



Abingdonian 2012



The Abingdonian

2011 – 2012

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Editorial



Reading the issues of *The Abingdonian* that were produced during the academic year 1911/12 it is easy to see that much has changed in the last one hundred years, but it is also interesting to note that much has stayed the same: an OA Olympian competing in the 1912 Olympic Games at Stockholm who laments how difficult it was for Great Britain's athletes to compete on an even footing with the Americans would perhaps be impressed with Team GB's performance at London 2012 while also noting how far ahead Team USA were in the medals table; the correspondent who states that "the decay of manners does not allow us twentieth century decadents to write a decent letter" would doubtless agree with those who nowadays shake their heads at the increasing use of text speak and tweets. And those who spoke for the debating society's motion "In the opinion of this House the rapid progress of aviation is detrimental to the future welfare of the world at large" would find themselves on the side of those campaigning against the current proposals for "Boris Island".

Much has changed at Abingdon School itself in the last one hundred years, but what seems to be a constant is the enthusiasm, determination and strong sense of community that the boys themselves bring to all manner of endeavour both inside and outside the classroom. It is to be hoped that this issue does justice to the considerable achievements of the latest generation of Abingdonians.

Adam Jenkins
Editor

Head's Foreword



It was with a sense of anticipation and enjoyment that I read this edition of *The Abingdonian*. What a year we've had, full of the diversity, excitement and sheer enormity of everything which constitutes the life of an Abingdonian.

Each boy must surely find his own special place amongst these pages. Whether as a member of a house, participating in a concert or play, travelling the world, playing sport or doing his bit in the local community, he too will have been part of the Abingdon story 2011/12.

And what a story. Flip through the pages reading news and views, admire the art work, gasp at the achievements of all our boys – above all – enjoy!

Felicity Lusk

Michaelmas 2011

First week thoughts

September 2011 saw 56 new first years become the latest generation of Abingdonians. The comments and poems below come from their first week at their new school and suggest that they began their time with great excitement – and perhaps a little trepidation.

On Monday when I arrived I was a little nervous, but I have had a great first week. I am really enjoying the activities after school and at lunchtime. All the boys are really nice and I am looking forward to next week.

Joe Roads 1JAC

My first week at Abingdon has been fun and exiting. I'm enjoying trying out new things, especially rugby and basketball, and on the academic side, maths and English, which I would like to get better at. I'm looking forward to next week when I can do karate on Monday lunchtime.

Jack Bevan 1SCVM

My first week has been very fun and enjoyable. I am definitely starting to get to know the school and I have made lots and lots of friends. I am really enjoying feeling so grown up as well.

Murdo Blythe 1SCVM

My first week at Abingdon has been great. The older boys have been so helpful in telling me where to go. Abingdon is already feeling like a second home. The teachers have been amazing; they have made the lessons really enjoyable. I have made some new friends and would like to make a lot more.

Daniel Lawson 1JAC

I have really enjoyed my first week here at Abingdon. I've found all of the lessons really interesting and enjoyable. All of the Other Half activities I have participated in so far have been so much fun and I can't wait to do some more! Making new friends has been easier than I thought, which is great!

Charlie Stoker 1JAC

School has been really fun this week; I had my first ever Latin lesson and really enjoyed it! I can't wait to come back to school next week.

Joshua Valentine 1SW





I've had a brilliant first week and I think I've made some nice friends. I'm enjoying the variety of lessons and the teachers are encouraging and enthusiastic. I am going to have to remember to take everything with me for the right lessons and stop carrying the whole locker around with me in my bag. The meals are delicious - my favourite lunch was paella.

Iwan Stone 1SW

My time at Abingdon so far has been great. I've tried so many new activities and learnt so many new things! For example I've hardly ever played rugby before but now, from just two lessons, I simply love it! I am, however, finding it a bit difficult to find my way around the school, as my previous school was smaller then the Art Department and I had only one classroom. I'm sure I'll get used to it though (hopefully).

Ben Goriely-McDonald. 1SCVM



Awesome Abingdon
Boys only
In a big place
Nervous
Getting to know new people
Delicious food
Other Half
No worries

Any regrets?
Bigger, better
Interesting lessons
New activities
Great facilities
Down at the bottom
Obviously different but brilliant
No regrets!

Abingdon
Big space
Interesting lessons
Nice teachers
Great fun so far
Drowning me with information!
Older boys helping me
New to everyone

Apprehensive
Bigger school
Intriguing subjects
New teachers
Getting up at crazy hours
Doing homework
Other Half activities
Nervous

House Singing

Competition was keen at the House Singing Competition when a selection of well-practised songs was performed in front of a packed audience of fellow competitors in the Amey Theatre. The man who had the difficult job of deciding the winners was Neville Creed, Director of Cultural Activities at St Edward's School, Oxford.



Results

1st: Franklin's

Cee Lo Green *Forget You* (Director Henry Jenkinson, piano Henry Binning)

2nd: Boyd's

Madness *It Must Be Love* (Director William Hewstone, piano Mitchell Keely)

3rd: Lower School

Christina Perri *Jar Of Hearts* (Director Alex Reynolds, piano Ethan Clarke)





Verdi's Requiem

On 26 November the Abingdon and St Helen's Joint Choral Society, joined this year by members of Our Lady's Abingdon, performed one of the established masterworks of the choral repertoire: Verdi's mighty *Requiem*. It was a bold choice but one that was fully vindicated by a fine performance, which was enthusiastically received by a sizeable audience in the Amey Theatre.

The choir, made up of pupils, parents, staff and friends from the three schools, had worked industriously throughout the term during their weekly rehearsals, and their efforts came to a highly satisfying conclusion; their well disciplined and balanced singing projected effectively through the full-textured accompaniment.

The soloists were Claire Seaton, Kate Symonds-Joy, Andrew Wicks (replacing at short notice Abingdon's singing teacher, Andrew Yeats, who unfortunately was indisposed with a heavy cold) and Henry Herford (who also sang at the last JCS performance of this work ten years ago, and is a former Abingdon parent). They conspired to elevate the performance to

its full dramatic height in both their solo and ensemble passages. Henry's sotto voce 'mors', and Claire's apparently effortless piano top B flat at the end of the final 'requiem', being particularly memorable.

The Oxford Symphony Orchestra, with guest leader Isabel Knowland, provided the accompaniment. There were several former and current pupils of the schools in the orchestra, notably Alistair Duff 7LFD playing the dynamic tympani part, and the

off-stage trumpeters, hidden on the fly-gantry of the stage.

It was a spectacularly successful performance, benefiting from the hours of meticulous planning and rehearsals put in by Michael Stinton, and from the multiple-decked staging, built by the theatre manager Rory Fraser Mackenzie assisted by Matt Cooper, which allowed the chorus to be heard to best advantage.

Christopher Fletcher-Campbell



Classics Trip to Turkey

On Sunday 23 October we arrived at school to set out for Turkey - far too early for my liking. It was 2.00 am and for four of us this was a deadline for handing in an essay which we all duly met, much to Mr Price's enjoyment (he would have some scintillating holiday reading ahead of him!). The travelling passed in no time at all and we arrived in Turkey in some glorious winter sun, in stark contrast to the horrific wet, cold weather that we had left behind in England. We crammed onto our Turkish bus and embarked on a mammoth journey of four hours from Istanbul to Canakkale; yet it flew by with a detailed history of Turkey from our incredible guide Yalchin (more on him to follow). After a ferry crossing of the mythologically and historically significant Hellespont, our beds were most welcome.

The next day brought us to Troy. Having read Homer's *Iliad*, I was intrigued to see what this mythical place looked like in the flesh. Troy was a spectacular city with archaeologists claiming to have found the walls that had been destroyed by the Greeks during the battle of Troy and Schliemann boasting of discovering the "Treasure of Priam". When I saw it with my own eyes, it enabled me to picture the famous scenes of the Iliad. After Troy, we got on the bus to Pergamon. The ancient ruins at Pergamon are on the top of a hill and have been splendidly preserved; this combination made for some spectacular views. The most impressive site at Pergamon – and one of the most impressive in the whole Mediterranean - is the theatre. This was built into the hillside, giving its steps a natural and alarmingly steep slope, with room to seat 10,000. You can still see the square holes where the supports for temporary staging would have been placed, as well as the Temple of Dionysus where they would have made sacrifices to the god of theatre before dramatic performances. The library at Pergamon sadly does not remain, but



was the second biggest in the known world after that in Alexandria. We then moved on to our hotel in Kusadasi, which was to be our base for the next three nights.

The third day was to consist of three Greek cities: first Priene, then Miletus and finally Magnesia. Priene was special as the layout of the city has remained and so we could easily walk down the streets and through the impressive agora. Moreover, there was a magnificent Temple of Athena which was partly paid for by Alexander the Great. Some columns have been re-erected (a process called anastylosis), which gave us all a feeling for the scale of the temple. Then we moved on to Miletus, a place with a significant history. It was a leader in the Ionian revolt against Persia in 499 BC and so was destroyed by the Persian King when the revolt had been quashed, to be rebuilt following the Persian defeat in 479. After Miletus we moved on to Magnesia, which in my opinion was the best site we saw on the whole trip. Half a mile up a nondescript dirt track is an awe-inspiring stadium, which is still being excavated from the mudslides which buried it for thousands of years. This meant that the stadium has been incredibly well preserved and, when we visited, still only half of it had

been excavated. Its preservation has meant that the graffiti images of bored spectators still remain on the stone seats, as do markings on the seats telling us where certain people could sit. As it was a stadium, it would have been rude not to have had a race: we duly obliged with a victory for Luke Terry 7JEF and second place going to Christian Reedman 7KL.

The next day was another of the highlights of the trip as we visited Ephesus, home to one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World with its Temple of Artemis, though now more famed for the Library of Celsus. Although the temple was a massive building measuring 51 x 111 metres, its remains are not the most impressive with only one column re-erected, but the library is one of the most stunning ancient buildings that I have ever seen. Even though it has been heavily restored, it is awe-inspiring with amazing detail still clearly visible: there is a scribble in one niche on a wall, which says, "Whoever relieves himself here shall suffer the wrath of Hecate".

The fifth day saw us visit Aphrodisias, the site of the Sebasteion, a shrine to the Roman emperors, which comprised a street with two-storey porticoes on either side. These were decorated with deeply



Temple of Zeus at Aizanoi



Library of Celsus at Ephesus

carved reliefs of heroic myths and the imperial family. There is a new museum at the site, which houses perhaps the best single collection of Roman imperial sculpture from the whole empire. The intricate detail on the sculptures was amazing with each emperor and family easily identifiable. Aphrodisias also has an incredibly well preserved stadium, in which there was another race. Our tour guide Yalchin nominated himself to run - this was a shock to us all as he seemed to smoke at least three packs a day. On his return he was heavily out of breath and we thought we might have a casualty, but he quickly brought himself back from the brink of collapse with another cigarette. After Aphrodisias, we went to Hierapolis where there was another magnificent theatre with a box for distinguished guests and a frieze of the emperor, Septimius Severus, and his family. That night, we returned to the rather nice Richmond Thermal Hotel where we joined lots of elderly tourists in the therapeutic baths. Although we



Stadium at Magnesia

were forced to wear silly shower caps, it was just as well for the heart rates of our ancient fellow-bathers that Mr Price did not don his tight lycra shorts on this occasion!

The next morning saw us start our long journey back to Istanbul, stopping off en route at Aizanoi. Here there was a prominent temple in honour of Zeus, which survived almost undamaged until the 1970s when an earthquake brought some of the structure down. However, it is a great example of an ancient temple with the naos, the central room, still having its walls of marble. It was also intriguing to see within the village so many pieces of ancient stone being recycled in the rather ramshackle modern houses. A further long journey brought us back to Istanbul, which is where we were to stay for the rest of the trip.

We received a new tour guide here who was rather too intimate an individual: he was very touchy-feely in conversation and would catch almost everyone unawares. Indeed Mr Price was incredibly offended and disappointed that Bulent did not feel inclined to touch him as he did the rest of the party, staff and boys alike. After a visit to the archaeological museum, we went on a cruise along the Bosphorus, which was

incredibly interesting regarding the history of Istanbul and the many attempts to control it throughout the ages. It was after this that we managed to get some shopping done in the cheap markets which were a theme throughout the trip. We then returned back to the hotel to take part in the highly competitive trip quiz, which was won by a team ably led by Edward Firth 7LFD. This team called 'I love Guy Giles' contained the most talented boys, and there was no surprise that we won (yes I was part of that team!).

Our final day saw us on a tour of more recent parts of the city: we went to the Blue Mosque and to Saint Sophia. These were both remarkable buildings and I wish that we could have spent more time in Istanbul as it is one of the most fascinating cities I have ever visited. However, we had to make our way back to the airport and the flight home to Heathrow. I thoroughly enjoyed what was a great trip: we visited some of the most stunning sites that I have ever seen and the unending knowledge that Dr Burnand and the rest of the classics teachers displayed was phenomenal. It was an incredible trip that was enjoyed by every single person on it.

Henry Sensecall 6RMF

Drama Festival

By any measure, 2011-12 was a bumper year for drama productions, with no fewer than fourteen extra-curricular shows rolling off the production lines at Abingdon and St Helen's. Furthermore, there was an air of innovation about many of the projects.

The Abingdon Drama Festival comprised five one-hour plays in different parts of the Arts Centre over three nights in November. That alone was a new development, the logistics of which were managed with aplomb by Rory Fraser-Mackenzie and his technical team. Yet each of the plays also had something new or unusual about it.

Alison Quick gave Shakespeare's rarely performed *Cymbeline* a lively re-imagining on an Amey Theatre stage transformed by a seating rake on the forestage into a studio. That, and the use of modern costumes, iPhones and colourful projections made this a thrillingly contemporary production. Henry Jenkinson 7JEF and Nicholas Krol 7JEF led a talented cast, supported by James Steele 6DRM, Joseph Heade 6DRM, Kieran Boddington 6HKA, Harry Stott 5NMR, Edmund Cornforth 5LM, Mathew Hartshorne 6DRM, Alex Wilkinson, Tilia Astell and Ciara Robinson.



Cymbeline

Cymbeline shared the stage with another novel production, Craig Taylor's *One Million Tiny Plays About Britain*, directed by Matthew Cooper. First performed only a few months earlier, this was obviously "new" material, yet most original was its form. The ninety or so plays range in length from a few lines to a couple of pages, and directors can stage as many or as few as they like, in any order, guaranteeing audiences a different experience each time. The result was a fascinating set of snapshots of contemporary Britain, brilliantly performed by Jonathan Ainslie 5LM, Oliver Bailey 7TCG, Sophie Dudhill, Imogen Feenan, Isobel Kynoch and William Nash 5VEH. The speed and scale of the acting transformations from one play to the next were breathtaking.

The Amey Theatre auditorium was the unusual venue for another distinctive piece. *Come Out Eli* was Alecky Blythe's first play – based on the siege of Hackney in 2002 - and the start of her unique "verbatim" method. Created entirely from interviews with 'real people', Blythe's plays demand actors don't learn lines, but rehearse and perform wearing headphones through which they hear the recorded words of the people they are representing, in order to reproduce

them as faithfully as possible a split-second later. It's difficult to master, so we were delighted when Alecky Blythe visited Abingdon in October to show us how it worked. The results were striking. The intensity of the listening required of the actors, together with a lack of self-consciousness arising from the use of headphones, drew some remarkable characterisations from a cast of eleven fifth formers – Charlotte Blower, Gabriel 5VEH and Johnny Burrow 5JPGB, Henry Crowe 5MJS, Helen Dallas, Edward Hambly 5VEH, Olivia Rohll, Stella Ryley, Jack Squizzoni 5PW, Alice Taylor and Susannah Thorn.



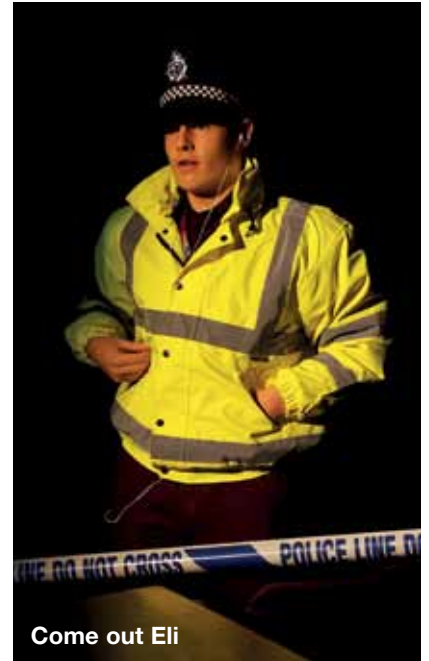
Cymbeline



Cruising



Cymbeline



Come out Eli

Abingdon's drama studio hosted two other modern plays. Blythe's *Cruising* deployed the same verbatim technique to explore the vicissitudes of a group of pensioners looking for love in the autumn of their lives. This time the cast comprised sixth formers – TC Chu 6AJL, Holly Crocker, Katy Donnelly, Megan Foster, Jyothi Giles, Kia Little, Alice Matthews, Christopher Mears 6RMF, Clea Southall, Tom Siston 6AJL and Harry Wilder 6RMF. They, too, rose to the challenge of the verbatim technique magnificently. Both plays were staged by Jeremy Taylor.

Ben Phillips directed Neil Labute's *The Shape of Things* to deliver a production of unrivalled power. Charting the uncomfortable story of a woman who uses her boyfriend as an art project, the play saw the studio remodelled into a pristine white exhibition space, then further transformed by Rory Fraser Mackenzie's excellent AV displays. The acting, from Charlie Bateman 7MIL, Agnes Donnelly, Katy Pennick and Joe Westcott 6SJG, was of a very high order indeed.

Jeremy Taylor



One million tiny plays about Britain



One million tiny plays about Britain



The Shape of Things

Rugby

The Daily Mail Cup was a real focus for the School's senior squad as it is a competition where a team can put a statement down for all the others to see. It started off with a nerve-racking trip down the road to St Bartholomew's in Newbury. After a wakeup call right at the start (going three points down in as many minutes), the team switched on. We took control and ran in tries through the forwards and backs to conclude the game with a 3-55 win. A solid start for Abingdon and it gave us the confidence to be able to score tries in both areas, as in a competition like this you need to capitalise every opportunity you get.

After a close defeat to St Paul's four days before, the team needed to get back on the right tracks. The match against Reading Grammar School at home turned out to be an excellent opportunity to do this. The confidence came flowing back with the team scoring three tries in the first half with ease, but the second half turned in to a scrappy one. Penalties kicked by Henry Sensecall 6RMF kept the score board ticking over for Abingdon despite the lack of penetration out wide. Joe Hogan 7LFD and his pack took it upon themselves to take the team through home and dry. The end score was 36-10. This took us through to our fourth round match against Pangbourne.



With a large home crowd against them, the team really came together to silence it. A slow start was then turned into a fast flowing game, which is the way Abingdon love to play rugby. Powerful runs from Alexander Hatzis 7JEF and Charlie Manasseh 7TCG got the team closer and closer to the home side's line, where the pressure then just got too great and they gave in. The gates were opened and Abingdon ended up with a comfortable 3-33 win.

After facing Pangbourne College, the team set their sights on round 5, in which they would face one of Abingdon's biggest rivals of recent years: Royal Grammar School High Wycombe. As in the junior age group of the Daily Mail Cup (U15) both sixth form year groups had lost to their respective RGS rivals, it was set to be an intense encounter. In a physical first half, Abingdon conceded early on before hitting back with two strong forwards' tries. The second half then continued in much the same vein as Abingdon used the wind to provide territory and pull out to a lead of 24-7, with tries coming from Hamish Grant 7IM and Alexander Hatzis.

Into the last sixteen Abingdon marched and they faced strong Cornish side Truro School, who a year earlier had reached the final of the Junior Daily Mail Cup. In a

game that witnessed some great running rugby and arguably Abingdon's best performance of the season, the home side pulled out 28-3 winners. Try scorers included Kristian Wood 6DCB, Peter Allan 7TCG, Tom Kynge 6MDP and most notably, with an excellent full pitch try to round up the match, Peter Moore 6DCB. Abingdon then faced Dulwich College in the quarterfinals, a team that had beaten the holders, Whitgift School, and the favourites, Hampton School to get to this point. Abingdon, shell-shocked by their opponents in the first ten minutes, conceded two converted tries to make



the score 14-3. From here Abingdon hit back strongly with tries from Peter Moore and Hamish Grant and the game finished 17-17. Although the teams were evenly matched, the away advantage allowed Dulwich to progress into the semi-finals. There was an even more bitter pill to swallow as Dulwich then went on to win the final at Twickenham.

All round, however, 2011/12 was an excellent season for Abingdon rugby epitomised by the attitude shown by the senior players in this cup run and there is plenty of promise for the future. Thanks go to all those players who put on the Abingdon shirt each and every Saturday in the Michaelmas term, and also to the excellent team of coaching staff.

*Tom Kyng 6MDP and
Peter Moore 6DCB*



4th XV v Bromsgrove



U12A v Akeley Wood



4th XV v Marlborough



U14C v KCS



U15 XV

Lower School History Club

You're having a bad day and went to bed way past midnight last night. However, as you're making your way to your maths lesson, there, in the sculpture garden, is a mob of very short knights whacking each other with swords. Is it a hallucination? Or is it a strange creation from the depths of your mind? No, actually it's only Lower School History Club filming one of many violent scenes from one of their latest productions. This is just one thing that members of the History Club, run by Mr McGill and assisted by Mr Hallinan, get up to every Tuesday lunchtimes in the winter and spring terms.

We also watch historical films and have recently seen parts of 300 and Joan of Arc, which provided 'inspiration' for recent club productions. Also enjoyed are numerous documentaries and a harmless amount of Blackadder on the side. This entertainment appeals to the majority of Lower School as does the vast quantities of confectionery we consume every session.

When we're not making Hollywood history, we busy ourselves with various projects as well. The last batch of projects completed came in the form of model castles. Members frequently



revealed that this was one of their favourite activities as such project work is fun and educational. One advantage the club has over a standard issue history lesson (even if it is with Mr Hallinan) is flexibility. Decisions concerning what to do next are nearly always left to opinionated members. This openness allows for members such as myself, a History Club 'Lieutenant' as the club's seniors are known, to make diverse contributions to sessions, which not only heightens the experience for other members, but also attracts a good amount of attention to oneself! So far we've seen a model trebuchet, a steel medieval helmet, an army of tiny plastic models as well as a suit of cardboard armour, complete with enough swords to equip an army. These, amongst others, make for a fascinating start to every session.

But there's more! History Club is not confined to just one classroom. Membership also gives the bearer worthwhile privileges such as priority over other pupils at the attendance of history orientated events in the school and a part in dressing up the history department for Open Days, where it is a pleasure to represent the department. One such event that came and went was a visit from the History Squad and a presentation on medieval weapons.

So there it is. Lower School History Club offers a refreshingly different, active, hands-on approach to history, an option which has and will serve Lower School enthusiasts as long as there is history to be studied.

*Henry Waterson, 2HFCP
History Club Lieutenant*



Christmas Concert

A full Amey Theatre was the venue for the second of this year's Christmas concerts, the first having featured choral performances from the Lower School in the first half, replaced on the Wednesday evening by two instrumental items performed by the Chamber Orchestra.

The Wednesday concert opened with the Second Orchestra manfully tackling the Carillon from Bizet's *L'Arlesienne*, and with greater success, I thought, than the version I had heard some years ago from a previous Second Orchestra. The pace was still a little on the slow side, but the quality of musicianship was much improved, with some lyrical playing in the strings (Joseph Barber 4JPN, Mitchell Keely 4JPN et al.) - MAS told the audience that he'd been working the players very hard this term and it showed. Their second item, *March* from Bizet's *Carmen*, had a good degree of pace and verve, and they even played an encore!

Next came the Chamber Orchestra consisting of 18 players directed by Mariette Pringle, long-time visiting instrumental teacher in a long flowing robe of festive colour! Their piece, *Spring* from Vivaldi's well-known *Four Seasons*, showed good dynamics and some nicely expressive solo and duet playing by the first and second violins, with a particularly delicate tone in the Largo. An excellent performance was given by George Burrage 5JFH, and all in all this was as good an amateur performance of this very popular piece as any I have attended.

A huge Symphonic Wind Band conducted by Andy Townsend came on next and played another oft-heard piece, the *Dambusters' March* by Eric Coates - this had a sharp, energetic start and maintained a cracking pace which conveyed the triumphant patriotism of the march very well - so well that I couldn't help humming along! *Pirates of*



the Caribbean by Hans Zimmer came next, a great film theme with some atmospheric and descriptive writing - Johnny Depp at once sprang to mind, peering round corners, setting traps for his enemies, chased by troops in hot pursuit!

After the interval, a very Big Band conducted as always by Simon Currie, made their way onto the stage complete with customary fancy waistcoats and Santa Claus hats. Their first piece, *Splanky* by Neal Hefti, was new to me; the solo saxophone immediately set the tone for this slow, smoky number with lots of other solo spots following. The sound was even huger than the band, with lots of depth and sparkle to it, and Alistair Duff 7LPD was very energetic on the drums. This was followed by that old chestnut, *Tequila*: it was played with great gusto and with nice improvisations by Stuart Jones 7KL and Laurence Copson 7LFD, *inter alios*. The audience were invited to shout the title word at the appropriate places, but only the gentlemen present made themselves heard. This particular performance will be memorable for Alistair Duff's use of what appeared to be a banana as a percussion instrument - 'shake it and it rattles!' He certainly seemed to enjoy making stabbing motions in the direction of Mr. Currie. Finally Big Band played another much-heard tune, *Autumn Leaves*, preceded by a drum solo by Rory Marsh 7IM, joint winner with Alistair

of last year's Abingdon's Got Talent.

Finally, the First Orchestra had three items to round off the evening - to begin with, the first movement of Schubert's *Symphony no.9*, the *Unfinished*. The piece demonstrated their talent in conveying its beautiful romanticism, with a very well-balanced sound and some lovely playing by the strings and brass. Next came Grieg's *Piano Concerto in A minor (1st movement)*, played by Joe Ereat 6PJEC from memory. Joe's performance was wonderfully fluid and dynamic with much emotion - this piece was a real virtuosic showcase for his talent and the audience were quite spellbound, giving two encores.

The final item before the community carol was a Burt Bacharach medley (arranged by Richard Ling); introducing it, MAS said that the boys in First Orchestra regarded this type of music as 'cheesy', but especially for the oldies in the audience it was a nostalgic trip back to the 60s and 70s. We heard *Alfie*, *I Say A Little Prayer*, *Walk On By* and finally, *Close To You*, made famous in the huge hit by The Carpenters.

The evening concluded with the community carol *Hark, The Herald Angels Sing*, and a retiring collection was taken in aid of Sue Ryder Care homes and Starlight.

Peter Willerton



Modern Languages Gallery





Lent 2012

Young Enterprise

The 2011-12 Young Enterprise team were involved in a number of ventures during the year including the selling of headphones and watches, the running of a computer games tournament and the selling and marketing of a novel guitar stand for a local entrepreneur. The extract below is from the Company Report and is written by the company's Managing Director, Duncan McLeish.

We were told at the very start of the year that Young Enterprise was not simply a school activity. When I signed up I was still unaware just how interesting and challenging the year would prove to be. I was pleased to be voted in as Managing Director and looked forward to leading the company through a year where I hoped to gain as much experience as possible.

I said in my opening speech as Managing Director that I would judge success not by the profits that the company would accrue but by the experience we would gain. I still maintain this opinion at the end of the project. We tried to diversify from the usual "buy low – sell high" mentality that a lot of Young

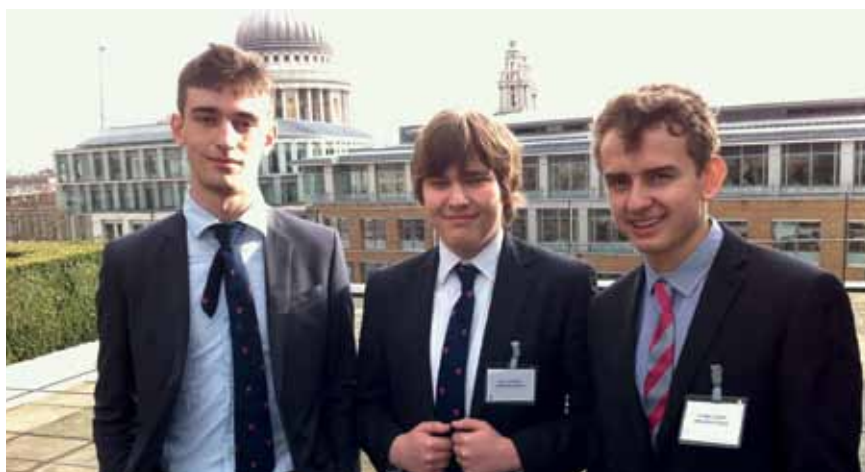


Enterprise teams follow. We achieved such a varied range of successes through the year and every man in the team contributed to that success: whether it was the need for people to man a stall, provide ideas for a logo or stand in for an absentee. The diversity of products allowed people to form specialised teams which reported back at the end of each week.

Being Managing Director has been a lot of hard work but also a fun and interesting experience. The sense of achievement at getting to the end of the year with a team still talking to each other and in profit is a great feeling. The road has not been easy but has always been enjoyable.

Our thanks go to Mr Grills and Mr Fieldhouse who have been a great help throughout the year. Our Business Advisors have been our greatest asset, always there with tips and advice that we would never have come up with on our own. The experience that this year has given all of us has been invaluable as an insight into the workings of a company. Wherever we end up in our careers the lessons we learnt here are now a part of that journey.

*Duncan McLeish 6DCB
Managing Director*



Economics Paris Trip

On a cold Friday morning in February, nineteen Lower and Upper Sixth economists accompanied by Mr Fieldhouse and Mr Grills departed Abingdon for the 'Your Future in Europe' Economics conference in Paris. We travelled by (the rather civilised) Eurostar from London St Pancras to Paris Gare du Nord, arriving at our hotel after a busy metro journey by early evening. The hotel in question was the Ibis La Defense, set right in the heart of Paris's business district and conveniently placed to access the centre of the city. That evening we headed out to explore the lovely cobbled streets and market squares of Montmartre where we stopped for some dinner and to take in the magnificent views of the city from outside the Sacre Coeur Basilica.

The next morning we headed out to the Palais des Congres for the conference, which was hosted by successful broadcaster Sian Jones. The day's key note speaker was economist, journalist and BBC presenter Evan Davis, who talked about the current Eurozone crisis and how it should be tackled. Peter Luff, vice-chairman of the European Movement, gave a comprehensive overview of the European Union from



a number of different perspectives, economic, political and social, and summarised the main institutions of the EU. Entrepreneur Jo Fairley spoke passionately about Green and Blacks, the popular chocolate brand she co-founded, giving a number of insights into how to set up a successful and socially responsible business. The day ended with a Question Time session in which members of the audience could ask questions to a panel that included Kate Green MP, Esther McVey MP, Simon Hughes MP and Evan Davis. This made for some heated arguments up on the stage and was a most entertaining finale! The conference was enjoyed by all, with the boys commenting that they found it both informative and academically stimulating. There is certainly a great deal of benefit to be gained by students through hearing

well-known and respected speakers discuss the economic and political issues tackled in the classroom on a daily basis.

After the conference we headed to the Trocadero for a fantastic photo opportunity at the Eiffel Tower, before taking a river cruise down the Seine. The evening ended with dinner in the lively Latin Quarter, where students were spoiled for choice in restaurants and cafes. On Sunday morning we headed out early for a spot of shopping on the Champs-Elysees, where we were treated to the sight of a Paris blanketed in white as it began to snow rather heavily. Luckily the weather didn't disrupt our journey back to the UK and we arrived back in Abingdon by early evening. The trip was a great success and we intend to return to Paris for the 2014 conference.

Nick Fieldhouse





Chamber Concert

This year's annual chamber concert on Wednesday 22 February afforded another opportunity to hear the amazing small ensemble work that is going on in the Music Department.

In addition to the usual fare of string quartets and piano trios, it was particularly pleasing to see some of the more unusual contributions to the evening, such as the wonderful *Hymnus* by Klengel performed by twelve of Valerie Findlay's cellos. This made for both a marvellous visual spectacle as well as an

aural feast, with the rich, ever-changing textures that the composer develops through sublime music, with its shifting tonalities and melodic phrases, passed from one cellist to the next.

Other unusual items included the oboe trio of Henry Binning 6MDP, Sam Gibb 5MJS and William Haines 7SEG, who performed Mozart's own variations on *La ci darem la mano* from *Marriage of Figaro*, followed by Powning's *Ragtime*, a suitably contrasting jazzy piece. The second half of the concert also featured a clarinet ensemble in a movement of a Mozart Serenade, arranged by our clarinet teacher, Tim Payne, for clarinet

sextet. This was a lovely performance of lyrical, cantabile playing. The Saxophone Quartet of Adam Parkes 5LM, Jamie Blackwell 4DJB, Jeffrey Hang 4EAK and Max Robinson 5NMR also entertained us with Neilhouse's *Taking a Chance*, rhythmically tight in its syncopated style.

We were reminded in these three woodwind ensembles of the tremendous support that we get from our parents at Abingdon. Each of the ensembles had special instruments that had been purchased as a result of the fund-raising of our parents – a cor anglais, a bass clarinet and an Eb clarinet and, in the saxophone ensemble, a baritone saxophone. All of these would be beyond the purchasing power of individuals, but it is wonderful for the boys to have access to them in the department.

The concert's other offerings embraced a great deal of variety; a viola quartet, a couple of violin trios, three string quartets (music by Wesley, Haydn and Dvorak), two piano trios (Mozart and Gurlitt) and a piano quartet (Seitz), all coached and masterminded by our Head of Strings, Mariette Pringle.

Michael Stinton



Community Service

This was a successful year for our community service, which consists of weekly visits to various places around Abingdon punctuated by termly tea parties. At these events, we invite anyone involved in the community service scheme, from Val Kir's "Older and Bolder" class to elderly residents from all across the town, to come to the school for tea and cakes.

At the tea parties Abingdon Academicals provided fantastic music to accompany the third years' quizzes, which are themed to match the term, and raffles. This year also marked the retirement of Mr Willerton, who has been a staunch, long-standing member of the community services team here at Abingdon. His friendly face and demeanour will be missed by everyone doing community services, as well as by the community itself.

Jack Williams 6NF

Volunteering

Facing the start of the Lower Sixth, aware that I would need some work experience to decorate my medical school application, I turned to Miss Hicks for help. I was relieved to find that Abingdon has strong links with the local hospital, and regularly sends several students to visit the wards. I have always been told that medicine is a varied vocation, but never quite believed it until I had spent a few weeks there; every time I visited I had an entirely new conversation with many fascinating people. I would readily advise any potential medics to take advantage of this activity, and to ask the doctors there for interview tips and advice.

I also persuaded Mrs Fishpool to let me loose in my old primary school, St Nicolas'. I am happy to admit that I rapidly rediscovered the joy of playing with Lego, and haven't looked back. The children are a delight, from their frank observations ("I can see why you



don't have a girlfriend, Charles.") to their unstoppable questions ("In science lessons at your school, do you get to play with any chemicals you like?"). The teachers are always grateful for the help, and I hope future sixth formers continue to visit.

Charles Pope 6RMF



Cross Country

This season was somewhat of a landmark in the history of the club as it saw yet another cluster of talent – Alistair Duff 7LFD, Stuart Jones 7KL, Luke Terry 7JEF et al – experience their last season of schoolboy racing while they attempted to join the ranks of the immortals – Hatzis, Tucker, Muir, Watkins, Kempton. Here are some of our highlights:



Wellington College Relays – Saturday 4 February 2012

The opposition comprised Magdalen College School, Harrow School, Highgate, Winchester, Sevenoaks, Tonbridge, Charterhouse, Mill Hill, RGS Guildford, Ardingly and St. Edwards. The Senior team of Thomas Kelly 5JPGB, Stuart Jones, Luke Terry, Jacques Tasker 4OTL and Alistair Duff beat all other schools by a margin of nearly 3 minutes – that is somewhat significant in two ways: two of our runners were not even in the Sixth Form, then there was the small matter of 3 minutes. That is a huge margin over such a short course. The intermediate team of Michael Fabes 3RP, Henry Hart 4EAK, Teddy Curtis 4JHW, Alex Gatenby 4JPN and Nat Jones 3HCGM won bronze medals... a decent reward for their efforts and indeed the colour of the medal ought to provide a strong incentive for next year.

OUCCC's Tortoise Relays – Wednesday 29 February 2012

For this event the club took two Senior relay teams and five individual Junior runners to the Tortoise Relays in Christ Church Meadow, organised by Oxford University Cross Country Club. This year was particularly important as OA Alex Muir was in charge of proceedings. In attendance were teams from St Edward's School, Magdalen College School, Stowe, and The Marling School.

The A team of Alistair Duff, Luke Terry, Thomas Kelly and Jacques Tasker took first place in the senior relay with Thomas and Alistair recording the fastest and second fastest lap times respectively. In the junior individual category Abingdon took an excellent first place with Michael Fabes and second place with Nat Jones. This is the second time in three years that we have won this coveted trophy.

Marlborough College Races – Thursday 1 March 2012

Abingdon fielded three teams at the Marlborough College cross country event, known for being one of the toughest courses in terms of terrain. The weather was unusually mild as teams from Abingdon, St Edward's, Harrow, Marlborough, Magdalen College School, Radley and Kingswood gathered for a 3pm start.

From the start of the senior event Abingdon challenged the other squads and as the runners ascended the last grueling hill towards the finish line Thomas Kelly was in the lead chased closely by one of Magdalen's senior runners. Thomas held him off to take first place. He didn't have long to wait before his teammates arrived to ensure that almost all the top positions were occupied by Abingdon boys.





For the first time we fielded a junior team made up of members of the Lower School who ran well in what was for most their first competitive cross country fixture. It was good to see some future senior squad members get their first taste of the sport with Tom Butcher 1SCVM making a particularly strong first appearance after only one and a half term's of running. My thanks to captain Alistair Duff for taking these young runners over the course and offering guidance.

South East Schools' Championships – Saturday 17 March 2012

The cross-country club today travelled to Harrow School to compete in the South East Schools' Championships. Thirty runners had high ambitions having won there two years previously. The Seniors of Alistair Duff, Stuart Jones, Luke Terry, Mathew Hartshorne 6DRM,

Joe Greenman 6RMF, Thomas Kelly, Nat Jones and Michael Fabes won silver medals. It is difficult to single out one or two best performers from this home-grown team since they were at their most impressive and devastating against the other schools when working as a team; and they did just that on the day bringing out their best performance to date. It was hugely enjoyable to watch and the runners did themselves full justice.

The Intermediate team were equally impressive in many ways. They won bronze medals – and they would have won silver easily had I given this team the fastest runners of their age group – and they stood out for their team work, camaraderie and sheer enjoyment of the task. Alex Gatenby, Jacques Tasker, Teddy Curtis, Bertie Boyd-Gorst 3SRB, Joe Blanch 3DCS, Thomas Fabes 5VEH, Jonty De La Harpe 3RP and Henry Hart

were quite remarkable and if they can pull off such damage to the opposition in their fourth or third year then many who read our pages from other schools need to look out for these athletes in future years. The Juniors were out to enjoy the course and be incentivised by the splendour and athleticism that the Seniors and Intermediates showed on the day. I hope we shall see a lot more of them next season.

Thanks must go to all the parents, who come and support no matter what the weather or the distance – thank you! Finally, on behalf of all the runners, I would like to thank all my fellow coaches.

Alexis Christodoulou

Football

2012 proved to be a historic year for Abingdon's footballers as a full block fixture card was put in place after an absence of ninety years. Cox's Field was to become the hub of our external fixtures with Upper and Lower Field also seeing football posts. With no real idea of our own or oppositions' levels it was with a great sense of curiosity that the first games were played.

What we did find out was that the incredible enthusiasm for the game from the boys, combined with the staff's knowledge of the sport, proved to be a fantastic starting point. Trials took place, kits were purchased, and off we went! The selection of more detailed reports below gives a flavour of the success that was enjoyed at all levels.

Football is most certainly now at Abingdon to stay and we are all busily analysing the tremendous learning curve of the 2012 season. We will continue to develop and adjust the fixture card, thus providing opportunities for all pupils. It is with great anticipation that we look forward to 2013.



2nd XI

In the first full season of football at Abingdon, a strong and physical 2nd XI gained some great results against strong opposition. The season started off away at Bedford Modern, and after a hard fought game we unfortunately came off as the losing side. However, to be competitive against a side that had been together for five years after only two training sessions of our own demonstrated that the team had a lot of potential for the future. This showed in the second game with the team dominating in all areas against a light but skilful Merchant Taylors' side, with good goals from Freddie Calder 7EOD, Joel Morris 7IM and William Swarbrick 7IM and a superb performance at the heart of midfield from Sasha Barras 6HKA. A strong defensive effort against John Lyon seemed to set the standard for the season, with the back four of Kolujo Abraham 7KTC, Charlie Fitchett 6RMF, Michael Shortis 7EOD and Robert Fishpool 6AJL remaining unchanged. A fantastic 30 yard screamer from Sasha Barras meant another win for the side in this match. The team were then unfortunate to lose a hard-fought game against Haileybury with William Bibby 7JJ having a particularly good game on the wing, bringing in some technique worthy of Soccer AM's showboat. They then came back strongly with two goals in the last five minutes to secure a fine win over a strong side from St Colomba's College. A poor performance against a strong Reading Blue Coat side resulted

in a loss, but this was to be the last of the season for the team. A last minute winner from William Swarbrick delivered a deserved victory against Oratory after we let a two-goal lead slip in a game which also included a stunning left-footed half-volley from Chris Hall 7LFD. The team were then too strong for Cokethorpe, St Edward's and Oundle, with Joel Morris scoring six times in a week and Freddie Calder scoring directly from a corner against St Edward's. Many thanks must go to team manager Mr Evans and coach Mr Berryman for their help in a quality season for the side.

Michael Shortis 7EOD

U16A

The opening fixture against an experienced Bedford Modern team was a very good defensive start, especially as the team had had no training sessions together. A Matthew Hart 5VEH header equalized just before half time and the eventual result was described as lucky by the opposition coach. The whole team made their tackles & headers and Alex Grantham 4OTL saved a penalty and was generally brilliant. The boys had an excellent first 20 minutes against Haileybury, enjoying lots of possession. David Chadder 5GRM created openings with his pace and Daniel Matthews 5JFH used space well. Abingdon went 2-0 up before the opposition started to play. Haileybury's strong centre forward pulled one back and hit the post, but couldn't force the equalizer. In the County Cup





U14B v St Columba's College



2nd XI v St Edward's

against the European School we showed our inexperience and due to defending too far up on a tiny pitch we were exposed and ultimately lost a frustrating game that we had enough quality to win. The next two fixtures were in Berkshire against maintained school opposition and tested the physicality in our game. The boys played fluently against Kennet School, especially in the first half when our passing was crisp and fast. Rory Garret 5JPGGB started to show how well he could adapt to an unfamiliar sport finishing his two goals well and linking our play. On the St Bart's astroturf we gave the opposition too much room to play and were well beaten. The only real positive was the return of the influential Laurence Lilley 5GRM from injury. Local rivals MCS were soundly beaten 6-0 and this game saw Patrick Boyd-Gorst 5LM at his mesmerizing best. Ryan White 5GRM smashed the goal of the season from long range to further boost our confidence. The boys responded well to criticism before the fixture against Oratory and produced our most convincing 70 minutes of the season against another more experienced team. We were at our most competitive, marking more tightly and winning all the scraps for possession. Laurence Lilley scored the only goal of the game, but, with more composure in front of goal, the scoreline could have been much higher. Against a weak St Edward's Felix Frank 5NMR showed his qualities and Freddie Pinkerton 4SEB scored a classy goal and scared the opposition back four. The final

match against Oundle was a lacklustre draw played in soaring temperatures.

Overall the U16 A team had a very successful first season, claiming impressive scalps such as Haileybury, but most importantly gaining playing time and experience. The team was technically sound and physically brave and competitive despite a lack of size. Rory Garret was the top scorer despite playing in goal against Oratory and captain Sam Alexander 5VEH was the most consistent performer.

Nick O'Doherty

U14A

The U14A football side had a fine first season in this historic year for Abingdon football. After an understandably anxious and nervous start, with many of them making their debuts in the sport, the mixture of former Lower School pupils and new intake soon gelled together to create a formidable side.

The group moved on from losing their first two games and drawing their third to notch up a hugely positive unbeaten seven match winning streak. Whilst this is impressive on its own, the entertaining style of play used was a credit to the team's self-belief as they resisted the temptation to smash the ball forwards like many of our more physically capable opponents. Possession was the key and often twenty or more passes would be found in a patient, perhaps European, style of play.

Harry Tompkins 3RKJ proved to be a steady influence in goal with his saves often keeping us in the game. The defence was well marshalled by sweeper Seb Hickman 3RP with Jack Holford 3CFC and Joseph "the beast" Bassett 3KEB providing both athleticism and physical presence in a hugely solid back three.

The midfield three of Jamie Cox 3KEB, Adam Lilley 3JAM, and William Whitworth 3CFC was without doubt the best found across all the schools we played this year. With captain Cox often breaking up play and showing a useful passing range, Lilley's ability to go from box to box throughout the game meant that we were never overrun and found it easy to maintain possession. Whitworth, who played in the hole behind the strikers showed a real gift to pick a pass and a high level of technical ability when arriving late in the box.

The forwards were led well through the mixture of the direct running of Nat Jones 3HCGM in behind the opposition defence, and excellent continental style dribbling of James Bourdon 3SRB. Christopher-James Nicholls 3KEB also proved to be a real game changer showing athleticism and strength as well as an excellent finishing ability.

All in all it was an absolute pleasure working with this team who will no doubt flourish within the sport at Abingdon.

Damian Shirazi

Hockey

There were a number of highlights this season, but the selection of ex-club captains Chris Newman and Toby Roche for England is an inspiring feat and one of which the Hockey Club is very proud. Toby and Chris played in the same Abingdon 1st XI side in 2006 and regularly play for the Old Abingdonians against the current 1st XI. Since leaving Abingdon, Toby and Chris have gone on to play domestically in the Premier League for Exeter University, Hampstead and Westminster and Reading HC.



Chris Newman, Toby Roche

There were also a number of achievements by current Hockey Club players in the 2012 season:

- Oxfordshire County Champions - U14
- Oxfordshire County Champions - U16
- Indoor Independent Schools Champions - U16
- Second in the Independent Schools League - U15 and U14.
- Twenty two players throughout the age groups being selected for Junior Academy Centres.
- Six players selected to represent their Regional Performance Centres.

Indoor Independent Schools Hockey League

The Abingdon U16s were captained by Ben Mitchell 5PW and showed glimpses of real class as they scored twelve goals over the course of the day to win the league. They have put a good deal of work into developing their indoor skills



1st XI v OAs

over the course of the term and were rewarded with some excellent displays. Ben Mitchell, Sean MacLachlan 5GRM and William Carter Keall 4SEB were outstanding amongst a talented group of players, with Tom Best 4JHW and Adam Scholey 5JFH scoring the majority of the goals.

In the U18 tournament held at Bradfield College, Abingdon came second to Radley College on goal difference by one goal, having beaten Radley 2 – 1 during the day. Abingdon started slowly and conceded in the first minute against Bradfield, but got better as the day went on. There was a two goal deficit comeback against Bloxham and excellent wins against Radley and Marlborough. In the last game of the day, Abingdon needed to win by four clear goals against Marlborough to take the title. After a great start, Abingdon were 2 – 0 up early in the game and, when Gregor Hearn 7MIL slotted the third, it looked like Abingdon would finish equal on goal difference with Radley. A frantic last two minutes saw a number of chances missed, leaving Abingdon agonisingly one goal short of Radley.

Independent Schools Hockey League

1st XI

The 1st XI, coached by Adrian Palmer, started the League well with a 4 – 1 win away against Marlborough, followed by a 2 – 0 win against Pangbourne in a friendly match. After defeat against eventual winners Radley, there were

further wins against St Edward's, Wellington and Eton to leave the 1st XI fourth in the League.

Toby Blong 7KTC captained the side for the second successive year and was supported by a number of talented players that have been of huge service to the Hockey Club. Gregor Hearn was the leading scorer from the back and was the driving force behind much of what the team produced. Michael Deeks 7SEG and Daniel Leach 7SEG were excellent throughout the season and Toby Warren 7LFD left the side as the player of the season.

U16

After winning the title last year and not losing a game, the U16s were left in a challenging position with instrumental players such as Ben Mitchell and Sean MacLachlan moving up to the 1st XI. They fought well all season and were deservedly County Champions, with excellent performances from George Ruck 5JFH, Adam Scholey and Robert O'Kelly 5JFH.



1stXI v St Edwards



U14 County Champions

U15

The talented U15 team were looking to go one better than last year in the league and finish above Bradfield College. This was scheduled for the last game of the season and, as anticipated, both teams were unbeaten until this meeting.

There were a number of fine wins and some excellent hockey played from every player in the team. William Carter Keall captained the side and moved the ball comfortably in midfield. This enabled Abingdon to play some expansive hockey – to which their thirty two goals in eight games is testament.

In the last game of the season, Bradfield started the game well and took control to go 2 – 0 up, only for Abingdon to fight back and leave the game in the balance at half time. In an entertaining second half, Bradfield were slightly more precise in front of goal and won the game 3 – 2 and with that the League.



U13A v Eton

U14

The U14 side also got off to a flying start in the League, with emphatic wins against Marlborough, Radley, Wellington, St Edward's and Cheltenham and a County title. They looked to have a good balance to their team, with Samuel Foster 3JSW marshalling the defence well and William Taylor 3JSW and Harry Anderson 3DCS controlling midfield. Their attacking threat came from the sometimes unplayable Dominic MacLachlan 3JAM and William Fearnehough 3JAM who scored the majority of the 11 goals against St Edward's. At the crunch end of the season, there were narrow losses against Eton and Bradfield, but there is plenty to be excited about with this group of players.

England Hockey National Schools Championships – Oxfordshire County Tournaments

It is the first time that Abingdon have won two out of the three county hockey tournaments, beating Radley College, Bloxham, St Edward's and Magdalen College School.

In the U14 tournament Abingdon won the title for the second successive year without losing a match. They played some excellent hockey to win the competition without conceding a goal, beating Radley 1 - 0, St Edward's 5 - 0, MCS 3 - 0 and Bloxham 3 - 0. Dominic MacLachlan led the side superbly and linked up well with Oliver Lovibond 2BJLP to score a number of vital goals.

The U16 tournament was a tighter contest, but Abingdon took the title on goal difference. On a freezing day at Banbury Road, Abingdon started slowly, but improved throughout the tournament to finish the day with a fine 2 – 0 win over MCS to edge the title and allow them to progress through to the regional rounds.

England Hockey National Schools Championships – South Regional Rounds

Abingdon teams are now a regular fixture in the Regional Tournaments, having progressed through the Oxfordshire Tournaments in five of the last six competitions.

The U14 Regional finals was held at St George's Weybridge and Abingdon were placed in a group with the Berkshire winners, Bradfield College, Surrey runners up, RGS Guildford, and the Buckinghamshire runners up, Dr Challoner's Grammar.

Their first game was against the strongest school in the group, RGS Guildford, to whom they went down 0 – 4. They picked themselves up in the second match against Bradfield College and produced an entertaining 5 – 4 victory. This was followed by another thriller, that saw Abingdon win 4 – 3 against Dr Challoner's Grammar.

The U16 Regional finals was held at Bradfield College and with many of our U15 players involved in the squad, we were facing a difficult group.

The first match was against Berkshire winners, Eton College, followed by Kent winners, Simon Langton GS, and Buckinghamshire runners up, John Hampden GS.

The team worked hard throughout the day and made some good progress from game to game. The day also provided good experience for many of the players, who will be available in the same age group next season.

Steve Brenchley



ESSA National Finals (all photos)

Swimming

The Swimming Club welcomed Scott Farnell as the new head coach in September and with his input the club has grown in strength and depth. The year started on a real high when the intermediate medley and freestyle relay teams consisting of Adrian Au 5JFH, Michael Esnouf 5JPGB, Nicholas Whitehead 5NMR and Luke Teh 5PW won through to the English Schools' Swimming Association (ESSA) National Finals in Southampton. This achievement identified them as one of the fastest sixteen teams in the country in each of the events.

At the Warwick 100 Competition, competing against Loughborough Grammar, Bedford, Solihull, Oundle, Warwick, Whitgift, Harrow and Bromsgrove, there were some very fast times posted by individuals, with Guy Giles 7MIL placed first in the U18 200m individual medley, Michael Esnouf first in the U16 200m individual medley, and Luke Teh first in the 100m breaststroke.

As a team, Abingdon performed very well finishing second in the U16 competition, third in the U14 competition, and fourth overall.

The Bromsgrove Relays attract teams from the Midlands and further afield, giving the boys an opportunity to compete against a different set of schools. This invitational U15 and U18 competition involved three heats in each of the age groups, with the fastest four teams progressing through to the final.

Abingdon qualified in each of the four events. The first of these was the U15 4x50m medley with Murray Eccleston 3JSW, Kristian Soderstrom 4DJB, James Law 4SEB and Todd Giles 3RP setting the second fastest qualifying time, and converting this into a silver medal in the final. The U18 4x50m medley team qualified for their final, which made for incredibly tight racing, with a superb performance from each of Guy Giles, Michael Esnouf, Nicholas Whitehead and Adrian Au, coming second by just 0.5





of a second, in a time of 1:54.79. The freestyle relays were always going to be more competitive. Joseph Law 2HFCP came into the U15 team to add a fresh dimension, and again they qualified in second place for the final, coming away with silver medals. In competitive heats, Abingdon qualified third in the U18 4x50m freestyle, but put in a terrific performance to take the silver medal in the final. It is very encouraging to note that three of these swimmers are still in the fifth year and, as such, still have another two years of racing in this age group. Gaining four silver medals in the four races in which we competed is very encouraging.

The Bath and Otter Cup Relay Competition, held at Crystal Palace, sees more than sixty teams competing for the spoils. Abingdon performed incredibly well in reaching the final, setting a new school long course record in the Bath Cup 4x100m freestyle race in a time of 3:50.82. In the Otter Cup medley competition we came a creditable 12th.

Michael Esnouf and Guy Giles gained selection into the South East Schools' Swimming Team. At the ESSA National Championships in Liverpool, Michael competed in the intermediate boys' 100m breaststroke and in the intermediate 4x100 medley relay, claiming a silver medal in each of these events, which effectively ranks him as the

second fastest intermediate breaststroker in the country. Michael's continued commitment to training and competition is to be admired. This prestigious competition also offered the opportunity for the School to show that swimming is starting to excel, as the programme evolves from its humble roots in 2008.

Guy Giles continued to perform with real aplomb during the year in regular open water competitions. His penchant for the longer distances is admirable and we look forward to following his success in the coming years. He served as a tremendous role model for the younger swimmers in his position as captain of swimming.

Andrew Hall



Badminton

The 2011-12 season brought continued success to the Abingdon School Badminton Club. Led admirably by the team captain, Nicholas Topping 7LFD, this year saw great enjoyment both on and off the court, with a busy schedule of matches and an increasing number of social events. The generosity of Nicholas' parents, Felicity and Crispin, in organising many of these events was considerable and I must thank them for all their support throughout the year.

The introduction of year group games this year has brought a new dimension to the club. Badminton now operates as a major sport, which means boys in all year groups have a chance to play badminton twice a week as their dedicated sports option. This has at least doubled the number of boys playing, probably more, and the benefits of this will, I hope, be seen in the coming years. Furthermore, the introduction of a full time coach, James Barclay, has lent a new enthusiasm and expertise to the club, and allows all age groups to receive excellent training in the skills and tactics needed to succeed in the game.

All this leads me on to the fixtures this year. There is no doubt that Cheltenham remains our most consistent opposition. This year's team featured a number of Upper Sixth boys whose badminton careers at Abingdon had begun many years earlier, some as far back as Lower



School - Nicholas Topping, Rupert Waterson 7TCG, Edward O'Brien 7JJ, Charlie Leslau 7KL among others – and the fixtures against Cheltenham have often been the toughest and most enjoyable for them to play over the years. Bromsgrove also proved to be strong this year and a three way competition with Cheltenham was most enjoyable. We travelled to Millfield for the first time in several years, winning convincingly by 22 games to 3, and the annual end of year quadrangular tournament against Eton, Harrow and Wellington was won by Abingdon for the third year in succession.

This year also saw continued success in the Center Parcs National Schools Competition. The U16 team of Daniel Chen 5DMH, Gem Vongseenin 5DMH, Adam Uberoi 5DMH and Bernard Ng 5JFH had all played in the tournament the previous year and, buoyed by that experience, progressed through to the



Regional Finals without much trouble. However, as in previous years, Denbigh School (the eventual winners of the competition) prevailed in several closely fought matches and Abingdon left with bronze.

As in previous years, there was a successful OA reunion bringing together members of the club who had left in the previous five years. I look forward to welcoming back players from the more distant past next year. The annual trip to the All England Championships at Birmingham was also a great success and was a good way to warm up for the Olympics in the summer, for which some boys had managed to secure tickets.

Although many of our top players will be leaving this year (those mentioned above as well as Paul Woo 7SEG, Mark Lee 7SEG, Pierre Joffrin 7MIL, Adrian Lam 7SEG and Jonathon Lam 7MIL), the squad continues to grow in strength with new players and partnerships being forged. We can look forward to next season with great confidence.

James Hallinan



Fencing

It has been a very successful year for the Abingdon Fencing Club, with excellent performances by many of our fencers at various competitions across the country. The year started well at the National Fencing Championships in Sheffield, where Abingdon fencers finished among the best sixteen boys in the country and Herman Chan 4NP won a silver medal in the epee. Next followed the Southern Region Championships held at Reading University. This competition was a qualifying event for the British Youth Championships held in Sheffield in May. The club entered fencers in all three age groups for epee (U14, U16 and U18) and one fencer in the U18 sabre group. We ended up with five fencers qualifying. Benjamin Schneider 3CFC came second in the U14 epee, Herman Chan second in the U16 epee, and Thomas Chan 6TK, Bernard Ng 5JFH and Kit Bowen 6DCB finished first, second and joint third respectively in the U18 event. This was a fantastic achievement for the club.

We then competed with further success in the British Schools Team Championships at Brunel University, Uxbridge, where the U16 epee team of Jack Dawson 4DJB, William Johnson 4DJB and Ben Schneider 3CFC won gold in the finals of the competition – a huge achievement! In addition to this, the two U18 Abingdon School epee teams also performed very well. The team of Thomas Chan, Herman Chan, Bernard Ng and Omri Faraggi 6SJG gained joint third place in the semi-finals, and the



U16 epee team



team of Kit Bowen, George Eason 7KTC and Ivan Nikolaev 5NMR reached the quarter-finals.

The Public Schools Championships at Crystal Palace National Sports Centre followed closely after this success. Hundreds of fencers from independent schools across the UK compete in this prestigious competition each year and Abingdon put in another good showing. Jack Dawson achieved third position in the Boys' Junior epee competition, while Herman Chan was also very successful, reaching the quarter-finals. In addition to this, Bernard Ng reached the quarter-finals of the Boys' Senior epee.



The year's competitions concluded with the British Youth Championships spread across the May Bank Holiday weekend at the Sheffield Institute of Sport. On the Saturday, Bernard Ng achieved a bronze medal in the U18 epee competition. Thomas Chan and Kit Bowen also competed successfully in this group on the day. On Sunday, Ben Schneider competed in the Under 14 Boys foil,



Herman Chan

and on Monday he competed again in the Under 14 Boys epee. Herman Chan performed particularly well on Monday, competing in the Under 16 Boys epee and finishing in third place, which earned him a bronze medal. All in all, it was a very good weekend's fencing!

Special thanks must be extended to our two fencing masters, Herman Du Preez and Alan Knowles for their expert coaching throughout the year. Next year the club will be playing fixtures against local schools, as well as entering all of the competitions mentioned above. An extra fencing session each week will also be provided for Lower School boys exclusively to encourage even more students to take up this Olympic sport.

Nick Fieldhouse

Art

The Art & Design Department enjoyed another rich and varied year providing numerous opportunities for the boys to extend and refine their skills both in and outside lessons.

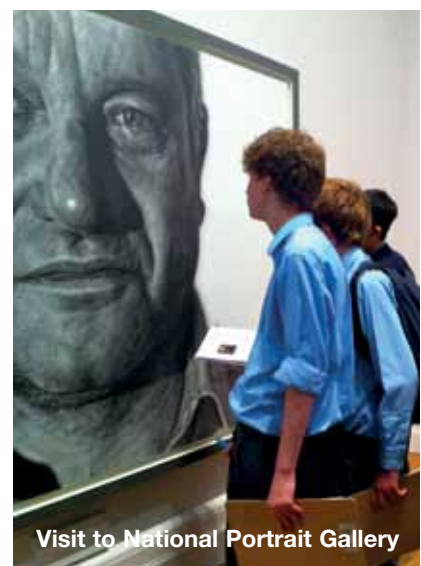
It kicked off with the 'Big Sculpt' workshop, which involved boys in the fifth year producing large-scale sculptures out of withies and recycled materials. It was a good test of creative thinking and the boys enjoyed the challenge of working on a larger scale than normal. Due to this being such a success, we decided to hold three further Saturday workshops which included a drawing marathon for second years and Abingdon Prep's year 8s, a third year master class painting workshop, and in February a group of first years transforming Boarders' Hall into an Olympic inspired installation. Alongside academic lessons, the fourth year enjoyed the chance to work on a sustained piece of work during the 'Big Draw' workshop in October and in March the fifth year took part in a practical workshop designed to help them push their ideas further for their exam unit. These are such valuable opportunities for producing sustained



pieces of art, providing well-needed practice in developing and refining their work. It is such a pleasure to see how proud the boys are once they see the finished results, whether they are for an exam or for the sheer enjoyment of the subject.

Visiting artists play an important role in introducing different perspectives and practices to the boys. On 28 November Luci Metcalfe was invited to lead a workshop for our Lower Sixth artists. She chose to focus on her practice as a painter, basing her workshop around

the use of limited colour palettes. During the day she spoke to our fourth year as well as the Lower Sixth about her work and ideas. It was interesting to see how her ideas about the utopian dreams and how advertising appears to be selling us are translated into images that subvert and disturb. Luci uses a fluorescent red ground for many of her works and she had our Lower Sixth working with oil on canvases prepared in this way. The boys thoroughly enjoyed her expert tuition and it was great to see them using this new knowledge to inform their work throughout the year.





6th form trip to Berlin



6th form trip to Berlin

There is nothing quite like seeing art in the flesh. We always try to visit a diverse range of different galleries and museums and this year was no exception. The fourth year visited the Tate Modern in November and the National Portrait Gallery in July. The sixth form enjoyed visits to the Tate Modern and the Saatchi Gallery in October and the Tate Britain and the Saatchi Gallery again in February to help inspire their exam unit. The extraordinary objects at the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford proved to be an inspiration for our fifth year artists as they began developing ideas

for their GCSE exam theme "Ordinary and/or Extraordinary". We also had a very successful sixth form trip to Berlin in October half term. We were lucky enough to have fantastic weather, and despite the hostel we were staying in being a bit loud and blue, the entire trip was productive and enjoyable.

Five Abingdon pupils had their work selected for Young Art Oxford, their work being displayed at the Ashmolean Museum. This event was a wonderful celebration of artistic talent across the county as well as raising funds for

Cancer Research UK. Thomas Foster 2NSH, Oliver Mead, Joel O'Byrne, Gregor Rae (all 2HFCP) and Jonathan Bibby's 3RKJ paintings were inspired by the theme "My Oxfordshire". Each year we encourage our sixth form boys to enter the Royal Academy A Level Summer Exhibition Online show. This year there were 1450 works submitted, 77 were shortlisted and a further 45 in the final show. Alex Wong 6NF is to be congratulated for his work, *Old Lady at a Party*, which was shortlisted coming in the top 122 works.

Providing a fitting end to the year were the GCSE and A level shows. They went on display throughout the Arts Centre and gained a very positive reception from staff, parents, family and friends. A huge variety of work was shown from painting, printmaking, and ceramics, through to installation, sculpture and graphic design. The private view was especially significant this year as it was James Nairne's (Head of Art) last show before leaving to take up the position of Director of Art at Cranleigh School. Both the Art Department staff and the boys alike will sorely miss him but we will endeavour to keep standards high next year.



Thomas Foster at Young Art Oxford

Emily O'Doherty

Rifle Club Tour to Germany

Over the Easter holidays, the Rifle Club went to Germany to take part in an exchange with the German Stade team, a tradition that has now been running for nine years. A team of Abingdonians had the opportunity to spend a few days training on the German ranges, as well as touring the neighbouring towns and cities of Buxtehude, Bremerhaven and Hamburg.

On the first day, we arrived at the Hamburg airport, where we were met by the head coach of the Stade team, Stefan Bösch. He accompanied the Rifle Club to our hostel in Buxtehude, where we promptly unpacked and went for dinner.

The next day we went for a tour of Buxtehude, guided by none other than Mr Bösch himself. It was a thoroughly enjoyable tour, and it was packed with information about the river town.

Later that day, we went shooting at the range at Buxtehude, and marvelled at the sophistication and size of the German range; it was far better than the range we have here in school. That night, we had the German team over for a delicious home-cooked meal, and despite the language barrier, we quickly bonded over our passion for shooting, as well as other similar interests.

On day three we spent a whole day in Hamburg city, where we were once again given a brief tour by Mr Bösch, before we were allowed to go shopping. Later, we toured around the harbour of Hamburg, took a boat ride, and visited several places of interests, including the Old Elbe Tunnel: a half kilometre underwater tunnel built 24 metres below the river Elbe in 1911 – a spectacular feat of engineering that we all enjoyed visiting.



The next day was another shooting day and we went shooting at the Buxtehude range, before going shopping in the town. That evening, we went bowling at a leisure centre in Stade. We played a few friendly games as we talked, and it was certainly one of the highlights of the trip - other than the shooting, of course.

On day five we played with the Stade team in a game of 'Bosseln,' a sport where participants try to throw a ball as far as they can, held in a fruit orchard in the town of Ladekop. After the game, which went on despite the rainy weather, we sat down to a hot cup of apple juice, and all participants received a miniature glass mug and slices of delicious, sweet apples, grown in the very orchard we had just played in.

On Monday we visited Ladekop again, but this time for shooting. We shot in one of the largest ranges we have ever been to, which was fitted with a cafe, an air pistol and air rifle range, a .22 range, heated flooring and electronic targets. We thoroughly enjoyed this amazing training session and it was truly an eye-opener as to just how dedicated the German people are to their shooting.

The following day we visited Bremerhaven, the seaport of Bremen, a state of Germany. We visited the House of Climate, a new museum in Bremerhaven, which includes a kilometre-long display of almost all the world's climate zones, packed into 18,800 square metre of exhibits. It was a once-in-a-lifetime experience: stepping from a 35°C, dry, simulated semi-desert into a freezing room with solid ice walls, which was a relatively accurate representation of an ice cave in Antarctica's ice sheets and an experience that none of us will forget.

On Wednesday we spent a day in Stade, the resident city of our hosts, the German Stade team. On this day, we visited the Airbus factory, where the vertical tail planes for all Airbus aircraft are produced, as Stade is one of the world's leading centres in the use of carbon fibre reinforced plastic. Although we were not allowed into the actual factory, we toured around its training facility, where prospective Airbus Stade employees train to work in the factory. In reality, the training facility was no more than a very high-tech version of our school's Design & Technology centre, and many of our Rifle Club members were able to surprise the trainees with how much they knew. Later in the afternoon, we were taken on a walking tour around the city, led by a guide from the tourism board of Stade. We started at the Tourist Information Centre and ended at the city centre after an hour-long tour.

On the penultimate day, the Abingdon Rifle Club participated in an official match in the Stade shooting club, against the German Stade team. Despite tremendous effort put into training by our team, we conceded to the Stade team. However, this was no reason not to celebrate the end of another successful shooting exchange and a presentation evening was held at our guesthouse in Buxtehude. Prizes were given out, coaches and organizers were thanked, new team members were welcomed, and the German team cooked a traditional German dish for dinner: schnitzel – delicious, breaded pork cutlet. At the end of the night, goodbyes were exchanged and handshakes were given, as we bid our farewells to the German team.

Asten Yeo 3SRB



Chess

In the Michaelmas and Lent terms, the Oxford and District Chess League was again an excellent source of regular matches for Abingdon's top players, and competing in these matches - and subsequently going through the games with Grandmaster Peter Wells - played a large part in boys' chess improvement. Unfortunately, clashes with National Schools' Championship matches caused Abingdon's season to get off to a slow start, with four consecutive losses. But once full-strength sides could be selected again, Abingdon's team, "City 4," rapidly moved up the table, with a draw followed by four consecutive wins. The performances of Edward O'Brien 7JJ, Alexander Lee 7KL and Omri Faraggi 6SJK were crucial to this turnaround and were the most significant factor in the team's continued survival in Division III following last year's departure of Jeffrey Yu. (Jeffrey has, incidentally, continued to play chess in the ODCL for Oxford University 1. He even came up against Mr Wells, who plays for Witney 1.) Once City 4 had done enough to stay up, less experienced players were introduced on the lower boards in anticipation of next season, when the Club will have lost its three best Upper Sixth players. Overall, Abingdon played 14, won 5, drew 2 and lost 7, finishing ahead of Witney 3 and Bicester 2. The team's best result was its convincing 4.5-1.5 home win against the eventual winners of the division, Cumnor 1. Given that Abingdon's participation in this league is very much about training and development, sixth place overall was an entirely satisfactory result.

Eighteen players contributed to Abingdon's campaign in the ODCL, the largest number used by any team in Division III. Edward O'Brien (5.5/8) was excellent on Board 1, winning thrice against higher graded opponents. Omri Faraggi (5/8) also had a fine season on the middle boards. Alexander Lee (4.5/12) made a huge contribution, missing only two matches, and he earned his points on Boards 1 and



2 with exciting, attacking chess, very much influenced by his study of the games of Mikhail Tal, "the magician from Riga." Dr Jeffrey's (3/7) fought well on Boards 2 and 3 and Mr English's points tally (6/13) included draws on Boards 1 through to 5, giving some indication of the variability of the teams fielded this season. Edward Reynolds' 4JHW performance (4/7) shows that he is ready to join Omri on the higher boards next year and Rafi'i al-Akiti's 3JSW results on Board 6 (3/3) show him to be another excellent prospect. The other contributors were Thomas Salt 7JJ (1.5/4), James Anderson-Besant 3CFC (1.5/2), Leon Wu 3CFC (1/4), Michael Jiang 3CFC (0.5/3), Matyas Hanisch (0.5/1), Angus Chan 6NF, James Murray 6NF, Alex Churchman-Davies 4JHW, Ray Ren 2HFPC, Giles Waterson 2HFPC and Alex Reynolds 2HFPC. It is worth adding that Matyas played most of his games this season for City 5 (4.5/9) and that Alexander Lee also played for City 1 (1/3). The full results are available at www.oca.oxfordfusion.com.

The Club's annual simultaneous display, a fiendish "clock simul," was once again a main event of Michaelmas term. On this occasion it was parent and coach Mike Truran who bravely accepted the challenge. On Wednesday 9 November, he faced 18 boys, from across the Abingdon age range, and 2 members



of staff. But this year, instead of 75 minutes on each clock for all players, members of the Lower School had only 30 of the 150 minutes. This was to ensure that they did not merely run down Mr Truran's clock by playing too fast. Last year OA Stuart Robertson beat the School 16-4. This year Mr Truran, whose ECF grade is somewhat higher at 191, beat the School 18-2. Edward O'Brien, Alexander Lee, Omri Faraggi and Mr Truran's son, Joseph 2NSH, all drew their games. The occasion was, as ever, enjoyed by all participants, who witnessed a tremendous display of chess skill.

Five years ago when a development programme for Chess Club was agreed with Headmaster Mark Turner, one stated aim was that after five years the School should again be able to face "the



**Daniel Lawson, Harry Walsh,
Thomas Shaw at
Wiltshire Open**



**Mr Wells gives
Alexander Lee
his UK Chess
Challenge
trophy**

old enemy" on equal terms. This year, I believe, Abingdon boys have achieved that aim. The School entered two teams in the National Schools' Championship and on 11 November, playing away, Team A did outpoint MCS's sole entry by 2.5-3.5. Sadly, this one point margin, because of the age-handicapping system, was just insufficient to see the team through to the next round. Team A comprised Edward O'Brien, Alexander Lee, Omri Faraggi, Thomas Salt, Edward Reynolds and Joseph Truran. Alexander and Edward Reynolds won their games while Edward O'Brien, Omri and Joseph drew. Thomas fought valiantly on Board 4 but had lost his Queen quite early on and after such a catastrophe there is little chance of success against even moderate play. Edward O'Brien's game against Daniel d'Souza-Eva was later published in *The Disinformator*, the magazine of Oxford City Chess Club.

Abingdon's Team B in the National Schools' Championship comprised Angus Chan, Michael Jiang, Leon Wu, Rafi'i al-Akiti, Ray Ren and Daniel Lawson 1JAC. On 17 November, this team played at home against an older Bedford Modern side and were knocked out after losing 1-5, a score-line that rather flattered the opposition. Abingdon's best player on the day was Ray Ren, winner on Board 5.

In Michaelmas term, boys also competed in knockout tournaments in the Lower School, Middle School and Sixth Form, the finals being played early

in December. In the Lower School tournament, attracting 38 entrants, Joseph Truran, who is Abingdon's most improved player this year, defeated Ray Ren to win the Nightall-Jakubovics Cup. In the Middle School tournament, attracting 27 entrants, Edward Reynolds defeated Leon Wu to retain the Pearce Cup. And in the Sixth Form tournament, attracting 11 entrants, Edward O'Brien defeated Alexander Lee to retain the Harding Cup - thus completing a clean sweep of knockout victories that began in his third year.

A new departure in Michaelmas term was a House Chess tournament played on a single afternoon, Monday 12 December, as part of the Inter-House Sports competitions. Houses were represented by teams of three, which competed in a four-round Swiss tournament. Matches took place in Room M110 with players retiring to M113. Davies', led by Alexander Lee and ably supported by Benjamin Massey Leahy 3RP, were the eventual winners, with Boyd's finishing second and Webb's third. Thanks to Mr Winters and Dr Wijek for help with scoring.

The main event of Lent term, commencing in mid-January, was the school stage of the UK Chess Challenge, consisting of seven rounds of rapid play. From 30 Abingdon entrants, there were again 14 who earned sufficient points to qualify for the Berkshire Megafinal. Alexander Lee was the School Champion, winning 20 of the 21

available points, with 6 wins and a draw. The other qualifiers were Omri Faraggi (18), Edward O'Brien (17), Thomas Salt (17), Thomas Kelly (16), Leon Wu (16), Joseph Truran (16), Angus Chan (15), Sandy Gildersleeves 6DCB (15), Edward Reynolds (15), Alex Churchman-Davies (15), Michael Jiang (15), Ray Ren (15) and Daniel Lawson (14). It is an indication of the current strength of the Club, especially in the third year, that players as strong as Rafi'i al-Akiti and James Anderson-Besant failed to qualify for the next round.

On Saturday 18 February, the Club again travelled to St Joseph's Catholic College, Swindon, to play in the Wiltshire Junior Open Chess Tournament. Ten Abingdon players competed, four in the Beginners' and six in the Intermediates' Section. In the Beginners' Section, Daniel Lawson and Thomas Shaw 1JAC both ended on 4/6, earning medals as the best U11 and U12 competitors respectively. Harry Walsh 1SCVM also scored a respectable 3/6. In the Intermediates' Section, Ray Ren was joint second in the U13s on 4/6, winning £10. And the best Abingdon U14 was Leon Wu who ended on 4/6, just ahead of Michael Jiang on 3.5/6 and Rafi'i al-Akiti on 3/6. Benjamin Massey-Leahy, Benjamin Schneider 3CFC and Peter Claassen 1SCVM also gained valuable tournament experience.

Abingdon's contribution to county chess was left more to the initiative of boys and parents this season. In the Chilterns' League Oxfordshire's twelve-



2012 Megafinal, Ascot

strong U-125 team included Abingdon players in all four of its county matches, which were played at weekends from September through to March at various venues, including Winchester and Wellington. Abingdon's players were Edward Reynolds, Michael Jiang, Richard Ainslie 3SRB, Joseph Truran and Mr English. We are again grateful to Steven Bennett of Cumnor Chess Club (and, incidentally, of the Lounge Café, Abingdon) for arranging the fixtures. Three Abingdonians also played county chess for the Oxfordshire U14 team, organised by Mr Place of MCS. Ray Ren won all of his six games and was awarded Oxfordshire's "Player of the Season" medal. Joseph Truran also earned a top performance award, and Daniel Lawson gained useful experience as a reserve.

At the county "Megafinal," on Monday 7 May, held again at the Licensed Victuallers' School, Ascot, Abingdon enjoyed considerable success, with several players benefiting from the addition of £20,000 to the national prize money fund. Some of Abingdon's best players were absent due to public examinations, but this merely provided opportunities for others. In the combined U15 to U18 sections, Sandy Gildersleeves did enough to win the U17 title (2.5/6) and Alex Churchman-Davies, despite missing the first round, won the U15 title (3/6). Both players earned £25. Playing in the combined U13 and U14 sections, Joseph Truran, Ray Ren and

Jeff Abrahams tied on 3.5/6. The £25 prize money was shared evenly but Jeff Abrahams, who will be joining Abingdon in September, was judged the boys' U13 winner. However, the best performance of the day, rewarded by neither trophy nor cash, was Daniel Lawson's 5/6 in the hotly contested boys' U12 section. This earned him second place overall and a place in the next round. Qualifying for the Southern "Gigafinal," on 15 July, are Daniel Lawson, Jeff Abrahams, Alex Churchman-Davies and Sandy Gildersleeves.

Chess continued at a more relaxed pace in the Summer term. On one Wednesday afternoon, we were able to watch live World Championship chess online, trying to predict the moves of Anand and Gelfand in Moscow. And on



Mr Wells and Ray Ren

another occasion, we enjoyed playing chess outside, using the giant set. And for the first time ever we managed to finish the complete 30-week cycle of puzzle positions.

Chess Club continued until the end of June, Mr Wells' coaching being interrupted only by a trip to the Tal Memorial in Moscow, where he acted as second to the World's best amateur player, Englishman Luke McShane. It was good to be reminded what a significant figure in British Chess we have visiting our Club and how much we all benefit from his deep knowledge of the game.

Going up to Oxford this year are the joint recipients of the King Trophy, Edward O'Brien and Thomas Salt, who were awarded the trophy for their unwavering support of Chess Club over the last five years.

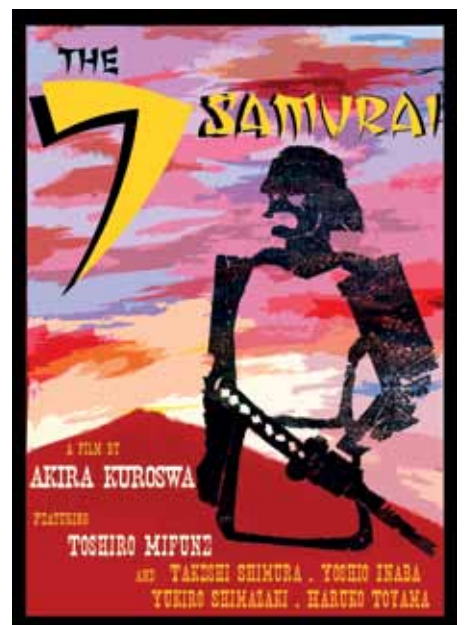
Thomas Salt,
Mr English and
Edward O'Brien

Finally, it has been particularly gratifying for Club members that the place of chess in School life has been recognised by artist Nicholas Mynheer in his Lent term chapel window, which features a King and Queen, representing temporal power, and a few humble pawns. It is worth reflecting that at the end of the game they are all returned to the same box.

Andrew English



Art Gallery





Summer 2012

Chapel Windows

The Bishop of Oxford, a local artist and the Abingdon School community have together created a legacy that will be appreciated for centuries to come. The School commissioned Nicholas Mynheer, a highly-acclaimed contemporary artist, to design a series of four windows for the School Chapel. Three of the windows combine pictures from school life and God's story including Christmas, Easter and the risen Christ. The fourth window is the Services Window which celebrates the commitment of the Abingdon School community to the Armed Forces.

The windows are at the centre of the School not only physically, as the Chapel sits at the School's heart, but because each year-group regularly comes together for an inter-denominational act of worship in the Chapel. The windows were designed to be thought-provoking for all ages and denominations with scenes from school life including cricket, Duke of Edinburgh expeditions, rowing, chess, cross-country running, choir, study and rugby. The interweaving of modern school scenes with God's story represents the spiritual dimension of life - there is something for everybody to look at. The Services Window is very poignant with a modern soldier in battle dress, a Tornado and Spitfire aircraft and a naval warship. This window is sand-blasted with the only piece of colour being a delicate red poppy.

The Bishop of Oxford, Rt Revd. John Pritchard, held a service of dedication of the Chapel Windows at the School on Friday 27 April. The Bishop was clearly impressed by what he saw, saying, "The windows are a magnificent achievement. They tell the story of the School in the context of the story of Christ and use design and colour very imaginatively for that purpose. I feel sure that the Chapel



will become a very significant place of Mynheer pilgrimage. Nicholas has surpassed himself."

The artist, Nicholas Mynheer, who comes from Horton-cum-Studley and whose work can be seen in several Oxfordshire churches said, "I feel enormously privileged to have had the opportunity to design a set of chapel windows that celebrate all that is good about Abingdon School and reflect the faith on which it was founded."

Nicholas first became involved with the School when, in 2003, he was

commissioned to design the Trinity window for the Chapel which celebrates the centenary of the Chapel's dedication in 1903.

The £150,000 needed to fund the windows came from across the Abingdon community with over 200 individual supporters including current and former members of staff, governors and parents, and Old Abingdonians plus many individuals and organisations associated with the School.

Rev Paul Gooding

I remember the old chapel windows as a part of my first few months at Abingdon, a window back to another age. I loved the simplicity of their red, green and white mottled coloured glass. But I think everyone thought it was time for a change; a chance to brighten up our lives and update to the modern life that we boys enjoy today. So, I found myself looking at the new windows, with the light of the sun shining down through them in our Monday morning service.

Mr Jenkins spoke to me after a long session of prep and said that he wanted me in a few weeks time to be filmed by BBC Oxford giving my opinion on the new Chapel windows. This was how I was given the challenge of standing in front of a big camera being interviewed by a man and a fluffy microphone.

Being the youngest pupil there I was really worried that what I said wouldn't make sense. My mind went blank and I stuttered out the first words that came into my head. As it happened, the window I chose to talk about actually was my favourite. It really does reflect what I am enjoying at Abingdon. I love the cricket and I'm looking forward to rowing. The two boys eating is meant to represent the Last Supper and the idea that we are part of a long story. Another favourite window of mine is The Services Window. I think it is really clever that Nicholas Mynheer has presented the single poppy in scarlet red on the white frosted, sand-blasted background, it almost looks like it is growing out of the window. It's a huge comment on the role of each individual person in war.

Sometimes I wonder whether one day, in hundreds of years time, a boy like me will look at the windows as if it they are part of an old dated film. I wonder if they will choose to update them again, what story they will tell and how they could possibly improve on these.

Iwan Stone 1SW



Bugsy Malone

When it was first announced that the Lower School Drama Production of 2012 was to be the infamous *Bugsy Malone* by Alan Parker, everyone wanted to be involved, and by chance everyone that wanted to be involved was! Everybody who auditioned was given a part.

I had the part of Bugsy, and was very excited when I heard I was going to be playing the Gangster Fat Sam's (Edward Turner-Fussell 2BJLP) accomplice. The cast was a huge one, involving over 35 boys, from both first and second years taking on key roles with Robert MacLennan 1SW playing Tallulah, and Thomas Foster 2NSH playing Blousey Brown. Some people certainly got their shot at being a woman for three nights, with our Dancing Girls making humorous appearances along the way.

Of course, the highlight of *Bugsy Malone* had to be the cream pies and the "Splurge Guns". Everyone got their turn with either one of these, but Dandy Dan's (Darren Maddison 2BJLP) Gang were the first to pull the trigger. On the other end of the first shot was Roxy Robinson. The dancing and singing cleaner, Fizzy (Angus Pinkerton 2NSH) had to clean up all our splurge along the way however.

Then there was the chase scene, and we accomplished this by filming Dandy Dan and his Gang chasing Bugsy, Fat



Sam and Knuckles all over the school. A number of teachers got 'splurged' in the making of this movie, including our Director, Mr Phillips, Mr May, Mr Loughe, Mr Jenkins and Mr Wickes.

What really struck most of the cast was the realisation of how complicated this play really is to put on stage and make look good! None of this could have been done without Mr Phillips, Miss Spurling-Holt, Mr Cotton, and our tech crew, Mr Frazer-Mckenzie and Mr Cooper. We also had a great band, made up of third and fourth years.

I'm sure the experience of *Bugsy* was not just amazing for us on stage, but

also for those in the audience. It was complicated, fun, and at times stressful, but is still the great musical that everyone knows.

Charlie Landells 2NSH

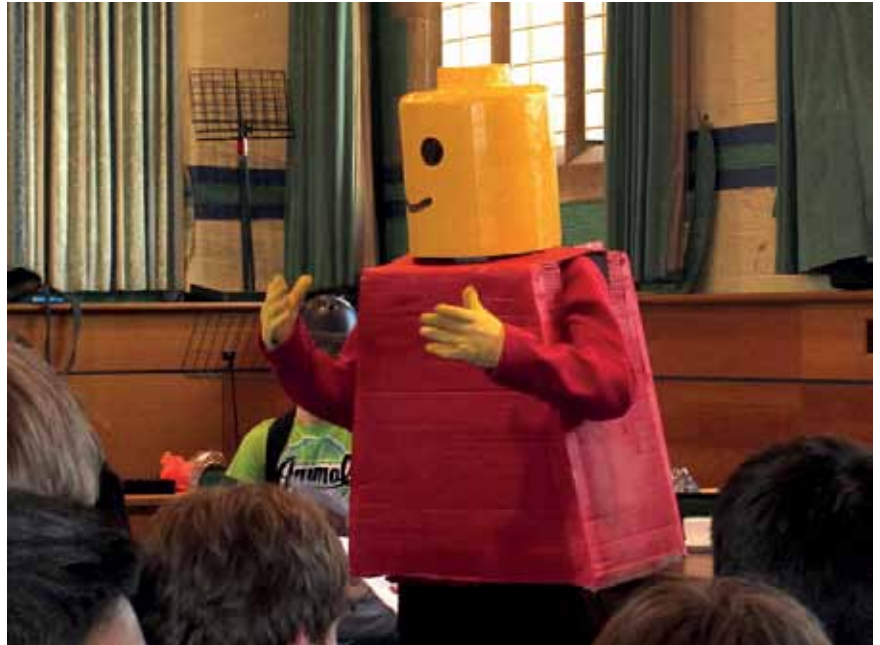


Debating

The 2011/12 debating season has been one of the most successful of recent years in the field of competitions, and one of the most consistently exciting in its speeches, speakers and events.

Our top two achieving competitions were the Oxford Union Schools' Debating Competition Finals, where Laurence Copson 7LFD and William Hewstone 7EOD were credited with great oratory and rhetoric, although analysis was apparently lacking. Similarly, the ESU Schools Competition regionals saw some well-crafted speeches on subjects including whether or not there are any potential extenuating circumstances that might merit the use of torture, though there were no competition winners, sadly.

Closer to home, there have been some memorable school debates. The contested independence of the Falkland Islands appeared, as did the controversial KONY 2012 campaign, which formed the basis of a motion for the Leavers' Dinner Debate between Abingdon and St Helens. With discussion of the morality and acceptability of cuts to the economy came a new conflict, as aspiring neoliberals and young socialists submitted deficit reduction policies to the legendary scrutiny of one of the School's oldest societies.



Balloon debates were well attended and stocked with riotously amusing speakers. Before Christmas, the admirable selection of 'Great Leaders' was topped by Laurence Copson, as Pope Benedict XVI, and more recently the 'Action Heroes' were boiled down to the winner, OA Joe Ridley, as a priest.

The 2011/12 year saw pleasing development to the society as a whole, and remarkable improvements in both oratory and debating strategy from some of our younger speakers. Coached by Oxford Union and Cambridge students, the quality of debate has been

uncharacteristically high in these last few months, with speakers understanding and engaging maturely with some of the most difficult issues society faces, and the concomitant debates of morality and expediency. I'm sure the next few years will yield further accolades for the Debating Society. With nearly 110 years of tradition behind them, the next committee have some great shoes to fill, especially since the unusually large but extremely capable 2011/12 committee of Charlie Bateman 7MIL and William Hewstone as Chairmen, along with Zander Cornish-Moore 7LFD, Laurence Copson and Jacob Diamond 7KL, has set a precedent of high quality debate and humour, drawing some impressive crowds to our chamber of adventure, hilarity and intrigue: the Charles Maude Room.

William Hewstone 7EOD



CCF

As I arrived at Abingdon as the new Contingent Commander last September, the first thing that struck me about the contingent was the excellent high standards. A fine group of well turned out, polite and enthusiastic cadets stood before me and I felt very lucky to be stepping into my new role. Thanks must go to my predecessor Major Joss Williams for all his hard work with the contingent.

As the training began, I was further impressed by the leadership potential shown by my NCOs and I was able to publically congratulate the then Cpl Coventry 6PJEC on being awarded an Army Sixth Form Scholarship, along with a guaranteed place at The Royal Military Academy Sandhurst – an excellent achievement!

My first outing with the contingent was the September field day to the Imperial War Museum, Duxford. We spent the day looking with awe at an amazing array of both British and American military aircraft, along with a vast amount of weaponry, land vehicles and various other militaria. An excellent day was had by all and with beautiful sunshine!

November saw the Remembrance parades held in both school and Abingdon town centre. The boys, as ever, did themselves and the school



Remembrance Parade

proud. As we stood at attention for the two minute silence, we were all given a poignant reminder of the dangers of war. Our thoughts are with the old boys currently serving overseas and we pray for their safe return.

In December, Exercise Winter Warrior VI took place as usual in Wengen in Switzerland. Unfortunately we were greeted by a distinct lack of snow! However, after two days of alternative activities including ice skating and a huge indoor high ropes course we were finally able to hit the slopes. Four days of excellent skiing followed, with the instructors commenting on the superb snow conditions – definitely worth the wait! By the end of the week it is fair to say that everybody had made a massive

improvement and some cadets had found a new passion – roll on Winter Warrior VIII!

In February we held a formal contingent dinner at the school: a new event for the CCF. The boys were able to dress up in their finest and experience some of the traditions and formalities of a proper military dinner, whilst celebrating the achievements of the contingent. We were fortunate enough to welcome Lt Col Adam McRae, the Commanding Officer of 11 Explosive Ordnance Disposal Regiment at Didcot, and Mrs McRae as our guests.

The link with 11 Explosive Ordnance Disposal Regiment continued during February half term when three of the RLC Section cadets attended an open day, along with some Sandhurst officer cadets. The boys were able to watch demonstrations of the equipment used by the regiment and also enjoyed a chat over lunch with some of the officer cadets.

February certainly proved to be another busy time for the contingent and at the end of the month the RAF Section's Air Squadron Trophy team were placed equal second in the competition. This was a tremendous achievement for the boys, especially as it was the senior cadets themselves who had trained the team – another example of excellent leadership and teamwork skills within the contingent.



Supermarine Spitfire

Lent term is always the busiest for Abingdon CCF and this kicked off with the annual Self Reliance Exercise for the older cadets at Colonel Carson's Farm – I would like to take this opportunity to thank him for his kind hospitality. The exercise was a success and the Cadets coped very well with the long hours and arduous training. As the boys patted themselves on their backs, having finished the final leg of the weekend, an eager anticipation of Easter Camp was felt by all.

The following week saw the Lent term field day, with the recruits and their NCOs heading off for a day of field training at Piddington and the others for a day of fun and tactics paintballing. The recruit package was ran by Sgt Taylor of 16 Cadet Training Team, and the boys took part in various stands including camouflage and concealment, how to cook rations, patrolling and a military paintball close quarter battle range. At the end of the day, this time it was the recruits who were looking forward to Easter Camp!

As the Lent term ended, Easter Camp was quickly upon us! Unlike previous years, this time we were at Westdown Camp Salisbury Plain Training Area. The Recruit Camp and Advanced Infantry Cadre were quickly underway with excellent training progression made by all. A particular "well done" goes to Cadet Rupert Jones 4JET for being awarded the Best Advanced Infantry



Cadre Cadet and to Recruit Alfie Smith 3SRB for being recognised as the Best Recruit. This year, unlike in the past, we held the Easter Camp passing out parade at school, at the beginning of the summer term. We welcomed Colonel Carson as the Inspecting Officer and, although the parade had to be cut short due to the bad weather, certificates were handed out to proud cadets and a good spread of tea and cakes was enjoyed by all.

The Summer term field day was replaced this year by our Biennial Inspection. We welcomed Air Commodore La Forte as the Inspecting Officer. His son, now a serving RAF Officer, is an ex-cadet of the contingent. After the inspection, Air Commodore La Forte praised the

cadets on their smart turnout and drill. Unfortunately the bad weather hit us again, and the wet weather programme came into play for the afternoon, with kayaking, command tasks and an RAF Part 1 lesson on the agenda – all of these being run by our senior cadets.

As the end of the year drew nearer, there was still RAF camp to look forward to at RAF Shawbury, gliding scholarships for two RAF cadets and, for three Army cadets, The Cadet Leadership Course at Frimley Park.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank my staff Capt John Chapman BEM, Sqn Ldr David Haworth, Maj Chris Fletcher-Campbell, Flt Lt Richard Ashdowne and P/Off Rebecca Cottam for all of their hard work this year. I would also like to thank the Upper Sixth CCF Leavers for all the effort they have put into the CCF over the last five years and I wish them all the best for the future.

As I finish my first year at Abingdon School I stand extremely proud of the cadets and all of their achievements. In my initial address to the contingent at the beginning of the year I told the boys that the more they put into the CCF, the more they would get out. They have certainly kept that in mind this year and I hope they continue to do so in the future.

Maj Eleanor Kaye



Biennial inspection



Radley Medley Relays

Athletics

As usual the Athletics Club began the term in a rush, with a match on the first day back at the Radley Medley Relays. Coming in as last year's winners, we were under a little pressure to perform and the team did not disappoint, doing well in every event entered. At U15 level, we even managed to win two out of three heats, only to find that the other heat had been faster – tough, but sport is like that.

With the Marlborough match being called off due to freezing rain, we were left with another relay competition, the Achilles Relays, as our next test. As before the boys acquitted themselves well. The Juniors fought all the way, but did not quite have the strength in depth needed. The Inters were less competitive but showed Abingdon spirit in striving to do their best. The Seniors proved their worth but, yet again, were pipped at the post by Southend for the third time in four years.

A week later saw a full Juniors team and slightly weakened Inters and Seniors teams competing at Radley in the first full match of the season. As expected the Juniors did well and were denied their first victory of recent memory by one point – a point, that is, in scoring terms and a point of a javelin that refused to stick into the ground. It was both a thrilling and a frustrating afternoon as a result, especially for the throwers, who felt unduly penalised.

Nevertheless it shows the strength of talent at the junior level, which is a great encouragement for the future. Inters and Seniors also accredited themselves well, although, lacking numbers on the ground, they were not able to compete with any real success on team points.

A little over a week later saw us at Harrow. The gap did not allow much time for tweaking technical skills or sharpening speed, and unfortunately we saw many junior athletes called away to other sports events. However, we gainfully competed with a number of outstanding performances, especially in the middle distance events. Every year it seems the cross-country runners come off their season more ready to go fast



over the shorter distances required by the track.

Our greatest success came a little later in the season in the unusual U16 age group. Abingdon came out clear winners at the Oxfordshire Inters ESAA Track and Field Cup competition held at Horspath. Their closest rivals were nearly 100 points behind, showing the importance of filling every event in this international competition.

Again the highlights were largely on the track, though Christopher-James Nicholls 3KEB showed how you can sometimes get away with very little technique if you have enough raw talent, with 1.60m in the high jump.

Top billing again goes to Nat Jones 3HCGM with a school record in the 800m overturning Peter Barnshaw's 7JEF last record at a middle distance, and pushing the time down by over a second to 2:09.2.

All the others competitors must receive similar praise as Abingdon pupils made up the top two places in every track event bar one, where we had to settle for first and third. This haul included personal best times for Michael Fabes 3RP (1500m), Michael Dewar 4SEB (200m) and Alex Munro 4SEB (400m).

The team therefore progressed to the A team final at Tipton later in the season. Here they again acquitted themselves well, increasing their points tally on the



day. We were never expecting to win as other teams came in with a 100 point margin on us, and so we were glad to walk away heads held high having done great work on the track even if we were outclassed on the field. This has been our difficulty over the years, as access to field event facilities are limited, while the few staff we have are track event coaches rather than field event coaches. They have however been excellent and this is a good opportunity to thank them for their hard work and dedication.

This leaves only our two national finalists: Peter Barnshaw and Nat Jones. Both went to the Schools Nationals with solid times, with a slim possibility of a medal.

Unfortunately it was not to be, though both produced very sound performances against the best in the land.

A final well done and thank you to all involved is needed. Athletics works as a club and so is reliant on the goodwill of staff and pupils as well as parents. Every year it is an encouragement to see how enthusiastically pupils compete, especially those who have been with us throughout the school.

George Moody



Cricket

After the dampest of starts and the subsequent loss of numerous fixtures due to the weather Abingdon continued its upward curve on the cricketing front. 2012 saw a record number of boys participating in the sport and this enthusiasm for the game being backed up by some incredibly positive results.

Overall the club recorded a pleasing win rate of over 60%, showing the strength in depth across the school. Twenty three boys represented Oxfordshire or Berkshire, with Daniel Matthews 5JFH also gaining a place on the Gloucestershire Cricket Academy. Another twenty boys also competed at District level within the Oxfordshire and Berkshire district festivals.

The 1st XI had a fine season after a planned pre-season tour in Hampshire succumbed to the rain. Despite having an average age of only just over sixteen, they often came out winners with our best set of results in recent times (78% win rate). Sasha Barras 6HKA captained the side with real aplomb and the future certainly looks bright with the vast majority of the side returning in 2013. Daniel Matthews and Matthew Hart



5VEH often gave us promising starts, while a solid middle order of Henry Sensecall 6RMF, Rory Garrett 5JPGB and Gregor Hearn 7MIL made useful contributions. Gregor in particular had a most pleasing final season at Abingdon. A late developer within cricket, his 70-ball century against the touring Scotch College from Melbourne was a real highlight.

On the bowling front a youthful attack developed at an alarming rate. Matthew Hart and Leo Bethell 4OTL both swung the new ball and with the pace and

bounce of Alex Davies 4JHW and Charlie Fitchett 6RMF they will no doubt form the seam quartet for 2013. Alex also proved to be an excellent spin bowler and alongside leading wicket taker Sasha Barras provided the squeeze in the middle overs. I have no doubt this side will go on to even better things next season.

Sadly the other senior cricket fixtures were hampered by the rain, yet Harry Shortis 6SJG, Luke Carter 6SJG, Daniel Scott-Kerr 5VEH and Othman Mirzan 6SJ all showed future promise with wicket keeper Adam Scholey 5JFH also being most impressive.



The U15A side followed a memorable tour of South Africa in February by reaching the Lords Taverner's quarter final. Even with many of their most experienced players being taken by the 1st XI they continued the excellent work of their U14 season by racking up a healthy 11 wins. Callum Russell 4OTL and Soumya Bhadra 4EAK both recorded centuries and captain James Fitzjohn 4SEB finished the season with an average in excess of 50. Adam Spears 4AJPE proved to be an excellent allrounder with the accurate bowling of Max Mannering 44JET, Matthew Butcher 4JHW, Owen Morgan 4DJB and Archie Wimborne 4OTL often successful. Theo Brophy Clews 4JPN and Bas Marshall 4JHW both proved to be useful finishers, with Theo also taking a claim to be the best fielder in the school.



Cricket tour, South Africa

The U15B side remained unbeaten for a second consecutive year. Under the tutelage of Mr Drummond-Hay, this fine side, that would match most 'A' sides, went from strength to strength. Alexander Foster 4AJPE, Joseph Williams 4JPN, Hugh Cutting 4JHW, Sam Herbert 4OTL, and Tom Best 4JHW all scored heavily with allrounders William Carter Keall 4SEB and Freddie Iswariah 4JPN providing the spin options. Captain John Francis 4OTL proved to be a tactically astute leader as well as a capable batsman when the side was in trouble.

The U15C team was competitive in all fixtures and used an impressive twenty one players during the season.

The U14As were led by wicket keeper/batsman Conor Graney 3KEB in a season that saw them win more than they lost. Regular scorers at the top of the order, both Conor and Harry Thomas 3SRB often provided the backbone of the innings. Jamie Cox 3KEB made tremendous strides throughout the season with bat and ball whilst Charlie Scott-Kerr 3RP, Louis Hampden 3JSW and Charlie Herold 3KEB played key knocks to see us home in tight games. Alec Curtis 3KEB and leg spinner Seb Hickman 3RP were the leading wicket takers.

Mr Hall's U14B side remained unbeaten. Mr Hall's focus on excellent fielding meant the team often squeezed the opposition into mistakes and in Jonathan



U13A XI v Haberdashers

Bibby 3RKJ, Matthew Young 3JSW, and William Whitworth 3CFC they had an extremely useful set of allrounders. Throughout the year many boys made contributions in what was a pleasing first season together for the side.

The U14C side's season was highly interrupted by the rain. Even so the side showed much promise with many making their full debuts in cricket. Charlie Macpherson 3DCS proved an accurate off spinner whilst the match winning innings of Dominic MacLachlan 3JAM against Radley was a moment to remember.

Lower School made positive strides this year and often punched above their weight when playing against our larger prep school opposition. Thomas Dingwall 2BJLP had a superb season whilst Thomas Bishop 2HFCE and Oliver Gray 2NSH showed real potential for the future. The U12s proved to be an inexperienced side but the development of Joseph Lilley 1SW, Henry Isherwood 1SCVM and Louis Ashcroft 1SCVM bodes well for 2013.

Many thanks must be given to all the staff who were so willing to give up their Saturdays and also to the parents for their continued support of the Cricket Club. I know the boys are very thankful for this.

Damian Shirazi



U13A XI v Haberdashers

Tennis

This was another hugely successful tennis season that started on the sun baked clay courts of Barcelona. The eighteen teams that represented the school should be proud of their efforts, as Abingdon School Tennis Club continues to excel on the schools' tennis circuit. There were multiple Oxfordshire County titles, individual national honours, unbeaten seasons and team trophies won throughout the summer.

Much of the success earned by the Tennis Club is down to the coaching staff and the standards set by the senior players. Joel Morris 7IM captained the Tennis Club and signs off in style after spearheading our campaigns for a number of years. Head coach Martin Butler also deserves a huge amount of credit for the hard work he puts in every day of the school year on court with the players.

Spain Tour, Barcelona

A total of sixteen junior players travelled to Spain before the start of the summer term to train on the clay courts. Every player developed over the week and it was pleasing for the team to get a win at the end of the week against La Bisbal Tennis Academy.

U14 Road to Wimbledon Tournament

A large field competed in Abingdon School's U14 Road to Wimbledon Tournament, aiming to follow in the footsteps of current pupil Giles Waterson 5VEH, who reached the final at the All England Club in 2010. The two players that progressed through to the Oxfordshire Finals were Edward Green 1SW and Lukas Ehlers 1SCVM.



Aegon Oxfordshire Schools Tennis League

The unbeaten U13 team won the Aegon Oxfordshire Schools League, to progress through to the regional knockout rounds. A strong team captained by George Jeffreys 2HFCP swept all before them and look forward to taking on Northampton School in the quarter finals of the regional draw in October.

Independent Schools' League

In a competition featuring the top sixteen independent schools in the south of England, Abingdon were looking to improve upon last year's fourth place finish. After the first week of matches was washed out, the tournament was played over one weekend, with Abingdon finishing as plate winners.

Independent Schools Tennis Association by George Jeffreys

In this prestigious national tournament, both Abingdon pairs performed really well to reach the final stages. The first pair of Edward Green and George Jeffreys finished the tournament second in their group on the last day having one seven of their nine matches, with only the winning pair playing in the semi-finals.

St George's Pair Tournament

For the second year running, Abingdon came second in the St George's Weybridge Pairs Tournament. The tournament attracts the top tennis playing schools from the region and a number of nationally ranked players.

The tournament split into two different draws for 1st and 2nd pairs, starting with a round robin group and then into knockout stages.

Giles Waterson and Joel Morris won their group, winning all three matches, before beating Radley College in the quarter finals and New Hall in the semi finals. They came up against Reed's in the final and lost 6 – 3.

Freddie Locock-Harrison 6NF and Peter Honey 6DRM also won their group; then went on to beat KCS Wimbledon in the quarter finals, before losing to RGS Guildford in the semi finals.

Oxfordshire Independent Schools Tournament

The U14 team capped an excellent season with success in the OXIST, beating Radley, MCS and Oratory. The eight-man team played both singles and doubles, with many of the singles matches going the way of Abingdon. James Bourdon 3SRB and Joseph Kelly 3RKJ led the way at seed one and two, with Abingdon's strength in depth also proving a feature.



Inter School Fixtures

With a strong block fixture card, Abingdon were getting used to playing tough matches on a weekly basis. With the A, B, C and even D teams challenging themselves on Saturday afternoons against the likes of Bradfield, Eton, Wellington, MCS, Radley and Marlborough, it was great to see Abingdon players raise their standard. There was a 57% win record throughout the school and the Tennis Club will be aiming to reach the 60% mark next year.

On top of winning the Oxfordshire Schools Tennis title and finishing fifth equal in the Nationals, the U13 team

were unbeaten in inter school fixtures and the team of the year. They gained excellent wins against St Hugh's, Moultsford, Dragon, Magdalen College School, Oratory and Akeley Wood, forming great team spirit and pushing each other to develop in every session.

Buckley Cup – Internal Singles Tournament

This year's annual Joel Morris v Giles Waterson contest was again won by Giles Waterson in two straight sets. In front of a large crowd, the hard hitting Joel could not find a way through the defences of Giles and he retains the title for the third time.

Old Abingdonian Tennis

The 1st VIII Tennis team took on the Old Abingdonians in the annual match on Wednesday 4th July. The OAs fielded a strong side and were looking for revenge after last year's thumping.

After three rounds of doubles and singles, the school side again took the honours, winning 11 of the 16 matches that were played. There were however excellent wins amongst the OAs from Ian Garnier in both the singles and doubles and the irresistible Mills and Kibble partnership.

The match of the day was the singles tie between last year's Tennis Club captain Sam Murrell and this year's departing captain Joel Morris. At 5 games all, Joel powered his way past Sam and took the match 7 - 5.

Steve Brenchley



Tennis club at Wimbledon



Sailing

Cross Channel Trip

During the October half term Dr Dudin and Mr Bickerton took four pupils on a trip to sail across the English Channel. The pupils left Plymouth in a 36ft yacht and 18 hours and 90 miles later they arrived in St. Peter Port, Guernsey. Inconsistent winds, fog and busy shipping lanes made the passage tricky. The pupils sailed back to Plymouth with experience of channel island life and history.

Day Skipper

During the February half term, Mr Bickerton took four pupils (Richard Matthews 6MDP, Tom Pugh 6HKA, Samuel Hughes 7MIL and James Tracey 7JJ) down to Plymouth for their Day Skipper Course. The whole group passed the five day continually assessed course in some often very tricky conditions.





Richard Matthews

RYA Dinghy Instructor

In June Tom Pugh, Harry Bruce 5NMR, Richard Matthews and Luke Carter 6SJG passed their RYA Dinghy instructor qualification. Several weeks spent practising their teaching skills was followed by a final 'moderation' day where the pupils each taught a lesson and were examined by an external assessor. The group all passed and can now run sailing courses at sailing centres in the UK and abroad.



Aegean Sailing

In July Mr Bickerton and Dr Dudin took six pupils for a week sailing around the Aegean Sea in the Mediterranean. Whilst improving their sailing skills aboard a 40ft yacht, the pupils saw dolphins, swordfish and an octopus. They also enjoyed local culture, food and swimming in the island bays.



Team Racing

The sailing club assembled two teams to compete in a team racing event hosted at Farmoor reservoir. After a round robin one Abingdon team made it through to a second round draw. Sailing continued late into the afternoon and Abingdon beat the Magdalen 2nd team and ended up in a respectable sixth place out of around twenty different teams.

RS 500 World Championships

The trip to the RS 500 World Championship in July started at a cold and windswept Farmoor Reservoir with the task of packing three boats onto the road trailer.

The big day then came but there was no wind! An inconsistent 'Ora' wind filled in and after the first day the three Abingdon crews were placed in the mid fleet.

Day two was once again dominated by the wind (or lack of) resulting in only one race being held, but this race provided Abingdon with its equal highest placed finish of sixteenth. As we were about to settle into a long windless trip back to the sailing club a huge storm rolled over the cliffs resulting in the whole fleet being flattened by 50mph winds and battered by lashing rain. After ten minutes of the pounding rain the sun came back out and by the time we arrived at the Swedish party there was not a cloud in the sky.

The last day was the hottest with a long wait on the lake for the wind to fill in; however, in the two races the Abingdon crews were placed tightly together. By the end of the final race everyone was exhausted but pleased with the results which saw Richard Matthews and Luke Carter performing best for Abingdon in twenty seventh place. The week was great fun and the racing was hard but overall everyone came back better and more mature sailors if a little sunburned! Thanks go to Mr Bickerton and Mr Curran for giving up their holiday to allow us to go, as well as towing the boats all the way there and back.

*Richard Matthews 6MDP and
Harry Bruce 5NMR*

Henley 2012

For any schoolboy rower, there is one event that eclipses all other events; one regatta that stands head and shoulders above the crowd; and one week that will never be forgotten. On the packed banks of the Thames, boys from all over the world battle to be crowned Henley Royal Regatta Princess Elizabeth Challenge Cup Champions.

On the first day of the 2011-12 season, the last day of summer, the glitz and glamour of Henley seemed an age away. The squad started training, some boys rowing and others, such as myself, playing rugby. Those who had opted for rugby soon found themselves in the thick of what would end up as a great season for Abingdon. But all the time the days until Henley were ticking down: 300, 299, 298...

This first term was the darkest time for the boat club. Boys were training hard and making improvements. However, during the October half term, at the Head of the Charles Regatta in Boston we lost heavily to Eton College. Still the clock was counting: 257, 256, 255...

With the success of the first XV rugby team taking them into the quarterfinals of the Daily Mail Cup, it was with only four months to go that the whole squad was finally together: 146, 145, 144... From this point on, every session we



had was a step on and every day was better than the previous. Things started to look good; training had picked up and the eight was coming together. We were now on track for Henley, securing victory at the Schools' Head of the River: 101, 100, 99...

In spite of this win, it was important not to become complacent. We needed to continue to develop and improve. A solid training camp in Ghent, Belgium in early May, were crucial, but Henley was getting ever closer: 52, 51, 50... For me, this was the best part of the season so far; the weather was improving, all the training we had done was starting to pay off and we were beginning to become a very fast boat. This showed at the National Schools' Regatta where, in securing first place, we broke the course record, which had stood since 1999.

The season was quickly moving towards its climax: 27, 26, 25... We knew we

were favourites, but we also knew we still had to perform: 20, 19, 18... We trained as hard as ever, perfecting what we could: 15, 14, 13... Soon we were winding down, ready for Henley: 10, 9, 8... We moved into a house just outside of Henley a few days before: 5, 4, 3, 2, 1 and suddenly the regatta started.

Five days, five races, thirty-two boats, two thousand, one hundred and twelve metres, six and a half minutes of racing, hundreds of thousands of spectators. It was everything we had trained for and it had arrived. The first two days were about getting a job done, winning our races comfortably, but without tiring ourselves out. Day one saw us race St Peter's, York, who we beat with an 'easily' margin. Day two had us up against Latymer Upper School, who we again beat comfortably, by four lengths.

On day three, the racing really started to heat up. We were racing the American national champions, Gonzaga, but we





proved too strong for them, and won by just over three lengths. We had made it through to the weekend.

Day four brought about a much tougher challenge in the shape of Scotch College, the Australian champions. We knew they were fast starters, but that over the full course we were faster. This proved correct during the race, with Scotch having a slight lead a couple of minutes in. We held our cool and pushed through to win by just under two lengths and move into the final.

Henley is an international event with crews coming from all over the world, but the final was as far from international as possible. Having raced crews from Australia and America, the final saw us up against our most local rivals, Radley College.

"Abingdon School, Radley College, when I see that you are both straight and ready I will start you like this: Attention, Go. Get ready please." The final had come, we were on the starting blocks and the umpire was just raising his flag.

"Attention, Go!" We were off, moving the boat away, pushing hard, zoning in on our cox's voice,

"We are up a seat." Things had started well, we had jumped them off the start and were holding a good rhythm.

"They have pulled back a seat, boys." Radley had gone out hard and moved back on us coming up to the Barrier.

"Now we're moving, that's one seat, that's two seats." Coming up to half way, we were starting to pull away.

"That's half a length" With just over 650 metres to go, we put in our push.

"Bow ball!" We were ahead a length coming into the final 500 metres of the race. Radley were sprinting hard, the line was coming closer, the Abingdon supporters were stampeding along the bank to follow the race and still we held on to our lead. Radley pushed again and started moving up on us, but it was too late, the race was over. The combined effort of over 300 days, the dream of over three years, everything we had trained for fulfilled in six minutes fifty-six seconds. Our hands flew into the air. We had done it, we had won!

For Felix Newman 7TCG, William Horlock 6DRM, Alexander Fisher 7IM, Thomas Pagel 7JJ, Matthew Carter 6HKA, Andrew Halls 7SEG, James Richards 7JJ, Neil Mckenzie 7SEG and myself, that race will be something that will stay with us for ever. Our thanks must go to Athol Hundermark for coaching us and to the Guivers for hosting us during the regatta.

Joel Cooper 6DRM



Sheldonian Concert

Abingdon School's leading music ensembles celebrated the end of another busy and successful year – and, not quite incidentally, the silver jubilee of Michael Stinton's directorship – with a major concert in Oxford's prestigious Sheldonian Theatre on Saturday 23 June.

The Abingdon Academicals, led by Simon Whalley, opened with a set of three close-harmony songs in lighter vein and varying mood, one arranged by their very own Hugh Cutting 4JHW. Their finely-balanced and carefully-honed singing and sensitively expressive delivery set the professional tone for the rest of the evening.

Next, the Chamber Orchestra provided accompaniment for two soloists. First, William Hewstone 7EOD, appearing for almost the last time in a solo role before he leaves the School, displayed his sonorous baritone in Sarastro's aria from Mozart's *The Magic Flute*. Michael Stinton, directing from the oboe, then took centre stage for Marcello's *Oboe Concerto*. Despite suffering the inconvenience of every oboeist's nightmare, a broken reed, he filled the Theatre with his mellow tone, and inspired the Chamber Orchestra to some neat, stylish accompaniment.

The Joint Chamber Choir, combining the finest singers from Abingdon and St Helen's under the skilled direction of founder John Cotton, has proved a



very special development during this year. They delighted the audience with beautiful renderings of Victoria's motet *Regina caeli laetare* and Michael Tippett's highly-charged setting of the spiritual *Steal Away*. This choir has a great future ahead.

The Big Band, led, in the absence of Simon Currie on tour, by Andy Townsend, finished the first half in rumbustious style with two jazz numbers, in which several stalwarts of the band featured as soloists for the last time before the end of their school careers.

The Symphonic Wind Band opened the second half with a substantial piece embracing a variety of moods, all of which they brought out to the full under Andy Townsend's skilled direction.

It was, inevitably, left to the First Orchestra, under Michael Stinton's direction, to close the programme. First came Simon Whalley's *Tokai Overture*, which received its premiere the last time the School performed in the Sheldonian,

on the occasion of the visit of the Tokai orchestra from Japan three years ago. Next, Na'im Peyman 7KTC, another leaver, gave a mellifluous, poised rendering of the slow movement of Mozart's *Clarinet Concerto*, with sensitive accompaniment from the orchestra. Finally came the pièce de résistance – Ravel's (in)famous *Boléro*. This work makes virtuosic demands on soloists from every section of the orchestra, and all the section leaders rose splendidly to the challenge, bringing the evening to a rousing conclusion with rapturous applause.

The fact that this programme had been put together on virtually no rehearsal due to so many musicians' absence on study leave made their achievements all the more impressive. The sizeable audience were warmly appreciative, and clearly thought their attendance to have been well worth the trudge through the pouring rain which graced the evening.

Christopher Fletcher-Campbell



Shadowing the Carnegie

The Carnegie Medal awarded annually by children's librarians to the writer of an outstanding book for children and young people encourages children to also judge the shortlisted titles for themselves through 'Shadowing the Carnegie'.

Each week throughout the summer term, a keen group of readers from Lower School met to discuss and debate the merits of the shortlisted titles. Abingdon is also part of the Abingdon partnership where students from all the Abingdon secondary schools share Carnegie events, held at the six participating schools.

The initial event is the Carnegie Tea held this year at Larkmead School and which serves to give students the opportunity to exchange first impressions of the shortlist, by comparing covers, 'blurbs' and first paragraphs. The Carnegie Quiz is the next event, where a more competitive edge sets in as students display their in-depth knowledge of the books. This year, Abingdon was host to the Quiz.

Shadowing the Carnegie concluded with the Carnegie Forum, held in Abingdon Guildhall. Over 100 students took part in the day long event which had a mixture of discussion groups, rehearsals and presentations centred around the shortlisted books. Awarded prizes for best reviews were Oliver Mead 2H (*My Name is Mina*), Iwan Stone 1W (*Between Shades of Grey*), Alex Reynolds 2H (*Trash*) and Ben Ffrench 1C, highly recommended (*Stuart Little*). Best contributor was Joseph Nash 1C and the winning group presentation included Alex Reynolds and Thomas Shaw 1C.

The Forum voted *Between Shades of Grey* by Ruta Sepseys as their winning book, which as usual was at variance with the national winner, which was announced as *A Monster Calls* by Patrick Ness.

Gaynor Cooper



Oliver Mead (far right)

My Name is Mina by David Almond – a review

My Name is Mina is my favourite book so far. I liked the very metaphorical style of it as it stirred up deep and subtle feelings that lie in everyone. The book has a very different view on life as the main character thinks very much outside the box. It is about a girl, Mina, who is considered strange and mad by the other people at her school. She thinks that school is a cage and she likes freedom and birds. She doesn't get on well with the teachers; they don't understand her and she sometimes deliberately winds them up. She goes to a special school for a day where there are other people like her and she feels she is not actually alone in the universe.

I liked the chapter names. They are funny and random, like 'Grandpa, missing monkeys and owls' or 'Fig rolls, pee, spit, sweat and all the words for joy' but they prepare you in an unusual way for the chapter ahead. The author creates a very deep-thinking atmosphere and you soon find yourself being glued to the pages. Mina is a wild, thinking



character; you want to find out more about her world and her life. You can never track her line of thought because she is always going off at a tangent.

At first you think the book is just a series of rambles but then as you move further on into the story things that didn't originally make sense start to make sense. I would recommend it to anyone but especially to someone who likes being creative or who likes thinking about things. I would also recommend it to people who are a bit like Mina as it might shed new light on their world.

Oliver Mead 2HFCP



Leavers' Day

Leavers' Day 2012 saw the start of a new tradition when the two Heads of School Matthew Landells and Joe Hogan delivered speeches looking back on their time at Abingdon and forward to what lies ahead for the Upper Sixth of 2011/12. The text of Matthew's speech follows:

On Leavers' Day it is only appropriate, I think, to give some thought to the future. It still seems slightly surreal that we're leaving the school that some of us have spent seven years at. Throughout our time at school the emphasis has always been on "the future" - this seemingly distant event for which we are preparing ourselves and aiming towards. As we move up through school we spend an increasing amount of time thinking about it, planning for it, often worrying about it. It is what drives us to make decisions that will perhaps impact the rest of our lives. And then, all of a sudden, "the future" becomes more of a reality. Before we know it we're given a leavers' tie, the letters OA to tag onto our names and sent off to do our exams; the final stage of our school education. I think we shall all miss certain things from school, but at the same time, we're glad to be moving on. For me, this transition to life after school has made me think about how my seven years at Abingdon have led me to the present day, how they've changed me as a person and certainly changed my view on school.

Joining as an understandably nervous, overwhelmed and physically dwarfed first year, I never imagined that I'd enjoy my time here so much, or achieve so much during it - for a start I certainly



never thought that I'd be standing here seven years later giving a speech. Through school I've been lucky enough to have the opportunities to fly a plane solo, represent the school in triathlons at Blenheim Palace and run a company for a year, to name a few. It sounds clichéd, but by taking part in things like these we really do learn more about ourselves, think more about who we want to be and make some of our best friends along the way. These will almost certainly be some of my best memories of school, and I'm sure the story is much the same for all of us. Abingdon has not only given us an academic education, but also confidence, motivation and long lasting friendships which will be important to us for a long time yet. The importance of exams is always stressed - but what this school has taught me is that they are simply the foundation on which we can build who we are, and allow us to pursue our ambitions, whatever they may be.

This year in particular I've felt an enormous sense of community within our year group - both in terms of the friendships we've made and our sense of being a part of the school. We may

be moving on and moving apart as a group, but it is clear that a few things will remain the same. A read through our yearbook reveals a large number of comments verging on the "deep and meaningful" category (perhaps a surprise for some of us); these are a sure sign of the strong friendships we have formed - the fond, amusing and in some cases embarrassing memories of our school lives written down for years to come.

One of the questions asked for the yearbook was about where we see each other in ten years time - most of these suggestions were shockingly easy to visualise. Henry Christiansen sat in front of his fire, Labrador at his feet, glass of port in hand. Peter Barnshaw, having made his fortune through some method nobody else even understands, with a fleet of cars he still can't drive. Will Hewstone...at the very least, prime minister. Many of us would seem willing to place early bets on Tom Salt or Ed O'Brien winning a Nobel prize and Ed Norris will almost certainly be driving down route 66, still listening to the Chili Peppers on repeat. Will Haines, according to the yearbook, will still be in the gym. I could go on.

But truly, who can tell where we will all end up? That's perhaps the most exciting thing about moving on to the next stage in our lives; the unpredictability of what's to come. I'm sure that I'll look back on my time here with pride and many great memories, and I hope that you will too. Thank you.



*Matthew Landells TCG
Joint Head of School 2011-2012*

The International Linguistics Olympiad

About half way through February I sat the first round of the UK Linguistics Olympiad (UKLO). A few weeks later, to my great surprise I was invited to participate in the second round of UKLO, which consisted of fourteen students from all round the country doing an intensive crash course on difficult linguistics questions for a weekend at the University of York. It was a very fun, and very confusing, weekend (which included a two hour discussion on which tenses a time traveller would use, which pronoun is appropriate for a post-op transsexual and whether languages even exist), and ended in a three hour exam with questions similar to those we had practised over the weekend. Having enjoyed the weekend greatly, I was extremely excited when I received an email from the organiser asking if I could be a member of the English team at the International Linguistics Olympiad (IOL) in Ljubljana, Slovenia.



We arrived at the rather small airport in Ljubljana on the 29 July and were immediately whisked away to the hostel we were staying in. The first day consisted of not much at all, exploring the hostel and engaging in small talk with teams from other countries (I discovered that pronouncing 'hello' in Polish is impossible). The main event happened on the Tuesday, the marathon six hour paper in which we were tested on our abilities to figure out grammatical rules of



a language based on only a few words or phrases in that language. There were five questions in total, on Dyirbal, Umbu-Ungu, Basque, Teop and Rotuman, of which I managed to answer all but the question on Basque. The second competition was on the Thursday and this was the team event. Each team of four people was placed in a room, given a list of fifty-seven country names in Lao (and no English whatsoever) and told to translate them. This wasn't a simple task and it required great mental stamina from us (at least more than the Irish team who spent most of the three hours drawing pictures) and by the end we had a pretty reasonable solution. I found both the individual and team competitions strangely enjoyable, especially considering they were six and three hour long exams respectively, and both challenged my problem solving skills. At the end of the week I found out I had achieved a bronze medal in the individual contest, which I was very proud of as it placed me in the top thirty in the world.

However, the best part of the week was definitely the people, from countries all around the world, Serbia to Australia, Japan to Brazil. All of our spare time was spent exploring Ljubljana, playing games and learning about each other's



Omri Faraggi

cultures. On the Wednesday we went to the Alps and saw Lake Bled, apparently the most popular tourist attraction in Slovenia, which was very impressive and picturesque. On the Friday after being told our results we had a bittersweet goodbye party until the early hours of Saturday, with gradually more and more people leaving for flights. We left on Saturday afternoon (4 August), one of the last teams to depart.

All in all, I learnt a lot from the week, ranging from the very trivial (I now know how to say "I love you" in ten different languages), to the very interesting (like what a language isolate is). I also learnt a great deal from all of the people I met – the week was an incredible experience which I would be very happy to repeat.

Omri Faraggi 6SJG

Olympics Bike Ride

Inspired by London 2012, Matthew Landells 7TCG, Michael Deeks 7SEG and OA Clym Buxton undertook a truly adventurous challenge to raise funds for the Make a Wish Foundation, Starlight Children's Foundation, and Action for M.E.

It was the 4 of July and just four days after finishing school, we were flying off to Athens, one way. With all the excitement that was mounting about the Olympics, we had decided to cycle unsupported from Athens, the original home of the modern Olympics, back to London for this year's games. And finally the start was upon us.

Unfortunately for us it wasn't the smoothest of starts. Arriving in Athens, our bikes were in a bit of a bad way – one with a broken wheel, another with a broken frame. Our ferry to Italy in three days was non-refundable; and that was nearly 200 miles away across Greece. Lost for ideas, we resorted to wandering the streets of central Athens and acting out our problem. Try miming 'welding' to



somebody you've just met and you'll have an idea. Incredibly we found someone, who, with much gesticulating and shouting in Greek, led us to a shop where the wheel was quickly fixed. The frame however needed even more specialist attention. After an extended phone discussion which we couldn't understand we were handed a sketch map of the city and promised that 'George' on the other side of town would hold the magic solution. So off we went. It was already 6pm.

By 5pm the next day we were still in Athens enjoying the sights and souvlaki. As fantastic as our souvlaki was, we had done a grand total of 0 miles towards London and time was ticking on. But finally the call came through from George – the bike was fixed. By 6:30pm we were on the road at last. We had under 48 hours to make our ferry to Italy. So much for a leisurely start.

That evening we climbed up over the mountains and into the Greek countryside – as it got dark we had no choice but to turn on our lights and keep going. We stopped at a local bar in Pili hoping to find a campsite. Luckily for us the owner of the bar let us sleep on his patio overnight – saved again! What followed was truly a baptism of fire. We left Pili at 6am, and after 88 miles of breathtaking scenery, 45

degree heat and 1000m high mountains we rolled into Delphi, lights blazing once again, at 9pm. Our glamorous accommodation for the night consisted of a ditch at the side of the road, but we weren't there long. By 4:30 we were back on the road with ten hours to get to Patras. Despite all of this, we were sad to leave Greece – beyond the constant coverage of the country's economic woes, the Greek people were genuinely friendly and helpful towards us and the scenery was fantastic. We'd wake up to Italy.

Arriving in Bari, Italy, we made our way across towards Naples, passing mile upon mile of olive groves in temperatures reaching 47 degrees at times. We were making good progress, well over our target 110km per day. One day we managed nearly 170. Fuelled by Italian coffee and gelato, we found ourselves just south of Rome after only four days in Italy, camped by the side of a lake in the evening sunshine. This was more like it.

From there we rode the ancient Via Appia into Rome, skirted the famous sights and carried on North towards Tuscany. We were getting used to the mileage, getting better at finding impromptu campsites and understanding the 'interesting' Italian style of driving. One by one we were burying maps to the bottom of



our pannier bags, and before long we were through Siena and glimpsing the Mediterranean just west of Pisa. It was three days of following the dramatic Riviera coastline before we eventually ran out of Italy. We crossed the border into Menton, France and enjoyed our first rest day of the trip. There was one lingering thought in our minds though – the mountains that towered above the town. We had 500km of the Alps separating us from Geneva, and we were about to cross

them, carrying ourselves and all of our kit over some of the highest roads in Europe.

We left Menton early the next morning with some uncertainty. The road soon kicked up - 25km of tarmac perched on a mountainside taking us to the first col - the 1600m Col de Turini. Over the next few days we experienced 50km long climbs taking us to 2715m and 45mph descents taking us swiftly back down to the next valley. We camped wherever we could - forests, village campsites, even a small piece of flat land 2000m up, and climbed mountains we'd only seen in the Tour de France. But five days later we met our target, arriving into Geneva having covered 520km since Menton. We were shattered – time for a well earned rest.

British drizzle greeted us. We'd thought about the moment all the way across Europe, but when we stopped opposite Westminster it was an even better sight than we'd imagined. The sun appeared and we swung left onto Westminster Bridge, and side by side covered the final few metres to our destination. We stopped the bikes one last time, engulfed by a group of family and friends who'd come to welcome us. Twenty eight days after we'd lifted off from Heathrow, we'd arrived home.

Thanks to everybody who supported us and made the trip possible. For more information or to sponsor us please visit www.bike4charity.co.uk

Matthew Landells 7TCG



The next evening we reluctantly left our friend's house and headed for the French border once again. After the initial climbs the terrain flattened out around Dijon and we absolutely flew, covering 130km a day all the way to Paris. The end really was in sight. After two days exploring the city we continued north, enjoying an easy two days of riding to Dieppe. Standing at the edge of the English Channel was an odd emotion – only one day's riding remained.

The last day could not have been more fitting. We rode off the ferry, quickly stopping to put on our raincoats as the



Moldova 2012

On a grey Tuesday morning in early July, as the partnership between Abingdon School and the Agape charity in Moldova neared its first decade, an excited and somewhat nervous group of Abingdon boys gathered to begin what has become a yearly expedition. Our journey began in silence, as we all attempted to reclaim lost hours of sleep. Fortunately, things livened up during check-in at Heathrow, when Gabriel emerged winner of our impromptu 'heaviest bag' competition, soaring over the weight limit by an impressive 4kg. Once we had picked up a copy of *The Gruffalo* in Duty Free to form the crucial component of our English lessons, we departed for Chisinau.

The combined effect of the 5am start, 8-hour journey, and 35-degree heat ensured we emerged from the Chisinau baggage reclaim ready to accept our welcome party with a few grunts and one or two astonished grins, each one of us both pleased to have finally arrived, and uncertain as to what to expect. All that remained of our journey was the hectic drive to Ialoveni, 10km from the capital, which reached a climax during a U-turn across a dual carriageway.

Our host families housed between two and four Abingdon boys in groups, and



I was fortunate enough to be part of the largest group with Rob, Matthew, and Peter. Despite the daunting issue of the language barrier, we were able to quickly settle in to an extremely comfortable two-storey house. The readiness with which the family offered us their hospitality and facilities, regardless of their own comfort, was truly humbling. Over a dinner of fried chicken fillets, potatoes and tomato salad, we had no trouble picking out the word 'Facebook' in conversation, and yet all four of us sat in disbelief when we were invited to use their PC to chat to friends and family over the

Internet. On the balcony that night, as we drunk something Russian that none of us could identify but was supposedly 'non-alcoholic', Rob's suggestion that our host families were exceptions to the overarching theme of rural poverty in Moldova seemed sadly all too true.

Once we had shrugged off the travel fatigue and familiarised ourselves with our hosts, our work could really begin. For three days we would be running activities at the Agape Community Centre, open to children from Ialoveni and Chisinau, between the ages of six and sixteen. We split into groups, providing activities in Art, English, Sport, and board games both to entertain the children, and encourage confidence in their English. I am sure that at this point we were all shocked by the failure of last year's boys to prepare us for the immediate and overwhelming sense of fulfillment and happiness that accompanied our work, and I personally enjoyed the surprising challenge that teaching English presented.

One evening, we all ventured into Chisinau to meet the British Ambassador to Moldova at his residence, which was situated by a secluded park away from the dark, Soviet-style apartments that occupied much of the capital. He provided us with a spread of takeaway pizza, and while we ate the conversation



Max English



turned towards the upcoming Olympics, and the prospects they held for a small, developing nation. To Moldovans, he mentioned, the games represented an opportunity to showcase the country's main sport, Greco-Roman wrestling. While in Chisinau, we met two members of the 'Young Entrepreneurs' initiative, which is one facet of Agape's work. It would be with this group that we would spend our second week in Romania.

After four nights in Moldova, and an extremely difficult farewell to the young children with whom we had enjoyed



countless games of Connect Four, it was time to make the 9-hour exodus to Lacu Rosu and a small wooden lodge perched amongst the verdant mountains of Transylvania. The name itself means 'Red Lake', although Charlie Roberts was slightly disappointed to see that it was in fact very green after having told us all it would be red. This second part of the trip posed us a new challenge; we would have to adapt the techniques we had used to help the younger children in order to work with people our own age. Fortunately, as we soon realized, the level of English was much higher, and the main focus was on boosting confidence, and to a greater extent cultural exchange.

Mr Jenkins (who is known throughout eastern Europe merely as 'The Main Man', for reasons which he will not disclose) proposed that we adopt a style of activities similar to 'The Apprentice', focusing on business and teamwork. Over the four days, we also worked with the Young Entrepreneurs to make short films, board games and went on two walks in the mountains. Conversation seemed to flow easily as we traversed the stunning scenery, and it soon became apparent that we had much in common with the Moldovans (the vast majority coming from Chisinau). Rob made a concerted effort to popularise the Arctic Monkeys, while many seemed interested to hear

from Alvin about living in Hong Kong. Over the first day or two, it dawned on us as a group that the trip had become more centred around building close friendships, as there was no better way to immerse ourselves in an alternative culture and perspective. For many of us from Abingdon, there was also a recognition that our new friends faced a daunting challenge; they represented a generation of change in Moldova, as they expressed an incredible optimism that the elder generations seemed to lack. Seeing a responsibility of this size carried by people of our own age was both humbling and extremely inspiring, allowing us to put our own problems into perspective.

The last night of the trip was crowned with a talent show, in which Alvin supplied plenty of laughs with a Rubik's Cube demonstration, accompanied by his own commentary. Whilst watching the other acts, which ranged from short comedy skits to an awful dance performance by Rob, Charlie, Peter, Alvin and myself, I noticed a profound change in the attitudes of our group; for many, it was an eye-opening experience, while others found it a source of confidence and maturity. Needless to say, the trip held just as many personal benefits for us as it did for the Moldovans themselves. In his closing speech, Nicu, who runs the Agape charity, highlighted the need for positive change in Moldova, and for all of us to have contributed to this process by visiting Moldova was truly fulfilling and gratifying. Around the bonfire that night, surrounded by friends from vastly different backgrounds, each one of us was aware of our shared experiences and responsibilities. Although there were tears shed on both sides at our departure the following morning, those friendships have continued through the summer, and hopefully will do so until this time next year. For those wishing to embark on the tenth Moldova trip in 2013, prepare for a truly unforgettable experience.

Max English 6TK

Geography Trip to India

Following a tense day of receiving AS results, a group of ten Lower Sixth boys and two teachers from the geography department (Mr Fishpool and Mr Southwell-Sander) set off on a trip to India, on what would prove to be a densely packed ten days to experience a country completely different from our own.

The trip focused on looking at globalisation and inequality in the rapidly-growing goliath Indian economy. After twenty one hours of travel we arrived in Delhi at 4am local time, greeted with Marigold necklaces and cows sleeping in the middle of the road. Arriving at a small hotel we were able to gain a mere two hours sleep before starting the trip by visiting one of the best private schools in Delhi and also the country. We were instantly made aware of the stark inequality simply by viewing the surrounding area of fields, derelict buildings and cows bathing in stagnant water while we entered this pristine school welcomed by leather seats and a waiter offering fresh orange juice and coffee. We met the students of Class 12, the top class in the school, with whom we discussed globalisation and its effect on their daily lives.



We then set off into the centre of Delhi for what would be a barrage on the senses and an unforgettable experience. We visited Jama Masjid, one of the largest Muslim temples in India, and took a rickshaw ride through the narrow market streets with people wherever you looked and motorbikes and cars beeping their horns unmercifully behind you trying to find the few inches available to pass by. Continuing our tour of Delhi, we visited Ghandi's memorial, the India Gate and the Lotus temple - an impressive piece of modern architecture which was worth queuing for in the searing heat and

humidity that accompanied us throughout the trip and made our air-conditioned coach feel all the more refreshing. Then, at the end of day two, we took the Delhi metro (that included a 'ladies-only' carriage) which sped us further out of the city to see Adrian Mutton, an OA who has set up a company in India and had himself been taught by Mr. Fishpool. Adrian gave us a new perspective and another deep insight into the effects of globalisation on his company and India in general. His company relies heavily on the interests of foreign companies entering the Indian market.





The next day we left Delhi passing through Gurgaon, a 100 square kilometre area of land being developed into shopping centres and apartment blocks, showing the sheer scale of development in India. After seeing these hugely wealthy areas we swiftly entered the rural towns where we could experience the Indian culture first hand.

Next day, having arrived in Agra, we visited the Taj Mahal, a highlight of the trip that left the whole group transfixed by its beauty, and the famous Red Fort where we gained our first experience of an Indian monsoon, the streets becoming a torrent in minutes. Rushing to the

coach we continued on to Fatehpur Sikri, an ancient Mughal city that had been abandoned and is now inhabited by hundreds of poor people aggressively trying to sell their wares; instantly seeing us as prime targets, it was hard to ignore their insistence and desperation to gain a customer. Still, in the rural countryside we stopped at a small village called Mundili of around 2,000 people and were greeted by a crowd of smiling children to whom we gave sweets which we had purchased from the single shop in the village. They led us on a camel ride through the dirt tracks, showing us their treasured water pump and the lifestyle they lead in such poor conditions.



Having been overwhelmed by the hospitality of these excruciatingly poor families we arrived in Jaipur, through a road with seemingly never ending slums on the left and middle class detached housing on the right. The next day we had yet another memorable experience of an elephant ride up to Amer Fort which was above a valley enclosed by the 26km Wall of Jaipur. Over the next two days we visited several factories, witnessing the working conditions and traditional methods used by people who worked for around twelve hours a day for 120 rupees (£1.50).

We then arrived in Mumbai, a stark contrast to the rest of the trip with globalisation much more prominent here; a Maserati was visible immediately after exiting the airport. Ghandi's house, the Gateway of India and Elephanta Island were just some of the places we visited, with the Daravi Slums being an eye-opener located right inside the city. There we visited one of the local schools to see around a hundred students in each classroom learning mathematics, no different from you and me. The surrounding slums contained workshops with deafening machines and hot wax, a bakery where dough being used for the bread was lying on the floor, and a family of fifteen living in tiny rooms where the air was full of fumes from a pottery furnace nearby.

The unique experience that we received from India left me speechless as I returned home to see the clean streets, breathe fresh air and hear the sound of silence in what now felt like an alien world.

James Steele 6DRM



South Africa Partnership

We left Heathrow for an overnight flight to Johannesburg with everyone raring to get to Shayandima to start our work with the charity Build The Nations. Whilst the plane journey was eleven hours long, as expected, no one really anticipated the six-hour minibus drive from Johannesburg to the base. We had a quick tour and then got an early night, looking forward to the adventure of the following day.

We were painting fences. There were a lot of fences. These became the main project of the trip and we managed to see the bare fence panels we had arrived to put up covered with faultlessly shimmering green coats by our very last day on the base. We also put up a new playground, masterminded of course by Jordan Anning 6MDP, with the intention of making an instructional DVD so it could be sent, and easily followed, to other places. Jordan impressively managed to put the DVD together by depriving himself of a night's sleep after Mr Palmer made it clear that he was not leaving until it was finished. He definitely wasn't joking.

The gruelling 6.30am wake-ups of the week were replaced by a 5.15am wake-up to get to Nwanedi Game Reserve on the first Saturday. For many of us it was our first experiences of a game reserve



and we definitely all had an awesome time there. The constant assault from baboons was also a new experience but we soon became more alert with food, although their malicious assault on Mr Loughe's tent was a little unsettling. We spent a day at a beautiful, but rather chilly, waterfall, which was one of the highlights of the trip. Mr Loughe, perhaps shaken by the baboon attack and now a veteran of Nwanedi, decided not to brave the icy water.

The next week we continued to paint fences and most of us became proficient in mixing cement by hand, which proved useful in Mozambique. We left for the South African border on the Thursday and most of us reached it with little issue, although Ben wasn't so sure. On entering Mozambique we had to wait for two hours as the immigration office had run out of the little VISA stickers for our passports and these were apparently kept at the hospital. Jacques, who was





head of one of the land rovers, then had to drive to the hospital to fetch the stickers as the border controller didn't have a car. Although we only had to travel about 100km, it took over five hours to reach Xicumbane, the first village we stopped at, due to the unevenness of the dirt 'roads'.

We stayed two nights in Xicumbane, extending their shade cover so they could expand their vegetable patch. The log-fire heated shower and only mildly funny tasting water of Xicumbane proved to be luxury when we arrived at Mabuzane. Our first instruction was to go and fetch water. This seemed simple enough. So we took the gerry cans and walked the 2km round-trip to the pump, which turned out to be a favourite hide-out for the local killer bees. We were then told, after informing Mr Palmer of the killer bees and his insistence that they were absolutely not dangerous, that the 210 litre barrel needed filling for showers. It took a team of eleven of us an hour to roll it all the way back.

shed in which to store school equipment. Having slaved away mixing and perfectly flattening the concrete, we drove to the nearest place to get a cold drink. When we returned the concrete had been vandalised by the village cows, which could apparently smell the water and had attempted to drink our masterpiece.



We spent the next few days putting up some more bits of playground and mixed what we later worked out was 1.5 tonnes of concrete to build a floor of a

We packed up the next morning and headed back over to South Africa, with relief from Ben who had finally found the border, and spent an awesome three days in Kruger National Park. The contrast with Mozambique was extremely clear to all of us and it made the break after our hard work even more enjoyable. We saw buffaloes, wildebeests, giraffes, so many elephants that they started to seem like impalas, so many impalas that they started to seem like goats, lions and cheetahs. Mr Loughe was delighted having never seen cheetahs despite being to Kruger Park four times before. We saw three of them within about an hour of getting into the Park.



Toby Brown
(back row, second from right)

After two final days at the base, we headed out for the last time for one more night in our now very familiar tents. We stayed at an animal reserve and were guided around some caves before leaving for the airport. We had the most enjoyable six-hour delay in an airport possible, all sporting our Build The Nations T-shirts, reflecting on what an incredible time we had had.

Toby Brown 6SJ

Inter-House



Gallery



Abingdon Sport 2011-12



This past academic year has been an enormous success from a sporting perspective - as good as I have known it in the past ten years. I have to pay tribute to the dedication of the pupils and staff for all the time, energy and commitment they put into training and representing the School on a weekly basis. It is a real privilege for me to witness the high level of devotion and expertise of our staff, who so willingly give of their time to assist our pupils in achieving their potential - and therein lies the philosophy of the Department.

Our aim is to give each and every individual pupil an opportunity to represent the School in the sporting arena during their time here and, in so doing, help them to achieve their potential and be the best that they can be, whilst realising that each one of us is different.

Abingdon's sporting ethos is very much about teaching boys about sport and exercise for life; finding an activity they enjoy and learning the benefits of sport

as a life skill. It is not just about health and fitness, but also about commitment, dedication and working as a team to achieve a common goal. There are few careers where these disciplines aren't relevant, so learning to play sport is important for everybody and should be part of everyone's education no matter what their sporting ambitions may be.

As a School, we are incredibly proud of our 1st XV rugby team, who had a tremendous Daily Mail Cup campaign and were unlucky not to progress to the semi-final following a disappointing 17-17 draw at home; likewise our 1st VIII rowers, who claimed the Triple on the tenth anniversary of our previous success in achieving this tremendous accolade. But, perhaps more importantly, this past academic year has seen the introduction of our U14E rugby team, demonstrating our ability to provide opportunities for all pupils to feel part of the School's sporting community.

The Swimming Club is one of our newest additions as a competitive club, and this

year saw the Intermediate Medley Relay team qualify as one of the top sixteen teams in the country, qualify for the National Finals in Southampton, setting a new school record, and acquitting themselves admirably against the top swimming schools in the country. The Cross Country Club continued to dominate local competitions and for the first time gained medals at the prestigious Knole Run.

This provides just a snippet of a wonderful sporting year and I trust that you have enjoyed reading in more detail about the successes of each of our sports clubs, which play a vital role in providing wonderful opportunities for all of our pupils. No doubt the London 2012 Olympics have proved to be an inspiration for all our pupils - for me one of the most striking consistencies in the interviews with the GB athletes was the reference to hard work, a quality that we see on a daily basis from our very own fledgling athletes.

Andrew Hall

Inter-House Event Winners

	U18	U16	U15	U14	Open
Athletics	O'Doherty's		O'Doherty's	Ch'odoulou's	
Badminton	Crescent		Crescent		
Basketball			Crescent		
Chess					Davies'
Cricket			Ch'odoulou's		
Ergos	S-Sander's		School Hse	Boyd's	
Fencing					School Hse
Football	Crescent	Ch'odoulou's	Ch'odoulou's		
Golf			Ch'odoulou's		
Hockey	Davies'		Ch'odoulou's		
Road relay	Davies'	School Hse	School Hse	Davies'	
Rowing			School Hse		
Rugby 7s	Davies'	Boyd's	Boyd's		
Squash	O'Doherty's	Davies'	Ch'odoulou's	Franklin's	
Swimming	Davies'	Ch'odoulou's	O'Doherty's		
Table tennis	O'Doherty's		Webb's		
Tennis			Boyd's		
Waterpolo		Ch'odoulou's			

Lower School

	2nd Years	1st Years
Athletics	2NSH	1SCVM
Cricket	2BJLP	
Cross Country	2NSH	1SCVM
Hockey	2HFCP	1SW
Road relay	2HFCP	1SCVM
Rugby	2BJLP	1SW
Swimming	2HFCP	1SW

House Reports

Christodoulou's

This year I decided that I'd commission this article... actually many have suggested that I do not delegate enough, amongst many other shortcomings within my Housemaster duties, so I acquiesced and asked two boys to write this article and as a reward they could write from the heart with little or no censorship! So, I keep my promise of no censorship on this occasion and this is what Matthew Landells and Robert Noyes wrote as their tutor group prepared to leave the school.

Alexis Christodoulou

"...In 2012 Christodoulou's suddenly and unexpectedly won almost every event in the Inter-House sports competitions. Chess and singing did not count apparently ... We were more than a little surprised by this accomplishment – even our 'mildly' competitive Housemaster was lost for words, at least for a while. So when asked to write this article, we decided to explore the unexpected nature of Christodoulouians' lives inside



Charlie Manasseh

and outside of school. Ironically, the results themselves were, wait for it ... unexpected.

First we looked at ourselves, and the unexpected changes that have shaped our school years, which have led us to where we are now in our final few weeks

at the school. Shying away from blowing our own trumpets and in the interests of fairness, we decided to analyze each other's rather than subject the world to our own opinions of ourselves ...

From feeling completely out of his depth joining the school in first year, by Middle School Matthew was generally considered a reliable pupil and known to be 'a good bloke'. Yet his academic prowess, and his leadership potential were still unknown. He is now not only a first-class Head Boy, but also heads our CCF, raises astounding amounts of money for charity doing absurd cycle rides from Athens to London and is now off to Oxford to read medicine. Such is his perceived breadth of talent that our tutor Dr Gunn signed up tone deaf Matthew to sing in the Chapel Choir!

Robert generally just kept his head down and got on with things, including nannying me through GCSE English. He still tries to be modest, despite being one of our Heads of House, running the school charities' committee, climbing the UK's three highest peaks in under



Mathew Landells

twenty-four hours for charity and raising £22,000 during the process, singing in a band, playing football for the 1st XI and running a half marathon in his spare time. It is perhaps unsurprising that he is so successful at school – but it is surprising to me at least that he has time left for everything else.

Our other Head of House, William Nott, is off to study economics at Cambridge University, but what his interviewer may not have known is that he only chose to study Economics four weeks into his Lower Sixth term, having grown frustrated by his previous subject choices. Phenomenally, the unpredictability of school life is even reflected in the sporting prowess of the tutor group – Charlie Manasseh, the powerhouse centre of the 1st XV rugby side, languished in the C-team back in the third year, while it is still a shock to some that Jack Wilson, the smallest member of the tutor group, now plays in the first team alongside him.

Of course, there are some stories of success in our tutor group, which we struggled to fit into the overriding theme of 'unpredictability' – that is testament to the sheer grit and determination of the people in our house. Rupert Waterson continues to pursue his career in dentistry, despite, from what I can tell, quite possibly having a viable alternative career as a concert pianist!



Peter Allan

Furthermore, Peter Allen has always been an extremely talented rugby player – he has played in the 1st XV for two years now, becoming vice captain. On the same note, Felix Newman joined the school as an academic scholar and thanks to his continued and seemingly effortless academic achievements is going to Cambridge next year to study engineering. Felix is also one of the school's most successful sportsmen, having represented Great Britain multiple times for rowing, winning both Henley Regatta and the Schools' Head as part of the 1st VIII and running the school's Boat Club as Captain of Boats this year.

It is not just the unpredictability of our own achievements or paths through school, but also the unpredictability of life itself that has perhaps affected our tutor group most this year. Earlier this year, Jake Ampleford was diagnosed with cancer, highlighting to all of us the truth that the very nature of our existence is both fragile and perhaps underappreciated. As a tutor group this brought a sense of solidarity for which I think we have Dr Gunn to thank, and it is a massive relief to us all that Jake's treatment has gone well.

As we look back over our time at Abingdon, it seems clear that the only predictable part of school life is its inherent unpredictability. All that remains for us to do is to thank our tutor Dr Gunn and Housemaster Mr Christodoulou for shepherding us down the unpredictable path with patience and humour and to wish each of our tutor group well in the future..."

*Robert Noyes and
Matthew Landells 7TCG*



Felix Newman

Crescent

Early September 2011 found me standing at the front door of Crescent preparing to welcome twenty-six new boarders, eight new dayboys, three new tutors and a new matron. 'Keep calm and carry on' kept drifting through my mind. These are natural emotions for anyone starting in a new school (boys and staff!) but deep down I was confident that it would be OK; I had been fortunate enough to visit twice in the summer term and Joss and Angela Williams had imparted a wealth of knowledge and patiently put up with the silliest of questions. It was clear to me that I was fortunate to be taking over a very special house.

My visits also allowed me to meet the Crescent boys and this reassured me that all would be fine. They were immediately welcoming and these first impressions were reinforced when I met my first Crescent Upper Sixth. All of the literature on taking over a new house (believe me it really does exist!) highlights the importance of the Upper Sixth in the first year. They will set the tone for the house and know the routines far better than the new Housemaster. With four School Prefects I knew this would be a strong year group and I owe the Upper Sixth of 2012 a great deal. They were willing to share with me their ideas and explain to me how Crescent (and Abingdon) operated. In particular Paul Woo as Boarding Head of House and Jamie Ward



Henry Hart



as the day equivalent were a source of invaluable advice and impressed with how well they seemed to know the boys in the house and to genuinely care about the Crescent community. The boarding prefects played a vital role in helping run the house and were diligent in their duties. Perhaps most importantly they helped mentor the new boys who were coming to terms with the Abingdon way of life.

It is impossible in so few words to offer a complete picture of everyone in the House but here are a few of my memories of 7SEG: my daily trudge over to Glyndwr to wake up Daniel Leach who seemed to be able to sleep through the loudest of man-made noises (but whose help on duty and advice was fantastic), discussions with Koyejo Abraham about his seeming addiction to *Made in Chelsea* and *Geordie Shore* ("but you do understand that this is not reality..."), the mighty and all-conquering badminton trio of Adrian Lam, Paul Woo and Jonathan Chung, Martin Yip's fantastic cartoon summaries in the prefect diary and watching Mark Lee and Wesley Yung take on Davies' House in Saturday morning basketball. Then who can forget Jason Wong's jokes (I think we are all trying...)? Andrew Halls and Neil McKenzie have the rare distinction of having won the Princess Elizabeth Cup two years in a row at Henley Royal Regatta. Neil's success was unfortunately not repeated when he famously paired with William Haines in the House Table Tennis. Their

'gentlemen's amateur' approach suffered at the hands of professional teams that had the audacity to practise and even knew the rules! Michael Deeks' dogged determination on the hockey pitch was demonstrated in sacrificing his head to save a goal (resulting in staples in his head). Mark Shuttleworth's willingness to involve himself in everything that Abingdon has to offer. Finally frequently bumping into Stuart Hall outside Cobban front door having forgotten once again the code for the door.

It has been pleasing to see the boys play such an active role in the running of the house. This year witnessed the first two editions of the *Crescent Sentinel* newspaper that was set up and edited by Alex Wong. The media bug has bitten and as I write the boys are in the process of



Jonathan Ainslie

setting up a radio station (watch out News Corporation!). Heyse Ip has decorated the kitchen wall with a mural and matron has run cooking classes for the Middle School tutor groups. The Crescent Committee has met each half of term to discuss house issues and suggest changes. The first result was the new dishwasher that has revolutionised kitchen duty!

Crescent boys have been at the forefront of the Other Half and whilst I cannot name them all, here are a few examples: George Read-Smith was a key member of the 1st XV that enjoyed a long run in the Daily Mail Cup. Koyejo Abraham, Toby Brown, Azarel Adebajo and Afolarin Shasore all represented the 1st XI football (helping Crescent to win the Inter-House Football Competition) while Michael Deeks and Daniel Leach were members of the 1st XI hockey. Edward McLaughlin was a member of the 2nd VIII that managed to qualify for Henley Royal Regatta. Lower down Jamie Irwin, William Sharp, Jonathan Lord and Patrick Boyd-Gorst played rugby for the U16A



William Sharp

team with Patrick also playing football and hockey for the A squads. Jonathan Lord and Luke Derrick both rowed for the J16 crew. Soumya Bhadra was a member of the U15 cricket team that toured South Africa at Easter that set him up for a successful season with the bat and Henry Hart was a dedicated member of the cross-country team. James Bourdon's all-round sporting talents were demonstrated in his contributions to rugby, football and tennis. Jonathan Ainslie's contribution to drama was recognised in the award of a scholarship and Bruno Rogers and Othman Mirzan both entered 'Abingdon's Got Talent' with the latter winning. Musically Sebastian Johns has regularly played organ at chapel (and directed the excellent house song) while Jonathan Chung and Jeffrey Hang have played in the orchestra.

Inter-House competitions have brought out the best in the Crescent community. Unlike in my previous schools, boys willingly volunteer even if it is not their chosen sport. Our victories in badminton and football helped us to secure fifth place overall. House debating was well supported and the fourth year team of James Beazley, Adrian Lei and Felix Tasker were worthy winners and impressed the judges with their argument and delivery.

Perhaps most importantly Crescent in 2011-2012 has witnessed a number of outstanding academic achievements. Six of the Lower Sixth secured all A grades in their AS exams. In the Middle School Wilfred Wong and Jeffery Leung have been awarded academic scholarships based on their performance in the third year and Anthony Chang secured some of the best exam results in the fourth year. Finally, the fifth years produced some excellent mock results which bodes well for the summer.

A word of thanks; none of the above is possible without the guidance and support of the boys' tutors who take pride in seeing members of their tutor groups thrive. Matron and her team of cleaners have looked after the boys and offered encouragement when needed (and managed the crush of boys after toast at break time!). Finally my thanks to the departing Upper Sixth and best wishes for the future.

Alex Tate



Sebastian Johns

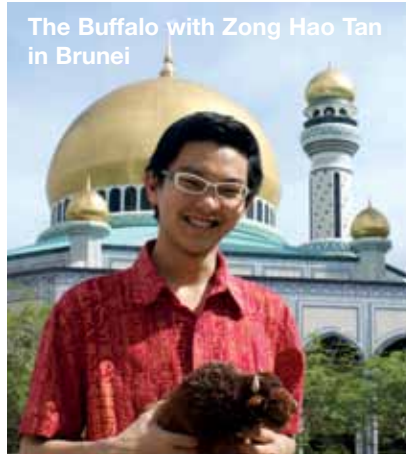


Othman Mirzan (middle)

Davies'

I, the Buffalo, was deeply honoured when back in September 2011 Mr Davies asked me to become the Davies' House mascot. Looking back now I can see that I was the obvious choice; whether fighting lions, stomping on vicious crocodiles or just chilling out grazing on the savannah, my personal qualities of imagination, courage, honesty, generosity and passion stand out as clear as day. I shouldn't have been surprised, therefore when I 'got the nod', given the identical characteristics of the pupils in Davies' House. I should, however, have been better prepared for the action packed, intellectually challenging and emotionally draining year that was to lie ahead. To be honest having raced zebras, laughed with hyenas, and fought with hippos back home I thought I'd seen it all; certainly sleepy Abingdon could hold no great surprises. In short I felt I was in for a well earned rest. How wrong I was...

The Michaelmas term was quite a shock I can tell you! House singing! Simon and Garfunkel's *Mrs Robinson* – awesome! I can't tell you how delighted I was to find the boys had arranged to sing my favourite song in my first term at the school. It was brilliant, I even got to go on stage and see close up Oliver



The Buffalo with Zong Hao Tan in Brunei

Goves and Micah Hayns singing their hearts out, what a blast - although (and I don't like to do this) anyone could see we were better than fourth place! Sometimes things just don't go your way. Also rugby, now there is a game that suits me – charging around in the mud, just perfect for a buffalo. It was no surprise to me then that Angus Weir, Joel Cooper, Gregor Hearn and Sam Hughes all played for the school 1st XV, or that Marcello Cau Tait, Max Townley, Matthew Prior, Matthew Hart, Sam Alexander and Sam Adamson all played for their year group A teams. Best of all though the 6th and 5th form won the Inter-House competition. As we say in my herd: 'wood already touched by fire is not hard to set alight.'



The Buffalo rescued from certain death in the depths of a Moldovan lake

So Michaelmas was cool but then came Lent! More sports, with football being the main one – not such a strength for me, it seems I am too clumsy, although William Juffkins, Thomas Allen, George Dyke, Seb Hickman, Jake Burgess, Nicholas Chan, Sam Ward, David Wheatley, Omoruyi Giwa-Osagie, Charlie Scott-Kerr and his brother Daniel all 'got lovely tekkers' (meaning 'good technique', apparently). More house competitions: Ben Massey-Leahy dominated the chess while Michael Fabes and his brother Thomas left the other runners wheezing on the cross-country course. Down in the Art Department creativity levels were sky high with Red Rowan-Hull and Jonty De La Harpe adding their artistic talents to the longstanding skills of



The Buffalo and the house U15 rugby side



The Buffalo and Sahib Tuteja in India



House table tennis with the Buffalo, Peter Honey and Milan Banerjee



Max Mannering and the Buffalo on Table Mountain, South Africa

Joseph Heade and Mathew Hartshorne. Oh, I forgot one of the highlights of the year, did you see Zong Hao Tan's publications of the Davies' House newsletter? If you didn't, check them out on the house page on the school website (click on the *House Heroes* link). I mean, the Michaelmas ones were good, but the Lent editions: OMG! What a chance for other boys to learn such classy publishing skills! Also, if you are interested in taking photos so good that deserted petrol stations look like art, then it turns out Matvey Kazarnovskiy is your man – the hidden skills of these boys are incredible.

Then, just when you thought it couldn't get any better, the summer term was sweeeeeeeet! So, OK, the exams added

a bit of pressure but for these guys that just seems to be something they handle without batting an eyelid. Certainly they are not afraid of hard work! I have to admit that exams have never really been my thing, I blame my hooves – very difficult to hold a pen with hooves but they all got superb results. At GCSE Thomas Fabes, Bart Jennings, Sam Adamson, Sam Alexander, Robert De La Harpe, Matthew Hart, William Nash, and Gabriel Burrow all got 100% A or A* grades! On top of that at A level Pierre Joffrin, Charlie Bateman, Guy Giles, Guy Bud, Francis Chan, Alaric James, Samuel Hughes, Jack Swanborough, Jonathon Lam, Alexander Lee, Thomas Yip, Charlie Leslau, Christian Reedman and James Waterhouse all got at least three A grades!!

What was even more unbelievable was that the boys just kept on with everything else as well. Gregor Hearn played in the cricket 1st XI (completing the set along with rugby and hockey) and Max Mannering in the U15A. The 1st VIII rowers, Joel Cooper and Will Horlock, were radical. They won National Schools, Head of the River and Henley all in the same season. Down the school the future for the house looks bright too with Max Townley, Robert Yates and Hamish Roper all making their year group A teams. Then we had Seb Hickman dominating the squash court along with Peter Honey and Giles Waterson (aka 'King of the tennis court') making waves for the house.

Finishing the year with an art and music social was great. The imagination of those guys is astonishing. Art from Joe Heade and Jake Burgess along with Dan Scott-Kerr and Jonty De La Harpe and Bart Jennings' DT work looked stunning. And if that wasn't enough there was music from Lewis Spring (who from what I can see single-handedly keeps every music group in the school going), Red 'the Jazz' Rowan-Hull, James 'the Voice' Steele, and Sam 'slider' Kashti on the trombone as well as Tom 'the Tank' Sishton and TC 'the Chat' Chu and their dramatic monologues drawing the crowds and the cheers to finish off the term.

For fast moving men, like me and the boys of Davies' House, the year didn't stop there. So many trips! Last year I visited Troy (or at least our best guess of where it was), India, Brunei, New York, Moldova (where I had a nasty dance with death while leaping from one rowing boat to another – thanks to a quick thinking Moldovan I am still alive), Egypt, Hong Kong, France and Berlin, just to name some of the highlights. What a year! What a rush! What legendary lads!

The Davies' House Buffalo



U18 Inter-House rugby champions and the Buffalo

Franklin's

Head of House this year was Alexander Jeffreys 7JEF, whose calm smile and sense of humour were great assets. Howard Winfield was the amiable Deputy Head, and Peter Barnshaw, Alexander (AJ) Hatzis, Edward Hughes and Nicholas Krol (all 7JEF) were House Prefects. Peter, AJ, Edward and Nicholas were all selected as School Prefects in recognition of their qualities and service to the school, and four selections made this a record year for Franklin's.

Talking of records, we come to the House Singing Competition. Such an innocuous title, such a scarred battlefield of horror and hope! I think it is fair to say that Franklin's have known peaks and troughs over the years, but this was the summit. Henry Jenkinson 7JEF, having navigated a few peaks and troughs himself, led us in Celso Green's *Forget You*, unforgettably. Excitement mounted as the runners-up were named, and then came the moment of glory; we had won! The air was punched, our rivals



Alexander Hatzis



Alexander Jeffreys

were thumped, and the cup was finally ours. It was a superb performance, and everyone had contributed to a memorable whole house effort.

The year contained a huge number of Inter-House sporting competitions, in which we achieved many great results. I was particularly pleased and impressed by our participation and attitude, with so many boys giving their all, even in events that were not their strongest, for the good of the house. Our best sport was badminton, and Jordan Anning 6MDP, Daniel Chen 5DMH, Gem Vongseenin 5DMH and Adam Uberoi 5DMH swept all before them. Testament to our combination of talent and spirit was the final result for the year's competitions; Franklin's came a brilliant second overall, making this our most successful sporting year ever. Well done to the whole house.

David Chung



Henry Jenkinson



There were many individual successes too. Luke Terry 7JEF put in brilliant performances as a key runner for the school. AJ Hatzis, always known to us as a superb rower, played some marvellous rugby for the 1st XV, and Tom Kynge 6MDP continued to show why he has already played rugby for England. Peter Barnshaw pursued his progress as an athlete of national quality. Alexander Jeffreys contributed his black belt expertise in karate in helping to develop the sport at Abingdon. Benjamin

Schneider 3CFC made his mark as a national standard fencer. Henry Jenkinson starred in many dramatic performances within and outside school. Douglas Ward 3CFC showed his enormous potential in athletics. Jack Holford 3CFC is a tremendous all-rounder who has competed successfully for house and school, and William Whitworth 3CFC has already shown why he is of national standard in football. Leon Wu 3CFC is a star chess player, and looks set to be a dominant force

for the future. He, David Chung 3CFC and James Anderson-Besant 3CFC are also key future musicians for the school. I do not usually focus on academic performance here, but a high point of the year for me was Benjamin Nabnian 5DMH achieving a brilliant 100% in his GCSE Greek.

We had to say farewell to Mr Perriss at Easter, as he left to become Head of Geography at Stowe. His friendliness and enthusiasm made a great impression on his boys, who also finally learned to polish their shoes! He will be much missed, and we wish him well. Senora Pradas took over his tutor group, and we are very glad indeed to have her in the house.

The house spirit was markedly strong this year, and I believe that the houseroom has been a friendly place where boys have been able to relax, whether helping each other with prep, playing pool, or just chatting. It has been a particularly good year for Franklin's, and I thank the whole house, boys and tutors, for making it so.

David Franklin



James Anderson-Besant

O'Doherty's

In October the House Singing Competition was the season opener and we had invested a lot of time in choosing a worthy and complex song on the basis of the comments from the previous year's judge. Under the leadership of Thomas Earl 7LFD and the brilliantly judged and popular conducting style of Hugh Cutting 4JHW the house came together with a high-quality rendition of Coldplay's *Fix You*. However, the judge said he didn't like depressing songs so in an instant another one bit the dust. Hmmmm, there's an idea!

In the end of Michaelmas term sports the U18s were runners-up in the sevens competition once again, Laurence Copson 7LFD won in the table tennis against all the odds, the badminton players came third overall and the U15s, inspired by Tom Best 4JHW, took the honours in swimming.

Superb inter-house competition performances were not exclusively in sport this year. The new-look and much improved Debating Competition provided an opportunity for the more cerebral and eloquent talents of the house to be showcased. Nathan Byrne, Harry



Thomas Earl



Toby Warren

Evans and Andrew Rainbow-Ockwell (all 3JAM) showed tremendous maturity and worked hard in their preparation to debate motions covering the influence of television, compulsory sport and exam pressure, eventually coming runners-up. Also runners-up were James Swain, Alex Churchman-Davies and Edward Reynolds (all 4JHW). This team gelled perfectly and individually developed complex arguments, but also worked brilliantly together to anticipate the opposition's case, which is so important in this style of debate. The fifth year team rode their luck in early rounds but a new talent emerged in the silky smooth Rian Bahia 5GRM whose incisive yet charming analysis made the difference. Unfortunately this team was the third out of three to lose in the final. Surely the wisdom of school debating stars Olly Jackson 6DCB, Laurence Copson 7LFD and Zander Cornish-Moore 7LFD would prevail? They did, just, winning a very competitive final against Davies' and showing that the experience of dealing with points of order and rebuttal is crucial. We were rightly proud to have all four teams in the final.

The U15s continued to carry the rest of the house in sport, being runners-up in squash, hockey and the Road Relay, and proved their all round talent, but there

were one or two highlights from the other year groups along the way: school team stars Toby Warren 7LFD and Thomas Godfrey 6DCB decimated all comers in squash and the sixth form were also runners-up in the Road Relay - but very worrying in this latter annual athletic extravaganza were the supermarket trolley quartet and the pair from the fourth year clad from head to toe in pink and blue lycra: thank goodness their faces were obscured. The U15s continued their winning trend in tennis



Peter Moore

and golf after Easter, sharing an intense rivalry with Christodoulou's in pretty much every event.

Only the compulsory House Singing Competition involves more boys than the Inter-House Athletics. In this latter event it matters just as much how many points you pick up in the B team 1500m or triple jump as it does at the front of the field in the 100m. Everyone in the house contributed something and most were superb. The Lower Sixth returned from study leave and some slightly unfamiliar names dominated the middle distance events – Andrew Birch, Leo Calnan and Matthew Workman scored heavily as did Peter Moore (all 6DCB). Alex Davies 4JHW completed the sprint double, Edward Reynolds and Teddy Curtis (both 4JHW) showed their cross-country class in middle distance and Hugh Cutting 4JHW proved his all-round capability by retaining his javelin crown. The U14s were consistent across the board and came second with the other two year groups winning, so the athletics trophy was ours. With such a strong set of Summer term results we could have retained the overall inter-house crown if we had won the final of the U15 cricket competition. We bowled and fielded well but Christodoulou's used the deathly slow wicket better, taking pace off the



Tim Grant, Edward Antonian, Rian Bahia, Oscar Jenkins

ball, and won comfortably. The overall competition was won by a single point by Davies, whom we congratulate.

Two days before the Griffen Ball the Upper Sixth finally went to the dogs. At the Oxford greyhound stadium Leo Dudin and I celebrated and reminisced with the first cohort of boys who had been members of O'Doherty's since the third year. Time has flown. Later that summer, with excellent A2 results behind them, they were off to embark on medical,

architectural, classical, engineering and chemical careers, to name but a few. They were a multi-talented bunch. Chris Hall was the fastest hooker in the west and smoked the peacepipe with the Germans to improve European relations, Thomas Earl made a four week absence before the AS exams work to his advantage and leaves us for Cambridge, Jack Lindsay (the Lord Lucan of Abingdon sport) is off to China, and Tom McGivan, who edited *The Martlet*, will no doubt thrive in Durham. But there was danger too: Nian Patel survived five years of the drive-by shootings on Conduit Road just to get an education, Toby Warren saved the house from a killer wasp attack, while 'Red Leader' Zander Cornish-Moore will hopefully swap the cut and thrust of the debating chamber for the RAF. We wish them all well and are pretty certain that we'll be seeing them on television, watching them get elected as MPs, or admiring their buildings soon enough.

I thank all tutors and boys for their contributions to both house and school this year and look forward to their continued efforts and achievements next year.

Nick O'Doherty



George Wilder

School House

School House started the school year back in September eager to embrace the changes to the school day. Both boarders and dayboys had their ideas about how they would be spending Saturday mornings, certainly. There was a determination by boarders to make the most of the weekend programme; when the previous year they would have been in lessons, this year they were paintballing, golfing, visiting the Bodleian Library, exploring HMS Victory or making a good start on the weekend's prep, to name but a few of the options. The dayboys enjoyed the enhanced games room facilities during their lunch breaks, and were as conscientious as ever about Saturday sports fixtures. Although we have again been wildly inconsistent in house competitions – our habit this year has been either to win or to come last – the boys in School House have once again given me many reasons to feel proud because of their many individual achievements and personal qualities. And now that there will be a musician as Housemaster, guess who the smart money is on for the House Singing...

The third years showed boundless energy and talent and had Mr Shirazi as their tutor to point them in the right direction. A strong Lower School group did much to set the pace – Joe Blanch ended the year on a high by winning the academic prize, Harry Anderson and James Robinson Ranger showed how to make the most of the Other Half, and Charlie Macpherson and Thomas Ripley helped set the tone socially. There was also a healthy number of boarders who did their bit to make life entertaining in the evenings and at weekends! Adam Teece and Max Thompson both had the benefit of older brothers in the house, and they and the remaining members of the tutor group quickly began to make their mark here. We wish the one leaver, David Wei, well.

The fourth years were looked after in her own inimitable style by their tutor Miss Petrov, and were intent on



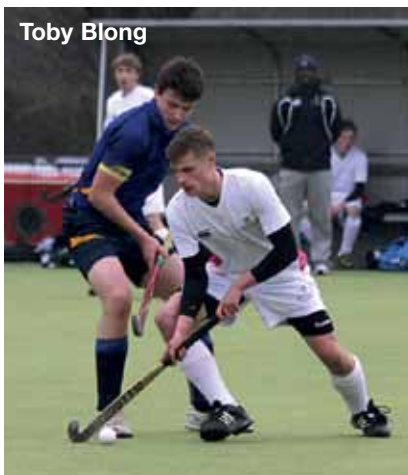
success in many areas. Jack Walsh won the academic prize but also was an exemplary contributor in both music and sport, Luca Rampin and Alexander Carmichael were others who combined hard work with making the most of opportunities here outside the classroom and the School House rowing quad – James Bruce, Thomas Teece, Tommy Nicholson, and Jack Walsh – won their trophy even without the help of Hector Blackwell and Jeff Zhao. Add more fine musicians to the mix, and other young men who clearly enjoy each other's company, and you have a fine tutor group. We were sorry to lose one of the stalwarts, Archie Ashford, and we wish him well in Australia.

The fifth years had Mr Hallinan to guide them through the challenges of their GCSE year, so it was no surprise that

they seemed to take things in their stride. There were some sporting triumphs with Kieran Routledge's selection for the England rugby squad taking pride of place, but Daniel Matthews and Adrian Au continued to excel in cricket and swimming respectively, while Alexander Bovingdon again worked hard on his equestrianism outside school. The group once again did more than their bit for Abingdon music with George Burrage, Tim Davies, George Ruck and Julian Ting all contributing to their usual high standard. The mutual support of the whole group was easy to see, and although we wish Felix Ogden well in his new school, we look forward to seeing all the others back for what should be a successful sixth form career at Abingdon.

The Lower Sixth had another new tutor to train; Miss Katic was a quick learner





however, and soon got their measure as they settled down. It would be harder to meet a nicer, more positive tutor group, but the new boys this year managed to enhance this reputation – Max English, Richard Ma, William Turner, Howard Tam and Wilson Wong all settled quickly, partly thanks to the support of the old guard, and Alexander Hewetson-Smith who joined the house as a boarder also soon became part of the School House furniture! Once again the group impressed with their willingness to support each other and their desire to make the most of Abingdon life. Christopher Cooke in particular ended the year on a high note by winning an Oriel College philosophy essay prize, but they all look set for a successful final year at Abingdon as the leading lights in School House. Thomas Browne and Max



English will be Heads of House as well as School Prefects, and I wish them and the whole tutor group well.

The Upper Sixth were as surprised as anybody to find themselves in that position, but had the great Mr Carson to see them through their last year here – even if he did jump ship early to take up his leadership team post at Leeds Grammar. Hard work on the UCAS application process brought in some great university offers, including two from Cambridge for Na'im Peyman and Phoenix Tse and two from Oxford for George Eason and Michael Zhao. The musicians – for example, Will Abell, Gerald Chan, Na'im and Timothy Li continued to do their bit – and solo performances from the last two named were highlights for School House. First team sportsmen again included

Toby Blong, Daniel Lloyd and Charles Studdy, who coincidentally looked as good as anyone at the Griffen Ball...

Toby and Simon Spafford made a very effective and caring Head of House team and Asin Zahir got many honourable mentions from the Lower Sixth as the House Prefect they would most like to be like. We wish the whole year group well for results day and beyond.

I wish my successor Mr Marriott and his wife well as they start their time in School House – it would be over egging the pudding to say that I have enjoyed every minute of my time here, but I will stand by what I once wrote in this publication, that boarding housemastership is one of the best jobs in education. I have certainly had more fun in School House than in any other post I have had. For this I would of course like to thank all the boys who have been through the house during my time here and their parents for letting me look after them, but also the house staff I have worked with over the years. The other woman in my life – Di Faulkes, who has been house matron throughout my time here – deserves a special mention, as things would have gone downhill very fast without her! But I am very much looking forward to getting to know my own family again, and am particularly grateful to Yvonne, Cameron and Eloise for joining me over the past seven years in the adventure that has been School House.

Douglas Aitken



House Singing competition

Southwell-Sander's

As the now familiar patter of June rain continues unabated I am drawn to pen a few words summing up the past year. This is now the third time I have tried to come up with an accurate summary of the comings and goings in Southwell-Sander's. Being deep in the exam season it seems appropriate to begin with the leavers of 7JJ aka 5DJB.

As a tutor group they would always set the academic bar very high – normally with Thomas Salt and Edward O'Brien vying for the best report of the year. In terms of UCAS, an unprecedented five lads got accepted into Oxbridge including Thomas, Edward, James Jenkins, Sarab Sethi and George Apps. The rest of the group can also be delighted with a splendid selection of offers from excellent institutions, including Thomas Pagel getting a provisional rowing scholarship to Yale.

Outside the academic realm they are a sporty bunch. Rowing has always been a strength, with Thomas Pagel achieving international honours this year, while he and James Richards formed part of a 1st VIII that won the Head of the River in March and more recently the National Schools in Nottingham.

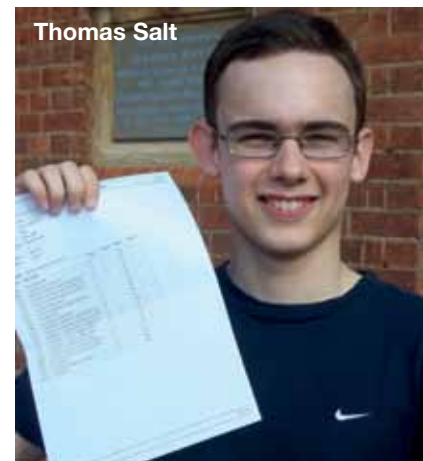
Pearce Taylor was a stalwart of the 1st XV and played an integral role in the team reaching the quarter-finals of the Daily Mail Cup, while William Bibby has been a regular in the 1st XI cricket.



Congratulations go to Ben Bryant, Alexander Sunderland and James Tracey on their selection as School Prefects, while Ben has also achieved national shooting honours. Well done to Oliver Bowyer and George Jorgensen who were both selected to head up their respective sections of the CCF.

I have been ably supported this year by my Heads of House George Jorgenson and Pearce Taylor and the House Prefects. On the whole they have mentored the younger tutor groups well and fostered an atmosphere of openness and camaraderie. Last but by no means least, James Winters has been a valuable member of the hugely successful Film Unit. Huge thanks must go to Mrs Jennings who has worked

tirelessly over the last two years, helping them navigate the vagaries of the UCAS system and organising the very popular form breakfasts (which are great unless you get there after the rowers!) and the fantastic tutor group karting outing where the speed demons of Bibby and Black really showed their mettle (Sebastian clearly drives like he karts, judging by the number of prangs he has!). It would be remiss of me also not to mention Mr Bickerton who took this group throughout Middle School and fuelled them with many a sailing story and a few facts of life! Well done to all the tutor group – it has been a pleasure to get to know each and every one of them – yes, Tom Jeffrey, you too! – and I wish you all the very best in your undergraduate life and beyond. You have done the Green Army proud.



Waiting in the wings comes 6HKA who have thrived under the thoughtful tutelage of Miss Allcock. They have recently returned from exams and have appeared to cope well. They now embark on the selection process for prefects, both at school and house level, where I am sure many will be successful. The system has been revamped this year as we try to up the profile of the house and the duties that a prefect carries out. They are crucial positions in the smooth running of the house and I am keen on trying to get the most out of them as possible. Notable achievements in the group include Matthew Carter who has been a stalwart in the 1st VIII, winning both the Head of the River and National Schools as well as having the fastest ergo in the country for his age. In addition, Sasha Barras has captained the 1st XI cricket with both authority and a good deal of tactical knowledge, Philip Smith received a Head's Praise for success in the UK linguistics Olympiad, while James Zhou continues to excel as a member of the all-conquering badminton side. House music will be in good hands next year with Humphrey Thompson, who appears to play a crucial role in just about every musical production the school puts on. This is to mention but a few names in a tutor group full of personalities who have really begun to flourish in the more relaxed atmosphere of the sixth form. I look forward to working with as many of them as possible as we continue to forge a strong house ethos of inclusion, friendliness and achievement.



George Jorgensen

Hot on their heels is 5PW who had to say goodbye to their tutor Mr Willerton at the end of his long and illustrious career at Abingdon. He had been an excellent tutor who the boys looked up to and respected. Within the tutor group there was plenty of talent with the sharp shooters of Daniel Belcher, Matthew Allison and Edward Bryant all getting national or regional honours for the Rifle Club; while Aman Patel represented the county at golf and Ben Mitchell did the same at hockey. They were a hard working bunch, who regularly achieved strong reports. Leo Wood and Jack Squizzoni were both appointed Lower School Assistants and carried the job off with aplomb.

4DJB turned out to be a tutor group who were full of fun, and I think they revelled in

the stories of Mr Bickerton's sailing days. Yet again they offered a lot, with Jack Dawson and William Johnson achieving honours for fencing, and the latter also being a stalwart of school music, while Ross Cook, Joshua Burdass and Declan Field were key members of the very successful U15A XV. Finally Owen Morgan was the lone representative in the U15A XI that got through to the Lord's Taverners quarter final. Below them, 3RKJ's year ended with an excellent tutor group social at Drayton Park golf club where the lads, Dr Jeffreys and myself had a hit around at the driving range before pairing up for a fun nine holes on the par three course. The highlight was obviously Dr Jeffreys and myself beating Joe Sandall and William Saunders on the last hole! William Dolin reached national level at sailing, while Lewis Dandridge was the stand out rugby player.

Overall it remains a fantastic house to be in charge of and despite the state that the houseroom sometimes gets left in, and the odd copy dished out for bouts of colourful language or inappropriate use of a pool cue, I feel enormously privileged to be a part of 'The Green Army'. Working with such a supportive and hard working set of colleagues and enthusiastic and talented bunch of lads means (pardon the cliché) no two days are the same and it is a real pleasure to come to work each day. Long may it continue.

Robin Southwell-Sander



Webb's

The end of last academic year saw me with a pleasant problem: almost all the then Lower Sixth wanting to get involved in running the house and being House Prefects. I can remember thinking then how this exemplified the spirit of the house with the boys wanting, as they all said in their interviews, to 'give something back'. Not wanting to knock their enthusiasm I took them all on with a plan that sharing the load would make their jobs more manageable. To top that, several of them wanted to be Head of House, so I split the annual job into a termly position. The incoming Heads of House willingly agreed to write this article for the *Abingdonian*, giving more of a perspective from the boys from the house. Kicking off with the first term is Edward Norris:

The Michaelmas term is a busy term in the house as it sees the arrival of the new third years. They were quick to integrate and get involved in the legendary house spirit. This house spirit was shown in abundance in the House Singing effort, which this year was directed towards performing Maroon 5's *This Love*. Despite a huge effort from the house, unfortunately we couldn't continue our winning run, but I think everyone still enjoyed the competition and got a lot out of it.

Things got off to a very good start for the Upper Sixth, with two from the tutor group, Rory Marsh and Hamish Grant, being selected to become School Prefects and eleven others becoming House Prefects.

Another highlight of the term has to be the superb house assemblies provided by some tutor groups. The Upper Sixth's *Lord of the Rings* parody stands out as one of the more entertaining.

Edward Norris 71M

The Michaelmas term also showed us a few new talents on the pool and table tennis tables: Louis Hampden looked good on both, and Matthew



Young looked particularly useful at table tennis, often luring his opponents into a false sense of optimism by keeping his excitement under wraps.

The end of the term came about very quickly and we needed to put a team together for the Inter-House competitions. The performances that stood out were those of the U16 rugby team of Rory Garrett, Matthew Cammack, Thomas Padfield, Michael Dewar, Freddie Pinkerton, Alastair Smith, Alex Munro and Christian Lawson-Statham, and I particularly remember Michael being all over the field and launching himself into tackle after tackle. The other Michael in the house, Michael Esnouf, gave the other outstanding performance. In the pool he was certainly the quality swimmer from Webb's, and arguably from the school in amongst several decent club swimmers. Michael did the breaststroke, butterfly and individual medley and won them all.

The idea was that the second Head of House's report could follow on here, and then the third. At the time of writing it is mid-July and after plenty of nagging

nothing has appeared from either of them. I shan't name them here but if you're in the house you'll know to whom I'm referring!

The dark starts and early dusks that go along with the start of the Lent term always make Easter seem a long way ahead. The fifth years were thrown into mocks straightaway; most did very well, but for some it was a wake up call and the start of some harder work moving towards GCSEs. To help provide a little relaxation for everybody, Bertie Dickson and a few of the House Prefects put together the draw for the annual pool competition. It saw a good entry including the defending champion Alexander Fisher. The young talents held their own against the sixth formers with Louis Hampden knocking Alexander out on the way to the final, which he also won.

All were now well and truly used to the two-week timetable and Saturdays without lessons, but the third change to tradition for the year came into action this term, and that was football. More boys in the house seemed to get into the school football teams than any other sports





Tom Wiblin and Kester Webb

from other terms, creating quite an air of excitement on the days before the matches. I felt justified in looking forward to the Inter-House football competitions at the end of the term, hoping it would bring up our overall position.

Starting with the sixth form football, Joel Morris, Hal Parke, Jonathan Hunter, Will Swarbrick, Bertie Dickson and Edward Norris formed a team. They played enthusiastically and matched their talk in some exciting games, getting to the final but then being pipped to the ten points by Crescent. The U16 football squad of Thomas Kelly (now a qualified referee for adult regional league matches), Johnny Burrow, Thomas Padfield, Alexander Rowe-Jones, Naimish Adroja and Freddie Pinkerton looked a very strong team on paper, but by all accounts we seemed to come off on the wrong side of some of the ref's decisions. At the end of the afternoon the team came seventh.

Other competitions at this stage saw the U16 waterpolo squad of Michael Esnouf, Matthew Cammack, Samuel Ashby-Crane, Andrew Stoney, Oscar Jackson and Duncan Grant earn their way to the



Michael Dewar



final, where they were beaten by a very strong Christodoulou's team, and the U14 ergo team of Murray Eccleston, Thomas Wiblin, Rory Fisher and Kester Webb coming fourth.

The Lent term also saw the restructured Inter-House Debating Competition, which seemed to suit us as we won two of the four competitions. The winning teams were Charles Edwards, Samuel Foster and Kester Webb in the third year, and Oscar Talbot, Johnny Burrow, and Noah Rogers in the fifth year. This competition is rapidly moving up my list of favourite Inter-House competitions and I'm already looking forward to seeing these boys perform again next year.

In the Summer term revision was becoming the focus for most with the fourth years being the first to sit their exams straight after the break and the others following in a near continuous cycle through the term. There was still time for plenty of inter-house rivalry however, firstly in the athletics afternoon. There were many great performances here, not least from boys who didn't win but gave their best effort to do their best, but the performances that spring to mind now are the fourth year 4x100m relay team of Alex Munro, William Carter Keall, Freddie Pinkerton and Michael Dewar, Zachary Muncaster winning the javelin with a standing throw, and the Lower Sixth 4x100m relay of Charlie Roberts, Charlie Fitchett, Elliott Mills and Henry Sensecall.

The last Wednesday of the school year saw one final flurry of sports competitions for the third and fourth years. I saw the rowers first and watched them win their first race. Harry Parker,



Michael Esnouf

Alastair Smith, Thomas Wiblin and Rory Fisher with Timothy Bird coxing proved an effective team; far lighter than most competitors they sculled well together and tapped the boat along nicely. They won their pool to get to the final where the others, with a few races behind them, had got together a bit more and proved a little too quick. The golf was interesting to watch with plenty of complete novices taking chunks out of the fairways. Duncan Grant and James Law looked as if they knew what they were doing and I left them confident they might do quite well. The cricketers played as a team really well despite losing James Fitzjohn to a 1st XI match. With Freddie Pinkerton injured the team was William Carter Keall, Michael Dewar, Louis Hampden, Henry Wilkinson, and Matthew Young. They both batted and fielded well with Louis scoring the maximum thirty runs in the first two matches. They managed to win their group to get to the semi-final but then lost to the eventual winners.

Overall the school has seen a lot of changes introduced during the year. I think the boys in the house have adjusted well and most have appreciated the positive impact the changes have delivered. I'm looking forward to seeing what they can all do next year.

Mike Webb

Lower School

Since I am writing this article on the day that Team GB overtook its gold medal tally from 2008 to make London 2012 the most successful Olympics for Great Britain for over a century, it seems appropriate for the focus of this report to have an Olympic theme. The motto for London 2012 was “inspire a generation” and it was with this in mind that the 1968 Olympic hurdles gold medallist David Hemery was tasked by Sebastian Coe with creating a lasting educational legacy from the games. Hemery’s response was to develop the “Be the Best that you can be” programme that encourages young people to be more self-aware and develop their sense of being responsible for their own success. Lower School boys began following this programme in September with “Be the Best” lessons over the course of the year considering ideas such as what makes a good team, how to push yourself out of your comfort zone, and how to set achievable targets. The programme is launched in schools by a visit from an Olympian speaker and so it was that the boys sat down in the Amey Theatre at the start of the academic year to hear from Adam Whitehead, European and Commonwealth gold medal-winning breaststroke swimmer. Adam’s talk was truly inspiring and the messages he gave the boys including “you can live with failure but you can’t live with regrets”



Lower School with David Hemery’s Olympic Torch

and “success is a choice not a chance” were ones that would serve them well throughout the rest of the year.

Certainly when it came to the big event of the first half of term, the annual House Singing Competition, Lower School definitely chose to succeed, having been given the opportunity to vote for their song for the first time. Any doubts the Lower School Housemaster may have had about this unprecedented level of democracy were swept away when the boys really went for it in all of their rehearsals of *Jar of Hearts* by Christina Perri. Ably conducted by Alex Reynolds 2HFCP and accompanied on the piano by Ethan Clarke 1JAC, Lower School secured its best result in the competition to date, coming third overall and, by cleverly having two boys who had to hobble on to the stage on crutches, we also got the biggest Ahhh! of the day.

The new structure of the school week with its longer lunchbreaks allowed the boys to get involved in a far greater range of Other Half activities than in previous years and several new ones were offered including the chance to write articles for a Lower School magazine, *The Blazer*, help out looking after the various animals in the Biology Department, take part in the new look Lower School Wind Band, attend Lower School debates, and, for the first time in

many years, represent the school in football.

The target that several of the second years set themselves over the course of the Lent term was to aim to secure a scholarship for the Middle School and it was good to see them all pushing themselves hard in their respective areas of expertise. Congratulations go to the successful candidates: Charlie Landells 2NSH, Patrick Leggett 2NSH, Sebastian Mulford 2NSH, William Sheffield 2BJLP and Henry Waterson 2HFCP (Academic), Thomas Bishop 2HFCP and Thomas Dingwall 2BJLP (Sports), Thomas Foster 2NSH and Charlie Landells 2NSH (Drama), Joel O’Byrne 2HFCP and Henry Waterson (Art Exhibition) and Stuart Pearson 2BJLP and Alex Reynolds (Music Exhibition).

The annual residential adventure trips in the Easter holidays definitely gave the boys the chance to push themselves outside their comfort zones. First thirty members of the second form headed to Plas Pencelli in Wales to enjoy six days of adventurous activity including caving, canoeing and climbing. The rather changeable weather conditions meant that one group ended up walking up the Brecon Beacons in deep snow – a challenge that was not particularly enjoyed at the time but which certainly gave the boys a sense of achievement



and a good story at the end of the day! Two weeks later fifty-four first years travelled to the PGL Little Canada centre on the Isle of Wight where, amongst many other activities, they successfully developed their team-working skills in solving the puzzles of The Matrix, while also pushing themselves individually to overcome the challenge of climbing up a telegraph pole to complete All Aboard. The sense of camaraderie on both these trips was commendable with the boys being very supportive of their peers when some were clearly struggling to overcome various fears and plenty of DMCs (deep meaningful conversations) taking place amongst the second years

over evening hot chocolate (one of which the Lower School Housemaster took part in without even realising it was a DMC!).

Teamwork was also very much in evidence during all of the inter-tutor group competitions that took place over the course of the year with the result that no one tutor group had it all their own way. In the second year 2H secured victory in the road relay, hockey and swimming, 2P won the rugby, cricket and Lower School Challenge, while 2S were dominant in cross country, public speaking and athletics. In the first year competitions victories were shared between 1M (cross country, road relay



and athletics) and 1W (rugby, hockey and swimming) – rumour has it that Mr Cotton has given his tutor group a strict training regime to follow over the summer holidays to get them back in the game! An individual winner who deserves special mention is Ray Ren 2HFCP who, having secured victory in the table-tennis tournament, went on to win the pool tournament as well, beating first year champion Edward Green 1SW in the grand final. The highlight of these events was undoubtedly the athletics competition held at Tilsley Park when we were very honoured indeed to welcome David Hemery himself as our guest. David fired the starting pistol for the 200m, having first given the runners some words of wisdom, and then spent time talking to the boys and parents, allowing them all to pass round the gold medal he won in 1968 and the Olympic torch that he had carried through Royal Wootton Bassett as part of the 2012 torch relay.

Drama offers another arena for the boys to push themselves out of their comfort zone and this year saw a welcome addition to the calendar in the form of a Lower School Drama Evening in which every single boy performed on stage in front of an appreciative audience of peers and parents – the amazingly wide range of performances, from mask work and





improvised comedy to a thrilling rendition of *The Jabberwock*, was put together in only a few weeks' worth of drama lessons and paid testament to how hard the boys and their teachers had worked in that time. The summer term then saw the Lower School production of *Bugsy Malone*, a hugely ambitious undertaking masterminded by Mr Phillips. The boys clearly relished the chance to fire their splurge guns (especially those involved in making the short film in which various members of staff found themselves on the receiving end) and act like a gang of hoodlums – not too much of a leap for some of them perhaps?



The exams in the Summer term gave all the boys the chance to set themselves ambitious targets and to develop the revision skills that will be so crucial to them as they move up through the school. Particular congratulations are due to Henry Waterson, William Sheffield, Sebastian Mulford, Joseph Nash 1JAC, Thomas Butcher 1SCVM and Robert MacLennan 1SW who won the academic prizes in their respective tutor groups for topping the class in these exams, but plenty of other boys worked hard to be the best that they could be with many second years really improving on how they had done a year earlier.

The year ended with a truly memorable event in the form of the "Be the Best" celebration evening at which we both marked the end of our first year as part of the scheme but also bade a formal farewell to the second years as they prepared to make the move to Middle School. The first half of the evening saw Adam Whitehead return to speak to the boys again and remind them about the qualities needed to be a success. All the boys then worked together to relive the House Singing Competition with a rousing performance of *Jar of Hearts* in front of their parents, which was followed by each second year tutor group presenting an item introduced by their tutor. The boys had worked hard on

their respective pieces over the course of the Summer term and the results were impressive – 2S sang *Don't Stop Believing* conducted by Charlie Landells and with solos from Thomas Foster and Angus Pinkerton, 2P presented the music video they had filmed which celebrated the importance of friendship (while also allowing them to poke fun at their tutor and Housemaster), and the 2H orchestra performed the Star Wars theme tune conducted by Mr Cotton resplendent in a Darth Vader helmet and brandishing a rather inferior light-sabre as baton. It was perhaps in watching these tutor group items that the fact that the boys can achieve great things when they work together was most visible – every single member of each tutor group was involved with many of them certainly out of their usual comfort zones (the look of slightly manic concentration on the face of one of the less-naturally musical boys as he kept the rhythm going on the bongo drums comes to mind) and they all contributed to what was a truly inspiring evening. Prizes were awarded to Alexander Moss 1JAC (The Broadbent Cup for sporting contribution), Joshua Ascroft 2HFPC (The Woodgett Cup for all-round contribution) and George Jeffreys 2HFPC (The Dillon Cup for Lower School service – a new award this year in memory of former Lower School Housemaster Michael Dillon) while Baker Awards were presented to Daniel Alcock 2BJLP, John-Christian Davey 2BJLP, Magnus Gregory 2BJLP, Samuel Martin 2HFPC, Benjamin Passey 2NSH, Alexander Reynolds and Henry Waterson.

This final event of the academic year proved beyond any doubt that the departing second years are a very talented and cohesive group of young men who are going to go on to great things in every area of school life. They have certainly kept myself and their tutors entertained during their time in Lower School and we all wish them well for the future.

Adam Jenkins

Common Room Farewells

Robert Edmonson

Robert Edmondson's temporary appointment to teach geography after Matthew Perriss moved to Stowe School was one of those serendipitous events that was meant to be. Already employed by the school in the boat club as a physiotherapist, it was Athol Hundermark who suggested we approach Robert as he was considering a change of career and wanted to become a geography teacher. He has taught Lower and Middle School groups with great aplomb and certainly showed a strong and passionate interest in the subject. We wish him every success in September when he starts at Reading Blue Coats in the Geography Department and as their Master in charge of Rowing.

Gareth Callan

Gareth Callan, the dynamic, driven chemist returned to Abingdon from St Peter's York in January 2012, and promptly was appointed Head of Chemistry at Warwick School but not before he once again impressed with his conscientious approach to the teaching of his subject and with his explosive (quite literally) lecture to visiting primary schools. An enthusiastic rugby coach, he has taken cricket teams and been a visiting tutor in the boarding house during both his stints at Abingdon.

Joel Taylor

Dr Joel Taylor has taught maths this year, bringing his considerable academic experience to the teaching of further maths for the sixth form, and his ability to conjure prodigious numbers of carefully constructed worksheets for Middle School. Indeed it has been those perfect sets of notes and examples for which he will be best remembered, as they still float around the files of his past students. As a boarding tutor in Davies' House his skills of exposition on the mathematics syllabus were often employed assisting students. He was a keen participant in cross country and greatly enjoyed his

athletics coaching, as did his students. He now progresses to a PGCE course in Oxford - we wish him well with his further exploits in teaching.

Julie le Belhomme

Julie le Belhomme first came to Abingdon in 2005 as a French assistant and enjoyed the experience so much that she decided to make teaching her career. We were therefore delighted to be able to welcome Julie back in January 2011 as a newly qualified teacher to replace Estelle Slatford during her maternity leave. Right from the outset Julie showed commitment and team spirit and was a joy to have in the Modern Languages Department. She shared her experiences from insets in Spanish and ICT and was a great asset to the first third year Paris/Disneyland trip and the first year trip to Normandy. As well as her enthusiasm and contribution to the department, Julie was keen to participate in all aspects of Abingdon life as her commitment to Davies' House, cross country and community service showed. Julie has since gone on to take up a full time teaching position at Highgate School and in July 2012 became Julie Spencer, having married Kris Spencer, also an ex-Abingdon teacher. We wish her and her new husband all the best for the future.

Kevin Carson

Comet-like in his traversal of the Abingdon firmament, Kevin Carson was with us for just three years but has left a considerable legacy for his successors in the English Department

to build on. He arrived, bright eyed and ready for a new challenge from being Head of English at Cheltenham College and immediately set about the job of moulding the English Department into a more modern and dynamic teaching force. Under his guidance, schemes of work and programmes of study were introduced to harmonise practice over the year groups and gradually GCSE became iGCSE, culminating last year in our first set of English iGCSE results which set an astounding record for the school with approximately two thirds of boys being awarded an A*. He could be hard and direct with people and certainly was the scourge of careless thinking and deliberate obfuscation, but it was all in the service of better teaching and learning. He liked people to be as robust with him in their communication and respected in particular those who took him on intellectually. Boys were inspired by his classes, his quirky dialect and accent, his unstoppable pursuit of excellence and his genuine care for them and their progress. Quicker than we might have liked, maybe, but an inevitability in itself, he left us to take up the Deputy Head (Academic) post at the enormous Grammar School at Leeds.

Matthew Perriss

Matthew Perriss joined Abingdon in January 2009 and quickly established himself as a highly competent teacher of geography and popular sixth form tutor in Franklin's House. In the classroom he displayed a strong passion for geopolitics in any form. High-class debate, discussion and argument



were the hallmarks of his sixth form teaching. Forcefully presenting a left of centre stance would always guarantee engagement from the wings within a classroom: Matthew relished the debate and his Oxbridge classes flourished as a direct consequence. Outside the classroom Matthew, an ex-army officer himself, found his services in high demand within the CCF and, as a passionate sportsman, he devoted many hours to the Rugby Club with several generations of Abingdonians receiving the rigorous and demanding 'Perriss' training regime. Latterly he was Head of General Studies. Matthew left Abingdon at Easter 2012 and moved to Stowe School as Head of Geography.

Mark Forth

Mark Forth left Abingdon School after four years and one term to take up a promotion to become Head of Chemistry at Haileybury College. During this time he developed into an excellent teacher with a calm and confident manner in the classroom. He claims that his greatest achievement was teaching Thomas Salt 7JJ all the chemistry he knows and there can be no greater accolade than this. Mark was also fully involved in the life of the school outside the classroom. He worked as a boarding tutor for Crescent House for four years and handled some tricky characters with great empathy. On the sports field he has been an excellent rugby coach culminating in the U15's unbeaten 2011 season in regular fixtures. He has also helped out with tennis



adapting well to the rigorous demands of lounging around in the sunshine at top class private schools watching sport. A keen traveller, he was behind establishing a link between Abingdon School and Kenya and led a school expedition that successfully climbed Mount Kilimanjaro. Mark will go on to be an excellent head of department but his loathing of early morning working could add a certain excitement to proceedings in his new department. An 8 o'clock phone call asking for a decision or making a request would often enliven a boring early morning! Mark has been excellent to work with and both the Chemistry Department and the boys will miss him greatly in many ways.

Stephen Ridd

Dr Stephen Ridd returned to live in Oxford in 2006, having taught at Headington and then in Ipswich as Head of Classics. He joined Abingdon as a part-time teacher of classics (and also taught Latin at the Prep School for a few years), but was never part-time in his outlook, always helping out on trips to museums, theatres and even up to Hadrian's Wall. In his time at the school, he taught a huge range of subjects, from Lower School Latin up to sixth form Greek, Latin and ancient history. Although he is the most humane of men, he always encouraged his pupils to set themselves the highest standards: among the boys he was renowned as a bit of a mean marker, but this was really just an indication of his high expectations, as well as intolerance with the modern fashion for very high marks - indeed such is his modesty that he would never have even considered awarding himself such high marks! In spite of this modesty, he was one of the most knowledgeable and widely-read members of the Common Room, and it was in part so that he could devote more time to his own research that he chose to retire fully from teaching: we all look forward to seeing his eagerly awaited book on ancient epic hit the bookshops. We wish him the greatest happiness with his family in retirement.



Andy Loughe

Andy Loughe also came to Abingdon in 2006 for his first teaching post. He became Head of German, and then the first Modern Languages Co-ordinator. In the classroom Andy is energetic, innovative and full of a sense of adventure in learning, as well as feeling able to give more or less free rein to his sense of humour. His enthusiasm for his subject is second to none, and he is at the forefront of whatever technological revolution reaches the Modern Languages Department. Andy was also instrumental in strengthening links with St Helen's. An enthusiastic organiser of and participant in trips abroad, Andy has travelled to the south of France, Berlin, Normandy and the Rhineland and has also represented the Modern Languages Department in Paris, Bielefeld and Santiago de Compostela. In addition he has been the prime mover in our links with the charity Build the Nations, taking groups of sixth form boys out to South Africa and Mozambique each summer. A live-in tutor in Phelps' then Davies' Andy has thrown himself into many areas of Abingdon life, including singing in Chapel Choir and directing Lower School plays. Outside school he has been a governor of St Edmund's Primary School in Abingdon. The outstanding pastoral care he has helped deliver in Waste Court since his arrival here will stand him in good stead for his next post as he leaves to run a boarding house at Downside.



Athol Hundermark

Athol Hundermark joined the school in 2005 as part of the 'new look' Geography Department that was established that year. He prepared his groups thoroughly for examinations and was always a willing and able hand in the organisation of Middle School field work. Several generations of Abingdonians have appreciated the South African anecdotes that were liberally dropped into his lessons along with many YouTube clips. When Athol took over the running of the Boat Club from Mike Martin, he inherited an operation which had had many successes. Keen to involve boys and support our many coaches, Athol has succeeded in running a well-organised, efficient, and successful club, culminating in a thrilling victory for the 1st VIII at the Schools' Head of the River, and both the 1st and 2nd Vllls winning at Nat Schools. Winning the Princess Elizabeth Cup at Henley enabled the crew of 2012 to repeat the glory of winning the triple, last achieved by Abingdon in 2002. Many boys have also had the opportunity to be selected for their country. Athol's progress at Shrewsbury as their new Master in charge of Rowing will be watched very closely from here, for he will surely continue to work his magic.

Henry Kirk

Henry Kirk came to Abingdon from Birkenhead School in 2004 where he had been Chaplain. Both Henry and his wife were often an encouraging presence at sporting and cultural events on the campus, and he also had a wider ministry in the town. Much of the work of a good Chaplain goes unheard and unseen, but Henry was noted for his liaison with boys and staff when they were unwell. Keen for boys and staff to have the opportunity to hear notable speakers, he reformed the Edmund Society. The twice-termly meetings were often followed by a small supper at which senior boys had the opportunity to converse with some eminent speakers. During the year Henry and his family moved to the Royal Russell School, Croydon.

James Nairne

James Nairne came to Abingdon as Head of Art from Bradfield. He is a very versatile schoolmaster and the Art Department has grown in many directions under his leadership, with James particularly expanding the department into digital art. He has spent many hours working on our school website, where his flair for design and presentation and his attention to detail have been much to the benefit of the school. Outside the classroom he has coached hockey to the highest level, been closely involved in the Christian Union, and has led an exciting programme of visits to galleries both in the UK and overseas.



Tim Gunn

Dr Tim Gunn has retired after fifteen years at Abingdon, during which he has served as Head of Biology and been an enthusiastic organiser of outdoor activities. Tim has done a huge amount for the Biology Department over the years. He has always been passionate about his subject and loved trying to inspire and foster that interest in others. His subject knowledge is second-to-none; he read widely around the subject and spent time carrying out further research in Oxford University during his sabbatical term. His links with Oxford have helped many pupils in many ways especially with practice interviews and work experience. Tim has worked tirelessly to give boys opportunities to hear and meet specialists in their fields – his contact book must be enormous! Tim organised a number of high profile expeditions in the past including sea kayaking around the Falkland Islands and this gave him the drive to build up a full fleet of sea kayaks in school. For several years these sea kayaks have been used for Duke of Edinburgh's Award expeditions organised by Tim with venues ranging from local stretches of the Thames to arctic Norway. Again, it has been Tim's drive that has enabled boys to take part in trips that many people would never get the opportunity to do.

David Pope

David Pope joined Abingdon's Modern Languages Department in September 1989 and from the beginning it was clear that his classes were benefitting from his infectious enthusiasm for foreign culture. He did much to encourage his charges to go beyond the basic requirements of the classroom if they wanted to excel, for example by showing them how to use podcasts and blogs. David introduced Spanish teaching into the Middle School for the first time and built up that department from scratch by getting his own A-level qualification and postgraduate Oxford degree in the subject. Amongst David's many notable achievements at Abingdon was his building up of the careers advice offered here into a department of its own. He also took on the editorship of *The Abingdonian*, bringing our school publication into the 20th century with his use of desktop publishing and turning it into a glossy A4 format production, ran the Fencing Club, and, with Simon Whalley, started up and sang in the highly talented a cappella group known as the Abingdon Academicals. In the wider community David has been much involved in the Rotary humanitarian organisation and he put much effort into starting up two junior Rotary groups for 12 to 18 year olds, called Interact, in our local schools. David will be remembered for his good humour and positive outlook, his love of Apple technology and above all, his bold and versatile approach to life. He has now decided to engage in a multifaceted career of private tutoring, schoolmastering, supply teaching, opera and cathedral singing, story-writing and designing computer games, and we wish him all the best for the future.



Alf Mansfield

In 1985 Alf Mansfield joined a Design Technology Department very different from the one we see today. Only in 1980 had an O level course in design technology been introduced, and we had acquired the current site in 1981. It is relatively recently that the materials of metal and wood have been co-located so for many years Alf ran the department across two sites. Through his background as an engineer at Rolls Royce he delivered the subject to an exceptional level and inspired many students to pursue careers in engineering and design. His infectious enthusiasm for his subject made him a popular teacher and supportive colleague. Alf spent many years as a caring Lower School tutor, where he managed to use football metaphors to illustrate nearly every element of the PSHE scheme of work. Outside the classroom he has been the enthusiastic organiser of the school's annual ski trip, and he has also been heavily involved with cricket, both coaching boys and playing in staff teams. Alf will be missed for his sensible down-to-earth advice, his willingness to take on nearly all DIY tasks that have confounded his colleagues, and his seemingly endless supply of shaggy dog stories over early morning coffee in the Masters' Common Room.

Peter Willerton

When Peter Willerton joined in 1975 Abingdon was still a direct grant school, and Sir Eric Anderson had just left as Headmaster of Abingdon for Shrewsbury. There was no Sports Centre, no Amey Theatre and no Mercers' Court. Thirty seven years later Peter retires, having taught French and German and, for nearly a decade, been Head of French. Throughout his time at Abingdon, Peter has shown himself to be a very capable linguist with a quiet passion for his subject that he has communicated effectively to generations of Abingdonians. A comment overheard from a colleague recently was that when Peter agreed to do a task you could guarantee it would be done and that dependability has always been one of his key strengths. Outside the classroom he has prized highly his work as a tutor, latterly in Southwell-Sander's, where his reliability and genuine concern for his tutees have been greatly appreciated by all the Housemasters he has worked for. Peter was also a boarding tutor in Larkhill and then Waste Court, organiser of the Wargaming Society and of the Fives Club, and a key member of the community service team where he has shown patient and dedicated service, especially in working with the elderly. Peter plans to enjoy his retirement in travel and in developing his singing career starting with a role with Abingdon Operatic Society in *Calamity Jane*.







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