



Remembering Abingdon's Fallen

The School held a week of commemoration to mark the Centenary of the Armistice culminating in the Remembrance Assembly, CCF Parade and wreath laying ceremony by the two Heads of School.

Abingdon's comprehensive archives were used at a public reading and exhibition by the drama scholars. The students told the story of the school community during World War 1. Combining excerpts from *The Abingdonian* with photos and music of the period, the students admirably brought to life the voices of those at Abingdon a hundred years ago.

Other events included the Abingdon and St Helen's Joint Choral Society performing Mozart's Requiem, in aid of the Poppy Appeal, and the History department gave a lecture on the local history of the Great War.

From the archives came the very poignant story of the 1st IV rowing crew in 1914 and their coach who were featured in a short film produced by a parent. The film can be viewed on the website. Also on the website, the 75 men from the Abingdon School community who lost their lives in the Great War have all been featured on the anniversary of their death.

Message from the Headmaster

On 9 November we welcomed Will Gompertz, BBC Arts Editor, for the formal opening of Beech Court, which came into use in September. It has been hugely exciting to see this project unfold over the past couple of years. Best of all has been to see how pupils and staff have settled into the new facilities and made them their own.

There is a quiet hum in the Sixth Form Centre on the ground floor as students chat to one another, get on with their work with their friends around them or sit quietly on their own. The students have much easier access to our Sixth Form team now too, so teachers and advisors are immediately on hand if the boys want to discuss a university application, progress in their work or just catch up.

The library on the first floor has proved hugely popular. It has some of the best views in the school, especially of the beech trees which give the building its name, perfect for giving poetic or academic inspiration! Collaborative and silent spaces mean that boys can choose the working environment that suits them best. I was particularly pleased to hear that



boys are taking out more books than ever to read, with the library catering for every reading taste and predilection.

Our Art department has space to breathe on the top floor and pupils have been gaining inspiration from their surroundings. It's particularly exciting to visit the Sixth Form Studio and to sample the range and ambition of the work that our A Level artists are taking on.

Another significant benefit of Beech Court is that it has opened up a number of informal 'quiet spaces'. The school day at Abingdon is always busy and some pupils in particular benefit from time out when they can enjoy some peace.

The opening of Beech Court has allowed us to undertake a significant reshuffle of departments and facilities across the whole of the school site. Mercers' Court, the former art facilities and the Lower School Houseroom have all benefited enormously from considerable refurbishment. This has given us an environment which I hope allows all staff and pupils to give of their very best and indeed to draw inspiration from the wonderful mixture of older and modern buildings that make up the Abingdon site.

Michael Windsor, Headmaster



Lunch with the Lords

Six lower sixth students enjoyed the All Party Parliamentary Engineering Group lunch at the House of Lords, engaging in conversation with lords, MPs, industry leaders and fellow students from across the country. A post-lunch question and answer session on 2018 Year of Engineering included equality in STEM subjects, studying engineering at university, and the wide range of fields engineers can work in, from railways to video games. The students had a wonderful day and were a great credit to the School.

Outstanding Economics

Sixth former, Sam Christie, came equal second out of 1300 entries in the Royal Economic Society's Young Economist of the Year essay competition. Sam's essay on GDP measurement came top of the entries on that topic. This success followed hot on the heels of second place for Sam in Cambridge University's Marshall Society Economics Essay Competition where he wrote about optimal currency areas.





A warm welcome to the First Year

68 boys joined Abingdon's First Year this September. Here is just a little of what they had to say after their first week

“ I had a great first week, it lived up to all my expectations and I had a great time with friends that I knew before and new friends that I have only just met.”

“ It has also been amazing to try out all the Other Half activities that I chose, they have been so fun!”

“ I am really surprised I haven't got lost yet and I hope I won't get lost in the future!”

“ I love playing in the houserroom especially the air hockey as well as the huge range of board games. My favourite thing though was the cafe's chocolate muffins!”

“ The food is INCREDIBLE and I love the new houserroom.”



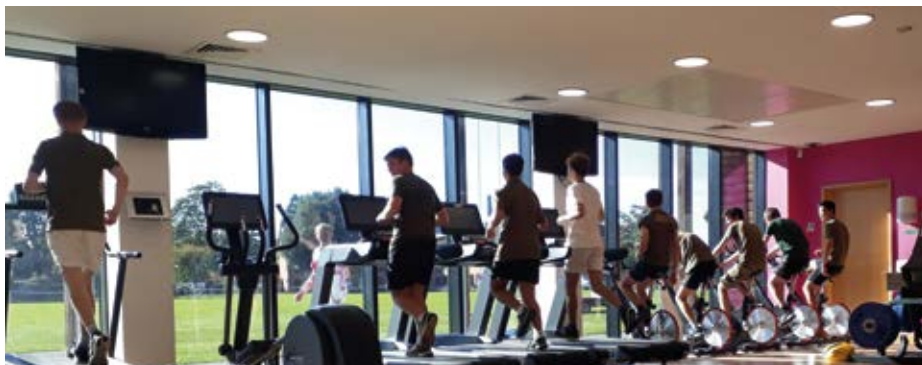
St Helen's and Abingdon join forces

Lower School pupils from Abingdon and St Helen's enjoyed two diverse social events, the Scrapheap Challenge and the Thinking Supper. The former required the students to work together to design a balloon-powered car and an egg-carrying parachute system - with varying degrees of success! In the latter they considered whether we should clone our pets, which led to some interesting and thoughtful debate and a very enjoyable supper.

1920's Dining Hall to Lower School Houserroom

Third year student Luke Prior studied the history of the new Lower School Houserroom. With the help of Sarah Wearne, the School Archivist, he discovered that it was originally an open air covered play area, before being turned into the Dining Hall in the 1920s. It then became the Grundy Library in 1974. Luke found photographs showing the different uses of the room and these are on display in the new Houserroom.





CCF raise money for Parkinson's UK

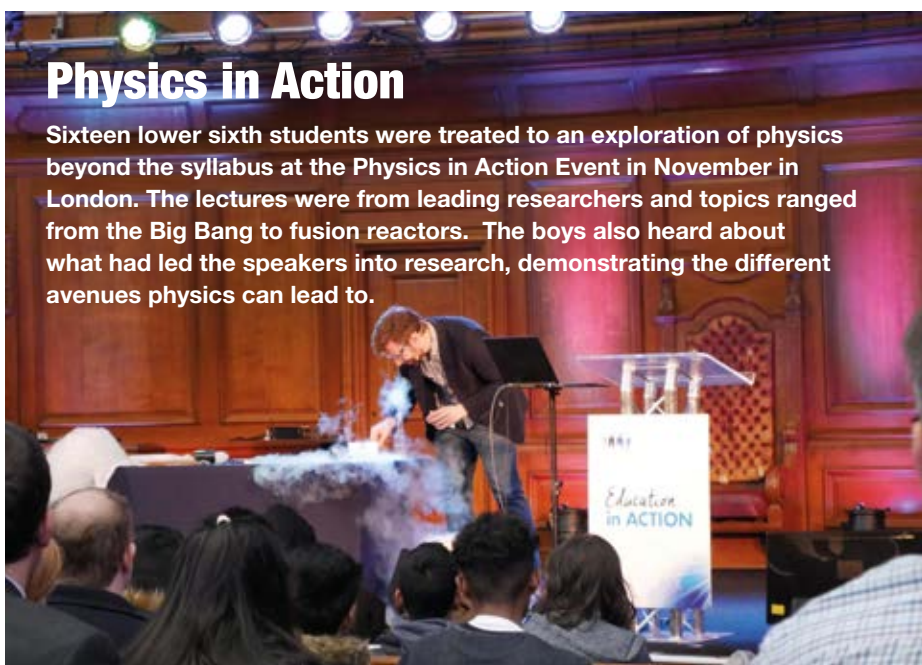
Sixth form members of the CCF walked, ran, cycled, swam and rowed the 1253km from Abingdon to our sister town of Schongau, Germany. Starting with the whole school sponsored walk then moving into the gym and pool, the boys completed the distance in 24 hours raising £1900 for Parkinson's UK.



Masterpieces of 19th Century Engineering

Ten fourth year students joined apprentices from the Atomic Weapons Establishment at the historic Crofton Beam Engine on the Kennett and Avon Canal. The working engines were explained to the students who received glowing feedback from Dr Mike Rodd, Chair of the Avon and Kennett Canal Trust, who commented,

'I would just like to say a huge thank you for bringing your delightful students over this morning – a really most impressive group of boys. We could not get over how mature and genuinely inquisitive they were. Some of their questions floored us and all our Crofton colleagues, who were running the station, felt that the special steaming was most worthwhile. And how great to see a group like this all most positive about becoming engineers! I hope that this will also be the start of collaboration between your school and Crofton.'



Physics in Action

Sixteen lower sixth students were treated to an exploration of physics beyond the syllabus at the Physics in Action Event in November in London. The lectures were from leading researchers and topics ranged from the Big Bang to fusion reactors. The boys also heard about what had led the speakers into research, demonstrating the different avenues physics can lead to.



First year Oliver Mallinson recited a poem by Roald Dahl to a full house at the Oxford Playhouse's 80th Anniversary Gala performance. Oliver was part of an all-star cast including two OAs, Toby Jones and Simon Evans.

Senior Team Maths

Congratulations to the team of four who came 7th out of 22 schools in the Senior Team Maths Challenge.



1000 take to the Thames

Over 1000 students and staff walked, ran, rowed or canoed the Biennial Sponsored Walk. This year the boys were raising money for Mary's Meals, which aims to ensure every child in the world is able to get a school lunch, and Crisis, a national charity that works to end homelessness within the UK. Introduced in 1986 the walk raised £7000 in its first year rising to £28000 in 2016. The current total for 2018 is over £24000.



ASP makes the shortlist

Abingdon School's Science Partnership, ASP, has been shortlisted at the prestigious Tes Independent School Awards 2019 in the independent-state school partnership category. Results will be announced on 1st February. We wish them the best of luck.



National Poetry Day

This annual event brings the whole school together to celebrate the energy, joy and wonder of the written word. We run a hotly contested whole-school poetry competition which includes a staff category. Tutor groups across the school share their favourite poems and there's a popular open mic event at lunchtime, where boys drop by to listen or read a favourite poem or one they have written themselves.



Sixth formers try their hand at teaching

Students from Larkmead and Fitzharrys schools joined 15 Abingdon sixth formers to take part in a program of academic mentoring. This is one of the many initiatives undertaken by our partnership programme, Abingdon School in Partnership, ASiP. The sixth formers planned a series of English and Maths lessons to teach to key stage 3 students from each of the three schools. The standard of organisation, collaboration and engagement was superb.

Building links with Chile

Fifth form and lower sixth students who are touring Chile and Argentina in the summer with the senior rugby squad, hosted 40 boys and girls from Craighouse School in Chile. The two day visit included a hockey match for the girls against Headington and the boys taking on our 1st XV. We very much look forward to the reciprocal visit.



Learning from the Maestro

The violin masterclass given by Levon Chilingirian gave six of our senior violinists the opportunity to hear the wisdom of the Maestro - his relaxed warmth, empathy and gentle sense of humour is perfect for the boys to learn from.





The Bellringing Club joined forces with ringers from St Helen's Church for an outing to local churches. The boys developed their skills and improved their striking.



Left to right – Gerald Zhang, David Harding, Liam Deegan, James Magé

Record success in the Arkwright Engineering Scholarships

Founded in 1991, the Arkwright Engineering Scholarships programme aims to identify, inspire and nurture future leaders in engineering and design. Only the highest performing students are selected and those who succeed receive academic and financial support during their studies. Abingdon has a long history of students successfully being awarded the scholarship, with many now working in the fields of architecture, engineering and product design. This year was an exceptional year with a record four students securing the prestigious award. This now gives us a total of six scholars in the Sixth Form.

Studying Geology

The annual Geology Day at the Natural History Museum in Oxford was enjoyed by all with talks on topics as diverse as “snow ball” earth, the geology of Mars and volcano risk management. There was also a chance to go behind the scenes at the Museum and look at William Smith's original geology maps and dinosaur remains that have been found in Oxfordshire.





Oxford University trained at Abingdon before the Varsity Match, sparing time to coach our 1st XV.

Christmas Celebrations

Local residents were invited to our annual Christmas tea party with festive music from the Brass Band and Music in the Community group and mince pies and prawn vol au vents from the catering team. Highlights of the afternoon were the raffle expertly run by Aron Lavis and Qasim Naqvi, and the quiz organised by Billy Backhouse and Rory Bishop.



Healthy Pre-Christmas Sales for Young Enterprise

The Young Enterprise teams made the most of the festive season with stands at the St Helen's and Abingdon Prep Christmas fairs. Team "Paix" did extremely well with a range of Christmas items while Team "Water Works" took advanced orders for their colourful, collapsible water bottles and Team "Bamboozle" offered a range of passive mobile phone amplifiers, with a strong sustainability message.

Lacrosse

The annual St Helen's v Abingdon lacrosse match saw the girls victorious once again!



MFL Debating Competition

Arguing about whether it's better to be attacked by 20 chicken-sized horses or a singular horse-sized chicken is hard enough in English but proved considerably trickier in a foreign language. However, the eight Abingdon and two Saint Helen's students who took part in the MFL debating competition at Cheltenham College were able to rise to the challenge!



The School's Entomology Society study this giant spiny stick insect *Eurycantha calcarata* which is native to New Guinea. This female is able to reproduce without a mate by parthenogenesis.

Be the Best You Can Be



This year's Lower School Be the Best You Can Be programme welcomed back a truly inspirational guest speaker Talan Skeels-Piggins. Talan, paralysed from the chest down in a road accident in 2003, told the story of how he overcame adversity to take part in the 2010 Winter Olympics as a downhill skier and become the first paraplegic in the world to compete against able-bodied racers in motorcycling. He gave the boys plenty of advice that will stand them in good stead as they journey through Lower School and beyond, including the importance of realising that "failing is part of learning".

Inspiration from the Abingdon Film Unit



Eleven films were premiered at this year's annual screening from the AFU. Documentaries outnumbered animation and fiction, and the range of subject matter explored was as wide as ever. There was certainly something to engage everyone.

While all the films were excellent, Freddie Marshall, Joe Bradley and David Bicarregui won awards that honour the memory of the AFU's co-founder Michael Grigsby. The films earned particular praise for their outstanding creative flair and technical accomplishment.

Studying Wildlife with Oxford University

Abingdon Science Partnership co-ordinated a successful bid for a prestigious Royal Society Partnership Grant allowing schools to work with practising scientists and engage in real research. The project involves using camera traps to study wildlife behaviour at a variety of school sites around Abingdon.





Lower School practised drawing and illustration skills inspired by Marcello Barenghi.

Model United Nations Conference



This term saw Abingdon's inaugural conference held at the school, AbingMUN18. Over 150 delegates from nine schools took part and debates included sanctions against developing nations, the Iranian nuclear deal, contemporary slavery and the deforestation and destruction of habitats. Delegates also heard a fascinating and insightful speech by Colm Wilson, a senior humanitarian advisor at the Department for International Development. The standard of debate was very high and it was a tremendous occasion for all those involved.

Team building

helps the first years to settle in and get to know each other.



Leavers' Destinations 2018

The list of university destinations is correct as of the end of August 2018: it refers to university places secured by those who applied in the 2017-18 UCAS application cycle. Where known, we have also included places won outside the UCAS system. We hope the list demonstrates the range of universities and courses for which Abingdon pupils are accepted. The number in brackets refers to the number of boys taking that course if more than one.

•(place deferred to 2019)

51

Oxbridge places over the last three years

EDINBURGH
Business Management
History•
Italian & History•
Mechanical Engineering
Medicine

LEEDS COLLEGE OF MUSIC
Popular Music

LEEDS
Biochemistry
Biological Sciences
Economics & Management
Electronics & Renewable
Energy Systems
Environment & Business
History & Philosophy•
Spanish, Portuguese &
Latin American Studies•

BRADFORD
Physiotherapy

MANCHESTER METROPOLITAN
Criminology

MANCHESTER
Economics & Finance•
Materials & Science
Engineering

KEELE
Geography

BIRMINGHAM
Biological Sciences
Economics
History
Liberal Arts & Sciences
Mechanical Engineering
Medicine (2)
Modern Languages•
Music
Philosophy

ASTON
Marketing

SWANSEA
Business Management
Electronic &
Electrical Engineering
Marine Biology
Zoology•

CARDIFF
Biomedical Sciences (2)
Chemistry
Geography (Human)
History
International Relations
Law
Medical Pharmacology
Psychology

EXETER
Biological Sciences
Computer Science
English
Geography (4)
Geography•
History (2)
International Relations
Law (2)
Mechanical Engineering
Physics
PPE (2)

UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST OF ENGLAND
Graphic Design•

BRISTOL
Chemistry (2)
Economics & Management
Engineering Mathematics
French & German•
Geography
History
History•
Management with Innovation
Mechanical Engineering

BATH
Aerospace Engineering
Business Administration•
Chemical Engineering
Chemistry
Economics (2)
International Development
with Economics
Mathematics & Physics
Mechanical Engineering
Mechanical Engineering•
Natural Sciences

WARWICK
English & Theatre Studies
Politics & International Studies
PPE (2)

OXFORD BROOKES
Economics
International Business & Technology (foundation)
Motorsport Engineering

ABERDEEN
Politics & International
Relations

NEWCASTLE
Chemistry
Geography
Mechanical Engineering

NORTHUMBRIA
Business
Management•

SHEFFIELD
Materials Science
& Engineering

SHEFFIELD HALLAM
Architecture•

DURHAM
Classics
Computer Science
Economics
Economics•
General Engineering
Law
Modern Languages

YORK
Chemistry
English
History•
History & Politics
PPE
Psychology

NOTTINGHAM
History
Mechanical
Engineering (2)
Veterinary Medicine

LOUGHBOROUGH
Banking Finance &
Management
Computing & Management
Electronic & Electrical
Engineering (foundation)
Geography•
Product Design &
Technology
Product Design &
Technology•

LEICESTER
Marketing

CAMBRIDGE
Computer Science (2)
Engineering (2)
Human, Social & Political Sciences
Land Economy•
Linguistics
Mathematics
Natural Sciences (2)

READING
Geography (Human)

ESSEX
Management Economics

KENT
Comparative Literature

SOAS
Politics & International Relations

QUEEN MARY COLLEGE
Biomedical Sciences

BIRKBECK LONDON
Arts & Humanities (foundation)

ROYAL HOLLOWAY
Drama & Music

IMPERIAL COLLEGE LONDON
Chemistry
Computing (2)
Electronic & Electrical Engineering•
Medical Biosciences

KING'S COLLEGE LONDON
Chemistry
French

LONDON SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS & POLITICS
International Relations
Law
PPE

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON
Applied Medical Sciences
Biochemistry
Chemistry with Management Studies
Classics (3)
Economics (2)
Electronic & Electrical Engineering
History
Medicine (3)
Modern Languages
Pharmacy
Philosophy
Russian & History

SURREY
Chemistry
Criminology

SUSSEX
Social Sciences
(foundation)•

SOUTHAMPTON
History
History•

SOUTHAMPTON SOLENT
Sports Coaching &
Development

OXFORD
Ancient & Modern History
Biochemistry
Chemistry
Classics (2)
Classics & French
English Language &
Literature (2)
History
Japanese
Mechanical Engineering

International

HONG KONG
City University

USA
Boston University
Columbia University
University of Pennsylvania
Yale University



Leavers' Destinations

Moving on

2018 proved to be yet another highly successful year for Abingdonians with 201 entrants, 30 of whom were OAs, applying to UK universities. The trend to apply to traditional courses at top universities continued, with boys securing places at Oxford (11) and Cambridge (10), and with Exeter (17), Bath (11), Bristol (10) and Durham (7) all featuring prominently. London drew many applications, to Imperial, King's College, LSE and UCL, the latter topping the list with 17 places won.

70% of all applicants gained a place at their first-choice university, a particularly impressive performance given the

competitive nature of the universities to which our students applied. It could also be said that 2018 was a 'buyer's market' with several universities accepting students who did not quite make the grade. This seems to be an upward trend, although it is less prominent amongst the Russell Group universities.

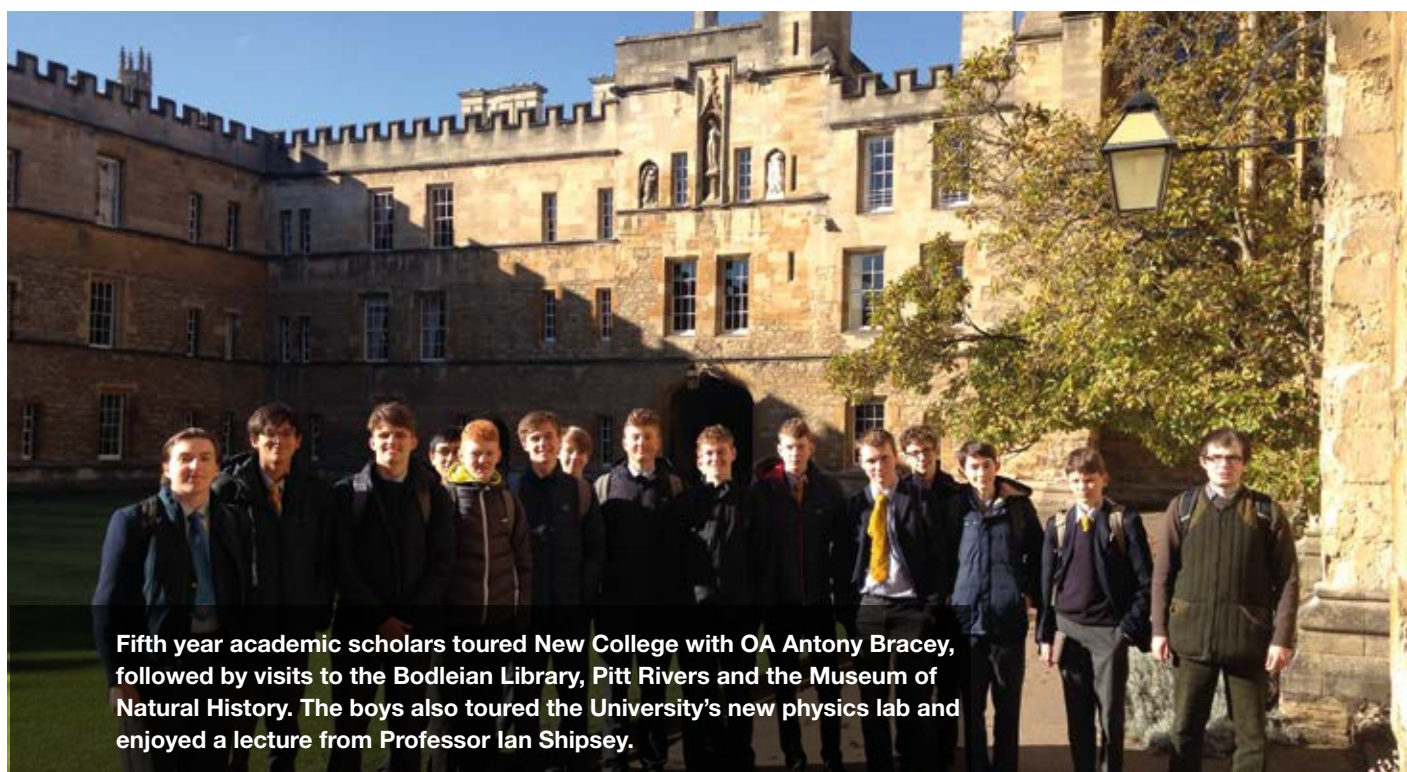
The popularity of degree courses was spread pretty evenly between the disciplines; the sciences, social sciences, arts and humanities all seeing their fair share of applications. The 24 places to study engineering were countered by 17 places gained to study history, 13 for economics, and 11 for geography and modern languages apiece. Some

boys opted for less traditional choices with Abingdonians embarking on degree studies in subjects as diverse as criminology, liberal arts, graphic design and popular music. As the depth and breadth of courses on offer grows, students have increasingly exciting opportunities ahead of them in the years to come.

In addition to the UK destinations, five boys won places to study overseas, one at each of the following:

Boston University, Columbia University, Hong Kong University, University of Pennsylvania, Yale University

Caroline Taylor,
Assistant Upper Master, Universities



Fifth year academic scholars toured New College with OA Antony Bracey, followed by visits to the Bodleian Library, Pitt Rivers and the Museum of Natural History. The boys also toured the University's new physics lab and enjoyed a lecture from Professor Ian Shipsey.

Star performance

The audience in the Amey Theatre was treated to a very special concert where the star performance was not from a young musician but from a new arrival to the School's Music department, a model D Steinway piano.

For the last 14 years the piano has been the instrument of choice for some of the world's finest pianists at the South Bank Centre – the Royal Festival Hall, the Queen Elizabeth Hall and the Purcell Room.



Senior Solo Competition

This year's competition showcased eight stunning performances from Abingdon's most accomplished musicians. Mr Neil Farrow, who is Director of Music at Our Lady's, was the adjudicator awarding third place to David Bicarregui, second to Oliver Simpson and first prize to Ashwin Tennant.



Solo Concert Platform No2

The platform provided an opportunity to hear 15 excellent solo performances from a range of talented musicians representing three areas of instrumental teaching in the school – woodwind, strings and piano.

The Christmas Concerts

This year's Christmas concerts took place over two evenings and were devised to give nine of the School's choirs, bands and orchestras a platform to share and celebrate their work this term. They were very much enjoyed by all.



The Greatest Showman tops the bill

School House picked up first prize at this year's House Singing Competition with *The Greatest Showman*. Pygott's came second with *California Dreamin'* and Crescent came third with *Mr Blue Sky*.



Chapel Choir relished the opportunity to sing at the Albert Hall in the Scratch Youth Messiah, raising money for WaterAid.



Harry the Piano entertains

Young pianists from Abingdon and St Helen's explored improvisation in a fascinating workshop with the virtuoso pianist and internationally acclaimed musician Harry the Piano. Harry went on to entertain a large audience in the Amey Theatre in the evening.



Loserville – Tickets on sale!

Excitement is building for this year's joint senior musical with St Helen's.

LOSERVILLE, the bold and brilliant rock musical comes to the Amey Theatre for three nights from 6-8 February. Created by James Bourne of the band Busted and Elliot Davis, it is a colourful and catchy ride through the life of the underdog.

The cast was very lucky to have a masterclass with actor Aaron Sidwell, who played lead character Michael Dork in the original production. Aaron gave our actors some amazing insight into his time in the show, and led them in a singing and acting masterclass that was exciting and inspirational.

Tickets: £12, book online at
abingdon.org.uk/future_events



Lord of the Flies

Our middle school boys have been hard at work this term, creating a highly stylised production of *Lord of the Flies*. The two performances were sold out and the audience was hugely appreciative of this ambitious production.



Out and About

China

Students improved language skills and their knowledge of Chinese culture in Beijing and Xian.



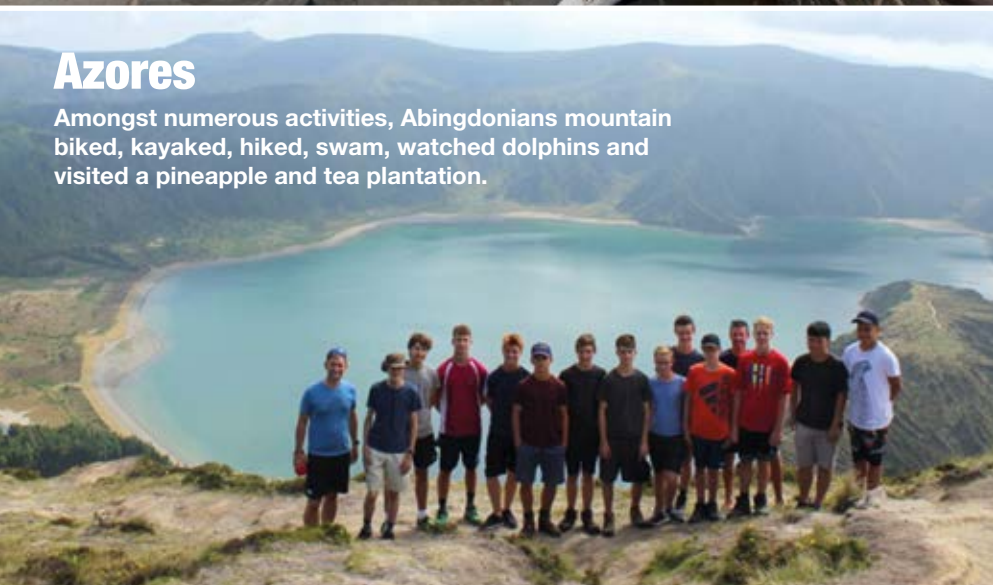
Spain

The Boat Club concentrated on fitness and skills in Banyoles.



Azores

Amongst numerous activities, Abingdonians mountain biked, kayaked, hiked, swam, watched dolphins and visited a pineapple and tea plantation.



Adventure training, Lake District



Italy

Classicists explored sites in Rome and the Bay of Naples including the Colosseum, the Palatine, Forum Romanum, Pompeii, Herculaneum and the Naples Archaeological Museum. The boys also enjoyed less well known sites, which were just as compelling.





Costa Rica

10 students worked on a turtle conservation project on the Pacific coast, trekked through hidden corners of the rain forest, studied the use of animals and plants for medicinal and survival purposes, zip-wired through the cloud forest and learnt all about coffee and chocolate which they sampled aplenty!



Madagascar

25 boys explored remote regions of Madagascar on a biology field trip. They spent a week in the forest with scientists collecting data on flora and fauna. Travelling onto the island of Nosy Be, those who were qualified scuba divers completed a marine ecology course surveying the reefs.



Greece

32 students from the 4th year upwards sailed around the Aegean Islands. The 450 mile challenging route can be used towards day and coastal skipper qualifications.



Moldova

14 sixth formers visited Moldova working with our partner charity Agape, organising summer camps for Moldovan children.



Silver DofE

8 boys completed a very challenging Silver DofE canoe practice expedition covering the 73km from Castle Eaton to Bablock Hythe and then back to the Boathouse with two overnight camps.





The Career Maze: How Parents Can Help

by Michael Triff, Head of Career Guidance

I'm the parent of two teenagers. You would be forgiven if you presumed that my kids enjoy the benefit of having a careers adviser as a father; the truth is that (often) they don't. Have you ever served up a nugget of advice from your own career only to see your son wince and quickly reach for his headphones? And, have you then seen how, when someone else offers exactly the same advice, he assiduously makes notes. Same message, different messenger. Makes all the difference.

But don't lose heart, because parents can – and should – play a significant role in guiding their children through the career maze. In fact, research suggests that the biggest influence on a pupil's career thinking comes from parents. Of course, not all parents – indeed, not all teachers – believe that educational choices should be made with career considerations in mind. While choosing A Level subjects at age 16 or a single or joint degree course at age 18, based purely on interest and ability and without career considerations, may work out just fine, there is plenty of scope for error. I say, why take the chance? The right intervention, at the right time, might reveal a different perspective.



For parents looking to help their son, here are a few ideas for starters.

- Talk to him about what he enjoys doing, what he is (or could become) good at, and what gives him personal satisfaction and reward.
- Ask him questions that facilitate exploration of his thoughts and foster confidence in his ideas.
- Remind him that there are many different occupations from which to choose (including many on the 'road less travelled') and excellent online resources available to research them.
- Encourage and enable him to pursue his ambitions, even if you don't share his enthusiasm.
- Take him to your workplace, talk to him about what you do and where your career path has taken you, and identify the knowledge and skills you have used along the way so he gets a sense of what the world of work is like, understands how careers evolve, and realises that he will need to prepare himself, whatever he does.
- Urge him to attend career events, fairs and talks at school and to undertake work experience.
- Encourage his participation in a range of extra-curricular activities, in and out of school, through which he can build a whole host of capabilities valuable in a career and life.

And, finally, support of – and show you have confidence in – his eventual decisions.

Details about the Abingdon School Career Guidance Programme are available online at:
www.abingdon.org.uk/careers



To have another language is to possess a second soul.

Taking a look at....

Modern Foreign Languages, MFL

We asked Modern Foreign Languages Co-ordinator and German teacher, Alexandra von Widdern, to tell us more about the MFL department which has 14 staff (full and part time) plus 5 language assistants.

September saw MFL move into bright, new accommodation in Mercers' Court complete with a dedicated sixth form study room, classrooms and individual spaces for the language assistants.

What are we looking to achieve with MFL at Abingdon?

We want boys to be interested and open-minded about languages and cultures. We want them to learn to communicate in more than one or two languages and to develop a love of language and an interest in other cultures that will stay with them throughout their lives. Learning a language is not just about sitting in a classroom. We are very keen for boys to take part in the trips and language exchanges that we offer; they get so much out of spending time immersed in another country.

What languages do we offer at GCSE?

In the Lower School we teach German and French in the First Year and then boys choose which of the two they want to continue with into the Second Year. In the Third Year boys have the option to take up an additional language which could be Mandarin or Spanish. We currently have 197 boys studying two languages in the Middle School and six boys studying three. MFL's results at iGCSE are excellent; the 2018 cohort achieved close to 80% of all passes at A*/A grade for all languages German (79%), French (78%), Spanish (80%) and Mandarin (92%).

What are the MFL options in the Sixth Form?

We offer French, German and Spanish at Pre-U. We also have the option to take Russian or Italian, Spanish or German Fast Track GCSE in a year if there's demand and capacity.

How popular are MFL?

We currently have 50 boys studying MFL in the Sixth Form. We seem to be bucking the national trend and not seeing the same decline in numbers that is happening elsewhere. Languages sit very well alongside the STEM subjects. It's very useful to have a language if for instance you are looking to work abroad or in research.

Why do we do the Pre-U?

We really like the Pre-U syllabus. It's varied, concentrates on current affairs and there's a lot of freedom in what we teach. It's also highly valued by universities. The syllabus really suits the boys; they are very engaged with it and achieve fantastic results. We were utterly thrilled with the 2018 Pre-U results, achieving an amazing 100% D2/D3 grades, equivalent to 100% A*/A grades, across all three languages.

Are languages popular subjects for Abingdonians to study at university?

Yes, especially compared with the national trend - in 2018 Abingdon had 11 boys go on to study joint honours, linguistics or a pure language degree at university – courses included Linguistics at Cambridge, Japanese and Classics & French at Oxford, Spanish, Portuguese & Latin American studies at Leeds and Modern Languages at Durham, Birmingham and UCL.

Why would you encourage boys to study languages?

Because to have another language is to possess a second soul.



At the first GB Junior Singles Trials, 8 senior rowers competed well against the best in the country. A good start from which to improve at the next trials in February. The senior rowers had a strong first term. Following a very productive camp in Banyoles, the Boat Club took four crews to the Fours' Head of the River on the Boat Race course in London. The highlight was the crew of Matthew Bell, Joe McConnell, Ed Sharp, Charlie Hall and cox Noah Walker winning the Junior 4+ category for the first time in 10 years.



Rowing

The Rifle Club



The Rifle Club has gone from strength to strength achieving some impressive scores in the British Schools' Small-bore Rifle Association Michaelmas Leagues. Against Marlborough College the senior team was victorious and the juniors lost by a small margin. The Club competed well in the English Schools' Long Range Challenge and the Winter Open, exceeding expectations. Some of our boys are now on the radar for the English national team selection panel.



Canoe Polo

The canoe polo team is amongst the best youth teams in the country having won all their matches this term.



Fencing

The fencers had another stellar start to the season both against our traditional school rivals and personally for individual members of the Club who compete nationally and internationally. Abingdon teams remained undefeated against tough opposition including Eton, Stowe, Charterhouse, Harrow, St Paul's, Dauntsey's and St Benedict's.

Harry Baston-Hall and Ed Scott Payne represented Great Britain several times with Harry achieving 2nd and Ed 4th in the GB National U17 rankings.

The Club made a fantastic start to the season with multiple individual and team podium placings across the age groups. Notable team performances include: 3rd at St Albans with a young squad, 2nd Seniors at Harrow and 1st Juniors at the Oxford City Schools Championships.

Cross-country

The Intermediate squad won the county and regional rounds of the ESAA Cross Country Cup and raced superbly well at the national final to finish the 7th fastest school in the country.

Rugby

The rugby season was highly successful both on and off the field. Pre-season training saw former U18 England coaches John Fletcher and Russell Earnshaw help prepare our senior squads.

Our U14s were very successful on the field and the U15s and U16s improved their skills enormously. The U18s may not have had the results they wanted but were excellent in their approach which bodes well for next season as the predominantly lower sixth team matures.

Other highlights included tours and trips and the seniors fundraising for their tour to Chile and Argentina in the summer. Pupils and parents enjoyed England v Japan and the term finished with the Middle School at Twickenham for the Varsity Match.



Squash

The squad has been training hard, and there's more strength in depth than ever before. We scored excellent wins against St Edward's and Bristol Grammar School but lost by the narrowest of margins to Radley. We also put up a great fight against Wycliffe and John Hampden, top schools in the country, in the Nationals.



Sailing



The Sailing Club prepared well for the RYA Schools' Match Racing Championships where the School came a very respectable 5th.

Abingdon Boarding

Visiting the SS Great Britain in Bristol



Victory in a tight game of football that went to penalties against Warwick



Making Christmas decorations for the tree decorating party



Testing strength pulling a stone at the visitor centre during a trip to Stonehenge





Climbing, caving and problem-solving at Blackwell Adventure



Exploring Oxford, and the practicalities of how to get there!



Debating social with the girls from Headington, followed by pizza.



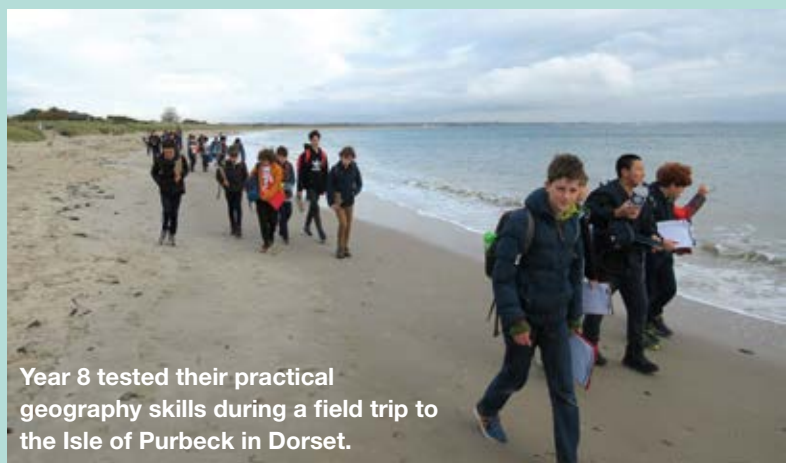
Getting to know Abingdon and discovering the School's long history in the town.

Abingdon Preparatory School

A small selection of the many trips and activities that the boys enjoyed this term:



Year 5 stepped back in time at the Victorian Living Museum



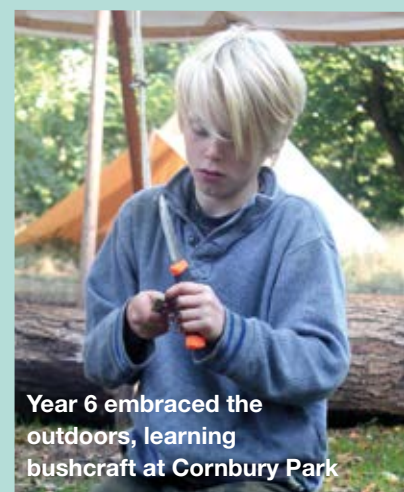
Year 8 tested their practical geography skills during a field trip to the Isle of Purbeck in Dorset.



Reception enjoyed Cogges Farm



Year 8 explored Oxford's Natural History Museum



Year 6 embraced the outdoors, learning bushcraft at Cornbury Park



Y8 discover DNA

The boys explored genetics using DNA that they extracted from bananas.



Sporting round up

On the sports field the Prep School had an excellent term with rugby results going from strength to strength. The boys continue to lead the field at cross-country and biathlon and many congratulations to the five boys who have been selected for the Oxfordshire County Cricket Club B stream, bringing our total to nine in the county streams.



Nativity

Pre-Prep charmed the audience with this year's play.

Entering the Dragon's Den

Year 7 have immersed themselves in a national Dragon's Den style project where they develop their entrepreneurial skills and business practices alongside their ICT skills. The initiative is part of the Tycoon Enterprise Competition, encouraging budding entrepreneurs to get involved in business by giving them a start-up loan to run a business while at school or college.

The boys, working in groups of four or five, wrote business plans for their ideas and the top five plans were submitted to the competition. All were successful, receiving loans to a total of £400. The businesses, which are competing against over 200 other enterprises, are:

- Culbs - potting up bulbs in recycled containers
- Iced Delights - fruit smoothies
- The Green Room - fun green screen images
- Books 4 You - second hand books
- Billy's Bones - homemade dog biscuits

Results are announced in April and winners go to Buckingham Palace.



Creativity in abundance

Flocks of wooden birds, kaleidoscopes, pencil pots, name plaques, jitter bugs, jigsaws and much, much more filled the CDT studio and spilled out into the corridor as a term's worth of projects went on display. The steady hand buzzers proved testing for the Headmaster!



Music for Youth



The Senior Choir performed *In Caelum Fero* by Karl Jenkins and *This is Me* from *The Greatest Showman* in the Royal Albert Hall at the Music for Youth Schools' Prom. The choir was part of the Oxfordshire Massed Buddy Ensemble, an orchestra and choir of 500 pupils from primary, secondary and special schools across Oxfordshire.

Remembrance

Boys in Years 3 to 8 made beautiful acrylic poppies as part of the School's Remembrance Day commemorations. The occasion was marked with a special assembly from Year 5 and a poetry recital from Year 8. The whole school gathered for a short Remembrance Ceremony, and with the 2-minute silence respectfully observed, Ruari, in Year 8, played the Last Post.



Saturday Art Workshops

Saturday art workshops were very popular this term with boys exploring sculpture and drypoint etching.



What makes you happy?

by Mark Hindley, Deputy Head (Pastoral)

To be happy, Google would seem to suggest certain core requirements.

You need to:

- sleep well
- eat healthy meals
- exercise – preferably outdoors
- be in positive relationships
- find your workplace fulfilling
- help others

How does this influence our pastoral care at Abingdon?

The Other Half

It is the sense of purpose, relationships, and helping others that we are particularly keen to engrain in our pupils. It is in these areas that the Other Half really comes into its own with over 120 different extra-curricular clubs at Abingdon.

The Other Half revolves around finding an area and activity in which to immerse yourself. This might be producing an economics magazine, lego architecture, rowing, chess, badminton or bell ringing – it doesn't matter so long as you feel valued and included.

This value isn't dependent on extrinsic success. For example, the value in sport is not that you play fly half for England, or stroke the GB Eight. It is as important – perhaps more important – that those who don't see themselves as physically adept find exercise that suits them.

The Other Half also allows Abingdon boys to place themselves within their community and to give something back. This might be through charity work, community service or helping others within school. We are also very proud of our partnership work with maintained schools.

Values for Life

We know that life can be problematic. Given that, at Abingdon we aim to provide a climate - academically and pastorally - in which boys have the opportunity to thrive and establish habits for life. We want them to be physically active, to build lasting relationships, to be purposeful, and to understand the value of putting yourself out for others. Hopefully this provides the bedrock for them to have a happy and fulfilling life.

Masked Fireworks Ball



The parents' associations of Abingdon and St Helen and St Katharine joined together to light up the night sky!

On Saturday 3 November, over 250 people gathered for a sparkling event held to raise funds for the charity, Mercy Ships, and for our respective parents' associations to help support the experiences our children have whilst at school.

The ball was an explosive mix of fabulous fireworks, a delicious three course meal, charity fundraising initiatives and dancing to live music from Freddie and The Free loaders.

It wouldn't have been possible without the incredible support from a large number of parent helpers as well as the ASPA Committee, many of whom played a crucial role in the Ball Committee and put a lot of time into organizing the event.

In addition we'd like to thank the Abingdon Estates Team for working with the St Helen's Estates Team to help set up, and Touchliners for lending us two of their gazebos for the fireworks display. Finally, our thanks go to St Helen's for all their support in helping to put on the event, especially the PE Department who allowed us to take over and transform the Sports Hall into a glamorous ball room.

ASPA to use Classlist

As many of you will know, ASPA has decided to use *Classlist*; a parent community service that many of you may have used at your son's previous school. From the Spring/Lent term we will only be communicating via that route and so please do sign up if you haven't already! We believe that *Classlist* will help to create a welcoming and engaging community amongst our parents and would encourage you to be a part of it.

A few things to let you know:

- *Classlist* will enable you to contact other parents safely and securely and to keep up to date with events organised by the Year Reps and ASPA. We have checked (with the help and support of the IT team at Abingdon School) where and how the data will be stored and are happy with the levels of security in place.
- The online system allows you to enter, manage and update the personal information that you wish to share with your child's year group. It means that you have full control over which of your contact details are shared, for example, just an email address or your full contact details. You can even choose to keep your email address hidden.
- Our parent community is much more than an online address book. By using *Classlist*, there is scope for parents to set up or invite others to events, join discussions or find other parents who live nearby.
- *Classlist* will replace and enhance the previous contact list system, if you are an existing parent please note that we will no longer be issuing these lists or using the Parent Portal for this purpose.

If you are having issues signing up for *Classlist* or haven't been sent a message to invite you to join then we can help you if you would please contact us at aspa@abingdon.org.uk

Abingdon Development



Benny Goodman Flight Simulator

Thanks to the continued generosity of Tony Edwards (OA 1962), the RAF section of the School's CCF now houses an outstanding virtual reality flight simulator suite which is already benefiting the training of cadets attached to Abingdon and other local schools.

The simulator equipment was assembled by dedicated RAF cadets last summer and officially opened on Monday 15 November by former Sqn Ldr Lawrence 'Benny' Goodman, the last surviving pilot of the 617 'Dambuster' Squadron. At this occasion, Tony – who first helped to set up the School's RAF section in 1960 – recounted to attending cadets and staff the remarkable life and bravery of Benny, who took part in 30 operations with 617 Squadron including two to sink the German battleship Tirpitz. Tony then unveiled and gifted to the School a wonderful portrait of Benny drawn by artist Jeremy Houghton, who has sketched all surviving bomber airmen for the RAF Centenary. It was a privilege to have Benny join us.

Bursaries at Abingdon

63 is a significant number for Abingdon School. OA John Royse was 63 when he re-endowed the School in 1563, and we currently have 63 pupils who receive means-tested bursaries. These were made possible by generous donations from OAs, parents, staff, governors and friends.

Providing access to an Abingdon education for able boys with limited or no financial support has always been central to the School. We are now turning to those in our community who share this vision and can help us to increase the number of bursary places we are able to offer. Our aim is to invest in the society of tomorrow through outstanding educational opportunity.

To find out more about supporting bursaries at Abingdon, please contact Alexa Broad in the Development and Alumni Relations Office at alexa.broad@abingdon.org.uk or 01235 849117.



BBC's Will Gompertz Opens Beech Court



Home of the School's Sixth Form Centre, Library and Art Department, Beech Court is a superb new facility that hosted its opening event on Friday 9 November. Guests including pupils, parents, staff, governors, OAs and members of the building project team were greeted to the lively sounds of a pupil jazz band and later treated to upbeat addresses from both the Headmaster and the BBC's Arts Editor, Will Gompertz. Will, who encouraged guests to 'think like an artist', attended with his wife, Kate, and his parents-in-law, Sir Eric and Lady Anderson – Sir Eric being a former Headmaster of Abingdon School (1970-75). Following the reception members of the *Martlet* editorial team interviewed Will and the Andersons for a feature in the next edition, with the Headmaster and his wife, Shanti, then welcoming them to Lacies Court for dinner.

All three floors buzzed with activity during the event, while the exterior of the building also came alive against the dark autumn skies thanks to vibrant cerise lighting and bold projections of the griffin on its walls.



Sixth Form Careers Evening

Now firmly fixed in the OA Club calendar, this annual occasion is a useful opportunity for early- to mid-level career OAs to return to the School and pass on their professional insights and advice to current students. At last term's event on Friday 16 November we were delighted to welcome back around 30 OAs whose job titles ranged from Sound Engineer to Senior Private Secretary, Sports Editor, Solicitor, Scientist, British Army Officer and much more.

The evening began with relaxed networking drinks before sixth formers heard from two concurrent panels of OAs, each of whom spoke broadly about their career decisions and development to date. A series of in-depth, industry-specific career discussion sessions between individual OAs and small groups of students followed, with a buffet dinner closing proceedings. Many thanks to all OAs who volunteered their valuable time and knowledge at this event.



Abingdon OA Club

OA Club Career Networking Event



On Wednesday 10 October around 40 OAs and Abingdon School parents working in the fields of property, design and construction met at BoConcept's Tottenham Court Road store for the OA Club's annual Career Networking Event. Many thanks go to Michel Baumgart (OA 2010) and Mireille Baumgart (former parent) of BoConcept for providing the venue and for speaking about current styles in interior design, and to Tom Sykes (OA 2002) for a fascinating presentation on the trends and future of architecture.

London Drinks Reception

Already bedecked for the festive season, the Cavalry and Guards Club was the splendid venue for the OA Club's most recent London Drinks Reception on Tuesday 27 November. Over 200 OAs and current and former members of staff filled the Coffee Room of this historic Club, nestled in the heart of Mayfair and overlooking Green Park.

It was fantastic to see so many OAs of all decades mingle at this increasingly popular event, and to hear addresses from the Headmaster, the OA Club Chairman, Ken Welby (OA 1984), and the OA Club President, David Lindgren (OA 1993). Please do get in touch with the OA Club Office if you have any recommendations for future venues – we are keen to hear from you!



Forthcoming OA Events: Lent Term

- Southampton Reunions -
Friday 18 January (University) and
Saturday 19 January (Regional)
- Birmingham Reunions -
Friday 1 February (University) and
Saturday 2 February (Regional)
- Cardiff Reunions -
Friday 15 March (University) and
Saturday 16 March (Regional)
- Road Relay -
Monday 18 March, Abingdon School
- OA Football and OA Hockey -
Saturday 23 March, Tilsley Park
- ASPA Quiz Night -
Saturday 27 April, Abingdon School

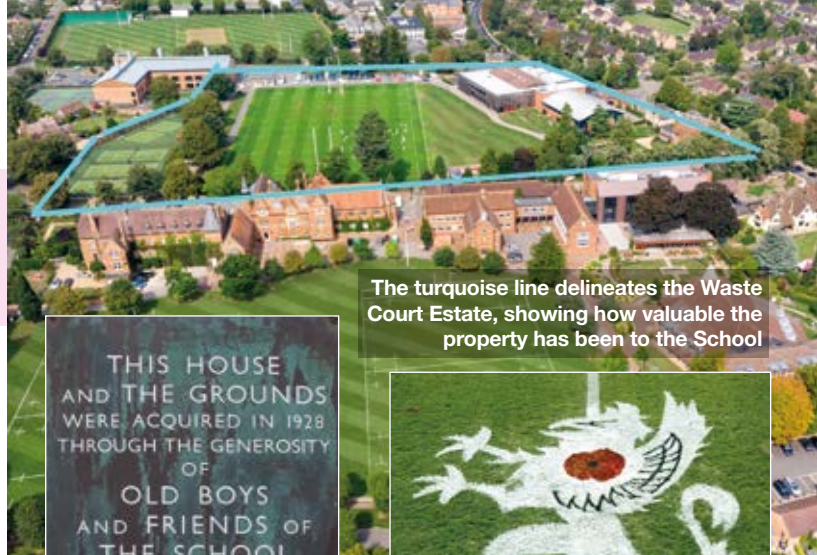
Abingdon Out of the Past

Waste Court - Abingdon's First World War Memorial

When the war finally came to an end Abingdon launched a war memorial appeal. This raised £1,442 and on 18 July 1920 the Master of Pembroke dedicated a plaque in the School Chapel to the memory of the 73 members of the School community who had died .

The plaque cost £75 raising the question of what to do with the rest of the money. Both an extension to School House and a new Library were under consideration when in 1924 the Waste Court estate came onto the market. With its house, outbuildings and 9 acres of grounds, the estate had vast potential for the future of the school. The only problem was the price – £5,500. However, by 1928 the money had been found and in the summer of 1929 Waste Court opened as a boarding house.

In 2014, to mark the centenary of the war, Waste Court House became Austin House in memory of Abingdon's first casualty, Alan Murray Austin who was killed on 15 October 1914 when his ship, *HMS Hawke*, was torpedoed in the North Sea.



The turquoise line delineates the Waste Court Estate, showing how valuable the property has been to the School



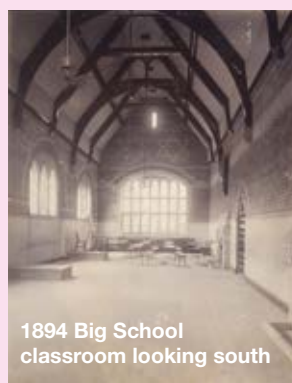
On the day before the centenary of Armistice Day, the stencilled Abingdon griffins on the School's rugby pitches wore poppies on their shoulders instead of John Roysse's rose.

All Change

What is now the Common Room was once the Big School classroom. And what was originally the Masters Common Room is now the Maths Department office. In 1963 the Big School classroom was 'modernised' and converted into the Library, where it remained until last year. Meanwhile the staff Common Room expanded into the two adjoining rooms – the Tesdale Room and the Pembroke Room. The Pembroke Room has now been subdivided to create offices for the Headmaster and his PA and the Tesdale Room is once again a classroom.



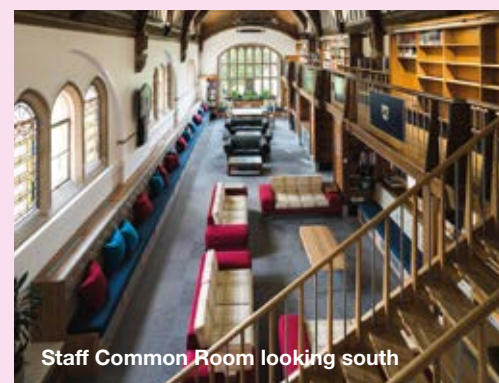
1957 Masters Common Room – spot the three pipe smokers



1894 Big School classroom looking south



1963 Library looking north



Staff Common Room looking south

The Kibble Balance

From 20 May 2019 one kilogram will no longer be defined by a cylinder of platinum-iridium held by a laboratory in Paris. In future its mass will be defined as a measurement made by a Kibble Balance based on the Planck Constant. Named after its inventor, Bryan Kibble (1938-2016) learnt his first physics whilst a pupil at Abingdon in the 1950s.

You can now follow Abingdon School on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram.



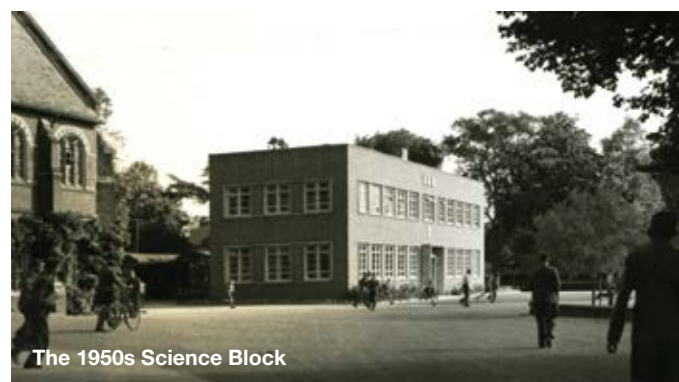
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The 1950s Science Block