



## Abingdon Appoints a New Head

Felicity Lusk visiting the School on 2 December

Felicity Lusk, currently Headmistress of Oxford High School for Girls, has been appointed the new Head of Abingdon and will take up her post in September when Mark Turner leaves to become Headmaster of Shrewsbury. In announcing the appointment, David Lillycrop, the Chairman of Abingdon's Governing Body, said that the governors had been looking for an outstanding individual to provide leadership and promote excellence and that in Felicity Lusk they had found that individual. Born and educated in New Zealand, she studied music at Victoria University, Wellington, moved to England in 1990 and was appointed Headmistress of Oxford High in 1997. ■

## Debating Champions of the UK

The Abingdon debating team are the UK European Youth Parliament debating champions. Out of an extremely strong field, the Abingdon team impressed the judges with their dynamism, teamwork and excellent debating style at the national finals of the competition held at the University of Durham last September. In October, following their success at Durham, the team went forward to represent the UK at the 62nd international session of the European Youth Parliament in Helsinki. ■



03

News



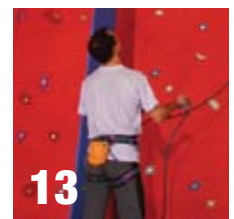
06

Arts



09

Sport



13

Development



16

OA News





**Governor Profile**  
**Christopher Owen**

Chris, a member of the selection committee that appointed Abingdon's new Head, was co-opted onto the governing body on the recommendation of Common Room. He has a special responsibility for representing their interests and serves on the staff and education committees.

Having spent most of his working life as a teacher in co-educational comprehensive schools, he was surprised to be invited, but he began his career at Abingdon, becoming

Head of the English Department, and he also knew the School well when his son Ben was a pupil in the 1980s.

Chris greatly enjoys his association with our 'hugely talented and extremely hard-working' teachers. He believes that their care for and knowledge of the boys is outstanding and that the entire staff community demonstrates huge loyalty to the school and total commitment to achieving the very best for its pupils. Special highlights for him are hearing the astonishing range and variety of accomplishments celebrated each year at prize-giving, and the mass participation events such as the inter-house singing competition and the road relay, where boys support each other's efforts with warmth and generosity.

Since retiring from teaching, Chris has done voluntary work for *Oxfam*, looked after his local village churchyard and compiled a history of Shropshire County Cricket Club. His wife Marion is a tapestry weaver and they live in Appleford with their Clumber spaniel, Hector. ■



**Headmaster of the Year**  
**Mark Turner**

Abingdon's Headmaster, Mark Turner, has won *Tatler's* Headmaster of the Year Award against competition from the headmasters of Canford, City of London School, Oundle and Winchester. *Tatler* publishes an annual Schools Guide, for which it consults widely with pupils, teachers and parents, both past and present – a process that gives the selection committee an accurate insight into the state of a school, on which it then bases its headmaster-of-the-year award. Mark Turner, in acknowledging the award, said that credit must go to the entire Abingdon community, which supports the School in the achievement of its excellent academic results, along with the high levels of participation and success in all areas of extra-curricular life. ■

**School's Caterers Win Top Award**

Menu for Friday 11 December 2009

- Roasted Vegetable Soup
- Beef Bourguignonne
- Broccoli and Cheese Quiche
- Mashed Potatoes
- Cauliflower Cheese
- Sweetcorn
- Chefs Choice
- Thai Fish Cakes with Sweet Chilli Sauce & Sala
- Pasta Bar
- Chicken a la King
- Pork and Pesto
- Chickpea and Tomato
- Rice Pudding and Jam Sauce
- Assorted Yoghurts
- A Selection of Whole and Cut Fruit



Against competition from more than 600 schools and colleges, Abingdon's *Sodexo* catering team have won a Service Excellence in Catering Award for their consistent delivery of the highest standard of both catering and customer service at the School. The team's versatility means that they can produce excellent lunches for more than 1,300 staff and pupils every day, as well as team teas, canapés for receptions or dinner for 500 at the annual Griffen Ball. All who daily appreciate *Sodexo's* fare feel that the award is richly deserved – the proof of the pudding being in the eating, as they say! ■



# The Impact of Health and Safety on School Trips

*Are concerns for 'health and safety' curtailing our children's sense of adventure? Not here at Abingdon as safety officer, Dr Megan Bowdrey, reports.*

All trips should have an educational basis and aim to enhance pupils' skills by broadening their horizons. However, before any trip can leave school premises, a risk assessment has to be completed. Although the paperwork can appear daunting, and the process can take anything from an hour to several months, it is in the planning that risk is reduced.

This planning has to take into account: all transport arrangements for every point on the itinerary; the ratios of staff – including non-staff adults – to pupils; are they CRB checked? do they hold the relevant qualifications? what is the School's insurance cover? are there medical issues or dietary requirements to be taken into account?

Plans have also to be made for free time: who will be on duty? how will the pupils be managed? if it is a residential trip where will everyone sleep? are there any hazards for the terrain they will be covering? are pupils' contact details up to date in case parents need to be contacted?

Only when everything is in place can the trip go ahead. Nor is this all since, once the trip is over, staff are expected to review their arrangements and consider whether they would do anything differently next time.

Last year the School made approximately 180 trips, but whether it was to take the bus into Oxford for a lecture, or to fly to Kenya for a two-week visit, these trips more than fulfilled their educational aims, whilst the emphasis on 'health and safety' in no way impaired pupils' experiences. ■

## Images from some recent School visits



**On the roof of the cathedral at Santiago de Compostela where a group of 17 boys and 22 girls from St Helen's spent nine days in October on the Spanish exchange.**



**The local well at Xicumbane, Mozambique, where last summer a group of sixth-formers worked on an outreach project with the South African charity *Build the Nations*.**



**Lower-sixth geographers visiting the spectacular Gullfoss waterfall in Iceland last August.**



**Group of 42 boys and five members of staff who visited Tunisia in October to see the country's rich array of surviving classical remains.**



## The UK's EYP Debating Team in Helsinki

Abingdon's debating team spent 10 days in Helsinki during October, representing the UK at the 62nd session of the European Youth Parliament, along with representatives from 35 other European countries. The European Youth Parliament is a charity designed to raise awareness among students of European issues and to motivate them to become involved in European politics. The 10 days were spent working in committees, preparing resolutions on such topics as climate change and civil liberties. These resolutions were then presented at the General Assembly, where the Abingdon team performed particularly well, forcefully arguing the case for their own committees and exposing the flaws in the resolutions of others. ■

## Alpha at Abingdon



The Bishop of Reading, the Right Reverend Stephen Cottrell, was the guest speaker at one of last term's Alpha sessions. Bishop Stephen's subject, 'How and Why Should I read the Bible', provoked some lively and thoughtful discussion among his listeners, who were all impressed by his ability to convey deep ideas in a light-hearted manner.

The Michaelmas term Alpha sessions gave sixth-formers from both Abingdon and St Helen's the chance to explore the Christian faith in a relaxed, informal setting. ■



## A Gargoyle for the Bodleian

Ben Bryant's entry for the Bodleian Library's 'Design a Gargoyle Competition' was designed when he was in the second year, three years ago. Now in the fifth year, Ben was present on 12 September when the nine winning designs, newly carved and installed, were unveiled by the author, Philip Pullman. Ben's design was based on the story of a man, attacked by a wild boar whilst reading in an Oxford forest, who defended himself by throwing the book into the boar's mouth. ■



## Simultaneous Chess

Alexandra Wilson, ranked sixth among Switzerland's female chess players, took on 18 boys and 2 members of staff last term, competing against them all simultaneously. Alexandra achieved 5 victories, 2 draws, 2 resignations and 1 defeat. However, unfamiliar with the timing system and although well in the lead, she lost the other 8 matches on time. ■





## UK Karting Champion

Patrick Lay, in the fourth year, became the youngest ever Junior Easykart UK Champion last September – finishing in the top three in thirteen out of fourteen races. Selected for Team UK, he took part in the Easykart World Championships in Italy in October, competing with the top five drivers from fifteen other countries. Patrick started the competition as 3rd in the world rankings, but failure to finish in one of the heats meant that his overall position dropped to 25th. In Easykart racing the karts, tyres and set-up are all the same so that the outcome of the race is determined by driver talent rather than by budget. ■

## Wonderful Telescopes

The 2009 Institute of Physics Schools' Lecture was held at Abingdon on 15 December. In the International Year of Astronomy, the title of the lecture, given by Dr Andrew Newsam, was 'Wonderful Telescopes'. Dr Newsam pointed out that astronomy is different from other sciences in that astronomers cannot just go out to gather materials, they can only observe. And yet, thanks to developments in telescopes, they can now reveal the age of the world, predict the life expectancy of the sun, and count the number of stars in our galaxy. Dr Newsam's talk inspired his hearers into thinking more about how we know what we know about our universe. ■



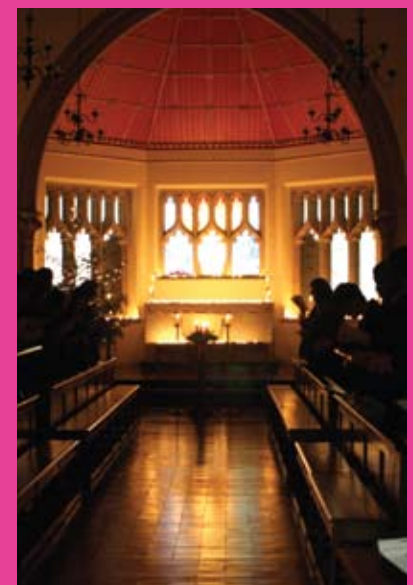
The fully robotic Liverpool telescope in the Canary Islands, the National Schools' Observatory

## Christmas at Abingdon



The spirit of Christmas was in the air when the School hosted sixty guests to the community tea party on 8 December. Whilst the guests consumed the festive fare of cakes, sandwiches and mince pies, the boys entertained them with music from the Big Band, a quiz and a raffle.

The boarders celebrated Christmas on 14 December, the last evening of term, with their annual candlelit carol service in the Chapel. Always a memorable occasion, the service emphasizes the centrality of the Chapel in School life. ■





## West Side Story



*West Side Story*, last term's joint drama production with St Helen's, was by turns tense, exciting and deeply moving. Bernstein's familiar music, a clever set design that made innovative use of the Amey Theatre, dramatic lighting and a large cast excellently choreographed by Matt Hawksworth, OA 2000, created a very professional production and made it an evening to remember. ■



## The Big Sculpt



In this sculpture workshop, fifth-form artists designed and constructed a large-scale sculpture in willow that was based on the golden mean. Using cubes and spirals as a starting point, the boys worked collaboratively at all stages to complete the sculpture in a day. ■

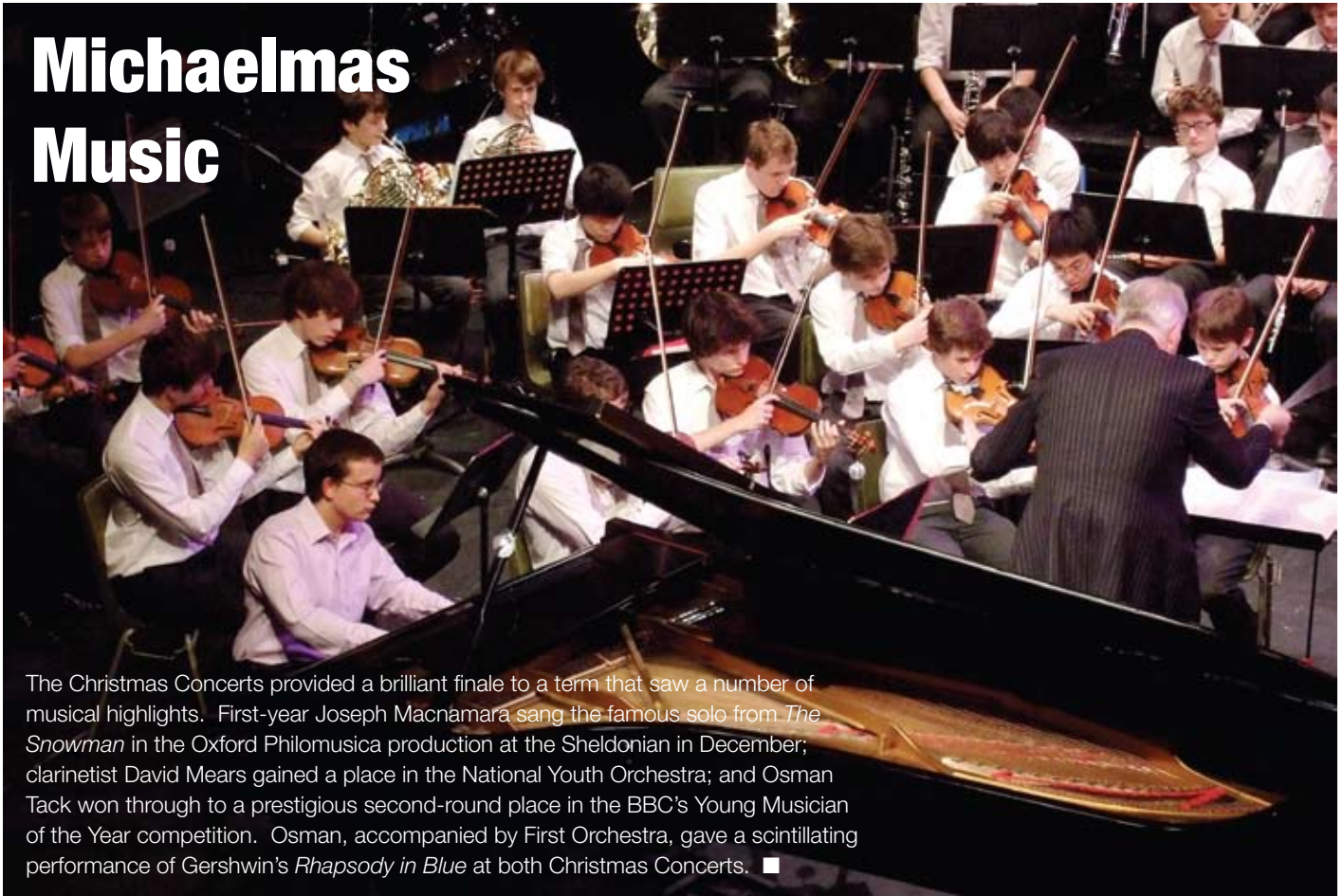
## The Big Draw



The Big Draw gave fourth-year artists the chance to spend four hours drawing, working on still life, landscape and figurative imagery. The boys all appreciate the opportunity the Big Draw gives them to devote a sustained period of time to a piece of work, something that is not possible within the normal timetable. ■



# Michaelmas Music



The Christmas Concerts provided a brilliant finale to a term that saw a number of musical highlights. First-year Joseph Macnamara sang the famous solo from *The Snowman* in the Oxford Philomusica production at the Sheldonian in December; clarinetist David Mears gained a place in the National Youth Orchestra; and Osman Tack won through to a prestigious second-round place in the BBC's Young Musician of the Year competition. Osman, accompanied by First Orchestra, gave a scintillating performance of Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue* at both Christmas Concerts. ■

## African Sanctus

The Abingdon and St Helen's Joint Choral Society filled the Amey Theatre with the sounds and rhythms of Africa when they performed David Fanshawe's *African Sanctus* in November. Joined by two soloists, and by guitarists and percussionists from the School, the result was an impressive and thrilling performance that was enjoyed by audience and performers alike. ■



## Oxford Pageantry

Three of the School's trumpeters – George Rossiter, Robert Hussey and Jonathan Barrow – provided the fanfare in Christ Church Cathedral for the Court Sermon, the annual service that marks the start of the judicial year. Richard Dick, this year's High Sheriff of Oxfordshire and a Governor of the School, presided over the occasion. ■



Photo by KT Bruce



# Rugby



Congratulations to the U16As on the completion of an unbeaten season – 11 matches played and 11 matches won – a major achievement especially when considering the quality of the opponents they have encountered. The 1st XV did well to overcome a string of defeats in the middle of the season, and performed particularly well against Radley, Bromsgrove,

Northampton and St Edward's. They have had two convincing wins over MCS, one in the Daily Mail Cup where they reached the last 32 teams. The Junior teams have managed to amass over 1,000 points in their matches, an average of more than 30 points a game between the four teams. ■

## Cross Country



In the Longworth 10K Run in September, out of a field of 80 club and recreational runners, Abingdon runners, Thomas Watkins, Alexander Muir and Joshua Ridley, took 3rd, 4th and 5th places. In November, competing against ten schools at the St Albans Relays, the Abingdon A and B teams came 3rd and 2nd in their respective sections. ■

## Lacrosse

Anyone who didn't know any better might have thought that the annual Radley match was the 1st XV's most important fixture of the season – but what about the lacrosse match against St Helen's? This year our intrepid players, having donned a variety of disguises, beat the girls 2-1 – a triumph of brawn over finesse perhaps? ■





# Champion Fencers



Will Fotherby, seen shaking hands with Olympic athletics champion Denise Law, represented England in the UK School Fencing Games last September, winning a Sabre team gold. Later that month he qualified for a place in the GB U20 Sabre team. Meanwhile, Thomas Chan became the Southern Region U16 Epée Champion, following a competition at Bradfield College in November, which saw three Abingdon fencers qualify for the British Youth Championships, to be held in Sheffield next May. ■



## Water Polo

In this term's Lower School water polo fixture against the Oratory School, Reading, the School won 6-0, the goals being scored by vice-captain Matthew Prior and Michael Dewar. Abingdon was represented for the first time in the English Schools National Water Polo Tournament and qualified for the plate competition. The goals were scored by captain Guy Stephens, vice-captain Sam Delo and Mihai Clapaniuc.

# International Rowers



Cox, Rory Copus; stroke, George Rossiter; two, Felix Wood (hidden); bow, Jamie Cook

In international events last summer, Jamie Cook rowed in the GB VIII at the Coupe de la Jeunesse, the European U19 Championship; the crew's two victories in two days helping Britain to win the overall team trophy. At the World Junior Championships, Felix Wood and Rory Copus rowed in the GB Coxed IV, winning an excellent 5th place, whilst George Rossiter stroked the GB VIII to an extremely close and hard-fought silver medal winning position. In the U23 World Championships, Matthew Rossiter, OA 2008, stroked the GB VIII into third place, thus adding a bronze medal to the gold he won in the Coxless IV in 2007. ■

## 1st VIII South African Boat Race Champions

The Abingdon 1st VIII beat the South African College Schools crew by 25 seconds to win the gold medal at the South African Old Mutual Schools Boat Race on the Kowie River, Port Alfred, Eastern Cape in December. The race is one of South Africa's premier rowing events, modeled on the Oxford and Cambridge Boat Race, and Abingdon are the first foreign crew to have won the race. ■

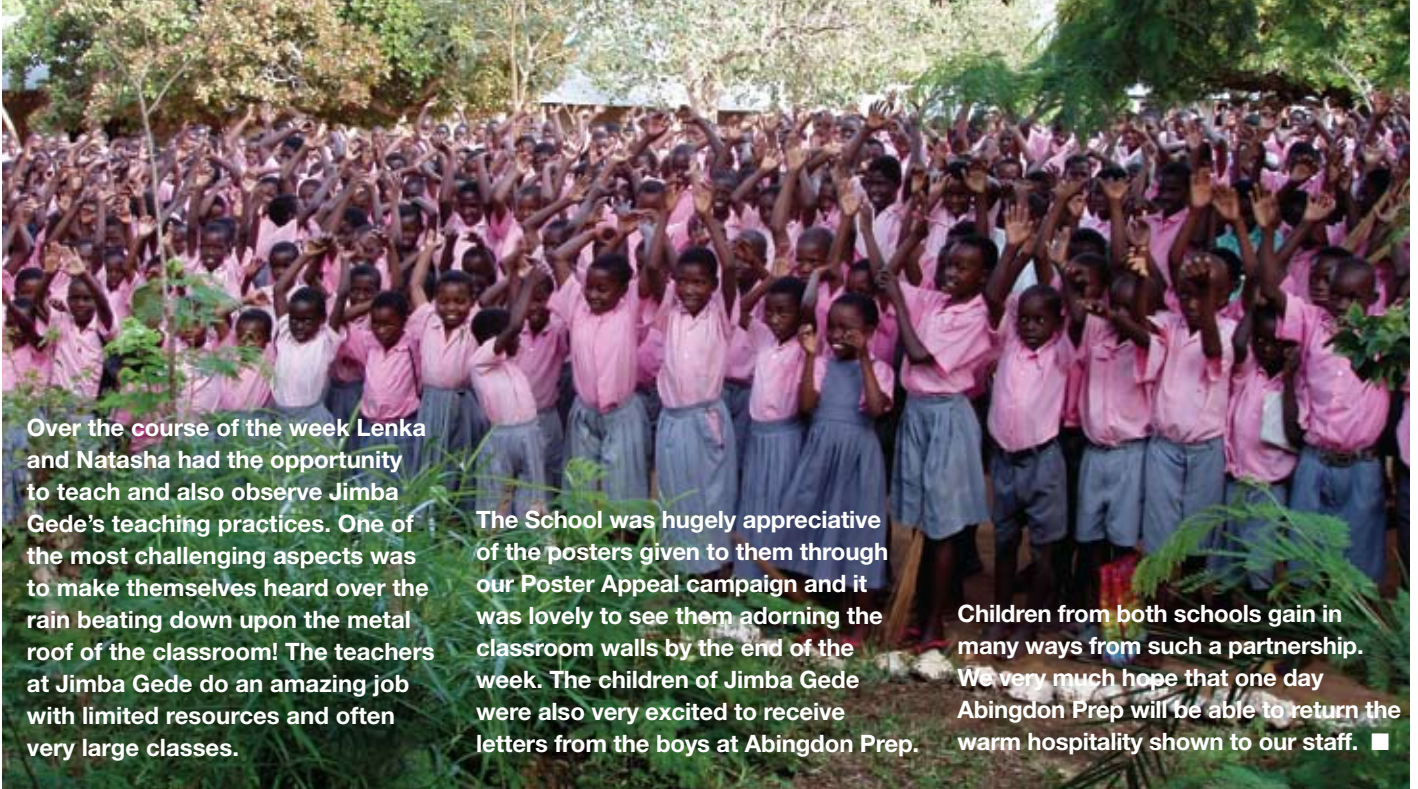


In the bicentary of Lord Byron's swim across the Hellespont, Abingdon's water polo coach, Celia Shephard, followed in his 'leg-kick' and beat an international field to win her category in a current-assisted time of 56 minutes for the 4.5km distance. ■



# Abingdon Prep goes to Kenya

At half term two teachers, Lenka Sowter and Natasha Davies, set off to Kenya to visit the Prep's 'link' school, Jimba Gede Primary. Our link with Jimba Gede was first established two years ago by the Head of Art and Year 5 teacher Jaany Ravenscroft. She developed a firm friendship with the Kenyan school, which we hope to sustain and develop further.



Over the course of the week Lenka and Natasha had the opportunity to teach and also observe Jimba Gede's teaching practices. One of the most challenging aspects was to make themselves heard over the rain beating down upon the metal roof of the classroom! The teachers at Jimba Gede do an amazing job with limited resources and often very large classes.

The School was hugely appreciative of the posters given to them through our Poster Appeal campaign and it was lovely to see them adorning the classroom walls by the end of the week. The children of Jimba Gede were also very excited to receive letters from the boys at Abingdon Prep.

Children from both schools gain in many ways from such a partnership. We very much hope that one day Abingdon Prep will be able to return the warm hospitality shown to our staff. ■

## Rugby Highlights



2009 closed on a very successful rugby term with the highlights being the trip to Argentan and the U8's tag rugby team playing at Twickenham before the Varsity match.

Forty boys representing the U13's and U11's crossed the Channel for four days to take on the French in Abingdon's twin town, Argentan. A tremendous time was had by all with some challenging rugby, superb hospitality and a chance for everyone to practise their French.

The Prep School's U8 tag rugby team fulfilled every rugby-playing school boy's dream when they stepped out onto Twickenham's hallowed turf on Thursday 10 December. Playing against The Perse School from Cambridge, they appeared alongside Oxford and Cambridge Universities' 1st XV's, with a crowd of 40,000 supporters, including some very proud parents, watching the game. ■



# Inspiring Young Writers

Mark Robson, best-selling author of fantasy fiction, including the *Dragon Orb* and *Darkweaver* series, spent the day at Abingdon Prep on Monday 5th October. He spoke to the boys from Years 5 to 8 about how he became an RAF pilot and subsequently an author, emphasising the importance of personal motivation, goal setting and self belief. Mark then led a creative writing workshop for some of our aspiring young authors. ■



# Thriving Creativity



CDT or Craft, Design and Technology is thriving at the Prep School. The creativity and enthusiasm of the boys never ceases. This term, the year 8s have been spotted racing their handcrafted fan boats across the swimming pool amongst squeals of uncontrollable delight. Taking their ideas a step further – onto land – they built simple belt-drive vehicles and raced them in the hall under the Headmaster's starting orders. ■



## World Premiere – The Landlord's Cat

This year the Pre-prep department were honoured to present the world premiere of *The Landlord's Cat*. This was written especially for Abingdon Prep by composer, Antony Copus, and poet, Julia Copus. This is especially exciting as the play is being published by Out of the Ark and will be on sale to other schools for next Christmas. One of the songs has also been shortlisted by Faber for their 'Singup' campaign. *The Landlord's Cat* tells the traditional Christmas story through the eyes of the resident cat of a certain inn on the edge of town.

Four narrators led us confidently through some excellent performances from the cast, which included all the traditional characters. The children sang beautifully, performed actions to the songs, and the percussionists enjoyed adding the rhythmic accompaniment. Antony and Julia, who watched the premiere, were delighted at the wonderful performances of all the children. ■



# Out and About

Trips this term have included Fishbourne Palace, Chedworth Roman Villa, Harcourt Arboretum, the Creation Theatre and the Oxford Mosque. ■



## Third-Year Parents' Supper



On 13 November 2009 about 120 parents of third year boys braved superstition and foul weather to attend an ASPA supper for parents. The event was a fantastic opportunity for parents to meet each other socially. This was particularly appreciated by parents new to the school and who perhaps knew few other parents in their year group. The bar provided a variety of drinks to a very happy crowd.

The feedback from those who attended was terrific: everyone seemed to thoroughly enjoy the evening and there have been a lot of requests from parents who attended for another, similar event and some interesting ideas for alternative events too!

Encouraged by the success of this inaugural ASPA parents' supper, similar events are planned for fourth- and fifth-year parents and perhaps even one for sixth-form parents. See dates for diary.

If parents would like to attend or are willing to help, have any comments or suggestions, then do please speak to your ASPA Tutor Group Rep (3rd, 4th & 5th years) or contact your ASPA Year Group Rep on the ASPA Committee via [aspa@abingdon.org.uk](mailto:aspa@abingdon.org.uk)  
Current Year Group Reps are listed on the ASPA web pages at:  
[www.abingdon.org.uk/go/aspa](http://www.abingdon.org.uk/go/aspa) ■

## We Need You

The ASPA Committee is always keen to welcome new members. We very much hope new volunteers will help make ASPA a genuinely useful and relevant group for both present and future members of the Abingdon community.

We would like to give our heartfelt and grateful thanks to Leila Beggin who has been the ASPA Secretary since May 2007. She is retiring at the end of this academic year. Leila has undertaken her role competently and professionally throughout and has always graciously given her time to the role of secretary of ASPA, its committee and the wider community of the School. ASPA need someone to take up the role of secretary so if anyone is interested in this or in joining the committee please contact:  
[aspa@abingdon.org.uk](mailto:aspa@abingdon.org.uk) ■



## Second-hand Uniform Shop

The Second-hand Uniform Shop (SUS) provides a means for parents to buy good condition second-hand Abingdon School uniform which has either been outgrown or unclaimed from lost property. It stocks all items of school uniform along with sportswear and equipment.

Parents should note that there are items in lost property for over 80 boys and if not claimed these will go for sale in January 2010. Marilyn Moore who runs SUS on behalf of ASPA has stated that within the Lost property are items such as lost watches and house keys! So if you are aware of any missing items do call in and see the shop. It is open every other Saturday and Wednesday. Please check [www.abingdon.org.uk/go/aspa](http://www.abingdon.org.uk/go/aspa) for times and dates. ■

Opening hours 12.15 – 1.15

Jan 9, 13, 30	Apr 24, 28
Feb 20, 24	May 8, 22, 26
Mar 20, 24	Jun 12, 16, 26

## Stop Press

SUS still has ski wear for sale – salopettes, jackets, goggles, helmets – and the SUS shop is willing to take in more items. If you have been skiing, or are just about to go, then check out the shop's ski wear – all the money raised goes to a good cause. ■

### ASPAs

#### Paul Tappins Memorial Awards 2010

A reminder that these are open to assist boys in the 6th form to undertake challenging and worthwhile activities.  
Please contact: [aspa@abingdon.org.uk](mailto:aspa@abingdon.org.uk)

[www.abingdon.org.uk/go/aspa](http://www.abingdon.org.uk/go/aspa)

### Events & Diary Dates

**5th February:** 7.30 pm  
Sports Centre Hospitality Suite –  
4th year Parents Social

**5th March:** 7.30 pm  
Sports Centre Hospitality Suite –  
5th year Parents Social

#### Parents Evenings:

**26th January:** 5th year  
**23rd February:** 3rd year  
**1st March:** 2nd year





## Legacies Making a Difference

For at least the past half century, Abingdon has justifiably enjoyed a strong reputation for science, and the School has been most fortunate in attracting a well qualified and enthusiastic team of physics, chemistry and biology teachers and support staff. So much so that around a quarter of A2 examinations taken are in physics, chemistry or biology and the results have been outstanding.

The size of the science department, and the number of laboratories and ancillary rooms, has grown steadily to meet the increasing demand for a high quality scientific education. Recently the School found itself in a position where 29 periods of science were being taught outside laboratories and acknowledged the need to reconsider the facilities.

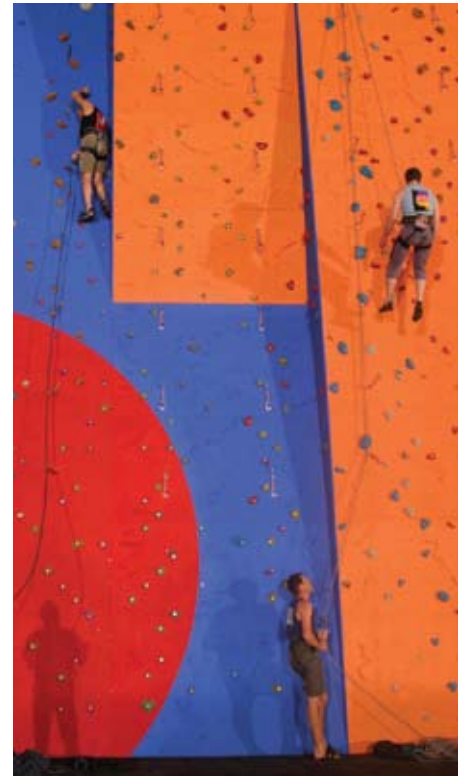
A reversionary legacy from Arthur Hendley (OA 1938), a steward of the School, allowed the conversion of a classroom to a state-of-the-art science laboratory. The work was carried out over the summer holidays and boys have been enjoying the new facility, which has ensured that all science lessons are taught in laboratories thus maximising teaching and learning.

The generosity of the Hendley family also means that the final piece of the Sports Centre jigsaw will be in place by the Summer term. Last year's annual fund attracted some generous donations from the School's wider community but the Hendley legacy has ensured that the building of the wall can now go ahead in the Easter holidays. A climbing wall represents the ultimate in alternative physical education. It can be empowering, challenging and exciting and suits children of all ages and skill levels.

The climbing wall will offer the realistic look and feel of outdoor climbing. Whilst the wall may be climbed by using built-in features alone, we aim to design it with plenty of space and holes to attach and remove holds ensuring the ultimate in versatility. ■

## Parents Golf Day

The first Abingdon School parents' golf day was held at Southfield Golf Club in November. Despite the somewhat inclement weather, there was some great golf and the day was much enjoyed by all. The individual winner on the day was Nick Gibb and Nick, Mike Eccleston and Trevor Halls won the team event. Antony Watkins won the prize for 'nearest the pin' and David Lindsay the prize for the longest drive. Please let Jan Glover in the Development Office know if you are interested in participating in future events. ■



## Annual Fund 2008/09

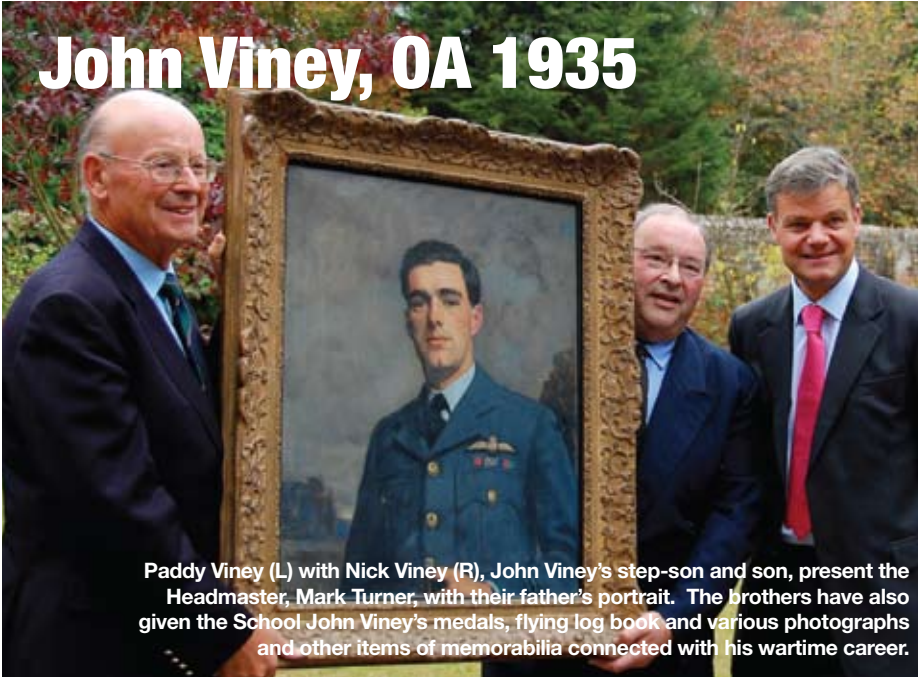
Last year's annual fund raised just over £70,000 which was a wonderful achievement particularly given the economic climate that prevailed. Donations were made to support a wide variety of the School's activities from art and the archivist to boarding, the Christian union and the film unit.

The School's financial year ends on 31 August and, at that time, the total raised over the year is collated and departmental heads are advised of the donations that have been received towards their departments. Once the use of the funds has been agreed, donors who have contributed to those individual departments are notified as to how the funds have been utilised. This will happen during the Lent term.

The generosity of the School's wider community is very much appreciated by everyone at the School; your donations do make a very real difference not just to teaching and learning at the School but also to the pastoral life of the boys. ■



## John Viney, OA 1935



Paddy Viney (L) with Nick Viney (R), John Viney's step-son and son, present the Headmaster, Mark Turner, with their father's portrait. The brothers have also given the School John Viney's medals, flying log book and various photographs and other items of memorabilia connected with his wartime career.

Despite being described by his headmaster, William Grundy, as quite the naughtiest boy he'd ever taught, John Viney was an exemplary pilot, consistently assessed as 'exceptional' or 'above average' during his wartime flying career. Between 13 September 1942 and 12 December 1944, he flew 49 missions with Bomber Command, his log book recording laconically, "attacked by fighter, lost port outer engine", "flak damage, no hydraulics", "SOS sent, short of petrol". In September 1944, John's plane came under sustained attack from anti-aircraft fire during a daylight bombing raid that put his hydraulics and one engine out of action, and jammed the bomb doors. He remained over the target until he had successfully completed his mission and then brought his crew safely home. He was awarded the DSO for this action but in his log book he simply records: '12 September – Munster'. John retired from the RAF in June 1945 as a Wing Commander with a DSO and a DFC ... he was 24. ■

## Abingdon Appoints a New Head – 1893



The Rev'd Thomas Layng (front row second from left) and his staff in 1900

When, on 16 November 1892, Abingdon School placed an advertisement in The Guardian for a new headmaster, following the resignation of the Rev'd Herbert Cam, more than 152 applications flooded in from all over the country. The letters varied from the abrupt to the garrulous and from the ink blotched to the extremely neat – like that from the second master of Cranleigh, the Rev'd Thomas Layng, who, two months later in January 1893, exactly 118 years ago, took up his appointment as the 46th known headmaster of Abingdon School. ■

## Seventy Years On

It was an evening of memories for some of the guests attending the opening of the exhibition *Abingdon and Old Abingdonians at War 1939-1945* on 6 November: memories of both school and war.



For Richard Lesser, OA 1944 – seen above presenting a chess set to Jeffrey Yu, the Chess Club's new Board 1 – the memories were of playing chess with Mr Grundy during night-time air raid warnings;



John Lambourn with his drawings recording the School in 1939

for John Lambourn, OA 1940, of cutting himself badly on the corrugated iron of the air-raid shelter in Waste Court Field.



John Rayson receiving his wings

For John Rayson, OA 1942, they were of being the pilot of a glider that took part in the successful airborne crossing of the Rhine in March 1945. After the reception, guests heard Julie Summers



... and on 6 November

give a talk on the inspiring work of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. ■



## Hong Kong Reception



A reception took place in the Marina Room at The Excelsior, Causeway Bay, Hong Kong, on 22 September 2009, for OAs and parents of current and former Hong Kong boys. Current and former Second Masters, David Dawswell and Tom Ayling (Hon OA), together with Jane Jørgensen, the School's Registrar, welcomed guests on behalf of the OA Club and the School. OA attendees included Guy Neville (1981), Tom Owen (1987), Winnoc Lui (1999), Mike Yeung (2000), Sherwin Chan (2002), Philip Wong (2004), Dickens Lam (2006), Aaron Mak (2006), Howard Loh (2008), Michael Chan (2008), Kevin Cheung (2008), Timothy Kong (2008), Jimmy Lam (2008), Michael Leung (2008) and Benjamin Fung (2009). ■

## Griffen Rugby 7s Tournament



The OA club will be hosting the third annual Griffen Rugby 7s Tournament on Sunday 14 March 2010.

Tournament information and the entry form are available to download from the OA Club website for any OAs interested in playing, or entering a team of OAs. ■

## OA Club Annual Dinner

The new Club President, Gareth Morris (1976), hosted the annual OA Club dinner on Saturday 14 November 2009. A drinks reception, followed by a fantastic performance from Abingdon School's Big Band, and dinner in the Sports Centre hospitality suite made for an enjoyable evening uniting 60 OAs, members of staff (both current and former) and their partners.

OAs present included:

1944: Gordon Dodge; 1945: Guy Willson; 1950: Michael Heavens; 1955: Richard Griffith; 1957: Richard Powell, Brian Smith; 1958: John Knight, Ian Oliver; 1959: Andrew Rowles; 1960: Barry Gibbs, Tony Howell; 1961: Terence Libby, Rodney Pitt; 1962: John Bunce; 1965: Anthony Johnson, Alan Williams; 1970: Nick Winton; 1974: Pieter Cox; 1975: Simon Hills; Simon Johnson, Paul Ashby; 1976: David Blomley, Charles Lowe, Gareth Morris, Bob Price; 1979: Philip Ashby, Jon Davies, Bruce Gow, Dorian Griffith, John Madgwick; 1980: Tim Cook; 1992: Richard Claye, John Kirkham, Nick Laing; 1999: Lloyd Bowden; 2006: Henry Carter, George Scarfe. ■

## Hugh Leach

Hugh Leach (1953) sounded Last Post in the Amey Theatre on 6 November, a duty he last performed at the School in 1952. ■



## Sir James Cobban – Centenary Celebrations

Saturday 27 November 2010



OAs are invited to join Sir James Cobban's four daughters at a Chapel service, reception and dinner to mark the centenary of his birth. Sir James, who died in 1999, was headmaster of Abingdon from 1947 – 1970. ■

*Further details will follow later.*

## Professional Dinner: Medicine

Oriel College, Oxford  
Thursday 25 March 2010

The second event in the new series of Professional Dinners takes place on Thursday 25 March 2010 and aims to provide a networking opportunity for OAs, current pupils, parents (past and present) and Governors with an interest in the field of medicine. The dinner will be held at Oriel College in Oxford and will be hosted by Professor Mike Stevens (1968), who is the CLIC Professor of Paediatric Oncology at the University of Bristol. Invitations have been circulated to all members of the School's wider community with a known interest in medicine. If this applies to you, and you have not yet received your invitation, please make contact with the OA Office. ■

## OA Events - Lent Term 2010

Saturday 16 January	Abingdon School Open Morning	At School
Friday 5 March	OA Reunion: 1969 - 1972	At School
Wednesday 24 February	OA Reunion: 1979 - 1982	At School
Friday 19 March	OA Reunion: 1989 - 1992	At School
Sunday 14 March	Griffen Rugby 7s Tournament	At School
Wednesday 24 March	Hockey: OAs v 1st XI	Tilsley Park
Thursday 25 March	Professional Dinner: Medicine	Oriel College, Oxford
March/April TBC	OA Reunion: Cambridge	Cambridge
Thursday 15 April	Golf: OA Golf Day	Lutterworth Golf Club



## Steve Fabes - Cycling the 6



By the time you read this Dr Steve Fabes, OA 1999, will have set off on his five-year, solo journey, cycling across six continents, to raise money for *Merlin* the frontline British medical aid agency. In addition to raising money, he aims to raise awareness of what are known as the neglected tropical diseases, fourteen ancient and largely parasitic infections that occur almost exclusively in areas of poverty and disadvantage. When he returns he will have cycled the equivalent of twice round the world. If you would like to follow Steve's journey, log on to [www.cyclingthe6.com](http://www.cyclingthe6.com) ■

## 2009 BAFTA Best Comedy Performance



**And the winner is ...**  
**David Mitchell, OA 1992, for his performance in Channel 4's Peep Show**

## Tom Astley



Competing against undergraduates from Engineering Departments across the UK, Tom Astley, OA 2005, has won the first RWE NPower National Engineering Undergraduate of the Year Award. Tom, who is reading Mechanical Engineering at the University of Warwick, was chosen for both his technical and his communication skills. He received his award, together with a cheque for £3,000, from the comedian Alan Carr at a dinner at Grosvenor House. ■



Photograph by Lisa Bowerman

## Matthew Hawksworth

The exuberant choreography and skilful handling of the large cast impressed everyone who saw the recent joint senior production of *West Side Story* in the Amey Theatre. It was the work of Matthew Hawksworth, OA 2000, who left school to study German and Italian at UCL and then won a Sir John Mills Scholarship to study at Mountview Academy of Performing Arts. He is now an actor and a freelance choreographer and was in the recent critically acclaimed production of *Salad Days* at the Riverside Studios, Hammersmith. ■

## Joe Oppenheimer

*The Meerkats*, produced by Joe Oppenheimer, OA 1989, and released last August, is the moving, shocking, but ultimately uplifting, full-length documentary feature film



about a meerkat family. The crew spent six months filming in the Kalahari Desert, first acclimatizing the meerkats to the crew's presence, and to that of their cameras, before they began shooting.

The meerkats surprised the crew by being natural actors and the dramatic plot arose from their everyday struggle for survival. ■