



From the Headmaster: Mr Michael Windsor, BA, MA

18 November 2016

Dear Parents, Colleagues, Governors and Boys of Abingdon,

The School took time to pause and reflect collectively on Friday 11 November, when we remembered the sacrifice made by our former pupils and teachers in conflict. To prepare for this event, I visited the archive pages on the School's website, which contain fascinating information about the Old Abingdonians who perished in the First World War. 2016 marks of course the centenary of the Battle of the Somme, a battle which in many ways encapsulates the suffering and loss in the Great War, and in his address on Remembrance Day, the Chaplain reflected on our former pupils who died on the Somme. The CCF did the School proud with their turnout and drill in their Remembrance Day parade and then represented us with distinction in the Abingdon Town parade on Remembrance Sunday.

Although half term is rapidly fading in the memory, as we focus on some busy weeks in the run-up to Christmas, I hope that all Abingdon families had a restful time. Many of the boys were involved in trips. The classicists fully appreciated the history and sites of ancient and modern Greece and linguists enjoyed improving their skills in Spain when 51 students from Abingdon and St Helen's visited Galicia. The Boat Club also spent half term in Spain training on the Banyoles lake (used in the 1992 Barcelona Olympics) and then competed very successfully at the Upper Thames Autumn Head.

In other activities, sailors completed silver and gold practice expeditions on the south coast where poor weather prevented the gold expedition sailing to France, opting for Poole instead. The silver expedition took on the extremely busy Solent water. The Sailing Club impressed at the National Schools' Sailing Match where both teams reached the semi-finals and Abingdon A went on to win the event. The U14 rugby squad played some good matches during their tour of Sussex while the U15s enjoyed taking part in the Langley Festival in Norfolk.

Congratulations to Charlie Quarterman, Ethan Moody, Louis Heard, Max Carter Keall and Rob MacLennan for their recent sporting successes. Charlie has been signed by the Luxembourg based cycling team Leopard Pro for next year and Ethan represented Great Britain at the Techno293 windsurfing championships. Louis has been selected for a British junior polo development course and earlier this year received the Most Promising Player award at the schools and universities national polo championships. Max has been selected to trial for the first stage of the England U18 hockey team. He represented England over the summer at U16 level and has been called up a year early for the chance to play against Holland in April. Following an impressive competition on Sunday to make the final of the Welsh Open Men's Senior Epee competition, Rob MacLennan has been selected to fence for the GBR Junior Epee Team.

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

Tel: +44 (0)1235 521563

Fax: +44 (0)1235 849079

www.abingdon.org.uk

Rugby results since half term have been mixed for the senior teams with the 2nd XV securing two good wins against Sherborne and Rugby but the 1st XV narrowly losing on both occasions. The overall results were excellent with Abingdon picking up both block wins with all teams from the U16Bs to the U14Ds victorious against Rugby with some impressive score lines in the younger years.

I was intrigued to witness part of the second years' combat workshop taken by Kev McCurdy, fight director for the National Theatre, the RSC and the Globe. The boys enthusiastically embraced the art of stage conflicts and were very attentive learners when it came to controlled fight manoeuvres!

Our senior mathematicians came a very credible third out of 18 teams at the annual regional final of the Senior Team Maths Challenge held at Wheatley Park at the beginning of November.

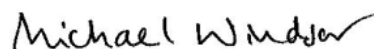
It was a great pleasure to hear the 16 solo performances from senior musicians at the second Scholars' concert of the term. Chapel Choir sang Evensong at Tewkesbury Abbey last week, to a very appreciative congregation and many thanks to James Anderson-Besant (OA 2016) for accompanying them on the organ. Following last year's success, the Music department held the second Senior Solo Competition and 11 very talented musicians performed to an exceptional standard on a variety of instruments – five pianists, two violinists, a cellist and a flautist. Dr Benjamin Skipp, a fine oboist, pianist, ABRSM examiner and Lecturer and Director of Studies in Music at Hertford and Somerville Colleges, had the unenviable task of adjudication. The standard was extremely high and many congratulations to fifth former, Didier Delgorge, who won the competition.

I was delighted that we were able to welcome pupils from St Helen's to join 40 Abingdon pupils at our Model United Nations conference recently. This event was organised almost entirely by our pupils, with George Aylard taking the leading role, and those involved showed an impressive grasp of detail and nuance in debating the major global issues facing us today.

I was also very pleased to hear that participants in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme at Abingdon had completed 2230 hours of volunteering in our local community over the last year. I am keen to see our pupils playing their part as service to others is an important component in our ethos.

I congratulate all our pupils on their endeavour and commitment during the past few weeks and hope that parents and friends of the School will be able to join us for some of the many events that will take place over the coming weeks.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael Windsor". The script is cursive and fluid, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Mike Windsor