

September 2022 | No. 61

# AbingdonNews





## Message from the Headmaster

As I write this, I look out on a perfect English summer's day, while a number of our Lower School students enjoy a game of cricket on Upper Field.

I have always marvelled at the mental resilience of those who play cricket. The need to move swiftly between different phases of concentration as a ball is bowled; the capacity to put a mistake behind you and move on to the next ball; the requirement to balance risk and reward; the unusual blend between teamwork and individual excellence.

It makes for a unique blend of the mental and physical and I've savoured watching some excellent performances this term, with our younger year groups displaying rich promise.

I'm delighted that cricket is part of the rich summer sporting tapestry at Abingdon. This term our oarsmen have made the most of their busy summer racing season, our tennis players have put together some outstanding performances, and a group of exceptional athletes have achieved some mind boggling feats. This includes smashing a 30-year-old record at the Achilles Relay event at Iffley Road in Oxford.

*Mens sana in corpore sano*; this is certainly something we live by at Abingdon.



## Practice makes ....



According to the old adage, **practice makes perfect**. But for most of us, when it comes to playing a musical instrument, we have definitely not reached perfection.

Learning a musical instrument as a young person is a common experience. For each of us, practice triggers different memories: potential arguments, avoidance tactics, the tedium of scales; and sometimes, I hope, enjoyment.

Fast forward a few decades, and I wanted to reflect on how all my hours of practice have impacted on my adult life. Having invested many hours over the years into practising a musical instrument, I have been fortunate to reach a good standard as an amateur player. This has brought many benefits. The thrill of performing an exciting large-scale orchestral work such as Rimsky-Korsakov's Scheherazade or playing the sublime clarinet solo in Rachmaninoff's 2nd Symphony made all the practising worthwhile.

Then there is the whole social aspect of playing music in groups: meeting new people and making new friends. This was particularly helpful when I lived abroad.

Another benefit of music-making came into sharp focus as the pandemic forced us into lock-downs with new routines. For me, the chance to make music each day became part of my new routine and a key ingredient in managing the stress of lock-down life.

So as I look back, practice has not made perfect but it has made great opportunities arising from this life-long and greatly rewarding hobby. It has made connections with a whole range of interesting people and it gave me a positive coping strategy during recent lockdowns.

So back to that common experience of struggling with practising. 'No pain, no gain': I would encourage all young musicians to keep going, pointing out that the 'pain' of those moments has the potential of bringing a life-time of 'gains'.

*Andrew Crisp, Middle Master*

**Front cover:** During May, the Art department ran a competition to celebrate the reign of Queen Elizabeth II. Students submitted some excellent supersized stamp designs, of which this cover is one, and the winners were chosen for depicting Her Majesty in a kind and endearing way. All entries were very graphic and professional with a great sense of surface pattern and decorative design.





## A celebration fit for a Queen

What a jubilant day the staff and students had on Friday 27 May as Abingdon celebrated Her Majesty's 70th year on the throne. The sun was shining and everyone was in a celebratory mood (even those who had exams in the afternoon!). Amidst the BBQ lunch and cake, there was a more formal undertone in the Headmaster's tribute to our Monarch, the National Anthem which was belted out to the accompaniment of the concert band; and the CCF parade. The School was extremely grateful to Lieutenant Colonel Niall Moore who inspected the parade; and High Sheriff of Oxfordshire, Mr Mark Beard (the Monarch's representative in the county). Certainly a day of celebration and one to remember.



## Performing Arts

Congratulations to 1st Years Arran Bell and Jasper Mullick who won the gold medal in the duologue acting category at the Cheltenham Festival of Performing Arts in May. They went up against 10 other pairs within their age category and put in a chilling performance as O'Brien and Winston from Orwell's '1984'. Both pupils also competed in the solo acting category for Years 7 to 8, with Jasper's comedy monologue *Chat Room* securing a distinction and Arran coming fourth with his portrayal of Biff in Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman*. Well done to them both.

## Making quite an impression(ism)



In early May, Upper Sixth French students visited the Pissarro exhibition at the Ashmolean Museum. The students were able to see a range of Pissarro's work, alongside that of his contemporaries, including Cézanne and Gauguin. To cap off the trip, students and staff enjoyed a two course meal at family-run restaurant Pierre Victoire in Jericho - a fantastic opportunity to raise a glass to our Upper Sixth students and to celebrate all their hard work over the course of this year.





## Investing in the future

At Abingdon, we are passionate about ensuring that our students and staff have up to date, modern, flexible and 'fit for purpose' facilities that really help them succeed academically and support them pastorally in the modern world.

Indeed our strategic vision is part of an investment story which, in recent history, has seen the construction of our Sports Centre; Science Centre; 6th Form Centre, Library and Art Centre; and Computer Science, Business and Economics Centre. Just as investment in these past projects has benefited our current student body; investment in projects today will benefit both current and future Abingdon generations.



This is the reason we are so excited about our boarding house and dining pavilion projects which are already well underway and taking shape. Once complete in September 2023, each of these ground-breaking initiatives promise to significantly enhance the Abingdon experience for our whole school and wider community for years to come. As sustainability is so central to so much of what we do at Abingdon, we are also mindful of the environment and are making sure that these projects incorporate a full range of sustainability features such as air source heat pumps and solar panels.

The development of our boarding provision in Austin and Crescent Houses; and renovation of School House, will see the creation of purpose-built House rooms, extended study facilities, student kitchen

facilities, and single bedrooms for all sixth formers. The accommodation will be modern and vibrant with dedicated, comfortable and contemporary spaces in which our students will be able to study, relax and socialise, creating a real home from home experience.



In addition to this, we are creating a truly cutting edge dining pavilion which will link the Amey Theatre to our existing cafe. Maintaining a connection to the outside, with green views across the front of the school with integrated outdoor seating, this will be a highly flexible space continually adapting to our changing needs, whether that's as a dining hall, social space for students; or entertaining venue for our theatre.

Justin Hodges,  
Director of Finance and Operations







**Bushcraft survival**

After the Inter House Athletics on 3 June, twelve 3rd Years and three members of staff travelled to Youlbury Scout Campsite for the Bushcraft Survival Camp. On arrival, the students put up the kitchen shelter and built a cooking fire, before setting to work on building their accommodation for the night. Most opted for the hammock and tarpaulin option, and a large group clumped together to build a hammock city!

Dinner was cooked in foil and in a large cast iron stew pot on the open fire before roasting marshmallows and making s'mores. A little sleep was managed, although the early morning light and birdsong got most of the 3rd Years up at 4:30am - not a time normally seen by teenagers on a Saturday! Breakfast was cooked on the re-lit embers of the previous days' fire - sausages and bacon baps - before packing away the campsite and heading back to school in time for cricket matches.

## What a change!

Students from the Entomology club were excited to find one of the *Attacus Atlas* moths that formed their cocoons last term emerge over the weekend. This large saturniid moth which is endemic to the forests of Asia hatched from an egg in October and spent four months feeding and growing before weaving its silk cocoon to undergo metamorphosis.

## Inspirational work in Moldova

Teacher in charge of the Moldova Project, Adam Jenkins, recently visited Moldova to see the important work being done by Agape in the schools, some of which are being funded by money raised by the Abingdon community. Whilst there, he also managed to find out about the extraordinary work of ordinary Moldovans in their bid to help Ukrainians since the Russian invasion earlier this year.

He said: "Using some of the money raised by the Abingdon sponsored walk last September, Agape organised four activity camps for young Moldovan children based at Grigore Vieru, Andrei Vartic and Petre Stefanuca Schools in Ialoveni and Mihai Imnescu School in the nearby village of Ulmu. I visited all four camps to see the children enjoying arts and craft, sport, and English lessons - it was particularly gratifying that many of the volunteers running the activities were older Moldovan students who had themselves attended summer camps run in previous years by Abingdon pupils.



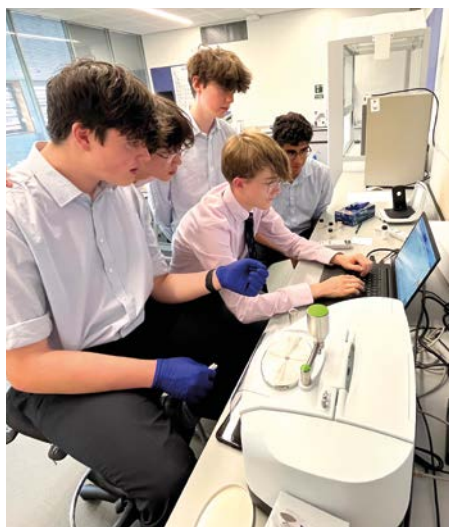
"There was also the chance to attend "The Last Bell" ceremony at Petre Stefanuca School which saw the graduation of the oldest students marked with dancing and the final ringing of the school bell and to present a donation of a new set of volleyball team shirts to students at Gregore Vieru School.

"However, one of the most inspiring moments of the trip was seeing how remarkable the hospitality of the Moldovan people, which Abingdon pupils have experienced for many years, has been in recent months as they have welcomed nearly half a million Ukrainian refugees into their country. Over 100,000 of these

are currently staying in Moldova and are being supported by numerous individuals and organisations. I met 18 year old Mihaela, who with a group of friends, has set up a refugee centre in Chisinau which offers food and accommodation for up to 70 refugees at a time. Hearing Mihaela talk about her determination to make a difference to those in need, and witnessing all she has accomplished, was truly heartening.

"I am looking forward to 2023 when I hope that Abingdon Sixth Formers will once again be able to return to Moldova and celebrate the 20th anniversary of our first trip there."





A group of chemists in the Lower Sixth have been doing some project work looking at the Infra-red spectra of vegetable oils. They initially set out to find out if there was any correlation between the spectra and the quality of the oils. In this early stage of their project they have found that the oils' spectra are all remarkably similar and all exhibit absorptions expected for the ester links in the molecules.

## Young Enterprise Oxfordshire Regional final

Competing for a place in the national final, 4th Year representatives from the Young Enterprise team "Ecocraft" competed against 15 other teams at the Young Enterprise Oxfordshire regional final, held in Oxfordshire County Hall on 3 May. The team had to set up their trade stand and answer questions about sales, finance and sustainability relating to their product range of passive amplifiers, designed to enhance the sound from a smartphone. Team Ecocraft then had to give a 4 minute presentation about their company, what they had learned from the process and the skills they had developed. They were commended on both their product and their imaginative use of up-cycled materials but sadly did not make it through to the final.



Aqua park

What a great start to the final half-term this year, and what better way to enjoy the summer sunshine than at Oxford Wet 'n Wild aqua park. Our boarders had a thoroughly fun Sunday afternoon, splashing around in the glorious sunshine.



In April, students working towards their Gold Duke of Edinburgh Award, braced the windy weather to complete their practice expedition to the Yorkshire Dales. The expedition saw some teams climb the famous Yorkshire three peaks; Pen-y-ghent (694m), Wherside (736m) and Ingleborough (723m) - no mean feat, given the challenging conditions. Then, in June, they did their assessed expedition in the remote and rugged mountains of Glencoe in Scotland, rising to the challenge and completing the 4 day expedition in good spirits.



Charlie and the Chocolate Factory

Before half term, forty four Lower School performers took to the stage of the Amey Theatre to perform an exciting adaptation of Roald Dahl's 'Charlie and the Chocolate Factory'. Having shown great commitment over the past few months, working tirelessly to learn lines and attend rehearsals, the cast brought the world of the play to life with supreme verve. Mr McDonnell commented: "The students demonstrated exactly what it means to work as part of a creative ensemble, looking out for and supporting each other every step of the way - we are all very proud of them."





A last-minute flight cancellation leading to a 24-hour coach journey arriving in Lyon at 4am was not the start our students had been hoping for. However, once they arrived in Lyon, they quickly began to enjoy all the things on offer in this amazing city.

The combination of language lessons in the mornings and accommodation with host families in the evenings gave our students the opportunity to make good progress with their French. In the afternoons, they were able to explore the rich culture of France's number two city. This included a couple of museum visits - one dedicated to the birth of the cinema (thanks to the Lyonnaise Lumière brothers), a river cruise, crêpe making and a guided tour of the Vieux Lyon as well as a quick visit to the Fourvière basilica which offers stunning panoramic views of the city.

Our students, as well as those from St Helen and St Katharine, were brilliant and engaged positively with everything they did. A number of the host families commented on how well brought up they were! Luckily, the homeward journey went according to plan with only a short delay. Enfin bref, je suis sûr que nos élèves ont fait de beaux souvenirs dans cette belle ville de Lyon.



Excitement and adventure awaited the 59 2nd Years who travelled to Wales in the second week of the Easter holidays. Under the expert instruction of the staff of Plas Pencelli Outdoor Education Centre, the pupils enjoyed canoeing, caving, climbing, kayaking and mountain walking in the stunning scenery of the Brecon Beacons with everyone reaching the peak of Pen y Fan, the highest point in southern Britain. The highlight for many was the gorge walk on the final morning which involved walking under waterfalls and sliding down river beds. All the children pushed themselves outside their comfort zones (as indeed did the 5 teachers accompanying them!) and really enjoyed their first opportunity to have a residential trip while at Abingdon.



In June, the academic and art scholars from the 4th Year went on a trip to London, to participate in a workshop at The Wallace Collection, followed by a guided research task at The British Museum. The workshop focused on oil paintings by Gainsborough, Velasquez, Frans Hals and Rembrandt, respectively, and involved getting the scholars to sketch their own versions with Conté crayons. The scholars then enjoyed exploring The British Museum in small groups, choosing three objects to curate for an article in the next edition of the Scholars' Newsletter. It was a great day out, and the ice-cream in Regent's Park on the way home was well deserved.



Lower Sixth pupil, Rory Kind, has been selected as one of ten winners in the University of Sheffield East Asian Studies Competition 2022. The judges were very impressed by Rory's competition essay and commented: *"Detailed and well-argued examination of Traditional Chinese Medicine in medical care in the UK. You have drawn on a good range of cases and sources from Chinese Studies and from the medical literature and make good use of images."* Many congratulations to Rory.

## “ We all have a Brain We all have mental health ,”

*I was drawn to this insightful comment from Natasha Devon MBE, a mental health champion. It normalises the reality that we all have mental fitness, and we should therefore cherish our mental health, in the same way that we encourage students to look after their physical health through the Other Half.*

### Stress Buckets

One tool that we are teaching the students to be aware of, and to proactively manage, is their own “Stress Buckets”. Doing this helps to manage and take charge of our mental health. This is also a tool that we teach staff on the Youth Mental Health First Aid training course as well. Picture this; we all have a stress bucket, some are big, some are small, depending on our own personal circumstances. Stress or ‘water’ goes into the bucket; things like life events that are often beyond our control. Some are small things, like a combination of academic deadlines colliding with other pressing deadlines, others are more significant and beyond our control, like a family bereavement. This stress or ‘water’ fills up the bucket until it overflows, a situation called “snapping”; something we want to avoid. In order to avoid this, there is a tap on the side of the bucket - a healthy, “positive coping strategy” to help let the stress or ‘water’ out of the side of the bucket.

### Coping Strategies

These positive strategies will range from person to person. If you ask me what my ‘tap’ is - it would be my love of cycling. Cycling helps alleviate my stress and allows me to reset an overloaded, tired or strained brain. Another person might say gardening, others: composing music, running, walking the dog, getting lost in a novel, whatever works (that is legal!) for you to let the ‘water’ out. We then teach the students that sometimes the ‘tap’ can get blocked

with “negative coping strategies”. These activities are often unhelpful ways of coping and stop the ‘water’ from getting out, so it overflows. Turning to drugs and substances or falling into game addiction might be an example where an unhelpful or negative coping strategy has emerged that blocks the ‘tap’ so the ‘water’ cannot flow out of the side.

### Other Half plays key role

We then seek to encourage students to understand what is going into their bucket right now - to write it down and be self-aware. Some things they can control. It might be that they can say “no” to something, but being aware of what goes in can be very helpful. We are then encouraging students to fine-tune their positive wellbeing strategies to let the water out. It is great to see the Other Half play such a key role in this regard. I’ve been at Abingdon since 2006 and I never tire of overhearing how much utter joy students take in a corner of the Other Half curriculum whether it’s shooting, the Amey Theatre tech crew, entomology club, Bridge club, the CCF, DofE expeditions, sailing at Farmoor, basketball and so the list goes on.



### Lifetime habits

We hope that students will maintain these positive habits for a lifetime and it is always great to meet OAs who are still following their passions years down the line. It’s great to be connected with OAs on Strava and it always excites me to see some hitting segment leaderboards with their efforts in swimming, running, cycling, or, in some cases, paddleboarding and snow-shoeing (and yes, there is a category for that!)

### Life skill

Taking care of our brains, and cherishing our mental health is a key life skill. If we can encourage students to proactively manage it now, whilst in school, I believe it will stand them in good stead for the future and be a key tool in their resilience rucksack for life.

*Rev'd Paul Gooding - Head of Wellbeing and Assistant Chaplain*





## Bronze Duke of Edinburgh

In early May, 130 of our 4th Year students completed their Bronze DofE practice expedition. Teams walked about 35km through the beautiful south Oxfordshire countryside in conditions which were mixed with bright sunny spells interspersed with very heavy downpours. All groups successfully completed their expedition which proved good experience for their assessed expedition to the Wiltshire Downs in June. Conditions for the nineteen competing teams were mixed with some very wet weather followed by a day of glorious sunshine, reflecting the weather they experienced in early May during their practice. The students tackled the challenge in good spirits with many groups enjoying the neolithic monuments at Avebury and the famous white horse hill figures. Well done all.



## Language Leaders

Four pupils from 3rd Year - Gustav Andrian, Jacob Fannon, Luke Glazer and Charlie Haynes - travelled to Brockhurst and Marlston House School in Berkshire during the first week of the summer term, to teach lessons to some Year 3, 4 and 5 pupils there. Year 3 were treated to a French lesson on activities in the town; Year 4 learned numbers and family members in Mandarin; and Year 5 were given the challenge of learning to build simple sentences in Latin - on gladiators and emperors, of course! Both 'teachers' and pupils thoroughly enjoyed the experience, with pupils undoubtedly going home with a few impressive phrases to share.

## A busy Bank Holiday for boarders

The Bank Holiday weekend in May proved to be busy for Abingdon's boarding community. Between games of Kubb (a lawn game with the objective of knocking over wooden blocks by throwing wooden batons); and rounders; they also got cooking in the kitchen, making pizza and baking chocolate chip muffins. However, the highlight of the weekend for around 50 of our boarders was a fun-packed paintballing session which took place near Henley with students from School, Crescent and Austin Houses competing enthusiastically in several woodland arenas.





## Putting sustainability at the forefront of debate

Eco Week ran in early May, in which pupils, staff and the wider community (including member schools of the OX14 Learning Partnership) were encouraged to focus on sustainability through a number of events and student-led initiatives aimed at encouraging individuals to help lower their impact on the environment. Led by students from Abingdon's Eco Committee, initiatives included reducing food waste; pill packet recycling; reducing carbon miles and energy usage; and trying plant-rich menu alternatives, made from 50 future-proof sustainable foods identified by the World Wildlife Fund.

Events for the week included an Eco Forum, organised by Abingdon School in Partnership and attended by students from John Mason School, Radley, St Helen and St Katharine and Abingdon. Students brainstormed ideas which their own schools could adopt in order to ensure environmental excellence in:

education and student experience; engagement and leadership; biodiversity and the built environment; marine and water; energy; waste; healthy living; and transport.

Tony Gray, Head of Abingdon's Environmental Committee, said of the week: "Initiatives such as Eco Week, certainly bring sustainability firmly into focus, helping individuals to realise the difference they themselves can make. I am very grateful to the Eco Committee for their passion and hard work in making the week such a success; to my colleagues for getting involved; and to our guest speakers David Johnston MP and Marcus Gover, whose guidance and expertise will live with our students, and those of the OX14 Learning Partnership, for years to come; and whose influential positions can actually result in a true difference being made so that ultimately our goal to make sustainability part of the everyday life at Abingdon, can be realised."

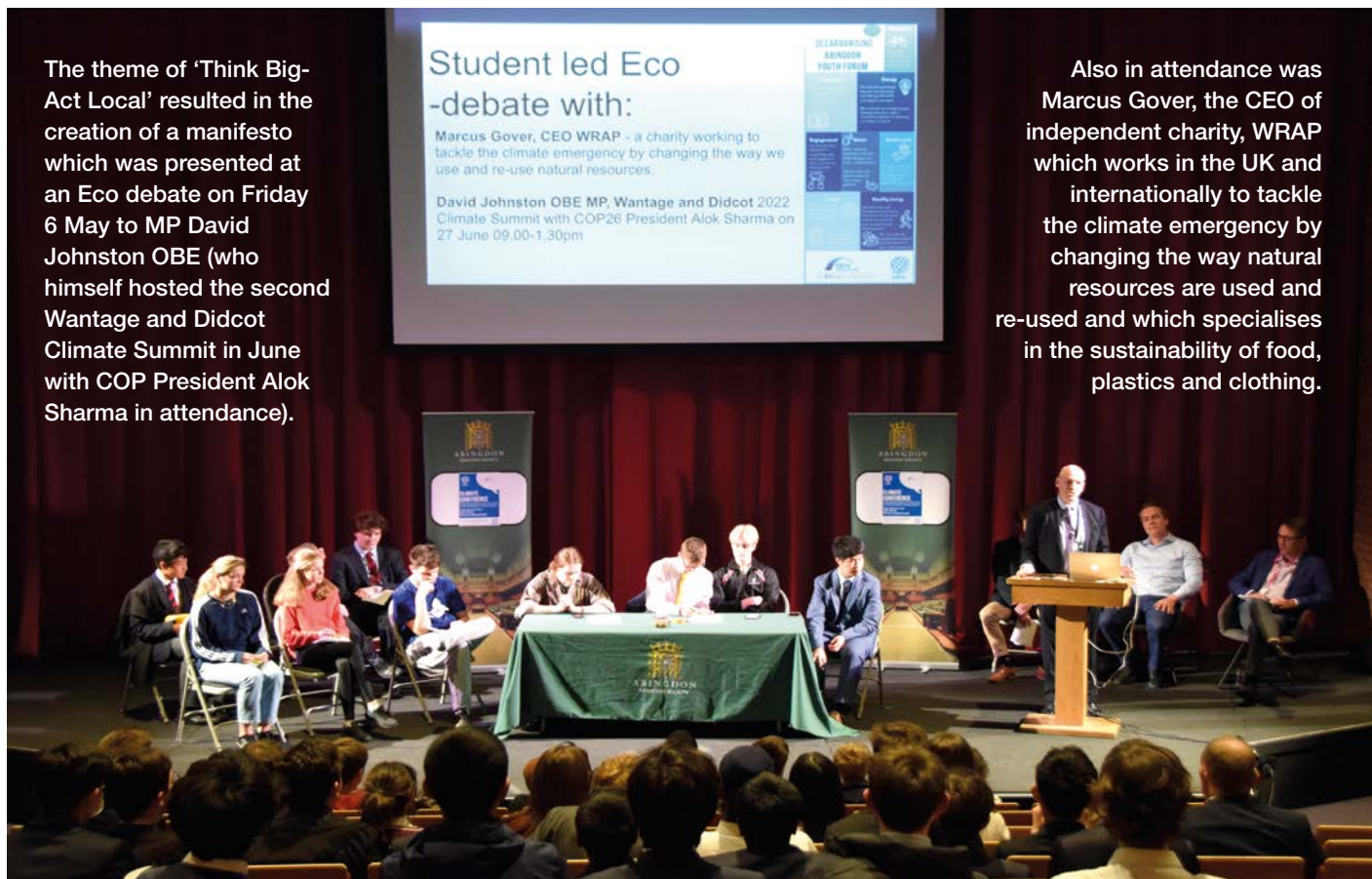
The theme of 'Think Big-Act Local' resulted in the creation of a manifesto which was presented at an Eco debate on Friday 6 May to MP David Johnston OBE (who himself hosted the second Wantage and Didcot Climate Summit in June with COP President Alok Sharma in attendance).

### Student led Eco-debate with:

Marcus Gover, CEO WRAP - a charity working to tackle the climate emergency by changing the way we use and re-use natural resources.

David Johnston OBE MP, Wantage and Didcot 2022 Climate Summit with COP26 President Alok Sharma on 27 June 09.00-1.30pm

Also in attendance was Marcus Gover, the CEO of independent charity, WRAP which works in the UK and internationally to tackle the climate emergency by changing the way natural resources are used and re-used and which specialises in the sustainability of food, plastics and clothing.



## House of Lords

A group of four A Level physics students enjoyed an engineering lunch at the House of Lords in May. The theme of the lunch was 'space engineering' with talks given by three industry leaders, followed by the opportunity for questions from the audience.







## Artist in residence

After running a successful workshop entitled *Painting with the Limited Palette*, Rob Pretorius embarked on a part-time Residency at Abingdon School in January 2022, offering students the opportunity to work alongside a trained painter and draftsman, and providing ongoing technical mentoring during lesson-time - particularly in core skills like drawing and colour mixing. Rob trained in portraiture and figure painting at Sarum Studio between 2015-2018, an independent atelier of fine art in Salisbury, UK, under the tutelage of Nicholas Beer. He learned to paint and draw according to a tradition that has passed down through generations, and is commonly known as the "sight-size" method.

Since graduating, Rob has adapted his training to suit his ambitions, though he still works in oils and charcoal, and continues to take the human figure as his central focus across a variety of genres. Rob is based in the Sixth Form studio, and can be seen working up his many sketches and studies as part of the lengthy process required to realise a final figure composition as oil on canvas. The procedure provides the students an invaluable glimpse of a creative process that runs in parallel to their own sketchbook development and visual problem solving.

## DofE

Participants from Abingdon School dedicated 2,782 hours to volunteering between April 2021 and March 2022, with a social value of £12,853.



## Biennial inspection

On Tuesday 3 May, Abingdon School CCF underwent their first Biennial Inspection in four years. There was much at stake, but the cadets didn't disappoint.

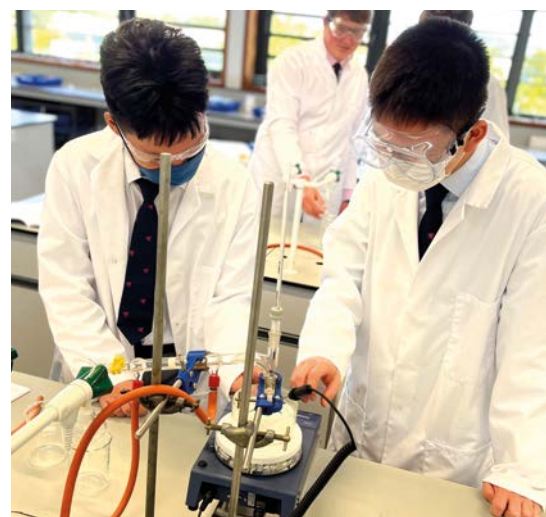
The day began with a whole contingent inspection outside Big School. After a few last minute rehearsals, and hours of work beforehand, the parade began. The inspecting officer Air Commodore Woods came and inspected all of the RAF and Army Cadets and was very impressed at their turnout of dress, standards and drill and was very complimentary. He also gave a very engaging speech on what individuals can take from being part of the cadet force and how it can benefit future careers, even if they're not military related.

After the successful parade, cadets made their way up to Dalton Barracks where 3 Regiment RLC, who regularly assist us, put on a round Robin of activities from Military theory tests to the live ranges, the assault course and a casualty evacuation competition run. This showed Air Cdre Woods how we operate in a non-ceremonial environment as well as highlighting the excellent partnership opportunities 3 Reg offer us.

Overall it was a very successful day, enjoyed by all cadets who attended. Many thanks to Air Cdre Woods for coming to inspect the contingent and for his words of wisdom. Similarly, a massive thanks to the 3 Reg team for the afternoon activities and, most importantly, the CCF staff who have spent months organising this. The hard work of the contingent truly paid off and we hope this will be reflected in the report of the inspection.

## Chemical reactions

As part of their core practicals requirement for the A Level, the Lower Sixth chemists have been preparing a sample of a halogenoalkane (compounds in which one or more hydrogen atoms in an alkane have been replaced by halogen atoms). Purification of organic liquids is an essential skill that chemists need and the students, in spite of the apparent complexity of the apparatus, quickly mastered the technique and obtained some excellent yields using equipment much the same as that found in many chemistry research labs.







## CCF Easter Camp

Easter camp began with excitement and high spirits, luckily not dampened by the bitterly cold Friday morning the cadets set out on. The cadets settled in well, with a busy first few days spent doing Fieldcraft and perfecting their rifle skills. The tuck shop cannot be forgotten and the queues stretched far outside the door when the new stock arrived! On Monday, the recruits had their first experience with live firing which was a blast. Three recruits qualified for their marksmanship badges, a phenomenal achievement for those who hadn't shot a rifle before. The whole camp enjoyed a well earned rest on Monday evening with a movie night before the AI cadre (composed of 4th and 5th Years) set out on exercise the next day. The first night of the AI 48 hour exercise was exciting with a full ambush on an enemy vehicle checkpoint followed and plenty of ammunition spent as a result. Recruits joined the AI the next day and, after a stormy night, took part in a full platoon attack on the village to capture the elusive enemy. After returning to the barracks, there were a few hours of down time (used for sleep by many!) before drill practice for the passing out parade the next day. The parade was a roaring success and the whole contingent showed their standards to the impressed Deputy Commandant Cadets. Overall, the camp was a highly enjoyable experience and it set an excellent baseline for future post-Covid camps. A massive thank you must go to the staff who gave up their Easter holidays to attend and were instrumental in ensuring the camp ran as smoothly as it did.



## Canoeing Expedition

Over two days in June, six of our 4th Year students completed their DofE Bronze Canoeing Assessment Expedition. Starting in Tonbridge (Kent), they paddled the River Medway to their campsite in Yalding. Exciting canoe shoots and lovely conditions proved for a good first day. On day two, the students paddled to their finish in Maidstone - there was one unfortunate capsizing but it didn't deter their spirits and they all passed with flying colours.



## A first for Abingdon

Many congratulations to Kajan Sivakumar who has been awarded The Rank Foundation School Leadership Award. Offered to only a handful of Sixth Form students from across the state and independent sectors each year, and only to those thought to have outstanding leadership potential, the award is an enormous privilege which carries with it a two week placement within a not-for-profit organisation.

Driven by a desire to help others, Kajan has been volunteering and helping within his local community for several years, including running a Saturday Science Club for primary school children. However, it was volunteering at a care home during his 3rd Year that left a long lasting impression, making him want to pursue a career in medicine.

*"I just want to be able to help people and the Rank Foundation Leadership Award will give me so much more opportunity to do that outside my local area. I'm really looking forward to that."*

Not one to rest on his laurels, Kajan will be shadowing an ER surgeon and a trauma and emergency gastro surgeon as part of two work placements over the summer; and hopes in the future to travel to Sri Lanka to volunteer in the local community in which his parents were born.

Mr James, Kajan's Housemaster, said of the award: "I honestly can't think of a more deserving recipient - Kajan has proved to be an inspirational role model, both to his peers and to younger members of James's House. He is always the first to put up his hand to help and works so hard in all he does. I am delighted for him."

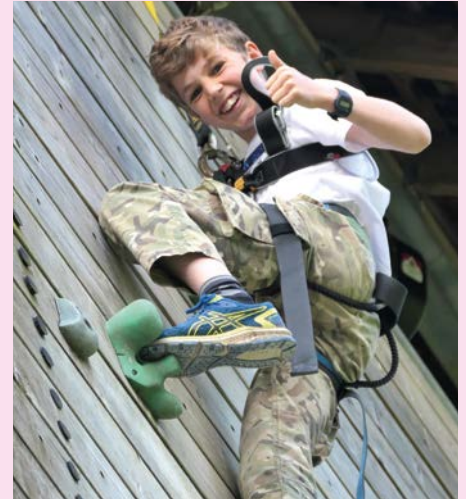
Once Kajan has finished school, he will also be invited to join The Rank Foundation's alumni organisation with all the benefits that it bestows.





## An action packed week

Fifty nine 1st Years travelled to PGL Liddington in the final week of the Easter break to enjoy a wide range of activities including abseiling, canoeing, climbing, problem solving and zip wire. Providing the perfect environment to develop teamwork and communication skills, the trip also presented plenty of opportunities for our students to strengthen existing friendships and build new ones.



## Joint thinking supper

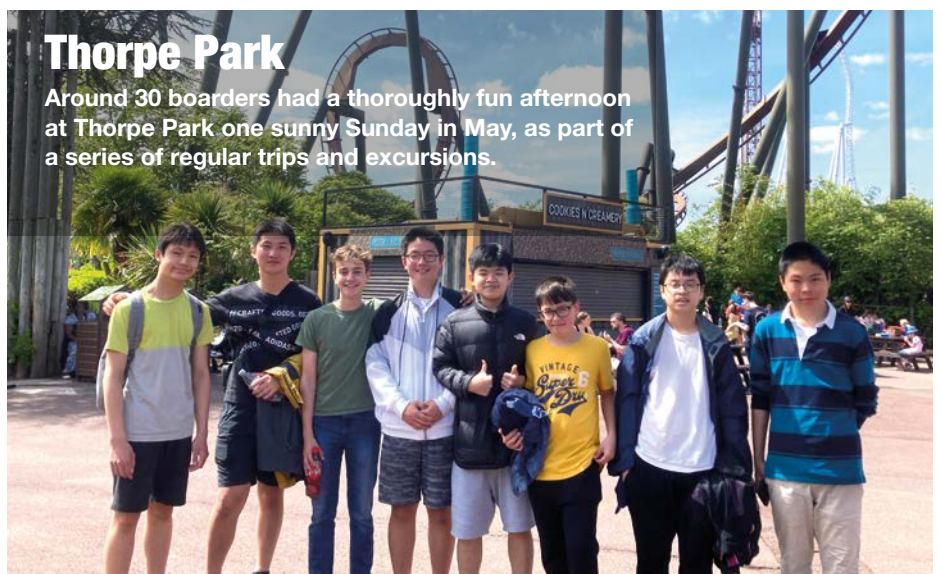
Before half term, the Lower School academic award holders met pupils from St Helen and St Katharine for the final Joint Thinking Supper of the year. They were given a collection of ethical problems, logic puzzles and paradoxes to discuss in small groups and then presented their ideas about them at the end of the evening. Some rebus puzzles were fairly quickly solved, but Newcomb's Problem proved particularly thought provoking and led to interesting debate about the nature of free will.

## Discovering 'Jerusalem'

Jez Butterworth's theatrical depiction of the rural life of an English waster took the Abingdon A Level students by storm in June when they went to see it at the Apollo Theatre, London. With a furiously comical display of drunkenness, illicit partying and swearing, Mark Rylance's outstanding performance as Johnny 'Rooster' Byron explores contemporary anti-establishment movements that are all too relevant in 2022 - thirteen years after the play's first debut. The Abingdon consensus was that this is a phenomenal production which left the Lower Sixth's top littérateurs pondering the true modern identity of England's pastures green.

## Thorpe Park

Around 30 boarders had a thoroughly fun afternoon at Thorpe Park one sunny Sunday in May, as part of a series of regular trips and excursions.





# Abingdon Music



## Junior Solo Instrumental Competition

Held in May, and adjudicated by Anna Leon, the Director of Music at Ashfold School, our Junior Solo Competition was a fantastic opportunity to get a taste of what's in store for Music at Abingdon in the coming years. We were certainly not short of accomplished performances, making the evening extremely challenging for our adjudicator! Toby Williams opened the concert with a sensitively played rendition of Barbara Arlen's 'Moonbeams'; and then went on with a Mendelssohn 'Song Without Words' on the clarinet. Zack Weekes' performance of 'Changing Times' captured the Jazzy atmosphere of the piece. Kwame Abayateye impressed us with an accomplished rendition of Tchaikovsky's 'Waltz from Sleeping Beauty' before Nikhil Harie gave an exciting performance of 'The Pretender' by Foo Fighters featuring a well-managed guitar solo. Benjamin Byrne's stirring performance of 'See the Conquering Hero Come' impressed with its superbly controlled tone. Edward Winter's Diabelli 'Sonatina in G major' offered a carefully controlled left hand which allowed the right hand to really sing out. The concert was rounded off with a jaunty performance of a 'Sea Song' on bassoon by Harold Lethaby.

After much deliberation, Miss Leon's choice for 3rd place was Harold Lethaby's Sea Song; 2nd place went to Kwame Abayateye's Waltz; and 1st place to Benjamin Byrne's 'See the Conquering Hero'. Many congratulations to all those who performed and special mention must go to Benjamin, who has come so far since starting the French Horn here as a First Year student. A worthy winner indeed.



## Musical triumph

The Lower School Gala Concert on 16 June provided Lower School students with the opportunity to celebrate their music making and showcase both individual and ensemble performances. Welcoming so many audience members to this year's concert encouraged the students to perform to the highest level.

Alongside the ensembles, Lower School Band, Open Mic Group, Junior Strings, Blues Society and Lower School Brass Ensemble, there were a number of outstanding individual contributions to the evening. From Bassoon to Bagpipes, the event catered for all musical tastes. The evening concluded with the whole of Lower School performing Hallelujah by Leonard Cohen and Jeff Buckley. Very many thanks to all staff who helped put the concert together.



## King's Singers

On Sunday 8 May, seven pupils from Abingdon's close-harmony ensemble joined pupils from three other Oxfordshire schools in a masterclass with the King's Singers. In the afternoon, they worked on the Billy Joel song 'And So it Goes', arranged by former King's Singer and former Abingdon parent, Bob Chilcott.

In the evening, the pupils were invited to join in the performance of this song at the end of the concert, which was the final event of the Dorchester Festival. This was a thoroughly enjoyable and productive experience for all concerned.

## Lower School Inter-Tutor Group Music Competition



Lower School pupils gathered in the Amey Theatre after the Jubilee celebrations for the annual inter-tutor group music competition. Each group performed a song which they had had a few weeks to work on in their class music lessons. A wide array of instruments were deployed to provide accompaniment for the solo singers and chorus members. Miss Stulting had a difficult job when it came to deciding the winner, but gave 3rd place to 2S's spirited rendition of "Sweet Caroline", 2nd place to 1H who sang "Radioactive", and 1st place to 2M for their lively and fun performance of "Waka waka".



## Summer Concert 2022



It was wonderful to be able to arrange a live and full end of year Summer Concert in June. Our First Orchestra started the first half in a performance of Haydn's Trumpet Concerto in Eb. Played with great accuracy and artistry by the three soloists (Laurence Peverall, Lachlan Keene and Oliver Hobbs) on a different Eb trumpet, kindly purchased by the School's Music Society.

Our Chamber Orchestra played next – first a pair of arias from Handel's Messiah sung by Upper Sixth bass soloist, Jamie Robson, who sang with great conviction and musicianship. He was soon followed by Oliver Glover who played Gabriel's Oboe, from the film 'The Mission'.

Under Mr Townsend's direction, the Concert Band was next up, allowing us to hear a group of rousing marches including The British Grenadiers, Scipio, Slaidburn and Rule Britannia.

Under Simon Currie's inimitable leadership, the Big Band presented three tunes – Splanky (Count Basie), Blue Bossa (Henderson) and Feeling Good. It was great to hear some new soloists and to hear Upper Sixth vocalist, Aidan Chan, who was very much in his element.

After the interval we heard from Jazz Inc. - a mixed staff and jazz quintet who played two numbers: Nostalgia in Times Square and The Theme from Monsters Inc.

The Gospel Choir, under Dr Jason Preece's direction, performed a couple of songs; Mr Blue Sky, and Time after Time. Accompanied by the staff ensemble, the choir sang with their normal palpable sense of enjoyment mixed with a tinge of nostalgia for the Upper Sixth for whom it was the last singing opportunity of their school career.

The Second Orchestra played music from Harry Potter, Elgar's Pomp and Circumstance March No 1 and Rimsky-Korsakov's Dance of the Tumblers, with confidence and panache.

Our First Orchestra rounded off the concert with Weber's Bassoon Concerto (first movement) with soloist, Josef O'Connor who stunned us with his technical authority and the rich quality of his voice.

Before the last performance, the first movement of Dvorak's great Symphony No 8 in G (which was joined by Mr Windsor in the double bass section), we said farewell to a great group of leaving musicians, and their parents, together with teacher and Chapel Choir Director, Mr Treadaway.

We are looking forward with anticipation to July 2023, when we plan to reward our musicians with an exciting European tour to Abingdon's twin towns.



The year's Solo Platform No. 5 featured a relatively short programme of nine performances, but one of enormous quality that testified to the wealth of musical talent that we have at school.

The opening item featured brothers and former New College Choristers, Oscar and Edward Bennett giving a most effective performance of Vaughan Williams' arrangement of the beautiful folksong, Linden Lea, which they sang as an a cappella duet.

We heard two clarinettists, Toby Williams in a lovely performance of Mendelssohn's Song Without Words and 4th Year Stanley Wong's performance of Saint-Saëns' Sonata (allegro). Both were beautifully controlled and with a lovely legato line throughout.

We enjoyed a total of six piano performances, all accomplished in their different ways. Elliot Liddle played a Chopin Mazurka, Justin Yeung a Poulenc Novelette, Laurence Peverall a Mozart Sonata (adagio), Yubo Gao a Mozart Sonata (allegro con spirito), Thomas Zhang Chopin's Waltz in C sharp minor and finally, Walter Liu in Beethoven's C major Piano Sonata in C Op2 No 3 (allegro con brio).

The quality of the pupils' playing was outstanding and it was a hugely enjoyable concert – our thanks and congratulations to all the pupils and their teachers.



# Abingdon School in Partnership



## Peer Support Lead training

Fifteen students from Abingdon joined other Lower Sixth students from the OX14 Learning Partnership at Fitzharry's on 21 June for the launch of the 4th cohort of the crosstown Peer Support Lead programme. One of the most successful elements of our growing partnership programme, the training saw students learn about active listening, safeguarding and everyday leadership. They then conducted role plays with peers to mirror the features of an effective peer support lead. There was a wonderful buzz of excitement as the young people got to know one another and looked forward to supporting the pastoral care of youngsters back in their own school settings. We look forward to further training later in the year which will include managing anxiety and recognising the signs of depression.

## ASiP Primary tag rugby tournament

Over the course of this year, Abingdon rugby coach, Steve Bates, and four 5th Year students (Tom, Finn, Arthur and Asher) have been coaching tag rugby to Year 6 children in a number of local primary schools. These sessions, intended to teach core skills and encourage good teamwork and fun, culminated in a tag rugby tournament, held on 22 June. Thirty pupils from Long Furlong, Sunningwell and Caldecott put into action all the skills they had learned and standards were impressively high. The event was a huge success with students leaving tired, happy and gripping a certificate of participation.



## Festival of languages

Ninety primary school pupils were welcomed to our 'Festival of Languages' this term. They participated in workshops on sign language, secret languages, French, German, Spanish and Mandarin; and Abingdon Sixth Form and 3rd Year students led several sessions in which they were able to develop their own communication and leadership skills. We were all impressed by the primary children's enthusiasm and confidence as they tried out the new words and phrases that they had learned; and the leadership skills displayed by our own students during the course of the day.



## Science ambassadors

With the departure of the Upper Sixth leavers, it has fallen to a brand new team of senior science ambassadors to inherit the responsibility of planning and running the weekly Primary Science Club for children from local schools. For their first session, the science ambassadors planned a forensics activity to identify a mystery ink using chromatography. Following completion of this task, the visiting primary children were then able to create imaginative artistic patterns using 'Skittles' sweets as sources of colour and predicting how the colours might spread and mix to make the most attractive patterns.

Members of Lower School CREST Science Awards Club have been taking the Squashed Tomato Challenge this term. This simulates a real engineering project built by the charity, 'Practical Action', in Nepal whereby hill farming communities now use a water powered cable car system to transport produce to valley towns in a fraction of the time it would take to carry them by mule down steep, mountain paths. Far less produce is therefore damaged and wasted so that the farmers make more money to support their families and pay for community projects such as schools and medical facilities. The CREST club members tried out a variety of their own designs using pulley systems or innovative water chutes to carry the produce. Once their designs have been perfected, they will be tested with real tomatoes in a set time interval to see which ones are most successful. The teams then hope to write up reports and presentations for submission to the British Science Association for CREST Awards.



# Abingdon School in Partnership

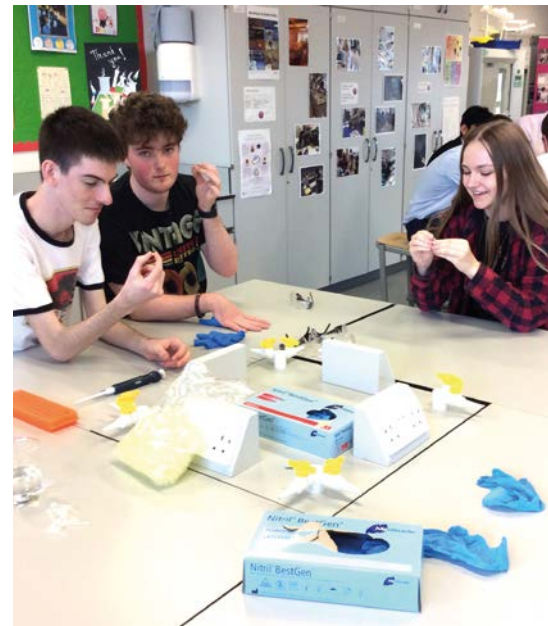


## Garden to celebrate the Jubilee

In the Lent term, students in the ASiP Eco group and pupils in the Eco committee of Thameside primary school came together to design a garden to celebrate the Queen's Jubilee year. This term, the challenge of bringing the garden to life began in earnest. A group of Abingdon students visited the primary school where they shovelled soil into new raised beds which, in turn, will be planted with wildflowers. What a wonderfully green fingered way to mark the Queen's 70th year on the throne.

## Academic Coaching

At the beginning of the year, over 30 students from across the town took part in the OX14 Learning Partnership Academic Coaching programme. The training sessions, which were run for a total of eight weeks, introduced students to the 'GROW' coaching model - a simple method for setting goals and problem solving - which enabled effective coaching conversations to progress towards clear actions and outcomes.



## Weekly Youth Space

Since February, students from all six of the OX14 Learning Partnership Schools (John Mason, Fitzharrys, Radley, Abingdon, Larkmead, and St Helen and St Katharine) have had access to a newly created youth space, thanks to a collaboration between local wellbeing charity 'The Abingdon Bridge' and the OX14 Learning Partnership.

Providing a safe place for young people to socialise and have access to early interventions, fun activities and supportive wellbeing sessions, the initiative will offer many opportunities, and teach many skills, to a large number of young people helping to equip them with the necessary skills to overcome many of life's challenges.

One student said: "It's such a fun space and really helps to have grown ups to talk to who aren't your parents or teachers."



## Check-mate

Throughout the Summer term, Abingdon 4th Year students have been running a chess club at Carswell Primary School. They are helping a group of Key Stage 2 pupils to perfect their game. Louis Bhatia said of the volunteering "I have found it really enjoyable and rewarding to teach younger children how to play chess. They have been very focussed and have learned really quickly."

## Primary Science Club

Year 5 Carswell Primary school pupils and ASP's Primary Science Club attended a 'Virus Factory' workshop earlier this term, working with researchers from Oxford University. Pupils found out about cells, extracted DNA from strawberries and discovered more about viruses and how they affect cells in living organisms.

## Fingerprinting Workshop

In March, Abingdon Science Partnership once again hosted the award winning A Level Genetic Fingerprinting Workshop run by a team of researchers from Oxford University's Wellcome Trust Centre for Human Genetics and attended by Lower Sixth biologists from Abingdon and Carterton Community College. During the day, the students were introduced to the PCR technique for amplifying the genetic content of small samples. Using a PCR machine, the Sixth Formers prepared and analysed samples and used the results to identify their source. The researchers gave detailed accounts of their own research and career paths, allowing students to gain a very personalised insight into the many opportunities in the field and the real world application of techniques they learn in their studies.





## Rowing

It was an encouraging post Covid return to normality for the boat club this summer, with lots of pupils out racing and doing well. Saturday 7 May saw over 100 pupils race for Abingdon at the Bedford Regatta - the first big regatta for the whole club post Covid. It was heartening to see the crews all back together to enjoy summer racing. Later in the season, 45 students made A finals at the National Schools Regatta, with highlights including a bronze medal for the J14B crew, 5th, 5th, 6th and 7th for the J15B, J14A, J15A, J16B crews. At the Henley Royal Regatta in July, the 1st VIII pre-qualified but, in a tough draw, lost out to the Australian Champions Kings School Parramatta.



## Canoe Polo

Abingdon students enjoyed an afternoon of canoe polo with Queen's College Taunton on Sunday 22 May. This began with an inter school match which Abingdon won and then the rest of the session was spent training and playing friendly games with mixed teams. A particular well done goes to Edward Saunders in his last fixture for the school as an Upper Sixth leaver.

## Upper Sixth Croquet

On a very hot and sunny Wednesday afternoon in June, the Abingdon croquet team attended an away fixture at Radley College, involving over 20 students from Lower School to Upper Sixth. We may have lost 14.5-5.5, but the students very much enjoyed their first fixture in over 2 years and are looking forward to a rematch soon.



## National Schools Squash Finals

Abingdon's KS4 Team achieved the outstanding feat of reaching the finals of the England Schools Championships in Nottingham. Representing the team were Alex Smith, Felix Loeffen, Luke Remington, Alex Kleinknecht, Will Simpson and Wilf Barter. It was an exhausting but exciting day of squash. Our team was up against both national and international players, and they did outstandingly well, with Alex Smith and Felix Loeffen achieving particularly brilliant wins. Despite the fact that four of our six players are a year young, Abingdon came 8th in the country, which is an extraordinary achievement to cap a breakthrough year. Our thanks go to our brilliant coach Ben Rosec, ably supported by Guy Tupper.



## Tennis

Abingdon seniors have been engaged in a number of important tennis matches throughout this term. In the Glanville cup in May, the first team beat Radley and progressed to the next round to play Sir William Borlase. The team played some phenomenal tennis, with Max Struthers and Tanguy Wache both taking their games to some close tiebreaks but, in the end, it was not enough to secure the win.

In the Independent Schools League, a gruelling series of matches played over two days against 6 other schools, Abingdon narrowly missed out in the first round, placing them in Group 2 for the following day, where they competed against Charterhouse, Radley and St George's. Abingdon was narrowly beaten to first place by deserved winners Radley and came out second in Group 2, placing them 6th overall.

On Saturday 14 May, Abingdon's top 32 players took on Radley again in the annual "Radlington" match. This tournament is always a good opportunity for more junior players to challenge the seniors and it was great to see so many of our younger players out on the courts. Having got a pair through to the final, Abingdon narrowly lost to Radley's 1st pair. It was, nevertheless, a fun day with plenty of sport and a great experience.



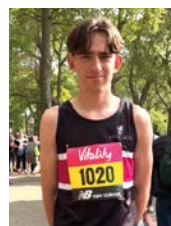
# Athletics

## Achilles Relays

On Thursday 5 May, the Athletics club travelled to Iffley road, Oxford to compete in the prestigious Achilles Relays. This unofficial national relay competition attracts some of the best school talent from across the country. On a track that is steeped in so much history, it was an eye opening and inspiring experience for our junior squad, who had their first taste of a big meet. The inter team raced superbly well to finish second in the 4x800m, behind a strong Coopers School. The day however belonged to the senior 4x800m team (R Miell-Ingram, W D'Arcy, H Channon, T Denning), who won The Philip Noel Baker Trophy and set a new meet record of 7.35.9, a record that has stood since 1992 (Millfield). The team were also awarded The Roger Bannister Trophy for the outstanding performance of the day.

## Vitality London 10k

In early May, Will D'Arcy ran in the Vitality 10km race in London, finishing in a time of 32:32 and winning his age group (15 to 17 year olds) and finishing in 53rd place overall - no mean feat when the race included professional runners including the great Sir Mo Farah!



## Inter House Athletics

Our annual Inter House Athletics took place at Tilsley Park in June. It was a glorious afternoon and great to see so many students taking part in a supportive and encouraging atmosphere, where we could also savour some fine individual performances.

The final standings were:

3rd year: 1st - Donnelly's (181), 2nd - O'Doherty's (179) and 3rd James' (178)

4th year: 1st - Border's (181), 2nd - Franklin's (168) and 3rd James' (164)

L6th: 1st - Border's (164), 2nd - Pygott's (163) and 3rd O'Doherty's (161)

The afternoon was rounded off by a golden mile relay where 8 individuals each ran 200m as a relay in an attempt to beat Sir Roger Bannister's famous 4 minute barrier. Six of the teams managed this successfully, with James' house winning the race in an impressive time of 3 minutes 38 seconds.

Once all the points from the 3 year groups were added together, along with the golden mile relay, the overall results were: 1st - O'Doherty's (512), 2nd - James' (501) and 3rd Donnelly's (492)



## Competing for his country

Congratulations to Rowan Miell-Ingram who was selected to compete for England in the England Athletics Cardiff 5k on 1 May, competing against a Welsh Athletics under 20 team, Welsh Athletics senior team, senior Area teams and an armed forces team.

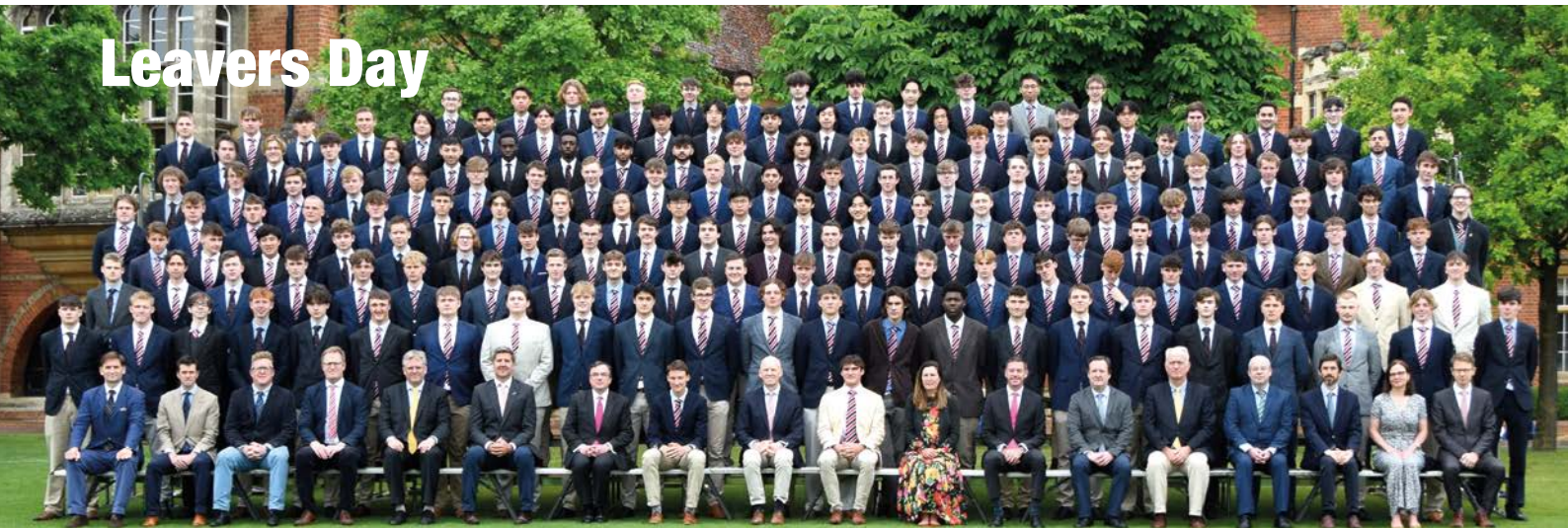
Rowan ran an incredible time of 14.33 over 5km to finish 2nd individual in the U20 race and 6th overall individual in Cardiff. This result helped the England team finish on the top step of the podium.

## Howzat!

It has been a very busy term for the cricket club and it has been wonderful to see so many students representing the club across all age groups, including five senior sides in our block fixture against Stowe. The 1st XI have shown great character in a tough season, with a young side, but there have been some real highlights including their win against Radley and the determination shown in securing a draw against the MCC. The U12 sides have shown lots of promise this term and are an exciting and enthusiastic group of cricketers to work with. Our U13 sides have won some close games against tough opponents, with a fantastic run chase against St Hugh's standing out as one of their greatest achievements this term. The U14 sides have enjoyed a very successful season, playing an expansive and exciting brand of cricket; perhaps inspired by the current England side's approach to run chases! Our U15s have achieved some outstanding results, with many of the 15 A side having the opportunity to represent the 1st XI over the course of the summer and the U15 A side progressing in the National T20 competition (last 16 at the time of writing).



## Leavers Day



On 28 May, we bid farewell to our Upper Sixth Leavers, wishing them well for their forthcoming exams. After year books were distributed, this milestone was celebrated by teachers and students with a graduation ceremony in which guest speakers OA Club President, David Lindgren (OA 1993) and Matt Boyd (OA 2011) inducted pupils into the Old Abingdonian Club.

Amid fond farewells, the day was rounded off with ice cream on Upper Field, a barbecue and wise words from Mr Windsor, the Rev Steer and Mr O'Doherty.





## 2022 A Level and GCSE Results

### A Levels

Grade	A Level passes
A* and A	78%
A* to B	94%
A* to C	99%
A* to E	100%
60% of Abingdon students achieved A grade or above in all their subjects	
Extended Project Qualification (EPQ)	
A* to B	100%

A Level grade equivalencies have been used for pre-U grades in the statistics. Abingdon currently 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 (Economics) by Abingdon teachers.

### GCSEs

Grade	GCSE passes
9	45%
9 and 8	71%
9 to 7	86%
9 to 4	99.5%
9 to 1	100%



#### The Headmaster, Michael Windsor, comments:

“ On behalf of everyone in the Abingdon community, I’d like to congratulate our leavers on these excellent results.

Our students have shown remarkable tenacity and fortitude, adapting to the uncertainties and disruptions over the past couple of years 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, the results of which accurately reflect the hard work and high standards which our pupils have set themselves.

My congratulations and thanks also go to our staff who have shown such professionalism and commitment in supporting our students. ”



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





## Investing in our youngsters

This September will see the opening of our newly created music school, second science lab, purpose-built CDT room and new classrooms for our Year 5 and 6 pupils. We've also been able to transform our existing provision with improved facilities for Computing, Drama, Learning Support; and a double height library which will sit at the heart of the School and provide bright contemporary spaces for teaching, break out and quiet reading areas.



## Reaching for the top

Two of our athletes - Arthur in Year 5 and Xavier in Year 7 - travelled to Monkton Combe Prep School in early May to compete in the IAPS National Triathlon Championships. Both pupils did themselves proud with Arthur finishing in 4th place and Xavier finishing 1st to be crowned the new IAPs National Triathlon Champion. Many congratulations to them both.

## Walk like an Egyptian

Ancient Egypt was brought to life for Year 3 in early June when they enjoyed a guided tour of some authentic exhibits at the Ashmolean Museum. The children became detectives for the day, searching some of the ancient artefacts for clues of what life was like during the Egyptian era, and what the Ancient Egyptians believed in. Not only were the children amazed that they were viewing objects which had been used thousands of years ago; but they were then very gratified when our guide allowed them to handle some genuine Egyptian artefacts. What better way to get a handle on history?!



## Wonderfully poetic

At the end of April, poet James Carter visited school to do poetry workshops with Years 1 to 4. Reading from his many poetry and non-fiction books, including 'Zim, Zam, Zoom' and 'Weird, Wild and Wonderful', each class wrote their own poems which were then shared at the end of the day.

In the second half of term, the Drama and English departments worked on the poetry performance skills of children in Years 3 to 6. Every child learned a poem of their choice off-by-heart and performed it to their peers in a series of class heats. In the final of the competition, the best performances were given again for the whole school to watch. The performances were amazing and the standard was incredibly high.

## Afternoon tea fit for a Queen

The sun shone down on our Jubilee tea party held on the Friday before half-term. Bunting and flags made by the pupils gently flapped in the breeze, as families enjoyed a traditional and delicious English tea at tables decorated with red, white and blue flower displays specially created by the Gardening Club. The afternoon featured some fantastic performances including 'Land of Hope and Glory' and 'Let's go fly a kite', getting everyone into the celebratory spirit.





## Celebrating the Arts

Our dining hall was transformed into a design exhibition space during Artsweek with pupils' very impressive CDT and artwork on display.

Tying in with this, we held our first whole school Big Think Friday in which every year group had the opportunity to spend time reflecting on, and responding to, a piece of art by Jean-Michel Basquiat. The pupils moved around different zones where they could respond through art, construction, creative writing, discussion and silent reflection.

We are also very proud of Ryan, Sam and Charlie for passing their Bronze level Arts Award. Awarded by Trinity College, London and supported by The Arts Council England, it takes commitment and perseverance to gain this award and they should, rightly, be very proud of their creative achievement.



**Leading the way**

Pupils in Year 7 explored the qualities they need to undertake leadership roles in the school during an interactive workshop with Michael Triff, Abingdon School's Head of Career Guidance. They were able to discuss in groups both the leadership qualities they feel are strengths and explore those they need to develop. After reflecting on these, we hope that many of the pupils will feel confident to take up leadership roles on offer at school including House Captain, Vice Captain, School Council, Eco Club, Junior Equality and Diversity group and Young Leader as they move into Year 8.

## Eco Committee

In May, our newly elected Eco Committee held their first meeting to discuss the kind of themes they wanted to prioritise over the course of this term. After much discussion and an array of excellent ideas, the pupils will focus on recycling in classrooms, reducing litter on site and encouraging less food waste from the dining hall. Watch this space!



## Top table tennis

Having won the U11 South Regional Selection/Qualifiers at Cippenham in March, Joe found himself once again battling against the same opponent in the Inter-Regional Finals at WV Active Wolverhampton in May. Over 100 players were competing in both team and individual events in Under-15, Under-13 and Under-11 categories. Joe was competing in Group 4 of the individual Under 11 Boys and lasted the distance to win two five-setters, beating the opposition 8, -8, 8, -7, 5 and 10, 5, 8, -9, 6. He went on to reach the quarter-finals, losing to the eventual finalist. To get so far in such a big event is quite an accomplishment!

## The sky's the limit ...

**There have been so many charitable initiatives this term.**



### House charity day

Our House Charity Day, held in May encouraged the pupils to wear something red in support of the Dolly Parton Imagination Library and raised over £250 in all.

Then, on 19 May, Dragon House ran a cake sale raising £449 worth of funds for Idiopathic Pulmonary Fibrosis. This was followed in June by Phoenix House who ran a tuck shop and who raised £313 for H-ABC. A huge thanks to all those who have supported our charity events this term.



# Abingdon Partnerships



## 15 minutes with Rob Southwell-Sander, Director of Partnerships

### How do partnerships differ from outreach?

Both are approaches to community engagement and that in itself should be celebrated. However, outreach focuses on the provision of resources for community use - it's more of a 'one way' street. Whereas, with partnerships there is a desire to foster collaborative interactions with the community to the mutual benefit of all.

### Why is a partnerships programme important?

As educators, our role is not confined to life solely within our own School and partnerships provides us with a fantastic opportunity to extend our reach beyond our own walls and into our local community. It enables us to experience and see how other schools work and the different approaches taken to meet the needs of students. If a partnerships programme is effective, it brings with it unparalleled opportunity and a huge number of mutual benefits. For teachers, it can lead to continuous professional development (CPD); as a student, it helps broaden outlook, builds teamwork and leadership skills and, perhaps most importantly, enables young people from different socio-economic backgrounds to work together and socialise.

### What does partnerships at Abingdon mean?

The cornerstone of our partnerships programme really began with the Abingdon Science Partnership in 2016. Since then, that (and the rest of our partnerships programme) has evolved to include an extensive range of partnerships activities; as well as the establishment of the OX14 Learning Partnership, of which Abingdon is a founding member.

To give you an indication of the scale of activities on offer, these range from a primary science club which is led by our own 5th Year and Sixth Form students; to our classics department offering GCSEs in Latin to partnership school pupils who don't have access to it within their own curriculum. We run a shared lecture programme, one of the most recent and successful examples of this was an Eco Debate in May, chaired by MP David Johnstone and Wrap CEO, Marcus Glover. Our mental health and wellbeing co-ordinator runs workshops for parents and pupils on a variety of subjects with recent topics including consent, post Covid anxiety, exam stress and internet safety.

### How do you measure the success of the programme?

Success can be measured in different ways. At Abingdon, we measure the number of student experiences we've organised - whether that's as Abingdon or as part of the OX14 Learning Partnership and then we survey the impact that has had.

Three years ago, we measured 5000 student experiences and this academic year, there have been 15,000.

Intrinsic to our success though, remains our student voice committee so the pupils themselves have a say in the direction in which they feel the programme needs to go. This helps us to remain relevant.

### Do you think partnerships help to solve inequality in education?

I think it is too simplistic to suggest that partnerships can 'level up' education. However, what they are successful in doing is creating a collaboration between a diverse group of people, giving them skills which will help them throughout their lives; and I think one of the real positives to take away is that whatever your personal circumstances, there is a place for you in a partnerships programme and you will definitely benefit from being part of it.



## Connecting parents, supporting school life

Dear friends,

I hope you are well and enjoyed a good summer break. It hardly seems possible we are once again at the beginning of a new school



year. For ASPA, your parents' association, our principal aim of enabling parents to connect with each other, continued to be slightly hampered last year by some pandemic related interruptions which impacted our normal flow of events. It was good, though, to start getting back to some degree of normality and see parents returning to events, sports matches and other activities on the school site.

Hopefully, this coming year will see an even greater degree of 'normal' activity return. We already have plans for a Cheese and Wine evening for each of the Lower School, Year 3 and Year 4 parent groups. These will take place this term, hopefully helping to build connections at this early stage, which is especially important for those of you new to the school. Beyond that, in the Lent term, we plan to hold a whole parent body quiz evening and then, in the Summer term, a fundraising dinner. Please keep an eye out for more details of all these events.

Finally, we would like to encourage everyone to reach out to other parents in their son's form and house. Please ensure you have downloaded the app and are registered on Classlist as this is the best resource for communicating with each other and making those all important connections. We encourage you to organise your own informal gatherings in those smaller groups – either at someone's house; a coffee after the school run; or an informal lunchtime gathering. If you need ideas or suggestions for venues, please get in touch.

I hope everyone has a successful year and that we get to meet at one or more of our events this year.

With best wishes

Richard

*Richard Stone, Chair of ASPA*

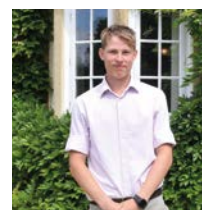
## Travel awards

Each year, ASPA and the OA Club donate up to £2,000 to be shared amongst pupils applying for a contribution towards a travel project and this year, two Lower Sixth students got through to the interview stage in May, both receiving an award.

Jonathan Pannett-Smith went to Morocco to help teach English to Primary school children and work in an orphanage. We were impressed by his commitment to budget travel and his motivation to help others which had begun in lockdown when he volunteered more locally. Due to his age, it was difficult for Jonathan to find a placement but he had persevered admirably.



Jamie Firth volunteered with the Nasio Trust, a charity with connections to his home town of Dorchester, which works to build houses for destitute families in Kenya. Jamie worked alongside the Kenya Red Cross and engaged with children in Nasio's two-day care centres. We liked the idea of one community helping another.



Both Jonathan and Jamie will give talks over the course of this academic year and we hope their experiences will inspire others to apply for a travel award this coming year.

### Our volunteers

Gayle joined ASPA in September 2021 when her son joined 1st Year.

“Joining ASPA as a new first year parent has been a great way to become part of the Abingdon community. The step up from a primary school can be as daunting for parents as it is for their children, but the committee is very welcoming and it has been enjoyable to be part of.



Overall, the past year has been one of 'relaunch' as we tip-toe our way out of the pandemic and, while it has been relatively quiet in terms of bringing parents together, there is a growing sense of normality. It's clear we've all missed the kind of bond ASPA provides between parents and school.

That's why the Cheese and Wine evenings that were held last March were such a huge treat for parents both old and new across many year groups. It was great to see folks mingling over a free glass of sparkling wine and getting to know one another or reuniting.

So, should you get involved? Committee meetings are infrequent, run like clockwork and it's been exciting to hear about the events that are planned for the next school year. A good sized and enthusiastic committee means there is the option to do as little or as much as you feel able to. I would recommend becoming a year group rep; everyone is welcome and 2022/23 promises to be a fantastic year for ASPA. ”

## Project Funding

In November 2020, we awarded several projects with grants and you can find full details and pictures of these on our website. The exciting news is that Capt Edwards has ordered the canopy for CCF. We can't wait for it to be delivered and fitted.

### How can you help?

If you would like to join the ASPA committee we are looking for reps across the years. Please do get in touch via [aspa@abingdon.org.uk](mailto:aspa@abingdon.org.uk)

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](mailto:aspa@abingdon.org.uk)



## Summer events

We were delighted to welcome so many members of our community to Abingdon at the end of the summer term to say 'Thank You'.



110 Club lunch - 21 May



1563 Society lunch - 18 June



Summer garden party - 24 June

## Be part of our Boarding story – name a room

Our boarding development project is well underway and we are able to offer a rare chance to have a personal connection with Abingdon's history and future by naming a room in one of our three boarding houses. Each supporter will be offered a plaque displayed outside the room they are choosing to sponsor, to be inscribed with their family name and/or a memorial dedication.

To find out more and explore the project, visit our [Building the Future](#) page or contact our Development team on [development@abingdon.org.uk](mailto:development@abingdon.org.uk)

## Telephone campaign 21 June to 4 July 2022

Our team of **15** young OA callers spoke to OAs, parents and friends of Abingdon to raise awareness and funds for our 'Seven years to change a life' bursary campaign.

**555** OAs, parents and friends were contacted across different time zones, with many memories and stories shared along the way.

**£105,131** raised in donations and pledges.

**774** hours of calling.

## Impact Report - September 2019 to January 2022

Thank you to everyone in our community who has supported Abingdon with donations, time and expertise. We hope you enjoyed reading about the impact of your donations in our recently published Impact Report.





## England selection



Huge congratulations to Charlie Atkinson (OA 2020) who is one of 35 players selected by Eddie Jones for a three-day training camp in Teddington in June. Atkinson joined England greats including Jonny May at The Lensbury in preparation for England's match against the Barbarians the same month and their tour of Australia in July.

Matthew Gold, Director of Rugby at Abingdon, said: "In recent months, Charlie has cemented his position in the Wasps side – his selection for the England Rugby squad is a nod to his progress – we are thrilled for him and so proud of his achievements."

## Henley Strawberries and Pimm's

A firm favourite of the OA calendar, the Henley Strawberries and Pimm's event was once again thoroughly enjoyed by all in attendance. It was fantastic to see so many members of the school community.

## Forthcoming Events

**Sat 3 Sept - OA Rugby**

**Fri 18 Nov**

**Sixth Form Careers Evening**

**Fri 2 Dec (TBC) - London Drinks**

**Thurs 15 Dec (TBC)**

**Festive Drinks**

[www.oaclub.org.uk](http://www.oaclub.org.uk)



OAs from across the years (and a smattering of current 1st XI footballers) united together at Tilsley Park for a football match on 21 May. In an Overs vs Unders match, it was the Unders that were eventual winners in a tightly fought affair. Alex Fisher (OA 2007), having just finished his season from Newport County, was unable to contain the current crop of Abingdon footballers as the young side ran out 2-1 winners.



## OA Golf Day

The OA Club's annual Golf Day made a triumphant return on Monday 9 May. The OA Club's annual Golf Day made a triumphant return on Monday 9 May. Played at The Springs Golf Club, OAs young and old came together for an enjoyable round followed by a superb meal in the clubhouse.

## Year Group Reunions

Following a hiatus in year group events, the OA Club held a reunion for 1970s and 1980s leavers at Abingdon on Saturday 21 May and for 1990s and 2000s leavers on Saturday 18 June. Chapel was followed by a drinks reception, tours of the School and a buffet supper. Former boarders were also given the opportunity to view their old House. The chance to reminisce and share stories left some "wishing they could turn back the clock 55 years" and relive their Abingdon days!

## 50s and 60s Dinner

Leavers from the 1950s and 1960s met for dinner on Friday 6 May in the Victorian seaside town of Clevedon, Somerset. Overlooking the Severn Estuary and the Welsh hills, guests enjoyed a wonderful evening and overnight stay.



## North East University Reunion

On Friday 6 May, Mark Hindley and Ben Simmons travelled up to Durham to host a university reunion for those in the North East. With over 25 OAs in attendance from both Durham and Newcastle universities, this young crop of OAs enjoyed meeting up with current teachers.



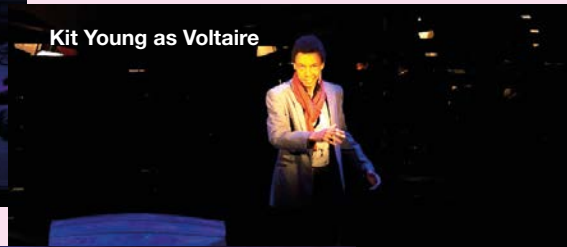
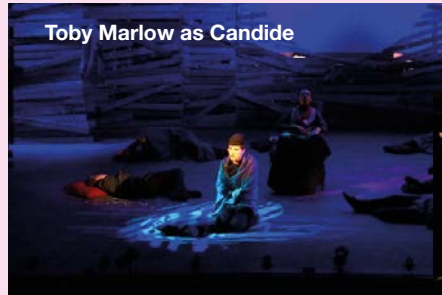


# Abingdon Out of the Past

## A School for Stars

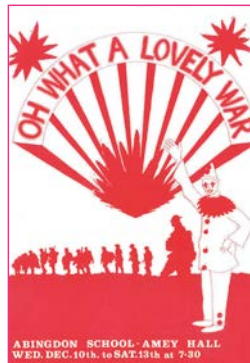
Ten years ago, the School's production of Bernstein's *Candide* featured three Abingdonians whose stars are currently burning brightly. **Toby Marlow (OA 2013)**, who played *Candide*, is the co-author with Lucy Moss of the sensational West End and Broadway hit, *SIX The Musical*. At the Tony Awards in June, which recognise excellence in live Broadway theatre, *SIX* received eight nominations and won the Best Music and Lyric award together with the award for the musical with the best costume design.

Toby's *Candide* co-star, **Kit Young (OA 2013)**, who played both Voltaire and Dr Pangloss, is currently starring as Jesper Fahey in the Netflix fantasy series *Shadow and Bone*. The cast included the counter-tenor **Hugh Cutting (OA 2015)** who last November took first prize in the prestigious Kathleen Ferrier Awards and has just been named one of Radio 3's New Generation Artists for 2022-24.



The Amey Theatre has been a nursery for stars ever since it first opened in 1980 with the junior production, *Dracula Spectacula*, where, 'from his first appearance, all was dominated by **Toby Jones's (OA 1985)** masterly performance as Dracula, highly sophisticated, debauched and energetic in the pursuit of his evil ends, in spite of what looked to be a very cumbersome set of false teeth.' The first senior production, *Oh What a Lovely War*, saw author **Ben Macintyre (OA 1982)** play a pierrot whilst West End producer **Julius Green (OA 1982)** took charge of properties.

Four years later, Toby played Dromio of Ephesus in *A Comedy of Errors* 'with the typical self-assurance of a man who eats comedy roles for breakfast.' A knack he hasn't lost over the years as his role in *The Detectorists* will testify. Among the other inhabitants of Ephesus was Radiohead's **Thom Yorke (OA 1987)**, who later made 'an excellent narrator' in *Joseph and his Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat*. In 1984, Yorke's music for *A Midsummer Night's Dream* was praised for its excellent contribution to the play's pace and atmosphere by **Tom Hollander (OA 1984)** – Major Dalby in the recent BBC production of *The Ipcress File*.



Toby Jones as Count Dracula



Basil Rathbone and Nigel Bruce in *Sherlock Holmes and the Secret Weapon*

## Out of the Distant Past

Abingdon's first international film star, **Nigel Bruce (OA 1912)**, was best known for his role as Dr Watson to Basil Rathbone's Sherlock Holmes. A fine cricketer, 'undoubtedly the best batsman in the team', he played for the 1st XI for three successive years, 1910-12. Nigel Bruce appeared in 78 films and after his move to Hollywood captained the Hollywood Cricket Club.



Nigel Bruce in the 1st XI 1911



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