



A welcome return to school fixtures

Fixtures made a welcome return to the school calendar last term. It was uplifting to have spectators once more enjoying the quintessential sights and sounds of summer sports at Abingdon.

We are very much looking forward to the time when we are able to welcome parents and visitors back to the school campus for other events from social gatherings to concerts and productions.



Message from the Headmaster

Having navigated the twists and turns of the pandemic over the previous year or so, we certainly embraced the standard pleasures of the summer term: cricket, tennis and athletics, expeditions and educational visits. I'm sure the experience of being deprived of many of the normal features of school life during the periods of remote learning ensured that we appreciated the events of the summer all the more.

Our Inter-House Athletics competition, held at Tilsley Park, is always a personal favourite. This year, it was particularly good to once again see students from different year groups and different houses taking part - and social distancing was no problem in the wide open spaces of Tilsley. This event in many ways captures the essence of the Other Half and its blend of elite performance and wide participation. There were some dazzling performances on the track and in the field from hugely talented athletes but also great encouragement for those for whom athletics is a once-a-year pursuit, with large numbers involved in the relay events in particular.

As the new academic year comes into view, I hope that it will offer a return to normality for everyone. I'm certainly confident that we will cherish those events that we can all too easily take for granted.



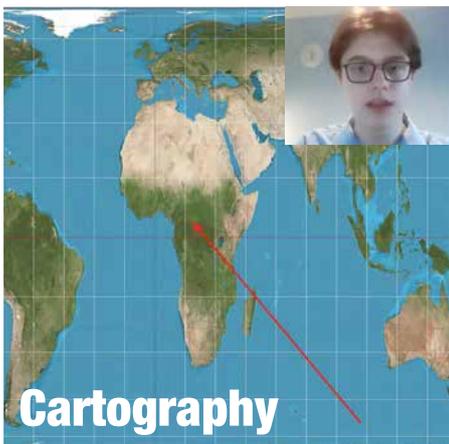
Bronze DofE

Seventeen teams completed their Bronze Duke of Edinburgh's expedition to the Wiltshire Downs. The conditions were wet but the students tackled the challenge in good spirits and enjoyed the neolithic monuments at Avebury and the famous white horse.



Professor Sir Martin Landray

Congratulations to OA Martin Landray on the knighthood he received in the Queen's Birthday Honours for services to public health and science. Martin, Professor of Medicine and Epidemiology at the University of Oxford, is the Deputy Chief Investigator at RECOVERY, established in March 2020 to conduct randomised controlled clinical trials for the rapid evaluation of COVID-19 therapies. The discovery that Dexamethasone is an effective treatment was their first success followed by the announcement that the Regeneron antiviral treatment can reduce fatalities in patients who have no natural antibodies of their own.

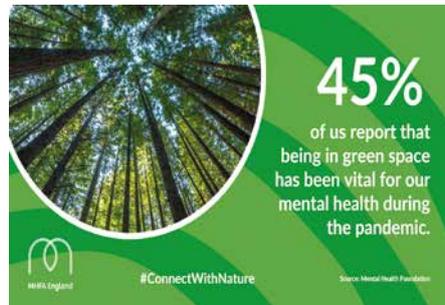


Many thanks to Philip Kimber in the Fourth Year who delivered a meticulously researched and well-illustrated assembly for Pygott's House on the politics of map projections and the importance of compromise.



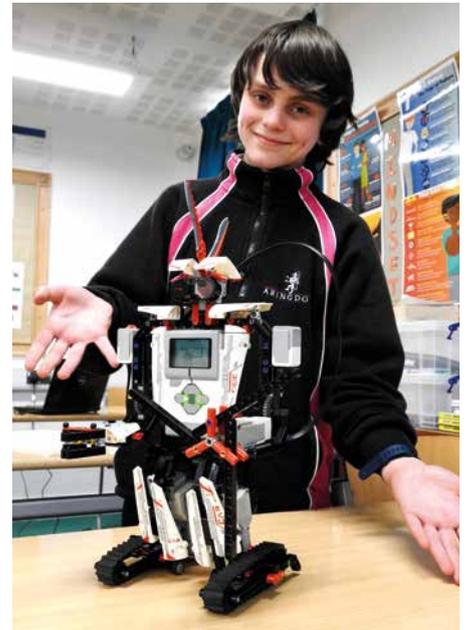
Youth Climate Action

Fourth year Lawrence Dew has set up a youth climate action group in his home town of Watlington. Lawrence set up the group for the volunteering element of his Duke of Edinburgh award. Talking to the local paper, The Henley Standard, Lawrence said, "I wanted to get more young people involved and to make the action group more welcoming for people my age. I've always been interested in nature and the environment and I think more and more people are now aware of the fact that our climate is not going in the right direction and it's becoming even more important to care and do something about it."



The importance of nature

We marked Mental Health Awareness Week by recognising the importance to our mental health and wellbeing of being in nature. The Mental Health Foundation says that: "45% of us report that being in green space has been vital to our mental health during the pandemic." Each day of mental health awareness week a member of staff shared their own thoughts about how nature has had a positive impact on them. Their thoughts are shared on the website.



Lego Mindstorms

Progress is well underway with building and programming robots in the Lower School Lego Mindstorms Club.

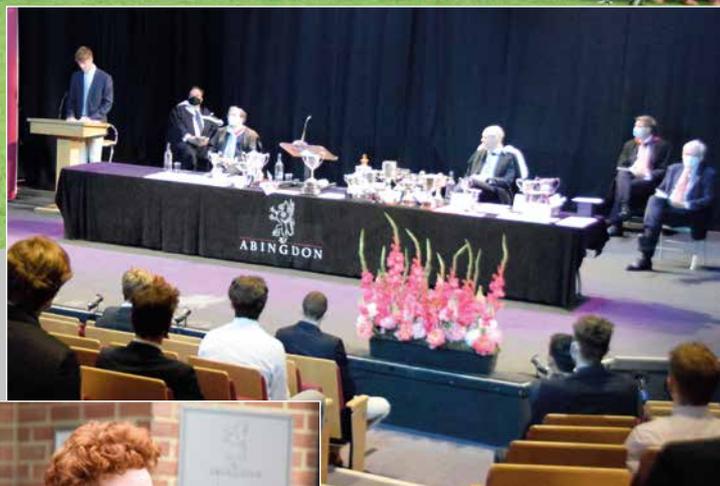


The Abingdon Apprentice

Lower School Assistants Noah Chakravarti and James Healey have been running a Tuesday lunchtime activity for lower school boys inspired by the BBC's, The Apprentice. Using just cardboard, the boys had to work in teams to design, make, and promote an innovative product which they pitched to Lord Sugar (aka Mr Jenkins).

Saying goodbye to the Upper Sixth

Yearbooks and OA ties in hand the Upper Sixth went on their way following Leavers' Day and Prize Giving celebrations. We wish them all the very best for their next steps.



2021 A Level and GCSE Results

A Levels

Grade	A Level passes
A*	46.9%
A* and A	80.2%
A* to B	94%
A* to C	97.8%
A* to E	100%

NB: A Level grade equivalencies have been used for Pre-U grades in the statistics. Abingdon uses the Pre-U for French, German and Spanish. The percentages include the results of girls from St Helen and St Katharine School in subjects which are either taught jointly (Drama) or solely by Abingdon teachers (Economics).



The Headmaster, Michael Windsor, said:

“ On behalf of everyone in the Abingdon community, I'd like to congratulate our leavers on their results this year.

They have shown remarkable tenacity and fortitude as they have moved through the Sixth Form, adapting to the uncertainties that they have faced with composure and good humour. They have made a superb all-round commitment to the life of the School and can take great pride in their achievements. Although results were reached in a different way this year, they represent an accurate representation of the high standards which this excellent year group have set themselves.

The process of putting together Teacher Assessed Grades placed unusual and exceptional pressures on all those involved. I would like to thank teachers and support staff for all their hard work.

These A Level and Pre-U results will open the doors for our leavers to a huge range of exciting opportunities. I wish them well in all their future endeavours. ”



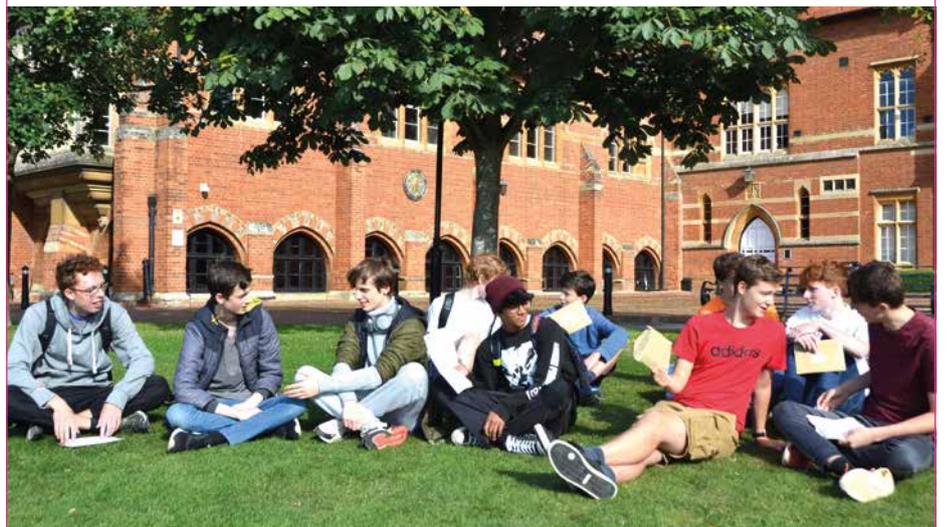
A full breakdown of A Level and GCSE results is available on the website

GCSEs

Commenting on the results the Headmaster said:

“ The excellent grades that our students have achieved will provide them with a sure foundation for success as they move into the Sixth Form. They should be very proud. ”

Grade	GCSE passes
9	49.4%
9 and 8	76.6%
9 to 7	91.1%
9 to 4	99.9%
9 to 1	100%





This edition of the magazine from the Economics department includes issues surrounding Bitcoin, the Olympics, Gamestop, Abingdon's Lent term essay competition winner and a crossword. Griffenomics aims to "open your mind to the limitless realm of economics, and pleasantly immerse yourself in the unexpected". A link to the online magazine is on the school website abingdon.org.uk/griffenomics

The Lockdown Art Competition was an ASiP initiative involving schools across the partnership. Students depicted their thoughts and feelings about lockdown in a variety of ways.

We had many entries from Radley, Buckland and St Edmund's and the artwork ranged from paintings and sculptures to drawings and collage. The pieces showed the diversity of young people's experience of lockdown.

Lockdown positives

My Lockdown activity
By Jonathan

My lockdown activity was a board game called Go. I have been playing Go for a little while and I was vaguely experienced. Go originated in China over 3,000 years ago.

First Year Academic Award holders took part in an online joint thinking lunch with girls from St Helen's. They were asked to reflect on some of the positives that they could draw from the last year of lockdowns, either looking at new skills and activities that they have developed or the role models that had inspired them - they then all contributed to a really interesting and varied presentation at the end of the session.

'The Listeners'

Congratulations to first year Bertie Smith, for being Highly Commended in the National Poetry By Heart Competition, for his rendition of *The Listeners* by Walter de la Mare. A video of Bertie's recital is in the news section of the website.

'Valete' Abingdon classicists

At the end of the summer term we said 'valete' to a particularly strong year of Abingdon classicists. Twenty-two students studied a classical subject in the Sixth Form, and many chose to continue their interest at university, including Classics courses at Durham, Exeter and Manchester and four to study Classics at Oxford.



Congratulations St Edmund's

The Abingdon Science Partnership (ASP) would like to celebrate the children and staff in Year 2 at St Edmund's Primary School for getting stuck in to CREST Star science activities every afternoon during British Science Week. ASP was delighted to loan the boxes of resources and activity plans that they have been developing over the years.



The Life and Legacy of Napoleon

Our thanks go to Professor Michael Broers of Lady Margaret Hall, Oxford University, who delivered an entertaining lecture on the life and legacy of Napoleon to students studying History. Broers is one of the foremost Napoleonic historians of the academic world and we were privileged to be able to host him.



Flash Fiction Competition

Ted Smethurst in the Lower Sixth has been 'very highly commended' in the National Flash Fiction Competition, run by the University of Chester, for his story entitled 'The Menu'. He competed against students from across the country so this is a great accolade for a young writer who shows much promise. A participant in Abingdon's AFA Creative Writing course, he's part of a dedicated community of creative writers in the Sixth Form, and richly deserves this success.



Hampton Court Palace

The second years enjoyed the annual history trip to Hampton Court Palace. Pupils engaged with the rich Tudor, Stuart and Georgian history and even caught a glimpse of Henry VIII himself!



Young Enterprise

Team Woodstuff picked up the "Entrepreneurship" award for their range of upcycled domestic signage at the online regional Young Enterprise final.

Tackling Inequality and encouraging Diversity

The Equality Committee at Abingdon School is a student-led initiative working to raise awareness amongst pupils and staff of the issues surrounding equality and diversity. It looks to provide a platform to promote discussion, address prejudice and to allow minority voices to be heard.

Equal rights for all

The Committee is well aware of the relatively limited social diversity within the school community and of the School's commitment to broaden access to an Abingdon education. They consider that this is all the more reason to work to raise awareness amongst the school community of the inequalities in our society. They argue that just because we may not see discrimination or inequality, it does exist within our community. It is the responsibility of our society to demand equal rights for all and it could be argued that because of the relatively homogeneous backgrounds of the student population, there is more work to be done at Abingdon and similar schools, than in some other educational settings.



Members of the Equality Committee

The Committee was set up in the wake of the murder of George Floyd. This, together with subsequent events including the sexual harassment cases highlighted by Everyone's Invited, have further fuelled the desire to recognise and acknowledge the inequality and injustices in our society in order to begin to correct the imbalance.

Student engagement

The Committee, which has around 25 members who meet weekly, works alongside the Headmaster and staff who have embraced their ideas and activities. It has a multi-faceted approach to raising awareness. The Committee has presented whole school assemblies on International Women's Day, George Floyd and systemic racism, and Pride and Allyship and provided resources for tutor group discussions to celebrate LGBTQ+ History Month. It plans further assemblies and events and to promote student engagement

through social media, a profile on the school website, plus joint initiatives with St Helen and St Katharine and other local schools. It is also reviewing the curriculum alongside staff with a view to adjusting the way subjects are taught, with the aim of making it more inclusive.

Long term project

The Committee is determined, as is the School, to raise awareness and promote discussion and positive action to combat inequality. The Committee recognises that this is a long term project and, having only been operational for two terms and within the constraints of the pandemic, their initiatives to date are relatively limited. However, it is a student body that is gaining momentum and it is an integral part of Abingdon School's measures to promote a community that is open, listening, addressing inequality and encouraging diversity.

Boarders

Boarders enjoyed a range of activities over the half term break, including gardening, tennis and a BBQ in the sunshine.



It's been fantastic to see our boarders return to school. On their first Friday evening of term the third years enjoyed the simple pleasures of making pizzas and watching a film together.



Students made the most of the May bank holiday weekend to practise their skills, delicacies included baking bread, brownies, cheesecake and fried milk.

Farewell and thank you

Our 2020-21 prefects gathered for a farewell dinner with the Headmaster. They have done a superb job over the course of an unusual academic year and we would like to thank them for all their hard work.



CCF leavers' final parade

The upper sixth members of the CCF took part in their final parade which was followed by the Senior NCOs handing over their duties to their lower sixth peers. The CCF staff would like to thank them for all their hard work and wish them all the best for the future.



The French Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars

Dr Neil Sanghvi spoke to around 25 lower sixth students, and pupils from our History and Politics Society, in a very entertaining lecture. The lecture was one of six held for history extension classes this academic year.



Peer Support Leads take up their posts

A new cohort of Peer Support Leads has been appointed for the 2021/22 academic year. Fourteen students were selected to work in collaboration with students from Abingdon, Fitzharrys, John Mason, Larkmead, St Helen and St Katharine and Radley College as part of the growing partnership program. The students will be trained in safeguarding, listening and counselling skills before supporting the pastoral care of younger students within their own school.

Sustainability at Abingdon

Trees planted around the school campus



Solar panels on the Estates Office



LED lighting installed in the sports centre

The Environmental Committee is made up of staff from departments that cover estates, grounds, transport, catering and teaching. Students are very much involved and they are encouraged to 'own' initiatives. Student representation is via the pupil led Eco-Committee which feeds ideas into the Environmental Committee, and together with an extremely supportive governing body, they form the driving force behind the School's sustainability initiatives.

Our goals are to:

- Reduce the environmental impact of the school estate
- Increase awareness of environmental sustainability
- Remain compliant with, and where possible exceed, environmental regulations

There follows just some of the School's recent initiatives. More projects can be found on the website.

Energy – buildings across the school campus have been audited for their environmental sustainability. Improvements include solar panels and LED lighting. There are plans to trial a new solar film, as an alternative to solar panels, with a possibility to roll out across the campus beginning with the science centre. The School aims to reduce CO2 emissions by 40% by 2030.

The Amey Theatre is encouraging a range of initiatives from promoting environmental events and artists to recycling and reusing sets and introducing a more sustainable approach to refreshment packaging and waste.

Transport – extensive carbon reduction through the use of the Joint Bus Service. Plans to encourage green commuting for staff and students including car-shares, electric car points and improved facilities for cyclists.

School grounds - 300 trees from the Woodland Trust planted around campus. The Eco-Committee installed bug hotels to promote biodiversity and is investigating wildflower areas, pollinating plants and bird boxes.

Litter and waste - the School is zero waste to landfill. All waste is sorted for recycling and further promotion is planned to raise awareness of the need to separate waste and recycle. Reducing printing and paper wastage remains a priority.

Catering – students and the catering team are looking into meat free days and more meat free and plant based options as well as alternatives to palm oil, the carbon footprint of food and reducing food waste and plastic packaging. All the fish used in our catering is responsibly sourced.

Global citizenship – the Eco-Committee reported that students are keen to support the development of materials to use across the curriculum. Students are involved with monitoring air quality through the SCAMPA project in science. Field studies look into biodiversity on the school site and the third and fifth year curriculum study climate change in detail. This year's Festival of the Arts includes an exhibition of animal sculptures created by students from recycled material. Environmental support is also promoted through the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme.

CCF fundraising

The goal of the CCF charity event last term was to honour the 71 Old Abingdonians who fell in WWI by virtually visiting the sites of their graves. The journey took the CCF from Abingdon through Europe and finally to Basra, Iraq. The challenge was in aid of SSAFA and CALM, - charities for men's mental health, military families and veterans - and the CCF aimed to raise over £2500.

The trip was split into two parts. In the five weeks leading up to 16 June, members of the Upper and Lower Sixth CCF completed sufficient running, cycling, kayaking and paddle boarding to cover the distance between Abingdon and Cremona. The 24 hour push to cover the remaining distance to Basra began at 9am on 16 June. The SNCOs completed the event with a virtual 8218.51km in the school gym and raised a total of £3655 (including gift aid).



As part of their Be More Griffen course and a post-exam treat, every lower school boy took part in a BMX workshop run by six-time BMX Halfpipe and former World Master Champion, Mike Mullen.



Let the bells ring out

After more than a year of not being able to visit the ringing chamber and having to meet virtually, the Bellingring Club was finally able to get back to St Helen's church and enjoy re-learning the ropes.

Return to film training



It has been a delight to welcome back students and tutors 'in person' to film training sessions at school. Members of both the Abingdon Film Unit and the Abingdon School in Partnership Film Academy worked with tutors to learn first-hand how to use cameras, sound and editing equipment and to hold discussions about films.

Abingdon News

Diary of a Drama

Diary of a Drama was this year's lower school production which documented some of what's been happening over the last year. Part diary, part anthology, it told the story of a drama teacher's attempts to put on a school play in a pandemic. With some original material created by the cast, and scenes by Salman Rushdie, Jewell Parker Rhodes, Robin Stevens, Michael Rosen and Graham Greene, the film features a cast of 26 lower school actors alongside professional actor (and OA) Alex Mugnaioni.



Canoe polo finale

The canoe polo season finished with the second years emerging victorious from a close competition with the third years.



Story time

Students shared recordings of themselves reading popular children's books with our partnership primary schools.

Blott Matthews



Essay competition

Congratulations to lower sixth formers Cameron Eilbeck and Dominic Wood on achieving joint second place in this year's Blott Matthews Essay prize competition. They won £100 each. The students had to write an essay in the form of an engineering report.

Cameron wrote an overview of the Apollo LEM, looking briefly at the challenges it faced and how it overcame them in terms of design and engineering. Dominic focused on the Millau Viaduct. He analysed the forces on the bridge to provide context for the engineering choices of the structure and outlined the challenges of the construction process.



In addition to the success in the Essay Competition, two teams competed in this year's **Blott Matthews Team Challenge**. The Challenge was to develop a plan to meet the UK's electrical power demand between 2021 and 2040 based on achievable infrastructure development.

Both teams carried out extensive research and then assessed the feasibility of different options to agree a plan. The judges were impressed both by the quality of the work produced and with the video presentation skills of the students.

Abingdon team Eat Your Greens was awarded the first prize of £500 while EDP Energy received a £100 Merit Award in recognition of the quality of their participation.

Partial eclipse

Members of the Astronomy Club demonstrated a range of methods, from a high tech solar telescope to pinhole projectors, for safely observing the partial solar eclipse on 9 June. During morning break a number of pupils and staff were very excited to catch a glimpse of the event during breaks in the cloud cover.



Investigating measurements with light

ASP's Royal Society Partnership Grant project entitled 'How small a measurement can you make with light?' became a reality for the team of lower sixth physicists when they got their hands on a Michelson interferometer. The Abingdon team's challenge was to measure the spacing of the well-known sodium spectral D-lines which are only a fraction of a nanometer apart. The interferometer is being passed on to other local schools to complete a different challenge, with all the teams hoping to meet for a workshop to present their results next year.

Thrilling local derby!



Sixth formers at Abingdon and St Helen's eagerly anticipated the return of the annual lacrosse match. Abingdon looked hopeful at one point at 2-2 but St Helen's showed grit and determination, finishing the match with a convincing 5-2 victory.



Senior Science Ambassadors

It was a sad but proud occasion for the Abingdon Science Partnership, ASP, to say goodbye and good luck to its current team of upper sixth Senior Science Ambassadors. Many of them have been engaged in ASP projects for several years. We would like to say a big thank you to them all.

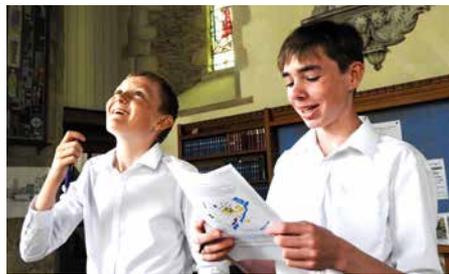


Students and staff took on the challenge to reduce their CO₂e during the last week of term as part of Eco-Week. Amongst the activities we were encouraged to take the bus, walk or cycle rather than drive, go vegetarian, pick up litter, reduce our intake of processed food and research dream careers.



Lower School Ceramics Club have been creating a parliament of owl thumb pots with air dry clay.

Exploring Abingdon



The first years explored Abingdon learning more about the history of the School. They visited St Nicolas' church where they hunted high and low for griffens, walked the outline of Abingdon Abbey laid out in the Abbey Gardens, found out more about the classroom that John Roysse created in 1563, and looked at Roysse's tomb in St Helen's church.



This year's online Summer Concert was shared with the Abingdon community worldwide. It was a tribute to the students and teachers who have sustained music making of all sorts – classical, jazz, singing and instrumental throughout the pandemic. The concert celebrated our senior students who move on to pastures new after making tremendous contributions to music at Abingdon. It was also reassuring to hear from our very talented younger musicians who are stepping into their shoes.

Investigating mathematical patterns

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The Cartwright Group of middle school pupils who want to explore mathematical patterns, have been delving into the undergraduate world of Group Theory, looking for abstract patterns in various contexts including modular arithmetic, transformations of shapes, complex numbers and ways to put on a T-Shirt in the dark. This culminated with constructing the Cayley Table for the group S4, which are all the possible symmetries of the tetrahedron, and how they combine together.

The Group finished off the term investigating the different possible tessellations of the plane and Platonic and Archimedean solids - the truncated icosahedron was the most impressive build (more commonly known as the shape of a football!)



The Dark Peak

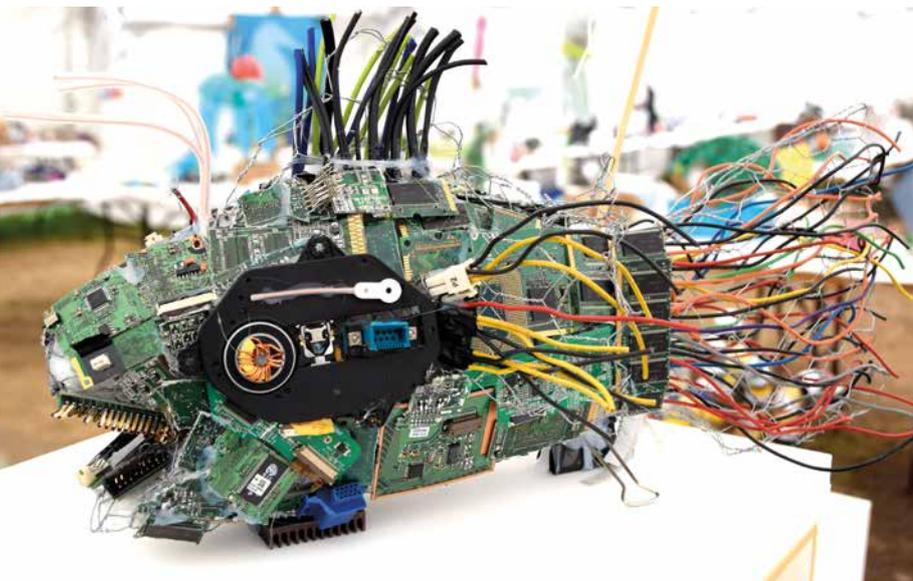
The Silver DofE practice expedition was to the Dark Peak District where teams completed the challenging climb up Kinder Scout at 636m and were rewarded with stunning views.

Celebration of the Arts

The Celebration of the Arts is a fun, end of the school year, festival that celebrates the students' artistry and achievements in the fields of Literature, Music, Drama and Art. This year the theme for the art project was 'recycled animals'. Below is a gallery of some of the work - very well done to all those who took part, the pieces were truly innovative and outstanding.

Celebration of the Arts

Art : Drama : Music : Literature



Abingdon News

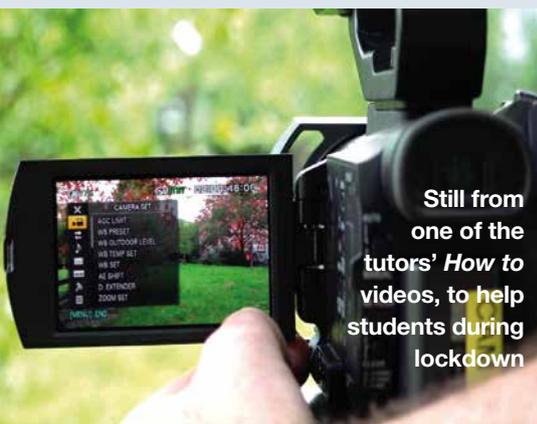
The Abingdon Film Unit

One of the School's Other Half activities.

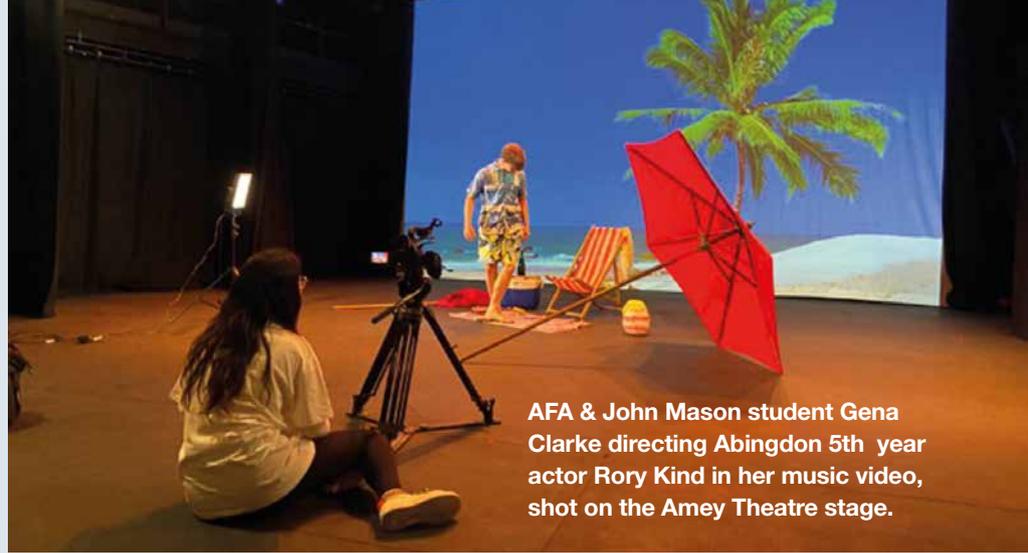
Founded in 2003, the AFU allows students to make their own films with guidance from industry professionals. To date, AFU filmmakers have produced 183 films, many of which have won awards and been screened at festivals around the world.



AFU students make all sorts of films, including fictions and animations, but they began with a focus on documentaries, as the AFU's co-founder was director and OA, Michael Grigsby (1936-2013). Mike was a renowned documentarist who also kick-started Abingdon's filmmaking as a pupil in the 1950s. The greatest impact of Mike's teaching was his encouragement to look outwards, and interrogate the world around you - inspired by his experiences at Granada TV in Manchester, where he encountered a very different environment from the one he knew here. The effect of Mike's teaching was immediate: three students shot a film on the streets of Oxford about the city's homeless people.



Still from one of the tutors' *How to* videos, to help students during lockdown



AFA & John Mason student Gena Clarke directing Abingdon 5th year actor Rory Kind in her music video, shot on the Amey Theatre stage.

Mike's concern for "giving voice to the voiceless" has led AFU students in many unexpected directions. In 2006, a crew travelled to Cambodia to make *Gravel and Stones*, a film about the stigma faced by disabled people in a country emerging from civil war. In 2009, another team travelled to Moldova to make *One Foot on the Ground*, a film about growing up in Europe's poorest country. The AFU not only helps students master the technicalities of filmmaking, but also empathise with others. As Jonas Mortensen, former tutor and BAFTA-winning cinematographer said, "The AFU is not just about making filmmakers; it's about making good people."

As well as using the medium of film to learn about the world, the AFU/AFA allows students to learn about themselves, and what it takes to make something. Filmmaking is hard; even a ten-minute film takes students a year to complete. For some, the experience is life-changing. There's an ever-growing list of AFU alumni working in film and television, and in time, we hope they'll be joined by Academy alumni.

As the AFU marks its eighteenth year, it continues to evolve. In partnership with sports broadcaster Olly Hogben, we've launched the Oxfordshire Academy of Broadcast Journalism to offer online sessions for 50 students across the town

Podcasts can be whatever style and form you want them to be.

If you want to have your own theme song, recording studio, and professional audio equipment... you can!

If you want to just record the whole thing on your mobile phone or Zoom and upload it... you can!

PODBIBLE

Kelechi Okafor: "There's a podcast for literally everything"

By this team
Published on April 1, 2020

The Team at Pod Bible have been looking through the magazine back catalogue with more than a hint of nostalgia. With so many great articles and interviews, we thought it was time to share them on the website. In each issue we ask a

They can be audio only, audio and video combined, or you can give people a choice to watch and/or listen.

If you entertain people and interest them, then you have a show... it doesn't matter how you do it.

It can be every day, every week, every month, or whenever you like. It can have no start and no end, or it can be a specific number of episodes.

Oxfordshire Academy of Broadcast Journalism

Olly Hogben

Olly Hogben leading the first online session

From the start, the AFU worked with students in other schools, mindful that the opportunity to work with professional filmmakers is both rare and invaluable. Early collaborations involved St Marylebone School in London and Wheatley Park School in Oxfordshire, with whom we founded the New Shoots Festival - attended on one occasion by the current Prime Minister. More recently, as part of Abingdon's commitment to developing town-wide partnerships, we've established the Abingdon Film Academy, AFA, to allow pupils at partner schools to work with us.

in podcasting, presenting and blogging. Olly's aspiration is to "democratize the media". It calls to mind a tribute to the AFU by actor, OA and former AFU member, Alex Mugnaioni, who urged us to "keep changing the world, one short film at a time".



Learning how to light an interview, March 2021



A welcome return for Choral Evensong

Chapel Choir ventured out to St Helen's Church to sing choral evensong for the first time in well over a year.



Lower School Gala Concert

It was fantastic to see so many young musicians performing in the Lower School Gala Concert. With an eclectic mix of music from Junior Strings, Lower School Band, Junior Blues and the debuting Open Mic Groups plus the professionalism of the first and second year choirs - it was a wonderful showcase of the musical talent we have at Abingdon.



Inter-tutor group competition

This term saw the inaugural Lower School Inter-Tutor Group Music Competition with each of the six tutor groups putting a performance together which had to include both instrumental and vocal elements. Instruments included an electric violin, harp, and even the bagpipes.



Solo Concert Platform 5

Pupils from the Lower School to the Upper Sixth were keen to participate in the last solo platform of the year. This was also a final solo outing for some outstanding senior musicians who we thank for their inspiring performances over several years.

Berkshire Young Musician 2021



Oliver Simpson in the Fifth Year has won the Berkshire Young Musician of the Year 2021 competition.

Ollie won the age 13-15 category, and also the title of overall Berkshire Young Musician of the Year 2021. As part of his prize he will perform a concerto with orchestra in St George's Chapel, Windsor Castle at the Windsor Festival 2021 in September.



Composers' Masterclass

The Composers' Workshop has been a busy hub of activity this year. We were delighted to welcome composer and OA, Edmund Finnis, to listen to some of our work in our Composition Masterclass. Edmund exhorted our composers to lead with their imaginations, listen widely and keep a wide range of possibilities open when writing their own music.



Harp recruitment

Six first year pupils enjoyed a free harp taster session with the School's harp teacher, Jenny Hill.

The Boat Club



We enjoyed a welcome return to summer racing with 14 racing Vllls. Highlights included the National Schools Regatta where the 1st VIII and 2nd VIII finished fourth, the 3rd VIII – third, and the J16 B and A crews fifth and tenth. The J14s and J15s attended Marlow regatta for their first race against the top schools and all crews performed excellently. Well done to the boys and coaches for showing such enthusiasm and a great post-Covid attitude.

Cricket



It was great to see so many Abingdon students representing the School on the cricket field, enabling us to fill more teams than ever before! There were some wonderful individual performances, with hundreds, 5-wicket hauls and even six 6s in an over. Congratulations to the U14As who retained the County Cup with a comprehensive victory over Bloxham School.



Lower school fencing

Lower school members of the Fencing Club competed in their annual tournament to practise their epee skills. Senior members of the Club were on hand to offer coaching tips and act as referees. In a close final match, with the winning margin only 2 points, victory went to Jack Barnes.



Students continued to excel and we placed 5th overall in the Independent Schools League, a three place gain from 2019. We also performed well in local tournaments, taking the plate at the annual Radlingdon competition, although losing the final narrowly, and winning the U14 and U15 OXIST tournaments. Performance at all levels was impressive especially the U15s who are shaping up to be very strong over coming years.



Kayaking

Kayakers enjoyed the lower water conditions on the Thames at Abingdon Weir. The river was at an ideal level for developing whitewater skills.



Golf

The Abingdon team of Harry Gale, Nick Owen and Finn Leigh took on Radley in the ISGA scratch match play competition.



Athletics

We saw pupils stand on all steps of the podium, become county champions and break multiple school records. Highlights include; Gold in the 4x800m at the Achilles Relays and performances from the intermediate boys 4x100m at both the ESAA Track and Field Cup 1st round and Marlborough Invitational. The camaraderie and support boys showed during training and competitions has been tremendous. A special mention to Thom Denning (800m) and Rowan Miell-Ingram (3000m) who both qualified for the English Schools National Final in Manchester, seen by many as the pinnacle of schoolboy athletics.



Swimming

The squad reconvened for one final event designed to allow the swimmers a last crack at school records in their age range. Ben MacLennan, Chris Skelton, Nick Skelton, Joe Watkiss and Scott Yap stepped up, ready to give it everything – and records fell like flies! Head over to the website for details.

Ancient Greeks



Year 4 enthusiastically took to their art project to create Ancient Greek battle shields.



Crest awards

Year 8 investigated how different materials affected the drop of a parachute for their Bronze Crest Awards. Other topics included reactivity; testing metals and acid, sodium bicarbonate and fizzy drinks and designing the perfect bath bomb. The experiment that led to the most trial and error was the boys' attempt to build a machine for propelling tennis balls out of guttering!

Learning to measure

Year 1 created their own potions by using a range of containers and measuring equipment to carefully read and measure millilitres.



Pandemic portraits



Year 7 was inspired by Julian Opie to create some powerful pandemic portraits. Using the gridding method, flat screen painting and outlining the facial shapes in Opie's distinctive style, they have made a fantastic array of poignant self-portraits.

Andy Warhol



Boys in Year 3 prepared a fact file of famous artists including pop artist Andy Warhol. The boys were inspired to create their own collages of soup cans.



Year 5 thoroughly enjoyed their trip to explore HMS Victory.



Music in Year 5

Glockenspiels were the instrument of choice for practising reading notes on the treble clef, while becoming familiar with the keyboard layout and playing together as an ensemble.



On safari

Pre-Prep safari day saw the younger boys exploring rainforest areas around the world. They disappeared into our woods to develop Haiku poems, made binoculars to help spot the wildlife, tried a selection of delicious exotic fruits and learnt to ground coffee beans.



Fixtures return

Despite inclement weather at times, parents and boys thoroughly enjoyed the welcome return of fixtures this term.

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Karate Club



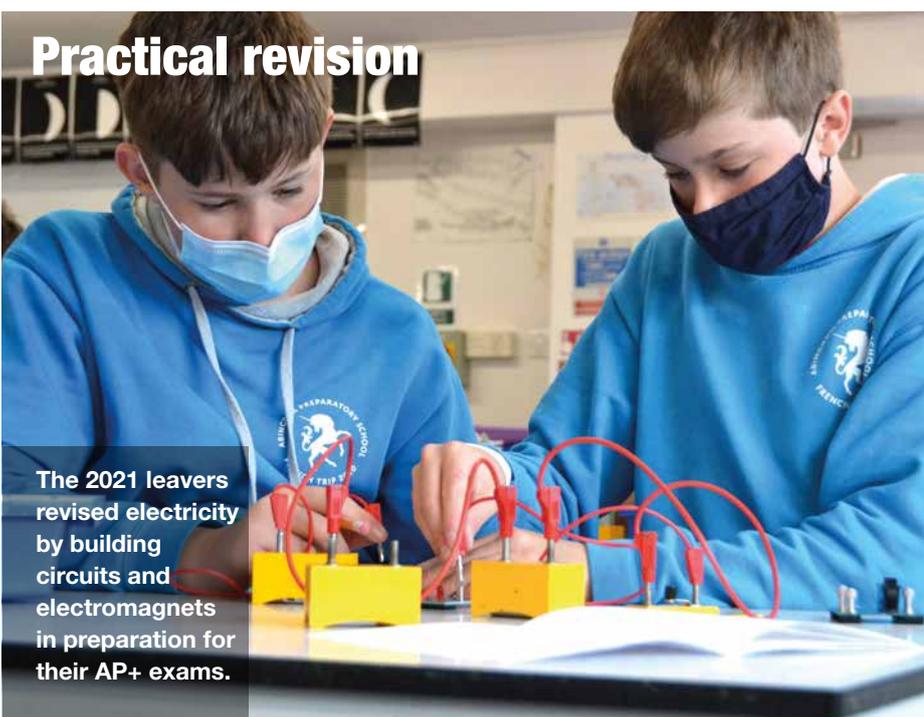
Rhythm Club



Lego Robotics

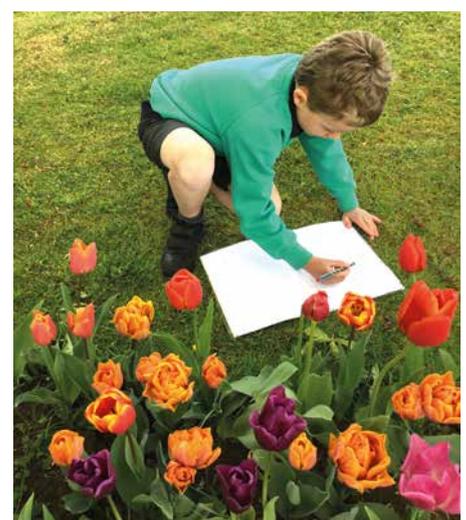
Other Half

– some of the wide range of Other Half activities embraced by the boys this term.



Practical revision

The 2021 leavers revised electricity by building circuits and electromagnets in preparation for their AP+ exams.



Sketching flowers

Year 2 combined art and science, learning about the different parts of the flower and how they produce seeds before sketching the flowers and labelling their drawings.

(He/him) and woke culture...

By Mark Hindley, Deputy Head (Pastoral)

I read an interesting article the other day on the weaponisation of the term “woke” - and it reminded me of heated discussions I have had in the past with friends whose view was that political correctness was somehow an invidious influence.

Unashamedly, I believe in the power of language, and in the importance carried by statements of intention. This is why I disagree with the naysayers of political correctness, and in the same way I view being called woke as something positive, rather than as an insult.

How we speak to and about each other is crucial, and we need to embrace the fact that the terms that we should use have changed, and will change, with time. I wish I could say I always get it right - I don't - but hopefully we would all cringe at some of the terms and attitudes that used to be mainstream years ago. Rather than viewing changing language as intimidating, instead we should embrace these changes as a chance to challenge our opinions, to check ourselves for bias, conscious or unconscious, and see changes in terminology as an opportunity to reinvigorate our desire to be inclusive.

It is this last aspect that is so crucial. Are we as individuals - and as a community - creating an environment of inclusivity? Are we creating a space where people can express their differences and celebrate diverse views, opinions and backgrounds? Are we establishing a culture in which pupils and staff are empowered to be different to the person sitting next to them, rather than feeling judged, or feeling under pressure - spoken or unspoken - to conform to a type?

It was for this reason that I am very thankful to our Equality Committee for challenging us on whether or not we should include pronouns (he/him, she/her, they/them) on our email footers. Including this is not about my name, it is a public signal that I want to welcome and support everyone in their gender identity, whatever that choice may be.

Some people may call me woke for doing that: if they do, I would take that as a compliment.



Connecting parents, supporting school life

A warm welcome to all new parents to the School and welcome back to those whose boys are returning for their next year. As ASPA, we will continue to connect parents and bring them together with the wider Abingdon School community.

As well as being social we also arrange fundraising activities that all members of the school community can join. Although Covid-19 has restricted so many of our plans and activities, we are looking forward to 21/22 with renewed focus and vision.



We send a HUGE thanks to Karen Hope who, after many years, has stepped down from ASPA and the Chair's role. Her contribution has been invaluable, and I know her experience, leadership and good cheer will be sorely missed.

We welcome Richard Stone as the new Chair. He has a son in Year 4 and as an OA, he brings a wealth of understanding of the School and has a clear vision and passion to support the School's objectives.

ASPA grants

We awarded several projects with grants in November 2020, a number of these are now coming to fruition.

Lower School canvases

"Many thanks for this grant – I got a total of 15 canvases which is enough to cover the whole of the main Lower School house room" - *Mr Jenkins*

Geology

"We have used all of these items already in our teaching and will continue to do so - being able to illustrate our teaching with real samples is amazing." - *Mr Pygott*

Geography Field Kit

"These handheld units will be fundamental in supporting our A-level students in their independent investigations."

- *Mr Stockdale*

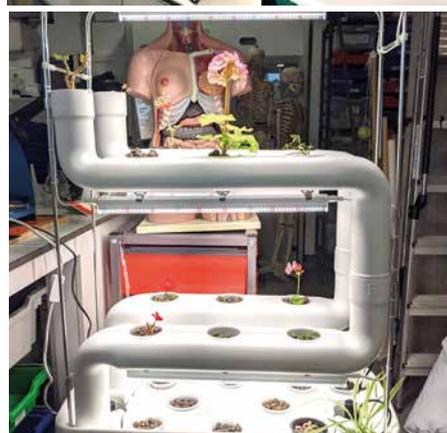
D&T

"Thanks to ASPA for their kind donation allowing us the opportunity to purchase a commercial quality vinyl plotter. This machine enables the boys to convert graphics or text that they have created on a computer into vinyl decals or transfers."

- *Mr Hughes*

Vertical Garden Wall/ Biology

"We have the hydroponics kit, and we are now trialling out which plants grow. We aim for it to be a focal point for the redevelopment of the Biology floor in the Yang Science Centre." - *Mr Whitworth*



Annual AGM

The AGM was held in May 2021. We welcomed Richard as Chair and Jay Hunt as Vice Chair. The other officers have kindly agreed to carry on their roles. We thank the officers and the year representatives for their continued voluntary support.

Charity Quiz

Working with the Charity committee ASPA helped run a fantastic family focussed quiz in May. The lower sixth students who ran it did a great job of compering and setting the questions. Great fun was had by all.

Year events

Our year reps have been setting up many informal 'get togethers' with parents, always with one eye on the Covid-19 restrictions. A bakery was over-run in June in Steventon as many third year parents met for the first time over coffee and cake! To connect to other parents please do use ClassList.

Travel Awards

Working with the OA Club committee ASPA has been able to award three boys with Travel Awards of £500 each, funded equally by the two organisations. Congratulations to:

Tom Anderson - Volunteer Teaching Assistant at the *Ocean of Light International School* in Tonga.

Lachlan Jones - Working on a coral nursery and restoration project with *Marine Conservation Costa Rica*.

Alex Hankinson - Volunteering and expedition in Nepal with *Raleigh International*.

How can you help?

If you'd like to help out in any way, even as a one-off, we'd love to hear from you. Drop us a line at aspa@abingdon.org.uk



Virtual wine tasting

On 20 May members of Abingdon's 1563 Society and their guests joined each other virtually for a wine tasting event hosted by Arthur Verdin (OA 2006). Arthur chose a range of complex and lesser known fine wines which were delivered prior to the event to all attendees. We were taken on a journey to France, Italy and further afield to California and New Zealand. Along the way the assembled tasters quizzed Arthur about the provenance of the grape varieties and vineyards. This event was universally enjoyed by all who attended and we hope to plan an in-person wine tasting in the future. If you would like to find out more about the wines we tasted and the 1563 Society, please contact Harriet Alderman at harriet.alderman@abingdon.org.uk or +44(0)1235 849107.



OA support for new Salvi Mia harps

Thank you to David Allen (OA 1966) and his wife Shelagh for their continued support of our burgeoning harp section at Abingdon School. Their recent donation has enabled us to purchase two Salvi Mia harps which takes the number of harps at Abingdon to six.

The vision for bursaries at Abingdon

A successful bursary programme is fundamental to our future as a leading independent school. Abingdon pupils experience and engage with different perspectives throughout their time here, reflecting the world they will encounter beyond school and university. Widening access to an Abingdon education with the support of means-tested bursaries at different levels benefits all pupils, ensuring that our school remains an accessible and diverse community with a grounded ethos.

This academic year 70 pupils at Abingdon are in receipt of a bursary. Our ambition is to reach 110 bursary places by 2026 (10% of our school cohort). We can only achieve this by increasing the number of people in our community who choose to support bursaries, through making a legacy pledge, through individual donations and by encouraging pledges at varying levels to support a pupil for 7 years from September 2022. This will enable us to offer more bursary places within the next admissions cycle.

To find out more and hear how bursaries have impacted the lives of others, visit www.abingdon.org.uk/support-us/the-impact/bursaries

110 bursary places
by 2026



70 bursary places
in 2021

Back to the Future!

Looking forward to going back to in-person events.



OA Rugby

4 September - Waste Court Field, Abingdon School



Year Group Reunions

(2020, 2019 and 2018 Leavers)

4 September - Lacies Court Garden, Abingdon School



OA Club Career Networking (Media)

11 October - The National Liberal Club, Whitehall Place, London
Parents are welcome to attend this event.



OA Club Sixth Form Careers Event

19 November - Yang Science Centre, Abingdon School



OA Club London Drinks Reception

24 November - The RAF Club, Piccadilly



Festive Drinks

16 December - Abingdon

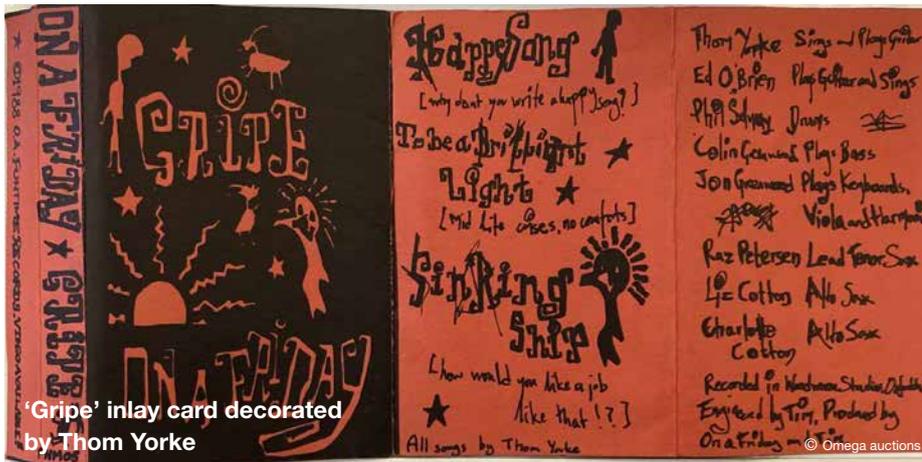
Abingdon Out of the Past

Going Going Gone ...

Earlier this year the newspapers reported the sale of memorabilia relating to some rather different Old Abingdonians.

On a Friday

An online sale at Omega Auctions in January saw a demo cassette sell for £6,000. Titled 'Gripe', the cassette was recorded in 1987/8 by a band calling themselves 'On a Friday' who in 1991 changed their name to Radiohead. All five members of the band – Thom Yorke, Ed O'Brien, Phil Selway, Colin and Johnny Greenwood – were pupils at Abingdon during the 1980s. The name 'On a Friday' came from the fact that it was on a Friday that the band rehearsed in a music room at the School.



'Gripe' inlay card decorated by Thom Yorke



Dionysia Mundy's house is to the left of the Missing Bean, the site of the headmaster's house.

Centuries of Boarding at Abingdon

As the School develops plans to renew its boarding facilities it is interesting to look back and see that Abingdon has been a boarding school for at least 639 years. Evidence comes from a legal judgment of 1372 which concluded that 'the master of the Grammar School at Abingdon and the servants and scholars lodging with him and in the house of a certain Dionysia Mundy' belonged to the parish of St Nicolas as opposed to St Helen's. This means that in 1372 the School had not just one but two boarding houses. Dionysia Mundy's house was and still is in Stert Street. The headmaster's house was demolished some time ago.

Our Man in Zanzibar



© Bonhams

At Bonhams' Travel and Exploration sale earlier this year, the papers of Major-General Christopher Palmer Rigby (1820-1885) sold for £130,000. Interest in Rigby's papers arose mainly from his time as the British Consul at Zanzibar, 1858-63, and his consequent relations with the explorers Livingstone, Speke and Burton.

Educated at Abingdon in the 1830s, Rigby's career owed much to his linguistic brilliance. His daughter, in the biography she wrote of her father, claimed that he could 'read and converse in fifteen different tongues'. These included Hindustani, Marathi, Kannada, Gujarati, Persian, Arabic and Somali, as well as Italian, German and Russian.

After his retirement in 1866, Rigby became a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society. In April 1874, the Society appointed him as its representative to receive Livingstone's body on its arrival at Southampton eleven months after his death in Central Africa in May the previous year.



© Bonhams

Signed lithograph of the explorer David Livingstone presented to General Rigby by the Royal Geographical Society.