

Abingdonian 2013



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The Abingdonian

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Editorial



The academic year of 2012/13 was one in which Abingdon School both considered its past and looked ahead to its future and this is reflected in the cover of this issue of *The Abingdonian*. The front shows a selection of items from the online exhibition *A History of Abingdon School in 63 Objects*, created to mark the 450th anniversary of John Roysse's bequest in 1563, while the back shows computerised images of the new Science Centre, announced this year, which is due to open in September 2015. The pages within contain a wide range of articles that give a sense of all that went on in another very busy and successful year.

The design team of Henry Cheung, Matthew Gill and Benedict Zeally have worked extremely hard to bring this magazine to fruition, grappling with the intricacies of design software, choosing the right images to illustrate the text, and sorting out all the layout. Thanks go to them, those boys and colleagues who helped with proofreading, and all those who wrote articles.

Adam Jenkins
Editor

Head's Foreword



I always look forward immensely to opening my brand new copy of *The Abingdonian* when it lands on my desk some time during the Michaelmas Term. Not, of course, that I am surprised these days by the huge range of events described within its covers, for that won't surprise anyone who knows Abingdon at all well. What I see here brings a smile to my face and a great sense of pride in our boys and their range of interests and achievements.

From the youngest to the most senior boys in the School, every sector of our community is represented in some way. There are exceptional achievements here in many spheres of Abingdon life, and there is also a sense of the initiative, individuality and creativity of our boys.

It's fantastic to read. I am sure you will smile too.

Felicity Lusk

The First Day

I wake up twenty minutes early and still manage to leave five minutes late. I run as fast as I can (arguably, not that fast!) and find no one at the bus stop. I think I have missed the bus, but after five minutes of checking my watch the first people start filtering in. I nervously look at my feet until the bus arrives. As soon as I get on, I realise that the second years are really, really nice. Luckily, I know a couple of people, but even then I didn't know that I'd be fine.

Registration. I see many faces, some look familiar from Open Day, but they don't look scary, or mean, or anything like that. They look just how I imagine myself; anxious and scared. I relax and my fears of being different are put to rest.

The school is huge compared to my old one. There are hundreds of people bustling around, laughing and talking. We have a map to help us around; a CLEAR map but I still manage to get lost on the way to History! Thankfully the teacher understands.

I really enjoyed my first day!

Seamus Ramsey 1BJLP

I started at Abingdon in September 2012, and already I feel like I have been here forever! I remember my first day, when everything was so big and so new. Big school was, in my opinion, appropriately named.



I remember being split into our classes, and lining up in the Houseroom. We met our mentors, and then were whisked off into the flurry of daily routine. My first Abingdon lunch was a tasty kind of curry thing, which we ate excitedly before rushing from the dining hall to explore the school. I remember meeting my tutor and my teachers, talking to the other new boys, and just generally gazing at everything, especially my new uniform.

At the beginning, I got lost a few times; I even ended up in the wrong class twice. However the teachers were all very understanding, even when the entire class arrived at a lesson a

quarter of an hour late as we didn't realise Mercer's Court existed. Oops!

Since then, the school has become a bank of memories, where lots of special moments have taken place - like the Lower School Public Speaking, which my tutor group won, and the Kids' Lit Quiz in Oxford. The first year trip to Liddington was great; the most bizarre moment was waking up to find that my roommate had decided to spend the night in the bath! The classics trip to Caerleon was also fun.

I love the Other Half, the music, the sports, and the lessons, and being on the School Council.



I had great fun playing Feste in the Lower School drama production of Twelfth Night, and the trip to a Propeller production of the play in, to show us how it should be done, was inspiring.

I think the community is great; everyone feels like they belong. There is always a friendly face to turn to, and I have made lots of new friends. Bring on the second year!

Alasdair Czaplewski 1HFCP

New Boarders

It's a sight most of you readers have to go through every year as you notice the terrified look of new boys lost somewhere, too shy to ask for directions, the late arrivals to class and our realisation that the weather here is pretty rubbish. Being the "new guy" isn't the easiest thing to do on earth, but we try to fit in as much as we can and we couldn't have done it without the positivity and the friendliness of those in the school community, who are more than willing to help, even if it is just directions to M117 or how to pass a rugby ball.

For the average Hong Kong kid who suddenly finds himself 6000 miles away from home, boarding life turned out great in the end. Sleep was the first thing noticeable, waking up at 7:30am for breakfast and not running out the door with a slice of toast in your mouth late for school made life way easier.

Boarding brings everyone in the house closer to each other through a sense of family and community. The life of a boarder really kick-starts at the end of the school day - the array of activities offered before and after prep provides a dynamic balance in our lives, which keeps us going. If going to the gym and doing a thousand arm curls isn't your thing, you could go for a game of badminton or even to the climbing wall and work on your ninja skills.

During the weekends, where life here switches to a slow lane, we have an array of trips to keep us busy. Whether it's a day trip to Thorpe Park or a welcome dinner, these activities keep you busy all the time.

Taking on this new life has been a big change for some of us as we are given the opportunity to try and experience many things that we previously have not had the opportunity to enjoy. Abingdon is not simply a school, but a community.

Michael Chan 6MIL

There are few things more daunting than starting at a new school, let alone a school with the tradition and heritage of Abingdon. I was worried about making friends, getting lost and the workload. I arrived at the school a day before most students to take part in an induction day. The only other new dayboy and I were shown around the school and we met the boarders who had arrived the day before.

The first week went very well. People were incredibly welcoming and willing to take the time to help me with any problem I had; it took little time for me to fit right in. The school also offers a great range of Other Half activities. I've already joined, and immensely enjoy, the Debating Society and playing rugby for the school.

On the first Sunday I was invited along with all of the new sixth formers and some of the existing students to take part in "It's a knockout". This was an inflatable assault course style competition that lasted around six hours. It was great fun and gave us all a good opportunity to compete against each other and get to know other sixth formers and form more friendships.

All in all, joining Abingdon has been the smoothest transition to a new school I have ever had. I have never met students so keen to make new students feel at home and help them to get used to the school.

Jacob Reid 6MIL



Michael Chan and Jacob Reid

Honduras

Fifteen boys ranging from fifth year to Upper Sixth gathered in Heathrow airport to travel to Honduras, in order to assist and learn from the scientists of Operation Wallacea. After finally getting through US customs in Miami, flying to San Pedro Sula, and (mostly) surviving a nauseating truck ride up to the mountains on the following day, we arrived to a warm welcome in Base Camp of Cusuco National Park.

On our first day we began the course of lectures on ecology, which continued while at Base Camp, with different scientists explaining their role in the park, and how they go about their work, or the ecology of the park itself. Some of us were also able to go on a “herp” walk (to see reptiles and amphibians), or a bat walk to catch a sneak peak of the rainforest at night. The next two days were spent doing more trips into the forest, with the obvious highlight being the canopy access, pulling ourselves up to forty metre high trees to get some excellent views before swinging and turning upside down in our harnesses during the descent.



We were also introduced to the REDD scheme, a process by which, after calculating the amount of carbon locked in the forest, and the approval of the proposition, Honduras will receive funds in return for the forest's preservation. While at Base Camp, we were able to do a quadrat, and in turn do our bit for Honduras' REDD proposal. After three days in base camp, it was time to pack our rucksacks in preparation for the trek up the mountain, to the highest satellite camp in Cusuco. This camp was more basic than Base Camp, but was actually inside the rainforest, rather than in a clearing. It also had the added excitement values of

hammocks, a campfire to eat around, and a trench system for toilets. We saw much more of the exciting (ie venomous) reptiles on the herp walks, and we were able to do another quadrat of trees for the REDD scheme. The more laid back attitude and closeness to the forest made it generally the preferred camp in Cusuco for us, though the American school group in Honduras were evidently made of stuff less stern, and weren't so keen on the trenches. After a few days, we yet again packed our kit for the return trek, and stopped in Base Camp for the night, in order to begin the journey to Cayos Cochinos the following day. The journey was to be split by staying in the village of Rio Esteban for the night, after most of the driving had been completed, before completing the journey to Cayos the next day. On the way we stopped off in Rancho Manacal to see the small patch of privately owned



forest there, home to several families of howler monkeys.

Arriving in Rio Esteban, we were split into pairs to be hosted by some of the very hospitable Garifuna, descendants of West African slaves who escaped from the Spanish ships heading to America. We were introduced to our host families, before having an excellent meal of the local food, followed by an evening of Garifuna dancing.

Finally we arrived in Cayos Menor, the smaller of the two islands that make up Cayos Cochinos, on the following morning, just in time for a fried breakfast! We were then split into three groups, depending on our experience with SCUBA diving. We had done the referral course at Abingdon, but not finished the Open Water qualification, and so had to start with some dives to show we could do the skills required for the qualification. While we were doing this, the already qualified boys, much to our



annoyance saw turtles, rays and barracudas. By the third day though, we had completed our course and we were able to visit a plane wreck, with a reef system forming on it. On the fourth day, we were joined by those who had taken the PADI course from scratch, and on the final dive we even saw a barracuda, but it seems we'll just have to go back to see the elusive rays and turtles.

We left Cayos the following day,

and arrived back in Heathrow to huge posters of Jessica Ennis and all the anticipation of the Olympics to begin in just a couple of days' time. The trip was really excellent, especially seeing as this was an opportunity that we're not likely to get again, so thank you to Mr Whitworth and Mr Bliss, as well as the Op-Wall staff at Cusuco and Cayos for making it happen and making it so enjoyable.

*Samuel Ashby-Crane 6MAS
and Oscar Jackson 6IM*



Mark Hatton

On the 21st of September Mark Hatton, Britain's fastest ever Olympian, came to Abingdon to launch Lower School's Be The Best You Can Be programme. Mark delivered an inspiring speech on how he became a professional luger.

How did you get into luge?

Obviously it's not something you can get into easily in England, but when I was 15 I watched the 1988 Winter Olympics in Calgary in Canada and I just knew it was something I wanted to do. I had known from the age of 10 that I wanted to represent my country in the Olympics and I didn't care what it was I was performing in. I knew I had made it when I was 21 - it took a lot of phone calls and I had to persevere but I had made it.

What motivates you?

Knowing that I'm the best I can be and that all my preparation



and build up is right and has made me ready for a race.

What's it like to reach speeds of 90 mph on your back?

Good question, I guess you don't really think about until you make a mistake and crash but you just get used to it after a while!

How much training did you do compared to what you do today?

About 95% more.

Who are your idols?

I have two main idols. The first one is Bill Beaumont (Welsh rugby captain). My second idol is Sergey Bubka (Ukrainian pole vaulter).

Did you face any problems or obstacles when you were becoming a professional?

I had three main problems: I didn't have enough money, I didn't have a place to train and there wasn't enough luge technology in England.

Interview by Matthew Coleman 2JAC and Nick Webster 2SCVM



Charity Walk

After a long two-year wait the day of the sponsored walk finally arrived on Thursday 27th September, early in the Michaelmas Term. Around 1,000 pupils, teachers and staff members woke up to a bright and sunny morning, which was a good sign for the day ahead and promised an enjoyable as well as challenging experience.

Having all arrived at school in home clothes (or running gear in some cases) everyone was transported to the scenic location of Donnington Bridge in Oxford in four waves throughout the morning. This was possible due to a generous offer from Weaveaway Travel Coaches, without which the walk couldn't have happened.

Lower School were the first to embark on their journey, battling through the mud, which had collected after the previous days' heavy rains. This proved to be a challenge throughout the walk, especially for runners, yet the day continued to run smoothly.



Once the sixth form had finally been dropped off it was simply a case of making our way back to the school 8 miles away along the Thames Path. There were some spectacular stories to tell, as running pupils completed this challenge in under an hour at an impressive pace. Yet more boys used kayaks and rowing boats as their mode of transport, all in the name of charity!

Thankfully there was a delicious barbecue at Radley Boathouse, halfway home for lunch. The second half was similar with a more precarious and even waterlogged route, yet the scenery and weather made it thoroughly enjoyable as we crossed Abingdon Bridge and made our way back to school to relax for the afternoon. It was a huge success, especially as the whole school was accounted for on return, even the final members who managed to return at a spectacularly late time of half past four.

I would like to thank everyone for raising so much money for our four chosen charities:

Agape, Abingdon's partner charity in Moldova, British Red Cross, a humanitarian volunteer agency committed to helping those in crisis, and Alzheimer Research UK, who support those suffering dementia. Finally we are proud to support Mr Nick Rees OA in his voyage across the Atlantic in a rowing boat for Breakthrough Breast Cancer, which is pivotal in the fight against breast cancer using large scale research.

Lower School was particularly generous, but well done to all members of the school for raising nearly £32,000 for these worthwhile causes. This is a significant amount and will surely make a difference to many people's lives. Finally my congratulations to Mrs Pradas, all prefects, and especially Thomas Browne for their work in organising this special occasion. The Charities Committee certainly enjoyed counting all the money and getting the year's fundraising off to such a good start. Truly an inspirational day!

Robert De La Harpe 6RJG

House Singing Competition

Due to the break for half term now occurring on a Friday, this year's House Singing Competition found itself no longer on the eve of half term, but two days before. In all other respects, the preparation for the competition followed the customary pattern of a week's intensive rehearsal in the run-up to it, following initial choices of repertoire in late September. Our adjudicator this year was Dominic Franks OA, who was eminently well qualified, with experience as a New College Chorister, an Abingdon Music Scholar (1988-93), a Graduate of the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, a Freelance Saxophonist, a Jazz Promoter and, most recently, as Director of Music at Rendcomb College. Dominic couldn't remember the competition from his day because it started the autumn after he left Abingdon.

The houses had prepared a now habitually eclectic mix of songs, many chosen by the



boys and then arranged, directed and rehearsed by them with support from House-masters and senior boys. As always, there was a great deal of friendly competition between the houses and an equal level of effort put into rehearsing slick, polished performances that would impress the adjudicator. For many, the reputation of their house was at stake and each group of boys rose splendidly to the occasion, showing great "house spirit"!

Starting at 3.30pm, and with a careful plan for how each house would move out of the theatre and then back into position for their performances, the occasion worked smoothly. The ten houses each took their turn in what was a closely fought contest.

This year's competition results were as follows:

1st place - Christodoulou's with *Some Nights* by Fun, directed by Jacopo Blumberg and accompanied at the piano by Joe Ereaut.

2nd place - Lower School with *Drive By* by Train (Director Greg Davies, Piano accompanist Gianluca Cau Tait)

3rd place – Davies' with *The Cave* by Mumford and Sons (Director Lewis Spring, Piano accompanist Ran Hu)

Michael Stinton



History Club

Tuesday, 12:40pm. Many enthusiastic Lower School boys gallop down to Mercer's court! But why? Has the world gone mad?! Are we being controlled by telepathic aliens? To tell you the truth, not really. Our little confession is that it's the start of the Lower School History Club, which occurs every Tuesday lunchtime during spring and winter terms. Woo hoo!

Our average session will usually start with scoffing some sweets. And you can't argue with that! If you want confectionery in your other half, this is the place to be. So things certainly start on a high note, and it only gets better. Yes, ladies and gentlemen, here comes the good bit. Blackadder!! Yep, there's nothing better than to pig out on the sweets whilst watching Blackadder and his dimwit sidekick Baldrick do their thing.

But other than Blackadder fans, we're also Hollywood megastars ourselves. Our recent films have included the likes of 300, Battle of Agincourt and Joan of Arc, but our latest blockbuster has been Richard III and the Battle of Bosworth, an amazing film with some legendary battle sequences. The average person walking behind the art block when filming was going on would see loads of armed warriors randomly shouting "Aaaaaaaah!" at each



other complete with nerf guns (historically inaccurate, but never mind) and some top class fighting, with modrocked swords that we made earlier (usually I get two or three done a session, most people are quicker). Yes, we've said it before, but I think our film this year was the best yet!

Yes, that's amazing, but the fun doesn't stop there. Oh no no no. Airfix fans, listen in. Our project this year was to design model battlefields. And boy, what a project it was. After carefully sticking down some fiddly figures, we're ready to get cracking on The

Battle of Trafalgar, WWI and WWII. Look closely, and you'd find a soldier in a funny or outrageously crazy position. Then it's time to wreak havoc on the board with some gore. By the time we've finished, the red paint's all gone, and there isn't a square centimetre of the battlefield that doesn't have blood on it, much to the delight of every member.

Museum trips are another fixture in the History Club schedule, and this year we went off to Abingdon Museum. There has recently been an Abingdon School exhibition there, and these aren't the boring old trips you usually go on. Upstairs, there are some great costumes to try on, and some people (you know who you are) did look rather hilarious in those outfits.

The world premiere of Richard III and the Battle of Bosworth will be showing soon in M102, so look out for that. Thanks have to go to Mr McGill and Mr Hallinan who have run the best Other Half activity there is to offer.

Ben Ffrench 2JAC



Overseas Views of Abingdon

Spain

Our time in England was great. The school was amazing, the families were very nice and also the staff of the boarding house. The trips were interesting and enjoyable and our exchange partners were absolutely fabulous. Before arriving, we were nervous but all our concerns vanished the day we arrived. We all had a great time and felt comfortable in our hosts' homes because of the fabulous treatment we received. It goes without saying that we all got on well with each and every one of our exchange partners and we also enjoyed all the extra activities the school and Mrs Pradas prepared for us. Finally, I dare say, we wouldn't mind repeating the whole experience all over again and with the same people that took part in this one.

Ángel Torrente & Sergio Pichel



Germany

A group of 22 German pupils travelled from Bielefeld to Abingdon for this year's exchange. Three girls went to the school of St Helen and St Katharine and fifteen boys and four girls were matched with boys from Abingdon School. Our first impression of Abingdon School was overwhelming. We were really surprised how huge the buildings are and what great opportunities the pupils have to study. It is very different from our school in Bielefeld in that the Abingdon boys have to wear a uniform. At Ratsgymnasium, pupils are able to choose their clothes.

Additionally, the English boys have Houserooms with modern equipment where they can spend their free time. Another difference is that the boys do sports at school and not in clubs like most of the German pupils. What surprised us most was that some of our exchange partners have to travel a really long way to get to school. Pupils from very far away and abroad even stay in boarding houses.

We spent four days at the school and four days on trips. Two of the trips were to Portsmouth and Stratford where we learned about English and English history. We also went to Oxford twice, where we visited the university colleges.

So all in all we had a wonderful time here and enjoyed the stay with our very nice host families. Now we are looking forward to the English boys coming to Bielefeld in February.

Finja Timmen, Isa Kleine-Bekel and Max Seidel



China

First of all, I want to say that Abingdon is really a nice place to study and live in. I was surprised by the beautiful view of the school when I stepped through the gate, which made me have a strong desire to study in such surroundings.

I found some differences of study methods between Chinese and British. In China students do so much exercise and have a lot of homework. But in UK, students have more sports during break and afternoon. Besides, since they finish homework in class, they can spend their time on their hobbies. At the weekend British students always hang out and have a good time. But Chinese students often spend half of their weekend in doing homework and the other half playing computer games. I really enjoy the days when I stay with my British partners. They played badminton with me and skated.



They showed the life styles of British students. I must say thanks to all the students and teachers.

Chen Sipeng

It was the first time for me to take part in the exchange party. All of us were dressed gorgeously. All the people didn't

have fixed seat, only standing there, drinking and chatting. We were all so shy that we couldn't greet each other first. Then we exchanged our name and the Abingdon boys would ask me about my hobbies and age. Gradually, they can speak Chinese very well and they often let me give some advice for their pronunciation. Each of them is versatile. Some played the piano, and some played the guitar and sang songs, others danced very well. They were all active. I think that we should learn from them. We should enrich our spare time somehow, not just be addicted to computer games or the internet. Sometimes attending social occasions or playing an instrument can improve our social skills, adding fun to life. In the exchange, we not only shared our experience in learning, but also understood the life of western teenagers.

Hao Hongyue



Bellringing

The Abingdon School Bell-ringing Club has met every Friday after school this year at St Helen's Church and held its first outing to other local churches in February. When people hear the word bellringing, there can be many reactions. Many might think of Sunday service ringing and wedding ringing, but they may not understand what goes on in the background. I personally go to three practices per week, each practice is usually around 1 hour 30 minutes - as many people won't know, it takes a lot of effort, time and concentration to get properly practiced at ringing. You can ring methods, which mean that the bells are constantly changing place, or you can ring call changes, which means that the bells only change when they are called to do so by a conductor and so are only changing every so often. Whilst ringing may not be considered the most mainstream of hobbies, it's certainly a good way to keep the mind 'oiled' and working. It's a good way to make friends and if you're ringing for a wedding, not a bad way to make money!

Andrew Rainbow-Ockwell
4JAM



Biology Volunteering

The Biology Department at Abingdon is well stocked with a variety of animals and plants for boys to study and admire. These include a snake (Tiddles), cockroaches, a scorpion, millipedes, snails, locusts, beetles, toads and stick insects, as well as a wide range of tropical and temperate plants and fish. However, all of these things need looking after - whether it is feeding, watering or the dreaded clean out, it all takes time and effort. Fortunately for the lab technician she is not alone. Every Tuesday a group of Lower School boys descend on the Biology Department to cater to the animals'/plants'/teachers' needs, and although it may not be classed as a "fun" activity as we have to do jobs, it is fulfilling and constructive for the boys that do it. We use teamwork and initiative when left to our own devices, meaning that the teachers can trust us to get on with our jobs, and not have to worry about us using the labs as a playground. As well as routine maintenance, we occasionally plant seeds, make displays and choose new animals to buy (we're still



not allowed a tarantula!), giving us a say in how the Biology Department works. We even get to handle the animals once the jobs are done. I certainly hope that there will be even more biology volunteers next year!

Thomas Butcher 2SCVM



Greece Trip

After landing in Athens our first stop was Thorikos, a settlement that had grown out of the Laurion silver mines, and one which was an important centre of trade in metals. The warmth and view of the sea from the theatre which would once have held 6,000 people was the perfect tonic for anyone still feeling the effects of a quarter-to-five start that morning.



This was followed by a short coach ride along the coastline to the sanctuary to Poseidon at Sounion, which, on the cliff top 60m above the Aegean, gave a spectacular backdrop from which to view the setting sun. The temple visible today, which dates from c.440BC, is situated on the south-easternmost point of Attica and would thus have been the first sight of home for ships returning to Athens, something extremely important for what was essentially a maritime state.

The next day saw a morning trip to Marathon, the site of the famous Athenian repulsion

of Xerxes' Persian invasion of 490BC. Another clear day gave rise to a splendid view over the whole plain where the battle was fought, but, while the famous Marathon tomb – a mass grave for the dead Athenians (around which was run the 2004 Olympic marathon) – was impressive in its scale, the 'tomb of the Plataeans', where excavations have revealed the bones of soldiers who fell in the battle, was more effective in bringing the battle to life.

In the afternoon, we returned to the area immediately around

Athens, and the Temple of Artemis at Brauron, the location for the quadrennial Arkteia festival, preparing girls for womanhood. Unfortunately, due to non-specific restoration which was supposedly taking place (although the evidence for this was limited in the extreme) we were unable to access the site, and so had to be content with photography from a distance, and a short visit to the Archaeological museum, which gave us our first encounter with Greek museum attendants, who, with remarkable powers of perception, and in even more



remarkable numbers, ensured, throughout the trip, that no one leant on, touched, or indeed posed with any Greek (or Roman) statues or artefacts. Fortunately, there were few objections to us actually viewing the objects, something which was very beneficial during the evening visit to the new Akropolis museum in Athens itself. In spite of the fact that a national holiday in Greece, entailing free museum entry for the public, meant that we were alongside huge crowds of people, the sheer quantity of artefacts recovered from the Akropolis and presented here was bewildering; the building also has strong political resonance, with a space reserved on the highest floor for the display of the 'Elgin marbles' (the frieze carvings which once adorned the Parthenon but whose remains are on display in the British Museum in London) in their proper positions, within sight of the temple for which they were carved.

The following full day we spent in the centre of Athens was typically hot. The most famous buildings today are situated on the Akropolis, and it was here we spent the morning, seeing close up the Propylaia (a monumental gateway), the Parthenon, and the Erechtheion (a temple dedicated to both Athena and Poseidon). While the considerable amount of anastylosis (restoring a monument by combining original stone with replacement

materials for missing pieces) which had clearly taken place detracted somewhat from the genuineness of what could be seen, this allowed us to gain a greater sense of how impressive these monuments were in their original context.

No less illuminating were visits to the Pnyx (the meeting place of the Athenian assembly), the Kerameikos (an extensively excavated area of the city, known to have been the potters' quarter), the agora (the hub of Greek political life, as well as the home to the best preserved temple on mainland Greece, the Doric Hephaisteion), and the temple of Olympian Zeus (the biggest temple in Athens, on which construction began as early as the 6th Century BC but was not completed until the reign of the emperor Hadrian in the 2nd Century AD). Impressive too was the Theatre of Dionysos

below the Acropolis, the original setting for almost all the extant Greek tragedies, thought to have held up to 17,000 people. The stay in Athens was concluded by a visit to the National Archaeological Museum. This houses a varied range of artefacts from across the ancient Greek world: highlights were the 'face of Agamemnon' discovered by Heinrich Schliemann at Mycenae, and the remains of the Antikythera mechanism, which was used for astronomical calculations in the first century BC – objects of this technical complexity have not been found again until those dating to the 14th Century AD.

Delphi was the next major site, although we did take a brief sojourn from the Classical world with a short stop at the 10th century AD monastery of the hermit Blessed Luke (Osios Loukas), still home to ten monks, whose prime concern



appeared to be to rid themselves of copious quantities of honey by selling jars as souvenirs. The site at Delphi was famous in antiquity for the presence of the oracle – an old peasant woman who allegedly sat on a tripod above a chasm, inhaling intoxicating vapours, uttering incomprehensible utterances, which were then interpreted by a poet. While the idea of being able to divine potential future occurrences is an attractive one, there is a lack of any geological evidence for any fumes or the mystical chasm. More impressive was the temple of Apollo, and the stadium, the venue for the Pythian games, although the stone seating that we see today was not put in place until the second century AD, paid for by Herodes Atticus.

The legacy of this patron was again evident at Olympia, with his Nymphaeum positioned next to the temple of Hera at the north of the site. Both these buildings, however, would have been vastly outshone by the Temple of Zeus, although the effect was somewhat compromised from our perspective by the fact both that it now lies in ruins, and that the site attendants, now armed with whistles, preferred to keep us as far away from the broken pieces of stone as possible. On to the running track, then, where we re-enacted the Stade race (the most prestigious foot race at the ancient Olympic Games), although unfortunately



no olive crowns were on offer as prizes – the wrestling event was also demonstrated twice with surprising zeal on both sides.

The last full day saw a considerable leap back in time, to the 14th Century BC and the remains of the palace at Mycenae. The giant Lion Gate, the deep cistern for obtaining water in times of siege, the Tholos tombs, and the stunning views over the plain made this a personal highlight. Similarly imposing was the fortress at Tiryns, in spite of its smaller size – both sets of remains and their incumbent museums gave a real insight into the palace

period of Greece.

Our final stops were Nemea, where further races were held in the 4th century stadium, the Roman forum at Corinth, and Acro-Corinth, the citadel, with the trip's best views - over the gulf of Corinth - at the top, for those who were quick enough to run up in the sticky heat before having to hurry back to the coach for the airport. It was something of a shock, therefore, barely 12 hours later, to be subjected to the sub-zero temperatures of November in the UK.

Thomas Kelly 6MAS



Spanish Exchange

The coach was abuzz with excitement and anticipation as forty or so teenagers (now functioning fully, due to the slightly more “civilised” departure time of 2pm) were handed their exchange hoodies. As the bus pulled away, pupils were given a chance to reflect on their setting and companions, after the initial hullabaloo of departure.

The group comprised pupils of Spanish from both Abingdon, and St. Helen’s. I suppose for many this added a new level of interest, as they would be able to share experiences of Galicia with two different groups: their exchanges and a new set of friends. The staff leading us on this challenging linguistic and cultural experience guided us uneventfully through Heathrow and into the welcoming arms of our exchanges’ families.

We met our families at the school, Manuel Peleteiro. All were taken aback by its clean modern appearance, and large well-equipped facilities. It was simultaneously very different and similar to our own respective institutions. However, there was little time to reflect for we were abruptly whisked off to our homes for the evening meal and bed.

Our first day in Spain was spent either in La Coruña for the boys, or at the school for the girls. On the way to Coruña we stopped in the nearby industrial city of Ferrol, to visit Zara’s fashion offshoot, “Pull & Bear”. We had a fascinating tour, following the business process from design and production to storage and communications. After lunch at the National Museum of Science and Technology in Coruña, we had another tour, viewing a variety of objects from a full scale 1970s Boeing 747, to a pair of hi-tech robots! A short ride down the scenic beach road found us at the Aquarium Finisterrae, highlights of which included sunbathing seals on the rocks and a 360° view of a variety of menacing fauna within the incredible hollow space of the “Nautilus” exhibit. Finally, we returned to school and supper with our hosts.



On Wednesday, we explored the historic centre of Santiago. We were guided smoothly from the worn cloisters of the University’s ancient library to the monasteries and convents vying for prime position by the cathedral, and finally the cathedral itself. We were blown away by its immense proportions and the audacity of its aspect and decoration. The



jewel in the crown of Spain's Baroque era did not disappoint. Particularly highlights of the structure included the gilded sanctuary and the wonderful insight gained from a trip to the building's roof. Then it was back to school for a sombre Spanish art-house film using themes including mental illness and family sacrifice - this was, of course, followed up by a thorough writing piece for prep.

Thursday was spent with families but included a friendly Spain/England football match, although, even after a great comeback for the three lions, we lost 6 - 3. To add some extra structure to our long weekend with the exchanges, there was a trip organised across the border to Portugal and Baiona on the Friday. A short journey through the rolling hills of the Galician countryside brought us to the amazing fortified town of Valença. Built in the 16th century and entirely surrounded by prominent star-shaped battlements. It also

offered a commanding view of the surrounding terrain. It was a romantic experience all in the light drizzle of an autumn shower. We then moved back north over the border to Baiona which was the most important Spanish port during the conquests of the 1500s and 1600s due to its position on the Atlantic. It contained many ancient places of interest, but the main focus was on the importance of its involvement in Columbus' return from the Caribbean in 1494 and the history, buildings and ships associated with it.

The final two days of the exchange were to be spent with the families. For me this involved watching my exchange play football on the Saturday and a rustic excursion for a long lunch in the country of SE Galicia on the Sunday. This gave me a real insight into Galician cultural life and tradition.

All this wealth of cultural



experience and linguistic challenge rendered all involved tired but content as the bus pulled once more back into Abingdon. I speak for all the pupils involved in thanking the staff from St. Helen's and Abingdon as well as the exchange students, their families and their teachers, who helped engineer our first tentative but successful steps into complete submersion in a foreign culture.

Hector Stinton 4OTL



China Trip

On arrival in Xi'an, we first experienced four days of lessons, both in Chinese language and culture, with numerous, helpful teachers. We were taught the art of Chinese paper-cutting and learnt many new things about Chinese culture and way of life. Preceding these lessons, we spent an hour every morning learning Tai Chi, which is much harder than it looks.

In the evenings, after an enjoyable yet slightly repetitive meal, we often went out into the city. On the second night we went to watch a light and water show at the Wild Goose Pagoda, which was around a 15 minute walk from our hotel. This was a great experience and gave us a chance to socialise with new people we'd met in our lessons.

Later in the week, we went to visit the world-renowned Terracotta warriors, just outside the city. It was amazing to see the thousands of soldiers still standing so many centuries after being built. Our guide gave



us lots of helpful background information about the site on the bus journey and, overall, it was a brilliant excursion and one that I enjoyed thoroughly.

In the days that followed, we visited a new university. It certainly had the largest campus I've ever seen, however this wasn't a problem as we had groups of helpful students to show us around. We played basketball, football and chatted a lot with the Chinese students and shared our knowledge of each other's language, as most

of them were studying English.

On Monday morning of the next week, we were tested in the new Chinese language we'd learnt in our lessons and then boarded the two-hour flight back to Beijing. The hotel we were staying in was like another world compared to where we stayed in Xi'an, this I think was a relief for all of us.

The highlight of Beijing was visiting The Great Wall. Luckily for us the weather was perfect and we were treated to views back over Beijing and the surrounding mountain range. That is, of course, once you'd climbed the hundreds of steps, each about 2ft high, to one of the highest accessible places on the wall.

We had equally good weather when we visited The Summer Palace, a beautiful site with ancient buildings and a lake with an island in the middle. On



all of these excursions, we were able to talk to those friends we'd made through the trip, many of whom we're still in contact with. All in all, the trip was a fantastic insight into the Chinese way of life, an experience to meet some people, and to practise language skills - I will certainly never forget it.

Will Clamp-Gray 5AJPE

We set off at four in the morning, none of us quite sure of what to expect. My first impression of Beijing? Big. We took another plane then to Xi'an. First impression? Smog. The sun is partially blocked out due to smog. There are so many people as well. Another thing I learned about China is that the people are very helpful, and a lot of them speak good English, which was a great help.

In the mornings we had Tai Chi, which was a bit of a culture shock. It was really different to anything I had done before. We



then had lessons, which were fine as I learned about the culture of China, as well as the language. After they ended I met up with my group and we did an activity of some sort.

During the first week in Xi'an we went to the market, which was really very good as there was a lot of good merchandise. The

traders see tourists and give "special prices." It was easy to barter them down to a reasonable, or sometimes really good, price. Fake beats were the main attraction.

Another great thing was the Great Wall of China. You could see how well constructed parts of it were and how well made it was. It was utterly awe-inspiring. However it was quite scary at some points and it was extremely steep. Another highlight was seeing the terra-cotta soldiers. There were so many of them and they were all so well-crafted - it was such an amazing scene.

A warning about China though: a lot of the food is deep fried, which is amazing for the first day or two, but after that all the buttery saltiness makes you feel quite ill. All in all however I had a great time in China.

George Thompson 4JSW



Rugby

This season the Rugby Club witnessed many successes, not all on the actual pitch. As a club, one of our initiatives was to be associated with a nearby charity, which we could help support and publicise through our games. 'Special Effect', based near Witney, have come on board and now feature on our 1st XV match shirts and we are proud to be associated with their cause, and will continue to support them moving into 2013/14.

On the field, 224 games of rugby were played from September to December, with a 58% win ratio, which is very healthy, especially in the light of the fixture card we now possess. Key performances included the 1st XV's debut at the National Festival in the October Half term, the 2nd XV's success in the County Cup, winning the final against Cokethorpe 1st XV, and the welcome sight of the U14 teams winning 81% of their games. For me, one huge success was witnessing the U14 E XV winning six out of their seven games.

Outside the School, there were again many highlights for the Rugby Club, notably watching Jamie Pearson representing England Under 16s - a very proud moment for the school and him. Also worthy of mention is Theo Brophy Clews in the fifth form who, due to injury, did not play, but was chosen as part of the England U17 squad



despite being a year young. The annual junior rugby tour was again a great success, taking 40 very excited third years to Wales, whilst the senior tour to Namibia was an experience for all 44 tourists not to forget. Perhaps the most obvious highlight however was witnessing the great numbers of Abingdon boys representing their school proudly, each and every week, with 22 teams active most Saturdays.

Peter Coke

Junior Rugby Tour

During the October half term break 40 boys from the third year and five staff travelled by minibus to Wales for the annual junior rugby tour. As a squad of two teams we took on three different sides in our three-day trip; Colston's Bristol, Christ College Brecon and Brecon High.

In our first fixture, both the forwards and backs were tested. Pressure was high from the opposition and our unforced

error count was higher than normal. However, our lead was saved several times by the back three making try-saving tackles. In the pack, Thomas Guthrie and Rhys Humphries had a fantastic game, both claiming tries and stealing a lot of opposition ball.

In the second match, the score line was more one-sided, with the backs claiming the majority of tries. However, Brecon High's inside centre caused us a lot of trouble in the back line and their pack's determination to turn the ball over caught us out on a number of occasions.

The B XV had a very successful first game against Colston's, scoring tries through both the forwards and backs. A dominant scrum ensured the Abingdon scrum half dictated the game and the end result was never in doubt. The second game for the B XV was a big step for the team, as they faced Christ College A side, putting up a real stirring effort, but losing out 29-10. Useful lessons were learnt.

Off the field, the boys awoke on Tuesday morning in the midst of a Welsh adventure centre. After a quick minibus trip to an old quarry, we had our first activity, climbing. Although there were lots of failed attempts at scaling the steep greasy cliff faces, teamwork and cohesiveness were there to see.

After the climbing, we travelled even further into the Welsh countryside and set off with different instructors on a gorge walk. The idea of the gorge walk was to dive into waterfalls and down naturally carved slides. The sight of our soaked prop resembling a drowned rat was one of the lasting memories of the tour.

Tom Haynes 3ALA

Senior Rugby Tour

For the 44 Abingdon schoolboys and five accompanying staff the senior rugby tour to Namibia and South Africa encompassed almost everything they could have imagined and more.

The memorable trip to the Apartheid Museum, the very warm climate, the witness to the amazing work of the DRC Schools project, the many experiences whilst on safari or the sand boarding down dunes, oh, and yes, the rugby... the trip to Namibia and South Africa will stay long in the memory for all.

On the pitch, the 1st XV returned having won two of their four games, scoring 139 points and conceding 63. The stand



out performance was the final game against a resolute and physical Parktown Boys High School in Johannesburg. The game, although lost 48 – 31, will be remembered for skillful play by all the Abingdon players, and the never say die attitude against a very large and physical side. The U16 side returned from the tour having learnt a lot of lessons, but really coherent as a group. Having won two and lost two, it was good to see so many of the young Abingdon lads stand up and be counted. The highlight being the dogged defence shown when holding on to the 14-0 victory over Walvis Bay High School.

Off the field, the tour will be fondly remembered for the day spent at the DRC Schools Project, where Abingdon boys threw themselves fully into the work at the community centre in the heart of the township near Swakopmund. This is not to forget witnessing the home-age left outside the hospital where Nelson Mandela was then being treated or indeed the lion kill whilst on safari.

I have no doubt that this tour will give the rugby season ahead a boost.

Kieran Routledge 6LPGM



Doing Candide

At the start of this academic year, I was very aware that over the following weeks I would be saying goodbye to many school-related activities that I have really enjoyed over the past 7 years: singing with the choirs, going on awesome school trips, even (believe it or not) occasionally playing with the sports teams. However, I knew that the one thing that would be the hardest to say goodbye to would be school drama productions. Therefore, it was vital that my last experience of doing a production at Abingdon would have to be bigger, better and of course, more musical-theatrey than the previous ones that I've had the pleasure of taking part in. So, you can imagine the look of horror on my face when in the first week back after a whole Summer of eager anticipation for Grease or Chicago or something along those lines, it was announced on the drama notice board that this year's production, my last ever production

at school, would be a Bernstein operetta that nobody, it seemed, had ever heard of.

After immediately taking to Google to find out what Candide was, let alone what it was about and whether I knew any of the music, and after being told by Mr T that it was a fabulous show, I decided to audition. And after a few evenings of dance-workshops, script-reading and song-singing, I found out that I was lucky enough to be playing the part of Candide, a naïve and good-natured boy who constantly finds himself in the wrong place at the wrong time.

My initial reaction was "YAY", as I thought I had landed myself with a fun, substantial and do-able part for my final time on the Amey Theatre stage. However, it wasn't until I was given the weighty script, the even weightier music score, and had a read-through with the cast, in which we didn't even get through a third of the musical, that I realised the juggernaut of a production that I had taken on.

Looking back on it, the decision to take on a big role in a whopper of a production, in the same term that I would be learning the crucial material for my A Levels, choosing and applying for universities, and preparing myself for a rather important interview at Cambridge, was made perhaps a little too lightly. However, now I can whole-heartedly say that I do not regret my decision in the slightest, as being a part of Candide was one of the most enjoyable, challenging and rewarding experiences of my school career.



The productions that I had been a part of previously seemed like a walk in the park compared to *Candide*. In *Dr Faustus* and *Earthquakes in London*, I only had very few lines to learn and my stage time was comparatively minimal; for *Cabaret*, I had no lines to learn, and only had to perform the 4 Emcee songs that I had learned and loved since the age of 10. With *Candide*, I had to learn solo parts for 16 musical numbers, I had to learn the largest amount of lines that I've ever had to learn for a school show, and the only moments when I wasn't on stage were 10 minutes in Act One, 10 minutes in Act Two and the interval. Needless to say, it was exhausting.

That said, I had it easy in comparison to the outstandingly talented Christopher Young. Christopher played Voltaire, the narrator of the musical, and therefore had to learn what seemed like 99% of the show's lines, and had to find a way to deliver these lines with the same energy, interest and diversity from the start through to the end of the show. And on top of that, he played the hilarious part of Dr Pangloss, an estranged, corrupt and excruciatingly optimistic philosophy teacher, for which he had to learn a chunk of solos as well. His virtuosic performance of a hugely demanding role carried, enhanced and stole the show. But we certainly weren't the only ones working hard to make this production memorable;



Candide was the type of show that involved everybody. There were huge company numbers involving sinking ships and public executions that the incredibly dedicated OA choreographer and performer Matt Hawksworth faultlessly choreographed. Putting these numbers together, and rehearsing repeatedly in our frequent after-school and weekend rehearsals was a challenge, as we had to rely on all of us involved to put in that 110% needed to make these moments work. School productions are like sport teams in that sense; when you're not working hard enough, everyone suffers, but when you're all focused, assertive and giving it your everything, you can make something really special.

So, in the week leading up the opening night, everyone involved in that show was feeling absolutely knackered, hoarse and on a very short fuse. All except Mr Taylor, whose constant calm and collected presence was, and always is, a

positive influence on everyone around him, exuding enough praise and reassurance to stop us all from going over the edge. Even if he went home after every rehearsal and tore out his hair for hours on end, he never showed it once.

The worst part of doing a production is the day preceding it. Is it going to be any good? Have I done enough? Am I going to humiliate myself in front of everyone I know? For a normal person, being nervous is bad, but for the overly-dramatic, self-indulged people involved in drama productions, it's worse. However, come opening night, after an inspirational speech from our director, we all felt ready to give it our all and be the best that we could be. And those three performances, albeit stressful, tiring and really quite sweaty, are three memories from school that I'm never going to forget.

This is because, unlike international rugby tours or prestigious debating competitions, doing

a school production doesn't earn you any medals, or trophies, or anything you can win for that matter. Instead, you are given the opportunity to make something that you are proud of, something that can never be replicated because of the way that you did it.

You have the opportunity to make friends with people you would not necessarily otherwise socialise with, and to bond creatively over a shared interest through working as a team. You have the opportunity to explore and challenge your capabilities, and to develop them into talents, and perhaps even find and enhance a passion you never knew you had. You have

the opportunity to throw yourself headfirst into a project you knew nothing about, and turn it into something you will regret never knowing beforehand. But most importantly, you will make the most unforgettable and incomparable memories from the moment you audition, to the first rehearsal where you're forced to release your inhibitions in a room full of strangers, to the final curtain call where an audience shows their genuine appreciation of a term's worth of hard work.

That is why I am eternally and inexpressibly grateful to the drama staff and creative team at Abingdon School for giving me these opportunities.

I believe that taking part in at least one school production is an integral part of one's learning experience, as it trains you in addressing an audience with confidence and enthusiasm, confronting any form of stage-fright you may have, and simply just putting yourself out there for the world to see, all of which are skills that one must learn and practice before entering the outside world, which apparently is all a stage anyway.

So if you're reading this and deliberating whether or not to audition for this year's or next year's production, then please, just suck it up and audition.

Toby Marlow 7SJG



Community Service



I really enjoyed playing dominos and hearing all of the stories that the old people had to tell.

We enjoyed making quizzes for them and then helping them to do them.

Visiting for Community Service was great fun, and personally I thought it was a useful and interesting experience.

Everyone at Fountain Court had amazing knowledge on lots of unexpected topics all of which led to many absorbing and intriguing conversations.



I thoroughly enjoyed learning all the stories they had to tell. They had really lived and were telling me this now and passing down their knowledge.

It was really fun and it was a very good experience. I really enjoyed it.

Christmas Concert

It was towards the end of the Summer term that I was approached by Mr Stinton and offered the exciting opportunity of playing a piano concerto with the orchestra in the next Christmas concert. It was not something I had done before, but something I had always thought looked like good fun. Being more of a jazz musician than a classical one, I knew playing a concerto would be a challenge, but it's not an offer you get every day so I decided to go for it.

The next question was what to play. Given my jazz background, thoughts soon turned to the work of George Gershwin and it wasn't long before we had settled on the *Finale* (3rd movement) of his *Concerto in F*. This piece, with its fast tempo and frequently

changing time signature, would provide a challenge both to me and the orchestra, and with this in mind I departed school for a busy summer holiday.

September came, and I had just about got my head around the piece, but there was still a lot of work to do. I was looking forward to my first rehearsal with the orchestra and was unsure what to expect. But before this came, I found out I would also be playing a piano feature with

the Big Band – Count Basie's *The Kid from Red Bank*. This was when I realised I would have to incorporate some serious time for piano practice into my already extremely busy timetable. Also at this time I was debating whether to play the Gershwin from memory or not, and there was also a question mark about whether I should play the 2nd movement as well.

I was apprehensive after the first rehearsal with the orchestra. It was clear that it was a challenging piece and that there was a lot of work to do. Although I had started learning it, we decided not to attempt the 2nd movement as well as there simply wasn't enough rehearsal time. However, each rehearsal sounded better and better until it started to sound pretty good. The final practice before the concert was actually where I felt the most nervous. However,



Henry Binning

after a clean run through, I felt confident that we could play it, so I wasn't nervous any more.

The first half of the concert was made up of a trumpet quartet, first year choir, Second Orchestra, Symphonic Wind Band and Big Band. This all went well; I was confident with the Count Basie piece as I tend to have the feeling that with jazz, since it is mostly improvised, as long as you remember the basic structure, there is no 'wrong' way of playing it.

After the interval, and following performances by the Abingdon Academicals, Abingdon Voices and Chamber Orchestra, it was time for my real challenge. About a minute before I went on stage, nerves crept in but only a very small amount. I surprised myself with this – I had expected to be anxious all evening. As I walked out from the wings on stage, I was impressed by the turnout; the second concert was sold out.

I really enjoyed performing the piece. It's exhilarating having a whole orchestra behind you and great fun (especially in the loud bits). The orchestra played it better than I had ever heard them play it before, and Gershwin's dramatic ending meant that it went out with a bang. After some bowing (something I've never been very good at but I think did improve because of this experience) it



was all over and the concert finished with the audience singing *God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen* accompanied by the orchestra, something I was hearing for the last time at Abingdon.

All in all, playing with the orchestra was a fantastic opportunity, and one that doesn't often arise for an amateur. I am grateful to Abingdon for providing a rare chance to do this, and to all the people who helped along the way – Mr Stinton, my teacher Lynette Stulting and of course the orchestra, led by Ian Chan. Even though I am primarily a jazz musician, this experience has helped me learn valuable skills which I can apply to all areas of my playing and I would jump at the opportunity to do it again. I've also decided already that if there is a next time, I'm going to play *Rhapsody in Blue*.

Henry Binning VIVP



1563 and All That

1563 was perhaps the most important year in the history of Abingdon School. For this was the year in which John Royse, Mercer of London, endowed the school with £50 with which to make a new schoolroom and in doing so saved the school.

From at least 1256 (when Abbot de Blosneville left money to the school), and possibly earlier, the school had been run in conjunction with Abingdon Abbey, a priest of which acted as the schoolmaster (Richard the Pedagogue who is mentioned in the 12th Century, even though the school itself is not.). However, in 1538, Henry VIII dissolved Abingdon Abbey and the school was left to carry on as best it could under its old headmaster, John Clyffe, who died in 1540. When Christ's Hospital was founded in 1554, it was given the responsibility of looking after the school.

Now we arrive in 1563, and the connection with Christ's Hospital was not as good as it had been. Although we don't know who the headmaster was at that time, we do know that Richard Croose was the headmaster in 1557, and John Argall was the head 'before 1568'. We get the impression that the head at that time actively looked for a wealthy benefactor, preferably an old boy. His search alighted upon John Royse, who was indeed a wealthy Mercer.

On 31st of January 1563, John Royse agreed to endow the school and put his seal to a set of Indentures and Ordinances; listing his requirements and what he expected but as early as 1560 Royse was preparing for this event, as the endowment fitted in with his sixty-third birthday. A building next to St Nicholas Church had been acquired in 1560 in readiness. The endowment was worth £50: a lot of money back then. This was to remodel the building and create a new schoolroom and premises. Royse also gave a building in Birchin Lane, London, worth £26 per annum. He stated that so much of the income be given to the poor, and the rest to the headmaster. However, in 1863 the income had risen from £26 to £150 pa, with £12 pa still being spent exactly as John Royse had decreed on the poor. The headmaster still received the surplus, which had risen to around £138, compared to originally £14.

Stating the times of the school day ("in the sommer tyme come to schole at six of the clock ... in the winter, at seven of the clock.") and establishing how many scholars there would be

and what they would pay are just some of the Ordinances (rules on how the school would be kept) and guidelines that John Royse set out. However, we get the sense that had the Reformation not occurred and Catholicism still been in favour, John Royse would have ended up endowing a Chantry Chapel (an extra chapel added onto a church in which prayers were said for the soul, in order for a quicker passage through purgatory.) This is because on no less than six separate occasions in the Ordinances he stipulates, "The Blessed Trynytye have mercy upon our ffounder John Royse and all Christian People." (or words to that effect.) However, in Item 24 he mentions the "soule", something that could get you branded as a heretic, and burnt!

All in all, the endowment saved the school from disappearing altogether. It was still far from the large establishment it is now, but it set it on that path. Of course there were other benefactors, and some might argue more important ones, but we have a lot to thank John Royse for.

William Sheffield 3NMR



4th day of June, year of our Lord Fifteen Sixty-Two

At the seventh hour of the morning, I woke up for porridge and to ready for School. By a quarter to eight, to school, whereupon would I start at eight. The school was in poor repair on account of stretched funds. The pupils numbered only a dozen or so, and after morning prayers were said, did we study Mathematics: perches to pikes: the different miles: and so forth, until noon. Then, to home for food, a bread and meat combination from Ponsoby's the Baker and Butcher. Most delicious, and a better name is beyond my ken. Back to school, where I saw an old man being conducted from the school. Wondering what he was here for, into the lesson I went, whereupon we were learning to decline 'Rex' without fail, or we would copy the whole section thricefold until we learnt it. Smith failed the test, and did curse thunderous oaths, the likes of which garnered him a stern boxing around the ear for his multitudinous sins. The schoolmaster dismissed us then, telling us to hurry home, for it was five in the evening and we did not want to be mistaken for treasonous papists.



Then to bed, following a supper of turnip and soup, which left me very much pleased.

4th day of June, year of our Lord Fifteen Sixty-Three

At the fifth hour of the morning, had I to wake in order to eat flakes of corn and to ready myself for the coming day at School. By six, I had arrived at the new schoolhouse, designed to support 63 boys in a space of 63 feet long. The new schoolmaster was very serious and honest, as he had been vetted by the Mayor and Burgesses of the town to be so. Following prayers to John Roysse and all Christians, to the schoolhouse where we were learning the import of using the semi-colon: all very exciting! To home for lunch, whereupon I happened to taste a wonderful 'Po-tay-to', which hailed all the way from America. At school again, we decided upon the boys who would clean the School House every Saturday, as the ordinances declare. But again to prayer, for the second of the prescribed three times each day. The master exacts a penny in payment from us, as the school is paid for by the rent of a property in London. Thank God the roof



will no more leak! We learned Latin, and translated the works of Virgil into fine English; and Smith failed to learn his vocabulary slates, and pleaded innocence. The Schoolmaster told him to write it on his prep slate and bashed him with a stick for his temporal sins. Then, most unusual for the day, the Mayor and Burgesses inspected the school, as they are required to do, with the assistance of a learned man by the name of Walker from Oxford. Yea, he was verily fobbed off by my misuse of the apostrophe, for which I also was bashed with a stick. At six in the evening, we were dismissed: the school being found to be satisfactory by Walker and the Mayor. Then home, for a meal of bread and cheese, and following this, to bed at last. Then up again, for I had quite forgotten my Latin exercises; this being done, I went to bed at last.

Edward Turner-Fussell 3NMR

Bridge Club

After a year of lying fallow, the Contract Bridge Club was revived this year.

Meeting on a Wednesday afternoon, the group consists of about 12 players of all ages and abilities. Each term we have welcomed in new beginners who are initiated into the basics of the game. Special mention should go to Conor Chippendale and Bede Lunn, both in Lower School, who confidently hold their own when playing with boys in the Sixth Form. Julian Ting, Bart Jennings, Nicklaus Pannu-Yuon and Arno Liang are excellent players and have been invaluable in teaching beginners. In particular, Julian's astounding memory makes him a formidable opponent.

We look forward to building a bank of able players who can meet socially at lunch times or after hours. Being able to play a game of bridge is a useful introduction to university life, as well as being a great pastime! The club looks forward to welcoming more members next year.

Katy Lee



Canoe Club

Having waved a fond farewell to Dr Tim Gunn at the end of last year, it seemed Abingdon Canoe Club would never be the same again. However, our fears were allayed when, on asking about the previous experience of his replacement, it transpired that we were to gain a man who was a highly qualified Coach Educator who has paddled all over the world. Mr Newton has proved to be every inch a worthy successor and the club is moving from strength to strength.

A great improvement has been the addition of a fleet of eight open canoes to the club's current flotilla of white water kayaks and racing kayaks. This has allowed us to broaden the range of our paddling skills and has given us greater flexibility in the type of paddling we can do. The open canoes have also been used to replace the sea kayaks for Duke of Edinburgh's Award expeditions, such as the

recent Bronze assessment trip on the River Medway. This has enabled a greater emphasis on working as a team due to the tandem nature of paddling in an open canoe. Another new aspect of the club is the introduction of sessions in the swimming pool. These have been really effective for teaching the more novice paddlers the basics before taking them out on the river. Being able to use the pool has also been useful for some of the more experienced boys. With some techniques such as the Eskimo roll, it is helpful to have a body of warm, still water to make your first attempts! The swimming pool is also the location of choice for the occasional bout of canoe polo. This is a furious game where tenacity and the ability to capsize your opponents seem to be just as useful as paddling ability. It is great fun and all the boys enjoy these sessions immensely. Despite the poor weather we have had, Mr Newton, ably assisted by Mr Bliss and Mr Whitworth, has got us out on the river regularly.

Our program has been varied and highly enjoyable, allowing us the full range of disciplines from the new open canoes to racing kayaking. We have also expanded the activities of the club: for example, a number of boys opted to paddle the equivalent of the school sponsored walk. This allowed the boys who participated to gain their 3* touring kayak award. All in all, it has been a very successful year for the club, and all of the boys look forward to the possibilities brought by the coming year.

Finlay Garland 6JJ & Henry Crowe 6RMT



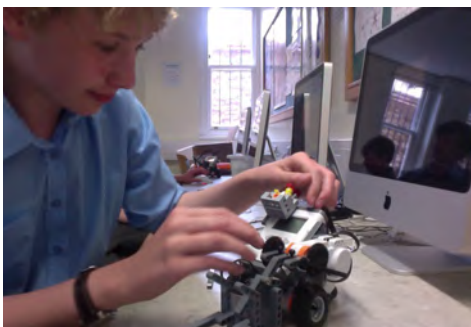
Robotics

Robotics Club. It says it all, really. Two nerds sitting at computers typing an endless stream of binary and all the while discussing Star Trek. So naturally, I was interested!

I was overjoyed to see that the robots were to be made of Lego and that the actual programming wasn't typing an endless stream of 1s and 0s but was a simple drag-and-drop system. Each week we got a task of some description and then both pairs would pit their robots against one another in an epic contest. I only managed to win twice, and both times I believe 'the enemy's' robot was unfinished. All the same, it was great fun.

The robots themselves are all built on the same base with various different devices attached as needed. The tasks vary from something like climbing up a steep 'hill' with gears to using light sensors to drive until you reach a piece of white tape on the floor. I have done it for all three terms this year, and always enjoyed it.

Archie Williams 3JPG



Squash

The season started off well with a new face at the helm of the coaching beside Mr Franklin in the form of Ben Rosec. Ben has encouraged more structured training sessions and tried to get the squad to pick apart their own games to identify areas that needed working on. This resulted in many of the boys making significant steps forward in their game in the early part of the season.

In the Michaelmas Term there were two fixtures. The first of these saw the team travel to St Edward's which resulted in a 3-3 draw. This was followed by a fixture against local rivals Radley, which culminated in a 4-2 victory: a very strong performance from the Abingdon team with tight 5 set matches throughout the order in both matches.

The next term saw training for many of the players disrupted due to the hockey and badminton seasons starting. Fixtures, however, came thick and fast

resulting in a another 3-3 draw against St Edwards, and a 4-1 loss against an extremely talented Wellington team that included a player ranked in the top 10 in Europe. The season culminated in a trip to Radley in a 3 way round robin. Abingdon came out triumphant defeating Berkhamstead 4-1 and Radley 3-2. This brought a close to a very pleasing season of squash where team morale has been high throughout, despite Mr Franklin's friendly, but somewhat sarcastic comments on our playing abilities. My favourite of these was when he said that he no longer considered me a 'bad player'!

Special mention to Giles Waterson and Charlie Roberts (Captain), who have had fine seasons which saw them both rise up the order as a result of their unbeaten records. Finally many thanks to both Mr Franklin and Ben Rosec for giving up their time to coach us and oversee our fixtures.

Peter Honey VIDRM

Chapel Life

Great company, great conversation and great food, what more could a person want? Not a lot if I'm honest!

Every Thursday from 4-5pm, in the Sports Centre Hospitality Suite, Rev'd Gooding accompanied by Rev'd Steer, Miss Spurling-Holt and Mr Lomax gathered with us, a group of fifth and sixth formers, to discuss some of the most important topics in life. Sitting down with a bacon sandwich we listened to riveting speakers: some were teachers from Abingdon such as Mr Wickes, others were special guests like Mr Perriss who was a teacher here. He shared his own personal story about how he came to know God and his time as an Army cavalry officer - which we all found really captivating. The speakers often shared their own interesting life stories and experiences of God together with sections of the Bible.

This was followed by compelling group discussions where we shared what we thought about the different topics. We explored various foundational topics within Christianity such as: "Was Jesus mad, bad or God?", "Did the resurrection of Jesus really happen?", "How do we pray?" and what it means to follow God practically today. I would go every week with some of my closest friends to learn, chat and laugh, and I can truly say that these Thursday afternoons were some of the most enjoyable times I had at Abingdon.

CS Lewis once said "Christianity, if false, is of no importance, and, if true, of infinite importance. The only thing it cannot be is moderately important." So if you are interested in what's infinitely important, want to help strengthen your faith, or just want exciting discussions, grab a friend and come along!

Jack Wardell 7VP

For most of this year, every Monday in lunch period, I have been going to a group called Y which is a Middle School group where we discuss the Bible and the Christian faith at the Chaplain's house. We generally either discuss a topic or ask questions which we then attempt to answer. Some of the topics we have discussed have been Science and Religion, suffering and God and the Gospel of John. We have used the Bible; the insights of Bible scholars and our own views to broaden our knowledge of the subjects and help us to find answers. Y can be helpful when you wish to share your views about certain topics or ask questions about God where you are unsure of the answers. It helps you think more about your Faith and the more confusing areas of it. It is also a good way to begin your week, by thinking about God. We also enjoy some good food and get to meet the Chaplain's mad dog, Jetta!

Blake Jones 3JRF



Choral Report

The school chapel choir undertook two trips this year: to Mercers' Hall in London, in November and to Keble College Oxford, in February. Mercers' Hall is an extraordinary place, (and of course Abingdon has a vital link with the Mercers' Company with John Roysse, who refounded the school in 1563, having been a mercer himself). Since then the company has been a huge benefactor in the development of the school: the most obvious example of this being the donation for the building of Mercers' Court in 1994.

At Mercers' Hall, which was completely rebuilt after the ancient headquarters were destroyed in the Blitz, there were cabinets full of row upon row of historic items, and from every angle were sharp glints of light from the many chandeliers. It also happens to be the only livery company to contain a private chapel. And this, in all of its historic splendour, sits down an unlikely looking alleyway in the heart of London.



We arrived and were greeted and escorted to the library, with no absence of comfy sofas. Then we rehearsed and then sang for the service preceding the quarterly court meeting. We sang the preces and responses by Thomas Tomkins, and our anthem was *Thy Word is a Lantern* by Henry Purcell, showing off the choir's individual talent as well as ensemble prowess, with counter-tenor solos from Hugh Cutting and Lewis Spring, tenor solos from Humphrey Thompson and Sebastian Johns, and bass solos from Jack Gee and Anthony Bracey. The piece intricately and seamlessly combines recitative lines with a three part semi-chorus

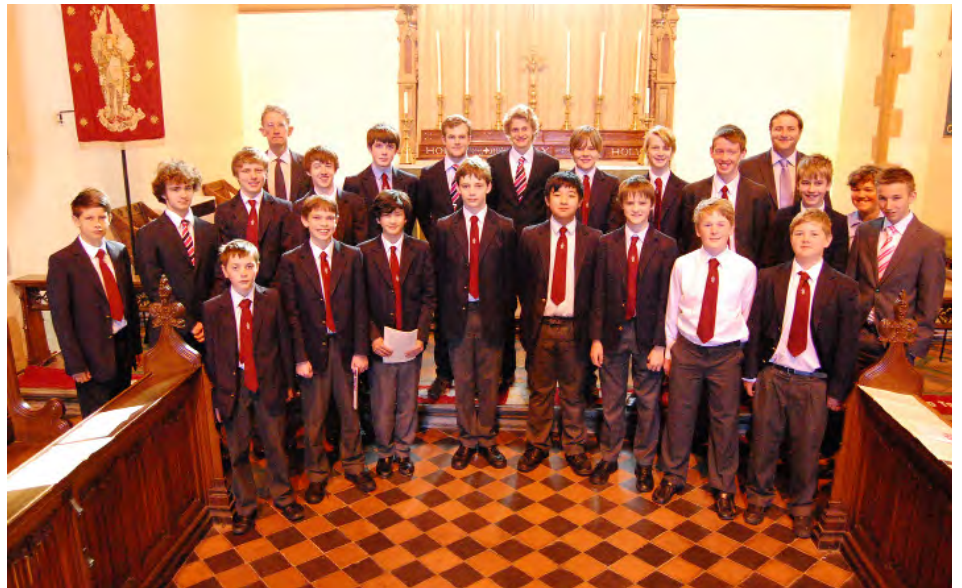
and full choir. I greatly appreciated the experience of singing such beautiful renaissance repertoire in a place so emblazoned with historic importance. I was also amazed at how good the acoustic was in the space, considering the chapel was not huge. The service was a great success, and we received a standing ovation afterwards, something that apparently was unprecedented. Then, back in the library, we were brought sandwiches and drinks, after which we departed for Abingdon. It was a huge privilege to sing in such a place, for a tradition that goes back for centuries, and we have been invited to sing again next year!



Going to sing at Keble College for evensong was also a wonderful experience, requiring a completely different approach to the repertoire and singing technique to fill the chapel with reputedly the largest acoustic in Oxford. Opting for a Victorian repertoire to suit the spacious Victorian neo-gothic chapel, we

rehearsed there, finding the seating space very generous indeed, and, after a break, sang for the service, singing the preces and responses by Bernard Rose, the famous *Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis* in G by Charles Villiers Stanford, featuring Cameron Thomson in the *Magnificat* and Humphrey Thompson swapping his tenor for baritone in the *Nunc Dimittis*. Our anthem was *Wash me Thoroughly* by Samuel Wesley, with a lovely treble solo by Hugo Eddleston. It begins with the solo, and then after a tutti treble entry and a full choral section, it develops the second theme in a fugal style.

Personally the Stanford Nunc Dimittis that we sang is one of my favourite pieces of choral music, gracefully intertwining the tranquil sound of the baritone solo with the magic of the full choir accompaniment. However, one of my most memorable moments must be hearing the basses' low D in the Rose responses "Amen" resonate around the building. The chapel also houses a new organ built by Kenneth Tickell in 2011, on which Sebastian Johns played the voluntary, something he also did on our trip to Mercers' Hall.



Overall this year, it has been a great pleasure and a privilege to sing in places such as these, along with the regular services in our own school chapel. It has been an immensely enjoyable year in the choir.

James Anderson-Besant 4CFC

It was a pleasant surprise when Mr Whalley asked Cameron Thomson, Hugo Eddleston and me to sing the part of the three pickled boys in a performance of St. Nicolas by the Oxford University Student Chorus in Keble College Chapel on Monday 4th March. As we all sing in chapel choir we got a chance to see the chapel (a magnificent building) and meet Richard Dawson, the 2nd-year

organ scholar who was conducting the St. Nicolas, a week prior to the performance when we went to sing Evensong.

We returned twice more to Keble chapel, once for a rehearsal at which I found out that Mr Dawson wished me to also sing the part of young Nicholas, and then for the actual performance. This was a tremendous experience since we sang in a beautiful chapel with the Oxford students and a visiting tenor and orchestra, whilst Mr Whalley conducted a choir in the gallery above.

Patrick Cole 3CAM



Football

Abingdon's Football Club continues to surge on, after displaying a dramatic improvement in results in only its second full season. With three new sides added, and 50 more boys participating across the school, interest in the game continues to develop. A 62% win rate in the club indicates a substantial rise and hints at great things to come.

At senior level all sides can be very proud of their work. The 1st XI finished with a 70% win rate and showed that we are now capable of competing against the top second term football schools. Wins against Berkhamsted, Radley, Malvern, Rugby, Reading Blue Coat, and MCS showed our quality.

The 2nd XI recovered from a slow start to go unbeaten in the last 7 rounds of games following the return of Mr Evans. The industry shown by David Chadder, Omoruyi Giwa-Osagie, and Othman Mirzan in front of goal and the platform



created by Thomas Padfield, Aman Patel, Matthew Hart, and Daniel Scott-Kerr were all key components in this excellent season. Keeper Christopher Cooke must also be mentioned for his consistent displays.

The 3rd XI, also known as the Upper Sixth XI, had an entertaining but perhaps inconsistent season. Clearly displaying a kinship found in all the great sides, all their games were full of goals and entertainment. Defending

was often put on the back burner, to the joy of the crowd.

The 4th XI were coached by Mr Middleton. Since he is an avid West Ham fan we were initially worried about his proposed style of play but the "keep ball" style, coupled with some excellent wins, showed his methods made sense. Many of this side will move up to the 3rd and 2nd teams next year.

At U16 level, the A's showed tremendous potential despite many injuries curtailing their pleasing start to the year. Playing with athleticism and style, the quality on show is encouraging potential for years to come. Strike partners Freddie Pinkerton and Jamie Bowles were both very skilful, scoring at will, whilst a midfield combination of Michael Dewar with Declan Field showed real creativity. At the back Jack Shearer was superb, yet again, and played with an intelligence





and experience beyond his years, whilst Thomas Harkness was the find of the season.

The U16B's continue to score goals and take part in excellent games. The 5-5 epic versus Berkhamsted was symptomatic of their season's play with a total of 18 players used and a high numbers of goals scored being a mark of their free flowing attacking methodology.

The U15A's had a wonderful season under the tutelage of Dr Burnand. A win rate of 78% shows what a great year it has been. As the best passing side in the school, the development made in this group was clear to see. At the back Jeffrey Leung proved to be a brave and agile goalkeeper; whilst full backs, Conor Graney and Bertie Boyd-Gorst, were both solid and effective at retaining possession. Jamie Cox captained the

side superbly throughout - never have I seen a more natural leader playing both the holding role and eventually sweeper. In midfield William Whitworth was again highly effective and was selected for the ISFA schools national representative side. Adam Lilley proved to be a tremendously balanced and key member of this group also. Strikers, Christopher-James Nicholls and Alec Curtis, often were the

difference in close games.

At U14 level a newly formed A side took time to settle. Reading FC Junior Academy player Horatio Hirst was a real stand out player, whilst central midfield player, Joseph Delafield, showed real quality. At times this side lacked the physicality needed but given a year's growth and some hard work on their fitness I am sure they will develop.

The B team had a most pleasing season. With a only a few losses on their record, and again large numbers taking part, I am sure they will continue to gain these pleasing results.

In 2014, the 1st XI will join the Thames Valley Independent Schools' League, with the organisers looking to play across the age groups in years to come.

I'd like to thank all the parents, staff, and boys for their support.

Damian Shirazi



Design Technology

The Arkwright Scholarship is a national award that is presented to students who display a flair or talent for design and engineering. It can be applied for in the Michaelmas term of the fifth year, with applicants undertaking an interview and aptitude test. Competition is high and only 500 scholarships are awarded nationwide. On securing the award, guidance and support is offered throughout the sixth form, to prepare the scholar for further study at university.

Dan Hughes

I applied for the scholarship in my fifth year as I had already decided that I was interested in studying design and engineering. I was in the middle of making a kayak trailer and used my design sheets to explain my product to Arkwright at my interview.

At AS level, I looked at designing a portable device that could be used to keep drinks cool at festivals and parties. We had to pick an iconic company to base our designs on, so I chose Guinness. After coming up with extensive design ideas and sketches, I settled on creating a cooler styled to look like a glass of Guinness which, by using a peltier cooler, has the ability to cool a can of Guinness rapidly

to drinking temperature. I was selected to exhibit my work at the national exhibition of scholars and it was a great experience getting real feedback on my product.

At A2 I chose a technology to use rather than a problem to solve. I decided I wanted to design a product around the turbos used in some vacuum cleaner attachments. I then researched many environments of use and possible applications of this vacuum powered turbo technology. After many ideas and a lot of research into the limits of the technology, I chose to create a drill, powered by a vacuum cleaner, which left no trace of dust. I styled my design to resemble a Dyson attachment and my final design was surprisingly successful (as many people thought it wouldn't be practical and able to function well enough).

Being an Arkwright Scholar has been a great privilege. It has also been something that admission tutors have asked me to expand on when applying for universities.

Jordan Anning VIVP



The Pardoner's Tale

This year's Third Year play, *The Pardoner's Tale* is a classic folk story from *The Canterbury Tales* written by Geoffrey Chaucer. We performed a modernised version with the three Revellers (portrayed by Thomas Foster, Ethan Sarphie and Patrick Cole) as hard-drinking bikers, out to take revenge on Death who had killed a friend of theirs. The set, built by Mr Fraser-Mackenzie and Mr Harnett, was a room in a tavern, which then transformed with clever lighting, into an outdoor scene for the tale. The story is told by the Pardoner (Charlie Landells) and his assistant (Angus Pinkerton) to the other pilgrims on their way to Canterbury. Among the pilgrims was Chaucer himself (John-Christian Davey). Other characters from *The Canterbury Tales* who formed the pilgrim audience were the Knight (Ethan Lo), the Landlord (Darren Maddison), the Landlord's Son (Darius Oraee), the Merchant (Daniel Alcock), the Host (Nick Harris), the Summoner (Harry Best), the Clerk (Blake Jones), the Priest (Alexander Dalglish) and the Franklin (Henry Averill). As the Pardoner and his assistant tell the tale, the pilgrims take on the roles of the characters in the tale: soon after setting out on their quest to find Death, the Revellers meet an old man (Blake Jones) who tells them he has just seen Death by a tree, a little way off.

When they come to where Death has been seen all they find is a briefcase filled with bundles of crisp bank notes. Filled with excitement, but then overcome by greed, the Revellers end up plotting each other's death. The tale ends with two of them drinking poison, bought by one of them from an Apothecary (Ethan Lo) and one getting stabbed. Mrs Quick's production was fast paced, and filled with excitement and humour. It was an enjoyable experience for everyone who took part in it.

Thomas Foster 3GFP



Art and Economics Trip to New York

It was a dreary morning at 4.30 a.m. when we set off on our long, perilous journey. A cool 11 hours later and we had made it. Times Square bombarded the senses: the honks of angry cab drivers; the chill on the skin; the bright lights and colours; the smell of burnt fat and of course the taste of pure art filled the air. The first afternoon was spent exploring, eating and recuperating.

It was an all-American morning when we set off to the Whitney; a beautiful collection where our artistic passions burned bright. Next on the agenda was ice-skating in Central Park. All boys displayed extreme skill on the ice as if they were born to skate, particularly Jack Wardell and myself. The evening ended on Broadway watching *Spider-man: Turn off the Dark* which was a theatrical masterpiece, and held Mrs O'Doherty's attention effortlessly!

Day three in New York City started with a boat trip with views of New York's magnificent skyline: the thick fog and poor visibility gave the city a mysterious air of serenity. After the voyage we had a moving trip to Ground Zero and then our last excursion was to the MoMA, which held another

impressive collection of art and design.

Day four in the City of Dreams, we headed to the Guggenheim, where the art was good. Finally we visited the Met, which was colossal. Another fine gallery, with amazing exhibitions and superb artworks.

Our final day and our time in NY was coming to an end. But there was no lack of adventure: a surprise visit to the Highline started with a severe lift/elevator scare. Moving from the ground floor to the first, the lift/elevator let out an almighty

crash and halted. We were stuck, with no way out. We were trapped for 30 minutes, tensions were high, but Mrs O'Doherty sorted things, with firemen who came and rescued us. Walking the Highline was a lovely end to a lovely trip, with great views and benches for those still in shock!

Overall it was an ace trip, and the art was fantastic. Mrs O'Doherty and Ms Hancock proved valiant leaders and we all took a lot away from the experience.

Gabriel Drewett VIEOD



On Sunday, the Economics group had a unique guided tour of New York, ably led by Mr Boyd and Mr Fieldhouse. We firstly headed for the United Nations building - a fantastic photo opportunity - before stopping off for coffee at Grand Central Station, and then heading down Fifth Avenue and dropping in at St Patrick's Cathedral.

Monday afternoon saw the Economics group having a guided tour of the Financial District, which included visits to Wall Street, Federal Hall and St Paul's Chapel. Tuesday started with a business talk and tour at Macy's department store, which focused on the marketing of this hugely successful

company, and was followed by a visit to the American Museum of Finance. After this came the undisputed highlight of the day: a trip to the Federal Reserve Bank of New York, which included a visit to the gold vaults deep below street level.

On Wednesday, the Economics group paid a visit to NASDAQ on Times Square, a virtual stock exchange, where they saw first hand a new company being listed and took part in the day's opening ceremony.

Nick Fieldhouse



Cross Country

The 2012-2013 season was a season that was characterised by promise: promise for some extraordinary performances for the future as young athletes grew, literally, and also developed into better athletes. The mean age of the squad was very young: the only Upper Sixth boy was Mathew Hartshorne who was Captain, recipient of the Watkins-Muir cup and also Head of School, so he was more than enough in terms of representing his year group.

Two races stand out: the County Championships, because if I recall correctly (as I am not one to keep logs and archives) this might be the eighth consecutive year that we have won this event, at senior level at least. Abingdon raced well, given the extremely muddy conditions, and secured first place in both the U17 and U19 team categories. Several boys managed to gain places in the National Schools Championships, taking place in March: Thomas Kelly and Mathew in the U19 category and Nat Jones, Teddy Curtis and Alex Munro in the U17 categories. Jacques Tasker and Harry Thomas also raced well, securing places in the reserve teams.



The second race that stands out was the Marlborough Relays because this saw, finally, a well-cemented team that exuded both a great performance on the day, and promise for the future. It showed the younger years in a great light because, being the last race of the season, confidence was high, knowledge and skills-base were enriched and, importantly, team and individual discipline had been accepted, understood and established. The team raced wonderfully here and they all made me very proud; they raced hard, pushed to the last metre and still had smiles on their faces during the post match dinner. We had, of course, also won comprehensively.

Typically, we raced a few more races and did well, though this year lacked the zest and vibrancy of others: first, it was a relatively young and inexperienced team with a very low mean age with talent equally distributed among the Lower Sixth, fifth, fourth and third year not, as one would hope, skewed towards the older years. However, while this meant that not many sterling races and results were delivered in the 2012-2013 season, it also means that next year and indeed the following one, we are being promised great things. Promise, however, is one thing, and delivery is another. In many cases there is promise that sadly goes untapped or even wasted. So we started to think and plan ahead, and this is an excerpt from a letter I sent out to all runners for the 2013-2014 season. As they read the words again in this edition of the Abingdonian and if my predictions are right, they will be smiling... they will also, a year on, have worked very hard and



shed a few tears and sweat in the process:

We have decided on a few aims for the new season:

- a) Attend every school-based race in the Michaelmas term (short distances) and place in the top three.
 - b) In the 10k road races, for all team members to post a time under 42 minutes for Longworth (it's hilly!) and an under 38 minutes time for all those at Bicester in December.
 - c) The primary aim will be to race the Knole Run, to win it and to be undefeated in subsequent events. It is without doubt our strongest year for winning it and we shall take full advantage of this.
- This is of course a very demanding task but the process of trying to accomplish the goal will be fun.



Alexis Christodoulou



German Social

On Friday 1st March I attended the Oxford German Network social at Radley College. Having successfully navigated myself around the school to the right building, I was greeted by a pair of boys from Radley, one of whom offered to lead me to the actual venue. Having told him which school I was from, I was slightly worried to be led through a maze of passages and down into the cellar. Was this some scheme of Radley's to control the local rival schools? No, it turned out not. It was actually an underground bar, normally reserved for sixth formers, but today taken over by the German departments of several schools and Oxford University.

After half an hour or so of socialising, we all took part in speed dating. This was 60-second rounds with numerous

partners, attempting to show off one's German skills, find out who might be a friend of a friend, and avoid having to answer too many difficult questions, which was often settled by repeating the question or answer in muffled English. After half an hour of fast-paced speaking, the food arrived. Free food was a definite luxury, especially after the hassles of finding partners to speak with, and I can assure you that it was not left uneaten by anyone.

Finally came the most prestigious event of the games: the pub quiz. Having assembled the quiz equivalent of the 1992 USA men's Olympic basketball team, consisting of two Oxford undergraduates, a native German teacher, two Radley sixth formers and a pair of Abingdon boys, we embarked on the event. After five gruelling rounds and a bonus round, our team seized victory, gaining 56

points out of a possible 60, including deciphering the names of London underground stations from the German-language equivalents and displaying a remarkable knowledge of German pop music.

Overall the social was a great success. I really enjoyed the fact that it was held not in some sports hall which had been tackily furnished for the event, but in a great cosy environment which seemed perfect for holding such a gathering. The planning was flawless as there was just enough going on to feel that the time was certainly well spent, without feeling rushed. Therefore I really recommend a further gathering like this to anyone who even thinks about taking part, and I hope that a similar event will happen in the near future.

Alexander Taylor 5JHW



Badminton

This year's badminton squad has maintained its record of being all but unbeaten. Thanks must go to all players in the club and especially to those who have shown exceptional dedication during team training sessions. These sessions have been given particular focus by the great efforts of our coach, James Barclay, whose drilling and tactical lessons have seen the team improve greatly over the season.

This year we have played new schools, such as Faringdon and King Alfred's, both of whom proved to be strong competitors, with Abingdon beating Faringdon 6-3 in a close game. As in the past few years, Cheltenham has been our greatest opponent. These matches have not been easy, with very close games going up to 23-21. However, our players have proved their consistency by beating Cheltenham five times in a row this year, without dropping a single set.

Our strong record this season has not come easily and it is only through continued teamwork and the experience of our senior players that we have been able to maintain it. I remember in particular a game against Cheltenham. Jordan Anning and I, playing as a pair, were trailing by some margin; smashes seemed to go straight through my racket; my own smashes were returned by what seemed an indestructible

defence. Lacking ideas, I resorted to the worst strategy - lifting. Of course, that did not go well. Jordan, realizing I was in difficulty, took me aside and suggested we drop to the net every time they served. It worked! We finally pulled through from losing to winning 21-12. It is this kind of teamwork and tactical thinking which has helped us maintain our record this season.

Jordan is not the only player among our leavers who has excelled himself this season. James Zhou was an old member of the club, and having played as a team member ever since he joined the school in the first year, has evolved to become a senior player in the club. He seems to walk the court in singles and is perhaps the most graceful player, on court, in the school. Nicholas Chan has also been a strong team player, making games against Cheltenham seem unrealistically easy. Credit must also go to Lower Sixth players Daniel Chen, Gem

Vongseenin, Adam Uberoi and Bernard Ng, together with more junior players Jonathan Chung, Adam Parkes, Ryan Ling and Yan Yang Chen (among others) for their efforts. It is this strength in depth which led to victory in the quadrangular tournament played against Wellington, Eton and Charterhouse and to maintaining our unbeaten record against other schools this term: 19 played, 18 won, 1 draw. In keeping with tradition, the club went to watch the All-England championships, and also had an OA reunion event towards the end of the season.

Although good players leave every year, younger players evolve to become the club's core team players year by year. We certainly believe that our players coming up have the ability and potential to maintain the club's record in the coming years. May I wish the club every success in the forthcoming season.

Duncan Chow VITK



Hockey

Senior Pre-Season Hockey to Bath University and Canford School

On Saturday 5th January, 23 senior hockey players set off on a pre-season hockey trip in preparation for the season ahead.

The first day was spent at the University of Bath's Sport Training Village. This impressive £30 million sports site was an inspiring venue to train at and the players were shown around the world class facilities that have produced athletes claiming Olympic medals in the last four summer and winter Olympics.

After a day on the astro pitch at Bath, we spent a day at Canford School, Dorset. The afternoon session involved an indoor tournament, before preparations were made for the match against Canford the following day. The whole squad worked hugely hard for the three days and made significant progress in preparation for the first weekend of matches against Radley College.



Indoor Independent Schools' Hockey League

Both Abingdon U16 and U18 teams remained unbeaten throughout their respective Indoor Tournaments, with the U16s winning and U18s finishing second on goal difference. Bas Marshall was named U16 player of the tournament by the opposition coaches.

Independent Schools' Hockey League

The Independent Schools' Hockey League is a national competition, comprising of four separate leagues. Every

team within the school takes part in these leagues and from 2013 the school that wins the A leagues will take part in a Champions Day against other winning schools.

The 1st XI had a difficult season in terms of results, but started well with a 1-1 draw against the league winner Radley College, and finished the season strongly, beating a number of schools at the KES Festival. Many thanks to those leaving the Hockey Club – Kieran Boddington (capt), Luke Carter, James Rogers, Julius Coventry, Michael Clarke-Warry, Peter Honey, Max English and James Weaver. They have been a fantastic year group and have given a good deal of time back to the club in coaching the younger years.

The 2nd XI had a great season and having beaten a few schools' 1st XIs in friendly fixtures, they were set up to challenge for the league. They



just came up short, finishing second after losing out to Cheltenham, but should look back on a fine season. Many thanks to those Upper Sixth players that have given so much to the club over the years and to retiring coach Jeff Drummond-Hay for his years of service.

With a number of key players stepping up into the 1st XI it was important that every player in the U16s took responsibility for a greater role in the team. Bas Marshall captained the side superbly and had by the end of the season forced his way into the 1st XI. Tom Best and Leo Bethell ran tirelessly from mid-field and the team played some good hockey in the first part of the season. The only thing lacking was the goals, and this meant that after a few early losses we were off the pace in the league and could only finish mid-table.



The U15As won the ISHL by 3 points from last year's winners Bradfield College. The team were unbeaten in the league, winning 6 and drawing 2 matches, scoring 25 goals and conceding 7. There were a number of convincing wins, none more so than the last game of the season against Marlborough, with a 12-0 win. Scoring 6 goals in that game and the captain of the U15A hockey team was Dominic MacLachlan.

The U14A team was led by John Corran and had a great season. During their league season they won three and drew 2, only losing to Wellington College. Charles Quarterman controlled the midfield and with Jonathan Hurrell, David Mackney and Sebastian Mulford threatening up top, this team were always going to score goals. The U14B team finished third in their league and were captained by George Strainge.



England Hockey National Schools Championships – Oxfordshire County Tournaments

Abingdon U16, U14 and U13 teams progressed through the Oxfordshire rounds of the National Schools Competitions (a round robin tournament between Abingdon, Radley, Bloxham, MCS and St Edward's) and moved into the regional rounds. The team of the day was the U14A team that won the tournament for the third successive year.

DOMO International U16 Tournament, Holland

Teams from Ireland, Germany, England, France, Poland, Belgium, Switzerland and the Netherlands attended Europe's top U16 Tournament. The first match saw Abingdon play German club Grobflottbeker THGC. Abingdon scored

early in the game and held on until the end for a 1-0 victory. Immediately after the match there was a shoot-out between Abingdon and Grobflottbeker. Mungo Graham did well to save 4 of the 9 shoot-outs. Abingdon unfortunately lost 5-4. The second match with Zuid-Holland was a tense affair with the regional team from Holland scoring first. Both teams had chances and with a minute to go Abingdon scored to level the match 1-1. The third and final pool match saw Abingdon needing a draw to stay top of the pool against a club team from Maastricht in Holland. Abingdon lost this match and ended level on points with Zuid-Holland but were pushed down to third in the pool on goal difference. The final game of the day was against the regional team from Holland, Noord-Holland. After a few early chances for Abingdon, Noord-Holland found

their stride and put Abingdon under pressure, which resulted in Noord-Holland running out winners.

Easter Sunday saw the boys refreshed and ready to go. First match versus a Dutch ended 0-0. Both teams had chances to win the match. The final pool match saw Abingdon win 1-0 versus French team, Nord Pas de Calais. The final match of the festival was against our first opponents on day one, Grobflottbeker for 13/14 place. Dominic MacLachlan opened the scoring with a 30m run, finished off with a superb back-stick shot past the keeper. Abingdon ended 4-1 winners and finished the festival 13 out of 16.

Well done to all the boys who attended - the standard of play was impressive.

Steve Brenchley



Rifle Club

The Abingdon School Rifle Club has seen another very successful exchange with the German shooting team. This year the Stade team of eight shooters arrived in the first week of the Easter holidays and stayed for a week.

It was straight to business, as the shooting match happened in the first few days of the trip - as good as it was to see familiar faces from previous exchanges and meet the new team members, shooting was the main item on the agenda. The match was a two day event, seeing a rather inexperienced Abingdon team taking the cup home by a narrow victory of two points. This was a particular highlight as it was the first time we have beaten the Stade team in three years.

The following days saw trips to London, Oxford and Abingdon. Unfortunately the weather led to the open top bus tours being quite cold, but the trips were enjoyed nonetheless. One of the more social aspects of the tour is getting to know the other team. The more long-standing members of the shooting club have seen four or five tours, so friendships are made and strengthened year on year. It was great to see old friends and make new ones, and the trip finished with the traditional prize evening. After the formal handing out of medals and trophies an evening of food and



drinks with friends was enjoyed. It was particularly fun to see some of the OA shooters return to say hello.

With the German team heading off home the following morning, goodbyes were said and an invitation to travel to Germany next year with an Abingdon team was accepted. I know I'm greatly anticipating my final tour with the Rifle Club in my last year at Abingdon, and I hope that I can be pencilling dates into calendars for the 2013-14 Abingdon Stade tour.

Matthew Allison 6JJ

I was quite nervous arriving at school for the match, because it was an important competition against a team from Germany, and I was hoping that it would go well. Unfortunately most of our usual team was away on a CCF camp, but luckily we had

some younger boys from the Unicorn school join in to help. The Germans were older than us on average, but fortunately they were very friendly towards us. They had modern equipment and looked experienced, and that didn't help my anxiety, but when it came down to the actual shooting I felt I performed well under pressure, with a score of 187 from 2 targets. The rest of our team shot well, and we came incredibly close in the scores - the tie had to be broken by an extra target shot by one member of each team, and we finally won by 2 points following Matthew Allison's victory in the final target. The Germans were good sports, considering that they were used to shooting on 50m ranges and found our one a new experience. I look forward to the return trip next Easter.

Alastair Wilson 3JRF

Lower School Adventure Trips

The fuse lies unbroken in my
hand,
Tempting me to pull it.
If I do, I plummet.
If I don't, I regret it forever.
Fear was racing through my
mind.
Do I do it? Do I do it?
I tugged, and fell,
And loved every second.

Alexander Thulin 1NSH



We went on the Giant Swing,
Where we had to “ching your
bling”.
The incredible height
Gave some a fright
On that Giant Swing.

David Bunn 1HFCP

Eight rungs
A challenge
A helping hand
Then victory
Only ants below.

Joseph Pearson 1NSH



Porth Ogof was like the entrance to the Void
 Pen y Fan and Corn Du were two brothers standing strong against sleet and snow
 The Brecon Canal was like a race track, filled with racing stallions
 The quarry first still as a graveyard and then distorted by scramblers.

Hugo Eddleston 2SW

The wind was like an ice-cold breeze that burnt.
 The walk was like a life on the edge of death switching between the two realities.
 The mighty mountain was like an immovable horror.
 The snow acted like shifting sands as it was blown around from side to side creating a blizzard which turned into a living nightmare.

Conor Whelan 2SW

The tunnel was the throat of the mountain
 Darkness cloaked me like a shroud
 Walls confined as a prison cell
 Friend's light ahead like a firm helping hand.

Thomas Butcher 2SCVM



Battlefields Trip

On April 12th, 54 Abingdon pupils left on an educational trip to explore the battlefields of the Great War. With military precision the group boarded the vehicle that was to be our transport for the weekend. A sleepy bus journey took us to Dover, having paused to gather e-numbers and pick up our pair of knowledgeable Anglia tour guides. Hyperactive, the group then boarded a colossal P&O ferry, our gateway to the continent.

The pleasurable two-hour journey over choppy seas saw Grand Admiral Turner-Fussell standing heroically up on deck yelling 'Fire the 12 inchers!' at random intervals. Meanwhile, Nick Harris purchased firearms to satisfy his thirst for imperial dominion and Ethan Sarphe engaged in awkward conversation with Dutch girls. There then followed a further bus journey to our first stop, Lijssenthoek cemetery in Belgium. Here we talked about the incredible work done by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission identifying soldiers.



Next we visited faithfully reconstructed German trenches at Bayernwald. There our guides showed us weaponry that wouldn't look out of place downtown on a Friday night. Finally came the town of Ypres. Here we ate a fine meal in an amiable restaurant and shopped at Leonidas chocolate shop, where a brilliantly spoken Belgian showered us with deals.

Mr McGill himself led a daring raid on the local antique shop, accompanied by a band of die-hard history nuts. The group relieved Belgium of a few more scraps of the German war machine. Next, we were greatly honoured to have three of our number (Ethan Sarphe, Alex Reynolds and Jamie Farrow) participate in the daily wreath-laying ceremony.

Our hostel was a clean, boxy, modern hotel, with six to a room, spacious interiors and a ground floor area with games, sofas and tables, which supported a very energetic breakfast every morning. On day two, following one such breakfast, the coach departed for another day of history and warfare.



Then we toured the infamous Somme region, an area of grim fighting in 1916. All day we zipped across the battlefields, passing the trench in which Wilfred Owen wrote *The Sentry*. We stopped at a massive mine crater, Lochnagar, and our guides informed us of the perils of tunnelling under enemy trenches to plant mines like the one that formed the 91m wide crater. As it began to drizzle, our party arrived at Ulster tower, built on ground taken by Northern Irish Protestants during the Somme offensive; it is an exact copy of a tower in Ulster and home to a delightful collection of artifacts.

As we trundled along in the bus our guides drew from their bottomless supply of knowledge at every turn. We visited the mighty Thiepval memorial and Newfoundland Park, where the valiant Newfoundland division was massacred. We explored a memorial dedicated to the young Pals battalions and yet another cemetery. All were amazed when we saw the patch of ground that once contained the corpse of the Red Baron himself. By coincidence one of our historians was a descendant of the British pilot who shot a fragment of Manfred's skull off in the war.



The third and final day saw further exploration in Belgium. We saw the great Tyne Cot cemetery, packed to bursting with the commonwealth dead of the infamous battle of Passchendaele, a tragic battle indeed. We also ventured into a very interesting and artifact-filled museum. The museum had a device enabling those who so wished to experience smells similar to those of various poisonous gases. Cameras were wrenched from pockets, as Admiral Turner-Fussell appeared dressed up as a Tommy, puttees and all!

Our final stop was Sanctuary Wood. This was without a shadow of a doubt the highlight of the trip for many as inside the museum the walls were covered in war memorabilia. Outside lay a perfectly

preserved battlefield. Everything from long dark tunnels through corrugated trench walls and bullet-riddled trees remained. I myself spent this visit poring over a large deposit of war rubbish: weapons, bombs, vehicle parts etc. As a militaria collector I felt very at home knowing that the fields around me were the place where many objects of my collection started their present day lives.

We visited many cemeteries and memorials during the weekend and the group paid all due respect to the dead and missing, who made the ultimate sacrifice for their respective countries. In all ways this trip was a huge success and everybody involved in its organisation is indeed worthy of praise and congratulations. Therefore, I say on behalf of all who went a big thank you to Mr McGill, Mr Hallinan, Mrs Northey and Mr Hofton. Congratulations also to our knowledgeable guides and patient bus driver!

Henry Waterson 3MRE



63 Miles in 24 Hours

Inspired by a small black and white photograph of the 13 pre-fects who walked 63 miles in 24 hours in 1963 to mark the 400th anniversary of the endowment of Abingdon School by John Roysse, a group of 18 sixth formers set off on the afternoon of Sunday 28 April, with the goal of repeating this gruelling challenge.

Starting at Overton Hill near Avebury in Wiltshire, they walked 42 miles along the Ridgeway, continuing throughout the night, before joining the Thames Path at Streatley for another 21 miles back to Abingdon. They were joined at Day's Lock near Dorchester by Felicity Lusk, Adrian Burn and Tym Marsh who were both in the original 1963 group (Adrian is now Chairman of Governors) and 20 parents, for the final 10 miles of the route.



The boys and supporters arrived back at school around 3pm on a gloriously sunny Monday afternoon to a fantastic reception from the whole school, and some well-earned hot food - and somewhere to finally sit down and count the blisters.

Special thanks to all of the staff, parents and OAs who supported the six training walks and the 24 hour walk itself, especially those on duty during the night shift. This team who gave so much enthusiastic support really made the event such a tremendous success. Thanks

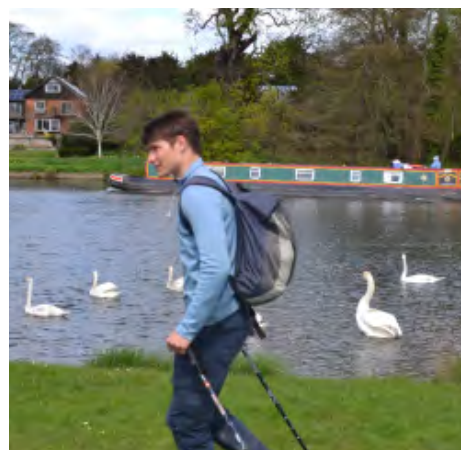
also to GO Outdoors Oxford for their generous donation of team fleeces, and Waitrose and Mars Confectionery for mountains of food rations.

All 18 boys who started the walk completed it successfully, and in doing so raised over £7,200 in sponsorship money, split equally between the John Radcliffe Children's Cancer Research Fund and Abingdon School bursaries.

The boys are now proud owners of the special LXIII tie; a very elite group indeed. Let's hope one of them picks up the challenge in 2063 ...



Dr Jan Wiejak



Sailing

The Sailing Club has had a busy year. In the Michaelmas term we at last managed to sail from Plymouth to Guernsey. Our first attempt had been called off due to forecast and actual force 9 winds. This time we set sail from Plymouth in the early evening and sailed overnight. At the end of the following day we enjoyed a spectacular sunset off Pleinmont Point before finally sailing into St Peter Port. We spent two days resting and exploring Guernsey, which is a 'French/Norman' island with its own government, currency and a patois which is still spoken by some natives. We dragged ourselves away from the attractions of the pavement cafes of St Peter Port and had a relaxed sail back, arriving in Plymouth after about 18 hours at sea.

At the start of the Lent term we entered a team for the RYA National Youth Match Racing Championships, coming fifth, at the Olympic centre in Portland. This was an excellent result for an untried team after just a



couple of practices in racing keelboats borrowed from Queen Mary SC.

DofE sailing is becoming very popular, and at the end of the Summer term Dr Dudin organised three practice expeditions, two led by Dr Dudin and one by Mr Bickerton. All three took place in the Solent, with Dr Dudin's groups drawing the short straw with wind and rain, and Mr Bickerton's having friendly winds and sunshine so that they could anchor and

swim in Osborne bay off the Isle of Wight and then spend a night at anchor in Studland bay, near Poole, enjoying the warm weather.

At the beginning of the summer holidays we left for the traditional sailing trip around the Greek islands. This year, with Dr Dudin as skipper, we sailed from Corfu, going south to Paxos and then to the Greek mainland. The weather was uniformly sunny and the winds generally light.

Last but not least the Friends of the Abingdon School Sailing Club organised a very successful BBQ at Oxford SC and later a dinner at school. The Friends have been firm supporters of the club, helping by raising funds and by assisting with the logistics of transporting teams around the world, even to Lake Garda last year.

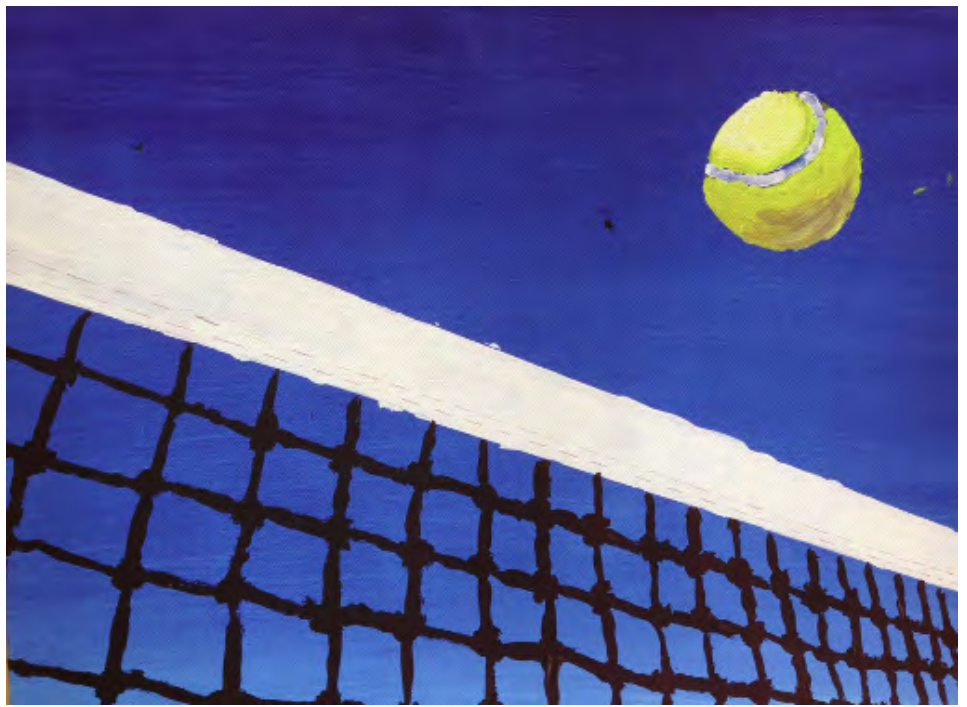
David Bickerton



Young Art

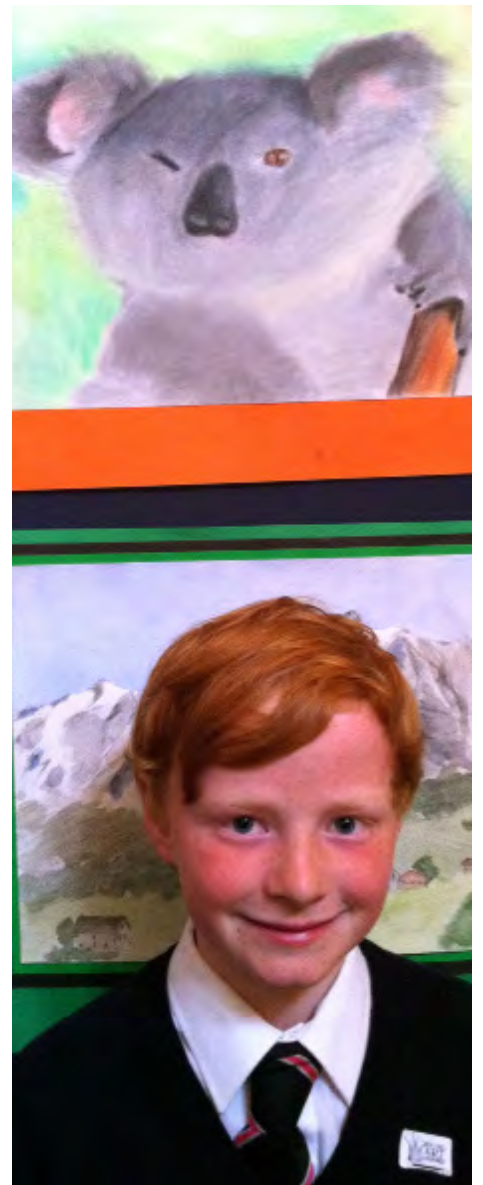
Young Art Oxford is an art competition open to schools within Oxfordshire to help raise money for Cancer Research UK. This year was the sixth annual Young Art Oxford exhibition. It is run entirely by volunteers and all expenses are kept to a minimum so that as much money as possible goes towards funding Cancer Research. 39 schools entered, making the overall amount of money raised over £32,000. The competition is split into three categories: Reception to Year 3, Years 4 to 6 and Years 7 to 9.

This year, 2400 pictures were entered and 440 of them were picked to be shown at the Ashmolean Museum. The theme was "What I Love". Luigi Felici from Abingdon Prep came first in the Years 4 to 6 category for his drawing of a very detailed rooster. From Abingdon, George Simmons, Liam Rogers, and Jasper Dale were all picked to be exhibited. I claimed third place with a painting of a tennis ball flying over a net and John Allen took second place with a colourful and fun pastel drawing of a pig.



I started my painting of the tennis ball going over the net by drawing the outline, then I painted it with the blue sky from dark to light upwards. I coloured the net in with a simple black and white and I then moved on to the ball, mixing green and yellow together to create a fluorescent yellow. The thing I most liked about my painting was the tone and the angle of the tennis ball in the picture. I painted this because tennis is "what I love" and because I have been playing it for eight years and I still enjoy it today.

Angus Blomfield 1BJLP



Angus Blomfield

Twelfth Night

When Twelfth Night was first announced I instantly knew that I wanted to take part in the play. I bought the film from my local library and immediately knew which part I wanted to play – who'd have thought I'd find Shakespeare funny! There were limited spaces for the cast but most of the people who auditioned got a part – so we felt really lucky.

I had the part of Sir Andrew Aguecheek, a rich, wimpy geek who Sir Toby Belch (Nick Webster and Harry Donoghue) pretends to be friends with – usually because he only wants a beer! Matthew Coleman and Robert MacLennan starred as a wealthy punk girl called Olivia who was longingly desired by Duke Orsino (Charlie Ball.). Meanwhile a stranded girl named Viola (played by Silas Gill) dressed up as a boy who served Duke Orsino, whilst searching for her lost brother Sebastian (played by Oliver Leafe). It sounded a bit complicated for a boy to play a girl pretending to be boy! Whilst all this madness was going on, Sir Andrew, Sir Toby Belch and Maria, the mistress (played by



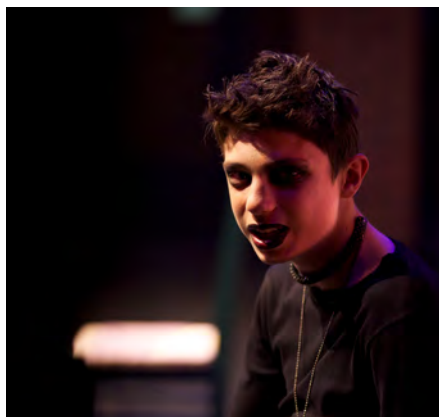
Iwan Stone), had a plan to baffle Malvolio, a horrible, mean servant, (played by Ben French).

With millions of rehearsals after school and at weekends we performed for two nights – with our key objective being to make the audience laugh. Trust me, we did, especially by including a boxing match, a guitar hero play-off and a Gangnam Style dance! We couldn't have pulled it off without our Director, Mr Phillips, who amazingly mixed

the old Shakespeare language with modern devices such as texting instead of sending letters. Miss Holt and Mr Cotton were always there to help and add some musical touches, while the tech crew provided a great set, lighting and filming.

We all had a really great time and couldn't believe Shakespeare could be so much fun – I really hope we do Twelfth Night for our English GCSE!

Michael Sutton 2JAC



Chess

The Oxford and District Chess League was again the main source of practice for Abingdon's top players. With two of our best – Edward O'Brien and Alexander Lee - having left, we knew it was going to be difficult to survive in Division III whilst developing younger talent. But by the end of the season, playing as "City 3," Abingdon had managed to field 19 different players and finish above Bicester 2 in the table, beating them at home and away by a single point. Our best result was an away draw against Didcot 2, who came second in the division, and we also drew away against Oxford University 2. The main contributors were Dr Jeffreys (1.5/9) on Board 1, Matyas Hanisch (1/5) mostly on Board 2, Mr English (5/12) on Boards 2 and 3, Edward Reynolds (5.5/12) on Boards 3 and 4, Rafi'i al-Akiti (2.5/7) mostly on Board 5, and Ray Ren (3/5) mostly on Board 6. The other contributors were Jeff Abraham, James Anderson-Besant, Angus Chan, Alex Churchman-Davies (1/2), Omri Faraggi (2/2), Oleg Kashirin, Thomas Kelly, Ben Massey-Leahy, James Murray (1/3), Richard Oh, Mr Poon (1/2), Seamus Ramsey (0.5/2) and Leon Wu. Joseph Truran (4/6) played on the lower boards for Witney 3 in the same division.

The School entered two teams in the prestigious National Schools' Championship.

Abingdon's Team B began with an easy 6-0 home win against North Oxford Academy B on 15 November. It then faced MCS's sole entry in a zone quarter-final and was not totally outclassed. Leon Wu achieved an impressive draw on Board 2 and Ray Ren won on Board 6. Team B comprised 1. Oleg Kashirin, 2. Leon Wu, 3. James Anderson-Besant, 4. Rafi'i al-Akiti, 5. Ben Massey-Leahy and 6. Ray Ren.

Following a bye in the first round, Team A began their campaign on 4 December with a comfortable 6-0 away win against North Oxford Academy A in Banbury. The next round was a zone semi-final at home against King Edward Five Ways. After frustrating delays due to snow in Birmingham, the match was finally played on 30 January. KEFW's top three players, graded 170, 175 and 148, were considerably stronger than our top three players, graded 119,

120 and 110, so realistically the only way to get through was to win on the bottom three boards and sneak a draw on a higher board. But in the end it was not to be. Abingdon needed 3.5 points but only managed 2, winning on Boards 4 and 5. Team A comprised 1. Joseph Truran, 2. Omri Faraggi, 3. Jeff Abraham, 4. Edward Reynolds, 5. Seamus Ramsey and 6. Daniel Lawson. KEFW went on to win the zone, knocking out MCS in the zone final.

Knowing that Abingdon's top team was at least as strong as MCS's entry, it was frustrating not to have met MCS in the zone final. With this in mind and with a view to gaining further experience, Abingdon for the first time entered the "Last Chance Saloon," held annually at Eton College. On 10 February a team of seven players, six playing in each round, competed in this five-round Swiss tournament in Eton's magnificent "School Hall."



Abingdon lost in the first round to the eventual winners, Eton A, but suffered no further defeats. Led by Joseph Truran on Board 1, Abingdon successfully defeated Meden, Wilson's D and Langley Grammar School, before drawing in the final round with Dr Challoner's to finish equal third, alongside Hampton B. Abingdon's side thus secured a coveted place in the national Plate competition. Congratulations to Joseph Truran (2/5), Jeff Abraham (2.5/5), Rafi'i al-Akiti (2.5/4), Ray Ren (3/4), Richard Oh (2/4), Seamus Ramsey (2/4) and Daniel Lawson (2/4). It is an indication of the magnitude of this achievement that Wellington College, who offer chess scholarships and attract some of the country's finest players, finished below Abingdon and failed to get through to the national stage at all.

In the first round of the Plate, on 20 March, Abingdon played Aylesbury Grammar School away defeating them comprehensively 5-1 to reach the national quarter-finals. By this stage MCS had been eliminated and Abingdon's next opponents were Hampton. We had spotted Grandmaster John Nunn with the Hampton squad at Eton, so were not surprised when Hampton's Plate team turned out to be strong. The top Hampton player was graded 167 and the team included the London U12 Champion, Jake Liang, graded 149, on Board 3 and a player on Board



6 stronger than our Board 1. The outcome was never really in doubt, but Abingdon's players fought well and Rafi'i al-Akiti came away with a draw. Abingdon's team for the national stage was 1. Joseph Truran, 2. Jeff Abraham, 3. Edward Reynolds, 4. Rafi'i al-Akiti, 5. Ray Ren and 6. Seamus Ramsey. Abingdon had enjoyed its best run in this tournament since 1989, when the School reached the quarter-finals of the Championship. Abingdon School Chess Club is once again, it seems, a real force in junior chess.

The Club's annual simultaneous display was a main event of Michaelmas term. On 14 November, our top coach Grandmaster Peter Wells faced 18 boys, from across the Abingdon age range, and 2 members of staff in a tricky clock "simul." The time control was 75 minutes except for members of Lower School who had just 30 of the 150 minutes. This was to ensure they did not play too

fast, merely running down Mr Wells's clock without finding good moves. On the last occasion Mr Wells played the School, in 2007, he won 20-0. This time Mr Wells, whose ECF grade is 234, beat the School 19-1, James Anderson-Besant and Joseph Truran coming away with draws.

The full Abingdon team was:

1. Angus Chan
2. James Murray
3. Rupert Kelley
4. Edward Reynolds
5. Alex Churchman-Davies
6. Oleg Kashirin
7. Leon Wu
8. James Anderson-Besant
9. Rafi'i al-Akiti
10. Ben Massey-Leahy
11. Joseph Truran
12. Jeff Abraham
13. Ray Ren
14. Daniel Savage
15. Joshua Strobel
16. Greg Davies
17. Praymore Shaba
18. Richard Oh
19. Mr Poon
20. Dr Jeffreys

In Michaelmas term, boys also competed in knockout tournaments in the Lower School, Middle School and Sixth Form, the finals being played on 23 January. In the Lower School tournament, attracting 26 entrants. Richard Oh, a relative newcomer to chess, defeated Daniel Lawson to win the Nightall-Jakubovics Cup. In the Middle School tournament, attracting 16 entrants, Jeff Abraham defeated Joseph Truran to win the Pearce Cup. And in the Sixth Form tournament, attracting 9 entrants, Omri Faraggi defeated Angus Chan to win the Harding Cup.

The House Chess tournament was again played on a single afternoon, 12 December, as part of the Inter-House Competitions. Houses were represented by teams of three and competed in a four-round Swiss tournament. Three teams eventually finished on the same number of points and were then separated by the total number of games won. The Webb's team of Rafi'i al-Akiti, Thomas

Kelly and Daniel Savage were victorious, with Franklin's and O'Doherty's finishing second and third respectively. Thanks to Dr Wiejak 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 weekly rounds of rapid play. From 30 Abingdon entrants, there were 13 who earned sufficient points to qualify for the Berkshire "Mega-final." Joseph Truran was the School Champion, winning 18 of the 21 available points, with 5 wins, a draw and a loss. Joint second were James Murray and Seamus Ramsey on 17 points, and in fourth place was Rafi'i al-Akiti on 16 points. The other qualifiers, all in joint fifth place on 15 points, were Jeff Abraham, Alex Churchman-Davies, Daniel Lawson, Ben Massey-Leahy, Richard Oh, Ray Ren, Edward Reynolds, Daniel Savage and Brian Shi. Remarkably, three boys in the Lower School qualified on points this

year. Seamus Ramsey's second place was particularly impressive.

On 16 February, the Club travelled to St Joseph's Catholic College, Swindon, for the Wiltshire Junior Open Chess Tournament. Ten Abingdon players competed, all in the Intermediates' Section. After six gruelling rounds, with a time control of 30 minutes, 7 of the top 10 places went to Abingdon. Jeff Abraham and Joseph Truran were joint winners on 5.5/6 - which included a draw between the two of them - Rafi'i al-Akiti, Daniel Savage and Leon Wu were joint 4th on 4/6, and Seamus Ramsey and Ray Ren were joint 9th on 3.5/6. Ben Massey-Leahy (3/6), Richard Oh (2.5/6) and Praymore Shaba (2/6) also gained valuable tournament experience.

Twelve Abingdon players went to the Licensed Victuallers' School, Ascot to compete in the county stage of the UK Chess Challenge and seven





qualified for the Southern "Gigafinal" in July. Ray Ren (5.5/6) was Abingdon's top performer, winning the U14 category ahead of Jeff Abraham (5/6) and Joseph Truran (4.5/6). James Murray came home with the U18 trophy (2.5/6). The other qualifiers were Edward Reynolds (4/6), runner-up in the U16 category, and Richard Oh (4/6) and Seamus Ramsey (4/6), runners-up in the U12 category. Also competing were Rafi'i al-Akiti (3.5/6), who only just missed out on qualification in the tough U15 category, Alex Churchman-Davies (2/6), Daniel Lawson (3/6), Ben Massey-Leahy (2/6) and Brian Shi (3/6).

Participation in county chess was left to the initiative of boys. It is pleasing to record that on 30 June at Haberdashers' Aske's Boys' School the twelve-strong Oxfordshire U18 team included five Abingdon pupils. Competing in the same team as

England stars Marcus Harvey and the Wang sisters, Maria and Anna, were Joseph Truran, Ray Ren, Jeff Abraham, Edward Reynolds and Rafi'i al-Akiti.

Chess Club continued at a more relaxed pace in the Summer term until 7 July, when a minibus took Abingdon's seven qualifiers to compete in the Southern Gigafinal at the

Rivermead Leisure Complex in Reading. Last year Jeff Abraham qualified on 4/6 for the last round, the national "Terafinal." This year Jeff finished level with Joseph Truran on 3/6 but Abingdon's top performer was Ray Ren on 4/6. Murray also won – in straight sets!

Going up to London University this year is the latest recipient of the King Trophy, Angus Chan, who has been an outstanding supporter of the Club during his time at Abingdon. Finally, I am pleased to announce that the Club has purchased a unique advertising poster of Magnus Carlsen signed at the London Chess Classic when he exceeded Garry Kasparov's highest ever chess rating. By the time Carlsen is playing Anand for the World title in October, this portrait will be framed and hanging in the Sports Centre.

Andrew English



Debating

It has been said that "too young" is just a name in China; this is a mantra we follow to the letter, and anyone, from their first week in the first year, can give their two pennies, from the intelligent to the inane (this year's highlights include using dolphins to replace liberal arts students - thank you Simon). To all those from the Lower School, I would say never to stop making pointless points, never to stop eliciting muffled "aww"s from the SHSK visitors, and to speak as often as you can, and by sixth form you'll all be positively Ciceronian. The society wouldn't be the same without you.

Middle School debaters continue to present a paradox: we have some of the cleverest students the school has to offer, and some of the most eloquent. How, then, are they unable to approach any issue surrounding women without breaking into giggles? Nevertheless, the third, fourth and fifth years have provided us with wit and style throughout the year, with some of the fifth years even joining in with the grittier sixth form debating on offer on Thursday lunchtimes (notable examples are James Beazley, always willing to speak at very little notice on potentially controversial topics, and Luke "Steve" Shepherd, who surpasses us all in sartorial choices, but continues to apologise for it).



The Lower Sixth of 2012/13 is an incredibly strong year, and no doubt will put on a fantastic array of politics, morals and dodgy jokes for the school next year. It's a cliché to say that it was difficult to choose who should be on the committee, but we really did struggle to pick next year's leaders. We leave the society in the capable hands of Jonathan Ainslie and Michael Bicarregui as chairmen, and Oscar Talbot, Edmund Cornforth and Thomas Munro as committee members.

To Jonny, I pass the mantle of making awful puns and fun facts to lighten up the last hour of the week. If the audience groans, that's always a good sign. Probably. Did you know the first recorded "your mum" joke is 3,500 years old, and the punch line has been lost?

To Mikey, hopefully the position of chairman won't stop you from speaking in debates.

Don't stifle yourself, and keep changeovers to less than 5 minutes; you'll be a great chairman.

Ed is full of surprises and mystery - do you keep the waistcoat on under your jumper? Is the ocarina even a real instrument? - and an exemplary debater; hopefully next year will see you in sixth form debating more often as well as continuing to fight for whoever's human rights are being denied on Fridays.

Oscar, you are the only person I have ever heard of winning a debate single handed, from the floor, introducing the abstention as a third side to the debate. If you keep on listening to the Smiths on those headphones, eventually you'll find your own Zooey Deschanel too.

Tom, your role is a tough but vital one, and perhaps comes more easily to you than to others. I leave you, our resident

right-winger, the advice I was given by my old Housemaster (before he, perhaps tellingly, left):

"It is always better to apologise later than to ask permission before".

I have found this doesn't apply on the M25, or in relationships with women.

This year's debates have covered the moral quandaries of our age, from censorship surrounding The Innocence of Muslims to female soldiers, from whether capitalism is evil to Margaret Thatcher's reign. Not only have we enjoyed top debating skills from the boys, but from teachers too - amongst others, Rev. Dr. Steer has spoken, with regular floor points from Miss Yarrow, Mr. Franklin, and Miss Allcock complementing the speeches. Sixth form debates, held in lunchtimes, are much less regimented, with no formal opposition or proposition, and

no fixed speech times. As a result, and because of the more intimate setting, they become more and more impassioned as a forum for people to fight for their own political, social and moral views on topical subjects throughout the year.

It's not all so serious: our dinner debates this year included a trip to Westonbirt to discuss the photos of Kate Middleton's breasts and some female contact for the more adventurous of our members. The balloon debates flouted all serious arguments, with a heated discussion of who the best video game character really is (Death), and who was our ultimate childhood hero. The latter was a prime example of commitment to the cause, culminating in a dance-off between Your Dad (Jonathan Ainslie - it got a bit confusing) and Mr. Dawswell (Toby Marlow), supplemented along the way by fantastic costumes

and impressions, ranging from David Beckham to the Fairy Godmother, with a truly fabulous appearance from Miss Lusk (Luke Shepherd). The winner, and proclaimed childhood hero of the society, inevitable in retrospect, was our very own Mr. Dawswell.

Jack Williams VINF



Hadrian's Wall

At eight thirty on a sunny Friday morning fourteen budding classicists and two teachers met next to a minibus for the first steps on their journey to Hadrian's wall. All of the baggage was loaded, Mr Jenkins arrived, Mr Colborn returned from collecting medical supplies from the Health Centre and all was going smoothly, until the lunches were left on the side of the parking space. Fortunately they were noticed and loaded. After a gruelling four-and-a-half hour drive Mr Jenkins started to wonder whether this had been a good idea.

We visited our first site, Arbeia, at about half-past-two. Arbeia was the site of a Roman fort carefully situated next to a river. The excellent reconstructions helped us picture what the fort would have looked like 2000 years ago.

Having arrived at our youth hostel, everyone settled down in their rooms and, after dinner, decided to leave walking to the next morning. After a hearty breakfast we set off on a four kilometre walk from Steel Rigg to Housesteads fort where I was appalled at the lack of historical accuracy in the



replica chain mail - Romans didn't rivet!

After a light hearted GPS tour of the fort and museum we continued on to Chesters, another fort, and engaged in a friendly match of hunt the stone phallus (used as a symbol for good luck/fertility) located in the principia. Chesters was most interesting for its bath-house and the well-preserved hypocaust. Corbridge was our next stop and was home to a pair of magnificent granaries, which looked impressive even in their ruined state, a museum with a guided tour from a plush lion, and finally Charlie rolling down a grass hill while being chased by compatriots holding his sweets. After Corbridge we hopped in the bus and drove to the Mithraeum, a shrine to the Persian-Roman sun deity Mithras.

Once again we returned to the hostel and after dinner set off to not so near Carlisle for the cinema to see Ironman 3. The next morning we took another quick walk and then went on to the Roman Army Museum. Here the chain mail was accurate even though a centurion quoted Shakespeare. An impressive film followed the journey of an eagle and an auxiliary in their travails on the wall - of course it was all made better in 3D. A slightly patronising hologram and several impressive exhibits later we moved on to Vindolanda.

The fort at Vindolanda was the most expansive so far and had the addition of a vicus (camp followers' town). The small museum held possibly the most interesting evidence about life on the wall in the form of the famous Vindolanda Tablets, one of which is a party invitation to a soldier's wife from her sister. After eating our lunch we set off on another journey, this time to Abingdon, our only casualty being Mr Jenkins' sanity.

Sebastian Jeffreys 3AMB



Berlin Trip

During May, 27 fourth year pupils visited Berlin. Everyone arrived at Abingdon School coach park at 2:15 a.m. for an early start. Some of us (Red Rowan-Hull) looked to still be clad in pyjamas. He didn't seem to care.

Problems were first encountered at Heathrow. Micah Hayns lost his bag. After he had been reunited with it, he then lost all of his toiletries (which were worth around £50 in total) at security. Shortly after this, he realised that he had also lost his boarding pass. He was having the best day of his life. James Gordon was taken aside and had his bag searched while I struggled to put my belt back on, with my trousers falling a little too low in front of everyone. After an hour's flight we headed through arrivals where Red then miraculously managed to get lost in a tunnel with no exits and disappeared. After quarter of an hour he was found and shown back to the group.

When we had checked into our hotel we cruised round Berlin.



Sites of interest included the Reichstag and the Holocaust memorial. The Reichstag is the German equivalent of the Houses of Parliament and was burnt down in February 1933. Bed was at 10:00pm after a stunning dinner at a local restaurant.

The next day included a visit to Sachsenhausen concentration camp. We were told by our excellent guide all about the gruesome ways inmates were killed from medical height checks with a gun-hole in the wall, to gas chambers. This really made us all think of how awful it must have been.

We also visited the Olympic stadium where the Berlin 1936 Olympic Games were hosted. We learnt that the youngest person to compete in the modern Olympics was Marjorie Gestring, a diver who won gold at the age of 13. Once we had prowled round more sights of Berlin and eaten at another superb restaurant, it had gone 10:00pm.

On our final day we visited the Stasi prison (Soviet police prison which mainly consisted of political prisoners) and the DDR museum. Finally we visited what was left of the Berlin wall. Tragic stories followed of failed escapes and even deaths of children killed escaping with their families. At the end we were all tired out and many of us rested on the journey back. We had definitely learnt a lot on this trip and wish to thank Mr Hallinan and Mr McGill for organising it.



Michael Fabes 4RP

Fencing

It has been a triumphant year for Abingdon School's Fencing Club, with huge successes across all areas of the club's many endeavours. This academic year saw the re-introduction of fixtures for the club, after many years of just competing in regional and national competitions. The club fenced against Winchester, Bradfield College, Harrow and Wellington College, and won all the fixtures played – some by quite a margin. Harrow were undoubtedly our toughest competitors and our match against them was a closely fought one, which saw Abingdon's Épée A and B and Foil A teams all win, whilst our Foil B team narrowly lost. However, with three out of four teams winning, victory belonged to Abingdon on the day.

Fixtures against other schools have provided the opportunity for Abingdon's squad to fence competitively more frequently throughout the school calendar, and this has undoubtedly contributed to some huge successes on a regional and national scale this year.



In October we took nine students to the Berkshire Buckinghamshire & Oxfordshire Fencing Competition at Langley Grammar School and came back with nine medals. In the U16 Boys' Épée we cleaned up, winning gold (Jack Dawson), silver (Benjamin Schneider) and Bronze (William Johnson), with the same feat occurring in the U18 Boys' Épée too - gold (Bernard Ng), silver (Herman Chan) and bronze (Ivan Nikolaev) were all brought home. In the U14 Boys' Épée we won silver (Robert MacLennan) and bronze (Louis Edward). Thomas Chan competed in the Seniors Mens' Épée and won bronze. All in all, this was a great start to the year's external competitions for the club.

The club's success continued with the Southern Region qualifiers for the British Youth Championships in March. We

took a large number of fencers to this competition and nine students won the opportunity to represent the school and the whole of the Southern Region at the English Institute of Sport in Sheffield in May. In the U12 Boys' Épée, Matthew Green won silver; very impressive as it was his first ever fencing competition. In the U14 Boys' Épée, Robert MacLennan also won silver. In the U16 Boys' Épée, Abingdon cleaned up, with Jack Dawson taking bronze, William Johnson taking silver and Benjamin Schneider winning the gold medal. In the U18 Boys' Épée, Herman Chan won gold and Omri Faraggi also qualified. Finally, in the U16 Boys' Sabre, James Fotherby won bronze and James Beazley won gold.

Next came one of the undisputed highlights of the year – the Public Schools' Fencing Championships, held at Crystal

Palace National Sports Centre in March. This year the decision was taken to run this competition as an overnight trip – a first for the club – and seven keen fencers signed up for the opportunity. All students fenced well in both Épée and Foil, however, the highpoint of the competition was an unprecedented all-Abingdon final in the Boys' Junior Épée. Benjamin Schneider and Jack Dawson defeated the other 140 entrants in the category with some very close fights, and a tense final match between them saw Jack take the title of National Champion in this age group. This was a considerable achievement and Jack must be congratulated on his success here.

The last competition of the year was the finals of the British Youth Championships at the English Institute of Sport in Sheffield. Herman Chan competed in the U18 Boys' Épée, Matthew Green competed in the U12 Boys' Épée, Robert MacLennan competed in the U14 Boys' Épée, and Jack Dawson, William Johnson and Benjamin Schneider competed in the U16 Boys' Épée.



It is a huge achievement to reach the finals of the BYCs as only a select few can represent the southern region at a national level, and all students from Abingdon fenced very well indeed. In particular, Jack Dawson performed exceptionally and finished in third place, winning a bronze medal. This places him as one of the best fencers in the county in his age group.

So overall, the club has had an enviable year – winning all our fixtures and achieving considerable success at both a regional and national level. Internally, the club is expanding, with more students joining from the Lower School and the third year.

A major factor in this expansion of numbers has been the dedicated Lower School fencing session run on Thursday lunchtimes this year. Alan Knowles (fencing coach) has provided a popular and energetic session for the younger students to try out the sport and this has led to a core of new fencers joining the club who will no doubt form the squad of tomorrow. Next year we will be adding more schools to our fixture list and hoping that even more of our fencers will compete in external competitions. Thanks must go to our two coaches, Herman du Preez and Alan Knowles for their unfaltering dedication and hard work. This year was also the last for Upper Sixth student and Fencing Captain Thomas Chan. Thomas has been a stalwart member of the club throughout his time at Abingdon and I wish him the very best of luck for the future. Bring on next year... En garde!

Nick Fieldhouse





Cricket

The 2013 cricket season will be remembered with much fondness by both boys and staff alike, with the weather allowing for a full allotment of games and participation levels at an all time high.

In all, 8 centuries were made as well as 44 half centuries and 8 five wicket hauls. It was clearly a batsman's summer! 24 boys were selected for either Oxfordshire or Berkshire youth squads as well as numerous others being involved in their respective inter county district tournaments.

The season started in early February with the annual U15 cricket tour. This year the group ventured to South Africa and the city of Cape Town. Positive results on the field followed as well as taking in some truly beautiful scenery. The opportunity to gain an understanding of South Africa's inspirational recent history was also a key factor in our decision to tour.

A few months later the 1st XI started their pre-season

activities with a trip to the United Arab Emirates and participation in the prestigious Emirates Schools Invitational Tournament. They then had a positive if slightly inconsistent season winning 68% of its games. Whilst this statistic is very positive this talented group could well have achieved even more. The highlights of the season must be the victories over Radley and Stowe and the crushing local wins against MCS and Oratory. With 90% of the squad returning next year the future is very bright.

Of the other sides the 2nd XI were the real standouts. With only one loss the 2nd XI proved to be full of quality and depth.

The 2013 season saw us field an U16 side for the first time. This year's group combined their record breaking GCSE results with some very pleasing results.

At U15 level all three teams had fine seasons winning many more than they lost. The U15A side lost only two games all year and also picked up the Bunbury U15 County Cup.

The U14s also had a fine first season as the ex-Lower School boys and new third years grew to work well together. The depth in this year group was clear to see with 24 wins and only 7 losses the end result.

The Lower School again proved to be hugely enthusiastic for the game combining external fixtures with the newly formed Abingdon Lunchtime Premier League.

In all the 2013 season will be seen as a highly successful and enjoyable one. The huge development made by all the boys is testament to their hard work and enthusiasm for the game and credit must go to the staff who aid this development.

The Cricket Club would like to thank Mr Wickes, Mr Barker, and Mr Crichton who will be leaving Abingdon to assume new roles at other schools. Thank you also to the many parents who support wholeheartedly on the other side of the boundary. I can't wait for the 2014 season.

Damian Shirazi



CCF

As the new academic year began, I stood in front of the returning cadets and fresh-faced recruits to give them my annual opening address. Much like last year, I was met by a blue and green sea of enthusiasm and I had a deep feeling that this was going to be a very good year for Abingdon CCF. The training was quickly underway with our first main event being the Michaelmas field weekend at Bramley Training Area. The cadets spent time practising section attacks and ambushes and I was extremely impressed with the leadership skills shown. The weekend was quickly followed by a field day, this time at RAF Brize Norton, where cadets took part in a range of activities including a high ropes course, shooting, a talk from the RAF parachute display team and a look around a C17 aircraft.

In October I was exceedingly proud to witness Sjt William Sharp being awarded the Lord Lieutenant's Cadet badge. As the CCF Lord Lieutenant's



Cadet for Oxfordshire he was about to experience a year of accompanying the Lord Lieutenant to many high profile events around our region. I truly hope that Sjt Sharp has gained a lot from this fantastic experience.

Our main effort in November was Remembrance, with parades held both in school and in Abingdon town centre. Yet again, the boys' turnout and drill was exemplary and the parades proved to be fitting tributes for the occasion; we will remember them.

In December Exercise Winter Warrior VII took place in

Wengen Switzerland. The boys enjoyed an excellent week skiing with much improvement made by all. Many thanks go to Mrs Cooper for leading the trip.

In January we welcomed our new SSI CSjt Matt Fisher to the contingent. An ex-Rifleman, CSjt Fisher was based at CTC Frimley Park before joining the school. We wish him well for his time at Abingdon.

The CCF annual formal dinner was held in February at Abingdon to celebrate the achievements of the contingent. We were fortunate enough to welcome Gp Capt Richard Maddison OBE RAF and his wife as our guests. The evening was a great success with many of the boys experiencing the traditions of a proper military dinner for the very first time.

After achieving second place in the regional Air Squadron Trophy competition in February, the RAF Section team progressed to the national competition in March. They put in a



superb effort, pitched against some extremely experienced teams and, although they didn't place in the top three, they should be remarkably proud of their achievement. The RAF section is thriving and, along with various gliding and flying opportunities, two cadets, FSgt Finlay Garland and LCpl Matthew Allison, have also recently become flight staff cadets at 612 VGS.

In March the run up to Easter Camp began with an Advanced Infantry Self Reliance weekend at Bramley Training Area. This was a challenging exercise with the aim of perfecting field discipline and administration. The cadets underwent a steep learning curve and by the end of the weekend, although fairly tired, they were all full of enthusiasm.

The recruits experienced a day of intense camp preparation training shortly after during their Lent field day at Abingdon Airfield. Here they were also lucky enough to have a ride on an Army drops vehicle and watch a sneak preview performance from The White Helmets, The Royal Signals motorcycle display team.



The Lent term progressed extremely quickly and, before we knew it, we were all at Knook Camp, Salisbury Plain, for the much awaited Easter Camp. The Advanced Infantry Cadre were first to arrive and their intensive training was quickly underway. The next day saw the arrival of the recruits, some nervous, most apprehensive, but all eager to see what the week would bring. All cadets made superb progress during the camp, despite extremely cold weather, and enthusiasm levels really soared! Thanks must go to my team of Officers and NCOs, without whom this camp would not have worked.

The sun shone for the Easter Camp passing out parade, which was held at Abingdon at the beginning of the Summer term. Our inspecting officer,

Gp Capt Maddision OBE RAF, presented the Advanced Infantry Cadre with their long awaited badges and congratulated the recruits as they passed out into their chosen sections, all proudly wearing their newly moulded berets. Cdt Bertie Boyd-Gorst was awarded 'Best Advanced Infantry Cadet' and Cdt Peter Coope achieved the 'Best Recruit' award.

Summer is the quietest term for the CCF but in April we had a productive range day at Ottmoor. During half term three cadets took a break from their revision to visit the Defence Academy at Shrivenham for a lecture on the Battle of Isandlwana and a guided tour of the Academy's Defence Capability Centre.

The summer holidays saw an Oxfordshire Joint Services Cadet Weekend, cadets participating in Southampton UOTC's Summer Camp, RAF Summer Camp at RAF Brize Norton and Army Summer Camp at Longmoor. Cadets also attended the Cadet Leadership Course at Frimley Park and the Air Cadet Leadership Course, with one



cadet completing a Gliding Scholarship and another completing the Air Cadet Pilot Navigation Training Scheme.

This would not be such a busy contingent if it were not for the dedication and commitment given by my team of staff. I would like to thank CSjt Matt Fisher, Sqn Ldr David Haworth, Maj Chris Fletcher-Campbell, Flt Lt Richard Ashdowne, Plt Off Rebecca Cottam and also Capt John Chapman BEM, who left Abingdon earlier in the year, for all of their hard work. I would also like to thank the Upper Sixth Cadets for all the effort they have put into the CCF over the last five years and wish them all the best for the future.

Maj Eleanor Kaye

This year as CCF Lord Lieutenant's Cadet for Oxfordshire has been a marvellous experience, one which I shall never forget, and which I am incredibly privileged to have had.

The variety of events, both military and civil has been astounding, commencing with St Frideswide's day at Christ Church. There was a reception beforehand and we were shown the mayor's office. At the service at Christ Church, Sir Roger Bannister spoke about the importance of the family.

The Remembrance parade in Oxford gave the opportunity to be involved in a multi-cultural service of remembrance. I also sat in on a council meeting

about giving 4624 Squadron the freedom of the county.

However undoubtedly for me the highlight of the year was the opening of the new wing at the Said Business centre, where I was lucky enough to not only accompany the Lord Lieutenant but also Prince Charles, which was a huge honour. There have also been many other opportunities to meet other important dignitaries from Oxfordshire including the mayors of both Oxford and Abingdon.

This year has been a fantastic opportunity, and has also allowed me an insight into what some of the influential people of the county do on a day to day basis.

Sjt William Sharp 6SEG



William Sharp

Library

Amongst the activities that focus around the library during the year, there seems a constant theme of reading and consumption of sweet substances is going hand in hand:

Lower School boys meet weekly for Books and Biscuits Club, choosing a book to read together and debating its merits, whilst hotly discussing personal preferences for hobnobs or digestives.

We are pleased to be host to the annual Oxfordshire Book Award each year. During the year, not only does it provide an opportunity to read some of the best fiction published each year, but it allows students to vote for their favourite book. At the Award ceremony which holds in October, about 350 schoolchildren across Oxfordshire will have the chance to meet the authors and illustrators that they have voted for – and, of course, there is the highlight of the day, the beautifully decorated Oxfordshire Book Award cake illustrating the books. The Carnegie Medal is awarded annually by children's librarians to the writer of an outstanding book for children and young people. Children also judge the shortlisted titles for themselves through 'Shadowing the Carnegie'. Each week throughout the summer term, an enthusiastic group of readers from Lower School meet to discuss and debate the merits of the shortlisted titles as do many schools taking part



across the country. The students post reviews on the Shadowing website.

Abingdon is also part of the Abingdon partnership of students from all six Abingdon secondary schools who share Carnegie events. The shadowing year starts with the Carnegie Tea held this year at St Helen & St Katharine School, which provided students the opportunity to exchange first impressions of the shortlist, by comparing covers, 'blurbs' and first paragraphs and the opportunity to meet their fellow shadowers.

The Carnegie Quiz is next in the Carnegie calendar, where students displayed their in-depth knowledge of the shortlisted books. Each school's librarian prepared a set of questions on individual shortlisted books and awarded a prize to the student who had contributed most to shadowing within their school.

The process finishes with the Carnegie Forum, held at

Abingdon Guildhall. Over 100 students took part in the day-long event, which involved discussion groups, rehearsals and presentations centered on the shortlisted books (and cake). The groups were led by PGCE students from Oxford Brookes University – and the competition was fierce to produce the best presentation.

Awarded prizes for best reviews are Iwan Stone (*Code Name Verity*) and John Dickson (also *Code Name Verity*). Alasdair Czaplewski (*Midwinterblood*) is highly recommended. Best contributors (nominated by the group leader for their contribution to the group) are Ben Ffrench and Hugo Eddlestone and the winning group presentation includes Jonny Fieth and Thomas Shaw. The Forum votes *Wonder* by R.J. Palacio as their winning book, which as ever is not the same as the national winner, which is *Maggot Moon* by Sally Gardner.

Gaynor Cooper

Here are the two reviews for *Code Name Verity* which were awarded prizes:

Julie and Maddie live under an umbrella of safety. The thin canvas has stretched to protect them from the truth, the lies and the torture of the Gestapo. But now a rip appears and danger spews through the tear. Julie is trapped in a cell beside an interrogation room. She lives under the terror of Amadeus von Linden. He is the main officer at the hotel where Julie has been caught as a spy in Ormaie, where she writes the first half of this novel.

It's a twist of lies and truth, sometimes they are woven so cleverly I didn't realise what was what until I read the 'verity' later in Maddie's section of the book. In my opinion the most powerful moment was right at the end of Julie's section, when she kept repeating the words: 'I have told the truth.' This linked to her code name and gave a desperate air to the end of her

time at the 'Hotel of the Butchers'.

I found this book quite dull at the start but by about a third of the way through I could literally not put it down. This whirlwind of a thriller rips out your heart and throws it into the middle of the resistance of Ormaine. I loved the fact that these girls were from extremely different backgrounds but they had more in common than most people from the same community. As Julie said, they would not have met if not for the war. During the book I wondered about the underlined words but now I understand, and they were like illustrations to this wonderful tale. By the end I was reading with dedication yet I was horrified by the darkness of the words in front of me. Fable meets fact; Lord Nelson meets Peter Pan. If I had to choose my winner now, I would choose this book.

Iwan Stone 2SW

Can two best friends save each other when they crash land in enemy territory? In *Code Name Verity* nothing is certain, especially not the girls' survival in this gripping and heart-breaking WWII thriller.

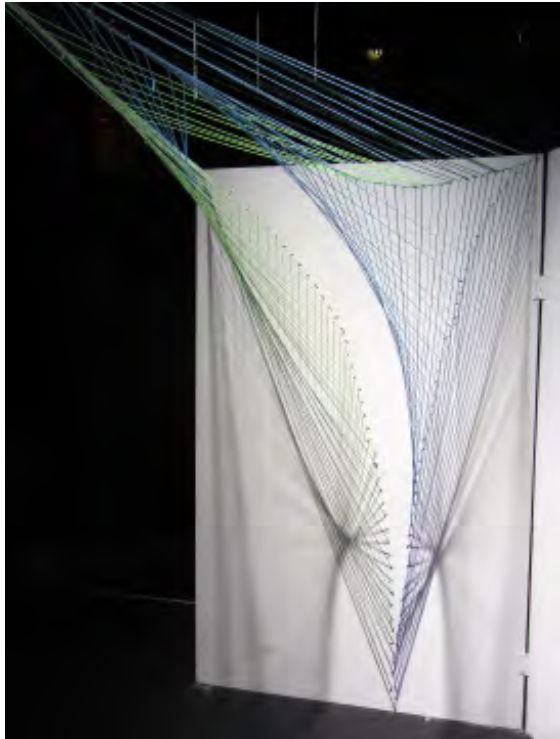
Despite not even knowing Verity's name for some time, and not even meeting Maddie during the story - these are two warm and realistic characters. So very different; a rich woman from Scotland and a working-class Stockport girl, but united in their strong friendship and in their battle to prove themselves in what is very much a man's world.

The plot is a mine-field. Crushing sad and hugely inspirational, this novel will thoroughly move even the most cynical of readers. Even the most experienced readers will not predict this story.

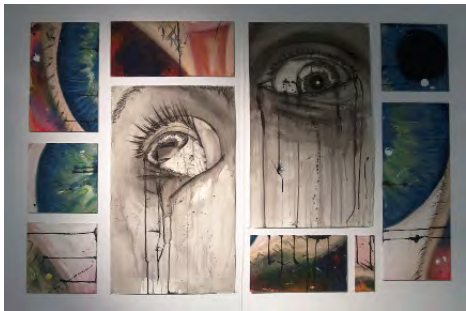
So, this is a very different read. Engaging, not completely... until the surprising ending. This story will enchant the reader's heart with a beautiful story of friendship.

John Dickson 1HFCP





Art





Gallery



Tennis

This was another hugely successful tennis season that began with the Aegon Regional rounds in early September and finished with the Old Abingdonian match on the last day of term. A vast number of players have played throughout the year in all conditions, receiving coaching on a daily basis from Martin Butler, the school's tennis professional. This hard work has seen the Tennis Club generate some fine results; winning Oxfordshire county titles, gaining individual national honours, securing unbeaten seasons and collecting a number of trophies.

Peter Honey captained the Tennis Club and led the 1st team to a fine season of results. He and a number of other senior players have coached throughout the age groups at school and have helped to inspire the next generation of players.

Independent Schools' League

With sixteen of the top tennis schools in the south of England playing in this team of eight tournament Abingdon were hoping to build on last year's fourth place finish. Going into the tournament as a seed, Abingdon were drawn in round 1 against Cranleigh, Dulwich and Marlborough. Playing both singles and doubles, Abingdon finished the day ahead of Cranleigh and Dulwich, but finished second in the group behind Marlborough.

In round 2 on the second weekend, Abingdon were in Group 2 and drawn against the three other schools finishing second in their group. Playing Radley, New Hall and Charterhouse, we again finished second behind Radley and ended the tournament in sixth place overall.

Independent Schools' Tennis Tournament

U18 – Youll Cup - A strong Abingdon team were seeded in the draw and after reaching the final at the St George's Tournament the week before, were hoping to reach the later stages. After wins in the preliminary rounds against St Paul's, Kings's Taunton and Winchester, they met Reed's School in the quarter finals. Reed's had beaten Abingdon in the St George's final and were number 1 seeds, having won the tournament for the past few years. Abingdon's 1st pair produced some incredible doubles play to beat the Reed's 1st pair in a tie break third set, but the Abingdon 2nd pair were not able to back the win up. This left Giles Waterson to play a

deciding singles rubber, which unfortunately he lost to one of Reed's many nationally ranked players.

U15 Thomas Bowl - Tom Buckle and Alexander Skelly have been part of Abingdon's unbeaten U14 team and with another year in this competition, they should be aiming to reach the later stages next year after this experience. They beat Reigate in the first round, before going out of the main draw to St George's Weybridge. This meant that they entered the plate competition and after some excellent wins, narrowly lost the semi-final to Repton on a tie break.

U13 Ralph Cake Trophy - Abingdon entered two U13 pairs into this event and with the draw starting as a round robin competition, both Abingdon pairs finished at the top of their groups and moved into the knockout competition. Playing against teams that had also won their group, they were beaten by some strong opposition, but performed excellently to reach the last 16.



Oxfordshire Independent Schools' Tournament

The Oxfordshire Schools' Tournaments are played at four age groups, between Radley, MCS, St Edward's, Oratory and Abingdon. A team of eight players competes, playing singles and doubles, with the winning school being the one that wins the most games. Abingdon won at U18, U15 and U14 level – a superb set of results.

Inter School Fixtures

Seniors – This was another excellent season led at first pair by Peter Honey and Giles Waterson. Their success was backed up by Jamie Bowles and Freddie Locock–Harrison at second pair, and Nicholas Leah and George Ruck at third. Good contributions were also made by Jack Maxted, John Wiekaj and Oliver Phillips.

The 2nd and 3rd teams played a total of 18 matches throughout the season and played some good tennis. There are a number of players here that have served the club well over a number of years and are now leaving the school - many thanks go to Elliot Mills, James Zhou, Toby Brown, James Dewar, Robert Fishpool and Christian Huck.

U16s – Once again led by Mr Revill, the U16 squad have a number of talented players that will be aiming to step up into the 1st team next season. With Jamie Bowles playing in the

1st team this season, Dominic Whaler, Adam Pearson, Nathan Allaby, Alex Bond, Edward Lowe and Max Finch made up the U16 A team.

U15s – Mr Deasy led this enthusiastic squad to another great set of results. Many of these players have worked hard throughout the year and were fully deserving of their success. Captained by Sebastian Evans there were wins for the A, B and C teams against Wellington, MCS, Stowe, St Edward's, Marlborough, Radley and Warwick. This is a year group with real strength in depth and the fierce competition for places has pushed them all to improve.

U14s – Dr Wiekaj has enjoyed an unbeaten season with this accomplished squad and has been able to rotate players with the same results. The U14 A team only lost 4 sets of tennis all season, dropping three against Eton and 1 against Bradfield. Tom Buckle has captained the team and played with Edward Green at first pair, with George Jeffreys, Alex Ling, George Strange, Alexander Skelly, Edward Adamson and Max Mortimer all playing a role. Next season many of these players will be aiming to challenge the senior players for their places in the 1st team.

U13/U12s – With a huge number of players taking coaching lessons, team selection was always difficult and over 45 players represented the school



in matches. Edward Green led the U13 team to a number of wins and Ray Prince and Seamus Ramsey were unbeaten at first pair for the U12's.

Tournaments

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

Buckley Cup – After the preliminary rounds, the semi final match ups saw Giles Waterson take on Alexander Skelly and George Ruck play Laurence Lilley. George and Giles progressed through to the final where Giles claimed the Buckley Cup title for the fourth time.

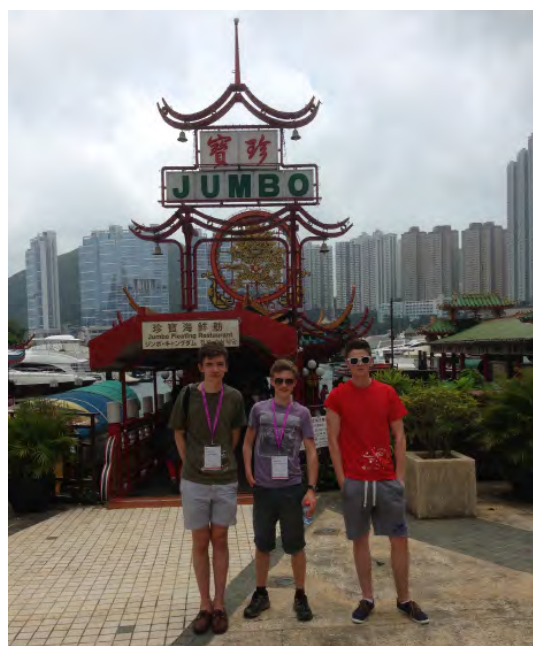
Steve Brenchley

PolyU Global Challenge

Departing for Heathrow at midday the team (composed of Henrik Cox, Harry Sandford and Jamie Sandall) was overcome by an eager sense of anticipation. Having worked on the plan and presentation extensively over the year we wanted to do justice to our efforts. Fortunately the Cathay Pacific ticket had been covered by the competition and upon landing in Hong Kong we were met by a throng of photographers armed with video cameras to be interviewed about the competition. Whilst this was novel for the first five minutes, our tone became increasingly despondent as tiredness set in and by the end inaudible grunts were the only things leaving our mouths. We were then introduced to our 'dedicated student ambassador' Keith, who herded us

all on to coaches bound for the PolyU student halls along with all the other teams and their respective SAs. After checking in we met the other participants we had been billeted with - I was paired with Oluwasanya Awe, who studies at the African Leadership Academy in South Africa. That evening we attended a drinks reception where the 60 teams (half from each category - University and Secondary) from all 34 countries could introduce themselves and network with each other. After this we visited Temple Street Market with the team from Hills Road Sixth Form college (UK), where we were coerced into eating at a side-street "restaurant". The vocal waitresses who had captured us proceeded to force an elderly gentleman off his low plastic table to make room and ordering what we actually wanted from the indecipherable menu proved impossible as we were presented with copious amounts of rice and meat.

The following morning, bleary eyed, we went to listen to an illuminating talk on entrepreneurship entitled 'Entrepreneurs change the world' by the University of Cambridge's Entrepreneur in Residence Professor Alan Barrell. Keith then gave us a tour of the campus, which among other things included a robotics lab that helps rehabilitate stroke victims and the university's Michelin starred restaurant where students of the Tourism and Hospitality course practise their trade. In the evening we went for a Chinese meal in Harbour City (Kowloon) and watched the spectacular light show from across Victoria Harbour. We then returned to Mr Fieldhouse's hotel, the Mira, for one last rehearsal before the competition. The hotel was a source of added intrigue as this was where the fugitive CIA contractor Edward Snowden was camping out before departing for Moscow.





Competition day! We donned our suits and nervously proceeded to the inconspicuous classroom to present our idea - Lüg - an app-controlled suitcase. The fifteen minute presentation went by without a hitch, just as planned. The subsequent questioning from our three judges proved more challenging. The world-class judges had come from all over; one, from South America, had made a 32 hour journey to be there. We successfully fended off repeated assaults on our idea and in our eyes performed admirably compared to the others in our room. We were duly reminded by Mr Fieldhouse that it is hard to view something you have invested so much time in objectively, but nonetheless he congratulated us on our performance. That evening the results were announced and sadly we had not made it through to the finals, being pipped in our room by a composite Thai/Korean team. We then dined in the university's hotel restaurant which had a beautiful view overlooking Hong Kong Island. The following morning we were briefed by one of our judges, Dr

Ben Corpus of Baruch College (New York), who said technically we performed very well but that our idea didn't quite contain the social aspects that the winning team's idea did. Disgruntled, we then partook in a comical Tai Chi experience in the sports hall en masse that roused our spirits. This was followed by a group Dim Sum lunch at Jumbo Kingdom (the famed floating restaurant) and a trip to the Hong Kong Cyberport. The view of the city from a nighttime trip up Victoria Peak was slightly obscured by cloud but was still impressive.

Wednesday morning started with a lecture from the



charismatic Paul Pei. As Marketing Executive of Ocean Park he spoke of the strategies deployed to counter Disneyland's arrival in Hong Kong in 2006. We then visited Ocean Park and the markets of Mongkok.

On the final evening the Gala ceremony was held in the Mira's ballroom which was quite a spectacle and a fitting end to an unforgettable week. The following morning we said our farewells to Keith and all our new friends at Hong Kong International airport before returning home.

Jamie Sandall 6JJ



Rowing

This year was another highly successful one for the Rowing Club with the 1st VIII winning the Princess Elizabeth Challenge Cup at Henley Royal Regatta for the third consecutive year – a feat not recorded by a schoolboy crew since 1948. The report here on third year rowing shows that there is great strength in depth in the club at the moment - the future is clearly in good hands.



J14 Sculling

A close victory over St. Edward's in the final – this was not Henley Regatta 2013, but the J14 octuple event at Reading Town Regatta only a week earlier. This was the culmination of a very promising season for a squad who have every chance of going on to emulate the successes of their seniors.

The victory in the warm sun was a fitting end to a season that had begun in February with a rather chillier victory over the same St. Edward's crew outside our home boathouse. The season had been one of great highs and lows. Staring at the waves rolling endlessly down the National Rowing Lake at Nottingham and gradually losing hope of a chance to show just how fast our crews had become – this was definitely the worst moment. However, there was a great sense of strength in depth throughout the season, with two trophies won by the C octuple; the fact that one of these finals was won over the Abingdon B octuple shows

how tricky selection was for the coaches.

In all, thirty-four boys won a regatta trophy over the season, a record at J14 level that will be hard to beat. In private matches against other schools, even our D and E crew were beating C crews, and showed impressive determination and focus that one would expect of more experienced crews. The A octuple, on the other hand, spent the season measuring their increasing speed against a very strong crew from Winchester; a shock defeat at Bedford left the target to overcome Winchester by the end of the season. A further defeat at Marlow left only one shot in the last race of the season at Reading Town.

Winchester had impressed due to their high rate of strokes per minute, with Abingdon looking to generate a higher speed at a lower rate. As the boats charged towards the finish, a heartening piece of commentary was heard:

“Winchester are at the higher rate...but it isn't working for them’, and Abingdon stormed through to a very satisfying victory. Traditionally, Abingdon has struggled at J14 level against three-term sculling schools, so the feats accomplished by these boys are particularly impressive and promising for the future.

Hugh Price



Leavers' Day

As ex-members of the Upper Sixth, we are now, as you may have guessed, at a significant point in our lives. Here we are, about to go out into the 'real world', something that the last 13 years of our educational lives have been geared towards. We've planned, worried and worked for this moment, taken the exams and finally become OAs. This is where that distant point of 'leaving school' becomes a reality, and for some of us it may still seem rather surreal. Perhaps at this transition it would be wise to take a look ahead into the future.

What will it bring? The great point about this moment in our lives is that nobody really knows. Sure, university perhaps, then a job, which would fit the majority of us. But what will we be doing in 10, 20 years time? According to the yearbook, Gareth Lloyd will be prime minister, and Gab Drewitt will be both a getaway driver and a stand up comedian. Who knows whether these predictions will hold true?

Let us not, however, forget the past 2, 5 or, for some of us, 7 years. I would like to say that everybody here is able to name more than a few things that they have gained from their time at Abingdon. Yes, you sit your exams and get the qualifications necessary, but there's more than that. As Mr Barker, our Head of Sixth Form said,

Mathew Hartshorne and Oscar Newman, Heads of School



exams are not the be all and end all in life, but they do open a lot of doors and make the path that much easier. I, for one have learned skills and had the opportunity to experience things that I will most likely remember for far longer than how to conjugate irregular Latin verbs. Walking for a solid 24 hours along the Ridgeway and Thames Path was challenging, but then again, for me, so was a Maths A-level. It is under these various challenges that we develop, and our time here at Abingdon gives challenges that yield huge rewards and allow you to learn about yourself and others. It brings academic ability but also confidence and, more importantly, forms strong bonds between us.

But despite all of this, I think that it's the friends we've made along the way that will last the longest. This again is evidenced by some rather sentimental comments in the yearbook, which you may not suspect to have been written by a load of 18 year-old boys. I can still remember my first day, looking around my tutor group, wondering where all these people had come from, and simply at how large the school was overall. For many of us, those first few days were the basis of friendships that would last for the duration of our time at Abingdon, and our school careers wouldn't have been the same without them.



This year group has developed a real sense of community over the past year, held together by strong friendships, which, with the help of the OA club, should remain for many years into the future. I would like to think that even with the year group following hugely different paths in later life, those friendships formed here, on the pitch or in the classroom, will still hold strong, formed over happy, funny or, in

some cases, outright embarrassing memories of the years gone past.

As I said earlier, nobody truly knows what the future has in store for us. However, I hope that whatever comes next, we can look back fondly on our time here at Abingdon. Thank you.

Oscar Newman VIPJEC



Stradivarius Exhibition Trip

Stradivari. The world's best violin maker. The creator of beautiful, amazingly ornate, perfect stringed instruments, and a pioneer in the field of musical discovery.

On the 2nd of July, a number of string players from across the school went to the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, to visit the Stradivarius Exhibition. We were lucky enough to be shown around by the curator of the exhibition himself, Dr Whiteley. Featuring over 25 instruments, and a number of other significant objects such as tools and letters, the exhibition was a truly impressive collection of Stradivari's best works.

Antonio Stradivari, of Cremona in Northern Italy, is a famous person whom we know almost nothing about. It is likely that he was born in 1644, and was making violins by 1666. It appears that he was taught by another fine violin maker, Amati, who introduced him to the tricks of the trade, and made the 'Serdet' violin with him. Today, Stradivari's instruments are highly sought after, and some are sold for several million dollars. It is thought that Stradivari made in his lifetime about 1200 instruments, 600 or so of which survive today.

Some of Stradivari's most amazing works came from the famous 'Golden Period',



running from about 1700 to 1720. In this time, he made some of his most beautiful violins, and some of the 11 highly decorated ones, like the 'Cipriani Potter'. Stradivari believed violins should be functional instruments, but he would sometimes give them highly ornate decoration.

During Stradivari's many years of production, his constant tinkering led him to change the shapes of his violins many times, in the pursuit of a superior sound quality. Constant changes applied to his products meant that no two instruments are the same, and that the sound just kept getting better. Thus, some of his later works, like the 'Fritz Kreisler' of 1733, looked less beautiful, but sounded just as enchanting. There are lots of myths about Stradivari and his work.

One such tale is that one of his most famous works, and one of the Ashmolean's permanent exhibits, the 'Messiah' violin, has never been played. While it is incredibly well preserved, it is

not because of its reverential lack of use. No – the 'Messiah' has been played, on more than one occasion, notably by the great virtuoso Yehudi Menuhin. It's not as if it is unchanged, either. In fact, nearly all of the violins have had their necks tilted and their fingerboards lengthened, making the instruments more suitable to play on in the 19th century. The tailpieces were replaced too, with intricate carvings of classical figures and other idols. Dr Whiteley commented that Stradivari, had he been alive today, would not have recognised the modern instruments as his own works; a great shame, considering.

But although the violins, cellos, guitars, violas and mandolins in the exhibition were not all 100% original, it was clear from the number of visitors and the format and information in the gallery that the exhibition was a very popular one. The trip was a great experience, enjoyed by everyone who attended.

Alasdair Czaplewski 1HFCP

Moldova

After our AS exams, a group of 11 sixth formers and two staff journeyed to Eastern Europe for the annual Moldova Project trip. Moldova is the poorest country in Europe and was part of the USSR until its independence in 1991. Abingdon has been supporting the charity Agape there since 2000 and has undertaken an annual trip to run a summer school for children near the capital city Chisinau since 2003.

I made my preparations for this trip with some trepidation, especially as none of us spoke the language and I discovered the currency, lei, wasn't available to purchase outside Moldova. Encouraged by Mr Jenkins to take art and craft supplies with us for use on the camp, for weeks beforehand I cleared out cupboards and cashed in Tesco vouchers until over half of my weight limit comprised art and craft items of every type.

We stayed with families in Ialoveni, many of whom had hosted boys before. We found the reception we received very generous, as the families shared everything they had with us, however little it might be.



It was a common occurrence for nothing to come out of the tap and nobody seemed concerned, even if the water supply did not resume until the morning. Communication was never really a problem although levels of English were very varied. Three of our family spoke not a word of English and yet they were charming and welcoming. There were a variety of situations, one friend stayed with a young family with a baby and grandparents, another had an outside toilet and shower, and some of us had to share beds, while family members slept on the couch to accommodate us. The food was plentiful and extremely

delicious, always home grown or acquired at local markets. I have never tasted tomatoes like it!

The main purpose of the visit was to run a week-long summer school for children during their long summer holiday whilst parents were out at work and unable to look after them. We split into three activity sessions – sport, craft and English – which we planned ourselves. We were normally situated in the local school and had the use of the gym and classrooms but on one of the days we moved to the community centre which is run by Agape. We had sixty children to organise ourselves, which was double the expected number, so it could get quite hectic and busy at times, and was a challenge. The children had varied levels of English and were split into three groups according to their ability so it was easier to communicate with the groups.



We rotated through all the activities to give some variety to the programme. I focused mainly on art and craft and our most popular activities were creating a giant mural and water bottle rockets, which we fired at the community centre for a special visit by the British Ambassador.

In the afternoons, we travelled into the city centre and met up with a group of teenagers our age who attended a young entrepreneur activity group outside school run by Agape. We were surprised and impressed by their excellent command of English and we all made some strong friendships through sightseeing together and a business challenge.

We visited some historical Moldovan sites such as the Milestii Mici winery, which houses the largest wine collection in the world, and includes a secret door for the more valuable bottles. We also visited a beautiful ancient church in Orheiul Vechi, which was dug into the rock and gave astounding views across the countryside. On the way, we had a spectacular tyre blow out but the driver carried on regardless! This is to be expected on Moldovan roads, but was an unnerving start to the day.



Bart Jennings (back row on left)

This was an extremely worthwhile cultural experience and one I would urge everyone to consider. We made very enjoyable, and hopefully long lasting, friendships and many of us feel it was the best thing we have ever done. Experiencing the cheerfulness of people living under very different economic conditions was eye opening and has perhaps taught us a greater appreciation of our own situation. We have resolved to return to Moldova under our own steam in the future to visit our new friends and see the changes that are constantly happening in the country.

Bart Jennings 6RJG

I liked this camp very much, because I spent here the most beautiful moments from my holiday together with my classmates and with our guests from Great Britain. At this camp I learnt a lot of interesting and useful things. I enjoyed my English classes, craft and sport. During these lessons I felt really good, because we were given full attention and everything was explained in a very easy way to understand. I would like to thank the Abingdon boys from my whole heart for the camp that they had organised, for the care and their friendship.

Cristina Bubulici

I have never believed that you can spend a holiday at school and in a very interesting way. But it was made possible by our teacher Miss Placinta, that invited us to practise English language together with students from Abingdon School. Coming to school I made new friends,



and we cooperated in English groups, art and sport. Sweets, sandwiches, pizza and ice cream were never missed at our lunch.

Unforgettable was the meeting with Great Britain Ambassador in Moldova. He visited us at Agape Community Centre. We launched fireworks manufactured by us and we played football.

We owe all these to our guests from England. THANKS A LOT!!!!!!!!!!!!

Daniel Frecautan



IGeo Japan Trip

Congratulations to Richard Matousek who was selected to represent the UK at the 10th International Geography Olympiad, iGeo, in Kyoto, Japan during the summer based on his performance in the nationwide Geography Olympiad competition for which he wrote the following essay on changing shopping habits:

I believe that shopping habits have changed and that high street retail is declining as a result; however, I disagree with the assumption that out-of-town shopping is the way to go.

In the past few decades, our shopping habits have changed dramatically. Since the 1970s we have been shopping less in small, independent shops situated on the high street and instead, we buy more from supermarkets and superstores. Internet shopping has also grown rapidly over the past few years; the number of Brits shopping online rose by 24.7% between 2006 and 2007.

Despite this trend however, I would not say that the high street is “dead in the water”. In fact quite a few independent retailers have found a niche and have managed, not only to survive, but even to flourish in their communities and sustain vibrancy in the centre. The high street is also used by national and multinational chains such

as banks and coffeehouses. Therefore it would be wrong to call the high street “dead”.

However, there is no getting round the fact that our town centres are vulnerable to competition, and I strongly believe that action should be taken to stem the decline of the high street. This would be the most beneficial solution for the people and the economy of a community even though it may seem easier to carry on developing out-of-town shopping centres as town centres are a vital part of our lives.

Firstly there are social reasons; the town centre has always been a cultural and social hub. The citizens of a community have a social need to meet, either for a work appointment or a casual rendezvous. Meeting is important because it allows new relationships to form and allows us to share our ideas and thus to develop our culture. Furthermore, despite the rise of social-media, face-to-face meeting is still crucial in the development of society. This is particularly important regarding the current demo-

graphic of our society. We currently have an ageing population and many British communities are often segregated by ethnicity and socioeconomic status. The town centre should be protected, as it is a common forum for all generations, cultures and backgrounds.

Additionally, the centre-based model for retail and services in towns and cities is sustainable. However, building on the rural-urban fringe increases the rate of urban sprawl, which is an extremely inefficient phenomenon for the growth of towns. The fact that the businesses are much more dispersed than in the centre also increases car dependency and leads to increased costs for the local government. This is because now more services and infrastructure such as sewers must be built, but to serve fewer businesses than they would in a higher-density city centre. Consequently, keeping as much retail and services within the town centres as possible is a much more economical method for local councils. I therefore disagree with the description



of out-of-town shopping as the “way forward”.

Furthermore, the perception that out-of-town shopping is the preferred method of shopping by the consumer is inaccurate. Two good examples of this are the cities of Manchester and Bristol. Both have large out-of-town shopping centres - Manchester has the Trafford Centre and Bristol the Mall at Cribbs Causeway - as well as city-centre shopping centres - Manchester Arndale and Cabot Circus in Bristol. Year upon year the out-of-town centres’ footfall figures are lower than those of the smaller, central shopping centres’. Cabot Circus for example receives over one-and-a-half times as many visitors as the Mall. This shows how the city centre - often nearer to consumers’ homes - is often the preferred destination; only sometimes some help is needed through investment.

In both city centres the retail in nearby towns declined as a result of the out-of-town centres, showing how out-of-town developments suck footfall, jobs and vitality from town centres. Altrincham for example, twenty-minutes from the Trafford Centre, has a shop vacancy rate of almost 30%. The towns around the Mall were not as badly affected but the main difference is that the centres of these towns were greatly redeveloped; the SouthGate precinct was built



in Bath and Dolphin Square in Weston-super-Mare is currently being overhauled. I believe that areas like Greater Manchester should use a similar approach, whereby nearby towns undergo a redevelopment - not just the main city – especially because they generally have fewer facilities to attract consumers.

I would also agree that our town centres could be better used to support economic growth. Since many goods can be provided by shopping online and out-of-town, the future of the town centre lies in mainly offering services - especially leisure - which are difficult to replace with online and out-of-town retail. This would provide more stable economic growth as shown by the fact that the number of “Eating-and-Drinking-Out” businesses has risen by 25% since 2006, despite the overall figures for businesses declining. Many of these services such as pubs and restaurants also maintain an important vibrant nightlife in the town centre. Hostels, gyms and artisan shops provide other

examples of services that cannot be replaced. Shops tailored to a nearby service such as a sports shop near a gym would also be difficult to replace because they immediately provide consumers with the goods they need. As is being done with the new hospital in Altrincham, public services should be offered alongside these services, to keep citizens coming. Another effective way to invigorate the town centre is to have public events such as markets, festivals and workshops throughout the year.

In conclusion, I agree with the government’s decision to ban new out-of-town shopping centres from being built because they extract vitality from the high street. Instead, we should invest more in our high streets smartly, so as to keep them growing as they provide an indispensable forum for our communities and are the most sustainable option for the future planning.

Richard Matousek 5DJB

India Trip

Twelve members of the Lower Sixth, led by Mr Fishpool and Mr Ghosh, made the trip to India in order to study development and inequality as well as seeing the sights in New Delhi, Agra, Jaipur and Mumbai. The majority of us hadn't been to India before, but we certainly made the most of our ten day long stint, learning about both India's vibrant and varied culture and increasing importance as an economic powerhouse and key player on the geopolitical stage.

The journey began in New Delhi, where shortly after arriving we were whisked off to G.D. Goenka, one of the best and most expensive schools in the Delhi area to meet the pupils and discuss everything from globalisation and British climate to ΔIt – J and Indian post-rock. We all got along well and it was interesting to learn about an alien culture from the viewpoint of people of our own age. While in Delhi we also looked round the spectacular presidential palace, Rashtrapati Bhavan, and paid a visit to Adrian Mutton OA who runs successful market entry services company Sannam S4. He told us about the value of the Indian economy to transnational corporations.

The highlight for most of us, however, was the morning spent in Old Delhi; a surreal visit



to the impressive Jama Mosque in the monsoon rain, and a rickshaw ride around the narrow and chaotic streets of Old Delhi.

Next we moved on to Agra, via Vrindavan, a small town known for its many temples of the Hindu deity, Lord Krishna. We entered one such temple, Banke Bihari, accompanied by our friends from G.D. Goenka, to witness one hectic ceremony, which involved tokens and coins being thrown towards a statue of Krishna and crowds rushing in to see the figure of the deity. One boy, caught in the crush of bodies, remarked "It's not quite Friday morning chapel, is it?"

We also rode tuk tuks down to the riverside, a serene place where ruins stretched right to the water and people sat looking over the water at fishing boats. The next morning

we rose early to go to the Taj Mahal, which was even more ornate and spectacular than we could ever have imagined.

Jaipur, the Pink City, was the third leg of the journey, where the main event was a trip to the astonishing Amer Fort in the hills above the city. We arrived atop Indian elephants, an excellent way to get superb views of the hills leading down to the city below, and, having fought our way through the hordes of hawkers in the fort's main square, the stronghold and the views from its ramparts were spectacular. Our accommodation in Jaipur also became a favourite; a family-run bedsit with a rooftop terrace which we were sad to leave.

However, spirits were soon lifted as we arrived in bustling Mumbai, the most populous

city in India. The main event of this part of our journey was a visit to Dharavi, one of the largest slums in the world and home to between 600,000 and 1 million people. It is also a key location for the recycling and reprocessing of everything from coke bottles to dregs of cooking fat, and it was very interesting to see how, although people would think of it as an impoverished community, it actually worked extremely well as a functioning informal business centre (with a turnover of \$650m per year), and a very tight-knit community where everyone, irrelevant of race or origins, pulls together to make a living.

We also visited a school in Dharavi, where upon entering we were swamped by groups of young children asking for photographs and autographs, certainly an unusual but entertaining and heart-warming moment for all of us.

Other highlights included a trip to a Dhobi Ghat, or outside laundry district, on the seafront, and a boat trip to Elephanta Island to see the caves dedicated to Shiva, where we kept a constant eye out for light-fingered monkeys and evidence supporting reported sightings of an anaconda.

Having enjoyed numerous excellent curries, cursed the 98% humidity and just about managed to ward off the notorious Delhi Belly (bar

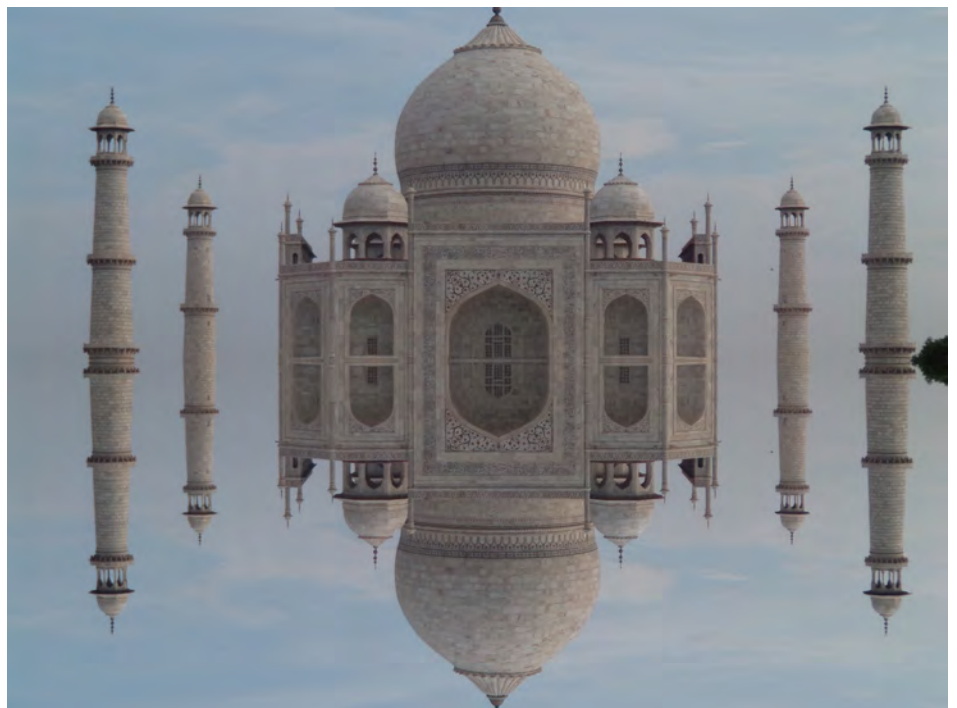


one unfortunate casualty), but overall having been amazed and overwhelmed by the colour and spectacular sights of India, we set off home. All of us return having enjoyed exploring a totally new culture and learned a great deal about the human geography of India.

I think I vouch for all members of the group when I say that

the trip only added to our enthusiasm for and interest in the subject looking forward towards universities, but perhaps also, more importantly, inspired us to desire to return and explore more of the vibrant, hectic melting pot of old and new that is India today.

Sean MacLachlan 6LFD



Boyd's

September 2012 was when I moved into the sixth form at Abingdon, and although a lot changed, the Boyd's House community remained as vibrant and thriving as ever. The houseroom had been refurbished when we all came back to school, with a computer room for 'silent' study and a shimmering new common room for the Upper Sixth, which they embraced fondly and decorated with framed photos both of Mr Boyd and their tutor Mr Grills. Other heirlooms we've been left this year include two lacrosse sticks and some potted plants, no doubt to keep the room healthily oxygenated. But as well as being a thoughtful year group, the Upper Sixth of 2012/13 will be remembered in many more ways.

It would be impossible to summarise the year without paying well-deserved homage to the legendary 'Thought of the Day' routine by the equally legendary Gabriel Drewett, known to us as Gab. Despite losing us the House Debating Competition with his hilarious speech on immigration, the gab is something everyone would agree he had the gift of. He rounded off all



of our house assemblies with touching personal anecdotes about friends from his past, all of whom seem to have died in circumstances all the more tragic for their unlikelihood. Ask any Boyddian about poor Randall, for example, and their face will bear a sincere grimace of reflective mourning. But jokes aside, Gab's charming, albeit farcical and entirely fictitious musings about childhood envies and catastrophic coincidences gave every tired, 9am face the humorous energy to lighten up with colour and zest for the day ahead. It was Gab's snippets of jovial thought, developing in continuity and absurdity over the year, that set me thinking to myself how nice it was that house assemblies were every two weeks rather

than dotted around at the ends of terms. His jovial and heartening attitude to life, both in school and the houseroom, will be dearly remembered.

In sport the house continued to excel, winning the rugby tournament in the Michaelmas term, and narrowly missing out on first place in the football. We have some exceptional athletes in the house who continue to represent the school and even the country. Tom Digby was selected as a potential future star of GB rowing. Jamie Pearson was selected for the England U16 (North) team and had his first international cap. Theo Brophy Clews played for the 1st XV team despite being a Middle School student and balanced that with his club training in London. Nat Jones continued to impress as one of the Cross Country Club's rising stars having returned that summer from the national schools' athletics tournament. He contributed to the club being crowned county champions for another year.



Jamie Pearson

Russell Orr Burns was our most senior rower this year with the 2nd VIII although James Wooding and Guy Scream are also making good reputations for themselves in the Boat Club and we look forward to their future successes. One third year who joined us this year already with national sporting accolades under his belt was Magnus Gregory. A young man of huge talent, his ability in the kayak and performance at national and international competitions was only surpassed by his modesty and quiet dedication to school life.

Perhaps one of the most loved yet simultaneously despised events of every Abingdon year is House Singing. Since arriving in the third year I've always loved how in Boyd's we laugh at what we're doing, but at the same time take it seriously and stand there singing unashamedly nonetheless. This year we belted out what was, quite honestly, a fabulous rendition of KT Tunstall's *Suddenly I See*, a song which I had never thought could be so fun to sing. Toby Marlow inspired us all to sing out loud, not just with his tireless enthusiasm and delightful sense of humour, but also with the preposterous yet effective warm up exercises he made us go through. Before that frantic week of non-stop rehearsals I'd never known what a push rhythm was, but our song was full of them. Toby taught us all what they were and how to sing them, and we had tremendous fun performing. My experience

Gabriel Drewett



of standing in the Ingham Room lined up with the rest of the house left me sad to realise that I only have one House Singing competition left.

A mention of Toby can't slip away without the memory of his starring in the production of *Candide*; Voltaire himself would definitely be proud of Toby's witty portrayal of the title character. Drama was something the Boyd's Upper Sixth seemed to be particularly good at, with Joe Westcott taking the lead role of Winston in the production of *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. It's been a pleasure to have been in the same house as these two, and it's not only in the last year that I've seen their brilliant performances in plays. Toby's hilarious role in *Hay Fever* and chilling portrayal of the sinister Master of Ceremonies in *Cabaret*, as well as Joe's stunning act as Faustus will stay with me for years to come.

I hope that the houseroom is soon replenished with thespians anew, as the Upper

Sixth has treated us to some real talent, not just in drama but academia as well; I don't think there can be many people with grades and achievements as considerable as those of Sam Wright and Omri Faraggi, whose intellects I'm sure will be satisfied in the wider world.

To the new red-tied third years: you have a lot to live up to in what is obviously the school's best house. I'm sure you will.

Michael Bicarregui 6EOD and David Boyd

Theo Brophy Clews



Christodoulou's

I said goodbye a few weeks ago to the Upper Sixth boys whom I have looked after since I myself first arrived in my houseroom in September 2008 - this means that I've seen a year group through! Over champagne, canapés and a three course dinner with some wine, it was with great relief that I noted that nearly all had survived the odyssey relatively unscathed, were more mature, and were equipped with a great deal more life skills.

I did not want to make a list of accolades and achievements, so instead this year I wanted to write about two things that were different in my eyes: first, we won the House Singing Competition and that made me very happy for the boys but also, alas, it brings out a competitive side of me which fellow housemasters find intolerable, so I will move onto the second topic right away.

The happening, as I like to call it, that I would like to expand on was a visit to my office by an OA during the Open Day in October last year, who lit up the room and exuded enthusiasm, passion and drive for what he had, counter-intuitively, chosen as his degree at university and subsequent career. He'd been in my house when I first started and his younger brother followed. The following are extracts from a letter he sent me after his visit:



"I left Abingdon in 2010 having started in the first year in 2003. My original plans had been to study engineering at somewhere like Exeter hopefully obtaining an RAF bursary based on me training to be a pilot once I had left. I wouldn't deny that being a pilot would have been an amazing job to have, however the main focus of this was to do my time in the RAF, and move on to becoming a commercial pilot, the reason for this was purely for the higher salary it offered. My life plan would then have been to have enough money to retire to a smallholding, as farming was where my real passion lay. I did feel that there was pressure from Abingdon to study a "proper" degree and that I should be looking at careers and degrees in more obvious industries. I found it very difficult to justify choosing to study anything agricultural as I also had a huge lack of experience in the industry.

My first proper, one-on-one careers meeting would have

been towards the end of my fifth year and it was then that I was asked where I would like to end up working; when I replied in farming or logistics (lorry driving not the piloting in this case), the careers advisor laughed and said: "no, honestly where would you like to end up?" This made me more determined that I wanted to fully immerse myself in agriculture and prove there is a living to be made from it and that anybody from any background or upbringing could do it."

Frustrated, Charlie goes on to use his Christmas holidays knocking on farmers' doors asking for unpaid work experience. He seems to come across even more obstacles: "...the first course of action I had to take was gaining some work experience in the subject, this was a lot harder than I had expected, and as I didn't have a driving licence I was "as useful as a chocolate teapot" as one farmer commented" but, he persevered and ended up mucking out calves for free,

which also included a six mile round bicycle trip - often through the snow - to milk the cows from 4am to 9am and then again at 4pm until 6pm.

Entering into the Upper Sixth and with AS grades of B, C, E, E, Charlie realised that he needed to "...knuckle down for his A-levels..." if he was to gain entry into the most prestigious Agricultural College in the UK. He eventually gained the A-level grades he required and a place to read Agricultural Engineering at Harper Adams.

I chose this story to illustrate that here at Abingdon we seem to both encourage and indeed successfully develop a confidence in our boys that makes them feel at ease with making life-changing decisions that are based not on cultural and organisational norms or indeed expectations from the boy's wider social circles, but decisions that come from the heart, which, in turn have to be backed up by a bucket-full of self-belief in that what you are doing is actually the right thing.

Doing not what is expected but doing the right thing by oneself - that takes a lot of courage, confidence, and a high level of emotional intelligence. The world needs farmers as much as it needs any other profession. Charlie was able to draw on his academic capability, the organisational and presentational skills that he developed while at Abingdon and ultimately apply these to make

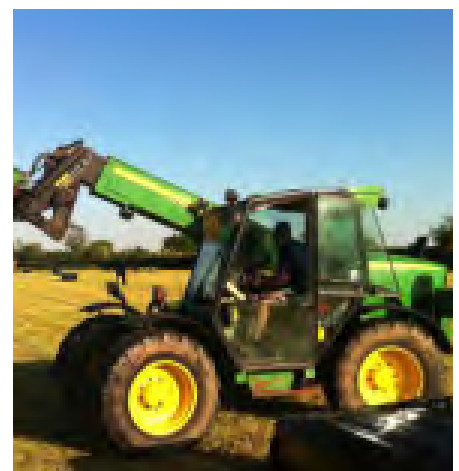
himself happy, to make himself a responsible and productive member of society and engage with a career that requires bright thinkers, dynamic, emotionally intelligent and honest men - just like in any other vocation. He works with people, animals, mechanical technology, virtually no paperwork and in nature - as perhaps we were intended to - rather than 'strategically' going blind on paperwork and proffering to be quasi-academic and part enlightened. Charlie left me with this piece of advice, which I recently recited, along with the above, to my current Lower Sixth in one of my house assemblies:

"...My advice to those choosing to study a degree would be to make sure that you are studying something you definitely enjoy and can easily motivate yourself to study or you'll find uni an expensive waste of time. Ultimately make sure your career choice is one that you could happily get out of bed for every day of the week for years to come."

I like it when ex-pupils turn up and put me in my place and lend me some perspective. Nothing does this better than a young mind. Incidentally, my own father insisted and wanted me to be an engineer, when all I wanted to be was a car mechanic. Fortunately, I had the fortitude to say no to him and by way of compromise I took the middle ground so that in the holidays I could tinker with

things that go fast... Did I mention that we also won the House Singing Competition?

Alexis Christodoulou



Crescent

In my house assemblies I frequently discuss the idea of community with the boys; whether it be supporting someone who is feeling down or volunteering to represent the house in a sport that you have never played, this sense of community is a good health check for a house and I am pleased to report that this year Crescent has passed with flying colours.



Othman Mirzan

This has been largely down to the superb leadership from the Upper Sixth who took a keen interest in the running of the house. They were vital in creating a vibrant and caring environment and keeping an eye open for any students who were unwell or struggling. Jack Williams was an outstanding Day Head of House who balanced his busy life (including a successful application to study Medicine) with a genuine concern for all. Afolarin Shasore fulfilled the Head of House role for the boarders and impressed me with his sensitive handling of the new boys who were adjusting to life in a boarding house. William Sharp, Freddie Locock-Harrison, Charlie Hames and Toby Brown (and at times Peter Truran) became part of the fabric of Cobban kitchen. The breadth of their discussions was bewildering; whether it be Scandinavian heavy rock, the benefits of a Crescent petting zoo or developing a Crescent mini-golf course (with a different James Bond film as a theme for

each of the holes!). Not only were all-comers welcome to join in the conversation, but I knew that they were also keeping an eye on the younger years and helping develop the house spirit. David Jorgensen was a fantastically helpful Deputy Head of House for boarding, setting an example by agreeing to represent the house (and school) in a wide variety of sports. Angus Chan (House Secretary) helped set up the Sunday night Monopoly club (which cost me a fortune in chocolate) and frequently stepped in to cover the house in an emergency. Azarel Adabanjo was one of four representatives from Crescent in the football 1st XI (the others being Afolarin Shasore, Toby Brown and Patrick Boyd-Gorst) who also made the occasional cameo appearance in house rugby (invariably arguing with Mr Evans as referee). Kevin Chan's dedication to his application for medicine resulted in a two week period of sleep deprivation which I has paid off with a place at Hong Kong

University (it must be stressed that he balanced this with excellent contributions to golf and real tennis). Othman Mirzan adopted more of a sociable approach to life in the U6th winning many plaudits for organising a fantastic fashion show at St Helen's. His interest in fashion was reflected in a wide variety of suits (and the offer of a place at London Fashion School). Lawrence Li and Erwandi Haji Harun charmed the cleaning ladies with their impeccably clean room and Jeremy Wei's skills on the drums were recognised with a prize. Tobi Onalaja flourished academically and the proof of his improved written style could be seen in his prefect diary! Ed McLaughlin and George Read-Smith were real ambassadors for Crescent, the former winning at Henley with the 1st VIII and the latter as a senior member of the 1st XV. Finally James Murray's quiet dignity and helpfulness were inspiring to myself and others and I am glad that this was

recognized on speech day. Writing this piece it is clear how diverse this group was; some having been at Abingdon since the Lower School (and even having boarded in those days in Waste Court) while others joined in the Lower Sixth. They have been a pleasure to work with and I wish them all the best for the future.

It is impossible to mention everyone who contributed to house sport. We may not have always secured the top positions, but the spirit with which the boys volunteered for events was a pleasure to witness. Craig Lau deserves a special mention here for agreeing to play his first ever game of golf although he was concerned that he did not have any "golf rackets".

The senior hockey competition saw Jack Williams, William Sharp and Freddie Locock-Harrison play for the first time in years (William was incensed at the end of the first match having not realised that the ball can be lifted). Crescent dominated badminton thanks to the efforts of Ryan Ling, William Tong, Jonathan Ainslie, Adrian Lei and Freddie Locock-Harrison. For the second year in a row we secured the U18 football and also won the U18 ergo with only two entrants (Ed McLaughlin and Jonathan Lord). The U15 hockey team was victorious and the same year group secured the fastest time in the road relay and third place in the athletics. The Lower Sixth were superb in the latter event

securing second place overall despite a shortage of numbers (Sebastian Johns nearly catching Thomas Kelly on the final straight of the 1500m was the highlight of the day).

Sebastian was once again inspirational in his organisation of house music; his patience (especially for the my inability to learn the lyrics) and enthusiasm was infectious and the boys responded with a strong showing on the day. We have also been very fortunate to have John Cheung and Bertie Boyd-Gorst 'jamming' at house events (including the road relay BBQ which raised a large sum for charity).

Perhaps the cultural highlight of the year however was the premier of the house film. Directed by John Cheung along with Rattanan Wonghirundacha and Astin Yeo, the 23 minute epic was hugely entertaining and professional and has (I hope) started a new tradition. My thanks to all the tutors who work so hard behind the scenes to support the boys and make my job much easier. Crescent

has been lucky to have two outstanding matrons; Tamsin Millington-Drake worked tirelessly for the boys before moving on to a minor public school in a village called Radley (!) and Jo Nutchey has quickly made her mark with the boys and been a source of help and advice to myself. Finally my thanks to Mick Cox (Houseman) and Sue, Maria, Sarah, Julie and Jackie. The support staff are often the unsung heroes of a boarding house and I want to publicly acknowledge their superb contributions.

Finally, this will be my final year in Crescent as I am moving to St John's Leatherhead in December as Deputy Head. This is much earlier than I had originally planned and it was a very difficult decision to make as my family and I have enjoyed our time in Crescent. I wish my successor Matt Kendry and his family all the best. He is lucky to take over such a supportive and caring community.

Alex Tate



Jack Williams

Davies'

The year 2012-13 has been one of great success for the boys of Davies' House. Members of the house have contributed to every aspect of school life and have excelled themselves once again. We won the inter-house athletics competition, the Lent term sports competitions as a whole, the road relay competition and we also won the overall House Cup for the third year running! The biggest event for me was our third place in the House Singing, however. Singing has been an area that the Waste Court boys have not found easy in times gone by. Recent years have seen significant improvements (unofficial fourth places) but to get into the placings this time round showed how far we have come. Particular credit should go to Lewis Spring who led the house superbly well, demonstrating fantastic concern and a superb manner while bringing the house round to a top notch effort. He showed the kind of generosity, passion and courage that I hope to see in all



the boys in the house. For me the house singing also captured a particular theme that I think is probably the most important for the boys in the house, their education, and their future prospects: the ability to bounce back, to show determination, to work really hard (in this case over several years) and, in spite of setbacks, to keep getting better. We are yet to win the House Singing but it still stands out as our best performance of the year in my eyes.

As with every year we end it by saying goodbye to a number of

pupils, particularly the 2012-13 Upper Sixth. This is a group that has brought to life the concept of resilience for the younger pupils in the house.

On the river Will Horlock, Joel Cooper and Ian Middleton all represented the school in the 1st VIII, where, in spite of disappointment at School's Head, they regrouped and went on to win National Schools' and Henley with Joel and Ian then going forward to represent GB. On the academic front, in spite of set backs at AS level Robert Fishpool, Milan Banerjee, Alex Erlach and TC Chu all applied themselves furiously to turning things around at A2 and never gave up. In addition the likes of Ian Middleton and Sahib Tuteja took hard work to a new level in their determination to secure places at Cambridge and to study Medicine respectively. One man who stands out in this regard is Mathew Hartshorne - as Head of School you might have thought he would rest on



his laurels but that was certainly not the case. He led the Cross Country Club to a remarkable season and committed everything he had to his pursuit of medicine including the decision to spend his gap year working as an assistant at the JR Hospital. Worthy of equal credit were the efforts of Nicholas Leah and Lewis Spring to develop their potential as A level (and in Nicholas' case degree level) historians - such was their passion, maintained in spite of various bumps along the way, that they were responsible for a history coursework and revision Facebook group that may have cost them a degree of social credit! Joseph Heade's decision to take up business studies on top of his A2 courses and then to commit so much to it that he was the only choice for the end of year prize again highlights the perseverance that this group have come to show.

On the rugby field Angus Weir came back from a succession of injuries to play a leading role for the 1st XV this year, winning selection for the South West before a broken leg (incurred while training for 7s) put an end to his season but not his enthusiasm or commitment to his peers who did go on to representative honours.

Similarly Tom Sishton's dedication to preparation in the off season didn't quite see him into the 1st XV but he did lead very much from the front in



securing Abingdon 2nd XV's first ever county cup triumph.

The Upper Sixth's qualities have been mirrored all the way down the house and will, I believe, be developed still further in 2013-14. The leadership qualities and the maturity of the fifth years grew over the year as they approached their GCSEs to the point that I am now looking at ways to get them involved in leading the house for next year.

Edward Lowe, Max Townley, Robert Yates, Thomas Harkness, Matthew Prior, Max Mannering and Marcello Cau Tait all played leading parts on the rugby field, football pitch, cricket field and river; Tom Shaw-Stewart, Alex Bond, Adam Pearson and Johnathan Goves lit up the academic life of the school with their creativity and passion; while Rupert Jones, Thomas Allen, William Juffkins, Sam Kashti

and George Dyke all added a little "je ne sais quoi" to the life of the house.

The fourth years continue to show great flair in all aspects of school life and the third years moving on to start their GCSEs have made a superb contribution to the house. The key for all of these boys and for the rest of the house is not that they rest happy with where they are now but that they use the year that is past as a basis for greater achievements next year and that they address themselves to their failures and challenges and do everything in their power to overcome them. If they do then they will have lived up to the example of the boys who have left. So well done for 2012-13; roll on 2013-14.

Ed Davies

Franklin's

Heads of House this year were Henry Binning and Tom Kynge. With their outstanding gifts in jazz music and rugby they well represented the diversity of talent in the house. Like the House Prefects James Dewar, Tom Farrant, Christopher Garratt and Richard Matthews, they were also strikingly pleasant and committed individuals who set a great example to the younger boys in the house.

As defending champions in the House Singing, we made a strong assault on the competition, as ever, with everyone contributing their volume and enthusiasm to the song *Feeling Good*. Christopher Young led us with his characteristic style and humour, and a beautiful singing voice we strove to match. We Felt Good; then disappointed; but then proud nonetheless.

House sporting competitions occupied our thoughts and energy many times this year. Many boys contributed their talents to earn some fine results. Tom Kynge and James



Benjamin Nabnian

Dewar gave their rugby muscle and brain to the house as well as to the 1st XV, and Tom won the Rugby 1st XV Trophy. Michael Clarke-Warry brought his hockey expertise to lead us ably, and won the Roche Cup for Hockey.

Richard Matthews earned full colours for sailing. Our great badminton quartet of Jordan Anning, Daniel Chen, Adam Uberoi and Gem Vongseenin thrashed all opposition in school and house fixtures, and I was delighted that Jordan won the Topping Cup for badminton as well as full colours. Adam also showed what a good table tennis player he is, and his prospects for next year are excellent. Daniel Chen won full

colours for badminton, and Tom Farrant earned half colours for squash.

Benjamin Schneider is pursuing fencing at the highest level, already earning half colours, and William Whitworth is still developing as a promising footballer. Tom Buckle and George Strainge both turned in many excellent sporting performances, and their prospects as tennis players in particular are very exciting. Kit Greenacre and Michael Jiang were also superb in the tennis and table tennis competitions.

The sporting year ended superbly for us in the Inter-House Athletics at Tilsley Park. Our third years were quite brilliant and won the event, our fourth years were also outstanding to come second, and Franklin's came third overall. Max Nurse-Bosley won both high jump and javelin, George Strainge won the shot, and Giles Oldershaw won the B high jump. Douglas Ward won the 200m, William Whitworth won the high jump, and David



Christopher Young

Chung won the long jump. Apart from brilliant individual performances, the team spirit was fantastic.

Our boys had many successes in other areas. Henry Binning won the Music Society Prize for Jazz. Leon Wu was lauded as a brilliant musician and received half colours for it. Leon and James Anderson-Besant played some fine chess, but the emerging star was Ray Ren, whose performances for house and school were really exciting. Ben Thompson won the CCF prize, and Benjamin Nabnian won half colours for Community Service. Thomas Howard won an Art Prize, and Jacob Miron won the prize for history. Christopher Young won the Drama Cup, and a coveted place at RADA. Richard Matthews won the School Prize for Design and Technology, and Michael Clarke-Warry won the Psychology Prize. Jordan Anning won the Griffin Cup for Craftsmanship, and Ed Lewis won the Dr James Molloy Cup for Innovation in Design. George Strainge won the Academic Prize in the third year, James Anderson-Besant won it again in the fourth year, and Alexander Foster won the fifth year prize.

All in all, this was a happy and successful year for Franklin's. I was delighted to welcome Mr Border to our tutor team, and would like to thank all my tutors for their work over the year.

David Franklin



School House

What a remarkable year it has been for School House.

We arrived to find the house in great shape following many years of successful 'house-mastering' by Douglas Aitken and with his support, and that of the other boarding house-masters, Jacqui and I moved into School House ready for a new and exciting challenge.

Faced with over 100 boys, day and boarding, it quickly became apparent that some serious name-learning was needed, as was the idea of developing a truly integrated house – something we continue to progress today. The Upper Sixth, potentially those who could dismiss a new housemaster as an irrelevance in their remaining year, did the opposite; they rallied around and started to quickly create a remarkable 'can-do' attitude in the house. Thanks to them the year has been a real triumph, combining our best inter-house results with a terrific house spirit and strong community. Starting off the year was the House Singing – it's not always as easy to instil enthusiasm for this as for some

other competitions but the house did themselves proud. Singing *We are Young*, we were praised for looking good and singing the chorus with enthusiasm – so, okay, the verse didn't really get going but we all had a great time and boys came to rehearse determined to do their best.

Having Max English and Thomas Browne as Heads of House was an inspired choice by my predecessor. By being confident, witty and able to talk openly about house life, they made my job easier and more enjoyable. I looked forward to seeing them and noticed how their determination and enthusiasm rubbed off on the other boys. I could not have asked for two better individuals

to lead the house and I thank them most sincerely.

The Upper Sixth were a strong and impressive year group. Eight boarders applied to Oxbridge, with Max English, Christopher Cooke, Howard Tam and Duncan Chan securing places in a tough and unpredictable selection process. In addition boys secured places at LSE, Warwick and Southampton. Harry Blackwell and Thomas Browne managed to combine terrific academic achievement with major rowing successes. Thomas went on to be part of the 1st VIII, which won the Princess Elizabeth Cup at Henley. Duncan Chan was a committed Captain of Badminton with Bernard Ng and Jonathan Chung playing extremely well and securing many excellent results. Thomas Chan led a highly successful fencing team, comprising Herman Chan and Bernard Ng. Christopher Cooke played regularly for the 2nd XV, and the 3rds included Max and Rex English, Henry Otty (who also played with the 2nds), Alexander Hewetson-Smith and Thomas Farrant.



The house continues to contribute well to cricket. Daniel Matthews and Adam Scholey represented the 1st XI with the former being the lead run scorer in the school as well as the newly appointed captain for 2014. We wish him well in leading the school's top cricketers next season. The annual Road Relay saw impressive performances by Jack Walsh (20th), Thomas Teece (22nd) and Sebastian Riera-Lamela (37th).

The inter-house competitions throughout the year saw School House secure successes in the U15 rugby, U15 and U18 swimming, and U15 ergos. We came third overall in the football and second in the hockey. To add to this impressive list of sporting achievements, School House won the inaugural boarders' basketball competition, just beating Davies' in the last minutes. Thanks must go to Rev Gooding for not only organising the competition but also for his weekly basketball coaching slot as a boarders' activity.

Musicians are much in evidence in the house and a significant number participate regularly in the school instrumental and choral ensembles. As a musician, I am constantly impressed by the level at which so many of these boys perform and their commitment to practising regularly. Boys have enjoyed drama too and in *The Pardoner's Tale* Ethan Lo, Darren Maddison, John-Christian Davey, Daniel Alcock and Blake Jones all acquitted themselves impressively. It was

a real privilege to see them perform so competently. Luca Rampin was a valued member of the senior production of *Candide*.

Art has been strong in the house for some time and the exhibitions in the Summer term confirmed the talent that exists – of note were Oscar Buckland's unusual exhibition, inviting people to sit and reflect and then to write down their thoughts, Brett Chung's remarkably detailed and impressive portfolio, and Luca Rampin and Nikita Dyakonov's GCSE work.

Boarding has seen some big changes: the real hit has been the evening drinks (milk shakes or hot chocolate, often with cakes or snacks) but the boys also really got into cooking at the weekends – the waft of garlic could linger for many hours, the fire alarm would sound, and once the cooking of squid in oil

overpowered all in the kitchen! The Summer term saw the sixth form appear for late-night cheese and biscuits – a competition developed as to which cheese was the strongest. A new kitchen was created at Easter, thanks to the remarkable generosity of a former School House boarder, Gleb Koslov. Now, the 'K' looks and feels like a bistro and boys of all ages enjoy the atmosphere.

And so the year came to an end with remarkable academic results from remarkable young men. It really has been a terrific first year and we are excited at what lies ahead as already talk of the next House Song is spreading. We hope that the Upper Sixth will feel that there is always a welcome for them in School House and wish them well as we move forward to another year.

Simon Marriott



Southwell-Sander's

As another year closes it becomes increasingly challenging to recall all that goes on in the house, such is the talent on show. It is, however, appropriate to say a special farewell to the Upper Sixth and their superb tutor Hannah Allcock, who has been with us for the last two years.

*There was a tutor group called 7HKA,
Who used to be called 5RKJ
A finer bunch of lads you never will see,
They are musical, dramatic, bright and sporty.
Whenever things don't go quite according to plan,
Miss Allcock is always there to lend a hand.
There's Sasha the prefect, he's as smooth as can be,
Mr Cricket, the captain of the first team.
Bibby is next with camera in hand,
And the finest quiff in the whole of the land.*



*Kieran's in the rugby and hockey 1st team,
And off the pitch he's known as a right drama queen!
MC is rowing his way across the pond
Flying the Abingdon flag as he's Harvard bound.
Knotty's the man, he loves to run,
Joint Head of House and bags of fun.
Ben's a different person since he was thirteen,
He's bound for the stage or the silver screen.
Then there's Jack M, he'll go far wait and see,*

*A far cry from the shy lad at the start of year three.
Whatever Plumby does he will do with aplomb,
Just avoid writing comments on 'Rate my teacher .com'
Pughey will have plenty to look back on with pride,
Especially the sailing trips with DJB and the guys.
While Phil is the quiet one, he's really come to the fore,
Offering help and advice through the house room door.
No doubt sporty SP will give out a little sigh,
Thankful that his hair can at last be dyed.
Chris is the face of the Army Green,
A more loyal fella you never will see.
While ladies beware because Connor is here,
The army is about to get a great lad - three cheers.
Norwich here we come is what Humphrey will shout,
Reminding Cambridge what a true gent they left out.
Last but not least is James the badminton star,
He's off to Oxford and bound to go far.*



*So as we look back on the few years past
As time often does it has travelled so fast.
Through the highs and lows they have been a great set
Making friends that will last for a good time yet.
All that is left for us to say,
Is "It's been a pleasure and we will see you some day!"
When you look back on your school days remember the scene,
The houseroom, the sport and of course The Army Green!*

The Lower Sixth hit the ground running this year under the experienced hand of Mrs Jennings, thriving under the new challenges. Aman Patel began the year with an excellent result representing Oxfordshire in the golf county championships. Fred Clamp-Gray took on producing the wonderful termly newsletter. Jack Squizzoni represented the school both in the Boat Club and in the CCF, where he has taken on an important leadership role. Huge congratulations go to Finlay Garland who at the beginning of the summer term was appointed a flight sergeant and is also the new Senior Cadet. Oliver Sayeed has gained a place in the national team of the Linguistics Olympiad. Jonathan Rothwell's artistic efforts were rewarded when he received the sixth form art prize. Luke Teh continues to impress with his swimming, gaining a haul of medals at the country championships this year. Jamie Sandall and Harry Sandford played a key role in the three-man team entered

into the Poly U Global Economics Competition. The tutor group as a whole have recorded many successes this year, winning both the general knowledge and debating competitions.

The fifth year have enjoyed success inside and outside the classroom. Richard Matousek has been to Japan representing Great Britain at geography. Calum Farwell has enjoyed another year in the A crew for rowing, while Ross Cook, Declan Field, Owen Morgan, Max Finch and Josh Burdass all had successful seasons in the rugby As and have been on an enjoyable tour to Namibia. Jack Dawson and William Johnson saw success in fencing, while Kristian Soderstrom continued his impressive participation in the Swimming Club. Rupert Kelly represented Abingdon well in the U16A football team and proved a key member of the road relay. In the musical arena Jamie Blackwell, Calum, Max Finch and George England all played in the first orchestra.

Our fourth year tutor group has done well academically with notable performances from Joseph Kelly, Ebyan Rezgui and Freddie Stretch. They have also had some very notable sport performances with Joseph Kelly playing in the 1st pair for tennis and Joe Sandall in the A crew for rowing. Joseph McNamara and Lewis Dandridge are trialling for county rugby for the upcoming season, and William Dolin continues to impress in the field of sailing, representing GB. As a tutor group, the boys

must thank Dr Jeffreys for helping them prepare for the exam process as well as persuading them to take part in many different things throughout the year.



The third years were placed an impressive second in the general knowledge competition, losing out narrowly to Davies. Tutor group breakfasts have also taken place throughout the year, providing a chance to eat together and talk with each other. This year has also been a good sporting year for the tutor group, with their fielding members of the A team for every core sport. The boys also achieved academic success in the end of year exams with Jonah Walker topping the whole year group.

We send departing tutors Hannah Allcock and David Bickerton away with enormous amounts of gratitude for their tireless work within the house. Thanks to them and the rest of the staff the house continues to go from strength to strength and remains such a stimulating place to work.

Robin Southwell-Sander

Webb's

The year got off to a good start and soon everybody was into their stride. The larger third year intake being split into two tutor groups really helped this and they became involved in school life very quickly. The rugby fixtures started straight away and Webb's boys were well represented in the teams.

As the first half term neared its last week, focus was drawn towards the House Singing Competition. As always the choosing of the song became a debate amongst the boys and in the end *The Impossible Dream* composed by Mitch Leigh was chosen. The rehearsal schedule is always really tight and with only six 30-minute sessions the boys worked together well and were soon making a good sound. Chris Mears led the rehearsals and directed the group very well. Thomas Kelly accompanied on the piano. In the competition we gave a good account of ourselves and lots of the audience had us down as contenders for the title but in the end, we weren't placed. Nonetheless the process of practising and competing drew everybody together really well. This year for the first



time we had a repeat rendition in the evening, accompanied by a few individual and group performances, for parents to see what the House Singing is about. It was received very well and there were plenty of requests for something similar next year, so boys, be prepared!

The next half term was mainly focused on work but to provide some alternative entertainment we had a third year 5-a-side football evening. It was a really good event run by some of the Upper Sixth with particular thanks going to Charlie Fitchett and Toby Ross. The end of term saw the Inter-House Competitions take place. The U18 rugby 7s and chess were our strengths with wins provided by Patrick Lawson-Statham, Henry Sensecall, Elliott Mills, Rory

Garrett, Nick Bradfield, Matthew Cammack and Toby in the rugby, and Rafi'I al-Akiti, Thomas and Daniel Savage winning at chess. Most of the other teams were placed in the middle ranks, with even the strength of Michael Fabes, Murray Eccleston and the Law brothers not being enough to win the day in the swimming.

The Lent term saw hockey, football and rowing taking over as the main sports and most of the teams included a good number of Webb's boys. The second formal season of football was a really popular choice and it was the topic of many conversations. The second half of the term saw a new competition, initiated by the School Council, in which Charlie Roberts and Henry had been key figures. The competition was a general knowledge quiz, called House Challenge and it is to become a regular feature. There was a team from each year group and we did reasonably well but the more established Debating Competition proved to be our strength, with the third year team of Archie Williams, Charlie



Lindsay and George Jeffreys winning their category. At the end of term we were middle-ranking overall in the various competitions but we had several top three teams: the U14 ergo team were third; the U18 football team were second as were the U15 hockey and U18 squash teams, while the U16 table-tennis doubles team of Eden Packer and Timothy Bird were first. In the Road Relay Thomas Kelly fought off all contenders to be first over the line on the first leg, and post the quickest time of the day. Webb's also had success at the younger age group with Ivo Brown being the fastest third year and, along with David Mackney, Joseph Delafield and Joseph Law, a member of the fastest third year team.

The Summer term, as always, saw a change of emphasis towards exams with fourth years straight into them, soon followed by exam study leave for the fifth years, then Lower and Upper Sixth. During this time a new initiative started for the third year scholars. Each scholar was set the task of re-searching a topic of their choice and giving a presentation to the rest of the group and teachers.



Archie gave a talk on the Opium Wars; Carl spoke about maths in music, and Sebastian Mulford on the history of sailing. The Upper Sixth represented Webb's at lots of events before they went on exam leave. First at the Rosslyn Park Rugby 7s, where in a squad of 12 we had Henry, Elliott, and Nick along with Matthew and Rory from the L6th. In the 63-mile walk we had Alexander Whitworth, Charlie, Henry and Elliott.

Most boys were involved in the Inter-House Athletics and I can't mention everybody here, so I'll highlight the highest points scorer in each year. Ivo won both of his track events, the 800m and 1500m. Tom Wiblin went for full participation and came second in the 400m, fourth in the 1500m, seventh in

the long jump, and was part of the A team relay. In the Lower Sixth Thomas won the 1500m in a really exciting sprint down the final straight, and was second in the 800m.

In amongst the sport there was also an arts display evening. Sam Cartlidge and Samuel Ashby-Crane both had displays of their work that had been done for the AS course, and Harry Parker was showing some of his GCSE pieces. All looked amazing.

In the final Inter-House Competitions, George and William Taylor did really well in the tennis doubles and came second. The sculling quad of Tom Wiblin, Jack Lewis, Robbie Allen and Harry with Rory Fisher coxing just worked really well together and were clear winners. The cricketers also had a really good afternoon, winning two of their three matches to go into the final against O'Doherty's. All in all, the afternoon was a good one and was rounded off with the last barbecue in the Jekyll Garden!

Mike Webb



Lower School

The start of the academic year in Lower School is always pretty hectic and this year was no exception as the 63 new first years took on the challenge of adapting to life at secondary school with all the extra demands that that makes of their personal organisation and resilience. To encourage them in their efforts we were very pleased to welcome Mark Hatton, Commonwealth and European champion in the luge and, at nearly 90mph, Britain's fastest ever Olympian, at our Be the Best launch two weeks into term. His inspirational story of overcoming all the hurdles in his way to achieve his dream really gave the boys something to think about and his message of making sure that you walk away from every endeavour able to say that you have given it everything you have got is one that will stand them in good stead throughout their Abingdon careers.

The highlight of the term was perhaps our performance in the House Singing Competition. Ably conducted by Greg Davies and accompanied by Gianluca



Cau Tait and Tom Woods on drums, our performance of *Drive by by Train* impressed the judge enough to secure us second place, Lower School's best ever result in the competition.

Music was also to the fore at the end of term with the first year choir impressing at the Christmas Concert and, a new development this year, the Lower School Band under the baton of Nigel Sommerville playing a medley of Christmas tunes before our Carol Service – it is great to see the future of music making at Abingdon in such secure hands. In tutor group competitions 2M and 1H

were victorious in both the rugby and the cross country, while 2C defeated 1P in the grand final of the Lower School Challenge with Mr May doing a creditable impression of Jeremy Paxman in the question master role.

The traditional first year “walk and talk” on the history of the School took place on 31st January to coincide exactly with the 450th anniversary of John Roysse's bequest to the school in 1563. The boys visited the Roysse Room, site of the school room that his bequest funded, Abingdon Museum where they were some of the first to view the exhibition “Abingdon to Zanzibar - a history of Abingdon School over 450 years”, and St Helen's Church where a wreath was laid on John Roysse's tomb by a current holder of the Academic Award named after him. The fact that there were exactly 63 boys in the first year this year was a rather wonderful coincidence!



Yazan Odeh

2W and 1S won the inter-tutor group hockey, 2M and 1H the road relay (which this year featured a fancy dress entry with a team from 2W dressed as cows pushing each other round in a wheelbarrow to raise money for charity), and 2C and 1H the public speaking, which was this year of a very high standard indeed. Special mention should go to those who were successful in the various scholarship assessments: Thomas Butcher, Joseph Nash (academic), Robert MacLennan (academic and music exhibition), Benjamin Pickford (music exhibition), Gianluca Cau Tait (art), and Michael Sutton (art exhibition).

The majority of the boys were able to attend the Adventure Trips in the Easter holidays. PGL Liddington proved to be a good new venue for the first year trip, while very heavy snow made the second year trip to Plas Pencelli an experience that will live long in the memory.

In the summer thoughts turned towards the end of year exams, which for many of the first years were their first ever set of



formal assessments. Plenty of advice was offered on how to revise and it was good to see the vast majority of the boys handle things convincingly. Particular congratulations go to those who topped their tutor groups and were awarded the Lower School Academic Prizes at prizegiving: David Bunn 1H, Yazan Odeh 1P, Liam Rogers 1S, Joseph Nash 2C, Thomas Butcher 2M, and Robert MacLennan 2W.

The summer also provides time for plenty of fun. The second years visited Hampton Court, the first years Fishbourne Roman palace, while a mixed group enjoyed the Modern Languages trip to Normandy.

Sporting events saw 2W and 1S win the swimming gala, 2W and 1H triumphant in athletics, and 2C winning a very tight cricket competition on run difference. Edward Green beat Alessandro Cantarelli in the final of the tennis tournament while Callum Ravden beat Max Owen in the pool tournament. Meanwhile the Amey Theatre played host to a stunning performance of Twelfth Night directed by Mr Phillips which saw all the performers convincingly getting to grips with the tricky Shakespearean dialogue, and a superb Lower School Gala Concert which included a thrilling rendition of the theme music from Skyfall by the massed ranks of the Lower School Band.

The final week of term saw the Be the Best Celebration when Mark Hatton returned to remind the boys of the hard work and determination it takes to fulfil your ambitions – a useful reminder for the second years as they ended their time in Lower School and moved into the third year. Mark also awarded the special prizes:



Baker Awards were presented to Jonny Fieth, James Heron, Oliver Moody, Joseph Nash, and Tom Shaw, the Broadbent Cup went to Ethan Webb for his excellent contributions to all three main sports, Joe D'Souza won the Woodgett Cup for his all-round contribution to the life of Lower School, while the Dillon Cup for Lower School Service was presented to Hugo Eddleston for the dedication he has shown both to Chapel Choir and as a librarian.

The end of term saw two Lower School tutors, Mrs McRae and Mr Cotton, depart to take on roles in other areas of the school. Their contributions have been much appreciated and, along with fellow second year tutor Mrs Wigmore, they have worked very hard to prepare their tutees for the challenges that lie ahead. It seems appropriate to end by reminding those tutees of the quote from Nelson Mandela that I used at the "Be the Best Celebration": "The greatest glory in living lies not in never falling but in rising every time we fall."



Adam Jenkins



Callum Ravden

Staff Farewells

Lara Ehenfried, Elise Fondu, Tristana Gillet, Hector Portela, Ying Yuan (Carole) – Foreign language assistants

We were delighted to welcome five new language assistants to the department this year. Each one brought their own personality, good humour and talent to the job. Not only were they all much appreciated by colleagues and pupils alike but they also got on splendidly as a team and it has been lovely to witness firm friendships being formed.



Lara arrived in the department as one of the top graduates from the university of our partner town, Bielefeld, where some of her work had already been published. With a sharp intellect and good sense of humour, she forged very positive working relationships with the students and worked tirelessly to create interesting and motivating activities for the boys. We know that she will relish the renewed intellectual challenge of a masters course in English Literature at Durham University.

Elise and Tristana both came to us from the University of Reims although, as they were studying on separate campuses, they did not know each other before they arrived. Elise had just completed a degree in English and Tristana had completed a law degree before also graduating in English. Both fitted into the department very quickly and impressed us all with their

business like approach to lessons, invaluable contributions to languages clubs and their colourful displays on the notice boards. Elise will not be going far as she is leaving to do a PGCE at Oxford Brookes University. Tristana has also been inspired to go into teaching and is applying for suitable courses.

Héctor joined Abingdon from the prestigious University of Salamanca. Having graduated in English Linguistics and Literature and previously spent a year abroad in Dublin, he was very keen to broaden his teaching experience at a successful academic school like Abingdon. He quickly created a rapport with both colleagues and pupils, made excellent contributions to the department and brought Spanish cheerfulness to every aspect of school life. He is now leaving to complete an MA in Translation Studies at the University of Salamanca.

Having finished her English degree back in 1998, Ying Yuan (Carole) became one of the best English teachers in the city of Chengdu. She had been teaching in Chengdu North-West Middle School for the last 14 years. As an experienced teacher, she very much valued this opportunity to teach at a different school in a different country. Carole was diligent and dedicated to her teaching at Abingdon; we often found her sitting in the Quiet Room making worksheets for the boys, and she has spent days and evenings updating the Chinese section of our Study Site. Our fourth year boys much appreciated her input for their controlled assessment. They have worked very hard with Carole to achieve the best possible grades. Carole has gone back to her school where she will continue teaching English.

Jane Mansfield

Carolyn King (oboe)

Carolyn has taught in the Abingdon Music Department for some 33 years. Carolyn's first career was as a research biochemist, having a BA from Oxford and a DPhil from the University College Hospital Medical School in London. A fine player, Carolyn has produced many talented oboists and enthused about all things double-reeded, including her famous double-reed ensembles. She has been a loyal and dedicated teacher at Abingdon.

Frank Toms (jazz piano)

Frank Toms, who has taught jazz piano at Abingdon for over 16 years, also retires this year. Frank has also had a very varied career, first as a scientist in the polymer industry and latterly as a science and mathematics teacher and lecturer in Buckinghamshire. All this time, Frank was playing jazz and gigging in the region, so when an opportunity came up at Abingdon in his late fifties, Frank seized it. He has nurtured many fine young players, including Henry Binning. He has thrown himself into Abingdon musical life, including several of our overseas music tours.

Caroline Hobbs-Smith (flute)

Caroline, South African by birth, has taught flute for some 9 years and has been a very dedicated and charismatic teacher. In her earlier years, Caroline was Principal Flute of the Johannesburg Symphony Orchestra, before extending

her studies at The Royal College of Music in London. Several years ago Caroline was appointed conductor of the Oxfordshire Schools Symphony Orchestra, a role that she enjoys greatly. Caroline leaves us to find time to develop this area of her music career.

Alex Ho (piano)

Originally from Hong Kong, but educated at Tonbridge School, at University College, London (BSc) and The Royal College of Music (MMus), Alex replaced his pianist sister, Cindy, five years ago, when Cindy married and returned to Hong Kong. Alex is a very versatile musician – he plays in a band, as well as giving classical recitals and he has been a popular member of the department. We wish him well for his relocation to the other side of London!

Michael Stinton

Carole Stokes

Carole joined us in March to cover Sarah Gibbard's maternity leave. Primarily she taught Lower School science but also covered some biology classes in the Middle School. She was a very experienced science teacher and had taught in a number of schools in the London area before starting with us. She brought with her an enthusiasm for her teaching and a desire to immerse herself in the life of the school.

As well as her timetabled lessons, it quickly became clear that Carole wanted to get

involved in a whole range of activities outside of the classroom.

Carole will be teaching biology next year at St Helen's although rumour has it she will be popping back to help with the gardening club.

Simon Bliss

James Fox

James was only with us for a year but he made a large impact during that time. He was appointed as Master in Charge of Rowing but also taught biology. From his first day he threw himself into life at the boat-house. He took on a committed bunch of J16s as well as overseeing the running of the whole club.

All the boys he coached would speak of his enthusiasm and the passion for the sport that he instilled in them. Under him the club went on to win the Princess Elizabeth Challenge Cup at Henley Royal Regatta for a third successive year. This is only the second time in history that this has been done.

James was also a very effective biology teacher. He was passionate about the subject and always felt it important to be involved in academic teaching as well as coaching rowing.

We wish him every success as he returns to Winchester College where he will take on the role of Housemaster.

Simon Bliss and Henry Morgan

Piers Taylor

Piers joined Abingdon in September 2012 from an international school in Mexico to teach chemistry. He made an immediate impression with his passion for the subject and enthusiastic teaching. He was always willing to find time to answer boys' questions and support both the most able and those who found the subject challenging. Significant contributions were also made to the coaching of rugby and he managed a very successful U15 B team. Having spent a lot of time in the West Country, he took an opportunity to move to a school in Bristol for September 2013.

Ian Middleton

Hannah Allcock

Hannah Allcock joined the English Department in September 2011 and brought with her bags of enthusiasm and humour. She was a wonderful member of the Common Room, throwing herself into her teaching with passion and verve and was always dedicated to helping the boys achieve their best, often going above and beyond. She also worked hard as co-ordinator of our Lower School curriculum during her second year with us. Not only did she throw herself into her English teaching, however, but also into many other areas of school life. As part of the Southwell-Sander's 'Green Army', she was a dedicated sixth form tutor. She took over *Words and That* and carried on the honourable



tradition of gently satirising all areas of school life, including the Blog of Ferocity Risk, Head of Fabingdon School.

The mighty task of helping the boys organise the Griffen Ball of 2013 was also one that she was ready to tackle, as was serving on the MCR committee, and taking on the role of Exchange Co-ordinator. Needless to say, she did it all with enthusiasm and commitment.

Hannah is moving on to Cheadle Hulme School back 'up North' so she can be nearer to her family but will be greatly missed by many boys and staff and will surely be long remembered at Abingdon for her style, pizzazz, great sense of humour and wonderful teaching.

Rachel Yarrow

James Barker

James came to Abingdon in 2010 to teach Religious Studies and take on the role of Upper Master. He showed a firm belief

in hard work and dedicated enterprise coupled with a certain cynicism about practically everything. When asking some of his students as to how he is perceived, "excellent teacher" seemed to be the oft repeated phrase, with "great bloke" (which I suspect he'd appreciate more) coming as a kind of afterthought.

Staff will remember him as a passionate rugby coach and a supportive and wise manager. My sense is that while he did many things, he may be most remembered for remodelling the Westridge room, making private study studios and demonstrating the art of preparing carefully for public speaking. To us in the Religious Studies Department he will best be remembered as an outstanding colleague, ever ready to lend support and advice and generous almost to a fault with the outstanding resources he so carefully prepared for his students. We wish him all the very best.

George Moody

Sara Northey

Sara joined the Abingdon School History Department in 2010 as a part-time teacher and quickly proved herself an excellent addition to the team. Being a part-time teacher can be tricky but Sara proved up to the task and quickly established a good rapport with the boys and the other teachers in the department. She proved to be a lively and popular teacher and coped with having to fill gaps in the teaching and adapt to whatever the situation demanded.

Sara joined the school having worked in various fields. She travelled widely in her twenties, spending a year in Chile and then returning to complete an MSc at the London School of Economics. This means, annoyingly, she can easily trump most of my traveller's tales with something more remote and arduous than the cocktail lounge of the Holiday Inn in whatever country we are discussing. After this she then worked for 9 years as a policy officer and lobbyist for the National Trust before being accepted on the government fast-track teaching scheme. After completing her PGCE at the Institute of Education in London she worked at Bullers Wood in Bromley for three years before leaving the city.

Since working here, Sara has had to juggle the demands of two children and her teaching, and has done so with good-humour and grace. She has also had two years of teaching three third year groups at the

same time and also taken three Lower Sixth sets through their AS period studies on 19th century Britain and shown unfeigned (well maybe slightly feigned) enthusiasm for mid-Victorian politics.

Sara leaves us to move to Broadchalke (a picturesque village near Salisbury). Her husband Ian is now responsible for the National Trust in Dorset/Wiltshire and Somerset so hopefully she will still be able to do some travelling, even if only in the confines of Wessex. We wish her all the best.

David McGill

David Wickes

David Wickes came to Abingdon in September 2008, first as Upper Master and then Deputy Head Pastoral from September 2010. David has been our guide and guru in all matters pastoral, taking on this huge responsibility with a lightness of touch and a seriousness of purpose. He has been a constant and dynamic presence in the school: greeting the boys off the buses in the morning, guiding our reflections in chapel services, running to the classroom to provoke historians into proper argument and going off to coach rugby to the highest level. Aside from all that, he has been doing his main job: working alongside all the housemasters and their teams to strengthen our pastoral provision, dealing with some really tough and difficult pastoral situations, being highly visible in his support of the

boarding community and, overall, just about making himself indispensable. He leaves us to take on the lead deputy position at Warwick and I know in particular that the SLT will miss his forthright opinions in our meetings (always lively when you get David onto certain subjects!), his unfailing good humour in the face of everything life at Abingdon throws at you and, most of all, the phenomenal drive he has at his core to make life for all the boys as interesting, challenging and transformational as he can.

Felicity Lusk



John Chapman

John Chapman was a modest man who nonetheless achieved a great deal in his eight years at the school. He had an extremely interesting military career behind him and had also worked as project manager with IBM. He first became involved at Abingdon whilst helping train the Ten Tors team and then gradually expanded his role to



include SSI in the CCF and also Duke of Edinburgh coordinator.

He will be remembered as a good-humoured, calm and patient man who helped boys achieve goals they would not have thought themselves capable of. John was always concerned for the pupils' well-being, safety and enjoyment. A large part of the SSI role, which can be hugely bureaucratic at times, goes unnoticed but is crucial to the success of any activities undertaken. He made sure that all the MOD requirements were in place for CCF camps, exercises, VIP visits and the like. Abingdon CCF is extremely well respected by both the Cadet Training Teams and Oxford University OTC and John deserves a real degree of credit for keeping the organisation running smoothly.

We will miss John very much and we know countless boys owe him a huge debt of

gratitude for helping them learn lessons you can only learn in the wilderness and on expeditions. Lessons about who they are and also about what make them tick. We wish John God's speed and all the very best for the future.

Paul Gooding and David McGill

David Bickerton

David joined us in 2000 from King Alfred's School Wantage with a proven track record both for teaching physics and for sailing.

David quickly settled in as an excellent physics teacher. He was a very valued member of the department, always prepared to take on a difficult class, and always having the time to listen to the boys. He always put in a lot of time and effort with the boys he taught or tutored, and, flicking through old leavers' year books, his name is mentioned with fond-

ness again and again. He was always well organised, particularly when it came to setting up cake rotas for the sixth form. This organisational skill led to him becoming science coordinator, where he has shone in negotiations with architects for the new science centre.

David's contribution to sailing is almost immeasurable. He has regularly led sessions at Farmoor on Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays in fair weather and and foul, all through the year; however cold, if there was enough light, there was sailing. On top of that David has given up a huge amount of his holidays for sailing. We all feel jealous of the Greek islands in the summer, but not the preparatory trip in the Channel at Christmas.

David will be sorely missed but he will return in September to cover Peter Willis' sabbatical.

John Brooks



Rodney Mearns

December 2012 saw the retirement, after thirty years' distinguished service, of Rodney Mearns. He officially relinquished teaching duties in the summer of 2011, since when he has continued to play a leading role in the school's university applications office. Rodney's contribution to Abingdon has extended far and wide, and in his retirement we bid farewell to a man who has unostentatiously won the admiration and affection of generations of pupils and colleagues.

Rodney joined Abingdon's English department in 1982. With a research degree from Oxford and university teaching experience in his native Dublin, Rodney brought a special distinction to the English department, though in fact it was his expertise in rowing that had particularly impressed Michael Parker. So it was that Rodney teamed up with his then Head of English, Graham Barrett, to coach generations of oarsmen: countless hours were spent by the two of them in preparing crews, transporting boats and boys, participating in regattas and charging up and down the Thames towpath.

Other duties followed: for some years, Rodney produced the school magazine; he took his turn in directing drama productions and was appointed a dayboy housemaster in 1989. For ten years, Rodney led his house with that quiet authority that has come to characterise him: he dealt with the inevitable

difficulties and crises with that steadiness of temperament and absolute reliability that colleagues and boys came to trust implicitly.

But for all his achievements, it is in his role as English teacher that many hundreds of Abingdon boys came to know Rodney. Teaching for him was a matter of having his pupils encounter an intriguing challenge. In effect, he stood before young minds and said, "Here is something I want to persuade you is interesting and important", and what followed would be a careful unfolding of why a text had something about it that was worth their attention, perhaps even their life-long attention. His lessons embodied a shared experience: with expertise and learning lightly worn, he prompted, cajoled, and challenged boys into discovering that what they took for granted needed questioning, and that what they found difficult was not beyond them.

For recent generations of Abingdonians, it is in his role as

master i/c all things UCAS that Rodney has been additionally important to them. Rodney stepped into the role in 1999, and for the past thirteen years he has steered hundred of boys through the often complex and challenging processes by which inchoate aspiration might be converted into a real university place. That so many have under his guidance progressed to prestigious universities is a matter of some pride to Rodney; more important to him have been the many boys whose paths were not straightforward but whom he was able to help towards personal success and achievement.

Rodney has approached his career at Abingdon with a modest vigour, an unfussy sense of responsibility, and a purposeful energy that has preferred service to self-advancement. He will approach retirement in just the same spirit, and with sleeves rolled up. Abingdon will miss him: we wish him every happiness.

Andrew Swarbrick





