoyed working out the words to the weird song at the end of the class. Oh, and I got a Diploma!

The Guggenheim

After some time wandering around Santander, shopping, we had a quick photoshoot (Mr Pope lay on the pavement, half under the bus, for the 'perfect shot') and set off for two hours of luxury driving to Bilbao and the famous Guggenheim Museum.

Wow!

Nothing prepared me for this place. It was AWE-SOME! The outside draws your eye; it is so WEIRD. There's a sort of polygon-block thing to one side with lasers playing inside it night and day 'to make the invisible visible'. If you look at it long enough you do see colours and things you didn't know existed. It was mesmerising.

Inside the exhibition was mostly Aztec art, which all looked pretty samey to me, but on permanent display were some pretty wild pictures. I left with my head reeling – it was all so very different from the day before and 15,000 years ago and yet just as powerful...

After an hour or so of shopping in Bilbao we got back on the bus for our return two-hour journey but then, surprise, we broke the journey to go BOWLING! That was brilliant...



The group in Santander

Friday 1 April

8:00 am: Breakfast. I really liked the food, although the packed tortilla-sandwich lunches were nothing to write home about. I know, I know – April Fool and all that, but nobody played any tricks on the teachers. Bit sad really ...

9:00 am: Set off for a full day in the mountains. A long journey, but it was through some stunning scenery – the gorges in the Picos de Europa. From the road the views of craggy mountain peaks stretched upward higher than skyscrapers. It was very beautiful, but I was glad when we arrived at the base of the cable car which was to take us up, precariously, to 5,000 ft.

12:30 pm: The world lay at my feet (through the scary-looking holes in the grille on which I stood, hanging out over the mountain as Mr Pope took more photos).

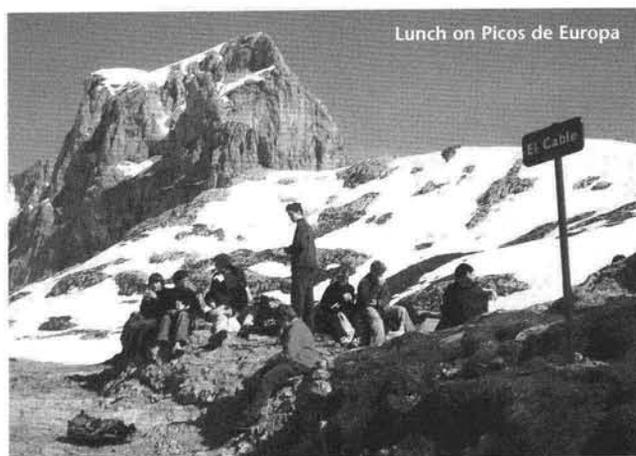
Bumboarding

Well, you just have to, don't you? The snow in the sun was glorious and white, with furrows carved out by previous visitors. It was brilliant fun! I got soaked, but who cares?

Saturday 2 April – Home again

8:30 am: Breakfast. Getting half an hour later each day, for which I was eternally grateful. Then we had a last morning's souvenir shopping in a local shopping centre – El Corte Inglés is VAST – and empty! I'd much rather be here than in Cornmarket on a Saturday morning. Then we piled on the bus to the airport.

I really enjoyed this trip. I hope the Spanish Department can do something similar next year. Why don't you come and join us?



Lunch on Picos de Europa

Creative Writing

A Walk to the Beach

Light blazed through the giant glass window of room 322, the great flickering shadow of the jagged palm tree dancing on the cold stone floor. It was Easter time, not the traditional English Easter celebrating Christ rising from the dead. It was Easter in a wild, dangerous, exotic land. We had decided to take my grandmother with us as a gift for her 80th birthday. It was a chance for us all to escape the cold familiar wet weather and long dark nights back home in exchange for a brief burst of sunny spells and longer days.

After a relaxing day soaking up the sun, we had left my fragile grandmother in the safety of the hotel, so that we could take a gentle walk to the nearby beach. The moment I stepped out of the hotel premises I realised I was in a different world. The hotel was a sheltered place. It could have been anywhere in the world, with sun, that is. But as soon as you left the security of its grounds you realised you were a rich tourist in a desperately poor country. As I was about to cross the road, a taxi raced past me. I also realised that it wasn't the safest place in the world and that life here seemed to have more danger than back home. When the coast was clear we all quickly crossed to get out of harm's way.

The walk down to the beach was not what you would expect. It was nothing like a typical English seaside town, such as Bournemouth. There was no long promenade along the sea front with coloured lights, no damp brisk breeze filled with the salt from the sea, and no loud calls from seagulls on the look-out for scraps of bread left from the day. Along the sea front there was only a large concrete wall around nine feet high. The air was still and I could hear the sound of cars in the distance about to hurtle around the corner. To me this wall summed up Tunisia: it was neither inviting nor persuasive, it was oppressive.

As we walked down an alley to get to the beach I saw a little tabby kitten. It couldn't have been more than three months old. It came up to us, looking for attention by miaowing loudly yet gently. It was clear that it hadn't eaten for a long time. My mother immediately placed some ham on the ground from leftover sandwiches we hadn't eaten earlier in the day. Suddenly, as if from nowhere the kitten's brothers and sisters rushed into view and began to eat the ham as well. We decided to leave them to finish what could have been their only meal and continued walking to the beach.

The beach was vast yet we were the only ones on it. It seemed to go on for miles. Around me were white plastic sun-loungers and

a small run-down bar as well as bright red sun-umbrellas. The sand was thick and lumpy. I took my shoes and socks off and walked into the sea. It didn't surprise me that it was very cold. After a while we decided we had better head back, as my frail grandmother was alone at the hotel.

On the way back I noticed there was still ham left on the footpath. Neither the little kitten nor its brothers and sisters were anywhere to be seen. We decided to leave the ham. The strays would probably return later to finish it off.

We were now close to the hotel and away from any danger. Suddenly I heard a quiet tapping noise behind me. It was the little kitten. It must have followed us back from the beach, but it still looked hungry. It started to miaow at us again for some food. My father decided to head back to the alley and pick up some ham for it. My mother and I kept stroking the kitten, making sure that it would wait until my Father returned with the food. I could hear the distant sound of a car about to swing around the corner. We cautiously stepped away from the road so as not to draw the kitten to any possible danger. Suddenly the taxi came hurtling by, its exhaust leaking loudly, making the car sound as if it could have been Concorde. The little kitten looked so frightened; it didn't know what to do, perhaps it had never seen a car before. I shrieked as it moved closer to the road and began to sprint to get to the other side for safety.

The little kitten never made it. The yellow taxi hit the kitten on its head, yet the driver drove on as if nothing had happened.

I was in complete shock. I could barely move. I couldn't believe what had just happened. The little kitten was now twisting and turning in violent fits, its screams loudly echoing off the concrete wall. My mother was in tears. She quickly ran out into the road, picked the kitten up and brought it back to where I was standing; cradling it, praying that it would be all right. I knew it was dying. All I could think of was the kitten's youth. It was just a few weeks old. It had only had a glimpse of life. The little kitten was killed by its instinct to survive. It was not its time to die; it should have had a long life ahead of it. Then I thought of my grandmother waiting for us and I suddenly felt frightened for her.

We couldn't tell her what we had just seen; we would have to pretend we had just been for a nice walk to the beach.

Edmund Perou 5 VMW

What Happens When My Leader Dies?

Decomposition of the Collective

Let me introduce myself. I am a human collective, somewhat like the Borg but more benign. I am many thousands of trillions of creatures who have come together during evolution. Each one of my cells contains formerly free-living bacteria called mitochondria. They were aerobic bacteria with their own DNA and protein structure. They are now symbiotic contributors providing energy for the collective.

I also house a lot of free loaders. In particular my intestines contain bacteria, protozoans and, if I'm unlucky, flatworms. While I'm alive I keep these under strict control, but I know they are waiting their chance to break free. What happens when I cease my policing activity? When I die, my heart stops pumping and each cell collective no longer receives blood and oxygen. Therefore the mitochondria can't produce energy and all the other individuals will die as a consequence. Kept unchecked, the bacteria in my gut will start feeding on the gut itself and then work their way into my body. The enzymes that in life broke down the food now start to break down my own cells. At this moment there is a free-for-all. Blowflies and coffin flies start laying their eggs in me. Their maggots will soon be eating me. Carrion and hide beetles will finish off the job. So my dead body has become a new ecosystem and a habitat supporting an entirely new food web.

As my body is digested, it turns to a liquid goo. Grave wax accumulates as bacterial enzymes break down my fats into fatty acids, and may remain in my coffin for a hundred years. However, with a bit of luck, if minerals seep into my grave and penetrate the bones, I may be fossilised and end up in a museum as an example of 21st century homo sapiens. This is the best that can be hoped for. It is naïve and unfair of Christians to say that only some bits of my collective will go to heaven (or hell). Why not all? Isn't it a bit bacterialist to allow only some eternal bliss? Furthermore, if my mitochondria are banned from heaven for not having souls, I'll be left gasping. I need those mitochondria to respire.

Why is it Important to do Good in My Life?

Human society has evolved over six million years to produce an altruistic form of behaviour to strengthen the coherence of the group. Groups benefit when their members are self-sacrificing. Society is dependent on moral and ethical behaviour amongst its members, and I hope that other people will feel the same because I will benefit from that.

Christians and other religious groups attribute uncharitable motives to those who do good. They are trying to avoid eternal punishment and to gain favour from God. This would be no way for a rational society to behave. We must do good for far more selfless reasons, for the betterment of others and society in general, without regard to personal reward.

Probably there should be no praise or blame attached to doing good because such drives are programmed into us by evolution and we do them instinctively. This explains why people who behave badly are generally miserable. They are acting against these instincts, and often stand outside society as a consequence and thus receive less benefit. I hope to do good in my life so that society benefits, and I am a happy, fulfilled person.

Harry Desmond 4 JEJO

Our Place

Every day,
Every night,
We went there,
To our place.

Our place was wonderful,
It made one feel beautiful,
The leaves on the trees were dainty,
Our place was special.

The glimmering sun would disappear,
And the sky turn dark,
Birds would quietly settle down,
That's what made our place magical!

The trees around were mighty,
Their hefty branches spread out,
Their trunks prominent in the bushes,
That's what made us feel secure.

The soil was hard,
On rainy days it would be damp,
The dead layer of leaves lay motionless,
That's what made it special.

The poachers' guns would fire on the odd occasion,
The noise boomed through the thick forest,
Terrified birds scattered,
That's what made it unique!

One day we went back to our place,
There was a spooky silence,
The forest was deserted,
All apart from a horrendous humming!

The forest was somewhat dead,
No one,
Nothing,
Was in our woods!

The yellow monsters were coming,
They were munching through the forest,
Eliminating everything!!
Our place was lost!!!

Jack Tinker 2 SPGS

The House

The Man walked in the House
And the door shut
And the House creaked
And the House changed

The House was beautiful
And the House was good
And the House was magnificent
And the House was glowing
And the House showed wonder upon its walls
And the Man thought
And the Man admired
And the House changed

The House was evil
And the House was tarnished with blood
And the House was darkly flaming
And the House was full of destruction
And the House showed black spikes upon its walls
And the Man thought
And the Man feared
And the House changed

The House was strange
And the House was filled with a stalking mist
And the House was a hypnotising green
And the House was worryingly calm
And the House showed silence upon its walls
And the Man thought
And the Man was confused
And the House changed

The House was death
And the House, like a rattlesnake, was distracting the Man
And the Man was watching the shaking tail instead of the
 deadly fangs
And the House struck
And the House showed the hungry mouth upon its walls
And the Man thought
And the Man died
And the House ate

And the House changed
And the House waited for another

Alex Carver 2 SPGS

Witch Bottle

All of the following events are true.

Berriew, Powys, Wales. January 1897

The farm had failed. At least that was my initial impression when I first heard. We'd lost seven animals: four sheep and three cows. I couldn't believe it! I only heard because my Ma was comforting Da when he told her. Brother Beda was the last one to be told. Ma told me that everything would be fine, we just had to hope and pray for a good harvest.

A week later, the milk stopped churning. We didn't choose the right day to churn it, Ma told Brother Beda and me. The next day, two ducks vanished from our farm.

It was then, two months before my eleventh year, that I had my first taste of anything pagan. Ma had been out in the fields and woods collecting food all day.

I asked her what her findings were but she replied, "If you don't stop asking about others' affairs, then you'll feel the back o' my hand across your face, Saffir my girl!" I rubbed my cheek as if that reply had delivered the smack she threatened, and returned to my room. The following morning, on the lintel of the back door was what my mother called "our little piece of luck". It was a four-leafed clover, a small clove of garlic, a string of barley ears and various herbs, all tied together with a lilac ribbon. I was just about to ask if Ma could make one for me to tie up my brown locks, when Ma told us not to tell a soul about the Luck Piece or the trouble on the farm. She said that it wasn't Christian to make a Luck Piece, but she had to do it so that we got all the help we could. I personally didn't see why something as colourful and sweet-smelling as a Luck Piece could be so evil, but the rule was to touch it every time we left or entered the house.

Three days later, half our chickens stopped laying. We now had no butter and no eggs. For the next month I stopped listening to Ma and Da talking at night about the trouble on the farm, as I thought perhaps God was punishing us for my listening in on others' affairs. I never knew precisely, but I gathered that the cows were now very short in number as Ma no longer gave us milk before bedtime.

Sometimes, I'd be washing my face in the sink, and look at my reflection in the water. It was on my eleventh birthday, and I had been very sad about the trouble on the farm, when I saw an old man with a white beard standing behind me in the reflection. When I turned round, there was no one to be seen. When I dreamed at night, he'd often be there and he'd say, "I can help you", in a quiet tone. When I'd tell Brother Beda, he'd tell me I was mad. He was four years my junior; I didn't expect him to understand.

It was in the hot month of July that my best friend Meddox, the boy from the cottage on the next hill, took me to see his new toy soldier that his grandfather had made him for his birthday. I'd never met his grandfather, but I was told that he was very wise and he could cure people who were in a sickly way. A portrait of him hung in the kitchen. When I first saw it, I let out a small scream of fright: it was the old man from my dream!

"Can he cure animals and plants?" I asked Meddox, nervously.

"He can make anything well again with his spells," replied Meddox proudly. "He's full of magic, our Old Father Griffyr." I never said the word 'magic'. Ma had told me not to, as it reminded her of the Luck Piece that she hated so much, yet felt compelled to keep.

"He comes here for a Christmas visit every year," said Meddox. "You can meet him then, if you like."

"Yes, please. I'd like that very much." I looked again at the portrait. Looking beyond his gruff beard was a kind face with bright blue eyes, just like mine. Da had always told me that I was special because I had dark brown hair and yet such bright blue eyes.

Meddox and I never again mentioned Old Father Griffyr.

A week before harvest, we only had one meal a day and fourteen more of our livestock were dead. Da had arranged the help of everyone he could think of, but no one could find an explanation of the mysterious deaths of the animals or the lack of vegetable food because the seeds wouldn't grow. My little cat, Alis, disappeared that week too.

That was the only time I ever saw my father cry. Harvest came, and we hadn't a good one. The crops were atrocious. Until November, we all suffered food rationing. Brother Beda was the only one who couldn't cope; he often kicked and screamed, demanding milk before bedtime. But what could Ma tell him?

At Christmas time we had to buy our meat from the towns. All we could afford was a small chicken breast and three potatoes that Ma had managed to grow in the fields.

Meddox came to me on December 23rd and told me that Old Father Griffyr had arrived. Ma allowed me to visit Meddox and we ran to see Old Father Griffyr.

"So you're our little Saffir, are we?" was the greeting I received from Old Father Griffyr when I entered the house. He was exactly the man from my dream. "Thank you so much for playing with our little Meddox here, he loves his soldiers, don't you boy?" Meddox nodded. "I know what," Old Father Griffyr continued, "how's about I give you a little Christmas wish, now? Come here and whisper it to me."

As far as I know, no one in the room heard me, except Old Father Griffyr. Then, I knew, for some reason, that my wish would be granted as he then said, "I can help you."

His only request was to accompany me to the farm and to show him what the farm looked like. I was also to hide him from Ma, Da and Brother Beda. Then Old Father Griffyr requested to be left alone and for me to return to my normal day. Unfortunately, my curiosity got the better of me, and although Ma had told me never to interfere with others when I shouldn't, I decided to spy on him. I climbed the, now leafless, horse chestnut tree and sat on the branch where Alis used to nap in the summer. I was quite hidden from view through the thick twigs and branches. I sat there for the best part of an hour, watching Old Father Griffyr wander through the farm, muttering a few words in Welsh and I think some in Latin. I also heard him recite part of the Lord's Prayer that I'd learned at church. Then I saw him walk into the cowshed, with only five remaining cows in it, with a brown leather satchel. I got bored of waiting so I climbed off the tree and went back to Ma in the kitchen – I never saw Old Father Griffyr again.

A month passed of more rationing and bad trouble again. Come February 1st, Da came into the house with his face as happy as can be, declaring that the animals were producing offspring and the crops were growing well again. By the summer, everything was well again and we had our best harvest ever that year.

In August, I was playing on the edge of the woods, when I heard a scratching behind me. There, out of the woods, came my little cat, Alis, followed by four baby kittens. Ma was most pleased.

I never found out what happened to the Luck Piece.

Shortly after the First World War, my great-grandfather was employed in the reconstruction of a cowshed on a nearby farm that had once belonged to his relatives until they struck a fortune and left Wales forever. In the process of breaking up an old feeding trough made of oak and stone slabs, he came across a cylindrical stoneware bottle buried underneath it. The bottle had been broken when the stone slab above it was smashed, and he noticed that inside the bottle was a piece of paper, covered on one side with handwriting in ink, curiously cramped and closely written. At the bottom of the sheet were strange hieroglyphs, with an abracadabra triangle on the left, and mysterious circular figures, also in ink, on the right. This type of charm has often been confused with that of a pagan ritualistic variety, but indeed it is quite the opposite: there are several references to the Christian faith. In some parts, lines of the Lord's Prayer can be seen. So, it is in fact a white magic charm with a strong religious element. My great-grandfather showed it to his parents, who recognised it as a conjuror's charm which had been buried to protect the farm against strange happenings of unexpected animal deaths and bad crops. They said that it must have been the work of Griffyr Polgadd who protected a farm in the districts of Llanfechain and Llanfyllin, situated in the mountains above Weshpool.

Charms continued to be produced in parts of Wales until the late 1930s, when it would appear that the art of the conjuror eventually succumbed to that of the veterinary surgeon.

Oliver Fóster 5 MMH

Sport



1st XV Rugby

The 2004-2005 1st XV season was one of great disappointment. The playing record speaks for itself — played 12, lost 10, won 2. Although there are obviously more losses than wins, some of these matches could have gone either way. It was a tough season with many ups and downs for a variety of reasons.

It started with a pre-season trip to Italy. The intensity of training throughout the week was tough and the boys went at it with full vigour. It all culminated in a well fought win at the end of the week against a Trevinito side. Spirits were high at this stage, maybe too high!

The domestic season began with a trip to The Oratory School. This first game of the season generally is one full of mistakes and the side that makes the least normally wins. Well, the sides were evenly matched but unfortunately we made too many mistakes that cost us the game. It was disappointing as at times we dominated play up front and threatened to score on a number of occasions but could not convert our pressure into points.

The next game was Radley. The biggest game of the season was always going to be a difficult one away from home. In the first half we matched them up front in the forwards, but when they did get good ball and good field position, their clinical back play, at pace, was too much for us to handle. The score flattered them as towards the end we let them score some soft tries that should have been stopped. This said, there were some notable performances from **Anthony Mak** and **Francis Gater**, who stood out in a tough game.

In the Daily Mail Cup we were given a bye and had been drawn against Sir William Borlase Grammar School in the second round. This match brought our first home win of the season. We played well with plenty of continuity and skilful finishing, **Toby Roche** at scrum half orchestrating most of our successful penetrating moves. We ran out winners 32-5 and moved into the third round to face Aylesbury Grammar School, to which I will come later.

In the week preceding the St Paul's match we had heard on the grapevine that they were strong and had one of their best sides for years. This was a daunting prospect for us as our injury toll escalated, taking out fifteen potential 1st XV players. Nevertheless, we prepared as well as we could. On the day we were outclassed by one of the most complete schoolboy teams that I have ever seen. I don't think that our injured players would have made much difference. It must be said that the boys who played could hold their heads up high because they never gave up and did a tremendous amount of tackling and on occasions forced a very good side to score from about the fifth phase.

Against Bedford our forwards gave an outstanding display, especially in the line-out and in the loose. Unfortunately, when the opposition got the ball they used it to very good effect, running in some well worked tries. Once again individual performances from **Nick Turnbull**, **Scott Henley** and **Matthew Duhan** shone through adversity. Every match saw improvement in our play but the opposition we were coming up against always seemed to have the measure of us — and more.

The MCS game is always a difficult one as they have a tremendous drive and determination to beat us. To win it is always a case of matching that drive and determination in the first instance. This we did not do and on the day MCS were the better side and deserved to win. This said, there were elements in our play that were encouraging but things were just not happening for us.

Stowe away is probably one of the most difficult places to win. The crowd is always very partisan and their style of play is always difficult to match. For me, however, this game was one of the highlights of the season. We started strongly, winning good possession and for the first time using it in the correct way. Unfortunately, the bounce of the ball did not go our way, with Stowe scoring a couple of, to say the least, opportunistic tries. This loss was difficult to take as we had played so well and deserved to get more from the game.



After our performance at Stowe we went confidently into the third round tie in the Daily Mail Cup against Aylesbury Grammar School. We were a little too complacent and came up against a well organised side and an extremely talented individual who in the end was the difference between the two sides. Although another loss, it saw a number of younger players from the Senior Colts get a 1st XV jersey on their backs and play well.

The half term break came with a sigh of relief and a real hope that some of our injured players had a chance of getting back to full fitness.

The second half of term started with a visit from Pangbourne. This game was a hard fought affair with Pangbourne unfortunately coming out on top. It is well quoted in sport that you make your own luck, but once again fate seemed to work against us and all our good play was spoilt either by an interpretation of the laws or by the bounce of the ball. This said, the forwards acquitted themselves well, but with no tactical decision-maker at 10 it was very difficult to use the ball we did win in the right way.

The games against Warwick and Bedford Modern took the same pattern, with our forwards in the game and our backs struggling to know what to do with the ball. This meant that we were going into our last game against Bloxham with only one win to our name.

At this stage I would like to pay tribute to the players. **Matthew Duhan** showed throughout the season his tenacity and versatility. **Cameron More** showed he had a tremendous boot. **Peter Jones** showed a certain amount of skill and hard running. **Nick Turnbull** led from the front and often popped up when you least expected him to make a try-saving tackle. **Brian Cullen** did well to eventually come back from injury. The Lower Sixth players who feature will have learnt more about their game and I am sure they will take their experiences into next season.

The injured players I empathise with: it can be very difficult to watch from the sideline and be powerless to help. I hope that maybe in the future they can get fully involved in the game once again.

The final match against Bloxham was a glorious victory and was a fitting end to a tough season.

My final thought on the season is that maybe we learnt more about ourselves when facing adversity week in week out than we would have if we had won all our games! Sean Fitzpatrick once said, "We remember our defeats more than our victories ... for me, fear of failure was always my biggest motivation."

Stuart Hamilton

1st XV Results

The Oratory School	L	3 - 13
Radley College	L	5 - 45
Sir William Borlase's School	W	32 - 5
St Paul's	L	10 - 68
Bedford	L	13 - 33
Magdalen College School	L	6 - 20
Stowe School	L	17 - 27
Aylesbury Grammar School	L	6 - 24
Pangbourne College	L	10 - 34
Warwick School	L	8 - 27
Bedford Modern School	L	17 - 47
Bloxham School	W	28 - 8

Junior Colts A XV Rugby

Results

Played 15: Won 10, Lost 5

Points For: 321 – Points Against: 157

Overall this was a hugely encouraging season. This is the most talented group of rugby players I have seen at this age group in my time at Abingdon and I am convinced that a number of players in this team will go on to great things at 1st XV level in a few years time. The highlights of the season were a fantastic win over Radley College and an exciting run of victories in the Daily Mail Cup, ended by Wellington College in a very close fourth-round match.

The season began with an exciting match on the 1st XV pitch against a big side from The Oratory School. **Ben Jackson** and **Simon Edwards** rounded off fine team play with excellent tries, while **Jonathan Bayfield** recorded a scorching solo effort and **Joseph Buckley** claimed a poacher's try. Unfortunately, despite outscoring our opponents by four tries to three, we were edged out by two points. Defeat was hard to swallow, but sloppy defensive work in the second half was to blame.

Next up was St Edward's School in the Daily Mail Cup. A three-try blitz in the first twenty minutes effectively decided the contest. **Jonathan Bayfield** scored two tries and **Robbie Woods** one, all out wide on the left-hand side. After a great start the match became a scrappy affair but it was very pleasing to record our first victory.

Then came the big one: Radley at home. What a match this proved to be. Wave after wave of red attack came to nothing as our brave, organised and determined defence ensured that we stifled Radley's primitive and inflexible game plan of attacking through the forwards and producing quick ruck ball. The opposition were taking us to pieces up front and dominating possession but we were happy to fan out across the field and soak up the pressure. Suddenly we broke clear on the left and **Jonathan Bayfield's** pace put him clear again for a great score. This pattern continued throughout the first half, with Radley unable to break through despite having almost all the possession and territory. Further imaginative counter-attacking play created two stunning scores for **Robbie Woods** and we could not believe the scoreline at half time: 17-0 to Abingdon! Radley did eventually score (shortly after a fantastic try-saving tackle by **Alex Sharp**) but a penalty from **Matthew Rossiter** left them 20-5 down with only minutes to play. To put the final nail in the coffin, **Max Neil** charged down a clearance kick and fell on the ball under the posts. At 27-5, the celebrations could begin!

After the ecstasy came the agony. A long trip down to St Paul's saw us arrive for the match in a strange frame of mind: lacklustre, lethargic and not 'up for it'. What followed was tough to watch. St Paul's were a physically confrontational, well drilled outfit with pace, depth and skills to drool over in the backline. Although we competed well in many areas, receiving praise from the opposition coach for our team spirit and determination, they seemed to take every single chance that came their way and never really gave us even a glimpse of an opening. Defeating this Abingdon team 48-0 marks a side out as pretty useful and, at the time of writing, this particular St Paul's team has yet to experience defeat!

The second Daily Mail Cup game proved to be our easiest victory of the season. Though it was good to get plenty of tries on the board against The Royal Latin School, we realised that tougher games lay around the corner.

The match against Bedford School was one of the most disappointing of the season. In many ways it was a good game to watch as the sides were so well matched, so how we managed to lose 29-0 remains a mystery. Ultimately, lack of fitness proved telling as the opposition ran in four tries in the last fifteen minutes to give them a very flattering margin of victory, aided and abetted by some pathetic tackling. Following an early score, Bedford had been 5-0 up for most of the game. We had our chances to draw level or even take the lead but we squandered them... and then came disaster!

The match against Magdalen College School produced one of our best spells of rugby. A hat-trick from **Joseph Buckley** was the highlight of a first half performance that saw us lead 35-0 at the break. Unfortunately, we were unable to add more than one score to this tally in the second half but we were all happy to be back in the winning habit.

The next game, against Stowe, proved to be one of the most enjoyable matches to watch. Four of the five tries were scored by our backline, including one each for wingers **Edward Hallett** and **Rhys Cadman**, but the performance of the pack in both tight and loose play was also mightily impressive and it was very pleasing to win so convincingly against a useful Stowe side. Their coach was rather shell-shocked after the game but he was generous and complimentary in defeat.

Lord Williams's School, Thame provided us with a tough physical challenge in the third round of the Daily Mail Cup but some great play in the loose and some super angles from our backs saw us build up a commanding lead. I was very pleased to see tries scored by players in many different positions: we were moving towards 'total rugby'.

After half term, our impressive progress as a team came to a grinding halt: the match against Pangbourne was dire. **Oliver Cook** deserves a mention for his two tries, but very little else about the game was memorable! This was not the ideal springboard for our important fourth-round Cup match against Wellington College.

Although the boys were focused and fired up before the game, we gave Wellington too much space and too much respect in the first fifteen minutes, during which they scored a try and a penalty to put them 8-0 ahead. **Matthew Rossiter** kicked us back to 8-3 before half time and, with little to choose between the teams, the next score was always going to be decisive. Unfortunately, it went to Wellington, a penalty putting them 11-3 ahead to leave us two scores adrift. **Robbie Woods** went close and **Oliver Raban** almost gathered a kick and chase for a probable breakaway score but we never kept control of possession and territory for long enough to work our way back into contention. Ultimately, the difference between the teams was not talent but composure, with Wellington showing more ability to look after the ball under pressure and take the simple options to stay one step ahead of us, despite the best efforts of **Thomas Green** from the Third Year who came on at half time and looked a class player, even at this level.

The Wellington match was played on a Thursday and we had to face Warwick on the following Saturday. Understandably tired, the boys were on the pitch but did not turn up mentally and we lost a scrappy game 11-8. With two weeks to prepare for our next game against St Edward's, we had lots to work on.

St Edward's were a much better side than we had faced earlier in the season and a beautiful try from a set move and a penalty kick put them 10-0 up. Having not yet won a game in which

we had been behind, the team were worried and panic set in: we were spinning the ball wide at every opportunity when it was obvious to everyone on the sidelines that we had a distinct edge up front. Following a rather heated half time team-talk from the coach (probably best not repeated here), common sense prevailed and we set about dismantling the St Edward's forward pack with a basic but mightily effective game plan of ten-man rugby. With **Sam Fletcher** and **Joshua Turrill** dominating the line-out, the forwards were awesome in the second half, hauling us ahead 17-10 before a late St Edward's try gave us a real scare. The St Edward's kicker then missed the crucial conversion and we scraped home by just two points. **Matthew Rossiter** deserves praise both for holding his nerve with his own attempts at goal and also for pinning St Edward's in their own 22 for long periods of time with excellent tactical kicking.

The match against a committed and physical Bloxham team did not produce a great performance but we did well to recover from the setback of an early penalty against us to win with a certain degree of comfort. We felt that we should have scored more tries but we shot ourselves in the foot on a regular basis by making poor decisions when we were in good positions. On a more positive note, **James Rhodes** had an excellent match on the flank and **Jamie Graves** sparked our backline in the second half.

The final match against Bedford Modern produced a performance much more in keeping with this team at their best. Five tries were scored, with **Oliver Raban** and **Simon Edwards** each scoring a brace. My selection for the 'magic moment' of the game (and perhaps even the season) was a try from a perfect driving maul. This may not be everyone's idea of beautiful rugby but, as a second row myself, I could appreciate how much this score meant to a pack of forwards who had worked so hard in training.

The following boys represented the Junior Colts A XV on a fairly regular basis: **Simon Edwards (c)**, **Jonathan Bayfield**, **Joseph Buckley**, **Rhys Cadman**, **Thomas Clee**, **Oliver Cook**, **Sam Fletcher**, **Hugh Graham**, **Edward Hallett**, **Ben Jackson**, **Max Neil**, **Oliver Raban**, **Matthew Rossiter**, **Alex Sharp**, **William Stockwell**, **Joshua Turrill**, **Jonathan Warlow**, **Sebastien Wilson**, **Robbie Woods**.

In addition, the following boys also played for the A XV: **Jay Amin**, **Jamie Graves**, **Thomas Green**, **Luke Himpson**, **Simon Jeffreys**, **James Moulds**, **James Rhodes**, **Patrick Shephard**.

Amongst the forwards, the most consistent performances came from **Simon Edwards** (no. 8), **Sam Fletcher** (lock and player of the season), **Jonathan Warlow** (prop) and **Joseph Buckley** (flanker), though all of the forwards deserve praise for the way in which their skills and teamwork developed over the course of the

year. The performance of the forwards in the final match against Bedford Modern was as good as anything I have seen at this level. **Hugh Graham** (hooker) was named most improved player, making up for his relatively small size with huge commitment. **William Stockwell** (lock) is the type of wholehearted player that everybody would love to have as a team-mate, while **Ben Jackson** (prop), **Oliver Cook** (flanker) and **Joshua Turrill** (lock) also put in some excellent performances for the team in determined and unselfish fashion.

In the back line, competition for places was fierce so a number of different boys earned an A team shirt during the course of the season. **Sebastien Wilson** (scrum-half) and **Jonathan Bayfield** (wing/full-back) were the most consistent performers, though **Robbie Woods** (centre/full-back) is certainly a star of the future as well, especially now that he has added to his considerable range of talents the ability to draw a tackler and pass the ball! **Thomas Clee** (centre) always gave one hundred per cent in both attack and defence and would have been my choice for man-of-the-match against Radley, while **Matthew Rossiter** (fly-half) proved reliable with the boot under pressure and showed a good range of passing. Team selection was always difficult but I do regret not involving **Jamie Graves** (centre) earlier in the season. He played really well in the last two matches, scoring the first try in the final game to help us finish the season on a happy note.

Despite a number of success stories, I can't help but feel a little disappointed that such a talented group of boys were defeated on five occasions. With the exception of St Paul's, by a considerable margin the best side we encountered, none of our losses came against more talented rugby teams. Instead, a combination of bad luck, lapses in concentration, mistakes at crucial times and poor decision-making meant that we made life too easy for the opposition in these big matches. Next year, following the tour to France, these boys should aim for nothing less than an **unbeaten season** in the regular block fixtures. I am convinced that their best performance would be sufficient to defeat The Oratory, Bedford and Warwick and would also be enough to give St Paul's a real run for their money. Even the mighty Wellington College found this Abingdon team to be very tough opposition and I feel that our titanic fourth-round match was a game that we could have won. These boys have nothing to fear from anyone if they concentrate on their own performance, especially their lower-body tackling!

Good luck to all the boys in the future: it has been an absolute privilege to work with this year-group. Good luck also to ASH, who will have the almost impossible task of deciding which players to omit from his starting line-up next season.

Sean Spratling

Results

			Tries	Conversions	Penalties
Oratory	L	20 - 22	Jackson, Edwards, Bayfield, Buckley		
St Edward's	W	22 - 5	Bayfield 2, Woods	Rossiter 2	Rossiter
Radley	W	27 - 5	Bayfield, Woods 2, Neil	Rossiter 2	Rossiter
St Paul's	L	0 - 48			
Royal Latin School	W	52 - 0	Edwards 4, Bayfield 2, Wilson, Neil	Rossiter 5	Warlow
Bedford	L	0 - 29			
MCS	W	40 - 0	Buckley 3, Bayfield, Warlow, Woods	Rossiter 5	
Stowe	W	29 - 5	Bayfield, Edwards, Cadman, Clee, Hallett	Rossiter 2	
Lord Williams's	W	40 - 3	Bayfield 2, Buckley, Warlow, Edwards, Woods	Rossiter 5	
Pangbourne	W	21 - 0	Cook 2, Woods	Rossiter 3	
Wellington	L	3 - 11		Rossiter	
Warwick	L	7 - 11	Fletcher	Rossiter	
St Edward's	W	17 - 15	Edwards, Cook	Rossiter 2	Rossiter
Bloxham	W	17 - 3	Edwards, Raban	Rossiter 2	Rossiter
Bedford Modern	W	29 - 0	Raban 2, Edwards 2, Graves	Shephard 2	

Senior Colts A XV Rugby

Performance was the key to success!

As an U15 side in 2003, going into the final game of the season, this team had won only a single game, against Pangbourne. This year the picture was very different. They took on Bedford Modern on the final Saturday of the season, confident in the knowledge that they had been a real force on the local circuit, with seven victories as a testament to their achievements. They were all too aware that real focus was required if they wanted to finish the season on a high. Too many sporting teams falter at the final hurdle because of over-confidence.

During the course of this particularly successful season, they turned games around through a combination of passion, intensity, dogged determination and real flair. Through good performance, the winning takes care of itself. Teams can train as hard as they like, but on match day you have to perform well. Combinations and units have to gel and if things are going badly, you have to try and overcome the problems. This was not a team that relied on individuals to perform in order to win, but throughout the season it was the unity and synergistic nature of the squad, which triumphed.

The scrummaging was a particular highlight, largely owing to the consistency of personnel and the effort of the tight five. It was not only due to their solid technique, but also their mobility around the pitch that gave them a considerable edge over the opposition. Getting numbers to the break-down was a critical part of the success of this team. Having the 'big fellas' there to clear out created a solid platform for the backs to launch their attacks. The line-out work also matured during the course of the season. Confidence grew and we started picking off the opposition ball on a regular basis. This was down to good communication and focus. The forwards developed a number of their own set pieces, showing a real understanding for the game. In the front row **Harry Moore** and **Charlie Quarterman** acted like extra back-row forwards, while **Bilal Yassine** showed his experience and strength, creating all sorts of problems for his opposite number. **Ryan Bucke** adapted well to his switch to the second row, showing a real feisty approach in the rucks and mauls. His work rate was superb. **Zhongjie Dong** showed tremendous determination in the loose, stealing opposition balls with regularity. The flankers, **Will Clegg**, **Alex Hamilton** and **Huw Parmenter**, proved to be a real handful for the opposition, not only demolishing the man in possession, but ably supporting the backs at the break-down. At number 8 **Chris Halford**, led by example, maintaining composure throughout.

Matt Watkins controlled the game superbly in the mid-field, playing a dictator's role, ensuring that his pack kept going forward. His tactical kicking led to tremendous pressure being placed on the opposition. Support off the ball improved during the course of the season and this led to greater momentum in attack. With a great deal of raw pace from **Adam Paxton**, **Tom Meadows** and **Bhavesh Amin**, the opposition had a lot to deal with. **Chris Checkley** and **Max Wood** are remarkably intuitive when carrying the ball, finding the space and exploiting it. **Jonny Hughes** showed tremendous strength in punching through the gain line and making some superb tackles. The backline as a whole need to be complimented on their defensive work. Consistency here is crucial and they put in the tackles that counted. They really asserted themselves, making their opponents feel their presence and the pressure.

Our early season encounter against Radley proved to be a cracker. We put good pressure on from the start, which led to an early penalty, which **Matt** converted. We maintained a good work-rate

but a defensive error in the backline gave Radley the opportunity to score off a line-out. We maintained our focus and fought back, earning another penalty to recover the lead. On the brink of half time we were awarded another penalty. The kick fell tantalisingly short, but a great solo chase by **David Mills** (top try scorer for the season) saw him pick up and score. It was converted by **Matt Watkins** and we ended the first half 13-5 up. Unfortunately, we could not keep up the pressure in the second half and some strong running from the impressive Radley backline saw them run in some well worked tries. The final score was 13-24 in a game that produced some very good schoolboy Rugby

The highlights of the season are undoubtedly the matches against St Paul's and St Edward's. Having lost by more than 70 points to St Paul's the previous year, and turning round 10 points down, self-belief kicked in. The commitment was immense. The forwards worked tirelessly, stealing opposition ball and securing their own. One moment that stands out for me was a tackle from **Tom Meadows**. Their player ran round the blind side and was thumped by a hefty tackle from **Tom** that drove him 3 metres back, allowing the forwards once again to get in on the action. It is moments like that which inspire teams to work a little harder, raising the intensity and the tempo. Against St Edward's there was never any doubt in the minds of the players. They ran out winners 22-5, a 43 point turn-around from last season. It was these types of performances that left the opposition bewildered by the outcome. The determination, the will to win, the commitment and the performance from the Abingdon boys were outstanding.

The competition for places was fierce and the real difficulty was trying to pick the strongest squad with the right combinations without damaging the self-esteem of the unlucky ones who do not get picked for the starting line-up. During the season **Alex Freeland**, **Huw Parmenter** and **Nick Li** forced their way into the starting line-up. The team members they displaced had done nothing wrong, but the players in question had shown a little more edge. As a result, the intensity in the training sessions was raised without any prompting. This is a tremendous position to be in as a coach, witnessing just how much the players wanted to be in the side.

Everyone made huge strides forward in their understanding, technique and performance in the game situation. At the end of the season **Matthew Watkins** was singled out as the Most Valuable Player. Not only for controlling the game, but also for his ability to kick the crucial points when the pressure was on. I look forward to following their progress over the next two years. It was a tremendous pleasure working with such a motivated bunch of individuals, who worked together to create a formidable team.

Andrew Hall

Oratory	L	7 – 8
Radley	L	13 – 24
St Paul's	W	12 – 10
Bedford	W	14 – 12
MCS	W	22 – 0
Stowe	W	17 – 15
Pangbourne	W	30 – 0
Warwick	L	5 – 17
St Edward's	W	22 – 5
Bloxham	W	17 – 3
Bedford Modern	W	37 – 12

Played 11: Won 8, Lost 3

Points For: 196, Points Against: 106

Junior Colts B XV Rugby

After the first Lions test Clive Woodward stated that "The contact area was a real war zone and we just seemed to lose out." We went into that war zone without our generals and lost last season's entire back row within the first week of term. I didn't realise how much of an impact this had had on the team until the players returned to secure and turn over possession, allowing a dangerous backline ball to operate.

The fixture list dictates that many of our toughest matches occur in the first half of term. This, combined with our lack of a back row during this period, meant that we were put under a great deal of pressure. We suffered losses at the hands of the Oratory School, St Paul's and Radley, with too many boys prepared to shirk their defensive responsibilities. After one or two fired-up training sessions, a different team turned out against Bedford where, although we played aggressively in the contact, we still only managed to grind out a draw.

The game which really kick-started our season was against MCS. We were able to secure the ball against a smaller opposition pack and on hard ground our backs ran in 59 points. The corner had finally been turned and from here on we won five of the remaining six games and were now looking like a different outfit from the one that had lined up early on in the season.

The games against Stowe and St Edward's saw our best performances of the season. At Stowe two of the three backs, **James Moulds** and **James Cookson**, who had been missing in action, returned to allow us to play more than one phase of attacking rugby, turning around a 3-0 deficit at half time to run in three tries out wide in the second half. This attacking rugby continued in the Pangbourne game, with Abingdon showing some good continuity. Our backs looked like scoring every time they got the ball and more often than not they did, as **Luke Himpson** and **Simon Jeffreys** both crossed the whitewash as we ran in seven tries.

After the only loss of the second half of term, against Warwick, we took on local rivals St Edward's. This game highlighted every aspect of the team that had developed throughout the season. Despite losing our skipper, **Max Neil**, to concussion we defended superbly for much of the first half with **James Moulds** and **Henry Locatelli-Malacrida** leading the defensive duties. In the second half, **Alec Plint** controlled the game well from fly-half, with **Jamie Graves** pulling the strings in the mid-field. This allowed us to open up space for **Luke Himpson** and **Timothy Gower** to touch down from their respective wings. **Tim** rounded off a man-of-the-match performance by tiptoeing down the touchline to score from a kick return.

Congratulations must go to the boys for the way they turned the season around and bounced back from their early defeats. Special mention should be made of **Patrick Shephard**, who led the side superbly, and to **Jamie Graves**, both of whom ended the season playing for the A team. **Richard Moore** displayed versatility in the front row, covering prop and hooker, and **James Bedford** took every piece of advice on board to develop into a fine player.

Steve Brenchley

Oratory	L	0 - 29	Pangbourne	W	54 - 5
Radley	L	0 - 22	Warwick	L	10 - 47
St Paul's	L	0 - 50	St Edward's	W	17 - 5
Bedford	D	12 - 12	Bloxham	W	17 - 0
MCS	W	59 - 0	Bedford Modern	W	48 - 0
Stowe	W	19 - 3			

Junior A XV Rugby

This season we had a very strong team with plenty of individual talent but because many of us had never played together before our first few games were a little shaky. We began well with three successive victories against Oratory, Radley, where we didn't concede a point, and St Paul's. After this we lost to a very strong Bedford team but, learning from our mistakes, we went on to beat MCS 31-12 and Pangbourne 43-0.

After these victories we had high hopes for the match against Warwick, although we knew it would be very tough. We managed to hold out for five minutes before they scored their first try and by half time they had increased their lead to 20-0. All seemed lost. However, during the second half we probably played our best rugby of the season, carrying the ball well and being very quick in the defence. Unfortunately, the gap between us was too big but they scored no more points and we scored seven. Had we played as well in the first half it would have been a very different story.

St Edward's was another very strong team but by now we had begun to play really well as a unit. Unfortunately, we made too many silly mistakes in this game and despite a really close battle we lost 12-10.

The game against Bloxham was played on a cold muddy day and despite some controversial refereeing the team showed fighting spirit and managed a 15-13 win with an excellent kick from **Jacob Swain** at the end.

We were hoping to finish our season on a high against Bedford Modern, a team we had never played before so we didn't know what to expect. They turned out to be an excellent team who played very imaginatively. We lost 31-7 but the spirit on the pitch in the closing five minutes was amazing and we did well under immense pressure to keep Bedford out.

All in all, 2004 season was a fine season and the teams that we lost to had better look out next year.

George Bone 3 JHT, Captain

Juniors A XV Squad:

Jacob Swain, Sherif Sam-Sadeen, Andrew Cook, Edward Tolson, Felix Wood, Michael Shaughnessy, Parathan Rabindran, Matthew Pursell (v-c), Jamie Laidlow, George Bone, Barry Tse, Cody Yellowlees-Bound, Thomas Bradfield, Ross Muir, Jojo Todd, William Shrier, Thomas Green, Jack Longden.

From the Coach: It has been a very exciting and rewarding season. I have been aware of a very talented squad passing through, who have had plenty of success and yet are still a long way from reaching their potential. This means the team can look forward to next season with real optimism — and given the outstanding record of the B XV there should be genuine competition for places.

I would like to thank the boys for their efforts. I have certainly enjoyed coaching this group and have been pleased by the way they have progressed with their rugby. They have always been positive in their approach — and have shown the right spirit in some tough games (and they have had a few). Finally, many thanks to the parents who have supported us loyally this season and best of luck with next season.

Stuart Evans

Oratory	W	36 - 5	Pangbourne	W	43 - 0
Radley	W	12 - 0	Warwick	L	7 - 20
St Paul's	W	17 - 0	St Edward's	L	10 - 12
Bedford	L	5 - 33	Bloxham	W	15 - 13
MCS	W	31 - 12	Bedford Modern	L	7 - 31

Junior B XV Rugby

This was an incredible season for all involved, not only because of the results but also because of the amazing team spirit and sense of friendship that grew amongst the squad. Every player gave 100% for every second of every game and, as coach, I could ask for nothing more. It's difficult to pick a game that stands out: with seven scores over 45, it meant almost every player scored a point, and with scores of over 30 at half time, many second-half performances became a display of flamboyant back moves and eccentric handling! However, the defence can't be forgotten; alongside over 400 points in a season, the team was so solid and fearsome they conceded only 24 points – tackling was intense, and teams became scared to run at us! It is a sign of how much self-belief the team had that, after they had seen off the strong opposition of Radley and St Paul's with brave determination, they developed a sense of invincibility and knew they could go

undefeated if they stayed focused; they did, and are believed to be the most successful team in Abingdon history. The season finished with a raucous celebration party at Pizza Express, enjoyed by all. It was an honour to be a part of this group of boys, and the season is something they should always remember.

Simon Dickens

Oratory	W	45 - 0	Pangbourne	W	50 - 0
Radley	W	7 - 0	Warwick	W	19 - 5
St Paul's	W	12 - 0	St Edward's	W	48 - 0
Bedford	W	34 - 0	Bloxham	W	46 - 0
MCS	W	57 - 0	Bedford Modern	W	48 - 19
Rencomb	W	53 - 0			



Seated back row (L to R):
Adam Paxton, Douglas Graham, Matthew Halford,
Christian Davies, Hilton Poultney, Andrew Cole,
Chris Cowan, Rowan Wheeler

Front (L to R):
James Dingwall, Toby Roche,
Sam Wylie, Cameron More

1st XI Hockey

Following an outstanding season last year, this year was always going to be a re-building season and, with eight players leaving and a whole new defence, it was going to take time.

However, our first match of the season proved to be a great start: King Edward's, Southampton are always strong and having lost last year we were not keen to lose again. It was a tight encounter and we came out on top, winning 1-0.

Next was St Edward's who were a more experienced team than us and it showed. They won 6-1 but the score did flatter them as good counter-attacks from **Cameron More** and **Adam Paxton** caused a headache for their defence. They benefited from the fact that they had toured together the previous summer and this showed in their ability to gel together so early in the season.

In the match against Pangbourne we won 6-3, dominating the game and showing our attacking power. Our defence, however, were still finding their feet and this allowed Pangbourne to make

the game more of a contest. **Rowan Wheeler** was at the heart of most moves, dribbling out of mid-field and causing numerous problems for the scrambled Pangbourne defence.

Warwick were our next opponents, and after a fantastic first half we were only 1-0 up but in the second half **Cameron More** showed his pace and scored a great individual goal. However, complacency set in and two goals in quick succession brought Warwick back into the match. Brave defence from **James Dingwall** stopped us losing the match, which resulted in a 2-2 draw. Nevertheless, it was a match we should have won but which we lost through missing simple chances.

Against Shiplake, poor ball retention from the mid-field, and a lack of physicality in defence, meant we lost 5-4 with the last hit of the game. This was a massive disappointment and we knew that we would have to play better if we were to stand any chance against Dean Close, who are known to be one of the best hockey-playing schools in the country

As it was, despite the international players in their team, we did very well. Our defence, in particular, played superbly with **Matt Halford** taking no prisoners and **Andrew Cole** breaking up well constructed moves, which only allowed Dean Close to score from set pieces and from a questionable penalty stroke. The final score, 4-0, was not a bad result: the mid-field had worked tirelessly, closing down space, but the opposition were too good.

Following this we faced Stowe. By now our team were settled and our pace, from **Sam Wylie**, **Cameron More** and **Adam Paxton**, was too much for them to handle and we won 4-2. After a fairly shaky start, we moved the ball around well but, as with Warwick, our score line could have been much higher.

Plenty of hard work was put into the week prior to the Merchant Taylors' match and, although the weather was bitterly cold, we were able to grind out a well deserved draw from a position 2-0 down, with **Rowan Wheeler** unleashing a sublime drag flick, one of many in the season. As with most games in the term, our opposition were a lot bigger and tried to enforce their size on us but our young team reacted well and we kept our heads, allowing the hockey to do the talking. **Christian Davies** had another solid game, distributing well and making key tackles. He did fantastically to be playing, having had major knee surgery before the season. His grit and determination were vital in the mid-field.

We had a very disappointing county tournament in which we lost to Bloxham and so revenge was on the cards for our next match. In the event, we played exceptionally well, dominating in all areas, especially mid-field. **Cameron More** was able to score at will and the final score, 8-0, could have been a lot worse for Bloxham.

In another tight game Magdalen College School proved difficult to break down. Some sloppy play on the brink of half time allowed Magdalen to take the lead. However, from 2-1 down we came back, having put the Magdalen goal under siege, with goals from **Sam Wylie** and **Rowan Wheeler**. It was a tremendous second half, which saw us scoring three goals without reply and demonstrated the sort of hockey we are capable of when we put our minds to it.

In our final local derby of the season we came to Radley. It was a roasting day, with temperatures in the high twenties but, although our individual play was good, we needed to move the ball more and we came un-stuck after losing an early short corner. **Doug Graham** superbly stopped some late counter-attacks and although it was a good spectacle it was a disappointing way to finish a good season.

In a rather more sociable game, the Old Abingdonians presented a slightly different challenge. **Mr Hall** decided to practise what he had been preaching all season and ventured onto the pitch! With ten players we battled well and would have won had a goal not been disallowed. However, a draw was a fair result and the teams mixed well afterwards.

Teamwork and commitment led to a good set of results in what had promised to be a difficult season. With only three players leaving at the end of the year, the future for Abingdon hockey looks good.

Great performances throughout the season from **Cameron More** and **Rowan Wheeler** kept us going forward. **James Dingwall**, **Matt Halford** and **Doug Graham** were tight in defence. **Chris Cowan** had a solid season at sweeper, working well with **Andrew Cole**, who had to move position at the start of the season. **Sam Wylie** and **Matt Duhan** did well when they came into the team and didn't let anybody down. A special note should be made of **Adam Paxton** who, playing three years ahead of himself, kept working hard and was rewarded towards the end of the season by scoring regularly.

Thanks to Mr Hall for all his hard work, effort and coaching throughout the season, which helped us to finish with a good run of results.

Toby Roche 6 JFH



Rowan Wheeler

Results

KES So'ton	W	1 - 0
St Edward's	L	1 - 6
Pangbourne	W	6 - 3
Warwick	D	2 - 2
Shiplake	L	4 - 5
Dean Close	L	0 - 4
County Champs	Sth	
Stowe	W	4 - 2
Merchant Taylors'	D	2 - 2
Bloxham	W	8 - 0
MCS	W	4 - 2
Radley	L	0 - 1
Old Abingdonians	D	2 - 2



L to R Jonathan Coleman, Thomas Rutland, James Arrowsmith (goalie), Patrick Stern and Alex Francis

2nd XI Hockey

On paper it looked as though this year's team would do well. We had some strong players from last year and some exciting new talent in the Lower Sixth. Our results showed that we didn't really meet those expectations. It is always difficult for a second team to achieve a settled side and this was especially true this year. Just when we started playing well we would find the best players promoted to the 1st XI. Some of our best hockey was played in the match we lost 2-0 to Dean Close, which came at the end of a run of three wins, and I was hopeful of a good performance in our next match against Stowe. However, illness in the 1st team, and university interviews, meant we entered that match with a much changed side that included two Colts B players, and all the momentum of the previous games was lost. Although we easily beat Bloxham, we struggled for the rest of the season. The matches were played with good heart and determination and our practices were always fun, for which thanks go to the enthusiasm of the players.

James Nairne

Those who played:

James Arrowsmith, Alex Francis, James Wood, Jonathan Coleman, Paddy Stern, Matthew Duhan, Tom Rutland, Matthew Coffey, Christian Davies, Hilton Poultney, Michael O'Byrne (Captain), Sam Wylie, Teddy Brooke, Kevin Kim, Nikhil Wilmink, Joe Canlan-Shaw

Results

KES So'ton	L	0 - 1
St Edward's	L	1 - 3
Pangbourne	W	3 - 2
Warwick	W	2 - 1
Shiplake	W	6 - 0
Dean Close	L	0 - 0
Stowe	L	2 - 6
Merchant Taylors'	L	1 - 4
Bloxham	W	4 - 1
Magdalen College School	D	1 - 1
Radley	L	1 - 4

Played 11: Won 4, Lost 6, Drawn 1
Goals For: 22, Goals Against: 26

Senior Colts A XI Hockey

The largely unchanged team from last year's U15s started with a certain degree of confidence that their very solid 2004 season could be replicated. This confidence was sadly dashed by St Edward's in their first fixture. The game started well with some excellent mid-field play and a number of chances, one of which was converted. One goal up and all looked good. However, a very fit and well practised St Edward's proceeded to expose a weakened defence. The pressure undermined all attempts to play team hockey and a series of individual runs from our mid-field were easily stifled by the St Edward's defence. The score line of 6-1 did no justice to the run of play, with the first half about 50-50 and only the second half being dominated by the opposition, but it was a lesson in holding your shape and converting your chances.

A restructured team faced Pangbourne a few days later, without confidence but with a lot of determination. The game started tensely, with some hard tackling from Pangbourne and some chances at either end. Then Abingdon got their first goal and it was the beginning of a trickle of goals that soon became a flood. When the second half was stopped with minutes to spare, we were 9-0 up and looked like scoring all day.

It was then with confidence renewed that we met Warwick the following week. They were a team we were hoping to beat, to confirm our new form, but the goals just did not come. Lots of work was done in mid-field and defence, but no-one seemed able to get into goal-scoring positions, let alone convert them. At last a goal came but we never looked solidly ahead and when Warwick got one back, there was never any confidence we could take back the initiative. Thus the score line ended at 1-1, a disappointing draw.

The Warwick game rather set the pattern for much of the rest of the season. From then on we failed to make or convert enough chances and as a consequence lost games we should have drawn and drew games we should have won. We held our own against good sides from Dean Close and Radley, but just went down by 1 each time. Against weaker sides like Stowe and Merchant Taylors' we drew where there was every chance of winning. It was frustrating for all concerned, particularly those who worked so hard and hoped so much. The exception to this pattern was the County Cup. Abingdon used the tactics of the break-out to knock St Edward's out 2-1 and though they lost to Radley in the final, they certainly looked dangerous.

The team was ably and enthusiastically captained by **Nick Li**, to whom I am very grateful for help with this report. Also playing were **Bilal Yassine, Zhongjie Dong, Stuart Robertson, Alexander Hamilton, Harry Wimborne, James Garrard, Charles Lester, Richard Parker, Thomas Blakey, Henry Freeland, Gregory Salmon, Matthew Halford, Michael Watts, Charles Quarterman.**

George Moody

Results

St Edward's	L	1 - 6	Stowe	D	1 - 1
Pangbourne	W	9 - 0	Merchant Taylors'	D	0 - 0
Warwick	D	1 - 1	MCS	L	0 - 3
Dean Close	L	0 - 1	County Cup	5th	
MCS	W	31 - 12			

Junior Colts A XI Hockey

With only one loss last year, in the very first match, we were expecting another good season but, in a repeat of last year, we got off to a bad start with a narrow loss to King Edward's, Southampton, in which we let slip a 1-0 lead. After the game our Captain, **Christopher Newman**, spoke for us all when he stated that it was to be our only loss of the term and, owing to our collective determination and confidence, we were unbeaten in the remainder of our matches.

Remaining unbeaten suggests a consistency of performance when in fact there were big fluctuations in our standard of play. After our first game, we played well in the next few matches, with convincing wins against St Edward's, Pangbourne and Shiplake. **Rhys Cadman** played very well, scoring a hat-trick in the match against St Edward's and four goals in the match against Shiplake.

In the match against Dean Close, who are an extremely good team, we played very well, with sweeper **Robert Woods** nicely controlling the flow of the game. The confidence this gave us was transferred to the Stowe match, where our opponents had reached the last sixteen of the National Finals. We got off to a flying start, leading 2-0 in the first ten minutes, only to sit on our lead and allow Stowe back into the game. However, after half time another ten-minute push, led by **Christopher Newman**, put us ahead again and we won the match 6-1.

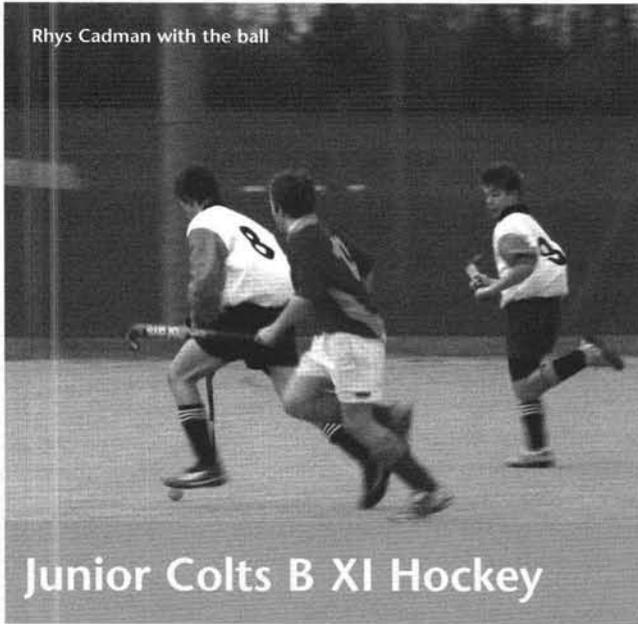
In the last few matches of the season the standard of hockey dropped and the boys became frustrated and tried to force things. They did, however, gain an impressive win against MCS and a well fought draw against Radley, without playing to their potential in either match.

Christopher Newman must be commended for the way he led the side, as must **Rhys Cadman** who, more often than not, made the difference in many of our matches, scoring seventeen goals in ten games. They were backed up by some equally gifted boys, and things look good for Abingdon hockey with such teams as this coming through.

Steve Brenchley

Results

KES So'ton	L	1 - 2	Stowe	W	6 - 1
St Edward's	W	7 - 1	Merchant Taylors'	D	3 - 3
Pangbourne	W	4 - 2	Bloxham	W	3 - 0
Shiplake	W	7 - 0	MCS	W	6 - 3
Dean Close	W	6 - 1			



Rhys Cadman with the ball

Junior Colts B XI Hockey

The season started with a match against King Edward's School, Southampton in the first week. We played well but they managed to put four goals past us and our defeat could be put down to lack of training in the first week of term. **Patrick Shephard** picked up man of the match.

Our next game against our old enemy, St Edward's, was a significant improvement. Their team had some quality players but Abingdon's strength shone through as attack after attack ripped through their defence with **Tim Middleton** and **Will Cullen** scoring one goal each to lead us to victory in what had been a tense match.

The next match, against Pangbourne, was a truly memorable one. We had to use our skills to adapt to a new surface but once **Patrick Shephard** had scored the first goal, pushed in between the goalie's legs, a surge of brilliant Abingdon goals followed. **George Collier** scored the second goal, completing an excellent mid-field move by smacking it ferociously into the goal. He also scored another one only a little while later, taking a nearly impossible shot very close to the line and sweetly hitting it in. **Rob Madden** then scored another great goal. However, the icing on the cake was **Will Cullen's** goal, which he took from near shoulder height, slamming it into the net baseball-style. **George Collier** was awarded man of the match.

Shiplake was another match similar to Pangbourne, only this time the opposition were better players, although they were not team players. Once again the game consisted of solid defence and awe-inspiring attacks by mid-field and forward players alike; **Will Cullen** smacked in a sizzling-hat trick, **Rob Williams** scored two and **Patrick Shephard** one. **Will Cullen** picked up the man of the match award.

We had one of our most fiercely contended matches against Dean Close. The previous year we had scraped a 2-1 win on their home turf, but now the pressure was on to beat them at Tilsley Park. The ball switched consistently from end to end but each side's defenders were as tough as rocks. **Will Cullen** nicely slotted in one goal but we were unable to retain the lead and they scored shortly after half time. Each side fought bitterly for the victory but neither could take it. **Max Derbyshire**, who defended very well, was awarded man of the match.

Our next fixture was against the formidable Stowe. Fortunately we scored three on three consecutive shortcorners very early in the match, with goals going to **Patrick Shephard**, **Will Cullen** and

Alec Plint. This put us in a commanding position which, later, we were to rely on heavily. The match continued at a high standard until half time. Once again, our unforgiving and relentless attack saw **Will Cullen** slice in another crucial goal but then disaster struck – twice. **Oliver Raban** was hit very hard in the ankle from a short-range ball and limped off. As we had no reserves we had to play on with ten men. Two minutes later, **Alec Plint** was caught by an undercut from one of their defenders and was unable to play on. We therefore had no option but to continue with nine players. As expected they were exploited our two-man mid-field and scored. But once **Alec** returned, the game stabilised and we won comfortably, 4-1. Excellent defending by **Jamie Soames** won him the coveted man of the match.

In driving rain and howling wind, Abingdon faced Merchant Taylors'. From the start they dominated us on the small grass pitch and maintained this standard throughout the match. They scored two key goals, which we couldn't come back from and our all-round performances weren't what they should have been. However, there was a shining light and his name was **Edward Barrett**. He kept our hopes of scoring alive with his superb defence and thus he was awarded man of the match.

As the season wound down we faced Bloxham away. As we were expecting a tough match, we weren't surprised when we got one. We began well with penetrating passing and running and solid defence. Two goals scored in the first half by **Will Cullen** and **Patrick Shephard** gave us some room to breathe in that hockey inferno but in the late stages of the first half the opposition scored a clumsy goal, which put the pressure back on. The second half was full of fruitless attempts to score, which both sides were increasingly eager to do. At last our time came with an attack down the middle of the pitch by **Patrick Shephard** who passed to **George Collier** who then drew the defender and passed back to **Will Cullen** who was able to simply tap it in. Once again the defence was crucial to our success and **Edward Barrett's** great effort once again earned him man of the match.

In our final match, against Radley, we were ready and eager to win. However, so were they. Our defence had a lot of defending to do and they did it well but our attack was only average. Radley attacked well and often and several times it was down to the last man, goalie **Harry Hole**, to save the day. He saved five or six drag flicks from short corners and from open play and he even saved a superb drag flick from a penalty flick. For his outstanding commitment he was awarded man of the match.

The team: **Harry Hole, Oliver May, Edward Barrett, Jamie Soames (vc) Max Derbyshire, Alex Sharp, Tim Middleton, Robin Madden, Patrick Shephard (c), Oliver Raban, Jamie Graves, George Collier, Will Cullen.**

Jeff Drummond-Hay

Results

KES So'ton	L	0 - 4
St Edward's	W	2 - 1
Pangbourne	W	5 - 0
Shiplake	W	6 - 1
Dean Close	D	1 - 1
Stowe	W	4 - 1
Merchant Taylors'	L	0 - 2
Bloxham	W	3 - 1
MCS	D	1 - 1
Radley	D	0 - 0



The 1st VIII rowing in the Princess Elizabeth Cup at Henley

Rowing 1st VIII

September always sees the start of the old, familiar, school routines of rushed breakfasts, lesson-filled days and homework-filled nights. Whilst we are at school nothing changes – except for the rowers. For them the start of each new year marks the start of a new beginning for each and every one of them – the slate wiped clean, a new training regime, the chance to become harder, stronger, faster, to iron out the mistakes of the previous year and to win a place in the 1st VIII.

Abingdon School Boat Club is founded on hard work, commitment and a good sense of humour – and this year was a good example of all these values. The Michaelmas term is notoriously gruelling, cold and dark, with the emphasis on regaining fitness lost over summer. However, the squad's team spirit makes what can be a hellish experience into an enjoyable and bonding one.

After Christmas, our attention was slowly focusing on the first race of the 'big three', the Schools' Head of the River, and competition for seats was intense, leading to a very strong squad with all three Vllls in with a genuine chance of success.

The results were extremely good: the 1st VIII came third and the 2nd and 3rd Vllls both stormed home to dominating victories. Overall we produced the three fastest winning times, for which we were awarded the Thames Team Trophy.

After a successful training camp in France involving some overly competitive go-kart racing, frequent trips to the supermarché, many card games and a bit of rowing, the regatta season was imminent. Wallingford Regatta is the first test over the shorter distances and usually gives a good picture of who will be the main medal contenders later in the year. Spurred on by our loyal and vocal supporters, both the 1st and 2nd Vllls were successful, the 2nd VIII winning Senior 3 and the 1st VIII winning the J18 VIII title (for the fourth year in a row!), also coming second in the Senior 2.

The National Schools' Regatta is always a huge event. The atmosphere of Holme Pierrepont – the stalls, the tents, the wafting smells of BBQs, the cheering crowds – make this race a very special one. However, this year was a bit of an anti-climax as strong winds made the course unsafe and all events were cancelled. The 2nd VIII had raced earlier and had experienced the huge waves

rolling up and down the course – **Mark Williams**, bow, is certain he spent at least 300m of the course totally submerged.

After all that build-up, for there to be no races was bitterly disappointing. Luckily, however, the championship VIII coaches agreed that there had to be some sort of race and an unofficial race was organised for before breakfast the next day. This dawn showdown, on an empty and totally silent lake, was a chance for the crews to vent their frustrations of the day before. The 1st VIII came in second to Eton, who were proving themselves to be an extremely fast crew but declined the medals. The race umpires had made it clear that this was not an official race and therefore was not part of the National Schools' event, and, as all the crews hadn't had a chance to take part, we agreed that it would not be fair for us to accept medals in this situation and we are confident this was the right decision, despite it leaving us with nothing to show for a good performance.

We came back from Nottingham with mixed feelings – the 2nd VIII feeling particularly bitter as, after their win at Wallingford (and their general 'beastiness' all season), they were confident that they could produce a good result. They got their chance at Marlow Regatta where a National Schools' re-run was organised after the day's racing. True to their words, the 2nd VIII dominated the field, taking a length in the first 500m and then, controlling the race from this position, coming home first ahead of St Edward's, their main rivals.

During the year the squad enjoyed overseas success, including a trip to Boston to race in the largest race in the world, the Head of the Charles. The 1st VIII were moving quickly until **Dan Boardman** made the unusual and unfathomable decision to overtake on the outside of the only bend in the course, considerably slowing their progress. We also went to the International Belgian Championships in Ghent, where **Nicolai Jürgens** and **Ryan Bucke** romped home to win the J18 Pairs event. We also won the J18 Vllls and came second in the coxed Vls. We also raced the Belgian International U23 VIII – which was a great experience but not much of a race!

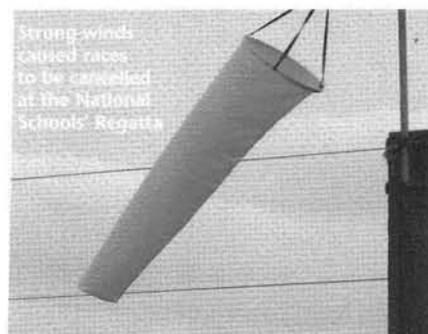


2nd VIII beating Bournemouth University in the first round of the Temple Challenge Cup

Henley really is the climax of the rowers' season. The build-up is intensive, including pre-breakfast training and lunch-time circuits. With a minor crew change the 1st VIII felt well prepared for the regatta. The 2nd VIII got the second-fastest qualifying time for the Temple Challenge Cup and earned their place in the competition. They did remarkably well and beat Bournemouth University on the Wednesday but unluckily lost out on Thursday to Cornell University (USA). This is one of the best performances ever of an Abingdon 2nd VIII. The 1st VIII cruised past Belfast Academical Institute, Choate Rosemary Hall School (USA) and Shrewsbury without any major upsets. By Saturday the twelve schools in the Princess Elizabeth Cup were reduced to four. Abingdon, who were seeded, were drawn against Eton and many were calling this the final as both crews had been vying for the top spot all year – Eton coming out on top most of the time. We knew that they would be re-loading their race as they had done so effectively all season and our race plan was simply to do the opposite. We went off hard and fast, everyone committing to the race. We went through the barrier nearly a length up and were still maintaining a diminished lead at halfway. But from here on Eton attacked and their finish was too strong. They went on to win the race and the Princess Elizabeth Cup. We felt tired and defeated, but the Eton crew must be given credit for their speed and consistency.

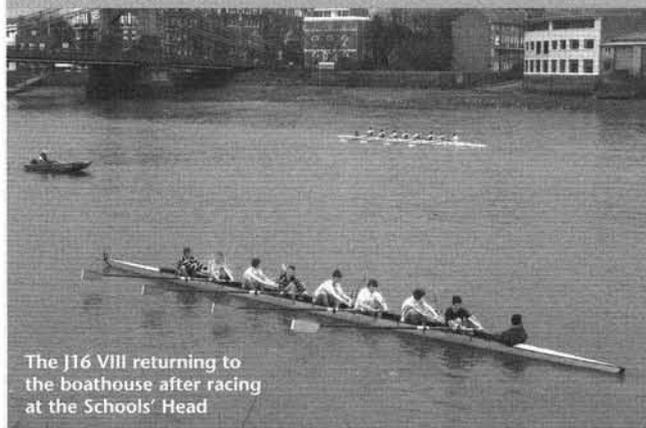
On the whole it was a successful and enjoyable season – and last summer **Nick Turnbull**, **Ryan Bucke** and **Paddy Vickers** all went on to represent Great Britain in the Coupe de la Jeunesse – where they all won gold medals (the first two in a coxless IV and **Paddy** as cox of the VIII). We are greatly looking forward to the challenges of another season in 2006.

Tom Raftery 6 APS



Strong winds caused races to be cancelled at the National Schools' Regatta

Junior 16 Rowing



The J16 VIII returning to the boathouse after racing at the Schools' Head

We began our J16 rowing season with apprehension, having lost several members of last year's crew. However, following some masterful coaching, we travelled up to the Peterborough Head for our first race, feeling much more confident. We raced two coxed IVs and an VIII and won the novice coxed Vllls. At the Worcester Head we raced twice and won the J16 Vllls. Just over a week later, at the Schools' Head of the River, we only managed to finish a disappointing 4th but our time helped Abingdon to win the Thames Team Trophy awarded to the school with the three best winning times.

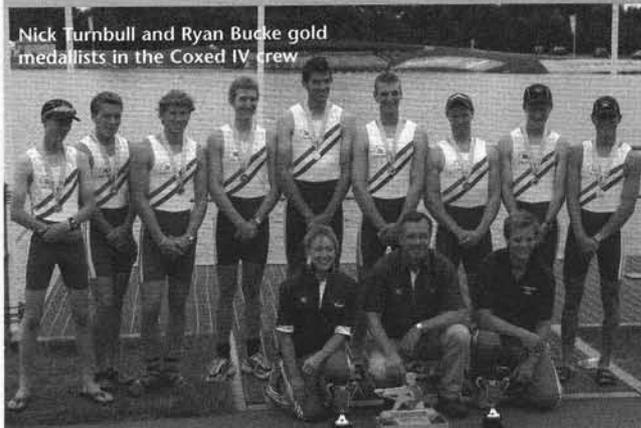
In the Summer term's regatta season, we made the finals of the Wallingford Regatta comfortably but were only able to reach 4th place in both the final of the novice Vllls and of the J16 Vllls. We were all looking forward to the National Schools' Regatta at Nottingham but on the Saturday 50 mph winds forced the cancellation of the event. On the Sunday, the J16 B IV came last in their heat and the J16 A IV, despite recording the 7th fastest time, missed out on the final by a couple of seconds. Both of the J16 Pairs made it into the semi-final with the B Pair making it into the final where they achieved a respectable 6th place. In the final of the Marlow Regatta the J16 As ended up a reasonable, but disappointing 4th. The next day, at Thames Valley Park, we achieved three places in three finals – and three second places. The following Saturday at Reading Town we went to our last regatta of the season. A J16 IV made it into the final where we lost by half a length. This was followed by another second place before the J16 VIII made it to the final of the Senior four Vllls, where an explosive performance gave us a three-length victory over Canford.

Much of our success this season, especially in our last race, was due to our desire to win something for our coach, **Mr Slatford**, whom we will sorely miss. We extend to him our utmost thanks for his guidance and good humour and we wish him all the best for his future.

Crews: **Adam Cox, Alex Freeland, Luke Titley, Rob Marsh, Will Clegg, James Wallis, Kemble Woodley, Harry Moore, Will Stockdale.**

Max Wood, J16 Captain 5 PKHR

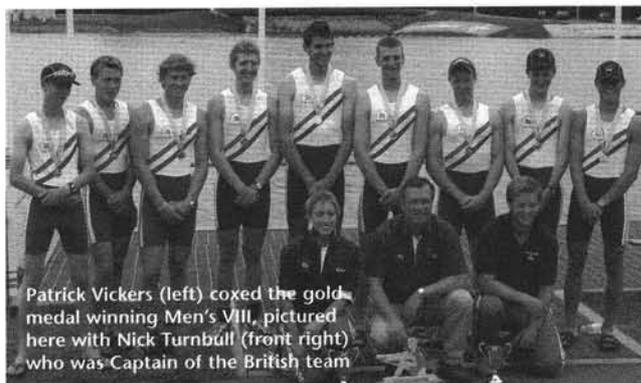
Coupe de la Jeunesse



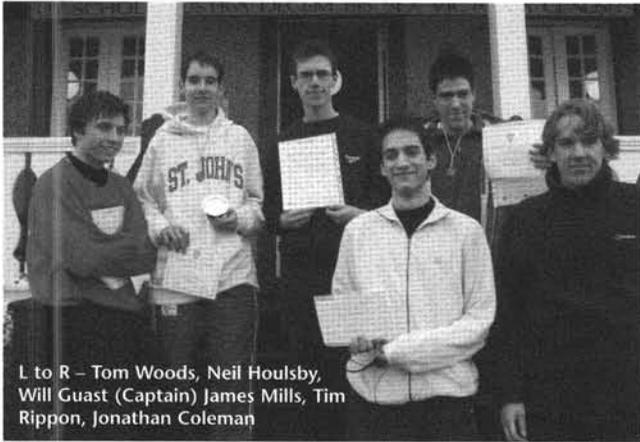
Nick Turnbull and Ryan Bucke gold medalists in the Coxed IV crew

Teams from eleven European countries took part in the 21st Coupe de la Jeunesse held at the Eton College Rowing Centre, Dorney Lake, on 30 and 31 July. The national teams are made up of rowers, who must be under 18, drawn from schools and clubs all over the country. Three members of Abingdon School Boat Club, **Nick Turnbull, Ryan Bucke and Patrick Vickers**, were chosen for the British squad. All three won two gold medals each: **Nick Turnbull and Ryan Bucke** as members of the coxed IV and **Patrick Vickers** as cox of the Men's VIII. Their second gold medals were gained as members of the British squad who, having won thirteen of the twenty-four races, won team gold. All of this bodes very well for 2012 when Dorney Lake will be the rowing venue for the London Olympics.

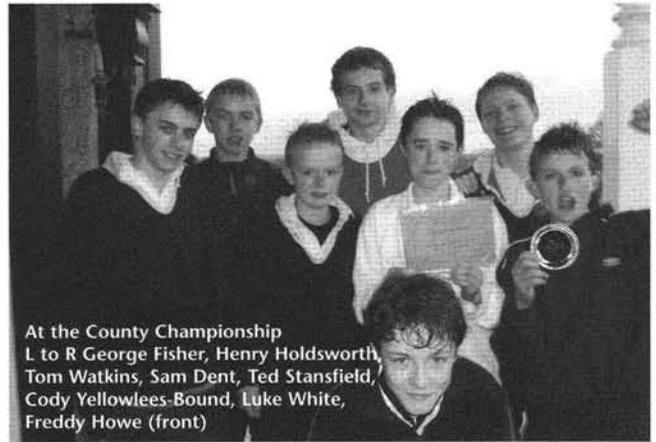
Sarah Wearne



Patrick Vickers (left) coxed the gold medal winning Men's VIII, pictured here with Nick Turnbull (front right) who was Captain of the British team



L to R – Tom Woods, Neil Housby, Will Guast (Captain) James Mills, Tim Rippon, Jonathan Coleman



At the County Championship
L to R George Fisher, Henry Holdsworth, Tom Watkins, Sam Dent, Ted Stansfield, Cody Yellowlees-Bound, Luke White, Freddy Howe (front)



At the Knole Run – L to R – Henry Holdsworth, Tom Woods, Neil Housby, James Mills, William Guast, Neysan Pucks, Ted Stansfield, Tim Rippon



Will Cullen and Henry Holdsworth on a training run

Cross-Country

Cross-country this year reached new heights under the dynamic leadership of **Mrs Slatford** and **Mr Christodoulou**. Training methods have improved: boys have started to think seriously about diet, running form, serious running gear and a structured training programme. Mr Christodoulou introduced us to training with heart-rate monitors so that we could run at exactly the right pace to get the most benefit from our training sessions. He also urged us so frequently to get proper running shoes that we began to think he must have shares in Saucony shoes. Our tradition of recruiting the best runners from other sports has continued, and this year we have been pleased to welcome rowers and even badminton players into our teams.

Our first race, as always, was the Dr Challoner's Relays late in the Michaelmas term. The race is a six-man relay renowned for its severe hills (including the legendary 'Big Dipper' just before the end, which destroys all hopes of a sprint finish among all but the pluckiest of runners). After some Christmas training/indulgence we tackled the traditionally gruelling January Triad of the Knole Run, the Vale Championships and the County Championships. None of our runners had entered the Knole Run before, but many now describe it as their favourite race of the season. A 10k run through Sevenoaks National Park, the course covered the most beautiful scenery and was almost a pleasure to run. Abingdon were delighted to beat Radley by one place at this event, and felt that they had sufficiently avenged Radley's earlier trouncing of Abingdon at the Dr Challoner's Relays.

Next came the Vale Championships at Radley, whose course is savoured by cross-country connoisseurs for its treacle-like mud, its life-sapping hill, and for the river jump thoughtfully placed just before the end. We were pleased to improve on last year's strong performance and the U19 victory was a particularly close result.

At the end it was found that Radley and Abingdon had an equal number of points, so victory would depend on which of the last-placed runners had been the fastest. Fortunately for us, **Jamie Mills** had beaten his Radley counterpart by a vital few seconds.

The County Championship, which is run over the same course, took place less than a week later. Once again, Abingdon did extremely well, this time by winning the whole competition. A number of runners qualified for the Oxfordshire County Team: **William Guast**, **Neil Housby**, **Tim Rippon**, **Henry Holdsworth** and **Freddy Howe**.

Our next fixture was Oxford University's so-called Tortoise Relays, which are held in Christ Church Meadow and are anything but tortoise-like, thanks to the annual participation of the speed demons from St Albans. Our senior team, crippled by injury, failed to run with distinction on this occasion.

Sadly, injuries and cancellations meant that this was our last formal fixture of the year. However, a number of our runners had to chance to run for the County at the South-East Championships at Basildon Park, Essex in the February half term. All the Abingdon runners ran sufficiently well in this event to qualify for the National Championships held in the Norfolk County Show Ground. The standard of runners in both these events was qualitatively different from any runners we had raced against before.

There was still the School's annual Road Relay to go, however, and the regular runners performed with distinction, often winning first position in their respective year-groups. Two of our runners, **Neil Housby** and **William Guast**, broke the nine-minute barrier.

William Guast and Hal McKend VI DE, Cross-Country Captains



Under 19 Team- – Back row L to R – Aaron Mak, Philip Cope, Harry Dawkins, Han Park, Ivan Cheng. Front row L to R – Danny Mak, Nicholas Miles, Tim Rippon, James Li, Yuan Gao



Under 16 team – Back row L to R – Tim Chu, Harry Richards, Jamie Michelson, Michael Chan. Front row L to R – David Ridley, Jun Tao, Tobi Ojo

Badminton

It's not often that we say 'We were robbed' but this year I think it would be a fair comment on the outcome of the Oxfordshire Schools' Badminton Association league finals. Abingdon had beaten everyone in all three boys' age-groups, yet, in the finals at Witney early in the Summer term, the effects of a holiday and the loss of our Sports Hall were clear and only the U19s could repeat their previous two terms' form. Still, a win and two runners-ups wasn't too bad and it gives the next generation something to try to better. We hope to arrange the finals for 2006 in late March.

Each term has begun to settle into a familiar routine: we do much of the travelling in the autumn and when the weather is really grim – winter and spring – the rest of the world comes to Abingdon! The results of the 2004-5 season are printed below and, like fine wines, need no bush.

Personalia

This term we say farewell to some long-serving team members: the Captains have been **Tim Rippon** and **James Li**. **Tim** has the priceless talent in a captain for noticing things that need to be done and then making sure that they are done; he has made himself into a powerful player, increasingly inventive on court and always competitive, although he knows that it's only a game and remains cheerful even under pressure. **James** has one of the sweetest swings to grace the Abingdon Sports Hall for some years and, even after coaching in China, has had the good sense not to try to play in a different way from that which nature gave him. He has added mobility and power to his game but never fundamentally changed his action, thank goodness.

Ivan Cheng, too, has been a part of the scene for what seems like a century but which is actually only five years. Since reaching the Sixth Form he has become steadily more communicative (from a sketchy base!) and happy to play with many if not all partners. He won 'shot of the day' at the Oratory School this year by totally missing an overhead shot and still having time to get his racquet under the shuttle and win the point with a dainty drop. **Ivan**, like **James**, has been blessed with an elegant action and when he gets aggressive he can generate huge power with next to no apparent

effort. **Ivan** has stoically put up with travelling to away matches despite suffering from motion sickness.

Yuan Gao caught the attention of masters from other schools years ago for his explosive style of playing and wristy use of the racquet. For years he was never one to complain – or speak if it could be avoided – and he soldiered through a plateau on the development curve. Class tells, though, and latterly he has emerged all the stronger. Minibus travel figures inevitably in one's recollections and Yuan's idiosyncratic brand of abstracted conversational whimsy has been a feature of journeys during the last four or five terms.

Anthony Mak will surely be the recipient of many encomiums and much silverware but I would like to add my two penn'orth. He has proved spectacularly that badminton is as physically taxing as any other game, he knows no other way than flat out in sport, and although he only played in the Lent term – being much in demand in the rugby world – we certainly would have been the poorer without him; heavyweight fixtures such as the Millfield match have seen Anthony powering his game along to great effect, absorbed even to the point of not noticing that he had broken a string!

Jamie Michelson is a good sportsman although physically quite slight. I have watched his growing skill in badminton over the last five years and even before developing the power to hit a shuttle the full depth of the court he had a sweet swing and fast hands. Senior players are happy to have Jamie in front of them at the net because of his unselfishness as well as his resourcefulness. He likes to win but knows that it doesn't really matter and I'm sure that he will enjoy the piquancy of playing for Malvern against Abingdon next year.

The ghost of **Chris North** still stalks Abingdon badminton! Several of the players mentioned above have lost numerous points through trying to play fancy shots like **Chris** and the Norths have generously donated a trophy which this year will be awarded to **Tim Rippon**. The Captain for 2005-6 will be **Nick Miles** and the secretary will be **Harry Richards**.

Ian Macdonald

Badminton Results

(Abingdon's score first)

Michaelmas 2004

1 st	Bloxham	W	9	-	0
2 nd	Bloxham	W	9	-	0
1 st	Cheltenham	W	7	-	2
2 nd	Cheltenham	W	9	-	0
A	Stowe	W	7½	-	1½
B	Stowe	W	9	-	0
A	Radley	W	6	-	3
B	Radley	W	8	-	1
	Oratory	W	11	-	5
	Malvern	W	9	-	0
	Cheltenham	W	5	-	4
1 st	Bloxham	W	9	-	0
2 nd	Bloxham	W	8	-	1
U14	John Mason	W	6	-	1 OSBA
U16	John Mason	W	5	-	2 OSBA
B	Wellington A	L	4 4/2	-	8 4/2
A	Rugby	W	7	-	2
U15	Rugby B	L	4	-	5
A	Millfield	W	6	-	3
Indiv.	Millfield	L	2	-	4
B	Millfield	W	8	-	1
Indiv	Millfield	W	6	-	0
U14	Wheatley Park	W	5	-	2 OSBA
U16	Wheatley Park	W	5	-	2
U19	Radley	W	4	-	3 OSBA
B	Radley	L	7½	-	11½
A	Stowe	W	8	-	1
B	Stowe	W	8	-	1

Lent 2005

	Oratory	W	10	-	6
U14	King Alfred's	W	5	-	0 OSBA
U16	King Alfred's	W	6	-	1 OSBA
	Rugby	W	9	-	0
	Rugby	W	9	-	0
U19	King Alfred's	W	7	-	0
A	Millfield	W	6	-	3
B	Millfield	W	8	-	1
Indiv	Millfield	D	6	-	6
A	Cheltenham	W	9	-	0
B	Cheltenham	W	8	-	1
U13	Oratory	W	14	-	2
U14	Marlborough School, Woodstock	W	7	-	0
U16	Marlborough School, Woodstock	W	6	-	1
Quadrangular Fixture	Oratory, Bradfield, Wellington	W	24	-	0
U14	Wood Green	W	5	-	2 OSBA
U16	Wood Green	W	5	-	2 OSBA
U16	Henry Box	W	5	-	2
U19	D'Overbroeck's	W	7	-	0 OSBA
U14	Henry Box & D'Overbroeck's	L	2	-	5
U16	Henry Box & D'Overbroeck's	L	3	-	4
U19	Henry Box & D'Overbroeck's	W	7	-	0 OSBA
A	Cheltenham & Malvern	W	5	-	3 & 7-0
U14	Bicester Community College	W	7	-	0
U16	Bicester Community College	W	7	-	0
U19	Bicester Community College	W	7	-	0 OSBA



1st XI Cricket

With so many of last year's star performers moving on, it was always going to be difficult to repeat the success of the 2004 season. Our mixed fortunes this year were reflected in an inconsistent set of results and it is disappointing that our only victories were predictable, recorded against sides that we would have expected to beat. With confidence fairly low, it becomes more difficult to enjoy one's cricket, but I believe that this talented group of boys could and should have shown more belief in their own abilities this season. That said, there were plenty of encouraging individual performances, as well as a handful of pleasing team performances, and the success of Abingdon's younger cricketers this summer means that the future looks very bright indeed.

We were below par in all three departments (batting, bowling and fielding) at some stage during the season, but the scores above show that our batting was probably our greatest and most regular weakness. We relied heavily on **Patrick Stern**, the Captain, for our runs and rarely put together the sorts of partnerships that can win games. **Patrick** performed extremely well under enormous pressure, scoring six half-centuries (but, sadly, no centuries) in his final season for the School and retaining his batsman of the season trophy. **Patrick's** consistency this year was remarkable: if we ignore the three Twenty20 games, his lowest score in the nine matches in which he played was 30, giving him an average of 65.25.

Only three other players scored half-centuries: **Samuel Florey**, **Arthur Verdin** and **Nathaniel Watkins**. Among these players, **Nathaniel's** achievements are the most impressive. At the age of 13, and too young to attend many of the schools on our fixture list, **Nathaniel** was able to score enough runs this season at 1st XI level to earn himself a place in *Wisden*. In addition to his 63* against Bloxham, he weighed in with scores of 30+ against Radley, Magdalen College School and KEQMS, Lytham. A mature, modest and hugely accomplished player, **Nathaniel** puts enormous pressure on himself to succeed and the way in which he has taken opening the batting for the 1st XI in his stride at such a tender age

is actually quite frightening. He will surely go on to score many, many runs for the School in the future.

I was delighted that **Sam Florey** was able to score his maiden half-century for the 1st XI this season. He has been a stalwart of the Cricket Club since starting at Abingdon and has enjoyed three successful seasons of 1st XI cricket. The leading all-rounder this year, **Samuel's** contributions with bat and ball and the experience, tactical awareness and leadership that he brought to the team as Vice-Captain will be sorely missed next year.

Those playing for the 1st XI will have to build bigger partnerships on a more consistent basis next year if they are to set or chase decent totals. Abject collapses such as those against The Oratory, Stowe and Birkenhead can only ever lead to defeat, no matter how well we might bowl and field. We will need our experienced players like **Joseph Canlan-Shaw** and **Christopher Halford**, both of whom endured a run of low scores and some horrible luck this year, to rediscover their form if we are to fill the considerable gap left by **Patrick Stern's** departure. Next season, we will not be able to rely so heavily on one source of runs and other players, possibly some from lower down the School, will get their chance to shine.

Our bowling performances were generally much more consistent and in only a handful of matches did we fail to make major inroads into opposition batting line-ups. **Matthew Halford** was the spearhead of our attack and the leading wicket-taker with 21 wickets, while our other main seamers, **Sam Florey** and **Alex Wimborne**, picked up 17 wickets and 15 wickets respectively. **David Mills** provided useful back-up in his first season in the 1st XI, taking eight wickets. **Toby Roche** was the leading spinner with 10 wickets, the minimum required for an entry in *Wisden*.

We gave too many easy runs away throughout the season by bowling extras and 'four balls' but, when our bowlers stuck to line and length, their abilities to move the ball through the air and off the pitch made life difficult for the batsmen and earned the team plenty of wickets. Control and patience will be the



Nathaniel Watkins taking strike, Paddy Stern at the non-strikers end in match against RGS High Wycombe

keys to success for the bowling attack next year. At 1st XI level, wickets are normally taken as a result of a build-up of pressure and our bowlers should not be trying to bowl unplayable 'mystery' deliveries every ball (and probably giving away runs in the process).

The ground fielding throughout the season was enthusiastic and usually pretty reliable. Our chasing and throwing was particularly good in several matches. Dropped catches, however, made our job more difficult in almost every match and a video of our many fumbles during the season would make for very embarrassing viewing for the numerous culprits. Very few catches went to ground in 2004, helping to make last season one of the most successful in recent times. It is no surprise that a large increase in the number of dropped catches this year led to a far less impressive win/lose record. As England found in the First Test against Australia at Lord's in July, players simply cannot afford to put chances down if they want to win against good cricket teams because those chances do not come around very often.

I have really enjoyed working with the 1st XI for the past four years. There have certainly been ups and downs during that time but I have had the opportunity to work with many superb boys and some exceptionally talented players, and I have also watched some truly memorable matches. I will miss the boys and colleagues who have been involved in cricket, but the performances of a number of younger players this season (many of whom you can read about on the next few pages) suggests that the Cricket Club is likely to go from strength to strength in the future.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of my colleagues who have helped with coaching players, supervising net sessions, umpiring and driving minibuses over the last four years. In particular, I would like to thank **Andrew Broadbent, Chris Burnand and Gary Palmer** for all of their long hours of hard work. I would also like to thank our grounds staff and caterers for what they have done to support the Cricket Club. Finally, I would like to thank all of the cricketers of all abilities whom I have worked with this year and in the past for making the long hours seem worthwhile with their infectious enthusiasm, good humour, impeccable sportsmanship and gutsy performances.

Sean Spratling



Joe Canlan-Shaw

1st XI Results

Played 16: Won 5, Drawn 3, Lost 8

Declaration match unless otherwise stated

Eton College 2nd XI	W	Abingdon Eton	151-9 dec 102 all out	<i>P Stern 79</i> <i>M Halford 5-24</i>
Dauntsey's School (Twenty20)	L	Abingdon Dauntsey's	79 all out (18 overs) 80-3 (17.1 overs)	
The Oratory School (35 overs)	L	Oratory Abingdon	09-0 (35 overs) 83 all out (23 overs)	
Stowe School	L	Abingdon Stowe	81 all out 84-2	
Shiplake College (Twenty20)	L	Abingdon Shiplake	98-8 99-6 (19.1 overs)	
St Benedict's, Ealing (Twenty20)	W	St Benedict's Abingdon	88-8 89-4 (17.1 overs)	<i>S Florey 4-8</i>
Bloxham School	W	Bloxham Abingdon	175-8 dec 176-3	<i>T Roche 4-66</i> <i>P Stern 84, N Watkins 63*</i>
Pangbourne College (30 overs)	W	Pangbourne Abingdon	107 all out (23.1 overs) 108-3 (28.3 overs)	<i>S Florey 5-27</i> <i>P Stern 68*</i>
RGS High Wycombe	L	Abingdon RGS	177 all out	<i>P Stern 57</i> <i>178-7</i>
Radley College	D	Abingdon Radley	205-8 dec	<i>M Halford 48*</i> <i>137-5</i>
South Oxfordshire Amateurs	L	SOAs Abingdon	242-7 dec 240 all out	<i>P Stern 82, A Verdin 52</i>
Magdalen College School	D	MCS Abingdon	256-6 dec 155-8	<i>P Stern 59</i>
Geelong College, Melbourne (50 overs)	L	Geelong Abingdon	251-2 200 all out (45.1 overs)	<i>S Florey 54</i>
University College School (50 overs)	W	UCS Abingdon	83 all out (31 overs) 87-6 (30.4 overs)	
KEQMS, Lytham (50 overs)	D	Abingdon KEQMS	193 all out (49.4 overs) 36-0 (9.3 overs) Match abandoned as a draw	
Birkenhead School (50 overs)	L	Birkenhead Abingdon	257-7 54 all out (22.1 overs)	

The following boys played for the 1st XI during the 2005 season (number of appearances in brackets):

Patrick Stern (c) (13); **Sam Florey** (vc), **Andrew Cole**, **Matthew Halford** (15 each); **Joseph Canlan-Shaw**, **Christopher Halford**, **David Mills** (14 each); **Toby Roche**, **Nathaniel Watkins** (13 each); **Alex Wimborne** (10); **Tom Swarbrick** (8); **Arthur Verdin** (7); **Francis Gater**, **Adam Hall** (4 each); **Siddharth Kapoor** (3); **Timothy Deeks**, **James Manasseh**, **Harry Wimborne** (2 each); **Christopher Checkley**, **Max Neil**, **Matthew Pursell**, **Gregory Salmon**, **Sahaj Sethi**, **Joshua Smith** (1 each).

Full Colours were re-awarded to **Patrick Stern** and awarded to **Sam Florey**.

Half Colours were awarded to **Matthew Halford**, **Nathaniel Watkins** and **Alex Wimborne**.

Junior Colts Cricket

The U15 As enjoyed a successful season, winning five out of the eight matches they played. The early season was particularly good, beating Eton by 10 wickets in the first match. The team spirit continued to rise after seeing off the Oratory a week later. At this stage it was obvious that there was some real talent among the bowlers with **William Stockwell** and **Dylan Clive** taking plenty of wickets.

It was unfortunate to lose some key players for the trip to Stowe as the team struggled to cope with a very talented side. However, the 7 wicket loss did not reflect the battle that Abingdon put up.

Two wins in the next two matches against Bloxham and Pangbourne gave some more confidence to the team. Both were comfortable wins with a highlight being **Max Neil's** second half-century of the season.

Coming into the matches after half term, it was important to re-establish the form that had been produced earlier. A match

against RGS High Wycombe gave another good performance, particularly in the field, where the team were sharp. Bowling RGS out for under 100 gave us another convincing win.

The final games were disappointing as we lost them both. It is still confusing to try and work out how we lost our penultimate match against Reading, whilst playing Radley, our last match, was always going to be hard. **Josh Ogle's** cameo 44 was a reward for the effort he had put in throughout the season.

The end of the season came too early, with matches rained off against MCS and St Edward's. During the season, there were two players who stood out for their skill and dedication. **Chris Newman** rescued the side on countless occasions when they seemed to be struggling with the bat, while **Jamie Graves'** bowling was very economical and he emerged as an important wicket-taker as well. I would also like to thank **Mr Broadbent** for his efforts with the team throughout the season.

Sam Fletcher 4 SRW

Results

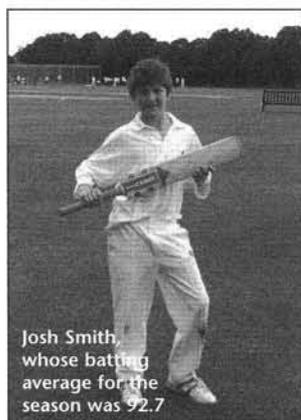
Eton	Won by 10 wickets Abingdon 110 for 0 Eton 108 for 9	Max Neil 63 not out Dylan Clive 5 for 24	Samuel Fletcher 43 not out
Oratory	Won by 3 wickets Abingdon 103 for 7 Oratory 102 for 6		
Stowe	Lost by 7 wickets Abingdon 117 for 8 Stowe 118 for 3		
Bloxham	Won by 5 wickets Abingdon 85 for 5 Bloxham 85 all out	Max Neil 50 not out Joshua Ogle 4 for 20	
Pangbourne	Won by 60 runs Abingdon 132 for 8 Pangbourne 72 all out	Christopher Newman 43 Jamie Graves 4 for 16	
RGS High Wycombe	won by 59 runs Abingdon 155 for 7 RGS 96 all out	Samuel Fletcher 54 Joshua Ogle 3 for 7	
Reading	Lost by 2 runs Abingdon 93 for 6 Reading 95 for 8	Christopher Newman 30 Joshua Ogle 3 for 15	
Radley	Lost by 38 runs Abingdon 144 for 9 Radley 182 for 2	Joshua Ogle 44	



U 14 A Cricket

We enjoyed an extremely successful season, including winning the Lord's Taverners Colts County Trophy and thus qualifying for the national competition next year. Our two most memorable matches were victories against Radley and, in the County final, against Bloxham.

Batting first against Radley, we got off to a swift start, thanks to an opening partnership of 69 between **James Manasseh** and **Josh Smith**.



Josh Smith, whose batting average for the season was 92.7

The middle order collapsed, but we reached a useful 185 for 6 thanks to a 70 not out from **Nat Watkins** and a helpful innings from **James Edwards**. Radley started well, but a stunning catch from **Mike Shaughnessy** at mid-wicket sparked a collapse. Radley were bowled out for 69, **Tim Deeks** taking 4 wickets in 3 overs.

Playing an able Bloxham team in the Lord's Taverners Final, we had an understrength team, lacking the three second-formers who had helped greatly in getting us to the final. However, this gave several others a well deserved chance, including **Tom Buffery**, **Oli Bouchier** and **Tom Devlin** joining **George Dugdale**, **Julian Thorn** and others mentioned here. After a shaky start, **James Manasseh** (again!) steadied the ship with help first from **Jonny Bucke** and then **Mike Shaughnessy**. Having reached 186, we got off to the perfect start, restricting a strong Bloxham batting line-up to just 14 for 4 after 10 overs! Everyone continued to bowl well and Bloxham were all out for 88.

Matt Pursell and **Nat Watkins** captained excellently, and many thanks must go to the **Reverend Henry Kirk** as well as **Messrs Spratling** and **Palmer**. The success was due to some great team performances (involving bat, ball, catches, aggressive running between the wickets, and team support); but some individual achievements must be honoured:

- Josh Smith opening bat 278 runs, av. 92.7; wicket keeper 3 catches and 3 stumpings
- James Manasseh opening bat 457 runs, average 57.1; off-spin 24 wickets, av. 9.0; 10 catches
- Nat Watkins number 3 bat 207 runs without being dismissed in three innings
- Guy Cutting 91 runs, av. 30.3; opening bowler 10 wickets, av. 16.6; 4 catches
- Matthew Pursell 150 runs, av. 25
- Tim Deeks opening bowler 19 wickets, av. 9.9
- Jonny Bucke 11 wickets, av. 11.9; 5 catches

Tim Deeks 3 PEH



Under 14 A, winners of the Lord's Taverners Colts County Trophy
Back row: George Dugdale, Jonathan Bucke, Thomas Buffery, Guy Cutting, Thomas Devlin, Michael Shaughnessy
Middle row: James Manasseh, Nathaniel Watkins, Matthew Pursell, Timothy Deeks. Front row: Julian Thorn, Oliver Bouchier, Joshua Smith, Parathan Rabindran, James Edwards

Results (** Lord's Taverners fixtures)

Eton	won by 110 runs, Abingdon 173 for 5, Eton 63 all out, Joshua Smith 108 not out
Oratory	won by 5 runs, Abingdon 128 for 6. Oratory 123 for 6, James Manasseh 72,
**Larkmead	won by 10 wickets, Abingdon 98 for 0, Larkmead 97 for 3, Joshua Smith 66 not out
Stowe	won by 2 wickets, Abingdon 135 for 8, Stowe 132 unbeaten partnership of 41 between Mike Shaughnessy and Guy Cutting , Guy Cutting 3 for 16
Bloxham	won by 102 runs, Abingdon 186 for 7, Bloxham 84, James Manasseh 39, James Manasseh 3 for 12, Tim Deeks 2 for 24
Pangbourne	won by 150 runs, Abingdon 229 for 2, Pangbourne 79, James Manasseh 89, Matthew Pursell 50 not out Guy Cutting 46, James Manasseh 5 for 6
**Shiplake	won by 12 runs, Abingdon 156 for 3, Shiplake 144 for 8 Nathaniel Watkins 97 not out, James Edwards 40
RGS High Wycombe	won by 9 wickets, Abingdon 165, RGS 164 for 9 for 1, James Manasseh 90 not out, Tim Deeks 50
Radley	won by 116 runs, Abingdon 185 for 6, Radley 69 Nathaniel Watkins 70 not out, James Manasseh 48, Tim Deeks 4 for 5
**MCS	won by 9 wickets, Abingdon 135 for 1, MCS 134, Joshua Smith 51 not out, Nathaniel Watkins 40 not out Jonathan Bucke 3 for 28, Tim Deeks 3 for 34, James Manasseh 3 for 38
**Bloxham	won by 98 runs, Abingdon 186, Bloxham: 88, James Manasseh 83, Tim Deeks 4 for 17



Michael Watkins
winner of the
2005 British
Under 12
National Tennis
Championships

Tennis

Abingdon School Tennis Club has continued to grow this year, with a total of 112 boys representing the School in inter-school matches. For the first time we have put out sixteen teams throughout the age-groups. Following the Andrew Murray school of development, many of our practice sessions and matches have been played on the clay at the Vale of the White Horse tennis courts, a surface which the boys now seem to relish.

Phil Warr, our resident pro has been as enthusiastic as ever, whether it be with the top-level boys or with those just picking up the game. His enthusiasm, together with the younger boys having a young but talented 1st VI as role models, has meant that the tennis courts have been packed at every opportunity. This type of involvement can only bode well for the future of Abingdon tennis.

Special mention must be given to **Michael Watkins** (a First-former) who has represented Great Britain on many different occasions throughout the summer. He certainly is a talent for the future and looked at ease stepping up to 1st VI tennis. Also to tennis captain, **Matthew Watkins**, Michael's older brother, who is still only in the Fifth Form, even though he has been playing 1st VI tennis for five years.

Seniors 1st VI, 2nd VI and 3rd VI

Our first fixture against Radley doubled up as the Glanville Cup, which consisted of a team of four playing singles and doubles. **Matthew** and **Michael Watkins** played at one and two, with **Oliver Raban** and **Justin Robinson**, in the Fourth and Third Years respectively, playing at three and four. Unfortunately, our young team lost, but they will no doubt learn from the experience in the two years more they have together.

On paper **Matthew Watkins** and **Andrew Bell** (Fifth-formers) were always going to win matches at first pair, but the question was who else was going to step up and give the 1st VI some success. The answer came mid-way through the season with the coming together of **Ted Griffith** and **Peter Jones**.

After two wins and two losses the pairings kicked into gear with a well fought win against Stowe. **Andrew Bell** and **Matthew Watkins** typically won and it was left to **Ted Griffith** and **Peter Jones** to seal the match. After coming second behind Radley in the Oxfordshire Independent Schools' Tournament, the 1st VI finished off the season with a tight draw against Bradfield. With all the matches finished it was left to **Matthew Watkins** and **Andrew Bell** to step up for one last time to win the tie-break, leaving the match 4.5 – 4.5.

In the Independent Schools' Championship at Eton, Abingdon were drawn against Charterhouse in the first round. With **Oliver Raban** and **Patrick Collins** winning their doubles, leaving the match 1 – 1, it was down to **Matthew Watkins** to play a singles rubber to decide the match. He coasted through 6 – 1 to lead Abingdon to a meeting with Bristol Grammar School in the second round. They proved to be too strong in the doubles and **Oliver Raban** and **Patrick Collins** were beaten in the third set.

The 2nd VI enjoyed some good wins this season. They beat St Edward's and performed well to see off a strong MCS side 5 – 4. **Matthew Haste**, **Jonathan Garrett** and **Nathan Hughes** were involved throughout the season and there were telling contributions from **Michael Rothkopf** and **Dickens Lam**.

Colts, Junior Colts and U14s

The Colts struggled this season with their top pair playing first pair for the 1st VI all term and with their sights set on their GCSEs, it proved hard for them to generate any real consistency in matches. There is some undoubted talent in **Michael Watts** and **Michael Sutcliffe**, but without much tennis between them before the season began they were unable to hit the ground running and lost three of their four matches.

The Junior Colts have a very talented pool of players, reflected in their losing only one match all season, and that very early on to Winchester. **Oliver Raban**, **Patrick Collins** and **George Collier** have all played 1st VI tennis at some stage this season and will form a very strong senior side in the years to come. At this level they had good wins against Radley, Bradfield, St Edward's, Harrow and Bloxham 1st VI with **Dylan Robinson** and **Euan Campbell** stepping up from the second year to add strength to the A team.

The Junior Colts entered a team of four into the Nestlé Cup. In the initial round-robin phase they won five out of five, which set up a final against Gosford Hill. After winning comfortably in the final of the Oxfordshire section they will go on to represent the county in the regional finals in September.

There was a good strength in depth in this age-group, highlighted by clean sweeps against Harrow and St Edward's. **Rhys Cadman** and **Max Kibble** formed a good partnership in the B team and there was whole-hearted commitment and a huge desire to be selected all the way through to the C team.

Never have I seen a group of boys put in so much additional time in on the tennis court as I have from the U14s this year. This has also been reflected in their results, losing only one match at A, B and C team level, with the highlight being wins across the board against Bradfield and Harrow. **Sam Jeffery** and **James Burford** have provided infectious commitment at the top end, whilst **Daniel Harris** and **Mark Heffernan** have done their best to imitate a brick wall with their consistency together.

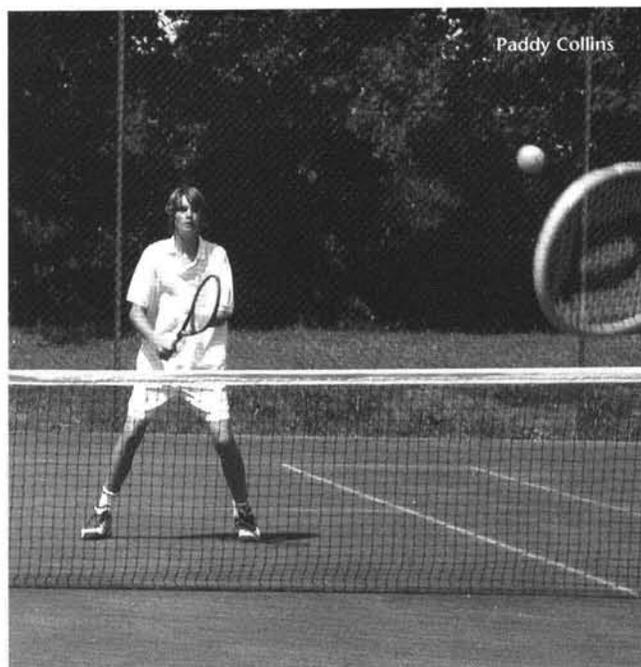
Lower School

There has been extensive input from the Lower School in Middle School fixtures with **Dylan Robinson** and **Euan Campbell** stepping up to the Junior Colts A team and **Joe Oldham**, **Sam Montgomery**, **Henry Kibble** and **Stuart Lonergan** turning out for the U14s.

The U13s also entered the Nestlé Cup U15 event with great success. In the other U15 group, they won all their round-robin matches and beat King Alfred's Sports College in the final, with **Joshua Smith** fighting back from 5 - 1 down to win in the tie-break. This is a great achievement and demonstrates what good shape Abingdon School Tennis Club is in with such potential coming up through the ranks.

In the final of the Buckley Cup **Oliver Raban** managed to go a step further than last year by beating **Patrick Collins** 6-4 in the third set.

Steve Brenchley



Results

1st VI

Radley	L	5 - 1
Pangbourne	W	8 - 1
Shiplake	W	5 - 4
MCS	L	7.5 - 1.5
St Edward's	L	8 - 1
Stowe	W	5 - 4
OXIST	2nd	
Bradfield D	D	4.5 - 4.5

2nd VI

Radley	L	9 - 0
Pangbourne	W	9 - 0
MCS	W	5 - 4
St Edward's	W	7 - 2
Stowe	L	5.5 - 3.5

U16A

Radley	L	8 - 1
MCS	L	6.5 - 2.5
St Edward's	W	6.5 - 2.5
Stowe	L	5.5 - 3.5
OXIST	4th	

U15A

Winchester	L	7 - 2
Radley	W	6 - 3
MCS	D	4.5 - 4.5
St Edward's	W	7 - 2
Bloxham	W	7 - 2
Stowe	W	7 - 2
Bradfield	W	6 - 3
Harrow	W	3 - 0

U14A

MCS	W	6.5 - 2.5
Stowe	W	8 - 1
Bradfield	W	8 - 1
Harrow	W	5 - 4



Matthew Pinner (left)
Alastair Blackmore (right)

Sailing Club

The Sailing Club has had a busy year, both competing in many competitions and buying our first boats.

We compete in almost all the sailing disciplines of fleet racing, team racing and match racing. We also run RYA courses and can train our own RYA sailing instructors and racing coaches as well as qualifying our own pupils in the various powerboat qualifications.

Last summer we sent a team to the RYA National Match Racing Championship. There are very few opportunities to practise this sport so most of the learning is done at events. We hope to build up a good team by taking part in competitions during the next few years.

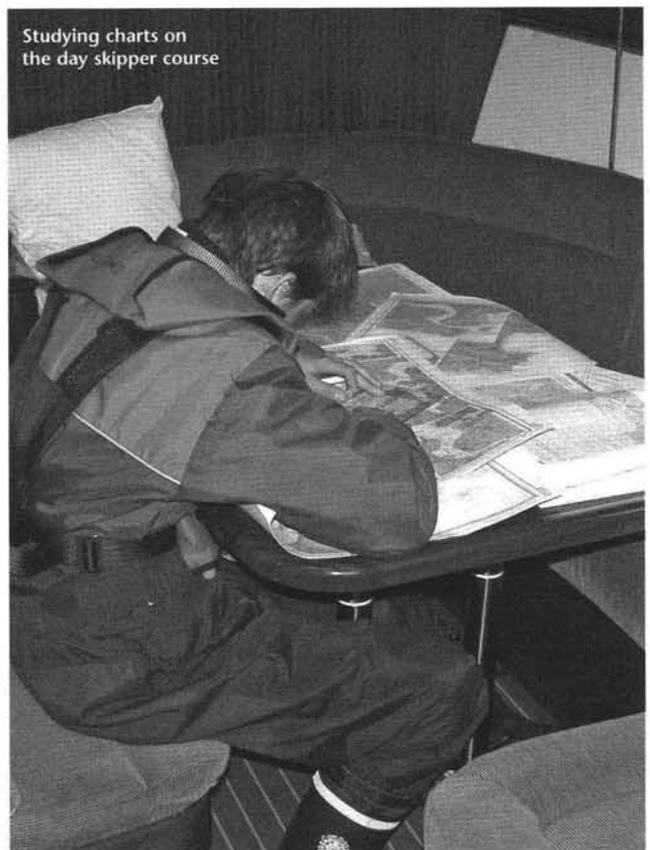
At the Oxfordshire championships in the autumn, **Matthew Pinner** came first and **Guy Stephens** second in a very light wind regatta.

The British School Dinghy Racing Association held a team racing regatta at Oxford Sailing Club, attracting teams from Lancashire to the south coast and from Kent to Bristol. Our team did well to come fourth in unfamiliar boats and strong winds.

We have now bought two Firefly dinghies which, when combined with the Fireflies at Radley and MCS, will allow our pupils to practise team racing for the first time.

Having learned the theory during the winter, and gained some experience, we took a small group of pupils to Dart where they enjoyed a week sailing a yacht along the south-west coast and qualifying as RYA Day Skippers.

David Bickerton



Studying charts on
the day skipper course



VIth Form Leavers, 2 July 2005

Back Row;

Adam Hall, Robert Grove Smith, Yuan Gao, James Mills, Matthew Haste, Simon Moulds, Richard Soames, Tristram Bainbridge, James Wilson, Edward Given, Harry Coules, Thomas Astley, Andrew Cruickshank, Johnnie Fisher, James Dingwall, Ben Harris, Peter Dean, Stephen Cork

4th row;

Ben Phillips, Tim Fox, James Wood, Ted Griffith, Richard Mallett, Jonathan Garrett, Jonathan Coleman, Richard Kaudewitz, George Clarkson, George Milne-Day, Charlie Moger, Oliver Diamond, Michael McCormick, David Brook, Koel Ko, Tony Lau, Tom Reid, Alex Wimbourne, George Cowie, Hilton Poultney, Richard Gray, Timothy Rippon, Sam Withnall

3rd Row:

Matthew Pinner, Peter Minch, Chris Dixon, John Foyle, Cameron More, James Cundell, Peter Lyons, Christian Davies, Daniel Boardman, William Guast, Jonas Muir Wood, Patrick Stern, Andrew Brown, Hal McKend, Siddharth Kapoor, Dominic Waite, James Horsburgh, Nikhil Wilmink, Michael O'Byrne, James Hopkins, Peter Jones, Thomas Evans, Joshua Fyne

2nd row:

Malte Engler, Edward Cottrell, Matthew Stott, Lewis Simpson, Adam Cornish, Jae-Wook Lee, Callum Francis, Sam Florey, Adam Woolford, Edward Rowett, William Beaufoy, Robert Coster, Thomas Swarbrick, Ben Sapsford, Nick Turnbull, Hugh Taylor, Jaime Evans, William Blackshaw, Zahid Karim, Nathan Hughes, Michael Scopes, Anthony Mak, Mr N Pritchard, Dr J Older

1st row;

Mr D Forster, Mr D Boyd, Mr W Phelps, Mr S Hamilton, Mr D Evans, Mr J Townsend, Mr D Aitken, Mr T Garnier, Mr D Dawswell, Mr T Ayling, Matthew Duhan, Mr M Turner, Peter Rowe, Commander R Jackson, Mr T King, Mrs J Jorgensen, Mr A Watkins, Mr A Hall, Mr I Fishpool, Mr N Revill, Mr S Evans, Mr K Spencer, Mr R Slatford

