

# The Abingdonian



2014



# The Abingdonian

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# Editorial



This has been my second year editing *The Abingdonian*, and the sheer volume, diversity and quality of the articles we receive each year has not yet ceased to surprise me. It has been another great year at Abingdon across many different fields, from the fifth year's record-breaking GCSE results to multiple Abingdonians being chosen to represent their country in a variety of sports. We have tried to ensure that all boys are well represented in this edition, wherever their passions may lie - whether in the academic sphere, in sport, music, art, drama or one of the countless other activities available in the Other Half - as it is this willingness to cater for the interests of all the pupils here, and also to encourage them to succeed at whatever they do, that has proved so successful at Abingdon this year, and will doubtless continue to do so for many years to come.

Many thanks go to my fellow co-editor Asten Yeo and lead editor Mr Jenkins, both of whom have worked tirelessly to bring this edition to fruition, and of course to everyone who has written an article inside - it truly is a pleasure to read.

*Benedict Zeally, 6CJM*

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# Head's Foreword



Looking back over the academic year 2013/14 I'm amazed at just how much goes on at Abingdon. This edition of *The Abingdonian* is bursting with activity which reflects the everyday experience of an Abingdon boy.

There's so much to read and enjoy in these pages which not only create a record in perpetuity but reflect the fun, stimulation and sheer enjoyment of our lives here.

Well done to everyone who has contributed an article, appears in the photographs and contributed art work. There's nothing like finding a good stint of time to read *The Abingdonian* from cover to cover.

*Felicity Lusk*



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# Michaelmas 2013



## Lower School Poetry

The academic year began in Lower School with the Be the Best You Can Be launch event. This year's visiting speaker was Ian Rose, Paralympic judo player. To help the boys understand what life without sight is like, he asked them to try to describe a colour in words. The boys then went on to write the following poems:

### Black

Black is like deep space, and the  
Deepest sleep.

It is the smell of empty air,  
And the taste of ice.

Black is cold.

And empty.

And

Blank

*Harry Baston-Hall, 1SW*

### Green

Green is nature's blanket

Never ending and giving warmth

The scent of a fresh mint leaf.

The trickling of water flowing over

Rocks along a mountain stream.

Green is the ailment that soothes  
the mind.

Green colours the season in  
which life sprouts.

*Uthman Alvi, 1MJE*



## Blue

Blue is the colour of peace and freedom in the world.

It is the smell of chlorine in a luxurious pool and the salty tang in the sea.

Raindrops falling from the sky from a very high altitude.

It is the sour taste of a sour, taste bud tingling gobstopper melting in the mouth.

The colour of steams and rivers flowing with the gentle breeze blowing like a huge invisible fan.

Blue whizzing through the bright side of the colour spectrum leaving its light trace behind.

*Hector Chambers, 1SW*



## Grey:

Grey is like a lonely cloud dragging itself across the sky,

Grey is the gods shouting down at us in anger,

Grey is the rocks that get crushed by the waves,

Grey is rain bullying the Earth,

Grey is the most depressing colour of all,

Grey is emptiness and solitude.

*Theo Zamani, 1MJE*



## Red

Red is a fiery, hot colour.

You can feel it burn.

It warms you up,

Making the cold, winter night,

A sweaty, stuffy sauna.

It's like a roaring fire,

And smoking hot ashes.

The colour of the fastest

Ferrari.

The colour of a crunchy, juicy

Apple when you

Take a huge bite.

*William Lebeau, 1SW*

## Purple

Purple is the deep voice of a volcano far away,

The secret of a man hiding in the dark,

A shade of guilt that rains life a stream.

Purple is a slow colour that creeps up like betrayal,

The colour made of red hot and icy blue.

The sting of a bruise, the hurt of a bully,

The smell of fresh lavender growing in a garden,

The taste of bitter sweet

And the feeling of a warm September evening on your skin.

*Edward Gill, 1SW*

# AFU's 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

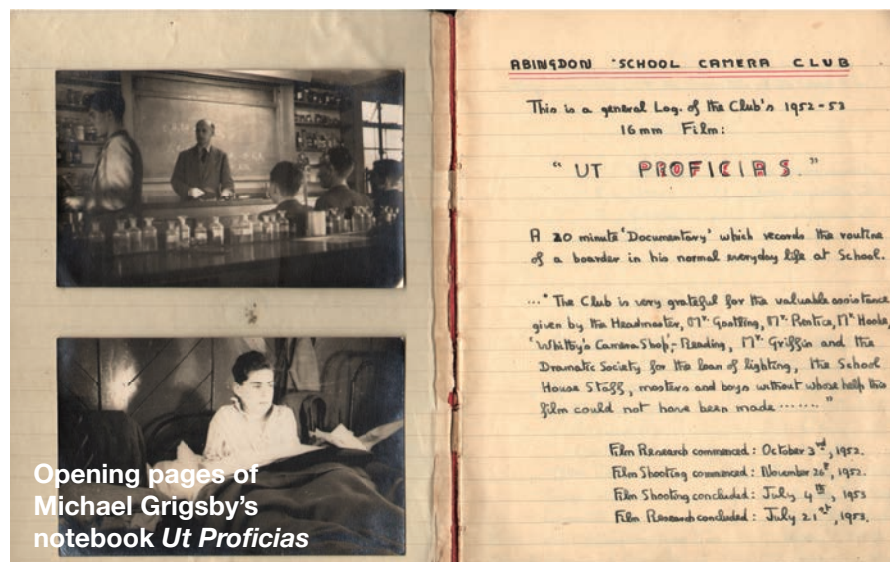
2013 saw two significant anniversaries in Abingdon's cultural life. Jeremy Taylor tells the story behind ten years of the AFU, sixty years of filmmaking at Abingdon and the part played in both by the great British documentary filmmaker Michael Grigsby.

Whether you go in for numerology or not, there's no denying the number '3' looms large in the life of Abingdon School. Sir James Cobban, Abingdon's Headmaster from 1947-1970, certainly thought so. Noting John Roysse's re-endowment of the school in 1563 and the 15' by 63' dimensions of the room in the town where 63 boys were taught before the school moved to its present site, he quickly changed the school's phone number to '1563' to ensure all his numbers aligned.

So perhaps it's no surprise that another year ending in '3' - 1953 - saw the start of a new chapter in Abingdon's history. Its author was one of the first boys Cobban admitted to the school. A keen photographer and member of the school's Camera Club, he gave his own account of what happened:

*The School Film Unit was formed, quite accidentally, over breakfast one cold, wintry morning when Michael Sale and I were discussing those sundry little items which are of such importance to the schoolboy. And then - out of the blue, 'Let's make a film!'.... The fact that we had never handled cine equipment or thought in terms of Film did not dampen our enthusiasm. The idea was enlarged upon...the Headmaster promised to help finance our scheme; a unit was formed and a script written. Production work began...a year later...the four words blurted out one cold morning materialised into 'Ut Proficias', a 20 minute Sound-on-Tape documentary of School routine...*

The photographer was Michael Grigsby, and *Ut Proficias* was his, and the school's, first film. Produced over eight months by a team of seventeen pupils and two staff, it premiered in the school



Opening pages of Michael Grigsby's notebook *Ut Proficias*



Michael Grigsby and members of the *Ut Proficias* team

biology lab on the evening of Tuesday 21 July 1953 before an audience of seventy people. The film took its name from the inscription carved above the entrance to Big School, "Ingredere ut Proficias" - "Enter, that you may succeed".

Sixty years on from that small beginning, the optimism of the film's title does not seem misplaced. By the time he left school in 1955, Grigsby had directed three films that not only opened the door on a six-decade career in television and led to acclaim as "one of the giants

of British documentary"; he and his friends had also created an appetite for school filmmaking that lasted through many of the intervening years.

The group that produced *Ut Proficias* called itself the Abingdon School Camera Club. Their debut piece won best film at the Slough Arts Festival in 1954, but by then, there were at least two filmmaking outfits in operation. The Camera Club had produced a now lost comedy called *Thanks a Million!* - made in locations ranging from "a well-known inn to the ancient courtroom





Members of ASPS  
and AFU at the ASPS  
reunion September 2013

in Abingdon” - whilst the mysteriously named Unit 4 had made a film about athletics called *Achilles and Gryphon*. In all probability, Unit 4 was a sub-division of the Camera Club that had been commissioned to make an instructional film for the PE department.

By January 1955, the Camera Club had given way to two new groups - both led by Grigsby. The Film Society screened films in the old gym (today's Charles Maude Room) and was open to all, whilst the Abingdon School Photographic Society was for those who wanted to make 16mm films. Membership was by invitation only, and granted after applying to Grigsby.

1955 saw the completion of the third and most ambitious of Grigsby's school films. *No Tumbled House* was a 65-minute “semi-documentary covering the complete life of a British Public Schoolboy”. The first idea for this may well have come from Cobban himself. In his notebooks recording the development of the project, Grigsby wrote, “Owing to the success of *Ut Pro* we were asked to make a very detailed film of life at Abingdon. However, the technicians wanted a break from school (so) we promised to make the H.M.'s film, 54-55.

Ideas for the new film had been accumulating over the previous year, resulting in a treatment by John Toplis, master-in-charge of the ASPS, with support from Grigsby and another pupil, John Hall. Many of the technicians who'd worked on the first two films had now left the school, so a new team was assembled. Cobban approved the treatment and awarded the filmmakers “a considerable sum” from his discretionary fund to help purchase equipment. Shooting began on Sunday 21st November 1954, and ended “three days before the start of A Level” in July '55. Even the editing went down to the wire, with Grigsby reporting that “pieces were still being removed from the film five minutes before it was given its first public showing in the gymnasium”. By the time of its premiere on July 20 1955, the making of the film had consumed hundreds of hours of ‘spare time’, with one editor spending at least 98 hours on the film, and a technician devoting over 300 hours to it.

At least it was worth it. Mr A.W. Hodgkinson, “Film Appreciation Officer of the British Film Institute”, came to watch it and was impressed:

*One remembers... Grierson's definition of documentary as 'the creative*

*interpretation of reality'... Is 'No Tumbled House' a documentary? ... Yes, (it conveys) the intangibles, the 'spirit of the school', which only the film – the good film, the documentary – can convey to the stranger. This is the greatest measure of success. 'No Tumbled House' is successful.*

Largely on the strength of that review, Grigsby secured a job as a cameraman with the newly formed Granada Television in Manchester. Meanwhile, his friend and mentor John Toplis wrote of him in the *Abingdonian*:

*It was largely through his initiative and drive that the ASPS was formed...he has put in a tremendous amount of work, both as Director and Secretary and it is through his enthusiasm and very able leadership that the Society has acquired respectability not merely in Abingdon School but also in Amateur Photographic circles throughout the country.*

There's no doubt that alongside Grigsby, Toplis played a major part in the successful introduction of filmmaking at Abingdon. Tragically, on November 2nd 1955, fifteen weeks to the day after the premiere of *No Tumbled House*, Toplis drowned in his bath in Lacies Court, having been overcome by carbon



monoxide fumes from a faulty water heater. He left a widow and three young children.

Toplis' friend and colleague John Horrex took over the running of ASPS, and under his guidance, films were still made at Abingdon until at least the late 1960s. Thereafter, the story became much less clear. As the school expanded, new buildings appeared and old ones changed purpose, reels of 16mm film were moved around, set aside in remote corners of the school and gradually forgotten about. Old projectors and tape recorders were thrown out. Soon, not only were the films hard to locate; the means to view them had gone.

This, then, was the state of affairs in 2003, when Sarah Wearne, Abingdon's recently appointed archivist, came across a cupboard in Lacies Court containing a few poorly labelled tins of film. She contacted members of the OA

community to ask whether anyone knew anything about them. Michael Grigsby saw the message and rang to say he might be able to help. Sarah invited Michael to lunch, and because she'd heard me talking vaguely of starting a filmmaking group at Abingdon, she suggested I come too. I'm ashamed to admit I'd never heard of Michael Grigsby. I remember thinking I might need to be careful in case his "television experience" turned out to be the sort that even then was turning television into a more trivial medium. We met on June 6 2003 and I quickly realized the enormity of my misjudgement. Grigsby was clearly one of the great figures of British documentary and Sarah had introduced me to the man who would define the shape of the AFU and set standards that were far beyond anything I had envisaged. For that, everyone connected with the AFU owes Sarah an enormous debt of gratitude.

The AFU held its first meeting with Grigsby at the helm on November 5, 2003 in one of the geography rooms while work on the new Arts Centre continued. Headmaster Mark Turner, like his predecessor forty years before, generously backed the new enterprise with funding to meet the costs of professional tutors, cameras and other equipment.

By 2014, around 150 students (including twenty from St Helen's) had passed through the ranks of the AFU, producing 122 films between them – documentaries, abstracts, animations, live action fictions and a music video - ranging in length from 30 seconds to 30 minutes, and exploring everything from the corridors of Big School to the Kingdom of Cambodia. Many have been screened at festivals and won awards. Around two dozen AFU alumni are now working in film, television or journalism with many more enrolled on film courses at universities, film or art schools.

How fitting, then, that in September 2013, we were able to welcome back to the school many of the ASPS who made those early films and put Abingdon on the map as a centre of student filmmaking. Around thirty members returned, including Jeffrey Heavens, who contributed to the making of *Ut Proficias* and Ted Brook who appeared in the film, but had never seen it. Together, we watched the newly digitized collection of nineteen ASPS films in the Amey Theatre, and over lunch in the foyer, heard some of the stories behind their making. In what was the only sadness of the day, we reflected ruefully on the fact that 2013 - a year in which the numbers had otherwise aligned so neatly - was also the one in which we'd lost both Horrex and Grigsby. Nevertheless, it was clear that the spirit of ingenuity, curiosity and creativity that Toplis, Horrex and Grigsby brought to Abingdon's cultural life was alive and well, not only in the bright eyes and still sharp wits of Abingdon's filmmaking pioneers, but in the latest generations of Abingdonians who are continuing to take up the challenge of articulating a view of the world through the medium of film.

Jeremy Taylor







## House Singing Competition

This year's House Singing Competition was adjudicated by Old Abingdonian Stephen Clarke, who has been the Director of Music at Radley College for over ten years. At the start of his adjudication, Stephen made it plain that he felt privileged to be back and wanted very much to be considered an OA.

Thanks to an ingenious plan devised

by Mr Fletcher-Campbell, this year's competition was divided into two halves, with five houses at a time being afforded the opportunity to be seated as audience members before or after the interval.

The unison songs had been chosen in the early part of term and the houses had spent a week rehearsing them, devising their own accompaniments and arrangements and allocating senior musicians to conduct and direct the rehearsals. It was this process of preparation which brought the many

benefits of team building, the exercising of leadership and the development of spirit within the ten houses. It was also a great way for the new boys to get to know and to be known by the older ones.

It was extremely heart-warming to see all the boys looking their best, working and concentrating hard together, and the competitive spirit made for a lively and exciting occasion that was enjoyed by everyone.

The songs chosen by the boys comprised pop songs from different eras, ranging from disco hits, such as Rick Astley's *Never Gonna Give You Up* (Christodoulou's) to the Proclaimers' *500 Miles* (Southwell-Sander's) and S Club 7's *Reach for the Stars* (Webb's).

Stephen Clarke's adjudication emphasised the importance of choosing the right song, finding the optimum pitch for the performance and hearing the words in a strong unison line that also showed some variety of dynamic and texture.

The competition this year was won by Franklin's House with a performance of Lady Gaga's *Bad Romance*, directed by Nick Schneider and accompanied at the piano by Leon Wu. Such was Nick's jubilation that, just like at the Academy Awards, he was keen to give an acceptance speech at the end!

*Michael Stinton*





# Classics Trip to Sicily

As with any good holiday, the 2013 Classics trip began with a day of travelling. After landing in Milan, we were met with a long delay before our transfer flight to Catania (a town on Sicily's east coast). Indeed Mount Etna had been erupting, spewing ash into the sky; Hephaistos was in his forge, the Greeks would have said. Luckily, however, we were allowed into the air and managed to land minutes before the airport closed for the night.

Our first night was spent in a hotel close to Catania, a stone's throw from the shore and a possible mythical location for the Cyclopes in the *Odyssey*. Then came our first taste of Sicilian cuisine, one of their specialities (and one which we were served almost every night), 'cotoletta' or breaded meat.

The next morning, we set out to Syracuse. Sicily saw a great number of battles, with many different empires controlling it in turn, owing to fierce competition for its fertile land and strategic position. Our first stop was an inland fortress, Euryalus, the site of a major conflict during Athens' Sicilian expedition. Moving to the coast and Syracuse itself, we found both a Roman amphitheatre and a Greek theatre. In the same area was an odd cave, called Dionysius' ear. The s-shaped chamber had an echoing acoustic, as an enthusiastic rendition of *Jerusalem* proved. The final site for the day was the island of Ortygia, connected to the mainland by bridges. The Greek temple had been converted into a cathedral, or duomo, a great piece of architecture. Outside was a vast expanse of water, the great harbour, which was the site for yet more battles during the expedition.

Thankfully Etna wasn't erupting on the third day, when we went up it. Although only going up two thirds of the way (still about 2000m in elevation), the views were spectacular, of sea, land and sky all around. Then on the way back down, in the coastal town of Taormina, we saw a Greek theatre. It was extremely well preserved, probably because it had often been redeveloped since its original



Greek construction. A short bus trip later and we came to Giardini Naxos, another seaside settlement. There was a small museum (our first instalment of museums containing pots) and a large archaeological park, with the remains of the ancient settlement.

We left our Catania hotel and the east of the island, heading deep inland to Morgantina. This ancient settlement gave a perfect opportunity to see a Greek house and town plan, with its own theatre, agora (a marketplace) and council buildings to name a few. As it was situated on a hill, the views were a spectacle as well. But most beautiful were the preserved mosaics at the Roman villa near Piazza Armerina. Long corridors and large rooms depicting fighting, animal hunting and myths were everywhere, in total accounting for over 4000m<sup>2</sup> of mosaics. That night we arrived in Agrigento, which was to be our second base.

To our surprise, the park we had planned to visit in Gela on the fifth day was closed owing to wild dogs roaming the site. So we went direct to a museum of artifacts which had been buried in the sand, leading to their excellent preservation. The sheer number came as a shock as cabinet after cabinet was filled with pristine, extremely detailed pots and statues. We then made our way back to Agrigento to visit the site of the ancient city of Akragas. Four stunning temples remained there, of which that of Concord is one of the very best preserved Doric temples in the world, and Zeus' the largest ever built. In the museum, a scale model reconstruction of the temple put into perspective its sheer magnitude: a seven-metre tall Telamon looked insignificant at a quarter of its height.

The next day brought even more temples, first at coastal Selinunte. Here we walked along the ancient wall and



around the city in which some temples were still preserved, although others had been reduced to rubble. Nearby, on our way to Segesta, we stopped in the middle of a quarry from which Selinunte's stone had been dug. In one bit of the rock, four columns of limestone were in the process of being carved, before being abandoned. These not only provided an insight into temple construction but some opportunities for an impromptu climbing competition, much to the horror of some of the staff. The temple at Segesta was a column skeleton, majestic in its valley. After a walk up a steep hill, we came to the theatre there; once again, Sicily provided both a theatre and a view. The hilltop theme was carried on with our next hotel in the picturesque town of Erice. The streets were cobbled and narrow in a haphazard pattern; and from Erice, the east coast and our next destination could be seen: Marsala.

Much to the pupils' dismay, no wine tasting went on. We did however get to look around a park with some excavated mosaics. The museum housed many treats besides the main attraction: the remains of a Carthaginian ship. Cabinets were filled with Greek inscriptions, a challenging but enjoyable opportunity for the linguists. This was further added to at Motya, an island a short boat ride from the shore, where there were stones engraved with Punic, owing to its Carthaginian settlers. Around the island were forts, ruins and harbours of interest.

The final day saw somewhat of a leap forward in history to the Normans with a visit to a stunning cathedral at Monreale. Over two tonnes of gold adorned the walls. There were mosaics, too, depicting biblical scenes, an amazing sight. Later, though, we went to look at the infamous crypt of the Cappuchin monastery in Palermo. This was probably the most moving and shocking visit of the whole trip: about 2000 mummified bodies, of monks and others, (including newborns) were displayed, the men hooked up vertically on the walls. However, this was but one of many memorable visits on the trip.

*Anthony Bracey, 5HCGM*





# Spanish Exchange

## My Experience on the Spanish Exchange

I spent my week in Santiago in Northern Spain with a very nice family. My exchange was called Lucas and he was really sporty and relaxed which suited me quite well. During the week, I spent a lot of time with the family, going out to various restaurants and tapas bars which was a new experience for me, although I enjoyed all the food I tried, including octopus and various other foods. Also, the family showed me round the ancient city of Santiago. Whilst I was there, they also took me to see the 'botafumeiro', where we witnessed the ancient tradition of incense being swung and spread across the cathedral in a golden burner. After I had seen the old city and the amazing cathedral, Lucas and his family took me to his grandparents' house a few miles away for a family gathering. At this, there were about 19 people, most of whom spoke little English and so my basic Spanish skills were put to the test. At the gathering, the family had prepared lots of various dishes including meats like chorizo. For me, the week in Santiago was very valuable for my Spanish and it helped me mainly with my speaking ability but also with my grammar, reading, writing and listening abilities too. For anyone who is thinking about going on the exchange, I would highly recommend it.

*Conor Graney, 5KEB*

## Life on the Spanish Exchange

Last year in October, I went on a Spanish exchange programme with my school to improve my Spanish whilst also learning a great deal about their lifestyle and culture. There were roughly 16 of us Abingdon boys and nearly double that number of St Helen's students that embarked on the trip. The exchange in total lasted a week, where we met our exchanges for the first time in the city of Santiago de Compostela in the Northern region of Spain.





My exchange's name was Pablo Romero Rivera and he was a delightful host and a perfect ambassador for Spain in my opinion. On the first day, I was introduced to his lovely family and they took me out very kindly to a wonderful Spanish dinner. One bizarre thing I learnt about the Spanish culture was that they eat dinner much later than we do in England. In general, dinner is normally eaten at 11pm!

After spending some time with our Spanish exchanges, we went to a regular school day at their school where we learnt even more about Spanish media and culture. One of the highlights of the trip was visiting the grand Cathedral in the centre of the city that was well known for a grand, holy pilgrimage of over 100km.

Later on that week, we embarked on an international journey to Portugal, which was just a short three-hour drive from the city! We had a lot of fun visiting the shops there and looking at the beautiful countryside surroundings.

Finally, we also had the pleasure of visiting a massive aquarium later on where we saw some amazing sea animals including seals and sharks! We also were given the chance to take a tour of the Zara HQ there, which was quite enjoyable, but I would assume that the St Helen's girls would've appreciated it more than us! However, all things must come to an end and we sadly had to leave eventually. However, that week was very memorable and helped improve my Spanish a great deal, as well as my knowledge of Spanish life.

*Michael Jiang, 5MEE*

### Our exchange visit to Abingdon

In May 2013, we registered to host exchange students from two prestigious schools in Abingdon.

After having them visit and stay with us over the last Halloween, we found ourselves wondering how we would fit into English families and their homes for 10 days.

The 19th of March 2014 arrived and off we went. After a short but tiring trip we found ourselves at Heathrow, one of the



world's busiest airports, and we were naturally a little disorientated. A few short hours later we were in Oxfordshire and our senses were heightened by the thought of staying with a strange family, our nerves, and also the Champions League football match due on TV that evening.

The next day at school we found our friends and discussed the previous evening as if we had not seen each other for several months. A week or so of unknown and interesting experiences and visits awaited us.

That first day we actually visited the school and we were speechless (difficult I know for Spaniards). It was fantastic and the food was delicious.

We had high expectations for the second day as we were going into London. We were a little disappointed as we did a bus tour of the main sights with some shopping near Hyde Park. However, we appreciate that London is huge and that it is difficult to fit lots into just a few hours.

After this, the weekend arrived and we stayed with our host families. We enjoyed various activities and some of us were able to watch some Spanish football on TV. Poor old Madrid supporters.

We were up early on Monday as an

exciting school schedule beckoned us. We attended class and learned some Chinese, studied business and the analysis of population. During the afternoon we watched a film called *The King's Speech* about King George VI.

On the following day we visited Oxford, where Luke explained to us the secrets of the university. We had free time for shopping in the town for more than two hours.

The next days were taken up with visits to Salisbury and Bath, cities close to Oxford with important points of interest. Actually, they were great trips. The common feature of these days was KFC lunches, which were so good.

Once we were used to our English timetable, there was sadly only a short while remaining prior to our return home to Spain. Those hours were unforgettable. An English girl had planned a farewell party at her home. We were able to spend our last hours together. The best thing about the party was that all of us could attend.

Next morning at 9.05am we said goodbye to our exchange hosts in the coach park... but it wasn't goodbye really, it was 'see you soon'.

*Pablo Romero Rivera  
Fernando Hernandez Ulloa*





## Fencing

Abingdon School's Fencing Club went from strength to strength in the 2013/14 academic year. The Michaelmas Term kicked off with high numbers of students and a full and varied fixture list. The dedicated Lower School fencing session on Thursday lunchtimes has continued to be popular, and has led to a good crop of younger fencers coming up through the ranks in the club, hopefully bringing with them a bright future for the sport in the school.

The club's inter-school fixtures were once again a huge success

and we recorded wins against Wellington College, Bradfield College, Charterhouse, Harrow, Winchester College and Marlborough College. Indeed, our only loss was to Winchester College away in October. We may have underestimated the competitiveness of this team; however, we certainly made up for this blip during the return fixture at Abingdon in February, beating them comprehensively in both Foil and Epee. Next year the fixture list will take on some new schools, including St John's Marlborough, The Dragon School (for our younger fencers) and Dauntsey's in Wiltshire.

November 2013 brought the welcome

news that Jack Dawson and Benjamin Schneider had qualified to represent Great Britain in the Under 17 Epee squad. Both fencers started their GB experiences by travelling to Bonn on the European Cadet Circuit in December and performed exceptionally well at such a high level. Success for the club then continued at the Southern Region Team Championships held at Fareham Leisure Centre at the end of November. The U16 Epee team of Benjamin Schneider, Patrick Johnson and Robert MacLennan won gold in this category, and in the same category, the team of Michael Temporal Darell, Jonathan Law and Jai Sidpra won bronze. The U13 Epee team of Matthew Green, Guy Tilley and Jake de Jongh (fencing in his first competition) won silver in their category. All in all, it was a fantastic day's fencing.

The next big external event for the club was the Southern Region Age Group competition, held at Wellington College in March. This is an important event on the fencing calendar as it forms a qualifying round for the highly prestigious British Youth Championships, held at the Institute of Sport in Sheffield in May. We took 18 fencers on the day (a record number for the club) and came away with seven medals. In the Under 12 Boys' Epee Harry Baston-Hall won bronze and in the U14 Boys' Epee Greg Davies won gold and Michael Temporal Darell won bronze. In the U16 Boys'







Epee Benjamin Schneider won gold and Robert MacLennan won bronze, and in the U18 Boys' Epee Herman Chan won silver and Jack Dawson won bronze.

March saw the biggest event of the fencing calendar – the Public Schools Championships at Crystal Palace National Sports Centre. This was once again run as an overnight trip and we took 10 students to compete in this prestigious competition. All students fenced in two weapons (Foil and Epee) across the two days. On the first day, Robert MacLennan won silver (2nd place) out of 101 fencers in the Boys' Mount-Haes Epee and Benjamin Schneider won 5th place in the Boys' Junior Epee. Both were fantastic achievements. On the Wednesday, Herman Chan won silver (2nd place)

in the Boys' Senior Epee out of 95 fencers. On Thursday 20 March James Fotherby represented the school in the Boys' Junior Sabre and came 8th out of a strong field of 86 fencers. Following the competition, news came that Abingdon as a whole had won the Hilary Hammond Trophy for the most points scored overall by a single fencing club in Epee and Sabre – a fantastic accolade for the club.

The year came to a close with the British Youth Championships over the May Bank Holiday weekend. Six fencers competed in this national competition at the Institute of Sport in Sheffield, with Benjamin Schneider winning gold in the Under 16 Boys' Epee – a win that makes him the best fencer in his age group in the country. Other fencers

involved in this competition were Harry Baston-Hall, Greg Davies, Michael Temporal Darell, Robert MacLennan and Herman Chan. Competing in the British Youth Championships is in itself a huge achievement as only the top fencers from the Southern region win a place to compete at such a high level.

Overall, it has been a hugely successful year for the Fencing Club and my thanks must go to our two dedicated coaches, Herman du Preez and Alan Knowles for their continued hard work and commitment. Herman Chan and Jack Dawson have been an excellent Fencing Captain and Vice Captain respectively, and the club looks forward to more successes next academic year.

*Nick Fieldhouse*



## Equus

I think it is fair to say that when Abingdon School Drama Department announced they were putting on *Equus* as the senior school play, there was quite a lot of surprise. If this play was successful, it would be an amazingly exciting performance, but there was no doubt *Equus* was going to push all of the actors out of their comfort zones, due to the controversial story-line and intense acting between characters, particularly between Alan Strang and Jill Mason.

*Equus* is about a young boy called Alan Strang and his psychiatrist, Martin Dysart. One night, Alan blinds six horses from a stable at which he worked. The story revolves around not the who but the why: why Alan has committed this deed. As the story progresses and Dysart gets closer to the truth, he finds out Alan is no normal boy, and his obsession with horses, believing them to be some sort of god, drives him to commit this horrible act.

It was a nervous gaggle of boys and girls who arrived for the first audition. After being split into pairs or small groups, we were given a passage to work on before presenting to the rest of the group. Immediately, the actors and actresses were thrown straight into the deep end, with some already intense scenes being performed in order for Mrs Quick (the creative director of *Equus*) to gain an insight into which



people could deal with the potentially uncomfortable scenes required to be a part of such a show. However, after this, the courageous gang of 13 actors and actresses was chosen. Initially, rehearsals started with just Alan Strang (played by Henry Papworth) and Martin Dysart (played by Noah Rogers) as Mrs Quick believed this to be the main character relationship in the play, and in order for it to work, Henry and Noah had to have complete faith and trust in each other. Through Mrs Quick's careful guidance, this relationship was built, and the main rehearsals could begin. The equine chorus was integral to the success of the production. The chorus comprised six actors and actresses working in unison who all had to learn to move with the striking metal headpieces that set them apart from the rest of the actors. A huge amount of respect must go to Matt Hawksworth, the professional

choreographer who worked closely with the chorus to create the intense and moving moments when the horses appear in the action. Every session Matt had with the chorus developed the actors superbly until all movements and flicks mirrored the movements of horses, hopefully so that during the real performance, after a while, the audience would forget these hugely talented actors were just school children.

Another relationship that had to be nurtured carefully was the relationship between Alan Strang and Jill Mason (played by Chloë Taylor). As this was a particularly close relationship, both Henry and Chloë needed an amazing amount of maturity in order to perform what they were asked. Initially, Mrs Quick helped hugely by allowing the two to rehearse with no other actors present, meaning they could gain trust and confidence with each other,





before allowing the rest of the group to view the intimate scenes between the two. After this first hurdle, the rest of the group were extremely helpful and mature, allowing the relationship to grow successfully, meaning Henry and Chloë could act confidently.

Finally, after months of work, the first performance was approaching, and Henry and Noah in particular were struggling with the number of words they had to learn. The two weeks leading up to the first performance were possibly the most stressful, with both Henry and Noah having to come in every weekend in order to rehearse and try to learn their words for the looming opening night. Then came the dress rehearsal, after which the group was a lot more nervous than before. It was anything but smooth. After a sleepless night, the countdown to 7pm in the Amey Theatre began. Tension was mounting, nerves fraying;

then sooner than anyone imagined the performance was over. It had been a huge success! News soon reached the cast that the final night was a sell-out, cranking up the pressure on all the actors. The second night, so often the performance that is the least successful, was on a par with, if not better than, the performance on the first night and the group went into the third and final performance with enormous confidence.

On the day of the final performance the cast gathered, and after some notes from Mrs Quick, went to grab a quick dinner, all nervous of the big night ahead. This was it, teachers, friends, family all in the audience. This was the night when the actors had to impress. Three hours later, and they were leaping around backstage, elated at how well the performance had gone. But we all had to make sure Mrs Quick was given the due thanks she deserved as, without

her creativity and direction, the play would have got nowhere near the quality it achieved.

The two new theatre managers, Mr Lloyd and Mr Cann built and lit a brilliant set, with fantastic help from the Amey Theatre technical crew; Mr Cooper, one of the theatre managers who left last year returned to create the chilling, atmospheric sound track and Mrs Hart not only organised all the ticket sales, but also sourced all the costumes. Without the help of these talented and dedicated people the performances would not have reached the giddy heights that they did.

Congratulations to all the cast and crew of *Equus* - everyone came together to provide three performances that were all truly memorable.

*Henry Papworth, 6CFC*





## Rugby

The 2013 rugby season witnessed a fantastic 210 games of rugby in the Michaelmas Term, with 107 of these games unbeaten and over 4300 points being scored from the 22 sides, who were playing against very strong opposition.

For the seniors, the season started on the back of a very successful rugby tour to Namibia, in which 44 pupils were given the opportunity to test themselves against some of the best schools in that part of the world.

Whilst the seniors' overall results were not as glowing as some of the other year groups', it was pleasing to see many of their performances, notably the following: the 1st XV securing a great victory over St Edward's, winning 49-12; winning well away against RGS Guildford 23-17; the 2nd XV securing great wins over three big schools – Eton, Radley and St Paul's; the 3rd XV winning a tight battle on tour against Lancaster Grammar 24-22 and beating St Edward's 25-5; and finally the 4th XV



winning well against both Shiplake and Cheltenham. All in all, it was a tough season, but the four sides battled from game to game and plenty of young players staked a claim for a higher team the following year.

Special mention goes to Theo Brophy Clews, who was selected for England U17s, having already played two

years at fly half for the Abingdon 1st XV, as well as Michael Dewar, whose selection for the England U18 Clubs and Schools side that toured France was very pleasing. Both players enjoyed academy rugby (London Irish and Wasps respectively) along with 1st XV captain Kieran Routledge, who played for Gloucester U18s.





Wasps U15s during the season

The U14s found their first season a tough one, and whilst the final results are not great reading, their commitment and dedication to improve never faltered. The A & B XV enjoyed a very good October half term tour to Dorset, playing Bryanston and Sherborne Schools, and made huge strides forward in improving their aptitude both on and off the field. The high ropes and laser questioning activities between matches helped enormously to bond the players. A good win over local rivals Cokethorpe by 38 points and the B's convincing win on tour against Sherborne are ones to savour. For the Cs, there was a great start, winning 31-0 against KCS Wimbledon whilst the D's recorded a win by 47 points. Finally the E XV finished their season with a 55-5 win over Marlborough College.

And finally to the Lower School, who won 19 of their 36 games, scoring nearly 900 points in the process – this was very pleasing to note. Memorable wins included the U13 A XV winning 27-24 against St Hugh's, the B XV winning 50-0 against Cokethorpe, the U12 A XV winning 38-7 against Magdalen and the U12 B's win over Moulsholme 30-7.

Overall therefore, it was a season with many highs and lows, and one that will be particularly remembered for an unbeaten season for the Colts A XV, the club scoring over 4300 points, more boys than ever representing premiership academies and finally the first 3rd and 4th XV senior tour.

*Peter Coke*

To the U16's season - and what a season! As a year group they won 20 of their 31 fixtures throughout the season, scoring over 660 points. Plaudits must go though to Mr Ghosh's A side that remained unbeaten, ending their season by beating Marlborough away 10-0. One memorable game must be the tight win at home against a very strong St Paul's side 20-15, whilst winning away at Radley by 5 points was also something to remember for players and parents alike. The U16 Bs also did not hold back, winning 60% of their games, and great wins over Cheltenham and St Edward's were extremely pleasing. The C XV did not have so much success at the start of the season, but finished on form with three wins on the bounce, scoring 50 points in each of the last two games.

Special mention must go to Jack Holford and Sam Telling, both of whom

played for the South West Divisional side at the Wellington International Festival over the Easter break. Both, along with hooker Jamie Cox, have been picked up by academies at Wasps and London Irish.

The Under 15s as a year group rivalled the success of the U16s by winning 61% of games played, but amassing a huge points score of over 1100. The A XV started their season off well with a 29-19 win against KCS Wimbledon, whilst the B XV will be remembered for their 41-19 win over St Paul's. The C XV won emphatically 45-0 against Radley, with the D XV putting over 50 points on both St Edward's and Marlborough in their last two fixtures. Finally, the mighty E XV scored over 60 points against Berkhamsted's D XV.

Special mention to the trio of George Strainge, Thomas Guthrie and Tom Haynes, all of whom were selected for





# Playing Rugby for England

It may sound a bit clichéd, but being selected to play any sport for your country is a huge honour. I have been extremely fortunate and lucky to be given this opportunity a few times in the last year, and it is something I will never forget. When I first found out that I would be starting my first significant game for England, the semi-final of the European U18 championships against Wales, I was unbelievably excited and proud of myself. However for the time being I was preoccupied with preparations for the game so I didn't have very much time to ponder that moment too much. The day before a game of this importance is always a weird one. There is only a limited time you can train in order to be in peak condition for the game, so you end up having a lot of free time. This is nice in a way but it gives you so much time to worry and stress, that after a while, it's basically torture. At this point on the evening before the semi-final, I just wanted to walk onto the pitch and play. On game day it was much the same, but just before we got on the bus to go to the ground we had a meeting, in which our coach told us a number of important things. The most significant was when he said "Remember the people who put you in that shirt and make them proud" and until the warm up starts that's all I really thought about. I always get really nervous before a game at any level, and this was no exception. By far the most nervous I have ever been was during the few moments just before we walked out for the anthems. However this moment is another that it is impossible to forget. Singing the National Anthem was a hugely passionate and proud moment and there is nothing that gets you more fired up for a game than that.

The game in many ways is exactly the same as any game I've played before. I was a bit more nervous than usual, but when I got out there, it didn't cross my mind what was at stake. The conditions were terrible that day. It was the first game I've ever played in the sleet and snow and it made for a scrappy first



half. The main thing you're thinking about throughout the game is trying to get the best out of the team and trying to make a difference in a good way, as after all we know that people are only remembered for what they do on the pitch and that that is all that matters. By the time I came off after 60 minutes we were down by 8 points to 9. There was a huge amount of tension both on the pitch and off it. It took a penalty kick in the dying seconds to get the win and the game. Moments like that stick with you because it is simply the best feeling in the world winning such a tight game that means so much.

After the game the first thing you think of is how you played. In this area I had

mixed emotions mainly due to the fact that we were losing when I came off, which is always frustrating, as you want to get the chance to finish the job you started. Also, in some areas I hadn't played as well as I would have liked to, but to this day I still love thinking about that game. It's a special game for me for the obvious reason that playing for my country is something I am massively proud of, but also how we managed to grind out a win in the dying seconds is something special. The best times of my life have been spent in a white jersey and I would never give them up for anything.

*Theo Brophy-Clews, 6CJM*





## Aachen Christmas Market Trip

When we were starting our trip, I thought Aachen would be a small town with a small market that was somehow related to Christmas. After staying there for one and a half days, I soon realised how totally wrong I was.

The town was about the same size as Abingdon. However, the Christmas Market was nearly on every street and every square. It was extraordinary. I could not understand how such a town could hold such a large market. The food was delicious, the market was plentiful and it was a big surprise for me when we found out that there is a massive Lindt shop/factory in Aachen as well. And it was really massive. Almost all, if not every, type of chocolate



currently being produced was there. However, the time passed quickly when we were there and the day finished with a bit of a disappointment, as the Youth Hostel was nothing like I had imagined. The rooms were small and we were tired, which made our surroundings even harder to get on well with.

Overall, however, this did little to

damage the great impression of the trip. It was a valuable experience for me. I enjoyed it very much and recommend it highly to any speaker of German, especially if you are doing the German Exchange, as it is an excellent chance to try out the language in a live situation, as opposed to the classroom.

*Stepan Khovanov, 4JFH*





Christmas Concert







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# Lent 2014



## What is 'Y'?

'Why?' - the most important question ever, of all time, to paraphrase Socrates. The question that pushes science and philosophy forwards and improves the human mind. This

question has been asked the most in all of human history. So what does one do during Y? We go round to Revd. Steer's house, eat some nice food and discuss the biggest questions we can think of with everyone getting a chance to chip in. This year we have looked at Mark and the conspiracy of the Gospel.

It is really nice to go into a friendly environment where all opinions are valid and no subjects are off the table. So if you are interested, join us on a Monday for Y, where all the "big" questions are discussed.

*Daniel Savage, 4JPGB*



## What is 'The Way'?

While an outsider may peek in and see just another chapel session, those inside know otherwise. As Mr Price has said, it's like chapel, just without hymns, the sitting still, the complete silence and the lack of food. We get to partake in games, discuss topics relevant to the passage and irrelevant to the passage. Sometimes we just talk about one question we don't know the answer to. Also, there is no necessary commitment to turn up every week. In fact, I don't think any of the regulars have signed up. If your Other Half is cancelled or the person picking you up is late, you can just pop in to the CMR to have a look. Each week Mrs Price makes biscuits or a cake, and at one point, the cakes

were made by some of the boys and brought in. Mr Lomax will then treat you to some warm squash and then you are ready to participate in a game. Kind of like the ones you may play in drama or just any you know. A common choice is ninja. However, occasionally, we will play the dice game (a game with dice which I always lose) or simply cheat. Then, we are into the main session. Here, we look at a passage in the Bible (provided) and talk about it and what that would be like in this day and age. After a little talking, we spend a minute or two praying. If we have time, we play another game. Then, the remains of the food are devoured and before you know it, it is 5:00. So feel free to give it a try. Come for one session and see what you think. It starts at 4:20 and ends at 5:00. We'll see you there!

*Jake de Jongh, 1RHH*





## Edmund Society

Philosophy students invariably find it hard to get through an entire A-Level without having some sort of disagreement with each other; it's the nature of the subject. The Edmund Society—the school's philosophy club—has, outside of the ceremonies of Friday's debates, become a safe haven for informal verbal tussle.

Topics are often rather less theological than the society's 12th century namesake, with certainly much less prayer; discussion on temporal identity, Wittgenstein, logic, and even whether a stick is simply straight or bent have taken place over the last few months. Meeting every second Tuesday in B9, the society provides an opportunity to 'jump in' to any topic presented from reading or general interest. This regularly pushes any student in the room to the edge of their knowledge, and often completely past that! There is something to be said however for our tendency to wander off the beaten track - a large part of a philosopher should be their ability to talk intuitively and confidently

on any problem they are presented with.

One particularly memorable incident of this was an initial tendency to call the concept of Aristotelian substance 'soul-ey mojo-ey stuff'. Speaking with naivety is often more productive than with a researched surety of what you're saying - and it's the spontaneous nature of discussion in the Edmund Society which means we can cut through the lingo which confuses anyone without a copy of the OED in hand (and saves us from having to pronounce words like phenomenology). A smaller, intimate atmosphere also puts everyone speaking at ease - there are no shaking, note clutching hands when someone makes a point.

This year the society has held a series of highly popular lectures on philosophy about a wide range of topics, both within traditional philosophy and further afield. Peter Hitchens made an address to the society on the issue of Russia and the Ukraine, for example, itself an interesting critique of moral pragmatism. Michael Lacewing, Lecturer of Heythrop College London, presented three intriguing approaches to the creation of the universe, and Stephen Mulhall a fascinating reading of Wittgenstein's early and latter works. Students are

invited to help out at all talks (particularly with the refreshments), and often introduce speakers themselves. If there is one thing that philosophy students appreciate more than attacking each other's views, it's listening to someone else's!

The society isn't exclusively for students, however: Mr Barnes, as a friendly and knowledgeable teacher and chair, often re-rails derailing points, tidies and clarifies arguments, and arranges the popular talks with leading philosophers and thinkers. From a student's perspective, his contribution over the last year and commitment to researching and explaining almost any topic we put forward has been astounding. Three boys have also been awarded half colour ties for their contribution to the society, for their role in preparing sessions and help with talks.

In the coming year, the society has a wealth of events planned and will be welcoming fresh members from the Lower Sixth into the ranks. It remains, as it hopefully will for a long time to come, somewhere unique for informal, contemplative discussion.

*Tomas Brown, 6OTL*





## Guys and Dolls

I have never really been a drama person. Music, sure - I've been doing that since I was 6, but since the age of 9, last year's joint school production of *Candide* was the first show I'd been even the slightest bit involved in (that is, if you can count one solitary line as 'involved in'). However, having realised quite how much I'd enjoyed doing *Candide*, and quite how much I regretted not having gotten involved in the school productions sooner, when the auditions for *Guys and Dolls* were announced I was in no doubt that I'd be there.

After an audition process that put us right in at the deep end straight away - it involved singing solo and attempting (for that is, I fear, the only word that can really describe it) an American accent in front of the 70 or so others who were auditioning, the cast list went up and it appeared that I'd been cast as a certain Mr Nathan Detroit. Having absolutely no clue as to who or what this mysterious Mr Detroit was, a quick Google search revealed that I'd been cast as one of the leads of one of the most well-known and popular musicals ever written - not, it seemed, a gentle once-a-week commitment! However, despite the



threat of Cambridge interviews and A2 studies (and a very anxious mother) looming on the horizon, I was delighted at the prospect and, rather unnervingly, jumped right in.

The rehearsals started in October, so the three show nights in the first week of February seemed rather a long way away. However, a quick browse of the script revealed quite how much there was to be done. The first glance to our two resplendent, dream-like directors (Ms Watt and Mr Phillips), however, put all initial worries at ease. After being given whispered instructions on how to pronounce her name, we were quick to

let Ms Rakowski teach us the array of songs we'd have to know (apparently there are songs in a musical, which seemed to be news to a few of the cast), and when it emerged that our choreographer would be none other than OA Toby Marlow, star of *Candide* and hero of dance floors across France, the decibel level of the St Helen's contingent (yes, guys - there are girls) went through the roof. These were exciting days indeed.

As the weeks and months progressed, change was in the air. Scenes that had initially felt as uncomfortable as the annual third year disco became easier





proclaiming that she'd seen "a whole row of bums"), the dreamy Bubl  -esque crooning of a certain Hugh Cutting or the hugely embarrassing height difference between myself and the Adamson brothers, the audience loved every minute of it, and we pulled off an absolute cracker of a show.

And you see, that's the thing about a drama production - at the start of the process you hardly know anyone there, and the prospect of marrying one of those 'maroon-jumpered girl-like people' on stage seems like rather a daunting one. But by the end of it, you've all joined together to produce something that you, your teachers and your audience will remember, look back on and be proud of for many years to come. I could not have wished for a better musical, a better cast and a better directive team to spend those months with than the crew of *Guys and Dolls* 2014. Being a part of it was an absolute privilege, and may I thoroughly recommend auditioning for whatever it is that's being put on this year. Even if you're not a drama person, you'll very quickly become one - I speak from experience. Trust good old reliable Nathan - you won't regret it.

*Sebastian Johns, VIANW*

and more fluid. Accents that had started off as a curious combination of Indian, South African and Welsh drifted slowly towards some semblance of being from New York. Dance/choreography routines swayed from looking like a beginners' yoga class at Old Station House retirement home to a slick, polished and professional end result. The show, it seemed, was coming together.

As January arrived, it all started to get rather serious. The weekend rehearsals rolled by, as well as the costume adjustments to cater for our remarkable Christmas waist expansions, and before we knew it the set and costumes had

arrived. After finally being persuaded to stop taking outrageous numbers of selfies in our frankly stunning double-breasted suits, we managed to race through a couple of run-throughs and, suddenly, the three nights we'd all been working towards were upon us. The tickets had sold out in a flash, and so we'd be performing in front of around 350 people every single night. The stakes were high (cheeky gambling joke, go with it). *Guys and Dolls* was go...

And, safe to say, we nailed it. Whether it was the year 11 girls in worryingly revealing burlesque outfits (with the ever diplomatic Ms Watt at one stage



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# Hockey

2014 proved a fantastic season for Abingdon School Hockey Club, with huge success on the pitch as well as much enjoyment off it. There were many memorable moments, but some standout ones included the 2nd XI beating Bradfield on the last day of the season 3-2, the U12 B VII remaining un-beaten in their matches for the season, a fantastic end of season dinner with a charismatic speaker, and many individual moments of brilliance from all of the pupils on the pitch.

The 1<sup>st</sup> XI recorded one of the most successful seasons in recent years with an overall rate win of 79%. The ever-dependable Sean MacLachlan captained the team, with top scorers Adam Scholey and Alexander Foster snatching 16 and 15 goals respectively. It was a great season and we look forward to seeing what the 1st XI can do next year. Special mention must go to the leavers, Adam, Sean and Ben Mitchell for all their efforts over the past years, we wish them all the best in the future.

Other individual mentions must go to Dominic McLachlan who represented Wales U18 over the summer, and to William Carter-Keall who continues to represent England at U18's level.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> XI captained by Matthew Wyatt and under the watchful eye of Mr. Hindley recorded some great results, with wins against Bradfield, Marlborough and Stowe.

The 3<sup>rd</sup> XI, otherwise known as the 'gentleman's XI', enjoyed a successful season under Mr Ponniah. A quote from their captain Henry Nunney sums up the season: "The team had a great sense of unity and team spirit. Everyone improved dramatically throughout the season and under tough opposition the team performed admirably and I am proud to have led the boys this year".

The U16s had an excellent season with the As recording a 65% win percentage and the Bs a 61% win percentage. This twinned with an excellent tour to the 'International DOMO festival' sets the boys up for an exciting season next

year.

The U15 As, who were guided by the departing Mr Brenchley, had an excellent season, and we would like to wish him all the best at his new job in Malaysia. The Bs, who were led by Miss Atkinson, had an excellent season, with only one defeat.

The U14's, who had benefited from a brilliant pre-season tour to Lille, had a solid season, and although they still have much to learn, they look as though they will be a force to reckon with in the future.

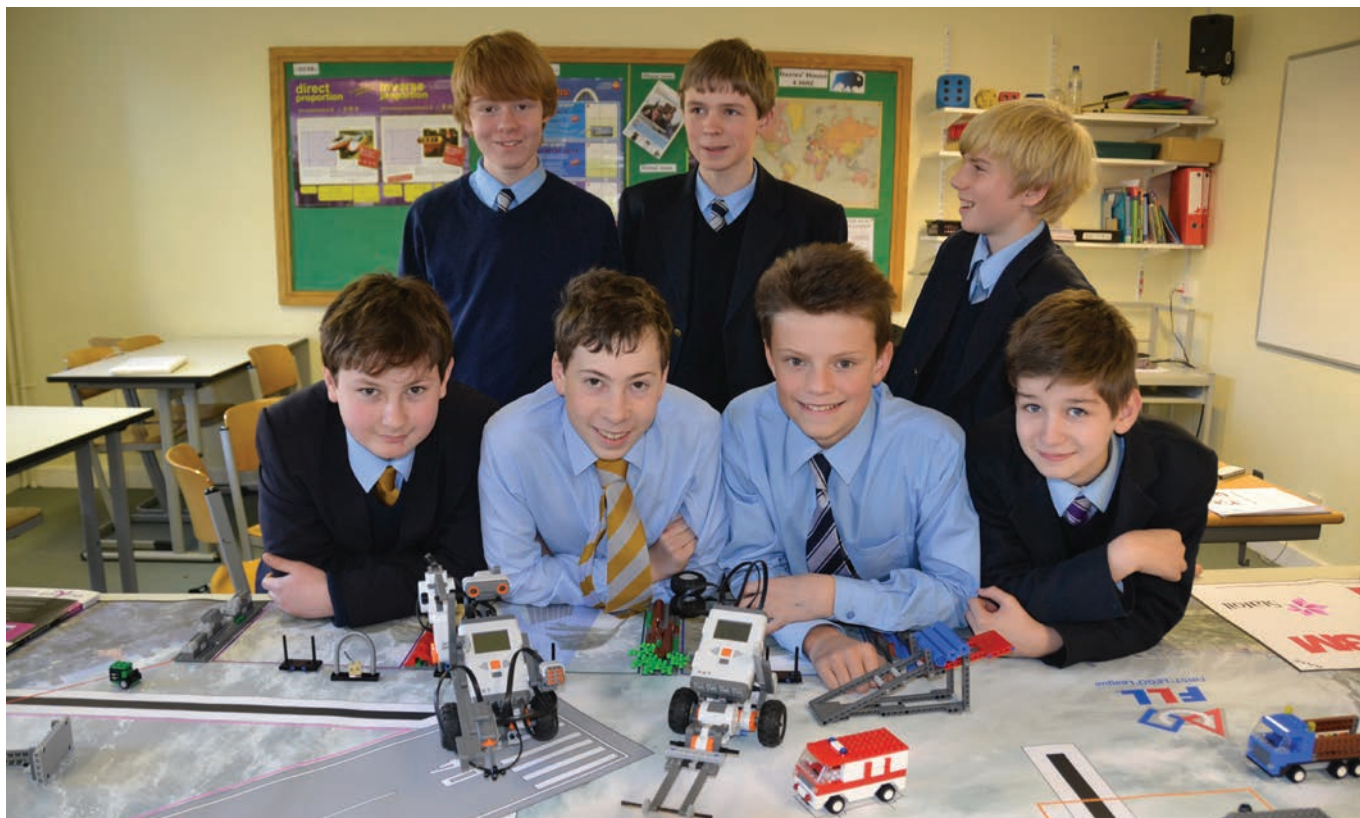
The Lower School provided some surprise results, and considering many had only just been introduced to hockey, played some very attractive and tactically astute hockey at times. The highlight here was "Broadbent's Buzzard's" winning the newly set up Abingdon Prep School Cup.

Overall, as can be seen, it was an outstanding season for all, and we are looking forward to seeing what the next year's crop of Abingdon hockey players can achieve.

*Olly Deasy*







## Third Year Robotics

At the beginning of the year, a group of fresh third years collected in an economics classroom, a bit annoyed about the fact that they were missing their lunch, to hear what Mr Poon had to tell them about their new Other Half activity. It was here they found out that they had signed up for an international competition. For the next few weeks, the 8 or 9 of us completed tasks, in two teams, that Mr Poon set us, getting used to the programming software, as well as some engineering techniques. Within the group Lego novices found themselves among people one might describe as Lego 'gurus'.

Within a short space of time, it was obvious that the two teams would take different approaches. While one bothered to name their robot, the other did not. And while one team went for four wheels the other went for three. While one team went with timed sequences, the other used sensors.

Speaking to Mr Poon, it was found that while one team started more



promisingly, it was the other that pulled through.

After weeks of getting to grips with our machines and the way in which we were to program them, the training board for the First Lego League competition arrived and, in the style of Lego, we were forced to build it ourselves. With that began our road toward the regionals in National Instruments, Newbury.

After only around six weeks for preparation, we made our way to our first meeting with the other competitors. Scared, we walked into the National Instruments building, not knowing what

to expect. After starting with a rather pessimistic view on things, the first round placed us top of the leaderboard, and despite many competitors clawing at our heels, that evening we walked out holding our trophies high. The next stage was national.

Despite having a bit more confidence for this second round, it was soon thrown out the door when we saw what we were up against. Despite our best efforts, we finished about 37th out of over 60 competitors. That was the end of the road!

*Rory Buchanan, 3AJPE*





## Economics Trip to Prague

We began our journey from the coach park in the early hours of a mild Tuesday morning, with our destination set on Prague, the capital of the Czech Republic and home to one of the most interesting economies in Europe. After a brief flight, we touched down in Prague airport and drove to our hotel, the Hotel Beránek, which was situated a mere five minutes walk from the main square in Prague: Wenceslas Square. On the drive to the hotel, we encountered a unique mix of privately owned shops, businesses, and even a mock-Sochi winter park, in and amongst many old tower blocks, reminiscent of the state-provided housing in the Soviet Union. After we arrived at our hotel, we went into the Old Town and began to explore Prague, which included a boat trip

along the River Vltava, where we sailed under the famous Charles Bridge. We were also lucky enough to walk up to Prague Castle which gave us a beautiful vista of the city. On the walk back to the Hotel, we were also able to walk across the Charles Bridge which gave us the opportunity to look at the famous statues on the bridge up close.

The next morning, we set off to the Ruckl Cristal Factory in Nižbor, deep in the Czech countryside, where we were taken on a tour of the factory. We were shown the careful production process of the glassware, starting with the smelter, which is ignited for years at a time, maintained around the clock and used to form the raw glass, which is then cooled and shaped into the basic glassware. If it is of satisfactory quality, the glass is then taken to the next stage of the production line, where workers cut fine, intricate designs onto the outside of the crystal. If not, the rejects are smashed, then melted down

to be reused. As one of the industries enforced by the Soviet Union in the years of Czechoslovakia's communist government, there was, and still is to this day, a significant supply of Bohemian glass in Prague, with many shops, especially those aimed at tourists, selling the Czech glassware.

After leaving Nižbor, we made our way to the Plzeň, home of Pilsner Urquell lager. After having lunch in Plzeň, we were then taken on a tour of the factory, where we were shown the brewing process. This includes the use of water from wells unique to Plzeň, some of which we saw during a tour of the Pilsner Museum, which is situated on the site of the old brewery. At the headquarters in the factory, the tour guide was able to give us a great insight into the workings of multinational companies, as Pilsner Urquell is one of the flagship beers of the brewing giant SABMiller, the second largest brewing company in the world. After a long day



travelling around the Czech Republic, we then went into Prague's Old Town for dinner before returning to the hotel.

The following day, we left the Hotel Beránek to go to Mladá Boleslav, the Czech town home to Škoda's largest production plant, which employs roughly 20,000 people. We were first guided around the museum by a particularly humorous guide, who showed us the evolution of Škoda as a firm from its humble beginnings as Laurin and Klement to the company's merger with Volkswagen in 2000 and onwards. The factory in Mladá Boleslav was particularly useful to us as, not only does it manufacture the Fabia, Rapid and Octavia models of Škoda, it is also the research and development hub for the company. During the tour, we were able to see several prototypes of cars created by the technical team at the factory, but which were never introduced into production due to the position of Škoda as an entry level vehicle within the Volkswagen Group. Moreover, supercharged TSI engines, used in several models within the Volkswagen group, are manufactured there, due to the high number of technical staff on site. In fact, some areas of the factory were off limits to us as they were in the middle of the new Fabia's production.

Upon our return to Prague, we were given the option of revisiting Prague Castle in the daytime, which allowed for some more great views of the city's



skyline, or free time to explore the city. Those who had explored the city also had the opportunity to go up the clock tower of Prague's astronomical clock, the oldest working one in the world, which became something of a meeting point for us.

As our flight left mid-afternoon, we were able to use the time in the morning to attend a lecture at the CERGE Institute, the economic arm of

Charles University and one of the most highly regarded economic institutes in Europe. Initially, the lecture introduced us to the economic situation within Czechoslovakia before its independence in 1989, before moving on to how the fall of the Soviet Union affected the economy of Czechoslovakia as it endured the transition between state-controlled markets and capitalist free markets, which played a part in the splitting of Czechoslovakia in 1993. We then were shown the economic growth of the Czech Republic since independence, and the impact of its inclusion into the European Union in May 2004. The skill and clarity of the speaker really made this lecture a very useful experience for all those who attended.

After having lunch in Prague, we then made our way back to school via Stansted, finally arriving in the early hours of the morning.

On behalf of all who went on the trip, I would like to thank Mr. Fieldhouse, Mr. Grills, Mr. Ponniah and Mr. and Mrs. Evans for their time, patience and effort in making this amazing trip possible.

*Liam Frahm, 6RY*





# Young Enterprise

Abingdon's Young Enterprise scheme has seen incredible success this year, with two teams reaching the Oxfordshire County Finals and all three companies winning awards in a number of areas. Three teams of fourth year students were formed in September: 'Stuff', 'Old School UK' and 'Terra', with each team having input and support from experienced business advisors who all joined Abingdon's Young Enterprise scheme for the first time at the start of the year.

Although all three teams saw huge success in terms of awards throughout the year, the emphasis of this scheme should not be solely on winning trophies. Young Enterprise is, first and foremost, a learning experience for all those involved. All this year's students will have developed invaluable business skills to take forward into other areas of their school, university and work lives. Thanks must go to our five business advisors: Kevan Leggett, Sally Rainbow-Ockwell, Allen Salter, Paul Green and



Steve Moyle for all their help, advice and assistance throughout the year. They worked tirelessly with their teams, providing their time every Friday to meet with students and also attending a number of trade fairs and competitions throughout the year. I would also like

to thank Victoria Griffiths for all her help in running Young Enterprise this year and for bringing her considerable knowledge and expertise to the scheme at Abingdon.

*Nick Fieldhouse*

## Old School UK

Old School UK produced a range of innovative products made from retro vinyl records. They moulded these records into bowls, as well as producing cake stands and clocks. This made for an extremely eye catching and original idea, and proved very popular with their target market. The team performed exceptionally well at the South Oxfordshire and Vale Area Final, winning an award for Creativity and Innovation, and they also went on to win a prize at County Level, the JSP Award for Manufacturing in recognition of the considerable efforts the team put into this area of their business. Overall, they had a fantastic year and made a considerable profit for their investors.

Managing Director: Robert Harris

Business Advisors: Allen Salter and Paul Green





## Terra

Terra's product was the Terra bird box, a unique and well-manufactured product which proved a popular choice with both their target audience and judges throughout the competition. Indeed, at the Cowley Trade Fair in January Terra won two awards, one for Best Product and the other being the Institute of Directors Award for Best Business Plan, a County Level award. Things went from strength to strength as the Terra bird box continued to sell well and the team won a place at the Oxfordshire County Finals in May. Here, they provided an outstanding presentation on their company and collected the business plan award they had won back in January. Overall, Terra had an excellent year, and as with Stuff and Old School UK, made a very tidy profit for their investors.

Managing Director: Charlie Lindsay

Business Advisor: Steve Moyle



## Stuff

Stuff found a particularly lucrative niche with a tuck shop at Abingdon's coach park, along with selling a range of products, including headphones, phone cases and speakers at trade fairs across Oxfordshire. They performed very well indeed at the Cowley Trade Fair in January, winning an award for Best Customer Service, and they went on to win a place at the Oxfordshire County Finals in May. Their charismatic and engaging Managing Director, George Jeffreys, also won an award for Outstanding Personal Contribution at the South Oxfordshire and Vale Area Final in March – a fantastic achievement. At the Oxfordshire County Final, Stuff won the Carter Jonas Award for Best Presentation for an exceptionally well put together performance. Overall, they had a great year and returned a very respectable profit to their investors.

Managing Director: George Jeffreys

Business Advisors: Kevan Leggett and Sally Rainbow-Ockwell





# Abingdon Swimming Club

We have just concluded what has proven to be another highly successful swimming season, starting with the ESSA Secondary Schools Relays in late September, and finishing with a hugely competitive gala against Abingdon Vale Swimming Club in mid June. With 19 school records broken throughout the course of the season and various trophies collected, the continuous hard work of the boys under the guidance of Senior Head Coach Scott Farnell and Junior Head Coach Amanda Ford has helped the Swimming Club make continued progress this year. Further down the school, the introduction of additional Lower School swimming lessons has helped further the progress of the younger pupils, as they continuously look up to and hang off every word said by the school performance squad swimmers who lead the sessions.

Whilst it has undoubtedly been a team effort throughout the course of the season, Michael Esnouf both captained and led the club tremendously, playing an inspiring role in and out of the water, and both he and all of the pupils involved should be pleased and inspired by their achievements.

## ESSA Secondary Schools Relay Championships

Having hosted and qualified in the county round, the U16 freestyle team and the U18 medley relay team travelled to the Crystal Palace National Sports Centre to compete in the ESSA National Secondary Schools Teams Relay Finals, with the U18 squad setting a new county record in qualifying. Unfortunately on this occasion both teams came away without any silverware, although the performance promised to be a platform on which all pupils could build upon in the events ahead.

## Warwick 100s

The Swimming Club demonstrated their determination and strength taking on the challenge of Warwick, Whitgift, Harrow,



Bedford and Solihull in this highly paced event. Heading into the final event of the day, the 4 x 50m relay, Abingdon found themselves tied for second place with a very competitive Warwick team. Unsurprisingly, the Abingdon team rose to the challenge, and, with an outstanding round of swims, pipped Warwick by one point, finishing overall in second place. This was a fantastic team display from the Abingdon squad, demonstrating pleasing strength and depth, but a special mention must go to Rex English for an outstanding 100m breaststroke swim, leading the field home in a time of 1:17:34, surprising not only his team mates, but also himself!

## The Bath and Otter Cup

In early March, five members of the Abingdon senior squad had the privilege

of competing in the prestigious Bath and Otter cup, a national relay event, which for the first time was hosted at the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park. This provided a fantastic opportunity for the boys to compete in the re-developed Olympic pool. Competing against over 80 other schools, the boys qualified through the heats to the final of the 4x100m freestyle relay, setting a new school record and finishing a creditable 8th, in a time of 3:48.66 against an extremely competitive final field. During the afternoon races, the boys continued their good form, setting yet another school record on the way to finishing 8th in the 4 x 50m medley relay final in a time of 1:56:03. Having set two new school records on the day, Michael Esnouf, Murray Eccleston, Luke Teh, Todd Giles, and Joseph Law deserved great credit for their swims.





### The Abingdon Sprints

In mid-March Abingdon hosted the first of what is hoped to become an annual gala, the Abingdon Sprints. Entering teams at U14, U16 and U18 level the squad swam exceptionally well against competitive competition from both Marlborough College and Bradfield College to bring home the overall winners' trophies in all three of the age categories. On this highly successful day for the school, Simon Chester, Win Cheevadhanarak, Todd Giles and Luke Teh each set new school records, becoming four of the numerous members of the squad to do so this year.

### The Bromsgrove Relays

Having won their age group for the past two years, and on the back of 2 excellent swims at the Abingdon Sprints and the Bath and Otter Cup, the U18 team travelled to Bromsgrove with great confidence and their performances demonstrated why. The team led the U18 4 x 50m medley relay final from start to finish in a time of 1:57:00, and then backed this up with an outstanding swim in the U18 4 x 50m freestyle relay final, winning comfortably in a time of 1:44:06. Whilst the U18s again stole the show, a very youthful U15 squad including Simon Chester, Angus Blomfield and Joshua Booth performed pleasingly, finishing 4th in both the 4 x 50m medley and freestyle relay finals.

### The Griffen Gala

The final gala of the year saw Abingdon School team up with St Helen and Katharine School to take on the challenge of Abingdon Vale Swimming Club. Whilst the U18 and U14 teams lost narrowly, the ever developing U16 squad of Joseph Law, Joseph McNamara, Solomon English and Alex Monaco helped boost the school's points total, winning their age group. Overall the male gala finished in a respectable tie, which is an outstanding achievement given the nature of the competition. This event was a highly enjoyable way to bring to a close what has been a very successful, progressive and enjoyable year for the Swimming Club, and we now look forward greatly to building upon it over the next year.

*Tom Donnelly*



## Music at Abingdon

For me, one of the most memorable things about music at Abingdon will definitely be the tours abroad. In 2009, when I was in the second year, Mr Stinton and Simon Currie asked me to join the Big Band for their tour to Italy. Despite not knowing any of the music, and never having been to a rehearsal with them, I accepted. It sounded great fun, and who cared if one trumpet on the end wasn't playing everything right? It turned out that, despite the laid-back attitude that Big Band (and Simon) are famous for, they did care. So I sight-read my way through the gigs we did, with much encouragement and help from Simon, Mr Stinton and the rest of the band, and even got in a few solos. I can safely say that my profound love of playing big band music has its roots in that tour.

I was asked to join a small jazz group that was led by the jazz piano teacher at the time, Frank Toms. He suggested pieces for us to learn, taught us about playing together, and showed us important skills and tricks to improve and develop your improvisational playing. After a year or so of tuition from Frank, the band became very much its 'own thing'. We ran our own rehearsals, found our own music, and started doing gigs. Many students from the Abingdon Music Department have been in this jazz band over the years; Tom Earl, Joe Brown, Tom Spears, Henry Binning and Jack Gee to name a few, and, despite the many personnel changes due to people leaving, the band is still going strong, with myself, Sebastian Johns and George Burrage. We regularly play gigs for all sorts of private events and functions, have entered (and won) Jazz Competitions, and have even recorded our own CD. The Music School staff have always been helpful and supportive, whether in providing contacts for gigs, or just a room to rehearse in. One of the features of Abingdon that has made this band so successful and easy to run over the last four years is that there are many extremely talented boys with a deep love of music in the Department who are



keen to learn new things, both from their teachers, and from each other. There is a huge breadth of knowledge, experience and enthusiasm in the teaching staff; I cannot count the number of times Andy Townsend, Andy Bush, Simon Currie or Frank Toms have strolled into a rehearsal and said: 'Sorry to interrupt, but why don't you try it like this...'

Andy Townsend has been teaching me the trumpet for five years now, and they are five years that have gone far too quickly. He was instrumental in helping me to pass my grade 8 with distinction and in preparing a concerto for both the Summer Concert and the tour to Spain. We are now working towards a dipABRSM. He has always encouraged me to expand my musical horizons, to

play more, listen more, and watch more music and has always been happy to tackle any piece, or obscure question I could throw at him.

The department has always done its best to encourage and develop the interests of its pupils. Two years ago the Big Band went to see NYJO at an 'open rehearsal' and a lack of trumpets (only one had turned up) meant Bill Ashton, the founder, called upon us for volunteers. With much persuasion, both from my friends, and the staff, Andy Townsend and I went up to play. I was invited to come back for the gig that evening, and on the back of that was invited to join the NYJO Academy Big Band. I have been a member ever since. Being in NYJO provided the amazing





opportunity to play with some of the best young jazz musicians in the South/London areas, be coached by a variety of excellent MD's and to really get the hang of the key concepts of professional sectional playing and improvisation. Through their own workshops, or connections with others, they also gave me the opportunity to play with and meet some of my musical heroes, most notably Chuck Findley, Benny Greb and Wynton Marsalis.

Another aspect of music that has played a large part in my life here at Abingdon is music technology. Last year a professional was brought in to clean up the recording studio, and to start teaching music tech. George Burrage, Nicholas Schneider and I were

first on the list for lessons. As an avid electronic music fan, and a drummer in a band, I had always been keen on the idea of being able to record ourselves, make music with a computer and some synths, and be completely in control of the whole process. The teacher, Alex Hehir, has helped me to achieve all of this, and more. After just two years of lessons, I have acquired extensive experience in recording and producing a variety of genres: jazz, funk, rock, electronic, a cappella/choral and film music (in partnership with AFU). Alex has always been extremely generous with his time, knowledge, and equipment; supplying microphones, software and world-class effects virtually on demand.

Next year I plan on taking up an offer to read Physics at Christ Church, Oxford, but music, no doubt, will remain a huge part of my life. I will continue my trumpet playing, with the aim of getting my dipABRSM, and hopefully join a big band, or small jazz group. I will also continue to record and produce both my own and other people's music, and maybe take up DJ-ing, or performing my own music live. I have hugely enjoyed my time at Abingdon, and life in the Music Department has been an integral part of that. I am very grateful to all, both staff and boys, who have given up their time to teach and inspire me over the last seven years.

*Tim Davies, VIVDP*



# Chess

The chess article for the 2007 *Abingdonian* was a potted history of Abingdon's Chess Club, founded in 1947. The article ended with the expression of hope that "with Grandmaster Peter Wells joining the coaching team in October 2007, the Club can begin to sharpen its competitive edge and once again aspire to face 'the old enemy' on equal terms." Well, this year we did face MCS on equal terms and finally defeated them in a head-to-head encounter. This happened in an away match in the second round of the prestigious National Schools' Championship. Abingdon's victorious Team A was, in board order, 1. Joseph Truran, 2. Jeff Abraham, 3. Edward Reynolds, 4. Ray Ren, 5. Rafi'i al-Akiti and 6. Richard Oh.

The average ages of the two teams were close enough not to matter, so the 3-3 result was decided on "board count." Abingdon's winners were on Boards 2, 3 & 4 and MCS's were on Boards 1, 5 & 6, and because  $2 + 3 + 4$  is less than  $1 + 5 + 6$ , Abingdon won. Jeff Abraham deserves a special mention for clinching the match by winning the final game on Board 2 whilst everyone else watched, continuing to find good moves under considerable pressure – until his opponent's flag dropped.

Team A went on to defeat Abingdon's



Team B comprehensively in the zone semi-final and then Vandyke Upper School 5-1 at home in the zone final. As a consequence Team A had the honour of playing as Oxfordshire's sole representative in the last sixteen of the Championship. At this stage the quality of the opposition increases greatly. Abingdon's team was drawn in the first round against King Edward's School, Birmingham, whose alumni include the 1938 British Chess Champion and Bletchley Park codebreaker C.H.O'D. Alexander and Britain's first grandmaster Tony Miles. Abingdon's team travelled to Birmingham for the match on Wednesday 19 March. It turned out that the chess-playing Chief Master of King Edward's, John Claughton, had

been at school with Tony Miles, and he came across to watch the match. The average ages of the two teams were similar, but the KES players were graded higher on every board, by about twenty points on average, so an Abingdon win would have been a real upset. Rafi'i al-Akiti won on Board 5 and Jeff Abraham drew on Board 2. On two other boards the results were decided during furious time scrambles, and so could have gone either way. After 2 hours 30 minutes of play, it was in the end a loss for Abingdon by 1.5 to 4.5. The Abingdon team was, in board order, 1. Joseph Truran, 2. Jeff Abraham, 3. Ray Ren, 4. Edward Reynolds, 5. Rafi'i al-Akiti and 6. Seamus Ramsey.

Abingdon's Team B also performed well in the National Schools' Championship. Their first round match, played on Friday 29 November, was a zone semi-final against Bedford Modern's sole entry. Because of age handicapping, they needed only  $2\frac{1}{2}$  points for victory and exceeded that total with three wins, on Boards 3, 5 and 6. The winning team was 1. Alex Churchman-Davies, 2. Ben Massey-Leahy, 3. Daniel Savage, 4. Daniel Lawson, 5. Aravind Prabhakaran and 6. Zain Islam. Abingdon's best performer on the day was Daniel Savage, who used his time well and succeeded in checkmating his opponent in the middle game. Team B's next opponent was Abingdon A. On Wednesday 8 January, playing at home, Abingdon B lost 5-0. Team B on this occasion was 1. Alex Churchman-





Davies, 2. Daniel Savage, 3. Aravind Prabhakaran, 4. Zain Islam and 5. Didier Delgorge, a late substitute. Both teams defaulted on Board 6. The best game was that played between Jeff Abraham and Daniel Savage, who put up fierce resistance on Board 2.

Four Team B players had prepared for the National Schools' Championship by competing against local schools in the Team Chess Challenge, held at Radley on 13 November. After four rounds of rapid play, Aravind Prabhakaran and Zain Islam had both won twice. Playing on the top two boards, Ben Massey-Leahy and Daniel Lawson scored fewer points but took the most significant scalps. Ben deserves particular praise for defeating Magdalen's top player James Cole, graded 126.

The Oxford and District Chess League was again an excellent source of practice games for Abingdon's top players. Our team, "City 3," had the lowest average grades in Division 3, so we knew the season was going to be tough, but we had hoped to do just enough to stay up, as we did last season. But in the end it was not to be. After fourteen matches, we finished bottom of the table with just two wins and two draws. The wins were away against City 4, a team including OA Tim King, and away against Oxford University 2, a match played at Queen's College. The draws were away against Cowley Workers and away against the eventual winners of the division, Didcot 2. This was probably our best result. Abingdon fielded 13 players in total. Five players turned out for more than half the matches: Jeff Abraham (5/11), mostly on Board 2, Edward Reynolds (3.5/13), mostly on Board 3, Ray Ren (4.5/11), mostly on Boards 3 and 4, Rafi'i al-Akiti (4/8), mostly on Boards 5 and 6, and Mr English (7/13), on Board 1. The other City 3 players were Seamus Ramsey (2/5), Matyas Hanisch (1.5/5), Richard Oh (0.5/3), Alex Churchman-Davies (0/2), Daniel Savage (0/2), Ben Massey-Leahy (0/1), Dr Jeffreys (2/5) and Mr Poon (0.5/3). Joseph Truran (2.5/7) played for Witney 3 in the same division, mostly on boards 2 and 3.

The Club's annual simultaneous display



**Rafi'i receiving trophy from Peter Wells**

is one of the most popular events of the Michaelmas Term. On Wednesday 27 November, Oxford City 1 player Jonathan Manley faced 18 boys from across the Abingdon age range and 2 members of staff in a clock "simul." The time control was 75 minutes, except for members of Lower School who had only 30 of the 150 minutes to avoid them merely exploiting the clock. Jonathan Manley, whose ECF grade is 192, beat the School 13½ - 6½. Six Abingdon players won their games on time, but the £5 best game prize was awarded to Alex Churchman-Davies, who secured a draw with top quality play. Mr Manley, a publisher at Routledge, said afterwards that he had not expected it to be quite so tough. The full Abingdon team was 1. Brian Shi, 2. Edward Reynolds, 3. Alex Churchman-Davies, 4. Rafi'i al-Akiti, 5. Ben Massey-Leahy, 6. Rushab Shah, 7. Leon Wu, 8. James Anderson-Besant, 9. Joseph Truran, 10.

Jeff Abraham, 11. Ray Ren, 12. Daniel Savage, 13. Daniel Lawson, 14. Aravind Prabhakaran, 15. Seamus Ramsey, 16. Zain Islam, 17. Rupert Kelley, 18. Didier Delgorge, 19. Dr Burnand and 20. Mr English.

In the Michaelmas Term, boys also competed in knockout tournaments in the Lower School, Middle School and Sixth Form, the finals being delayed until 22 February. In the Lower School tournament, attracting 31 entrants, Richard Oh defeated Seamus Ramsey to win the Nightall-Jakubovics Cup for the second time. In the Middle School tournament, attracting 22 entrants, Jeff Abraham defeated Joseph Truran to win the Pearce Cup for the second time. And in the Sixth Form tournament, attracting 7 entrants, Thomas Kelly caused a real upset when he defeated Edward Reynolds to win the Harding Cup.



The House Chess Tournament was played on Wednesday 11 December as part of the Inter-House Competitions. Houses were represented by teams of three and competed in a four-round Swiss tournament. Cotton's were favourites, but last year's runners-up Franklin's were in the end victorious. Cotton's were runners-up this time and Webb's third. The Franklin's team was 1. Ray Ren (3/4), 2. James Anderson-Besant (3½/4) and 3. Leon Wu (3½/4).

The main event of the Lent Term was the school stage of the UK Chess Challenge, consisting of seven weekly rounds of rapidplay. From 30 Abingdon entrants, there were 16 who earned sufficient points to qualify for the Berkshire "Megafinal." Rafi'i al-Akiti was the School Champion, winning 19 of the 21 available points, with six wins and a loss. Joint second were Joseph Truran and Richard Oh on 18 points, and in fourth place was Jeff Abraham on 17 points. The other qualifiers on points were James Anderson-Besant, Ben Massey-Leahy, Seamus Ramsey, Edward Reynolds, Zain Islam, Daniel Lawson, Aravind Prabhakaran, Ray Ren, Daniel Savage and Leon Wu. Toby Butterworth and Giles Waterson also qualified as joint winners of their age category. Richard Oh's second place

was particularly impressive, especially following his triumph, earlier in the year, in the Lower School knockout tournament.

On Saturday 22 February, the Club travelled to St Joseph's Catholic College, Swindon for the Wiltshire Junior Open Chess Tournament. Eleven Abingdon players competed, nine in the Intermediates' and two in the Beginners' section. There were no major prizes this year, but after six grueling rounds of rapid play with a time control of 30 minutes, no Abingdon boy had scored less than 50%. In the Intermediates' section, Rafi'i al-Akiti (4.5/6) and Daniel Savage (4.5/6) came joint third, winning medals. The other Intermediates were Ray Ren (4/6), Seamus Ramsey (4/6), Ben Massey-Leahy (3/6), Daniel Lawson (3/6), Aravind Prabhakaran (3/6), Richard Oh (3/6) and Praymore Shaba (3/6). In the Beginners' section were Jacob Henney (3.5/6) and Matthew Kunov (3/6). It was an excellent training day and confirmed Daniel Savage as a strong contender for A Team honours.

On Bank Holiday Monday 5 May, fourteen Abingdon players travelled to the Licensed Victuallers' School, Ascot for the county stage of the UK Chess Challenge. After six rounds of rapidplay,

Abingdon boys had won three sections and six had qualified for the Southern "Gigafinal" in July. From the combined U13 and U14 sections, the Abingdon qualifiers were U13 winner Richard Oh (4/6), Seamus Ramsey (4/6) and Daniel Lawson (4/6). From the combined U15 to U18 sections, the qualifiers were U15 winner Jeff Abraham (4.5/6), Ray Ren (4/6) and U17 winner Edward Reynolds (4/6). James Beckinsale (4/6), who will be joining Abingdon in September, qualified in the U12 section. Abingdon's other participants were Toby Butterworth (3/6), Giles Waterson (2/6), Rafi'i al-Akiti (3.5/6), James Anderson-Besant (3/6), Leon Wu (3/6), Daniel Savage (2.5/6), Zain Islam (2/6) and Aravind Prabhakaran (3/6). Joseph Truran was away playing a match in the Junior Four Nations Chess League (Junior 4NCL).

Participation in county chess was again left to the initiative of boys and parents. It is pleasing to record that Oxford won the Chiltern's League again this year, and that the U-125 team, organised by Steven Bennett of Cumnor Chess Club, included four Abingdon players: Edward Reynolds, Rafi'i al-Akiti, Jeff Abraham and Ray Ren.

Chess Club continued at a more relaxed pace in the Summer term, the focus of training switching, as usual, from tactics to mating patterns. It was pleasing to see our two current visitors Matyas Hanisch and Luke French continue training with the Club right up until the very last session. A couple of portable trestle tables were purchased to make future Megafinals and Gigafinals more comfortable and profitable, but their first use was postponed because too few of this year's six Gigafinalists were able to make the 13 July date, which was a week into the summer holidays.

Going up to Exeter this year is the latest recipient of the King Trophy, Giles Waterson. Better known as a tennis player, Giles has also been a welcome regular at Chess Club, representing the school on numerous occasions. The kind of determination he shows at the board, which has discomforted Mr English on more than a few occasions, is just what Chess Club needs if further progress is to be made at national level.

*Andrew English*





## Cross Country

The Cross country Club has enjoyed one of its best ever seasons. The Senior U19s secured some very strong performances whilst the Intermediate U17s had an undefeated season.

The Lent Term kicked off with the Knole Run, the biggest event of the Club's calendar. It's a nationwide schools 9.2 kilometre race in the toughest of terrain. Despite missing some key athletes the team travelled down to Kent and secured 4th place with 186 points missing out on the medals by only 7 points. The team were bitterly disappointed but showed enormous resolve to bounce back at the Vale of White Horse Championships with the Seniors obliterating the competition with 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, and 8th place. The Inters also won the event comfortably. This strong performance was backed up by victories at the County trials with Nat Jones (U17) and Christian Von Eitzen (U19) becoming County Champions while many other Abingdon runners secured a place at the National Cross-Country Schools' Championships. After half term the club had fixtures at the Wellington College Relays. The short



Michael Fabes

2 kilometre legs favoured the U17s greatly and saw them comfortably win against over 20 other schools by a margin of over a minute. The U19s were just pipped to victory on the last leg coming a commendable second. The Marlborough College race saw further victories in both age groups against many of the big name

independent schools such as Eton, Harrow and Magdalen.

Abingdon also competed in the Harrow Relays and St Albans Relays. The team saw some success at St Albans with the A and B teams both securing 3rd place in this U19 age grouped event, losing out only to the top two cross-country schools in the country: the Judd and St Albans themselves. The Harrow Relays which took place in the second half of the season saw decisive wins for both the U19s and U17s against traditional rivals MCS and Radley amongst others.

The final race of the season was the South East Schools Championships at Harrow. Despite missing the Club's top athlete, the team did exceptionally well with their best performance of the season. The U19s came second against the top running schools in the country beating the second place school at the Knole run, The Judd, into third and just losing out to St Albans by a few places. The Inters finished off their best ever season with Abingdon's first ever win at the U17s age group at Harrow ending the dominance of the Judd and St Albans in the race.

*Michael Fabes, 5RP*  
*Nat Jones, 5HCGM*





# The School and the First World War from the pages of *The Abingdonian*

One hundred years ago, the December 1914 edition of *The Abingdonian* had an air of excitement about it: Mr Channing-Pearce had "joined the colours", war maps decorated the boys' studies, the OTC drilled vigorously and 161 OAs were already serving with the armed forces, "In Freedom's Cause". But there was a slight air of disappointment too since Abingdon was a very quiet place: yes there was an occasional crowd outside a newspaper shop, the odd lorry drove through the town and a soldier with a naked bayonet stood guard in the Market Square beside the statue of Queen Victoria, but this was hardly war.

However, the quietness on the home front was made up for by the news from the war front. The magazine carried letters from a number of OAs recounting their adventures: two had been interned in Holland following the fall of Antwerp and one was in a London hospital, having been wounded at Messines.



Three were already dead: Lieutenant Alan Murray Austin RN, killed when HMS Hawke was torpedoed in the North Sea on 15 October 1914; Second Lieutenant Americus de Courcy Williams died of wounds on 22 October, and Corporal Hugh Stanley Cannon killed on 30 October.

To follow the course of the war through the pages of *The Abingdonian* makes for interesting reading, as the editor really doesn't know what is going to happen, and we can follow him as his early confidence melts into something close to despair. By March 1915, the war had claimed three more OA lives, including that of Arthur Gelston Shepherd, who was killed during flying training. Of the eight OA pilots who died in the war, three of them were killed in flying accidents, a ratio that equates to RFC / RAF deaths as a whole.

The July 1915 edition reported the death of Lieutenant Eric Graham. Wounded in Belgium in the previous October, Eric died on 4 April, three weeks after his younger brother Ronald, who was killed on 13 March. But, according to the editor, "the martial spirit at Abingdon continues to grow with unabated fires", the Head of School and the whole of Lower Dorm will soon have enlisted, "the happy ones who may and can serve", as the editor described them.

By December 1915 the editor was no

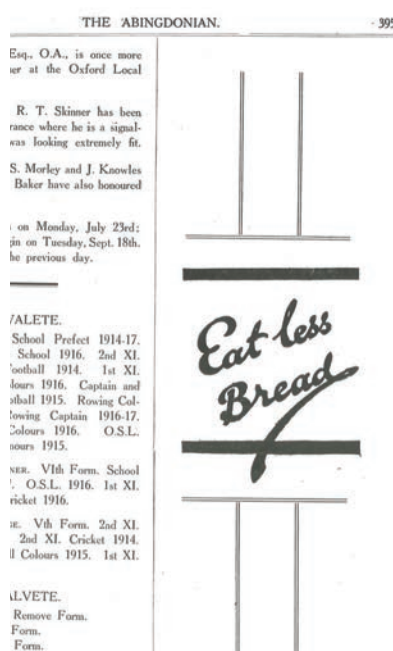
longer quite so buoyantly optimistic, "The watchword for us now must not be 'business as usual' but the much used 'carry on' ... We look forward to 'after the war' though the words begin to take upon themselves a depressing sense of remoteness". There are four names on the casualty list and two of them, Lance-Sergeant Walter Staniland and 2nd Lieutenant John Mitchell, were killed on the same day, 25 September 1915, in the Battle of Loos.

The deaths from Gallipoli are reported in the April 1916 edition. There were three, including Private Geoffrey Tinegate, who was only seventeen and five months when he was killed at Chunuk Bar. There was also news of the death of one of Abingdon's superstars. Alan Eason, Head Boy, captain of the 1st XI and of the 1st IV, had taken a commission in the Royal Berkshire Regiment and then died of appendicitis in January 1916 scarcely a month after leaving school.

The Somme dominates the December 1916 magazine, claiming nine of the twelve casualties listed in that edition. Rifleman Dudley Marcus was killed on 1 July and Cyril Cook died on the 8th of wounds received on the 1st; just two of the 57,470 casualties suffered by the British on the first day of the campaign. By the time the battle ended on 13 November 1916, it had claimed 95,675 British lives. The bodies of 72,194 men were never found. They are commemorated on the Thiepval Memorial and five of them are Old Abingdonians.

Despite the casualties, Abingdon boys appear to have enjoyed watching The Battle of the Somme. This was shown at the School on 29 November, with a boy reviewer commenting that, "By most people the picture was thought a great success, but some were greatly disappointed by expecting to see a hand to hand fight or a German trench. But on the whole I myself think it was exceedingly good under the circumstances".

By March 1917 the editor's tone had changed completely: "Perhaps the most notable point about this term is the way in which some of us have come to understand in what a desperate struggle we are engaged." Things have







**Abingdon Staff in 1915  
(Headmaster William Grundy in the centre)**



**W Staniland**



**G Tinegate**



**SH Baker**

now become serious, Government food restrictions are biting and the boys have been set to grow potatoes on Lower Field. By July they are helping with the harvest and the magazine carried an advertisement from the Government asking people to eat less bread.

Nine months later, the German Spring Offensive of March 1918 had the editor seriously worried, "All England must share in the strain and anxiety of the critical happenings on the Western Front". That summer the magazine published the casualty list, which included Major Baker, the science master. The 1918 casualties are the greatest for the whole war, the result of the German offensive, the British fight back and the influenza pandemic.

And then it was all over, and if Abingdon had been disappointingly quiet at the outbreak of the war it made up for it at the end. The December magazine described the celebrations. On 15 November there was NO PREP and the boys, carrying lighted torches, processed round the town until they reached the Market Square where they threw their torches onto a bonfire, which was lit underneath hanging effigies of the Kaiser and his son. Dancing in the streets continued until well after

midnight but by that time the boys had gone home to bed.

Abingdon was a very small school in 1914 with only 75 pupils on the roll. There are 73 names on the war memorial in the Chapel although two more names have been discovered since it was put up. Not everyone was killed in action or died of wounds: eleven died of illness and three in flying accidents. Two of those who died of illness do not qualify for commemoration by the War Graves Commission as they were not serving soldiers. Four of the dead were members of staff but only Mr Baker, the science master, had been at the School for more than one term. Some of the OAs had scarcely been at the School any longer. Alfred Dunn, news of whose death was received too late to be included on the war memorial, had only been at Abingdon for two terms in 1900/01, whereas Arthur Davenport had been at Abingdon from the age of 8 until he was 18. Nevertheless, they all qualified as members of the Abingdon community for inclusion on the School's war memorial and a hundred years on, their names are still remembered.

*Sarah Wearne*





## History Trip to Paris

On the morning of Saturday 29 March a group of 11 intrepid historians, accompanied by Mr Hallinan and Mr McGill, congregated in the grand terminal of Didcot Parkway. After taking the underground from Paddington, the group made a quick raid on the platform-side M&S before we boarded the Eurostar. It was a quiet journey, bar the fierce ideological debate over inequality in the UK. Excitement could hardly be suppressed; springtime in Paris awaited! The related topics being studied by the group were the French Revolution (1789-95), Napoleon I (1795-1815) and the French Ascendancy (1610-1715). Having arrived at the Gare du Nord we sought to deposit our bags before our first evening in the city. After a slight delay, the map was eventually handed to the only geographer on the trip who assertively pointed the group in the right direction. Or so this student, who need not be named, thought until Mr McGill successfully led the group in completely the opposite direction. It transpired he was misinformed about

the station we were at, apparently. Regardless, the Abingdon students had a chance to absorb one of Paris' more 'vibrant' districts on the short walk to the St Christopher's Inns hostel.

Everyone boarded the driverless metro train as swiftly as possible to avoid the ruthless automated doors, a source of entertainment throughout the week, in a sport appropriately coined 'extreme metro-ing'. Here we were met by a hen party who were wielding some blush-inducing accessories, and the 'Hen' sought to exploit our embarrassment by proceeding to quiz members of the group. Fleeing the metro as swiftly as we boarded, everyone marched to the Seine (via the Eiffel Tower) for a circular boat trip, passing the Louvre, the Musée D'Orsay, the Hotel de Ville and the Île de la Cité, site of Notre-Dame. Then the metro whisked us to St Michelle for an evening tour of revolutionary Paris, led by Mr McGill. Here we visited Marat's house (the location of his assassination, immortalised in the haunting painting by David that hangs in M101), the site of the Jacobin Club, a plinth to Dannton and the bar that was thought to contain the last original guillotine, which mysteriously had been sent to Russia.



Our first full day opened with an early departure for Versailles, Louis XIV's exuberant palace. The importance and significance of the Sun King's indulgence was detailed by Mr Hallinan in the first of many presentations by the group at various important sites. After an exhibition on the history of the palace we ascended to the first floor to bask in the beauty and historical significance of the Salon des Glaces (Hall of Mirrors) that commemorated the Dutch War and its conclusion in the Peace of Nijmegen (1672-1678). Not only was the Treaty



of Versailles (1919) signed in the room, but the very nation it crippled was founded there after the Franco-Prussian War (1871). Perusing the apartments, dining rooms and bedrooms of the Ancien regime, we learnt of the majesty of Louis' daily routine. His dressing was a coveted spectacle, where the most influential nobles of the land would seek the privilege of handing the king his clothes and performing equally mundane tasks. Then it was on to the Battles Gallery that selectively commemorated notable French battles from Poitiers (732) to Wagram (1809) on huge 10m wide canvases. Naturally there was not space for Agincourt (1415), Blenheim (1704), Trafalgar (1805) etc., not even in Versailles of all places! After having sourced lunch we were then given a few hours to explore the extensive grounds, visiting the Trianon and Marie Antoinette's mock English hamlet. The more athletic went on a wild goose chase in search of Louis XIV's hated Bellini statue that he hid in the grounds. Returning for a quick pit stop at the hostel we made for Montmartre, for a visit to the Sacre Coeur. After having imbibed the atmosphere we enjoyed a group meal in a nearby restaurant.

Day two opened equally early in order to beat the crowds at the Louvre. In fact we were so early that the Mona Lisa gallery was practically empty, a rare privilege. Just round the corner we saw David's magnificent paintings, most pertinently for the Upper Sixth Napoleon's self coronation at Notre-Dame. We were then afforded the luxury of three hours to roam the Louvre before moving on to the Palais Royale, Richelieu's Parisian residence. After absorbing the square behind it, we passed the site of the Café where the French revolution was sparked, ironically now a very bourgeois designer clothes shop. After a quick lunch and exploring of picturesque arcades and second hand bookshops we walked to the Place de la Concorde. Our route took us past the Place Vendome and Robespierre's house, which was three doors down from Chanel! Then on to Les Invalides, where Fred Clamp-Gray gave an emotive talk about Napoleon's tomb, and then on to the military



museum. Everyone rejected the offer for a deserved rest at the hotel before the evening, hoping to visit Rodin's house cum museum that was close by, but sadly it was a Monday and it was therefore shut like most of Paris. Instead we resorted to visiting the Arc de Triomphe before returning to the hostel followed by an opportunity for everyone to source their own nourishment. One group returned to Montmartre and one Abingdonian fell head over heels for the waitress who he affectionately called Amelie.

Our final day started with an enlightening visit to the Conciergerie, one of the many prisons used during the various terrors of the revolution where Marie Antoinette spent her final days.

Spontaneously we then went to Sainte Chapelle, to sample the most exquisite gothic stained glass windows. After visiting Pont Neuf and Notre-Dame we crossed to the right bank, passing the Hotel De Ville. This was followed by a brief chance to explore the Carnavalet Museum in the Marais district and an hour or so for lunch before collecting our bags and boarding the train for the return journey home. I speak for the entire group when I thank Mr McGill and Mr Hallinan for what was a thoroughly engaging and enjoyable trip. Thomas Jefferson describes any visit to the enchanting city aptly: "A walk about Paris will provide lessons in history, beauty, and in the point of life."

*Jamie Sandall, VIJJ*





## Badminton

The 2013-14 season brought continued success to the Badminton Club, but also saw the end of an era. Our senior squad, which has remained unbeaten in the last few years, will be diminished by the loss of three key players - Daniel Chen, Gem Vongseenin, and Bernard Ng - all of whom have been crucial to the Club's development and are leaving at the end of the year.

Daniel has been the club captain this year and, with Gem, has been playing in the school senior team for the last five years. This year they led the team as our first pair, playing with

an indomitable spirit and leading the school team to continued success. Their skill and determination has been an inspiration for the younger players and they have brought a happy and committed atmosphere to our training sessions. Bernard, who came to prominence by winning the house badminton competition as a fourth year, has also been an integral part of our team. Always coaching and advising the younger players, his expertise and laid back approach will be sorely missed. We also say goodbye to Adam Parkes and Jonathan Ainslie, who have been stalwarts of the team throughout their time at Abingdon.

With these senior players leading from

the front, the team saw continued success this year. As usual, our stiffest opposition came against Cheltenham College. Hard fought wins in both our fixtures against them suggest that future years will be highly competitive. Games were given to more players than ever before this year, with around 40 boys playing in fixtures against a variety of schools: Rugby, Stowe, Bloxham, Wellington, Bromsgrove, Eton and MCS. With the opportunity to play competitive matches in the Middle School, I am looking forward to seeing many of these players come through into the first team in coming years. We were also pleased to add Harrow to our fixture list - a school we have played before in our regular quadrangular tournament - but not in a two-way match. Close wins in both the doubles and singles matches suggest this will become one of our toughest fixtures in the coming years.

As usual, my thanks must go to our coach, James Barclay, whose commitment and expertise have added an enormous amount to the team in the years he has been with us. However, my greatest thanks go to the boys who, over the years, have given their all to the Badminton Club and ensured its continued success.

*James Hallinan*





# Art Gallery

|   |                         |        |
|---|-------------------------|--------|
| 1 | Luke Mayor              | (GCSE) |
| 2 | Tom Farish              | (GCSE) |
| 3 | Rattanan Wonghirundacha | (GCSE) |
| 4 | Michael Man             | (GCSE) |
| 5 | Matthew Rogers          | (GCSE) |
| 6 | Ben Woollard            | (GCSE) |
| 7 | Michael Man             | (GCSE) |
| 8 | Red Rowan-Hull          | (GCSE) |
| 9 | Thomas Farish           | (GCSE) |



2



3



5



6



8



1



4



7



9



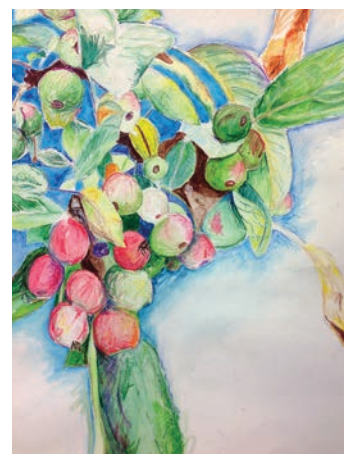
|    |               |           |    |                |        |
|----|---------------|-----------|----|----------------|--------|
| 10 | Luca Rampin   | (GCSE)    | 16 | Carl Cox       | (GCSE) |
| 11 | Luke Mayor    | (GCSE)    | 17 | Kees Luteijn   | (AS)   |
| 12 | Micah Hayns   | (GCSE)    | 18 | Teddy Curtis   | (AS)   |
| 13 | Wilfred Wong  | (GCSE)    | 19 | Michael Man    | (GCSE) |
| 14 | Jonah Walker  | (Scholar) | 20 | Sam Hogan      | (A2)   |
| 15 | Thomas Howard | (A2)      | 21 | Charlie Leeves | (AS)   |



11



12



10



13



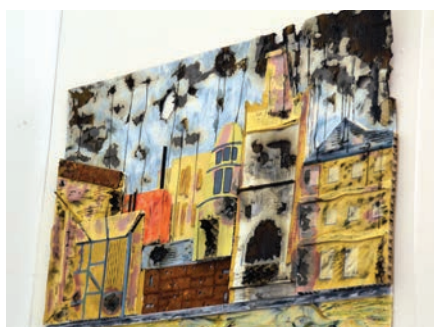
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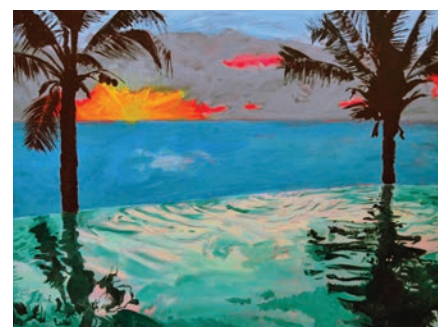
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16



17



18



19



20



21



|    |                |        |    |                   |        |
|----|----------------|--------|----|-------------------|--------|
| 22 | Samuel Foster  | (GCSE) | 27 | Jonathan Rothwell | (A2)   |
| 23 | Luke Derrick   | (A2)   | 28 | Johnathan Bibby   | (GCSE) |
| 24 | Harry Bruce    | (A2)   | 29 | Thomas Howard     | (A2)   |
| 25 | Zhuo Ming Shia | (AS)   | 30 | Harry Parker      | (GCSE) |
| 26 | Noah Rogers    | (A2)   | 31 | Luke Derrick      | (A2)   |



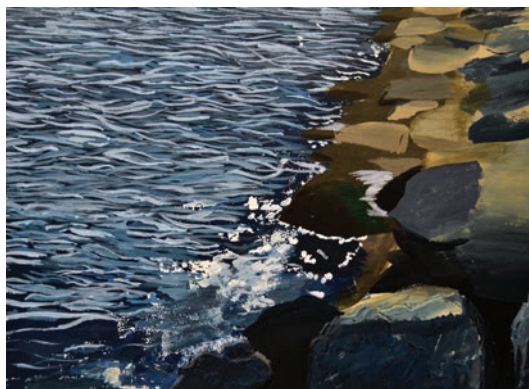
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# Summer 2014



## Abingdon Battlefields Tour

On Monday 14 April, at 6:15 am, our tired selves (me anyway!) embarked on the coach for the battlefields tour. We were handed our booklets, detailing practically everything there was to know about the Ypres Salient and the Somme. Some of us then promptly nodded off, only to wake up soon after. After stopping off at the Maidstone service station to pick up our guides, Martin Featherstone and Ed Church, we encountered a lengthy wait at the Euro shuttle station, checking in at passport control. At 11:20, we got on. We would be going forward an hour when we arrived. 'Bus selfies' and many stupid photos were taken.

Eventually the shuttle stopped; we were in France! As we drove along the

road, (driving on the right!) card games, chatter and A-Z games of such and such ran amok on the bus.

We took in the lovely fields and farms that scatter the landscape of Flanders, a big change from 100 years ago. I felt sweltering in what I was wearing: a t-shirt, jumper, and coat.

And then we were in a new country; Belgium! Our drive through the somewhat bumpier roads took us to our first stop: Lijssenthoek, a British war cemetery. The amount of graves was astounding. At the cemetery, there is a post for every day of the war, and a strut for every man lost. Many people are buried there, from a female nurse and the Chinese to a few Germans. It really was massive.

After passing through some small villages with stupendously big churches, we visited Bayernwald (Bavarian wood), a German trench system. We passed

what I would call the 'entrance gates from hell' and went in. Here we learnt about the development of trench warfare, trench life and everything in between. They had a very good trench system, complete with muddy bunkers, water shafts and all sorts, though in my opinion, not the best (I'll get to that later). Continuing the trend of all things German, we also visited Langemarck German Cemetery, one of the few cemeteries the Germans were allowed before they had to leave the country. We were on German owned land, so officially, we were in Germany! It was an abrupt change from Lijssenthoek. It was quite silent, not as public as the British cemetery, and much more militaristic, reflecting a very different ethos to burying dead. Then we saw the grave of Peter Pan, or at least the inspiration - George Llewellyn Davis.

Then it was on to a highly anticipated part of the tour - a meal in Ypres



(chicken and chips, very nice), a visit to Peter de Groot Chocolaterie (cue the opening of wallets as we stared at huge lollipops), and the Menin Gate memorial ceremony. During the ceremony, five trumpeters played the Last Post and there was the laying of wreaths, during which the school even did one. A choir performed inside the great dome, surrounded by the thousands of names of the missing. OA 2nd Lieutenant Mitchell from the Oxford and Bucks light infantry who died at the Battle of Loos in 1915 is mentioned on the names of the Menin Gate. It just shows you how so many people were affected in the conflict, and how it affected everyone.

We then got back on board the bus arriving at our accommodation for the night, Messines Peace village, a luxurious youth hostel. We eventually got to sleep, and that was the end of our first day.

On day two, we got slowly out of bed, hurried down to breakfast and quickly departed. We were going to the Somme! The route from Albert to Bapaume stretches a long way.

Our first stop was Serre, a small village North West of Albert. This was on the 12-mile front line. There, we came across unexploded bombs, the story of the Accrington Pals, and Sheffield Memorial Park, boasting an impressive crater, and of course the Somme.

After that, we visited Newfoundland Park, with its sole surviving tree, great tales of miscommunication and great memorial builders. Then we saw the Ulster Tower, with its tales of rivalry between the Catholics and Protestants, and stopped for an ice cream.

Lochnagar Crater is something that you have to see to believe. It goes down a very long way. Originally a mine hole, it is amazing to think that humans could cause so great a destruction to the landscape.

The last stop of the day was the Thiepval Memorial. Like the Menin Gate, thousands are mentioned there. Among them is another OA, Company Quarter Master C.E. Perrin, from the Royal Berkshire regiment who died at the Somme. It must be the largest memorial. Like before, you have to see



it to appreciate its massive size. It was saddening to know that all these people had died on the Somme battlefields.

We woke up the next day (in my case, slightly earlier this time) and went down to breakfast, where I ate a particularly strong piece of Belgian cheese, which didn't agree with me. Then it was back on the bus. We visited Sanctuary Wood, a British trench system that was, in my opinion, the best. Not only has it got great tunnels, the muddy water is such that you can't go in without wellies. There's wire and all sorts - it's very authentic, and shows the grim reality that many had to live in. During this stop our guide Martin told us the cracking tales of the Red Baron, aka Baron von Richtofen. It makes a great story. Also in the museum were cameras showing pictures from the Somme, some more

gruesome than others. There were some pretty horrifying pictures, certainly not for the faint hearted.

A visit to Passchendaele was next, complete with its cosy bunkers and oozing with info. Our final stop was Tyne Cot, another British cemetery. It, like the others, was very big, containing a German bunker and a big pedestal where you could look out over the graves. Here, OA Private P.N. Miles is commemorated. Then it was back on the bus for our long journey on the shuttle home, and the massage chairs of Maidstone services. Big thanks have to go to our guides, and also to the teachers, Mr McGill, Mr Hallinan, Mr Edgar and Mr Hofton.

*Ben French, 3TJD*





## Debating Society

Occasionally I find myself dreaming about the distant future in a galaxy far, far away, when men still talk about the riotous things the Abingdon Debating Society achieved this year. We have tiptoed around the sensitive issues of the day, while barrelling through the great conflicts of Russia vs Crimea, Munners vs The Innocence of Muslims, and Jesus vs Everyone else. Therefore in my colourful dreamland I believe that these memories will be re-lived and cherished by at least somebody else in the years to come.

We have seen the largest recorded attendance at a debate ever, where 152 people, including the Head Boy, turned up to a Balloon-Debate-Extravaganza -‘Characters who stole the Greening Wing Computers’. This was rivalled by an annoyingly constant thematic addition of ‘Fish Husbandry’ to our collective vocabulary. Perhaps the greatest spectacle of the year was Alex Wallis-Smith, attempting to dress and speak like the unhelpfully racist Borat, and managing to surpass all of our expectations. Or perhaps it was Edmund Cornforth dressed, quite literally, as a

diesel train. We have also featured more highbrow performances, from Dr. Rev. Steer, members of the Chemistry and English Departments, and a reprisal of Luke Shepherd’s impersonation of our own pinkly-clad glorious leader.

I will also always remember the large section of our audience who constantly seem to undermine the authority of the Chair – the Lower-Schoolers, who paradoxically mix a well-meaning confusion and boundless enthusiasm with occasional gems of genuine wisdom. Oscar Wilde apparently said “Youth is wasted on the young”, but thankfully youth has not been wasted on the young debaters, and the standout performances of Alasdair Czaplewski, and even Kit Mannix, must be mentioned as impressive second year and first year speakers who have been featured in the School’s oldest non-academic society. Alasdair – you’ll be chairman someday.

Equally important has been the mature and contemplative wing of the Sixth Form Debates, a gritty and hard-core body of intellectuals headed capably by committee members Oscar Talbot and Thomas Munro. This Upper Sixth maturity was however completely undermined by Ivan Nikolaev as Spartacus in an aerial assault on our

senses in the CMR. And let’s not forget the Ginger Trio, a superhero team made up of Jack Grant-Adamson, Teddy Clamp and Henry Crowe – who spoke with or without notice, whenever they were called.

Although I’m sure the Upper Sixth leave the Society sad and nostalgic, there is no reason for any of the younger, fresher, and handsomer talent to feel discouraged. We leave things in the capable hands of chairmen James Beazley and Luke Shepherd, who will be supported by Liam Frahm, Richard Matousek and Louis Hudson – who have new-fangled devices such as ‘The Youtube’ in their grand design. To James, the third Crescent House chairman in a row, you have the task of continuing Fact of the Day, or generally providing a hilariously humorous interlude to a normal Friday’s proceedings; remember, if you laugh, it must be funny. And to Luke, never stop wearing waistcoats, never stop apologising, and never stop fabulously cross-dressing in your free time. I look forward to a list of your own escapades even further in the future, and let the Debating Society, like England, prevail.

*Jonathan Ainslie, VIBW*





## Bridge Club

The Abingdon Contract Bridge Club continues to grow. On average, we have 16 players who turn up on Wednesday afternoons. Some come for a term in order to learn the basics of the game, others are so addicted they come all year. In the past, bridge was a game popular with the older students but it has been really good to see that we are developing some excellent younger players. Liam Deegan is our youngest player. He was well taught by his granny so was able to slot straight onto a more able table. Others, like Matthew Kunov, James Chung and Robert Smith arrived with no previous knowledge. After six sessions on the beginners' table, they felt sufficiently confident to join the older boys. Bridge may be one of the few clubs where boys of all ages can enjoy an activity together. It is interesting to see the younger boys grow in confidence; Conor Chippendale, Ethan Lo and Bede Lunn are seasoned veterans now! The older students have

had an opportunity to mentor younger boys and to nurture their talent. Julian Ting, Arno Liang and Nicklaus Pannu-Yuon have proved particularly good at guiding younger players.

The club has benefitted from the generosity of Bart Jennings' granny who donated two lovely baize bridge tables to us at the start of the year. We also benefit greatly from the advice given to us by Mr Pete Shepherd, who attends the club every week as a volunteer, helping to coach the more able players. Whilst Ms Lee teaches caution and rule following, Mr Shepherd specializes in aggressive tactics and rule bending!

An introduction to bridge has also been offered as a General Studies option to boys in the Upper Sixth.

Our aim is that boys learn the basics of the game, have fun and feel confident enough to play socially or join a Bridge Club once they reach university. Everyone is welcome.

*Katy Lee*

"Why did I choose to join Bridge Club? Well I just wanted to try something new! I had never played bridge before so I decided "Hey, why don't I try this out?" So I signed up and it's been a real blast ever since I've joined. I'm having fun despite bridge's complications and I assure you, you will too. So have a go, try it out!"

*James Chung, 2BJLP*

"I joined Bridge Club because I thought it looked fun. I was a bit nervous at first as there was a lot to learn, but after a few weeks I learned the basics and started enjoying myself. I have learned a lot from the short time I have been playing bridge and I would recommend it to anyone who wants a relaxing, fun and very addictive game."

*Robert Smith, 2NSH*





## Cricket

Abingdon's cricketers can be very proud of the 2014 season, with results across all age ranges being extremely pleasing. After a damp start the season was mostly untouched by the weather and participation was again very healthy.

Outside school the following boys represented County sides:

**Leo Bethell** (Sussex Academy, Oxon 1st XI, Academy and U17)

**Alex Davies** (Oxon 1st XI and U17)

**Soumya Bhadra** (Berks U17)

**James Fitzjohn** (Oxon U17)

**Max Mannering** (Oxon U17)

**Callum Russell** (Oxon U17)

**Adam Spears** (Oxon U17)

**Max Mortimer** (Berks U15)

**Thomas Bishop** (Oxon U15)

**Thomas Dingwall** (Oxon U15)

**Alex Ling** (Oxon U15)

**Aadam Samiullah** (Oxon U16)

**Charles Goulder** (Oxon U14)

**Max Owen** (Oxon U14)

**Dominic Whinfrey** (Oxon U13)

**Hector Chambers** (Berks U12)

**James Coombs** (Oxon U12)

Coupled with the above list numerous other boys represented their district in the Best of District Festival in mid July. Many of these boys will no doubt push on into County set ups in the winter.

The 1st XI had a fine season that, barring a mad 10 days in the middle of the exam period, will be remembered by many as the best in recent times. Ably led by School House pupil Daniel Matthews the side recorded victories over Stowe, Clifton College, Oratory, Winchester, Portsmouth Grammar School, Scotch College, The Blue Leopards, Felsted, and Cheltenham. The batting was led by Rory Garrett, James Fitzjohn and Alex Davies whilst Soumya Bhadra, Daniel Matthews, and Callum Russell also made useful contributions.

Off spinner Max Mannering and left arm paceman Leo Bethell were the leading bowlers, with Adam Spears also making huge strides over the season. Leo Bethell and Alex Davies were rewarded with full men's Oxfordshire 1st XI debuts during the school term. With three county wicket keepers to choose from, Adam Scholey, Daniel Matthews, and Callum Russell all kept with real skill.

The 2nd XI also had a strong season. Daniel Scott-Kerr and Joseph Williams proved to be the leading batsmen whilst

Owen Morgan and Archie Wimborne will no doubt push into the 1st XI next season after being very successful opening bowlers.

The 3rd XI and U16 sides were always highly competitive and in total an amazing 39 players represented them. Some might call this great depth!

Mr Broadbent's U15A side, who entered the season straight after a very successful pre-season trip to Dubai, have yet again given much hope for senior cricket in years to come. A convincing County Cup win coupled with some steady block results over the season showed real development. Max Mortimer led the bowling and is certainly one to watch in the next few years whilst Oliver Gray, Alex Ling, and Thomas Guthrie all played significant innings. At U15B and C level the results were even more impressive. Alexander Sayeed and Patrick Leggett both scored centuries in the same innings for the B side who often quickly swept past opposition and Hamish Garland proved to be a powerful finisher. Tobias Jupp was an excellent captain in the U15C side and also scored his maiden century for the school. Both these sides were led by the tremendously enthusiastic Mr Barnes and Mr Cotton who must take





huge credit for the upturn in results from last year.

At U14 level great strides were made. Samuel Warren proved to be an excellent all round player whilst Oscar Fountain, Max Owen, and the hard hitting Ben Ling all made pleasing contributions with the bat. In Charles Goulder they had a leg spinner of real quality who often bamboozled the opposition and Alexander Moss improved no end with the new ball.

The U14Bs produced some of the more tense games of the season. A hard working and focused side, Mr Ghosh's team were a mirror of their coach. William Senior and Harry Venables look stars for the future whilst Oli Honeyman also bowled with great pace.

The U14Cs continue to be a winning team at Abingdon and wins over Radley and St Edwards, to name but a few, were testament to their improvement throughout the year. Left hander Joshua Valentine fell agonisingly short of a maiden century in what proved to be a great year for him with the bat.

The U13s battled hard and made significant improvement after a slow start to the season. Ethan Webb played some excellent innings and Dominic



**U15 County Champions**



**U12 County Champions**

Whinfrey and William Ginks often provided control with the ball.

Our newest teams at U12 level had a truly memorable unbeaten season culminating in them being crowned County Champions. They were a team possessing huge amounts of depth. Hector Chambers and James Coombs proved to be powerful spearheads, both making significant totals whilst all rounders Jake Blackwell, Ollie Graham, Alexander Glover, and Aaron Mara also added to the quality of the side. The last ball win against Berkhamsted will not be forgotten easily.

The Cricket Club has yet again proved to be the quiet unassuming success of the Summer Term. Lots of credit must be given to all the boys, parents, and, most importantly, staff who give up their time in practice and games. 67% wins on a tough circuit shows that Abingdon's cricket is in a good place and must look to continue to push on in 2015. As I step down and Mr Golding takes over I wish him and all the boys the best of luck for the future and thank them again for making my six years as Head of Cricket incredibly enjoyable.

*Damian Shirazi*





## History Trip to Berlin

On Wednesday 28 May, a party of 60 fourth year pupils, some looking to flesh out their knowledge of the Nazi Germany topic, others seeking a cracking holiday, assembled in the dead of night, under absolute secrecy, in the coach park. Under cover of darkness they made haste to a drizzly Luton Airport. The group, accompanied by Misters Hallinan, Davies, Edgar and McGill, embarked EasyJet A320 G-EZUT, which promptly departed for Schönefeld Airport, East Berlin. Sleep deprived and humiliated by airport security, we began our three-day programme of unrelenting Teutonic history.

Without delay, we went for our first drive through East Berlin. First impressions were not good. Garish German graffiti clings to every vertical surface. In some cases it is not clear exactly how the intrepid graffiti artists of Berlin had managed to put it there. It soon became plain, to those who could still hold their eyes open, that the country we had

arrived in was somewhat more 'liberal' than our own, as could be ascertained from the number of lascivious boutiques.

To the relief of some, our first stop was the hotel that we were to spend the next two nights in; Hotel Citylight was unblemished by graffiti and appreciably decorated. After dumping luggage in the cellar and meeting up with our fabulous guides, Ed and Rob of the renowned Anglia Tours, we were soon on the march once again. Rob and Ed are both fluent German speakers, possess a wealth of knowledge about the city, and are great guys. The day's exploration was done in two groups, each consisting of one guide and two members of staff, each escorting 15 pupils.

Without further ado, we trooped through the city to the Brandenburg Gate – a true icon of the city. The grandeur of the aged monument reminded us that Berlin had not always been so uninviting. As we would discover throughout the trip, any structure predating 1945 was always a welcome sight. The Brandenburg Gate was one of 14 defending the city of Friedrich Wilhelm I to stop smugglers coming in and deserters going out. It was completed in

1791 in the classical style and has been stolen twice. The road running under it will take you to Brandenburg if you walk one way, but head into the city and you will find yourself 'Unter den Linden' – in Berlin's scenic boulevard planted with linden trees.

Day one also saw us pass the historic Reichstag parliament building, Frau Merkel's office, the memorial to murdered German anti-Nazi politicians and the controversial monument to the murdered Jews of Europe. Clearly, the Nazis were the type to do a lot of murdering. Some argue that the memorial itself is not meaningful or attractive, but it is controversial because, as we know, the Jews were by no means the only race to suffer at the hands of Hitler. As a result of the choice of name several monuments have since been erected to accompany it, which our group silently visited as well. As we dispersed for doughnuts and currywurst alongside the memorial, the ability of absolutely everybody in Berlin to speak English was discovered, along with the ultimate embarrassment of addressing a local in your own frail German only to be answered in English.

The day of our arrival was full on, and



before the sun set we also found time to visit the haunting Grunewald Bahnhof platform 17, where the overgrown Nazi-period platform remains. The platform is inscribed all the way along and on both sides with details of every single train that departed the station carrying Jews under the Nazi regime. Tedious Nazi record keeping can be a blessing as it enables us access to the dark goings-on at an operational level. Thus, every inscription bears a date, destination and number of passengers. The penultimate bus journey of the day brought us to the infamous yet picturesque Wannsee Conference House, and this is when, after a day of threatening atmospheric conditions, the heavens opened up. Fortunately the entire exhibition was inside the building, renovated solely for use as a museum of the Nazis' ethnic cleansing. It was in this building that, with many euphemisms, the decision was taken by the top brass of Hitler's staff to carry out 'the final solution'. The notes from the meeting, written by Adolf Eichmann and checked by Reinhardt Heydrich, a driving force behind the Holocaust, are preserved in the room it took place in. The documents make no mention of killing or murder, let alone genocide. Is this Nazi security protocol, or was even the Nazi high command a touch uneasy with what they were planning?

Filled with knowledge and currywurst, we returned to the hotel. There was no banter that night. 60 weary heads hit the hay as quickly as possible – foreseeing that tomorrow would be no easier.

Following a smashing self-service breakfast and sandwich preparation, our usual permissive bus driver was soon waiting to take the entire company to day two's first and foremost whereabouts – Sachsenhausen concentration camp. One of the first labour camps opened by the regime, Sachsenhausen was never an extermination camp, yet they still managed to eradicate 200,000 people within its walls. The well-preserved compound crawls with history as well as evil. Abingdon boys stood on the assembly area where inmates were counted every morning (including the dead), visited the cookhouse (where prisoners loved to be sent to work



because of the warmth), explored the Nazi infirmary with its dissection tables and underground store rooms, and walked in a series of increasingly coarse testing pits for synthetic boots. The camp fell into the use of the Communist East Germans after the war, who erected a towering Soviet memorial, clearly visible from the execution pit and the ruins of 'station X', a building commissioned by the Nazi commandant containing a small gas chamber and eight corpse ovens. Also present on-site was the high security compound where POWs were tortured and political prisoners detained – including Stalin's own son.

With this harrowing excursion at an end, we got a taste of the Berliner's daily commute on the old and reliable U-bahn (much like the London tube but above ground), which took us to the recently enlarged Olympic Stadium – a masterpiece of oppressive Nazi architecture, now pock-marked with battle damage from the final days of fighting. We then rode the elevator (not without strict security checks) to the roof of the Reichstag building – not fully recovered from its battering in 1945 either, but now sporting a large glass dome sheltering a dizzying staircase. The Reichstag is almost entirely hollow.

One traditional currywurst-stop later, we were all escorted to a bar-cum-bowling alley. Here we donned pointy bowling shoes and slugged it out in groups of five. It was soon obvious who had done this activity before. Then back to Hotel Citylight for our second night's sleep.

The focus of the third and final full day was the Cold War or, more specifically, the lives of Berliners during that traumatic period, conveniently relevant to topic three of GCSE history. However, the Nazis were not done with yet, for we also saw the ruined basements and cells of the Gestapo HQ, and one superb example of surviving Nazi architecture. It is one of history's little ironies that after three years of strategic bombing, the Reich Air Ministry was not scratched.

With the Nazis finally defeated, we also visited Berlin's second largest stretch of Berlin Wall – preserved along with a guard tower and shot-up, rusty dishwasher which an East German had no doubt tried to cross the border in. All of this could be overlooked from a towering observation platform. The next activity for the day was to spend a few hours shopping in the great Alexanderplatz. Special acclaim must go to the generosity of Edward Turner-Fussell for dispensing €30 to a beggar despite his companions' leanings to the contrary. Both of our groups also enjoyed a friendly tour around the former Stasi detainment facility in a part of Berlin once obliterated from maps. This is where you were deposited by the East German secret police (Stasi) after being hooked off the street, bundled into the back of a prison-van disguised as a greengrocer and driven for hours around the city blindfolded with not a clue where you were going – only the estimation that the next 24 hours would not be at all pleasant.

*Henry Waterson, 4MRE*





## CCF

This year marks the centenary for Abingdon CCF and the contingent is going from strength to strength. Demand for a place in the CCF continues to be high and last September we recruited fifty-four eager new cadets.

Our first outing of the year was a field weekend at Barton Stacey. Along with the help of our efficient new officer Lt Cecilia Olley, who joined the school for a term, we carried out a successful exercise. Highlights included rescuing a particularly vocal 'downed pilot' and recovering rations whilst avoiding attack.

In October the contingent visited RAF Cosford, viewing a vast array of aircraft and also experiencing a 4D simulator. Later that month, I was extremely proud to witness Sgt Henry Hart be formally appointed as the Oxfordshire Lord Lieutenant's CCF Cadet. This was the second year running that one of our cadets had been awarded this prestigious role and Sgt Hart has proven

to be exactly the right man for the job.

We were extremely fortunate to receive a grant from the school and the SUS for some new service dress that arrived in time for the November remembrance parades at school and in Abingdon town centre. Sgt William Sharp also acted as the escort to the CCF banner at the London Festival of Remembrance. These events are always extremely poignant and give us a chance to reflect upon the true dangers and reality of conflict whilst remembering those who have made the ultimate sacrifice, including the 122 members of the school community who lost their lives during World Wars One and Two.

In January we were delighted to welcome Maj Dale Lodge to the contingent for two terms. Having just left the army, he perhaps hadn't envisaged spending his first day at Abingdon in uniform but he quickly became an integral member of the team of CCF staff.

The annual contingent dinner was held in February and we welcomed

Col Iain McKend CBE, Commander Logistic Support Headquarters 3 (United Kingdom) Division & Commander Abingdon Station and his wife as our guests of honour. The cadets enjoyed experiencing the formalities and traditions of a military dinner.

The RAF Section annually competes in the Air Squadron Trophy regional competition and this year, as always, they put in a tremendous effort. The team placed third in the fitness and first in the RAF knowledge and First Aid competitions, finishing fourth overall and narrowly missing out on progression to the national competition.

The RAF cadets have experienced some gliding opportunities this year but, unfortunately, there has been limited air experience flying due to the grounding of the RAF's Grob Tutor aircraft. However this is now back in action and the boys thoroughly enjoyed the recent flying day.

The Lent Term is extremely busy for the CCF with plenty of preparation for Easter Camp. Field Day consisted of





named Best Recruit.

Next it was time for our biennial inspection where we welcomed back Col Iain McKend CBE as our reviewing officer. The parade and the afternoon activities at Abingdon Airfield were a great success. Maj Chris Fletcher Campbell was also presented a medal clasp to recognise the impressive long service he has given to the CCF.

As we approached the end of the year, there was still a summer camp with Oxford University OTC to look forward to as well as the Cadet Leadership Course for two Army cadets and the Air Cadet Pilot Scheme for one RAF cadet.

I would like to thank all of the CCF staff for the huge amount of hard work and dedication they have given the contingent over the last year. Sadly, along with bidding farewell to Maj Lodge this summer, we also say goodbye to Sqn Ldr Haworth who will be leaving the school. Sqn Ldr Haworth has completed a total of nineteen years with Abingdon CCF including five as Contingent Commander and ten as Officer in charge of the RAF Section. During his time at the school he has given a great deal to the CCF and credit must be given to him for the huge successes of the RAF section. We wish him all the best as he leaves for ventures new.

pre camp training at Abingdon Airfield for the recruits, while the older cadets took part in a team building focussed activity package. The Advanced Infantry Cadre also undertook a self-reliance weekend exercise at Bramley where, already, some natural leaders were beginning to emerge. Despite a busy training package we held a 'best field brew' competition and the results were certainly interesting...

CB RAF as our inspecting officer for the Easter Camp passing out parade. Parents gathered to witness the Advanced Infantry Cadre proudly receive their eagerly anticipated badges and the recruits formally pass out into the Army and RAF Sections. Congratulations go to Cdt Peter Coope who achieved the Best Advanced Infantry Cadet award and to Cdt Joseph Salter who was

We took a break from camp preparation to attend an Arms and Services evening held at Oxford University OTC. This gave the cadets the opportunity to learn about the different branches of the Army, and also get their hands on some exciting kit.

Easter Camp was soon upon us and nearly one hundred cadets and staff travelled to Longmoor. The Advanced Infantry Cadre quickly got stuck into their programme, which included an excellent range package and 48 hour exercise. The recruits realised the benefits of their year's training and particularly enjoyed the 24 hour exercise and the competition day. Both cadres were also lucky enough to fly in a Chinook helicopter; a real highlight.

At the beginning of the summer term we welcomed Air Vice Marshal Lindsay J Irvine MA (Oxon) MA (Lond) DipLaw







The cadet NCOs play a huge part in creating a strong contingent. They take the lead with much of the training, showing real commitment and excellent leadership ability. I would like to thank this year's CCF leavers for all of their efforts during their time in the contingent and wish them all the best for the future.

This really has been a superb year for Abingdon CCF. As Contingent Commander I am extremely proud to witness the fantastic progress that all of our cadets are making. Here's to another outstanding year!

*Maj Eleanor Kaye*

## Lord Lieutenant's Cadet

The Lord Lieutenant's Cadet role this year has been unique in allowing me to attend events that the general public would not usually see, some of which are centuries old. During my time in this role I have met royalty in HRH the Duchess of Cornwall and the Dukes of Kent and Gloucester.

It would be difficult to really describe the experience in a summary so I shall instead recount some events which should give an overview of this prestigious role:

The first event for me was a service to remember Lord Nuffield who was heavily involved in Oxford and founding Morris cars. The main duty was to keep the Duke of Kent in small enough company while he met members of the Nuffield family while he attended this event. This was an opportunity to meet the other cadets in the role. I was also helped by Cpl Fulford (now Sgt) from Abingdon School at this event, as they needed lots of cadets to help direct the correct people to the correct pews, which was more difficult than it sounds!

On Remembrance Sunday a month later, the Oxfordshire Lord Lieutenant's ACF Cadet and I led out the column of Mayors and Chairs from St. John's Oxford towards the remembrance service so



**Henry Hart with Oxfordshire's Lord Lieutenant Tim Stevenson OBE**

that they could pay their respects and lay their poppies. I carried the wreath of the Vice Lord Lieutenant John Harwood (the Lord Lieutenant was attending the same event in Banbury) as we went down the road to the outdoor remembrance service.

The frequency of events did slow somewhat over winter but picked up soon enough. Being organised and being able to think on your feet really is necessary in this role, for example when I was called at lunchtime to fill in for another cadet that same evening! This was the High Sheriff's awards held in the Oxfordshire County Council Chamber. The event was a success despite the Union Flag having to be rearranged at the

last minute due to it being upside down!

One recent event was the Commonwealth Flag raising ceremony in Abingdon, which I was asked to attend by the Chair of the Vale of White Horse Council, Michael Badcock, to replace the Union Flag (correctly orientated this time) with the Commonwealth Flag on Abingdon Town Hall. It was certainly the most informal formal event yet with the Queen's Address read to four or five by Mr Badcock as the flag was raised.

I look forward to the rest of the year in this role and meeting my successor as Oxfordshire Lord Lieutenant's Cadet for the CCF.

*Cadet Sgt Henry Hart, 6SJ*



## Duke of Edinburgh's Award

It has taken me five years at Abingdon to move through the ranks of bronze and silver to the DofE gold award. Committing an hour each week to the skill, physical and volunteering sections whilst going on six walking expeditions, I finally received my gold award from Prince Edward at St. James' Palace.

For my skill section I continued playing the clarinet from my primary school when I arrived at Abingdon with grade 4 Clarinet. This enabled me to enter 2nd Wind Band and Orchestra. My aim was to be in 1st Orchestra where I needed grade 5. This took time but I found that the experiences of 2nd Wind Band and Orchestra were invaluable. In the fifth year after one failed attempt I finally received grade 5 to join 1st orchestra and became the section principle in the sixth form. Using music as my skill for the award gave me the extra commitment that was needed to reach my goal. I was also able to be part of clarinet ensemble, which reached the semi finals of the pro corda national chamber music competition. All this musical experience gave me the drive and confidence to conduct house singing this year.

My physical activity at Abingdon was either swimming or rugby. I have always been an averagely skilled rugby player and because of my tall stature I have been part of the B teams throughout my playing career. I've tried other sports such as rowing, which I have not enjoyed as much as rugby. As a result of this, my other sporting options were quite basic but I still had to commit to a six month physical for gold rather than rugby which only runs for three months. I chose swimming as I wanted to improve my fitness and ability. This was the time in the whole DofE award I disliked the most.

I had a mixed career volunteering in the CCF, as back in the third year I really didn't enjoy the lessons, uniform and dress parades. However on Easter Camp I saw the enjoyment that comes with CCF on camp, which gave me my first indication of what DofE expeditions



Thomas Purkhardt

would be like. I was still very close to quitting but decided to stay, using CCF qualifying as the volunteering section for DofE, which was in my opinion the hardest section to commit to. Then for two years I put the minimum effort possible into the RAF section, turning up for one hour each week to get me through bronze and silver. Throughout this time, the DofE programme was the sole reason I stayed in the CCF. In the sixth form things changed, as I was made section commander of 12 new third year recruits doing more army based training. This shifted my attitude towards CCF as it became a priority in my Other Half. In the Lower Sixth I had completed the time to volunteer for DofE gold but I stayed in CCF wanting to give more back. So in my final year I was able to be jointly in charge of the overall third year recruit training programme for 60 people.

I travelled to Moldova for my residential part of the gold award for a week. Here I worked with a team of 11 running a summer camp for the youth of a suburb. We led three activities, which were sport, art and English teaching. This was a very hot, tiring and active week in a very different country, which doesn't have many tourists visiting. We were hosted by families who spoke no English at all, so there were many communication issues which needed to be solved by miming and pointing. The trip made me reflect on just how lucky I am and how the smallest amount of help makes a huge difference.

I felt that with these four sections I was able to improve my confidence, reliability and communication skills. Throughout the award the assessors around me running the activities were the ones who pushed me beyond my comfort zone. They set the small short term goals needed for me to reach each of my overall aims stated in each of the four activities. I know that without this award I would not have engaged as much with the Other Half activities offered to me at Abingdon.

The most enjoyable part of DofE was the walking expeditions. I still grimace remembering the trials and tribulations my groups went through such as our tents flooding at 4:30am, the days of non-stop rain in Wales and the ever-present broken tent pole. Yet I look back on these expeditions with a smile on my face recalling the time we climbed Mount Snowdon on the hottest day Wales ever experienced, the conquering feeling when arriving in camp, and those morale boosting tunes. The expeditions really provided a sense of independence and adventure giving me a short break from normal school life.

I feel that to achieve any DofE award you have to exploit the Other Half at Abingdon. I know that the Duke of Edinburgh's Award programme at Abingdon will continue to thrive as more pupils sign up to bronze and stick with the award up to gold.

*Thomas Purkhardt, VIRMT*



# Tennis

Another fantastic season of results saw the Tennis Club win County titles, in all but one of the block fixtures during the course of the term, and reach the latter stages on the National Schools' competitions.

Many thanks once again to all the players for their whole hearted commitment throughout the year, to the parents for their continued support, to the staff who have invested so much time this term and to our tennis professional Martin Butler. Martin has worked with the players throughout the year and delivers a fantastic tennis coaching programme that has seen results steadily improve.

*Steve Brenchley*

## Junior Pre-season Tour to Croatia

Over the Easter holidays, a group of U14 and U15 players travelled to Porec, Croatia for the Tennis Club's annual pre-season tour. Throughout the week the players trained for five hours a day on the clay courts at Laguna Porec tennis club, a facility offering 54 clay courts and base for the week for a number of other international tennis academies and clubs.

The 20 players from Abingdon all worked hard on court and developed significantly over the week in preparation for the upcoming tennis season. At the end of the week there were matches



against Stuttgart Tennis Academy, who were also based for the week in Porec with over thirty junior players.

## Independent Schools' League

### Junior ISL – Finished 4th

Round 1 – 1 **Abingdon**, 2 KCS Wimbledon, 3 St Paul's, 4 Dulwich.

Round 2 – 1 Reed's, 2 Eton, 3 New Hall, 4 **Abingdon**

(Sebastian Evans, Joseph Kelly, James Bourdon, Andrey Gurkov, Alexander Skelly, Tom Buckle, George Strainge, Edward Adamson, Lafite Lo, Edward Green, William Pearson and George Tanner)

### Senior ISL – Finished 13th

Round 1 – 1 KCS Wimbledon, 2 Bradfield, 3 St Paul's, 4 **Abingdon**

Round 2 – 1 Tonbridge, 2 **Abingdon**, 3 Dulwich, 4 Epsom

(Giles Waterson, Adam Pearson, Jamie Bowles, George Ruck, Dominic Whaler, Nathan Allaby, Oliver Phillips, Thomas Webster)

## Oxfordshire Independent Schools Tournament

### Senior OXIST – Finished 2nd

1 Radley, 2 **Abingdon**, 3 MCS, 4 St

Edward's

### U16 OXIST – Finished 2nd

1 Radley, 2 **Abingdon**, 3 MCS, 4 St Edward's

### U15 OXIST – Finished 1st

1 **Abingdon**, 2 Radley, 3 MCS, 4 St Edward's

## Aegon Oxfordshire Tournament

### U15 Winners

The U15 team won all of their matches in the competition and successfully retain the Aegon Oxfordshire title.

### U13 Winners

The U13 team beat Cokethorpe, Our Lady's Abingdon, St Birinus, Faringdon and Cheney. They progress through to the regional rounds of the Aegon Tournament to be played in September.

## St George's Pairs Tournament

1st pair – Quarter Finalists (Giles Waterson and Edward Green)

2nd pair – Plate Finalists (Jamie Bowles and Dominic Whaler)

## Eton Pairs Tournament

U15 IV – Finished 3rd (Edward Green, Thomas Buckle, Alexander Skelly and George Jeffreys)





## Inter Schools Matches

### Seniors

The senior teams have put in some very good performances over the course of the term. To complement the 1st team there have been some strong players playing in the 2nd and 3rd teams and many have remained fully committed throughout the examination period. Many thanks to the departing Upper Sixth tennis players for all their efforts, in particular Thomas Webster, John Wiejak, George Lennox, Oliver Phillips, Henry Papworth, Jacob Miron and Thomas Howard.

### U16s

Early season matches against Wellington, Marlborough, Stowe and Bradfield saw the U16s start brightly, continuing the form they showed last season. Good performances in the ISL came from Joseph Kelly, Sebastian Evans, James Bourdon, Andrey Gurkov and Seb Hawkey and they were unlucky to finish second in the OXIST.

### U15s

The U15A team have completed their second unbeaten season in a row, having won 25 inter-school matches straight in two years. Many of the team have not lost a set over this period in a team that contained George Jeffreys, Thomas Buckle, Alexander Skelly, Oscar Bond, Edward Adamson, George Strange, Angus Williams, Jake Windsor Lewis, Alex Ling and Max Mortimer.

There have also been some very strong performances from the U15B and U15C teams against strong opposition.

### U14s

Many of the U14 players enjoyed a productive pre-season in Croatia and took this form into the opening few weeks of term in the ISL tournament, where they won their group against KCS Wimbledon, St Paul's and Dulwich. In Round 2 they faced tougher opposition, but gained some good wins against Eton, New Hall and Reed's.

Throughout the season there were some excellent performances from a strong top pair of Lafite Lo and William Pearson, who were well supported by a group of strong players. The U14B, U14C and U14D teams results showed how much strength in depth there is at this age group with good wins against Stowe, Marlborough, Wellington, Radley, Warwick and Bradford.

### U13s and U12s

There has been a great deal of enthusiasm for tennis in this age group, with a vast number of boys playing tennis throughout the winter and representing teams. The stand out performances in the summer have come from Ray Prince, Angus Blomfield, Ethan McLellan and Cameron Yu, leading the teams to a number of wins.



## Independent Schools Tennis Tournament

### Youll Cup

U18s (Giles Waterson, Jamie Bowles, Dominic Whaler and George Ruck)

Round 1 – lost v KCS Wimbledon  
Plate Round 1 – won v Whitgift  
Plate Round 2 – won v MCS

### Thomas Bowl

U15s (1st pair – Edward Green and Tom Buckle, 2nd pair – George Jefferys and Alexander Skelly)

1st pair group matches –  
won v Tonbridge  
won v Dulwich  
won v Cheltenham  
won v Haberdashers  
won v KCS Wimbledon

Last 32 – won v Whitgift  
Quarter Finals – lost v Reed's

2nd pair group matches –  
lost v Whitgift  
won v Winchester  
won v Dulwich  
won v Hampton  
Last 32 – lost v Langley

### John Barrett Cup

U13s (1st pair – Ray Prince and Angus Blomfield, 2nd pair – Cameron Yu and Ethan McLellan)

Lost in the semi-final of the plate competition.

### Buckley Cup

Final – Edward Green beat George Ruck



# ISGA Golf Final

Abingdon School golf team, consisting of Aman Patel, Alec Curtis and Charles Normanton, travelled to Carnoustie Golf Course just north of Dundee. The event was brimming with the elite of the UK's independent schools' golfers, yet despite this Abingdon School performed handsomely across the two rounds, culminating in the team finishing in tied sixth position, with a combined score of 306, just 23 strokes behind the victors, Whitgift School.

Saturday 26 April saw the team embark on a train for the 7 hours 56 minute journey from Oxford Station up to Carnoustie. Following a transfer in York and a further transfer in Dundee, they arrived at the course. After the formalities were completed at the hotel, the team headed over to the practice facilities, with the highlight being the short game practice area, for some much needed preparation and adjustment to the world renowned greens of Carnoustie, which have claimed numerous high scores from the golfing world elite. After the practice was complete, the boys spruced up and headed for dinner at the hotel.

Once morning broke on Sunday, the team convened at breakfast, and then hit the practice green and short game practice area before the first round on the Burnside course. Charles was on the tee first at 12:52 and, after a slightly leftward drive, seemed to get off to a promising start beginning with a par. Alec and Aman both followed suit teeing off soon after Charles. The Burnside is often overshadowed by its illustrious neighbour, The Championship Course, but it oozes character and should not be underestimated as it's still a splendid test of golf. Despite the difficulty ahead of the team, Aman paved the path forward with a 73, 5 over course par; Charlie followed swiftly with a 74, 6 over par, and then Alec completed the triumvirate with a 76, 8 over par. This had the boys placed 16th, 21st and 28th respectively individually. Night fell and suits were donned, ready for the first of the presentations by David Quin, the organiser of the event, accompanied by a meal. The evening gave the boys



a perfect opportunity to network with other elite golfers from a plethora of the most prestigious UK schools, including Wellington and Bedford.

Following the excellent performance of the first day, the boys looked to build upon this in the second round on the Championship Course. Alec was first to step onto the first tee box and hit a sensational drive straight down the middle. Charles was somewhat leftward, off the tee, but managed to recover to make a par on the first, but Aman's tee shot followed the style of Alec's drive. After the first tee drives, Mr James was already waiting with bated breath behind the 18th green to bathe in the glory. Alec finished with a cracking 10 over par (score: 80) but Carnoustie claimed its first victim, with Charles making a 9 on the par four 17th, leaving him ultimately 16 over par (score: 86). Alec, Charles and Mr James waited for Aman behind the 18th. He didn't disappoint and repeated his first round performance with a sterling round of 9 over par (score: 79).

The cumulative scores earned Aman and Alec a gold medal, with Charles just missing out on the gold medal but gaining a silver. Aside from the individual performances, Aman and Charles' combined scores on the first day and Aman and Alec's combined scores on the second day allowed the Abingdon School golf team to achieve tied 6th position.

This was an exemplary achievement for the Abingdon team, not only to have qualified for the ISGA Finals at Carnoustie in the first place, but to have then achieved a position as the sixth best school golf team in the UK. After the medal ceremony, the team changed into casual wear and then headed forth to a celebratory dinner in Carnoustie.

On the last day, with the moon now illuminating the course, the team packed a motley assortment of luggage and headed for a swift breakfast before clambering on to the train at Carnoustie Station for the return journey via Edinburgh.

*Charles Normanton, 6DCB*



## Who You Gonna Call?

The Lower-School production of *Who You Gonna Call* was a take by Mr Phillips on Ghostbusters. It was a challenge for the actors and directors as it is a film script and not a play script. However, we overcame lots of hurdles (mainly illness!) and overall it was definitely worth waiting for.

We found out the title of the play as it was introduced to us just after half term. The buzz started straight away as everyone started to dream themselves into the parts. The ones that everyone wanted were of course the four Ghostbusters (Winston, Venkman, Stanz and Spengler). The auditions started... everyone started finding partners, learning the lines and asking their mums for help with learning their lines. Despite being my tutor, Mr Phillips didn't reveal anything about the casting, no matter how much we begged and pestered him.

Eventually, one special breaktime, Mr Phillips walked into the houseroom with the glistening sheet of paper which all had wanted to see for the past few days. He had timed this to perfection. The bell went for the end of break just before he pinned it onto the wall. After counting the minutes of that brutal English lesson, we went to the OtherHalf notice board. We saw the cast in all its glory. The names at the top were Venkman – Callum Ravden, Stanz – Marc Tuazon, Winston – Mayibongwe Chivizhe, Spengler – Charlie Ball.

The rehearsals began. Every Monday and Wednesday we worked our socks off learning lines and getting used to the play. It took us countless hours to learn the lines. Finally we pulled through our first non-script rehearsal in the Lent Term. This was a joy to watch as our dream slowly started becoming a reality. However, it was only when we could see the date of the play creeping up at us that we realised we would really have to start working hard.

The tech weekend was interesting. We managed to last the whole weekend with about three full rehearsals with all the props. Most of the weekend passed



without a hitch, but then on the final rehearsal before the show on Monday a key character became ill. We had no choice but to postpone the show. Our dreams were falling apart.

We set a new date. It was a Sunday. We all turned up early and started to do a final rehearsal. Then the big night

came. It ran smoothly and Mr Phillips did not have to shout out any lines. All in all it was a great success. We worked very hard and it certainly showed. We completed the show, our mums and dads were proud of us, and we all lived happily ever after.

*Mayibongwe Chivizhe, 2BJLP*





## Battling with the Bard! English and Drama Shakespeare Day

On Friday 20 June, Lower School pupils had the opportunity to get to grips with the dazzling range of Shakespeare's plays. Helped by members of the Drama and English Departments, as well as a group of professional actors, the boys divided into four groups and set out to put on edited versions of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *The Tempest*, *Henry V* and *Macbeth*. After playing drama games and rehearsing in the morning,

the boys gathered in the Amey Theatre to perform their plays to each other and were judged by the actors, who formed an *X-Factor* style panel.

After their initial performances, the standard was so high that groups were asked to go away and select one scene of their play in a different genre prompting some highly original interpretations!

In the end, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* just beat the other groups to win best play with a host of other awards being given out including best authority figure, won by Kit Mannix for his performance as Henry V, and best woman (!) won by Finlay Shannon for his performance as Thisbe in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

Hayden Ramm, Zain Islam and Alexander Hann reflect on their experiences below.

### A Midsummer Night's Dream

When I first heard of Shakespeare Day, I admit that I was somewhat worried. Would we be forced to learn about Shakespeare all day? Would we be doing some sort of Shakespeare activities all day in a tedious fashion - with our maths teachers somehow getting us to find out





the difference in length of Shakespeare's hair? Instead, I found myself enjoying a range of cool acting exercises and being able to perform a play with my friends, as well as being able to learn more about the story of some of Shakespeare's plays.

After a long but fun half-day of rehearsing our play, in my case *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, I performed in front of the other groups with the rest of our team, and I couldn't help but laugh along with the audience when I spoke in a ridiculously high voice while playing a female character, or when my friend, who was acting as a woman, kissed my hand.

Other plays included *The Tempest*, *Henry V* and *Macbeth*. We each performed twice, once in the regular way, once in a quicker but more entertaining fashion, including *The Tempest* being performed in the style of a kid's show, *Henry V* becoming a full "freestyle" rap performance, as well as *Macbeth* being performed as an all out Russian mafia war.

Hayden Ramm, 1RHH

### The Tempest

Before we began even discussing anything Shakespeare-related, we played a few games and tried out a few different exercises so that we could look closer at the different elements of drama such as the physical appearance of a character without any costuming. One of the exercises, for example, was to create a freeze frame of a sinking ship in twenty seconds without talking to others. Playing these games were especially beneficial as it entertained those who didn't particularly enjoy drama by making them engage more. It was impressive how we were all able to practice and learn an entire play in less than a day.

Performing was rather fun overall. I thought I was going to be very nervous performing in front of so many people, as I did not have much experience in drama. For some reason, however, it was quite easy to perform in front of a relatively large audience. The instructor made it a great experience and the plays on stage went very well!

I have learnt a few things from this day

including the fact that Shakespeare is more interesting than you think he is. It also added to what little experience I had in acting and at the same time I was able to learn the summary of an entire Shakespeare play. Overall, I thought the day was brilliant and, although all the rehearsing was tiring, I would love to do days like this one more often

Zain Islam, 2NSH

### Macbeth

Our Shakespeare day started with a warm up in which we were to secretly choose one person in the room to be our "bomb" and one to be our "shield". We then had to stay as far from our "bomb" as possible while keeping our "shield" in-between the two of us. I was in the unfortunate position of having my bomb choose me as his shield leaving us running round in circles.

This was a fun and energetic way to begin the day. Our next exercise was to pretend that we were aliens who couldn't speak English; we then had to communicate with someone else about ourselves. This led to some rather amusing attempts to convey things through actions and some rather amusing interpretations. Having lost all our inhibitions and dignity, we were now ready to get to work on the script.

I was unfamiliar with our play *Macbeth* so it was useful that we first went through the general plot. After this, each group of four or five concentrated on their own scene. Our scene, in which Macbeth sees the ghost of Banquo at a banquet, didn't seem to have much dialogue and I was a bit disappointed to only have two very short comments to say. However, it was a good exposure to a Shakespeare play that was new for me, and I thoroughly enjoyed it.

Alexander Hann, 2HFCP





# Lower School Rhineland Trip

Just after last year's summer exams, the Lower School was offered an opportunity to go to the German Rhineland with the Modern Languages Department, on a school trip for the weekend. This was a great idea and clearly not something to be missed!

The journey up there was about 14 hours, which included many stops at various service stations and prolonged periods of talking (including a rather tuneful rendition of *Girl on Fire* by Alicia Keys, much to the unmistakable joy of the teachers up front). When we reached the outskirts of the Rhineland though, our concert stopped and we stared out of the windows onto the scenery beyond. Before us lay vast expanses of fields, vineyards and castles, with a central river running between them. The river itself flowed slowly through a valley, giving life to the nearby farms.

The next day, after a questionable hotel buffet breakfast, we packed ourselves onto the ever-present coach and headed out to Boppard for a guided tour and a quick history lesson - did you know that there are 500 castles and castle ruins around the Rhineland's edges? Later on in the day (after 30 minutes of free time that brought ridiculously low priced pastries for all),



our group trekked up to a chair lift on a mountain. For me personally, this was one of the most terrifying experiences of my life and the weather didn't exactly help either. The wind rocked my chair as I rose higher into the air. This, along with my slight fear of heights led to my kissing the ground when I was eventually reunited with it. However, between moments of intense fear, I did get a chance to admire the scenery from my magnificent height, the valley stretched out before me like a map as I sailed higher still, revealing more lush fields and the town of Boppard in the distance.

The journey down was a little easier, and when we got off, we headed straight back to the town for a cruise on the Rhine. This was a really peaceful and interesting cruise along the river, with extra information on the local area. This was amazing and really allowed us to appreciate the wonderful place we were in, and also allowed us to have a few good, chilled out conversations together as well.

After dinner, we drove to the pool. Some quick notes on this pool before I start on what we got up to:

- This pool was massive!
- There were huge slides!
- This pool was massive! (Wait; did I say that already?)

No, but seriously the pool was enormous, and we had huge amounts

of fun! (including some very interesting slide races).

The next day we set out to the city of Cologne. This was possibly the most memorable as it boasted a famous chocolate museum. First of all, as we arrived at the entrance we were immediately taken aback by its volume - it was huge! As we stepped inside, we were even more surprised to see that the interior proved just the same with a great winding stair case towering above us and tunnels going off in every direction. It was like being submerged in a Roald Dahl story. A quick tour informed us of the history of chocolate and how it is made and moulded into the food we know and love. This was followed by a shopping spree that probably benefited the museum far more than our own health.

Finally we visited Marksburg Castle. This was the guided tour that ended our third day in Germany. It promised an ancient room with a view as we went from hall to hall round the old fort, finding out everything about it, from what it was used for to the people who used to live there.

In summary, the trip was really fun, entertaining and a fantastic vacation that I would definitely recommend to anyone doing German in the second year, or if you just want to have a holiday abroad with your friends.

*Jacob Henney, 2NSH*





## Blenheim Debating

Tuesday 24 June. The Sir Winston Churchill Public Speaking Competition at Blenheim Palace. And I walk into school wearing my trainers. Ten minutes later, after some scrabbling around by Mrs Wigmore, I walk out again, wearing someone else's shoes.

The suffering didn't stop there, however, as Jake de Jongh kept us 'entertained' with his Maroon 5 album all the way to Blenheim Palace. Before being able to take in the scenery, we were hurried into The Orangery for a briefing by the Duke of Marlborough. He had slicked white hair, tanned skin and narrow eyes. I would mention his speech, but I was more focused on the Duke not noticing my shoes. We were then ushered into the Marlborough Room, where teams from eight other schools were waiting.

Alphabetical order meant that Abingdon went first but fortunately for me, our other team took this honour. It started well, for Liam Deegan and Alasdair Czaplewski at least. However, Kit Mannix, the questioner, stood in silence as the judges didn't realise they had to ask questions. For the second time that day, there was more scrabbling around.

My turn. I walked to the podium, took in the atmosphere, and was told to sit down again. Straight after I was told to speak. Despite a severe looking woman shaking her head at the back of the hall (probably the shoes), I grew confident after getting my first laughs from the judges. I walked proudly off the stage, and promptly tripped. Not really my day. I hurried Jake up to the podium to take the heat off me.

We might not have won, but we knew we had done a good job. And nobody had noticed I was wearing shoes that were three sizes too big. We climbed



into the taxi and drove off. And then the Maroon 5 tribute band began.

*Jack Mulcahy, 1SW*



# The Coxswain's View

Abingdon has produced many excellent coxswains ('coxes' for short), who have steered and motivated their crew to Henley Royal Regatta and international victory. Joseph Salter, one of the new 3rd year coxswains, writes below about the steep learning curve and challenges of this role:

In my view, the cox is the brain to the oarsman's brawn. He creates the strategy, motivates and adapts to any situation that can arise on the water. As the cox, I shout, berate and cajole the hefty, muscle-bound rowers. This, of course, has its consequences. I often become the subject of taunts from the crew, taunts which I would be proud of using myself! One of the more mechanical roles of the cox is to steer the boat to victory. The skill of steering only comes about after long periods of practice, which results in the experience required. I believe that this is all that is required for greatness in coxing. There is no brilliant rookie cox and there is no bad experienced cox. All of the coxes in the J14s have spent a substantial amount of time on the water and therefore by the end of the year we have all become confident and relatively accomplished in our endeavours.

One of my best experiences of the rowing season was when I attended the senior rowing camp in Bordeaux when I was selected to cox a J15 crew for a week. This involved me (then the



reserve cox for the J14E crew) taking on a more experienced and regatta-hardened crew of oarsmen. I therefore had to quickly learn and understand the various elements of my role. I was very glad that they showed patience and allowed me time to develop my skills. They even put up with my constant energised rants for which I seemed to have discovered a new ability.

On returning to school and with the Thames having returned to more usual pre-flood levels, I was able to spend

important time honing my new-found skills on home waters. As a mark of progress, we came a respectable second place at the first BASHER (inter-school regatta) of the year at Eton Dorney Lake. As the season advanced, I was delighted to represent the school as the cox for the J14A crew.

Coxing isn't all just shouting and steering, however; there are also regatta marshals to appease! This in itself seems to be a whole new skill to acquire – and there are consequences for learning too slowly. Added to this, the regatta 'experience' can entail several hours' wait between races in which you are involved – time for eating, dozing certainly and even maybe some bank side revision! However, it can be challenging to then motivate a fully rested crew to gear themselves up for a burst of activity, which may last little more than three minutes.

Overall, coxing has been one of the parts of the school week that I have enjoyed most and I am looking forward to continuing in my role as a cox for the J15s next year.

*Joseph Salter, 3EJW*



**1<sup>st</sup> VIII win National Schools' Regatta**



# Leavers' Day Speeches

Today, the 28th June is the 100th anniversary of the assassination of the Archduke Franz Ferdinand in Sarajevo. Some of you will also be aware that today is Henry VIII's 523rd Birthday – he was born on the 28th June 1491. The more diligent historians among you may even know that 39 years ago to the day, on the 28th June 1975, the Abingdon School cricket 2<sup>nd</sup> XI scored a resounding 10-run victory over Shiplake College. These are all historical events of great importance, and have affected the lives of many people, but for the 150 or so Upper Sixth formers who are sitting in the hall today, the 28th June 2014 is just as significant a moment as we leave the place that has, for some, been the focus of almost half of our lives.

I remember arriving here for the first time in September 2007, informing the person next to me not-so-surreptitiously that I had managed to tie my own tie that morning, and it seems a frighteningly short time ago. Perhaps that is because life at Abingdon is so full on: it is incredibly easy to fill up every moment of the school day with all manner of sports, activities, music, as well as academic lessons. The variety is endless, and this is in no small part down to the tireless work of so many members of staff. Whether you are a hockey player or a pure mathematician, there always seems to be someone who is willing to go far beyond the call of duty to answer questions, to get you more involved, and also to give support in moments of stress or difficulty, work related or not. The teachers I have had are a genuinely inspiring group of people, totally committed to their subject, and at the same time totally committed to each of their pupils, and I feel confident in saying that they have had an immense positive impact on the lives of many people sitting here today, and that we are all immensely grateful for all their effort over the past two, four, five, or seven years.

I think it would be wrong to go on without also thanking our parents, who have invested so much of their



resources in allowing us to come to school here. In any case, parents have as much a role in education of the young people here as school does – after all, the ethos of a school can only reinforce what has been learned at home, and a celebration of the culmination of our schooling should therefore honour the huge part in our lives that they make up, just as much as school itself.

I can assure you that these parents have done a very good job (for the most part at least) as I have been in the fortunate position of being able to spend time in the company of the amazing group of people who comprise this year's Upper Sixth. There is always someone with a smile on their face, whether it is studying in a lesson, throwing paper aeroplanes in the Westridge Room, or even outside the exam hall. There has been a great deal of hard work too – I have even seen several members of the year group in the Upper Library on a number of occasions this year – and I

think everyone deserves much success when exam results come out in August. However, I think being at Abingdon has shown all of us that in the end, more important than these grades, are enthusiasm, commitment to whatever we attempt, and a strong regard for everyone around us. I feel, as I am sure many of those leaving do, incredibly privileged to have been able to have the opportunity of attending a school like Abingdon – it is now up to us to make the most of it as we move on into the future.

However, whatever successes each of us may or may not have during the coming months and years, I think it is reasonable to hope that, as a result of the hard work of so many staff, parents, and other people connected with the school, in the future, the 28th June 2014 will be able to be remembered as the day that the wider world became 150 young men better off, and that makes it a very important day indeed.

*Thomas Kelly, VIMAS*



One hundred years ago today Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria, heir to the Austro-Hungarian Empire, was assassinated in Sarajevo by the Yugoslav nationalist Gavrilo Princip. The events that resulted from this and implications of what occurred that day have reverberated through history ever since. The horrendous consequences of the bitter and costly war that followed had devastating repercussions which, indeed, should be recognised, respected and never trivialised. However, they also had a deeply unifying effect, drawing together people of all creeds, colours and classes towards the common purpose of defeating the fascist advance.

Although times have changed dramatically and most of us are not required to face our own mortality on a daily basis, a similar sense of unity of purpose can be identified in the boys here at Abingdon School, albeit in very different circumstances. Schools such as this have obvious goals and some less obvious ones. Academic success may seem at the heart of every undertaking at Abingdon but this is certainly not prioritised over our well-being, a difficult line to follow for what is essentially an academic institution, but ultimately one that is trodden very carefully. Focussing on the development of the 'whole man', and recognising that academic success is only a part of this, underlies the whole ethos of the school. To this end, sport, music and other activities out of the classroom and



Thomas Kelly

further afield are given equal weight.

These shared goals have provided us with a platform from which to form some very close friendships, some we shall no doubt cherish all of our lives. C.S. Lewis once wrote this of friendship: "Friendship is born at that moment when one person says to another 'What? You too? I thought that it was no one but myself...'" Again, this shared sense of understanding and experiences underpins the deepest principles of good friendship. Here, during our school careers, we have shared these experiences whether it be the dread of writing a personal statement, the anticipation of results day, euphoria after a sporting victory, or, if you are a member of the Abingdon

School 1st XV of 2013, the shared upset of suffering a crushing defeat week after week.

Over the years spent here we have undergone many changes whether they be physical, social or emotional. Some of us have grown upwards, others have grown outwards, but there is no doubting that we have all grown in one way or another.

We have been incredibly lucky to make the most of the outstanding sports and music facilities, teaching of the highest standard and the unrivalled cookies during morning break. I don't think any of us will fully appreciate this until we enter into the big wide world.

However, reflecting on my school career over the past few weeks it is not the academic opportunities for which I will be most grateful, nor the sporting and musical opportunities, but the opportunity to develop personally in a positive and nurturing environment where individuality is encouraged, not penalised, academic success is respected, not scorned and intellectual curiosity prized, not derided.

I would like to conclude with a quote from the great Muhammed Ali. "Friendship is the hardest thing in the world to explain." It is not something you learn in the classroom, but if you haven't learnt the meaning of friendship, you really have not learnt anything at all."

Leo Wood, VIJJ



Leo Wood



# Music Trip to Spain

The excitement was intense; to be on tour and in the company of friends was exhilarating. Our farewells completed, we were all shoehorned into two overnight coaches. With about 80 people and a plethora of orchestral instruments safely on board, we began a long, overland journey through France and into northern Spain. The opportunity for hours of uninterrupted use of iPods and tablets was sheer pleasure. This was until they ran out of battery! But then there was also my booty bag of unhealthy goodies to be consumed.

Arriving at the Pyrenees signalled the end of an increasingly restless and musk-smelling journey. A weary yet unified band of brothers had arrived in Barcelona. The Hotel Can Fisa, where we were staying, was luxurious. It was wonderful to lie down after a tiring day in one of the hotel's suites for a good night's sleep. The lounge, complete with its own balcony, boasted a phenomenal view of a town on the outskirts of Barcelona. Then there was the outdoor swimming pool, home of our invigorating post-breakfast water polo matches.

Barcelona is a magnificent city. Not immune to the extremes of our weather, our first sightseeing tour had to be made by coach. We journeyed past the docks and through the madness of the city. Brightly clad in our tour uniform, pink polo shirts, we also visited La Rambla, a historic avenue, lined by a vast array of stalls and shops.

All the boys had the opportunity to perform at some incredible venues. In Barcelona, these comprised Barcelona Cathedral, a 14th century Gothic Cathedral, and Sagrada Familia Cathedral. This, as yet incomplete, inspiration of Antoni Gaudi is a unique, unconventional feat of architecture and engineering that was begun in the late 19th century. Snugly tucked into the crypt of Sagrada Familia Cathedral, the Chapel Choir and Chamber Orchestra worked their magic. Finlay Garland and Thomas Kelly made the crypt dance with their lyrical performance of Mozart's



*Sinfonia Concertante*. The choir, too, sang from their impressive collection of tour repertoire.

Each day our Catalan audiences became more receptive and appreciative. Hector Stinton, Hugh Cutting and Tommy Nicholson eloquently introduced our musical programmes in Spanish, to obvious gratitude. There was improvement in our performances with every concert and complimentary words of congratulation were replaced by standing ovations. Our concert programmes were enriched by the enormous talent of our soloists - George Burrage made his violin sing in Mendelssohn's *Violin Concerto*, with his high notes tuned to perfection. Tim Davies's rendition of Arutiunian's *Trumpet Concerto* was energetic and jazzy. Leon Wu showed his nimble pianist's skills in a concerto by Kabalevsky and Sebastian Johns dazzled us with his electrifying performance of Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue*.

Outside of Barcelona, we visited Tarragona, an old Roman town on the Mediterranean sea, which is now a vibrant port city. Before our afternoon rehearsal, we headed for the beautiful sandy beach for some football and paddling in the vivid blue sea. Similarly, spare precious moments were spent in a whole-group game of frisbee as the sun went down in Igualada.

Heading north up into the Pyrenees, we discovered the secluded mountain retreat of Montserrat. The views from here were spectacular, with bush-clad, rugged mountains, interrupted only by a narrow river and mountain path. The Chapel Choir sang in the tranquil atmosphere of the Benedictine monastery. Its peace and gloom were broken only by their rich vocal textures and natural light falling through the stained-glass windows. One failed to be unmoved.

Our last day was spent in Puigcerdà, set amongst spectacular scenery, near the border with France. Some sightseeing was finished off with a rendezvous at the most self-indulgent ice cream parlour. We then headed to the park to ride pedalos and face local Spanish teenagers for an intense match of football. Our final and most memorable concert was held in Esglesia St Domenec. Ears rang loudly with the rapturous applause. Our small concert in the Pyrenees felt like the Last Night of the Proms.

All the boys would, I'm sure, echo my sentiments in wishing to show our gratitude and appreciation to Mr Stinton, Mr Cotton and their cheerful band of chaperones for a wonderful tour, musically accomplished and truly enjoyable.

*Alexander Glover, 1SW*





## Moldova Trip

I think it is fair to say that when the 15 boys heading to Moldova got on the bus to go to the airport, there wasn't a whole lot of enthusiasm or excitement, mainly due to the fact it was three o'clock in the morning! However, in a way, we were all curious. What was Moldova going to be like? Would their culture be scary or exciting? Would any of us get a bite from a rabid dog? These questions, and more, were on my mind at least as we set off.

After arriving at Heathrow airport, we checked in and had a short flight to Vienna. From there, we transferred and arrived at Chisinau Airport at about 3pm. One thing that worried all of us was the teenage Moldovan girl who came up to us in the airport and said, 'Excuse me. Why are you coming to this country? Is this a holiday?'. After we replied it was for charity work, she assumed a much more understanding look on her face and left. The fact an

actual Moldovan was confused as to why we were visiting this country put us all on edge. Stepping through into the tiny arrivals lounge, we were swamped by Moldovan teens attending the Young Entrepreneurs Club run by Agape, Abingdon's partner charity in Moldova. They were all eager to greet us, and immediately tied ribbons round our wrists in the colours of the Moldovan flag. We were then bundled into minibuses and set off towards the small village of Ialoveni.

After arriving in Ialoveni, we went to meet our host family. I think my group and I hit the jackpot, as we had a flat-screen TV, as well as internet access and even air-conditioning. However, it was clear from the buildings surrounding us that this was not a normal Moldovan house. A lot of those around us had half-built roofs, as well as doorways without doors - there was a general sense of disrepair. However, this did not put us off, and after a delicious Moldovan meal, we settled down to sleep. I remember this first night

particularly well, as it was one of the scariest of my life. In order to go to the loo, we had to go outside the house into a wooden cubicle in the garden. Stepping out into a new, relatively scary country in the dark was terrifying enough, but the dogs and cats howling loudly certainly didn't help, and when I went past the chicken coop, all of the chickens went berserk, making me fear for my well-being. However, I made it back to the house alive and fell asleep.

The next day, we all got up early and set off to the Grigore Vieru School in Ialoveni to start the summer camp. The children were eager to see us and we were all excited to start teaching them English, art and sport. I think everyone was quite humbled by the school. Being used to grand buildings with fully kitted out classrooms, we were pretty stunned by this school's conditions. With paint peeling off the wall and a sports hall with only about three balls, we all suddenly realised what a difference we could make to these kids. For the next five days, it was clear from the excited





looks on their faces that we were having a large impact. Every day, more and more children would show up, making it clear that news was spreading that the Abingdon boys were in town again! Midway through the week, we went on a trip to Orheiul Vechi, a 14th century monastery in a stunning setting, which making an enjoyable day out, which the children seemed to enjoy as well. Then came the important football match between England and Moldova. However, unfortunately, the English team were not able to recreate the quality of the actual England team, and after a hard fought game, both sides settled for a 0-0 draw.

Our stay in Moldova had come to an end, and this was when we realised the impact we had made when we saw that many of the children were crying at our departure. We all now set out for Romania, slightly heavy-hearted to leave Ialoveni behind, but excited about the trip ahead. Staying in the Carpathian Mountains, we were all taken aback by the beauty of the surroundings, and we were all excited about starting new projects with the 20 or so children coming with us from Ialoveni. When we had settled in to our cabin, we set about doing icebreaker games with the children. Over the next few days, we did all sorts of activities with them: walking in the mountains, rowing boats on the nearby lake, making paper planes, and



even making our own short feature films, helping the children speak English in their starring roles. Then came the grand finale to our trip - *Lacu Rosu's Got Talent*. This was a great night, including many embarrassing moments, particularly for the two people who had to sing a recipe in Moldovan... in the style of an opera. Of course, Mr Jenkins gave us no prior warning of this, causing the shock factor to be high. The next day, after an emotional goodbye, we made our way back to the airport to fly home.

A huge thank you needs to go to Mr Jenkins and Mrs McRae who not only made the trip happen, but also made it enormously enjoyable for everyone involved. Personally, I thought this trip was amazing, and I was blown away by the realisation of what a difference we made in quite a short time. It also really makes you appreciate what you have back home. I hope that those who go on the trip in years to come will have as good an experience as I did.

*Henry Papworth, 6CFC*





Sport





Photo Gallery



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# House Reports

## School House



It's very much been a year of transition for School House, not only have we seen a change in Housemaster halfway through the year but we have also begun to be regarded as a real contender in many of the inter-house events, even House Singing. The new third years settled in remarkably quickly; within two weeks the boarders were already at home enough to "forget" their bedtime and the dayboys followed a similar vein over who the 5 o'clock teas were really for. New additions also included students in the fourth year and Lower Sixth as well as a new resident tutor, Mr Simmons.

In this year of transition the ever present and wonderful matron, Di, remained consistent in her approach that no problem of the boys or teachers was too big or too small for her to help

with. A crack team of Upper Sixth spearheaded by what is surely seen by all as a Sturidge-Suarez pairing of Daniel Mathews and myself did its best to complement Di's outstanding efforts. The team helped run prep time and organised house events on top of their most important job – deciding when the next meeting would be.

It wasn't long before House Singing preparations were underway, with the house opting for simplicity after last year's difficulty with what are technically known as "high notes." The final performance of *If You Wanna* by The Vaccines was so impassioned that it led Mr Dawswell to remark "Was that really School House?" – praise indeed! However the Cinderella story was not to be as our name was left unmentioned in the judge's top three - the glass slipper

seemed to fit perfectly on somebody else's foot.

Luckily it is unlike School House to be discouraged by past losses so each house event was approached in a sense of optimism. This drive meant that by the time the dust settled at the end of the academic year the house had victories in water polo, ergos, fencing, swimming and even in the overall under 16 event in one of the competition days.

Being a house with boarders means that the house must spend a significant amount of time simply entertaining its members. The house tutors rose to this challenge admirably with activities ranging from eating hot dogs to board games and even kayaking. But the tutors were not alone in devising entertainment, as during the Summer Term the boarders themselves also





took to playing American football in the evenings - a sport in which their eagerness to play was only matched by their lack of understanding of how to play it.

The end of the Lent Term saw the departure of the Housemaster Mr Marriott and his wife Jackie from School House. In their short time in the house they managed to achieve a great deal, not only ensuring its smooth running but also making sure that they got to know every member of the community. They provided a friendly face to go to with problems ranging from tying bow ties to help with UCAS forms. The house saw them off with a goodbye meal open to boarders and dayboys as well as all of the tutors as an expression of our sincere gratitude.

The start of the Summer Term brought

Mr Swanwick, Sue, Sadie and Buster (the dog) into School House to pick up where Jackie and Mr Marriott had left off. Within a few days Mr Swanwick was already playing football with the whole house, winning hearts and minds in a language the boys understand. As exams loomed the house grew quieter but remained in high spirits. Soon the various study leaves began, leaving the house somewhat depleted. The end of this year's Upper Sixth's era was approaching until finally the baton was passed on, leaving Henry Tipple and Justin Wilson as the new Heads of House.

Thank you School House for a fantastic year, and good luck for the years to come.

*Rex English, VIACW*





# Crescent



Sebastián Johns and Adam Parkes



James Beazley

Walking through Crescent last year, one would see and hear a whole host of weird and wonderful things. From the multiple games of mug-pong to the seemingly endless cooking; from the random conversations over tea to the invention of the water game; from the Cobban football matches to the erratic movement and disappearance of furniture, it was certainly clear to see that Crescent House was as action packed as ever. In fact, if last year is anything to go by, the only thing Crescent boys have no time for is apathy. Last year's foray of noise and excitement was duly conducted by the Upper Sixth and Crescent House certainly felt a lull after their departure in July.

Patrick Boyd-Gorst and Luke McCormack were hugely admired as Heads of House, leading from the front. Patrick, in both the 1st XI for football and 1st XV for rugby, ensured Crescent was represented out on the field. When inter-house sport came around, Crescent came out in droves. The most notable time being the number of boys wanting to play inter-house rugby even when they were labelled, and I quote, an 'insurance risk'. Regardless, Crescent merged with Franklin's to form

'Cranklin's' and played anyway.

Crescent was well represented on the water as well by Jonathan Lord and Luke Derrick, both of whom were in the 1st VIII. Jonathan is now rowing at Princeton University. Crescent's sporting prowess certainly isn't confined to rugby, football, and rowing however. Galen Wong was an integral member of the badminton and tennis squads. Last year also saw William Sharp compete in the national powerlifting competition,

having qualified by winning the regional competition the year before. William won the event and is the current British U19 Powerlifting Champion.

The most noticeable lull, however, has been left in the corner of Cobban's games room where, for the first time in a long while, the piano isn't being played by Sebastián Johns. Throughout the year, Sebastián's flare for music was shown time and time again. *Guys and Dolls*, last year's joint senior production,



Luke Derrick





Alex Wallis Smith

hence, became a refuge for those stuck with revision, to have a last minute cramming session with Wolfie.

Last December saw the departure of Alex Tate as Crescent housemaster. Much like the Upper Sixth, he was sorely missed. Although Mr Tate's time at Crescent was brief, his efforts to make Crescent a more communal and supporting place have stayed long after he left. Mr Tate is now Deputy Head at St John's Leatherhead and continues to have strong links with Crescent.

The New Year saw Matthew Kendry taking on the mantle of Housemaster - something that I can only imagine is tantamount to jumping onto a moving train. Within his first few weeks at Crescent he was exposed to the Abingdon and St Helen's production of *Bull*, featuring one of this year's Heads of House, Tim McGovern, and, Crescent boy, James Beazley, execute a deft and powerful performance involving bullying, assault, and, for the latter, nudity.

Of course, Crescent House would be nothing without the staff and our thanks go to all of them: Mr Deasy, Rev. Gooding, Mr Hall, Mr Fieldhouse, Mr James, Mrs Kaye, Mrs Waite, Mr Whitworth, and, of course, Jo our matron. We also said farewell to Miss Man and Mr Brenchley, and we wish them all the best for the future.

With Mr Kendry and this year's Upper Sixth now in full swing, Crescent House is once more back to its action-packed self. It is still as true as it's ever been: the Crescent community certainly doesn't care for apathy.

*James Beazley, 6NF*

saw him perform as Nathan Detroit. He also had another sterling effort as conductor of Crescent's House Singing entry - where Bastille's *Pompeii* just missed out on the, as yet elusive, top three places. It was just before his departure that Crescent heard, quite loudly, that Sebastian had been accepted into King's College Choir at Cambridge.

Along with Sebastian, Adam Parkes has started his course at Cambridge, where he is reading English Literature. Adam made a huge effort to help boys in the younger years and was revered by all of Crescent. Adam also played in many concerts last year as the lead in Big Band.

Crescent boys also proved themselves in other ways. Gary Wu won the Target 2.0 economics competition last year and is now studying economics and management at Oxford University. Gary was always happy to help out those who were struggling in his field. Gary's menagerie of talents was shown again as he starred in *Blindsided* - an award winning film by two other members of Crescent House; John Cheung and Rattanan Wonghirundacha.

The Upper Sixth provided many other highlights; Heyse Ip's art and Spiderman-like abilities in climbing; Kester Bond's alarming electronics experiments in his room; Arthur Wong's exploits on the football field; Benjamin

Bowers doing his best Bear Grylls impression on the local wildlife; Jamie Irwin's irrepressible personality and impressive beard.

Last year also saw Crescent feature heavily in the Debating Society. Jonathan Ainslie and Edmund Cornforth were made committee members with the former awarded the role of chairman. In inter-house debating both represented Crescent splendidly, leading to a close, and some may say controversial, second place.

The departure of Alex Wallis Smith, or Wolfie, as most know him, left the most noticeable gap in Crescent House. One would often see his John Nash-esque scrawls plastered around the games room before exams, left by Wolfie the previous evening. The games room,





## Davies'



The academic year 2013-14 was another vintage one for the boys in Davies' House. For me, it reminded me of one of my personal heroes, Muhammad Ali. I am going to borrow from Ali in order to illustrate what exceptional young men the Davies' House boys are.

***"I hated every minute of training, but I said, 'Don't quit. Suffer now and live the rest of your life as a champion.'"***

One of the things that I find most remarkable about the boys in the house is the way they can face up to challenges and set-backs, and keep on trying and learning – they just don't quit. This takes place every day and applies to those who don't get the headlines just as much as it does to the stand-out performers. Examples abound but there are a few who I think are deserving of particular note. On the academic front, Rostislav Gorbunov's A in A Level economics, Bart Jennings' A\* in A Level Chemistry, and Sam Adamson's A\*AA results at A level came at the cost of many hours of dedicated and determined work in the face of



previous setbacks. With regard to the Other Half, the effort Max Townley and Robert Yates put into encouraging and motivating the senior rowing squad, in spite of nightmare weather conditions, tough competition and early season difficulties, played a crucial part in the 1st VIII's victory at National Schools', even though at times selection decisions didn't go their way. In their personal lives too the boys demonstrate enormous tenacity. One of the achievements of the year was Akintomide Akinajo's

magnificent effort in scaling a 20-metre cliff face during the boarders' bank holiday expedition to Wales.

***"If you even dream of beating me you'd better wake up and apologise."***

There is certainly no shortage of competitive edge amongst the boys in the house. This is apparent in every field. It was great to see that the house continued to dominate the house sports competitions and we finished the year winning the overall cup for the U18 and





pupils overcome the challenges that teenage years can throw up. Service to others is a big thing at Abingdon and the Davies' students certainly did their part, whether it was Edward Hambly practically running the CCF, Bart Jennings and Samson Yeung travelling to Moldova (stocked up with sports kit from the boarders) to help out with the Moldova Project, or Michael Chan (Head of Boarding Pupils) developing and running the house council and putting a huge quantity of time into helping the first ever crop of Davies' third year boarders settle in. It was great to see the small things, however: Seb Hickman helping out in the house library or boys in the same year group clubbing together to try to solve that tough maths problem.

***"He who is not courageous enough to take risks will accomplish nothing in life."***

Those boys who left us from the Upper Sixth in July 2014 for university or gap years had the opportunity to experience a world-class education. They did wonderful things while they were here and they will remember those things for the rest of their lives. Those still with us will be aiming to live up to that legacy and make the most of the chances that present themselves over the coming terms.

*Ed Davies*

U15 category. The remaining category, U16, only narrowly eluded us. The house's performance in the squash U18 competition was fairly typical with Giles Waterson, Aaron Taylor, Seb Hickman and Callum Taylor - all members of Davies' House - collectively constituting the top four players in the School! It is impossible to name all the boys who represented school sports teams in the house, there are so many, but perhaps a list of the boys in the fourth form alone will give you a flavour: Edward Adamson, Tom Haynes, Stuart Pearson, Toby Collins, John Hobby, Oliver Grey, Joseph David, Will Sutcliffe, Harry Fishpool, Tom Bell, Peter Coope, Christopher Jackson, Henry Waterson, Samuel Wilmot, Henry Averill and Cameron Thompson - in short the entire year group! And the sports they played? rugby, rowing, football, cricket, tennis, shooting and swimming, to name but a few. Even in maths we proved hard to beat! William Lam, Joseph Nash, Patrick McCubbin and Narun Tantichirasakul dominated the school maths team at third form level. There were also some outstanding individual performances. 16-year-old Michael Fabes' 4th place in the World U16-19 Aquathon championships in Edmonton, Canada over the summer was one such example. Our representation amongst the academic elite was again top class with Thomas Fabes, Brian Shi, Joshua Poon and George Lennox all going to

either Oxford or Cambridge and Eric Ng attaining 5A\*s and one of the highest scores in the country in the BMAT exam for aspiring doctors.

***"Service to others is the rent you pay for your room here on earth."***

The best thing about the Davies' House boys of 2013-14 was their willingness to go out of their way to help each other. The pastoral prefects, Sam Alexander and Ben Yaxley (Head of House) epitomised this spirit, with each giving up hours of their time in training with the School Counsellor and helping younger





# Boyd's



**Member of Boyd's House 2013/14 reflect on their favourite moments from the last year.**

"Boyd's House has always been a really fun place to hang out this year, and I'm sure that will continue with Mr Morgan taking over – I certainly can't wait to see what changes he brings in!"

"Having joined the house this year, I was struck from the start by the way Boyd's House made it really easy to get to know people from the start, and remained a really friendly atmosphere throughout the year."

"One of the house highlights last year was the biennial house social, which saw several teams of boys, parents, and teachers compete to answer the Upper Sixth's quiz. Teams wrestled with a variety of challenging rounds, with the teachers' team finally emerging triumphant."



**Joe Russell**



**Alex Gatenby**

"It was really nice to have Mr Morgan take over the house for a term – his style was different from Mr Boyd, but certainly just as nice"

"Gabriel Drewett OA came back for a House Assembly to give a much appreciated 'thought for the fortnight' in his usual comedic style. This included the mention of many friends who met unfortunate ends, and a rather sarcastic moral conclusion - all greatly enjoyed by the assembled company."





"One of my highlights last year was representing the house in the inter-house rugby competition, as we all pulled together, made a solid team, and had loads of fun as well."

"Some of my favourite times of the year are the house sport competitions, and this year was no exception. I always like to compete in as many different sports as I can manage!"



**Sam Gibb**

"Competing in the Inter-house football because members of the house from different teams pulled together to meet one defined purpose because we did not have enough people to make up a team."

"Definitely winning the house basketball – an epic final against Christodoulou's. It was great scoring for the house and helping the team to achieve the win."

"Mr Boyd made moving school to Abingdon much easier. I met loads of people through the house, and love spending time there."



**Joseph Barber**

"It was sad to say goodbye to Mr Boyd this year, as he's helped me through every school year so far, and I know life in the houseroom will be very different without him."

"Winning the Inter-house general knowledge competition was a big moment. It was all about Tom Butcher. He was the wheels on the bus that went round and round; we were just seats making up the numbers."

"I always love it when the Christmas tree goes up in the houseroom – we all make a big effort to make it as nice as possible, as it makes the end of term feel especially enjoyable in the house."



**Alexander Chapman**



# Christodoulou's

I would first like to start with a heartfelt thank you to Peter Coke, who looked after the house during my sabbatical – he did an excellent job and the boys, their parents and I are very grateful. The tutors Kate Byrne, Emma Williamson, Peter Coke, Nick Revill, Andy Broadbent, Richard Taylor, Oliver Lomax and Stuart Evans also performed above and beyond the call of duty, dealing at times with delicate situations, which they resolved with their usual patience and aplomb.

Make no mistake... I am writing the remainder of this only because the person I asked to do it seems to have forgotten, and has also left school. I have returned from sabbatical even more dyspeptic and prone to rambling, and I cannot decide whether it's because I am missing France or because I am now approaching nearly two decades of school-mastering.

I should be honest with you and admit that I had originally typed "school mastering" lest I offended any neo-progressive educational movements, and then I removed the inverted commas because school-mastering is what most of us still do, in spite of New Labour-things-can-only-get-better calls to abolish outmoded ideologies: old fashioned schoolmasters still, it seems,



Joe D'Souza

have the appetite for teaching, pastoral work, shouting at no one in particular on the sports field, driving minibuses, late Saturday afternoon wet and cold fixtures...

All this had me wondering about my past influences, which shaped my 'value systems', or indeed eroded them, and what gave me the confidence, or delusion, to want to work in an independent school system

so alien to me. I was assured during my languishing London-based early twenties that I could have easily worked for Cazenove where no midnight oil was burned, and the Greek economy could be at its acme...

Aged 13, I sat at the back of the classroom and witnessed an unusual maths teacher at work. He had been, as a child, severely compromised by polio, his speech and walking being particularly affected. In 1983, in a crumbling, Greek-speaking, post war co-ed comprehensive, there was little appetite for learning or sympathy of any kind for anyone, yet he controlled a class of 42 pupils with eye contact, a calm voice and purposeful finger pointing. The chalk made serious and carefully thought out sounds on the black board... just demonstrated once, by the teacher at the front of the class with a half-moon shape of eager and attentive apprentices. You'd line up to take your apron, talking was not permitted and so you worked in silence, relying on your focus, ability to follow a detailed demonstration, decipher a schematic, and use your imagination. The teacher was oceanic in calmness, a man of few words. He barely spoke in fact, pointing at you with a claw hammer or a sharp chisel was enough.



Robert MacLennan





Hector Stinton

“...there was something wrong with a society in which education and class had such an incestuous relationship... to put it simply, the public schools were holding Britain back...”

Was he trying to rid the chip from his shoulder having attended as a boy a minor public school? Was it his lower second-class degree in History from Cambridge? Or was he an honest outspoken liberal who was a proper pedagogue? I prefer the latter. His book did not speak of public school mysticism or how great he was at what he did. It was honest about incompetent teachers in the classroom, work-shy learners and ambitions predicated on the notion that success can be bought.

So, I understood it to mean that, while you can hone your organisational-fit, you can also, very much so, be outspoken, anachronistic, and liberal and Marxist... and people might love you for it...or tolerate you in an endearing manner and hope you don't ever write about it, or that you move on to another school. Still, better than having Michael Gove around, and the Shadow Education Secretary who wants us to take an oath. And only now has it occurred to me that “mastery” is a limiting term as it implies an omniscient outlook and a cessation of learning and evolution... something that teachers oughtn't be immune to.

Alexis Christodoulou

Few words, very few words were ever spoken, yet we all excelled and somehow retained our digits.

Aged 25, during my first year of teaching in a public school, I read John Rae's *Delusions of Grandeur*. John Rae was an assistant master at Harrow, then Head of a public school in the West Country, followed by twelve years as Headmaster of Westminster School and Chair of the HMC.

The characteristic he spoke of is 'reputation': you need a good one, or a bad one, but definitely if you have no reputation, you won't succeed—an example of this being Eton's ex-Head Robert Birley gaining one such reputation because a portrait of Brahms on his wall was mistaken for one of Karl Marx. John Rae had also mastered an understanding of how public schools work and he was quoted as saying that



George Hale



Conor Graney



# Cotton's



Hugh Cutting

The new year saw a new Housemaster and a new house name, but the intention was that the old qualities that had served O'Doherty's so well as a house community would continue unabated and any change should be gradual, subtle and piecemeal, as well as fully considered before implementation. The vision was that every house member should aim high when setting their goals, should be encouraged in the pursuit of them, and should have their successes celebrated when those goals were met. House members should be disciplined and cajoled when necessary, but they should find their tutors and housemaster friendly, supportive and approachable at all times. Their goals need not be singular or narrow in their scope, nor should they carry unequal weighting in the perception of their peers - each of their achievements should be recognised and celebrated in equal measure.

The first opportunity in the year for the house spirit to be publicly in evidence was the House Singing competition, and there was a strong feeling amongst the boys that their hard work in previous years had not been rewarded by a favourable adjudication and that this year we must address this. The stated objective was to try to be placed in the top three and we were therefore delighted when we gained the third

place in the competition, and vowed to build on this for the following year.

We are blessed with a huge number of talented sportsmen in the house and a good number of the boys have been happy to participate in sports events to great acclaim. The list of successes in sport this year is long, but deserves special mention nonetheless. In the Road Relay we had the fastest third year team. We won a closely fought rugby final at U16 level and we triumphed at all three age groups of the Inter-house football, with success at U14, U15 and U18 categories. Similarly we dominated the hockey, with victory at both U15 and U18 level. Unexpected success at U16 table tennis was also welcome, whilst there was anticipated victory in the golf tournament by a massive margin and finally the delight of winning the U15 cricket. A large number of individual house members represented the School at various levels, many for the first time and a number also tasted success at a higher level still, with Charles Normanton having success at a national level in golf and Sean and Dominic MacLachlan representing Wales at hockey, whilst Henry Lambe shared in the rowing glories of the 1st VIII, and Adam Samiullah and Alex Davies both played cricket at county level. The legacy of Mr O'Doherty remains strong within the house cross-country representation and the school continues

to forge a formidable reputation in this field, led by a significant cohort from the house.

Intellectual prowess, thoughtfulness and matters cerebral also featured heavily in the lives of the boys in Cotton's. Dan Newton achieved outstanding success as one half of the pair who won every round of "Les Joutes Oratoires", a French debating competition held at Marlborough College, where they were declared West of England Regional Winners. The chess team regularly benefitted from the skills of Edward



Edward Reynolds





Edward Antonian



Harry Best

Reynolds and Jeff Abraham on their way to regional and national success. As a house, there was success in debating, with victory in the inter-house senior competition and in both public speaking and general knowledge the house was strongly represented. *The Martlet* team included many of our house members, and some editions were almost exclusively comprised of the writings of Tobias Jupp and Aidan Steer. The house is particularly strong at art, and the houseroom is adorned with featured works by some of our boys. The Art Department exhibitions

were impressive showcases for others, particularly those in exam years, with memorable pieces from boys from each year group within the house. Drama and music remain important creative outlets for our boys and it was wonderful to see house members in lead roles in the many drama productions last year, most notably Hugh Cutting as the main character in the senior production of *Guys and Dolls*. Hugh led the way in matters musical again with many outstanding musical highlights, but noteworthy contributions were also made by many others, including Edward

Antonian, Edward Reynolds, Harry Best, Edmund Breen and Harry Brown.

The prize giving ceremony saw the house well represented amongst the recipients of the School's awards, and showed the versatility of the boys in the house and the range of areas across which they achieved to a high level. Aidan Grenville and Tom Hampshire won the third and fourth year academic prizes respectively. Hugh Cutting was awarded the Aitchison Cup for Musical Versatility, Edward Antonian the Prize for Percussion, Sean MacLachlan the Spanish subject prize and the Roche Cup for Hockey, Laurence Lilley the Rugby 1st XV Trophy, Dan Newton the Richard Anderson Trophy, Alexander Taylor the David Haynes Prize for Computing and the Mervyn Gray Prize for Applied Science, and Sam Hogan the Williams Art Prize.

It was wonderful to see how much the boys of Cotton's achieved over the year and they were ably assisted in their endeavours by the dedicated team of tutors, to whom immense thanks should be given. It was particularly sad to bid farewell to Dr Leo Dudin at the end of the year, who tutored the departing Upper Sixth with distinction, and we thank him for all that he did for the house in his time at Abingdon.

*John Cotton*



Dominic MacLachlan



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## Franklin's



**Henrik Cox**

Our Heads of House this year were Henrik Cox and Sam Harris. Both were outstandingly friendly as well as responsible, helping to establish an excellent atmosphere. Benjamin Nabnian was a courteous and diligent deputy, and Callum Buchanan, Jack Grant-Adamson, Jacob Miron and Thomas Howard as house prefects all set a great example of cheerful co-operation.

The year began brilliantly, once again, with the sweetest victory. Yes; the House Singing Competition! Nicholas Schneider led us with a crazy passion through *Bad Romance*, and the crowd went Gaga. They cheered, they wept, and we took the cup for the second time in three years. Particular thanks to Nicholas, and Leon Wu on piano, but well done to everyone on a superb effort.

We went on to more victories in inter-house sports. In the Michaelmas Term, Gem Vongseenin, Adam Uberoi and William Chessell won the senior badminton competition, and Kit Greenacre won the senior table tennis. Ray Ren, James Anderson-Besant



**Jack Holford**

and Leon Wu then won the senior inter-house chess competition in a thrilling final. The result of these and all our other efforts was that Franklin's won the senior inter-house sports for the Michaelmas Term, which was a tremendous achievement.

Athletics day was also to bring a tremendous crop of successes. Alex Ainslie, Cailan Reddy, Conor Martin, Matthew Johnson, Max Nurse-Bosley, Giles Oldershaw, George Strange, Henry Bambridge and Louis Hudson all

won events, and I was delighted when Franklin's House achieved a great third place overall. The most extraordinary occurrence was that in winning the 100 metres, Matthew Johnson dipped for the line and seriously damaged his neck. I don't expect boys to actually break their backs for the house! Thankfully he is now fine.

The final inter-house competition of the year came at the end of the Summer Term. This was an occasion when top individual results were hard to come by,



but the point was once again reinforced that showing up and competing for the team ensures a strong house performance; the result was that we came third overall, which was a real achievement.

There were many individual successes too. Benjamin Schneider was selected for the national epee team, and his prospects are very exciting. Daniel Chen, Adam Uberoi and Gem Vongseenin won full colours for their outstanding badminton performances. Jack Holford captained the Oxfordshire U16 rugby team, and played for the First XV, for South West U16 and England Roses U16. Alexander Foster won the music prize, got his diploma in horn, and a distinction in grade 8 percussion; he also was top goalscorer for the first XI in hockey, and got his DofE gold award! George Simonson won glory for his team in the national schools shooting competition. Darius Oraee represented the school in the maths challenge, and won gold in the biology challenge; he also earned a distinction in his grade 8 for the Trinity Guildhall drama exam. Adam Spears earned cricket colours and is now a national champion for U17 Oxfordshire one-day cricket. Henrik Cox won the nationally coveted Robertson Scholarship to fund his higher studies in America at Duke, which was a huge credit to his qualities and attitude. I was very proud that the two Abingdonians to win this honour in recent years have both been from Franklin's.

I am glad to say that it was a happy year in the house as well as a successful one. The mood in the house was pleasant, and the room was well looked after. The table tennis table continues to be very popular, and will be retained.

I owe heartfelt thanks as ever to my team of tutors, who have worked so hard for the boys. I was delighted to find that our new sixth form tutor was to be Mr Phillips, and it was clear from the boys' reaction that he will be a popular new member of the house tutor team. The final bonus, late in the year, was the arrival of Mr Hughes' son, Ben Emrys. We wish the family well, and look forward to Ben supporting the house!

*David Franklin*



Leon Wu and James Anderson-Besant



Alexander Foster



Louis Hudson



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# Southwell-Sander's



## Overview:

As another year draws to a close for 'Southwell-Sander's' aka 'The Green Army', as ever there is much to look back and reflect upon. Firstly we welcomed Mr Barnes and Dr Burnand as our two new third year tutors, and Mr Haworth who joins the Lower Sixth. We begin by looking at notable achievements by each of the tutor groups.

## Upper Sixth

This year we say goodbye to 7JJ, and with them we bid adieu to their fantastic tutor Jayne Jennings. The tutor group have been Green Army stalwarts and were third years when I took over the house from Jamie Older. Throughout the Middle School, under the tutelage of Peter Willerton, it was clear they were a talented, quirky tutor group who enjoyed nothing more than tutor periods that analysed PSHE topics through the medium of *The Simpsons*. By the time they reached the sixth form it was

obvious they would go far. Special mention should go to Oliver Sayeed, joint Head of House Thomas Munro, Deputy Head of House Fred Clamp-Gray and school prefect Jamie Sandall, all of whom managed to take up their Oxbridge places. We also said goodbye to the likes of Deputy Head of House Ed Bryant, the 1st VIII cox who achieved 4 A\*s at A2, and Head Boy Leo Wood who managed A\*AA and is reapplying to university to read medicine. The tutor group also comprised characters such as school prefect and sharp shooter Matthew Allison, who headed his unit in CCF, along with joint Head of House Finlay Garland, who led the RAF section. In addition we say farewell to rowing mad school prefect Jack Squizzoni and school prefect Luke Teh, along with 1st XI hockey player Ben Mitchell, county golfer Aman Patel, Jonathan Rothwell and Harry Sandford all of who comprised a multi-talented Green Army Upper Sixth. Highlights of the year in no particular order included Oliver Sayeed's

superb summer research project on the Origins of Language, Mrs Jennings' memorable *Just a Minute* tutor periods, lunchtime dessert eating competitions, the house social involving karting and steak (can't seem to remember who won that?) and the fantastic summer farewell meal at St Edmund Hall in Oxford where Mr Willerton and Mrs Jennings made a great stand up double act and we were able to reminisce on five great years together. They are a special bunch of guys, led by two very different but equally loyal, hard working and effective tutors, and watching the lads grow and mature since their arrival is one of the true pleasures of the job. Goodbye and good luck.

## Lower Sixth

The Lower Sixth in Southwell-Sander's continued to build on their strong academic record with a string of notable extra-curricular achievements rounded off by another excellent set of exam results.



The tutor group has excelled particularly on the music front. Calum Farwell, Jamie Blackwell, William Johnson and George England all enjoyed a First Orchestra tour to Spain whilst Eric Whitfield and Jamie have also been noted for their roles in the School's Big Band. Jamie's winning performance in *Abingdon's Got Talent* and lead role in the School's play *Guys and Dolls* also put the house under excellent leadership to place a competitive entry in this year's House Singing Competition.

The tutor group's sporting performances also deserve to be noted. Whilst Joshua Burdass and Declan Field have represented the 1st XV on the rugby pitch, Owen Morgan has been a pivotal member of both Abingdon's 1st XI cricket team and 1st XI football side. On the theme of sport, Calum Farwell helped the 2nd VIII row to an outstanding second place at the National Schools' Championship (only coming behind Abingdon's 1st VIII), and many of the tutor group are hoping that he will be able to break into the 1st VIII this year. Sporting excellence continued with Jack Dawson and William Johnson's 1st team fencing representation whilst, as a whole, Southwell-Sander's Lower Sixth demonstrated outstanding breadth in sporting success when they rallied together and won the inter-house athletics in the Lower Sixth category.

Other notable performances include Ross Cook's and Owen Morgan's exceptional accolade of regional runner's up in the ICAEW BASC - a prestigious economics and accounting competition. Similarly, Liam Frahm was commended when he partook in the hotly contested Oxford Union debate.

Overall, the tutor group has shown excellent achievement in the past year and hopes to build on this success going into their final year at Abingdon.

#### Fifth Year

Leading up to our first set of important exams, the tutor group united to help each other with revision and general subject advice led by Dr Jeffreys. There were yet again strong performances outside the classroom, with Joseph McNamara and Lewis Dandridge having

an unbeaten rugby season for the U16 As, Ebyan Rezgui continuing to impress in the skating world, Joe Sandall and William Dolin representing the J16 As in numerous regattas, Joseph Kelly continuing to fly regularly, and Andrew Convery representing the CCF. There were many strong performances in the GCSE mocks, with five boys getting at least six A\*s. We all wait in anticipation for results day in late August. Unfortunately we say farewell to two boys from our tutor group. Ebyan Rezgui is leaving the school to go to Magdalen after three years, and we wish him every success in the future. Also leaving us is Erskine Wylie, who moves on to Cherwell School. Dr Jeffreys has led the group over the past three years brilliantly, teaching them how they really should revise and perfecting their dancing techniques.

#### Fourth Year

There have been many great moments this year for the fourth year.

Charles Quarterman has had many successes for cycling. He has travelled to the Isle of Man to compete in the tour of the Isle of Man, in which he came a very respectable 22nd. He then also competed in the U16 nationals, in which he had a fantastic sprint at the end and finished with a position of 15th. He also had some success in Belgium on Sunday 22 June, finishing 4th behind the national and then the regional champions of the country.

Another success is that Robert Harris, along with a few other boys from the School, has won a prize for competing in the South Oxfordshire and Vale area finals in the Young Enterprise competition at Unipart House. Robert, the project manager of the company, came up with the innovative idea of making vinyl bowls, moulded into a unique shape which could be used to keep many things, like fruit. They had to produce a ten page company report, detailing their business plan, then after that complete a four minute presentation to a panel of judges, followed by answering questions from the audience. At the end of the day, *Old School UK* took home an award for creativity and innovation.

During inter-house sports, a few boys from the year, George Aylard, Rory Finch and Scott Cook all competed in the water polo event, in which Southwell-Sander's had a close final match against Webb's House, finishing in third position overall.

Another strong inter-house performance was from the hockey team from the fourth year, including Byron Langley, Jake Windsor-Lewis and Charles Quarterman. They finished the competition as runners-up after a close final match against Cotton's.

#### Third Year

Throughout the third year in Southwell Sanders there have been many moments of success: Charlie Stoker getting into the Junior Regional Performance Centre for hockey, Henry Isherwood being selected for Oxfordshire School of Rugby, Matthew Coleman continuing to develop with his athletics, having represented the county for his age group in both high jump and 400m... and don't forget the performances in the inter-house sport competitions where we narrowly came second in both hockey and rugby.

#### Summary:

So as you see the Green Army marches on - sadly we have to say good bye to Jayne Jennings, who after seven loyal years leaves us to go back to university (lucky thing!), while David Haworth leaves after only a year in the house but many years being in charge of ICT. I thank them both for the support and hard work they have given the house over the years. Southwell-Sander's remains a house full of talent, be it academic, sporting, musical, entrepreneurial, dramatic or linguistic. But most importantly to me it remains a house that welcomes everyone and tries to make everyone feel at home. This is made possible by the hard work of a fantastic prefect and sixth form body and an incredibly dedicated bunch of tutors. But most of all, it is down to the attitude and behaviour of each of the 92 members of the house. It is an environment that remains a pleasure to be part of, and long may that continue.

*Robin Southwell-Sander*





The start of the academic year saw us move into our new house room, a temporary measure until a permanent new home is created in the current science areas. Another change to the year saw Mr Poon join our group of tutors, with the new third year being split between him and Mr Bliss.

The end of the first half-term saw the usual antics of trying to coerce, persuade, encourage, and convince 90 boys to sing a song from nothing to performance standard after six rehearsals. Thomas Kelly worked his magic and brought everybody together and by the performance, I'd go so far as to say that most boys were even enjoying it.

Congratulations should go to Thomas who managed to fit in the rehearsals and the extra time that was required for adapting the music, along with the duties that go with the role of Head Boy. He is the third boy from Webb's to be Head Boy in five years.

In the fifth week of the term, Joshua Valentine went to Italy to represent Great Britain in the Junior Karate World Championships, showing his exceptional ability and the result of a lot of hard work. To be selected was excellent but to win the bronze medal was a brilliant achievement. Speaking to him after his return, the tournament left

him hungry for more and he has set his sights even higher for next year. Good luck, Joshua.

On the very last Thursday evening of the first half-term, the third years had a 5-a-side football and table-tennis evening, as a way of celebrating finishing the first term in Middle School. Everyone had a good time and it was good to see Mr Bliss joining in with the football and showing he still has a good turn of speed, and Mr Poon showing he is a very useful table-tennis player.

In the second half of term, Cory Squire, James Law, Nathan Allaby and Henry Wilkinson launched aluminium recycling for Cancer Research at the various school assemblies. I was grateful for their contribution with this scheme. It raised awareness of the environmental impact of using aluminium and the benefit of recycling, as well as seeing if we could raise funds for Cancer Research. Later in the year I took the sacks of cans to a recycling yard and we raised £22.

Henry also wrote the runner up essay in the 2013 Oxford High Sheriff's Essay competition and won £100 and a visit to the Oxford Crown Court. The High Sheriff presented the award to him in December.

Towards the end of the Michaelmas

Term I took the School's senior swimmers to the National Swimming Relay finals held at Crystal Palace. I took eight boys and four of them were from Webb's (Michael Esnouf, Joseph and James Law, and Murray Eccleston). It was great to see them perform in a big pool and they all did really well against some quick opposition.

This year saw the 450th anniversary of the day John Roysse endowed his old school with money and property in the city of London. Roysse endowed the School on his 63rd birthday, and established a school room 63ft long for 63 boys. The Archivist marked the occasion by researching 63 objects from Abingdon's history. Archie Williams was one of the team of researchers and he was interviewed by Meridian television.

The last Wednesday of term saw the traditional inter-house competitions. Our glory event from the afternoon has to be the U18 swimming. With Michael Esnouf, James Law, Andrew Stoney, Oscar Jackson and Murray Eccleston it was always going to be a strong team and they did dominate the event, winning comfortably. The slight cloud to the swimming team overall was that the U16s lacked numbers (which is why Murray swam with the U18s as he didn't have enough U16 team mates to make up a relay team), and the U15s had a



confusion over times and only Amrik Sahota was at the pool at the right time—thank you Amrik for swimming and gaining some points.

Our second highest result on the day was from squash, with Louis Hampden coming second and William Taylor coming third in his category, ranking us second overall. The table-tennis players at U18 and U15 level overall gained a solid fourth, with Duncan Grant (U18 singles), Nathan Allaby and Thomas Padfield (U18 doubles), George Jeffreys (U15 singles) and Edward Fry and Freddie Bermingham (U15 doubles) coming a mix of fourth, fifth and sixth in their events.

The chess players, Rafi'i al-Akiti, Daniel Savage and Zach Muncaster, did well and came third. The other sports were badminton and rugby and again we were middle-ranking with Oliver Phillips, William Carter Keall and James Fitzjohn performing at badminton and Daniel Rohll, standing out on the rugby pitch.

The beginning of the Lent Term saw everybody getting straight back into work and by the end of the first day it was business as usual. Mr Poon started a Robotics Club in the Michaelmas Term for third years and the group went to their first competition in January. Joseph O'Shea, James Hogge and Angus Alder helped the group win their event and secure a place in the national competition.

Mr Stinton's Upper Sixth tutor group arranged an evening out before they got too close to exams and, maybe with a little influence from the tutor, decided to go and see a Brahms concert!

This year Young Enterprise was launched to the fourth years by Mr Fieldhouse. Several of our boys got involved and soon became prominent figures in the groups. David Mackney and Charlie Lindsay for Terra, and George Jeffreys and Piers Clark for Stuff showed their expertise and won a place through to the next round.

The end of the term saw a flurry of sporting activity. First the Road Relay—for some it's a time of thinking up a good excuse why they can't possibly run, but four of our fourth years didn't need asking twice. Ivo Brown, David

Mackney, Jack Lewis and Joseph Law remained undefeated for the second year in a row.

The other sports took place on the last Wednesday of term, with lots of boys involved in football, hockey, badminton, squash, shooting, water polo, table-tennis or ergos.

The Easter break saw lots of trips for various subjects and sports and one that was well attended by Webb's boys was the rowing training camp at Temple-sur-Lot, near Bordeaux. The weather was perfect for the entire week and all the boys developed their rowing techniques significantly in the week. Milo McNally even earned the prize for most improved rower in his year.

The Summer Term started and straight away had its usual focus of exams for most of the boys, with the fourth years having their exams first, followed by the GCSEs, ASs and A2s, and the third years exams at the end. Most of the internal exams went well and there were lots of very good results, and hopefully the external exams went as well for the fifth, Lower and Upper Sixth boys. There were of course other activities still going on, the Robotics Club and Young Enterprise being just a couple.

The inter-house athletics afternoon saw several notable efforts as Louis Ashcroft (1500m) and Cameron Dewar (javelin) won their events and helped the third years to an overall joint second place; the fourth years had three wins with Ivo

Brown (800m), David Mackney (800 B) and Joseph Law (400m); and the L6th had Alex Munro (400m, high jump), Michael Dewar (shot) and Alastair Smith (Javelin B) winning their events.

The inter-house sports afternoon on the last Wednesday saw a medley of sports spread far and wide with cricket at Cox's Fields, golf at Drayton, tennis at the White House Tennis Centre, rowing on the river and basketball and squash at School. Our best sport in terms of results remains rowing, with the squad of Jack Lewis, Tom Morris, James Hogge, Edward Fry and Carl Olavesn, with Freddie Bermingham coxing, narrowly missing out on retaining the title, coming second to Christodoulou's.

The cricketers found themselves in a tough group and in the style of the England football team didn't make it past the group stage. Angus Alder bravely had a go at golf, and starting from a position of little experience improved as he went around the nine holes. Joseph O'Shea turned his hand to squash and came sixth. The basketball team had a couple of good games, but came eighth overall.

At the Tennis Centre Max Paton played in the singles, and George Jeffreys and Piers Clark played in the doubles. Sadly this partnership was playing together for the last time as Piers will be moving to Los Angeles. He will be missed by many in the House and we all wish him well.

*Mike Webb*



**Webb's boys at rowing training camp**



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## Lower School



**First years rafting at PGL Liddington**

September 2013 saw both year groups in Lower School starting out on a new journey: the 55 first years took on the “real” challenge of adapting to life at secondary school, while the second years took on the “virtual” challenge of being the first boys at Abingdon to trial using iPads in lessons and for the completion of some prep tasks. Both year groups made a good start, with the first years being quick to get to grips with the complexities of the Abingdon timetable, the geography of a far bigger school site, and all the opportunities of the Other Half, and the second years responding well to the responsibility of being entrusted with an expensive piece of kit and being quick to work out which apps were most helpful to their studies while, for the most part, avoiding any technological distractions.

A few weeks into term we were very lucky to welcome Ian Rose as guest speaker at the Be the Best You Can Be Launch. Ian, winner of 2 Paralympic, 5 World Championship and 9 European Championship medals in judo, gave a truly inspiring and thought provoking

presentation and ran a workshop with the first year boys. He advised the boys that if they want to achieve their “#epic” moment, then they must not walk away from the challenges that will face them thinking “I could have done more”.

As term went on, routines started falling in to place for all the boys and minds began to turn towards the annual House Singing competition. James Chung did an excellent job of conducting our rendition of *Counting Stars* by One Republic, with Didier Delgorgue accompanying on the piano supported by George Simmons on drums and a trio of flautists (Drew Farwell, Jacob Henney, and Richard Oh). This year, for the first time in recent years, the judge did not place us in the top three – this must be blamed on the fact that rehearsals this year had been run by the Housemaster himself in our first year without a member of the Music Department on the tutor team, rather than any fault of the boys!

The Lent Term saw many of the second years taking on the challenge of applying for various scholarships

and it was very pleasing to see a good number of them proving successful – congratulations go to David Bunn, Alasdair Czaplewski, Alexander Hann, and Yazan Odeh (Academic), Angus Blomfield (Art Exhibition), Charlie Ball and Jacob Henney (Drama Exhibition), Callum Ravden (Drama), Ben Adams, Mayibongwe Chivizhe, Didier Delgorgue and Jude Stanley (Music Exhibition), and Ray Prince and Ethan Webb (Sport).

A healthy sense of competition between the tutor groups is very much part of life in Lower School and honours were shared pretty evenly during the Spring months: the road relay was won by 2H and 1E, water polo by 2P and 1W, and hockey by 2S and 1R. The final day of term saw the culmination of the Public Speaking competition, with first year champions 1W arguing for the benefits of increasing teachers’ salaries, and 2P speaking against the cost of the International Space Station. Judge Mr Hindley was very impressed with the standard of both teams but, by a narrow margin, declared 2P to be the winners.

The Summer Term is always very



busy and this year was no exception. Whilst inside the classroom minds turned towards the end of year exams, outside the classroom the boys were engaged in a wide range of trips and competitions. The U12A cricket squad had a superb undefeated season, becoming county champions, while the inter-tutor group competitions saw 2H winning all events bar the cricket (won by 2S) and 1R topping all the first year events apart from the athletics where 1E were victorious. A new competition this year saw the awarding of The Cooper Cup for Excellence in Reading (named in honour of Gaynor Cooper, retiring after over 20 years as Librarian) – 1R were the inaugural winners of this, having scored consistently highly across the year in the Accelerated Reader quizzes taken after they completed a book.

The term also saw plenty going on in the worlds of drama and music, with the Lower School production of *Who You Gonna Call?*, a reworking of *Ghostbusters 2*, written by Mr Phillips, and the annual Lower School Gala Concert. The former was a hugely entertaining mixture of creepy ghouls, rivers of slime, and heroic daring-do, while the latter saw strong performances by both ensembles and individuals, with a barnstorming number by the Lower School Band and a hearty rendition of *Under the Boardwalk* by a choir made



up of all the boys present. A highlight was the first performance by Junior Blues, a new group set up this year at the instigation of the boys themselves.

The now traditional Be the Best Celebration took place in the last week of term, and we welcomed back Ian Rose as guest speaker. Once again he inspired the boys, on this occasion joined by their parents, with an excellent speech and took on Mr Hindley in a brief judo sparring session. Following presentations from each tutor group, Ian then presented the special prizes: The Broadbent Cup for Sporting Excellence to James Coombs, The Dillon Cup for Service to James Chung in recognition of his work as a Lower School prefect

and key chorister in Chapel Choir, and The Woodgett Cup (for all round contribution to the life of Lower School) to Toby Rowles. Baker Awards were presented to Conor Chippendale, Alasdair Czaplewski, Alexander Hann and Nathaniel Reading.

The end of term saw the departure from the Lower School tutor team of Mr Phillips and Miss Spurling-Holt, both of whom are transferring to tutor in the sixth form. My thanks go to them and to all the other tutors who have helped guide the boys under their care through another very successful year for Lower School – a year full of “#epic” moments!

*Adam Jenkins*





## Inter-House Sport Results

|                      | Michaelmas 2013 | Lent 2014       | Summer 2014        |
|----------------------|-----------------|-----------------|--------------------|
| Athletics (3rd year) |                 |                 | Davies'            |
| Athletics (4th year) |                 |                 | Davies'            |
| Athletics (L6th)     |                 |                 | Southwell-Sander's |
| Badminton            | Crescent        | Boyd's          |                    |
| Basketball           |                 |                 | Boyd's             |
| Chess                | Franklin's      |                 |                    |
| Cricket              |                 |                 | Cotton's           |
| Fencing              |                 | School          |                    |
| Football             |                 | Cotton's        |                    |
| Golf                 |                 |                 | Cotton's           |
| Hockey               |                 | Cotton's        |                    |
| Road Relay           |                 | Christodoulou's |                    |
| Rowing               |                 | School          | Christodoulou's    |
| Rugby 7s             | Christodoulou's |                 |                    |
| Shooting             |                 | School          |                    |
| Squash               | Davies'         | Davies'         | Boyd's/S-Sander's  |
| Swimming             | School          |                 |                    |
| Table Tennis         | Davies'         | Cotton's        |                    |
| Tennis               |                 |                 | Southwell-Sander's |
| Water Polo           |                 | School          |                    |
| Overall U18          |                 |                 | Davies'            |
| Overall U16          |                 |                 | School             |
| Overall U15          |                 |                 | Davies'            |

## Lower School Inter-Tutor Group Competitions

|                        | 1st Year | 2nd Year |
|------------------------|----------|----------|
| Rugby                  | 1E       | 2H       |
| Lower School Challenge | 1W       | 2H       |
| Cross Country          | 1W       | 2H       |
| Hockey                 | 1R       | 2S       |
| Road Relay             | 1E       | 2H       |
| Public Speaking        | 1W       | 2P       |
| Water Polo             | 1W       | 2P       |
| Athletics              | 1E       | 2H       |
| Reading                | 1R       | 2H       |
| Cricket                | N/A      | 2S       |
| Swimming               | 1R       | 2H       |
| Tug of War             | 1R       | N/A      |



# Staff Farewells

## Manuel Krone (German assistant)

Coming from the University of Bielefeld, Manuel arrived on crutches after an operation but turned out to be a Ninja! He not only conducted the usual German speaking lessons with fourth years to Upper Sixth, he also impressed with his sporting skills by contributing to the Other Half climbing sessions and was frequently seen in the Sports Centre or around Abingdon keeping fit. In the department, he quickly became the go-to guy for any technical matters, transferring A-level listening files on to our iPods in a manageable and logical way, giving a mini-inset on how to use Google Drive, and setting off on the thankless task of ensuring all vocabulary lists on quizlet were complete. Keen to continue his own studies, he embarked on learning Spanish himself and has plans to visit South America after his return to Germany. We wish him the best of luck for the future.



boys to victory in the regional 'Joutes Oratoires' debating competition at Marlborough College. They have both been unfailingly cheerful and good team players, not only in the Languages Department, but in the Common Room as a whole. Julie has been inspired by her year's teaching here and has been accepted to do a PGCE at Canterbury. Julia is returning to France where she will be doing a Masters degree in English in Clermont Ferrand.

because not only did she work as an assistant preparing boys for their oral exams but she also worked as a teacher delivering the third year syllabus. She has now gone back to Spain to pursue other interests. We are extremely grateful for all her contributions to the School and wish her the very best of luck for the future.

## Julia Durand and Julie Domingues (French assistants)

Our collaboration with the University of Reims once again proved successful this year as we welcomed Julie and Julia into the department. As Reims has two separate campuses it is often the case that the French assistants do not know each other before they arrive but it is also often the case that they are firm friends by the time they leave. This year has been no exception. Julie and Julia had both completed a degree in English and were keen to make the most of the opportunity to spend a year in this country. They both fitted into the department very well and were most efficient in their preparation and planning of lessons and soon built up a good working relationship with the boys. A special mention must be given to their efforts coaching two of our Upper Sixth

## Marta Santana (Spanish assistant)

After work in the field of journalism, Marta decided to go into education and became a civil servant working for the Spanish government as a Spanish language and literature teacher at a secondary state school. In order to teach Spanish as a foreign language, Marta took the well-known teacher training course at the International House in Barcelona and immediately set up an online Spanish tutor website. The Spanish Department was extremely lucky to have this experienced teacher

## Bishan Huang (Chinese Assistant)

Bishan has been a lovely colleague to work with in the Chinese Department. She was hard working and never said no to any academic requests from our boys. She tirelessly worked with all her students this year, and helped them all to achieve the best grades they were capable of. The Chinese Department could not have achieved so much this year without her help. She was a valuable asset in the department. She has gone back to China to continue being an English teacher in a secondary school. We wish her all the best in the future!

*Victoria Pradas*



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## Dale Lodge

Dale joined the Abingdon School History Department in January 2014 for two terms after the departure of Alex Tate. He had recently left the army after a twenty-year stint in the Adjutant-General's Corps and, having served in Afghanistan and other hotspots, he had some good war stories to tell. Hopefully he found Abingdon less taxing than his operational tours but the experiences he had gained there certainly gave him credibility with the boys.

Dale quickly established himself as a knowledgeable and engaging teacher with a real passion for his subject. Despite having three third year sets he managed to retain his enthusiasm for the First World War and clearly enjoyed bringing the subject to life with his students. He also took on a first year class and quickly established a great rapport with his students. Dale accompanied us on our annual trip to the battlefields of Ypres and the Somme where he proved to be a potential battlefield guide with Anglia Tours!

Dale leaves us to take up a full-time position at the Duke of Kent School in Surrey where he will no doubt complete the transition from army officer to schoolmaster. We wish him all the best and hope he continues to enjoy the new career.

David McGill

## Gilly Prior

Gilly joined us as Second in English in September 2012 and was an immediate hit with boys and other members of the department. We hugely enjoyed working with her for a variety of reasons. Traits she had in abundance included her passion for literature, particularly poetry, her sharp sense of humour, her kindness, her real dedication to helping the boys she taught, her hard work and above all her great enthusiasm for teaching. A number of boys have spoken of how inspiring they found Gilly and how much confidence she gave them in themselves. She made close friends among staff, too, where she is much missed for her good company and wisdom. Gilly was also hands down

the department's most stylish dresser! She threw herself into tutoring, *Words and That*, and cross country running as well as various other less muddy departmental activities and showed great commitment to school life. Gilly had to leave much sooner than any of us would have liked due to family illness but we are pleased to have stayed in touch with her and wish her all the best for the future.

Rachel Yarrow



## Simon Marriott

Simon Marriott took up the post of Head of Boarding and Housemaster of School House at Abingdon in September 2012. Simon had run two music departments at Ryde School, Isle of Wight and Sutton Valence School in Kent. More recently, he served as Deputy Head and Head of Boarding at St Peter's School, York, before deciding to run an educational consultancy, which he did successfully for several years. An experienced music teacher, Simon was a welcome addition to the Music Department at Abingdon.

Simon's pastoral role was his main priority at Abingdon and he and his wife, Jackie, did much to foster the sense of community among the boarders of School House and the boarding community as a whole. This included entertaining the boys with hot chocolate in the evenings as well as devising

rewarding activities for the boarders over the weekends. A kind and gifted communicator, Simon was a great advocate for the boys in his care.

Simon soon became a popular member of the music team and quickly found a niche in the Music Department, where, as an early bird, he was able to find time to chat to both teachers and ancillary staff. He was keen to use technology to pilot some more modern approaches to his second and third year music teaching and took responsibility for the aural aspects of the AS and A2 music examinations. Simon took over the Community Service music activities and the School Choir, rebranding it Abingdon Voices.

Jackie's developing career as Head of Early Years at The Dragon School in Oxford – and a promotion to a role at Cheam School in Newbury – caused Simon to review his own position and, after considerable reflection, he took the decision to leave us to revert to his former role in educational consultancy. We wish him the very best for the next stage of his career in education.

Michael Stinton



## Alex Tate

Alex Tate left Abingdon in January 2014 to take up a highly prestigious appointment as Deputy Head of St John's Leatherhead. He will be a great loss to Abingdon School but we are sure he will do a superb job at St John's. Having arrived from Dulwich College in 2011 Alex's time at Abingdon has been, like his favourite caramel espresso, short



but intensely sweet.

Alex has been Housemaster of Crescent House since his arrival. The boys under his care have benefited enormously from his concern for their welfare. His time working for P&O Ferries prior to his move into the world of teaching gave him a particularly acute awareness of the quality of food provision. So, much to the boys' benefit, his careful monitoring of the fare in the dining hall played a vital part in raising standards in that area. His support for the boys in his house in difficult times and enthusiasm in celebrating their varied successes earned him their trust and loyalty. His advice to the boys regarding sartorial matters will, arguably, be his lasting legacy. The development of the world famous Tate wardrobe from city slicker to *Wind in the Willows* has been watched with interest and we look forward to receiving news of future changes in light of his move to nouveau riche Surrey.

In the History Department his imagination has fired the hearts and minds of his students, as evidenced by a fantastic set of iGCSE results last year - in no way related to the fact he was given a top set! He will be a great loss and we will all miss his unfailingly sunny disposition, even in the face of adversity, and of course his beautiful, lustrous, head of hair. There is no doubt that as he moves on we that are left behind will feel the loss of a great friend and outstanding professional.

*Ed Davies*

## Leo Dudin

Leo joined Abingdon School from the chemical industry in September 2010. This was not his first contact with the School having given a very interesting lecture on Discovery Chemistry a couple of years before. During his time at Abingdon the boys have really benefitted from his high quality teaching and passion for the subject. New ideas have been brought to the classroom and he has given fresh perspectives in departmental meetings. He is never afraid to experiment and this has led to highly successful ventures such as the joint Art and Chemistry Study Day. Outside the classroom he has been heavily involved with sailing and taken groups of boys on some very exciting and demanding trips. The Green Abingdon Project – GAP – which he coordinated was also a very successful initiative which allowed sixth form boys to define, research and present on issues affecting the local environment.

Leo leaves Abingdon to take on the role of Head of Chemistry at Uppingham School—Uppingham has a new science centre with feature staircase opening in September 2014—and will be much missed by the whole chemistry team.

*Ian Middleton*

## Lois Glenn-McKibbin

Lois came to Abingdon in September 2009 from Caterham School in Surrey, where she had worked for three years. She taught Spanish, Lower School

French and one year of Lower School Drama. Amongst her varied Other Half contributions were sixth form swimming, Community Service and the Karate Club. Her passion for trips made her organise the first ever sixth form Spanish study trip to Cuba, which now continues with the trip to Salamanca. Needless to say, she also led the Spanish Exchange to Santiago de Compostela, which has now been running for nearly 10 years.

Pupils and their academic success have always been her priority and she gladly gave up her time to help students excel in exams and support those who struggled. Nothing gave her greater joy than to see her A Level students continue their language studies at university level. In boarding, she had the opportunity of working in the three boarding houses and was a sixth form tutor - a role she thoroughly enjoyed.

During her time at Abingdon she had two children, Luciana, now three years old and Levi, now one. In March 2014, she left to move back to Northern Ireland where she will be starting to work in Belfast High School, a grammar school on the shores of Belfast Lough. We were extremely lucky to keep this linguist for all these years, and we now wish her and her family the very best of luck for the future.

*Victoria Pradas*

## Jayne Jennings

Jayne came to Abingdon in September 2008 as Head of the Modern Language Department after fulfilling the same role at Headington and working in many other schools during her long teaching career. A very experienced linguist, she taught French and German at all levels and has also been the expert for preparing potential candidates for French at Oxbridge.

In addition to her role as a subject teacher, Jayne has served as a sixth form tutor during her time at Abingdon, first in Older's House and then in Southwell Sander's. She has always been very committed to the pastoral care of her tutees, organising breakfasts and outings for her tutor group as well as supporting them through the





university applications process.

Jayne has a real passion for languages and is always keen to discuss the finer points of meaning and nuances of words and expressions. She takes an interest in French culture, both classical and contemporary, and visits France regularly, thereby keeping up to date with the evolution of the language and French daily life.

Jayne retires from teaching in order to go back into full time education herself and she leaves Abingdon to begin a new stage in her career as a translator and interpreter. She also plans to spend more time with her family, having become a grandmother in recent years. We wish her every success and happiness for the future.

*Jane Mansfield*

## Damian Shirazi

Damian's enthusiasm and energy, which he first demonstrated on the day he came for interview, haven't waned in the slightest in his six years at Abingdon.

The Cricket Club has thrived under his guidance. He lives every ball of every innings of every team he coaches. The enormous progress which the players have made is down to the detailed and dedicated knowledge that Damian has



imparted to them in the hundreds of one to one sessions he has done in his free periods, and out of hours after school. Every summer he has virtually camped at War Memorial Field and was often seen on the roller assisting the ground staff or painting the picket fence and trimming the hedge.

Damian was also asked to take on the newly established Football Club and did so with the same energy, coaching virtually every session during the week. The fact that it has become so smoothly integrated into our programme is a great credit to Damian.

He demonstrates great skill in the classroom, having the knack of prising knowledge from even the less sporty pupils, leaving them feeling valued and confident. His technical and tactical knowledge are of a very high level and his ability to forge strong, professional relationships with the pupils is one of his many key strengths. Damian has an unquenchable enthusiasm in the work place, making him a very congenial colleague, bringing to the department a vibrancy and sense of humour that was appreciated by all. He moves to Dulwich College to become their Director of Cricket.

*Andrew Hall*

## Lina Man

Lina came to Abingdon in 2006 with the main role of setting up Mandarin teaching in the School, as part of the Modern Languages Department. In addition she brought her academic background in mathematics, and taught mathematics across the School.

To build a department from nothing would be seen by anyone as daunting. It is up to you what 'flavour' to give the department, and to set a course, for study in which there were few roadmaps. Lina approached this with confidence and supreme capability. Her lessons tapped in to the enthusiasm of younger students to throw themselves into something completely new and different, but without leaving them





adrift in an open sea. Lina managed to map a careful course for students just starting out on new explorations with the language, with much support and careful waymarkers along the way. Her confidence in bringing Chinese culture into the school was gentle and all pervasive. The position of her teaching room, B15, on a major pedestrian route through the school campus, means we all took the brightly decorated classroom, with Chinese characters and advertisements dancing across the windows, to be a lively and sensitive portrayal of China, brought into a small corner of Abingdon. Another innovation were the trips to China and Chinatown in London that she arranged, extending further students' experiences of a culture that was often very new to them.

Her supreme care over her teaching extended also to her superlative support of her tutees throughout her time at Abingdon. The huge whiteboard in one corner of B15 was the guide for Lina's tutor group for every activity, notice (including commendations) and piece of news they needed to know: a work of art in its own right. Her involvement in the pastoral life of the school was immense with 8 years spent as a Crescent House boarding tutor. In a boarding environment her mathematical skills were much valued during prep time, when struggles with algebra needed to be addressed, but it will be her bright, gentle and caring persona that was most keenly valued as part of a community where all the ups and downs of life are seen.

Being Master in charge of Shooting was a surprise departure, but illustrated Lina's willingness to always be there to support the school: the job needed doing, so she would do it, and with her usual efficiency.

The images we will hold of Lina will undoubtedly be of a supremely fun and always bright and friendly colleague and teacher. Her trademark short skirts and fabulously high heels illustrated well her real love of life and determination to make sure there was fun to be had in every moment. Many will carry with them memories of her positive outlook: always bright and busy and with a ready smile for everyone, focussed,

and resolutely determined to be helpful. Occasionally the high shoes proved to be a challenge to wear all day, and Lina wandered the Masters' Common Room or top corridor barefoot, carrying her shoes along with her piles of papers and marking. It is to be hoped that she has found a comfortable fit at Aiglon College, in Switzerland.

*Vanessa Penrose*



## Jan Gardner

Jan joined the Learning Support Department in April 2006, bringing with her a vast wealth of teaching experience, gained in teaching in England, Germany, Qatar, Bahrain and Nigeria, in the maintained sector and in the independent sector, as well as in special and tertiary education.

She drew on this extensive experience to support the boys who came her way. She was determined and resourceful in finding ways to help them overcome their stumbling blocks, and they appreciated her patience and care. As was the nature of her work, she generally worked with the boys for relatively short periods of time, but many did not forget the help that she had given them in achieving their educational goals, when they had been at a tricky stage on their journey; they often came to say "Goodbye" and to celebrate their success with her, as they moved on to the next phase in their education.

Jan was a supportive and utterly reliable colleague, who was always ready to share her ideas and experience. Her

professionalism and friendship were very much appreciated in Whitefield, as was her sense of humour and generosity of spirit.

Jan retired in December 2013, having decided that she needed more time to pursue her Other Half activities. She will be travelling: Madeira and Morocco will have been ticked off by February; more destinations, no doubt, will have been reached by the end of the year. She will now have the pleasure of being able to "over-winter" in her home in Turkey, instead of being restricted to spending the summer there. Jan's garden will benefit from the extra time that she will be able to spend in it, and there will be more 4x4 off-roading experiences to be had. In between times, she may well learn another language. We wish her a long and healthy retirement.

*Chris Cross*



## Steve Brenchley

In June 2004 Steve was appointed as a post-graduate sports assistant on a one year contract, and was then appointed as a permanent member of the PE Department from September 2005. It was obvious from the outset that Steve was a very competent and knowledgeable sportsman, and that he had an innate ability to transfer that knowledge in the most wonderfully adept way to the pupils he teaches. He is an excellent communicator in his teaching and coaching.

Steve was a very well respected colleague, not only because of his convivial nature, but because he is a



very accomplished teacher, and has won the respect of his colleagues and, more importantly, the pupils, both in PE and in Biology. His diligence and exemplary work ethic have made him a valued member of our school community.

Steve also demonstrated his commitment to developing his own knowledge and skills by undertaking his PGCE through Buckingham University. On the back of his success as a student, he was recruited by the University to become a lecturer and course tutor, which is a great testament to his skills as a practitioner.

As Master in charge of both Hockey and Tennis, he has worked tirelessly to raise standards. Both of these sports have grown and developed immeasurably under his guidance. It is due to his endeavours that Abingdon now has a national reputation in these two sports.

As Director of Sport and PE at Epsom College, Malaysia, a brand new school, Steve has the wonderful opportunity to plan and develop his own curriculum, and there is no doubt that he will do an exemplary job. His ability to adopt a global perspective is one of his great strengths, alongside stamina, integrity, professionalism and a genuine kindness. He will inspire the pupils and stimulate confidence in his staff. We wish him every success.

*Andrew Hall*



## Peter Willis

Peter came to teach at Abingdon in 2004, first in the Chemistry Department and then in Physics. He was soon made Science Coordinator and was then appointed to the position of Director of Studies in 2008. In the latter role he revolutionised our approach to timetabling, immediately changing the software used and completely rethinking from scratch how to do it. He showed himself to be an independent learner in his inclination and ability to read books, do his research, learn how something works, apply that knowledge and then produce a synthesised solution that makes things better; he always had his eye on the bigger picture and focus on how he could improve the teaching and learning at Abingdon.

Peter was instrumental in the move to 55 minute lessons and the new shape of the school day. Here again, Peter proved himself to be a fantastic problem solver and a tremendous hard worker – this significant change to the way we do things certainly could not have worked had not Peter been completely on top of the practicalities as well as the theory.

Having brought into being the timetable change, Peter also became central to the planning of the new Science Centre, providing all the analytical backup to the justification as well as contributing to the vision. There are in fact very few major projects that have happened at

Abingdon that haven't had an input from Peter - he may not have actually been on the Senior Leadership Team, but there were times when he might as well have been.

It is typical of him that he's just about the only member of staff I can think of who took getting a sabbatical term as a reason to do yet more work for Abingdon rather than to have an extra long holiday or to pursue something for themselves. Peter was assiduous and comprehensive in touring Australian schools, examining their IT set ups with a particular focus on the use of laptops and other devices in the classroom, all of which experience we were immediately applying to our own situation and planning upon his return.

His move to Cokethorpe to become their Director of Studies, where it is a senior position, is exactly the right thing for him. He has been ready to step out of the shadows for a long time now and take his seat at the SLT table, so he goes with my absolute blessing.

*Graeme May*



## David Boyd

David Boyd joined the staff in September 2003 as a teacher of Religious Studies and boarding tutor in Waste Court. He quickly established himself as an exceptional classroom teacher and the boys have benefited from his intellect, humour and obvious interest in technology throughout his time at Abingdon.

His impact has stretched well beyond the classroom including setting up the



highly successful *Martlet* magazine, which bore the characteristic Boyd wit, and coaching the Debating Society to national success. He has accompanied boys on trips to Italy, New York and France and coached in the cross country and swimming clubs.

His interest in technology helped him play a key part in introducing iPads to the Abingdon School curriculum but it is in his role as a Housemaster that David will be best remembered. During his eight year tenure in charge of Boyd's House, he formed many supportive relations with both boys and tutors, demonstrating a genuine interest and care for all. He leaves Abingdon for a new life in Hong Kong as an ICT teacher and Housemaster.

*Emily O'Doherty*



## David Haworth

David Haworth first came to Abingdon as a physics teacher in 1994 and was then Head of Physics at Trinity Croydon before returning to Abingdon in 2003 as Head of ICT. Since then he has always had the strongest eye on what would be of most use to boys and colleagues. He is not someone driven by fads or fashions in the IT world; he is interested in what works and he is interested in how it makes things better. There is a word to the wise here about having a Head of ICT who understands what it is

to be in the classroom.

It was through the creation and development of Schola, the School's bespoke database until last year, that David perhaps best showed the phenomenal creative power at his disposal. Requests were made to him, sometimes for huge developments, and they arrived. And they worked. Piece by piece, David would listen to people's requests and ideas, and then (absolutely crucially) weigh them up as to the benefit they might bring to colleagues. And then he'd do the ones that were worth doing.

David has borne with immense good humour and infinite patience the fact that sometimes it doesn't matter how carefully you take some people through an apparently simple process, you just know that they'll be back in a week asking the same questions, since he understands that not all teachers 'get' IT and that his role has been to spread its use to the benefit of all.

Under his guidance, Abingdon has continued to develop its network and approach to the future and he has clearly placed Abingdon in one of the strongest positions of similar schools. The move to Google a few years ago was a terrific decision and has opened up a whole world of GoogleDocs and sharing that has driven us onwards and kept us up to date.

David will be remembered for his creativity, patience, good humour and camaraderie. He has been a popular colleague in the Masters' Common Room and has given a tremendous amount to D of E and CCF in his time, alongside the day job. We wish him well for the future.

*Graeme May*

## Simon Whalley

Simon Whalley joined the Music Department at Abingdon in January 2001. Simon had run two music departments at Christ Church Cathedral School and at St George's Windsor, which educates the choristers for the Chapel Royal at Windsor Castle. The post there also involved directing the Lower Chapel at Eton College, so Simon came to us with a wealth of experience of music teaching.

Simon's musical gifts as director of Chapel Choir, a role he fulfilled with huge distinction over a period of ten years, a composer and as a first class pianist were very soon apparent and his work, both inside and outside the classroom, soon came to be admired by boys, colleagues and parents alike. His delightfully modest approach in all his dealings with individuals made him a very popular teacher and he was able to cultivate a great love for music among





his pupils, as well as a great sense of fun.

As Simon's commitment to Keble College grew, resulting in him becoming their Fellow in Music, it was inevitable that he would have to reduce his time at Abingdon. In a new half-time role as the designated Composer in Residence, Simon was able both to allow his university work to develop and to respond to some significant commissions both in the UK and in USA. This included a commission to write the music for the enthronement of the new Bishop of New York earlier this year, as well as an anthem for the dedication of the chapel windows, an orchestral piece for a joint concert with a Japanese orchestra and, of course, the splendid new School hymn, *Teach us to Follow your Command*.

Latterly, key areas of Simon's work at Abingdon included teaching the composing elements at GCSE and A Level, running the close harmony ensemble, Abingdon Academicals, teaching the organ and helping many musicians successfully prepare for their university applications. Many boys were lucky enough to come under Simon's musical influence. We thank him for his huge musical contribution to our music at Abingdon over nearly 14 years and wish him well for the future.

Michael Stinton

## Gaynor Cooper

Gaynor came to Abingdon in 1993 as Assistant Librarian after a substantial career outside the School, having worked for twenty years in hotel management, lecturing at Oxford Brookes, and taking up a job as a book sales rep. She was then appointed Abingdon's first full time librarian in 1999.

Gaynor's relationships with the boys marked her out as special. There is no 'standard' type of boy librarian - some like books, some long to be web-master; some are gregarious, others timid - but all found themselves accepted, valued, taught a trade, given responsibility, encouraged to try out new methods and to innovate under



Gaynor's guidance. Every now and then, a boy's loyalty and commitment would continue for five, six, seven years...

Then there were the Christmas parties. A few days before the end of term, the Library would be 'Closed for Stocktaking'. Tables were pushed together in the secluded sixth-form area, quantities of party food and drink imported, music, silly hats and crackers, and just to keep it professional, most of the games were word games.

In Abingdon's grouping of the six secondary schools, Gaynor's dynamism and drive propelled the 11-13 year-olds in particular to increasingly exciting and creative opportunities through ventures such as the Reading Bonanza and Oxfordshire Book Awards. 'Shadowing the Carnegie' was and continues to be a great success and the Abingdon event one of the first in the country, while Gaynor's involvement in 'The Kids' Lit Quiz' initiated Abingdon's, and eventually Britain's, participation in an antipodean adventure.

As a librarian, Heads of Departments have found her incredibly supportive. She didn't buy every book they recommended, but she considered every one. Her question always was "would the boys read it?" If so, she bought it. She has been known to replace a perfectly good book, with a new edition of the same, knowing

that most people do judge a book by its cover, and that a new edition that looked up to date would be borrowed more than an old plain dusty hardback.

Gaynor also made immense contributions to the Other Half, participating in many D of E expeditions, the first of which in a snowy Lake District led to hasty visits to the shops for warmer gear. Gaynor found the typical backpacking tent a little too small and bought her own more substantial tent, nicknamed Chateau Cooper. As a colleague commented, "she certainly brought a new level of class to camping". Gaynor also participated in several First Year Adventure Trips and the orchestra tour to USA at Easter in 2011.

The restructuring of the school timetable in 2012 allowed time to be found for all Lower School tutor groups to have a regular library lesson with Gaynor once a fortnight, which has given her even more opportunities to develop their research skills, all important for their school careers, and encourage a love of reading, even in those boys who initially felt that there was no book for them. It seems appropriate that, to mark Gaynor's twenty one years of service to Abingdon, The Cooper Cup was created this summer to be awarded each year in Lower School for excellence in reading.

Anne Soper and Peter Willis