



ABINGDON

From the Head: Miss O.F.S. Lusk, B.Mus

17 October 2014

Dear Parents, Colleagues, Governors and Boys of Abingdon,

It's hard to believe that half term is already upon us. The two week break should give everyone the opportunity to rest, do some work, see friends and family and also perhaps go on one of the many school trips.

I am delighted to welcome the following new members of staff to the School: Mr Rhys Denton, Mr Daniel Ruell and Mr Nathan Bulfield are Sports Centre Supervisors; Mr Noel Hatherall is Site Manager at Tilsley Park. I wish all these new colleagues a happy and fulfilling time with us at Abingdon.

We say farewell to the following staff this month: Mr Tom Clewley, Senior Sports Centre Supervisor; Mrs Bernice Gilmore and Mrs Margaret Stratton, both in our Housekeeping department.

We congratulate Oliver and Caroline Lomax on the safe arrival of baby Timothy recently. Congratulations also to Ben and Helen Whitworth on the birth of baby Laurence Ned on 15 October.

At the OA Club Committee Meeting and AGM on Saturday 11 October we said farewell to outgoing officers and welcomed in new ones. Mr John Bunce retires as Club Chairman after 10 years, and Mr Mike Stevens retires as Club President after three years. We thank them both for their loyalty and commitment to the School and the OA Club. Mr Mike Litchfield and Mr Simon Hills retire from the Committee. They have both been energetic and enthusiastic members for many years, and will be missed on the committee. We welcome Mr Gareth Morris (OA 1976) as the new OA Club Chairman, and Mr David Allison (OA 1993) as the new Club President. New committee members are Mr Christopher Clayton (OA 1973), Mr Ken Welby (OA 1984), Mr Darshan Puri (OA 2003) and Mr Ian Oliver (OA 1958). The OA Club is a crucial part of our organisation, and we thank all those OAs who are prepared to give their time and energy to making it a successful enterprise.

The whole school sponsored walk went very well. I always feel the picnic lunch is the highlight for many – an Abingdon army certainly does march on its stomach. A special thanks to the bus companies who gave their services free-of-charge. The money raised is still being collected and we hope to have a figure soon.

Abingdon School, Park Road, Abingdon, Oxfordshire, OX14 1DE

Tel: 01235 521563 Fax: 01235 849079

www.abingdon.org.uk

At the beginning of October we hosted our partner school from Germany, Ratsgymnasium Bielefeld. This partnership has been in existence for nearly 50 years and this year, to mark the centenary of WW1, both schools put together a joint exhibition. It was interesting to see the essays from German 18 year olds in 1914 talking about their fears at the onset of war; very similar to our own. We also welcomed staff and students from our Spanish exchange school this week. Other recent visitors include the eminent chemist, Dr Peter Wothers from Cambridge University who presented the Royal Society Christmas lectures in 2012. Dr Wothers gave an engaging talk to our pupils, and students from Headington and the Abingdon schools, as well as a masterclass to our sixth formers.

Our senior brass players also benefitted from a masterclass with the trumpeter of international standing, Crispian Steele-Perkins. Crispian then went on to give a very enjoyable concert to an appreciative audience in the Amey Theatre. In other news from the Music Department, our Chapel Choir sang Choral Evensong at Gloucester Cathedral this month. The Anthem and Canticles were both by Henry Purcell and featured impressive solos from Hugh Cutting, Thomas Keogh, Didier Delgorge, Alexander Glover, Mitchell Keely, Anthony Bracey, Jamie Farrow and Carl Olavesen. James Anderson-Besant assisted with playing the organ. Chapel Choir continues to grow in popularity and now has over 50 boys as members. Perhaps not quite so polished but with certainly as much enthusiasm, the House Singing competition raised the rafters of the Amey Theatre on Wednesday. There were excellent performances from everyone - thoroughly enjoyable. Congratulations to the winners, Southwell-Sander's.

This year's impressive 11th annual screening from the AFU was also the inaugural year for the Michael Grigsby Awards. Congratulations to Jack Bradley who received the Michael Grigsby Young Filmmaker award and to John Cheung and Aim Wonghirundacha who received the Spirit of Grigsby Award. These boys were amongst the 13 students who received 'Head's Praise' last week; other recommendations were for excellent research projects from the Upper Sixth, sporting achievements over the summer and contribution as house prefects. Very well done to all.

During October, our students have enjoyed trips to The British Museum, the Institute of Economic Affairs conference, Tate Britain and The Saatchi Gallery. The CCF RAF also took part in a field day at RAF Odiham and the Army section at Saint George's Barracks near Bicester.

Our boarders have embraced their weekend activities with a social with Westonbirt School and the delights of Thorpe Park! As part of their community service, the boarders have also been honing their bingo skills at an evening for the residents of the Old Station House.

The Fencing Club continues last year's impressive performance winning their first fixtures of the season against Wellington College and Winchester. Rugby is also having a good term with recent wins for the 1st and 2nd XV against local rivals Magdalen College School and Radley and an excellent win for the 2nd XV against St

Paul's. Rugby teams will be competing this week, and over half term, on tour in Somerset and Dorset and at the Sedbergh and Langley Park Festivals. The rowers will also be competing in the USA at the Head of the Schuylkill in Philadelphia followed by the first of the big rowing titles, the Head of the River on 1st November. Our swimmers have been in action, winning convincingly against Stowe School and, in our division of the English Schools Swimming Association, the U15 squad set a new county record in the 4x50m medley relay. The Sailing Club has also had a good week winning against both St Edward's and Cokethorpe.

We have enjoyed a flurry of OA activity recently welcoming back Henry Jenkinson, OA 2012, in an impressive performance of Much a Do About Nothing; Tian Macleod Ji, OA 2010, was awarded the very prestigious BAFTA scholarship to study Master of Fine Arts at the City University of Hong Kong and I very much look forward to the well-known comedian and writer, David Mitchell, (OA 1992), returning to Abingdon on 13 November to discuss his new book.

Over half term we have boys taking part in DofE canoe training and sailing at Plymouth. The classicists are off to Italy and there is a sixth form trekking trip to Nepal.

I hope everyone has a very enjoyable half term and I look forward to our return, refreshed and relaxed, on Monday 3 November.

Yours sincerely

Felicity Lusk