



## Sail away

Some of our 3rd Years took advantage of the good weather and tried out a multi-handed boat, with a trapeze harness, for the first time.





## Message from the Head

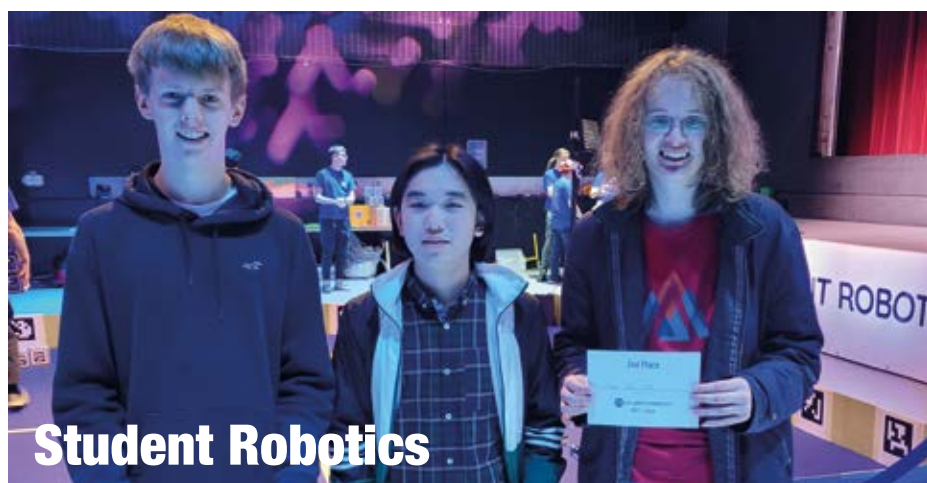
We had known that a visit from the Independent Schools Inspectorate was likely this term as it had been some time since our last inspection but I still certainly felt a rush of adrenaline when I heard that the inspectors would be with us in 24 hours...

We got the call in mid-May and were delighted with how the inspection went. It was certainly an intensive process. A large team of inspectors observed lessons and activities, scrutinised pupils' work and our documentation, surveyed parents, pupils and staff, and held interviews with pupils, staff and Governors.

We were delighted with the eventual outcome. In ISI reports there are two headline judgments relating firstly to the quality of pupils' achievements and secondly to the personal development of pupils. In both areas Abingdon School was assessed to have achieved the highest descriptor available, that of 'excellent', as was Abingdon Prep School, in their inspection. But more broadly, when we read the report, we recognised our school and felt a great sense of pride that our pupils had made such a positive impression on the inspectors.

The inspectors were hugely impressed by our boarders and by the opportunities that are available to them. We are very excited about the improvements in living accommodation and communal spaces that we will soon be able to offer our boarding community, as we come to the end of significant building projects in two of our three day/boarding houses.

School inspection is an important exercise as it gives current and prospective parents reassurance as well as insight into the nature and quality of a school. It's a demanding and thorough process, so I'm hugely grateful to all my colleagues who displayed their characteristic commitment and diligence in their approach to the inspection. I hope everyone in the wider school community will take pride in the resulting report.



## Celebration of the Arts

On Wednesday 28 June, we celebrated 'the arts' with a dedicated art exhibition, showcasing work produced by our GCSE and A Level students; as well as our annual 'anything but classical' concert. The overcast weather did nothing to dampen the vibe as musicians - both students and staff - regaled visitors with renditions of jazz, rock and pop. Well done to all involved.

Three A Level Computer Science students attended the 2023 Student Robotics competition held at the University of Southampton over the Easter break. The culmination of 5 months work by a larger team at school, they competed against 30 other schools. Each team was given a Robot 'brain' by organisers 'Student Robotics' and then challenged to design, build, programme and test a robot which would collect and transport cubes.

The team found day one challenging as they came to terms with the activity of robots from the other schools in the arena. However, after analysing video taken of the other teams, and adapting the coding of their own robot, Abingdon developed a successful counter strategy which resulted in a significant and impressive improvement on day two, resulting in Abingdon coming 2nd overall.

Peter Willis, Head of Computer Science, said: "This is only the 2nd time we have participated in this prestigious competition and I am very proud of our students who demonstrated their skill in engineering, their adaptivity and excellent teamwork."





# Going for Silver and Gold in Snowdonia



Six Abingdon Duke of Edinburgh (DofE) teams completed exhibitions to the Snowdonia national park over the Easter holidays. Two teams successfully passed their silver expeditions, demonstrating excellent organisation and navigation skills; and four successfully completed their Gold expeditions. All went on to do their assessed expeditions to the Lake District.

In addition, a group of determined Gold canoeing participants embarked on a challenging practice expedition on the Oxford and Kennet & Avon Canals. The 4 day expedition required the team to learn how to work together to paddle efficiently upstream, navigate locks and negotiate waterways, as well as learning about what to do if you capsize and how to rescue capsized paddlers and equipment. The expedition provided an opportunity for the participants to develop their resilience, self-confidence and problem-solving skills, all whilst enjoying the beauty of the British countryside. The group successfully completed the expedition, and will now use the experience gained to prepare for their final DofE Gold Assessment expedition on the River Wye in July.

## 3rd Year visit WW1 battlefields

In April, 60 3rd Year students and 6 members of staff visited the battlefields of Ypres and the Somme. The battlefields guides were very knowledgeable and helped bring the subject to life. In particular, students learned about the role of the Indian Army in 1915; day one of the battle of the Somme (1 July 1916); and the battle of Arras in 1917. They also learned stories about some of our OA's who are remembered at the Thiepval and Pozieres cemeteries and laid a wreath on behalf of the School at the Menin Gate memorial.



## 6th Form visit Valencia



Sixth Form Spanish students enjoyed a practical and cultural trip to Valencia during the Easter holidays and, with their Spanish pre-U just around the corner, there really couldn't be a better way to revise than to learn in a Spanish school and stay with Spanish families! In addition to taking Spanish lessons, the students also enjoyed a tour around the city centre; ascending the Cathedral to take in the view; the opportunity to reenact a Formula 1 race on bikes around Valencia's very own street circuits; as well as trips to the Oceanografic, the Mestalla Stadium, and the El Museo Marqués de Dos Aguas. A great time was had by all.





## Lower School enjoy the great outdoors

Our Lower School pupils developed their communication and teamwork skills on two different trips over the Easter break. Under the expert guidance of Plas Pencelli OEC, the 2nd Years enjoyed an outdoor expedition which involved caving, kayaking, canoeing, mountain walking and climbing. Our 1st Years travelled to PGL Liddington where they enjoyed a wide range of activities including abseiling, raft building, climbing and aeroball.



## Having some chemical substance

Twenty 4th Year students took part in the 1st round of the RSC Chemistry Challenge in April. Teams of 4 undertook a series of questions that tested their basic, as well as some quite obscure, chemistry knowledge.



## Miles for Moldova

On 29 April, staff and 6th Formers took to Abingdon's Sports Centre in a sponsored challenge to raise funds for Agape (the charity based in Moldova that works to improve the lives of young people there). Using equipment in the gym, they travelled a total of 398 km, the distance that the River Dniester flows through Moldova - one of Europe's poorest countries, successfully managing to raise £3,000.



## A winning team

The Young Enterprise team "Ox Enterprises" attended the Oxfordshire Area final on 24 April. This involved giving a 5 minute presentation outlining their product, sales, finances and journey since September, as well as setting up their company stall and answering questions from a panel of 4 judges. Competing against 9 other regional teams, the team added an award for their marketing to the innovation award they won earlier this year, with the judges impressed by the team's ability to adapt their selling strategy and product range which included producing and selling upcycled passive amplifiers, bespoke key chain pendants and tote bags.

## A turn up for the (economic) books

Congratulations to 6th Form Economics student Rory Middlemiss who has won the Institute of Economic Affairs' prestigious Monetary Policy Essay Prize. Run in conjunction with the Institute of International Monetary Research and the Vinson Centre, entrants are judged on their knowledge and understanding of the economic issues raised by the challenge; use of resources; the quality and clarity of their argument and analysis; as well as the degree of originality and insight they display. Having got through the semi-final stage against 16 other competitors; Rory was one of 5 finalists each of whom was assessed based on their presentation style, command of the theory, relevance to the question as well as overall persuasiveness. Well done Rory.



## Ring for the King

Members of our Bellringing Club joined campanologists at All Saints' Church, Sutton Courtenay on Coronation weekend to 'Ring for the King'. Parents were invited into the ringing chamber to see the ringing in action and celebratory tea and cake was enjoyed by all afterwards.





## The sky's the limit!

Three RAF cadets from the CCF had the opportunity to go gliding at RAF Little Rissington in April. Though perhaps a little nervous before launch, all had a fantastic time and are looking forward to the next opportunity.

## How to argue

Lower School pupils benefited from a public speaking workshop in June, thanks to a donation from SUS. Run by oracy trainers from the English Speaking Union, the workshop began with confidence building sessions; an understanding of how to formulate a structured argument; and how to use verbal and non-verbal techniques. Then, the pupils worked in groups to create a pitch to sell a summer holiday; as well as having to use persuasive language to convince someone to try a new food. The day culminated in everyone writing a speech to get themselves elected to the School Council in which they had to develop a powerful and convincing argument for the changes that they would bring about.



## Ben Kane visits school

On 27 April, the Classics Department welcomed bestselling author Ben Kane to deliver 3 talks enjoyed by 300 students. Well-researched historical fiction is a good place to inspire a love of a civilization, and for the Roman army, Ben Kane is one of the leading names; having published 14 historical novels set in the Roman world and travelled the Mediterranean (and beyond) to walk in the footsteps of the Roman army. An authority on replica Roman equipment with an impressive collection, including armour, swords, pendants, water flasks and purses, which he brought along and displayed on the day bringing his talks to life. Some students were even lucky enough to try on the heavy chain mail (weighing nearly 10kg) and helmet, heightening their admiration for the daily marching distances recorded by the Roman troops. GCSE Ancient Historians learned about the Roman army during the Punic Wars, 3rd Year Ancient Historians discovered the harsh realities of serving in the Roman army during their occupation of Britain; and Lower School realised just how much the Roman army changed over the centuries. The number of questions (and book sales) at the end of each of Ben's talks testify to the enthusiasm he was able to generate in the students.

## Crowning glory

Ahead of the Coronation day celebrations, Abingdon art students designed and built their own crowns which were displayed for a special one day exhibition at School on 3 May. Whilst many of the designs were inspired by King Charles himself, others were influenced by celebrities or the personal heroes of the students. This resulted in the use of a wide variety of exciting material including wire, card and upcycled objects, many of which were then spray painted or embellished further with metallic colours and jewels. Mr Williamson, Head of Art, was particularly impressed by the students' work and creativity. Well done to everyone who took part and particular congratulations to the overall winners Kwame in 2nd Year and 1st Year Akram.



# Chat GPT

## The Benefits and Pitfalls

*You may have come across ChatGPT already, you may even have used it but do you really have a grasp of what it can and can't do? We ask Chris Hack, Physics Teacher, Assistant Director of Teaching and Learning and Director of E-learning at Abingdon, about the benefits and possible pitfalls of ChatGPT.*



### What is ChatGPT?

At heart it is a piece of software that generates text as a response to text input prompts at a natural human level. It is a very advanced, exciting and quickly evolving technology.

### What are the benefits of ChatGPT?

For both students and teachers, there are numerous potential benefits, most of which essentially speed up a process - these might include brainstorming ideas, summarising text and proofreading.

### Are there any pitfalls?

It is important that individuals remember ChatGPT is not infallible - in fact, it is quite the opposite. When asked to provide factual content, it can often just make things up but it does so in a way which can be very plausible, for example using references from real authors but invented paper titles.

Also, there is the challenge of potential academic dishonesty and plagiarism - i.e. passing off ChatGPT as your own work. Interestingly, universities have now said that if a student is publishing a paper, they can quote or cite ChatGPT as a reference but any submitted academic papers need to be written by the named author.

One thing I should add, whenever you put something into the free online version of ChatGPT you are handing over that information to Open AI, the company who made ChatGPT. They can use it to train and refine their AI model so you need to be careful not to send anything that could be sensitive, or that contains personal information or data that is protected by any data regulations.

### What is the future for ChatGPT?

ChatGPT is only one of a larger family of AI models - others can generate images in response to text input, some can replicate voice and video. I don't think it is an understatement to recognise that AI will have a significant impact on the workplace and how the job market will be shaped in the future.

It is not going to go away, and it is in its least sophisticated form at the moment so it is only going to get better. We need to embrace this technology, as we have in the past (for example, when the internet was created or the steam engine) and work out how it can help us, while keeping the wellbeing of real people at the heart of everything we do.

In education, the Covid pandemic forced the industry to find other effective ways of study when the normal classroom environment was shut down, but I think most would agree that the impact of remote learning also had disadvantages. That's because education is not simply about learning, it's also about socialisation and discovery. It's about finding out who you are as an individual and your place within a wider community. Therefore, I don't believe that AI will substitute human teachers but I do believe that, as educators, we need to guide creativity, structure students' time and understand how the ever improving capabilities of AI provide opportunities to complete tasks better, quicker, smarter and more effectively.



## Mathematically minded



Abingdon has been awarded 1st place (UK Seniors) in the prestigious Náboj international mathematical competition, which brings together some of the brightest young mathematical minds from around the world. Designed to challenge students' mathematical abilities and to foster a love for mathematics, it provides an excellent opportunity for students to showcase their talents and meet like-minded individuals from around the globe. This is the 2nd consecutive year that Abingdon has been awarded 1st place - a testament to the exceptional teaching at Abingdon and the talent of our students.



## What a show!

Our 2nd Year pupils, Arran, Jaspar and Ajeet, enjoyed a successful few days at the Cheltenham Festival of Performing Arts in May.

In the Year 7 to 8 group categories, Arran and Ajeet earned bronze in 'duologue'; Jasper won gold in 'solo' acting and Arran came away with silver; and all three won gold in 'group acting' as well as the trophy. In the Year 7 to 10 categories, Arran took gold and the Harry Smith Shakespeare cup in 'solo Shakespeare'; as well as silver in 'dramatic sight reading'.

Congratulations to them all.

## Tackling a challenge head on



Having successfully completed their Bronze Duke of Edinburgh practice expedition through the Oxfordshire countryside in May, 140 of our 4th Year students embarked on their assessed expedition to the Wiltshire Downs in June. Conditions were hot and humid but the students tackled and completed the challenge with good spirit, enjoying the neolithic monuments at Avebury as well as the famous white horse hill figures.

## When in Rome...

Students from our 2nd Year travelled to Caerleon in Wales on 11 May to learn more about the lives of Roman soldiers. As well as looking at the artefacts in the National Roman Legion Museum, they explored the remains of the amphitheatre, military bathhouse, and barracks of the 2nd Augustan Legion.







## Ready for Fleet Street?

Budding Lower School journalists had a very busy month in May as they found themselves hard at work writing their articles for the latest edition of The Blazer. Topics currently under consideration include Formula 1, role-playing games, best milkshake flavours, and whether anything rhymes with orange! We can't wait to see what made the final cut!



## Outdoor pursuits

The Lower School Assistants took full advantage of the May sunshine to organise a whole host of outdoor activities for Lower School pupils during their lunch break.



## Great opportunities

The breadth of extra-curricular activities undertaken by Lower School pupils was celebrated in May during the Other Half Exhibition. Each pupil prepared a short talk about an activity that they have been enjoying and presented it to the rest of their tutor group - hopefully, as a result, many of the pupils will be encouraged to try out something new next term!



## Good for them and good for the environment

Our gardening club students have been focusing this term on producing nutritious, seasonable produce. Most recently, they have planted French beans, leeks, Brussel sprouts and broccoli; and have harvested radishes, rhubarb and lettuce. Delicious!



## Holocaust survivor talk

Holocaust survivor, Henry Schachter, visited Abingdon in June to give a talk to 4th Year history students. He brought the atrocities of the Holocaust to light by providing a general overview of the persecution of the Jews but he also shared his own personal and very tragic story - from being smuggled across the German border and having to go into hiding; to having to change his identity and be put into foster care; to losing his own parents who died in the labour camps and being reunited after the war with his uncle. The students were left with a far deeper understanding of the barbarism of the Nazi regime.





## Canoeing assessment

In June, 8 of our 4th Year students successfully completed their Bronze Duke of Edinburgh canoeing assessment on the River Medway. The group, who had completed their training in May, braved the intense heat as they made their way from Tonbridge to Allington Lock, skilfully navigating the exciting canoe shoots along the river. The students' resilience and teamwork shone through and their ability to navigate the unpredictable nature of the river exemplified their commitment, serving as a testament to their unwavering spirit and determination to overcome challenges in pursuit of personal growth and achievement.



## Learning to lead

On 16 Jun, 4th Years took part in a leadership day at school. Aimed at testing and developing the students' leadership potential, students participated in sport, music, drama, public speaking, CCF and linguistics activities, before finishing with a reflective closing session. Each stand had a competitive element and many congratulations to team 12 who finished as the overall winners.



## In search of Neverland

Based on the novel by J M Barrie, and adapted for the stage by our very own Mrs Sharman, this year's Lower School drama production 'Peter Pan – The Lost Boy' tells the story of the boy who never grew up. It was a fantastic performance, imaginatively and exuberantly delivered by the cast. The audience were treated to a rapping, dancing, martial-art loving Peter Pan; 15 mermaids in sequined tails; a talking crocodile on a skateboard; a feisty Latin-American Tink; a drunken parrot; the infamous Captain Hook; and, in a true first, several cast members flying across the stage of the Amey Theatre (very many thanks to Mr Lloyd-White and his team).



## Hot shots

On a hot and sunny Wednesday afternoon, 12 members of the Abingdon School Croquet Club visited Radley College for a friendly tournament. Whilst Abingdon was not successful overall, the pupils showed a high level of skill, strategy and teamwork. Well done to all.



## Biology Challenge 2023

Twenty 3rd and 4th Year students entered the 2023 Royal Society of Biology's 'Biology Challenge'. This is a highly prestigious competition which, this year, saw over 43,685 students take part from over 600 schools across the globe. Alongside those who came away with participation, commended and highly commended certificates, 6 students won gold medals; 2 students won silver; and 4 students won bronze. Congratulations to them all.



## Mitigating Anxiety

*The middle of May not only heralded the start of exam season but also marked Mental Health Awareness Week which, this year, focused on anxiety. In this article, Natalie Hunt, Mental Health and Wellbeing Co-ordinator at The Abingdon Foundation; and Lucinda Powell, Assistant Director of Teaching and Learning and Psychology Teacher at Abingdon School, share their thoughts on anxiety and some of the best strategies to use to help mitigate it.*

### Natalie explains:

“ We talk about anxiety and stress a lot but what often goes unacknowledged is how normal and useful feeling anxious can be. If individuals can accept that a certain amount of anxiety can help them to focus more, they will be able to harness this to their advantage. This is something that can be seen in professional sports people who require a certain level of cortisol and adrenaline in order to perform at their best. What is unhealthy is when our levels of anxiety go beyond this point and cause individuals to feel overwhelmed.

When this happens, there are some fairly simple strategies which can help mitigate those feelings. These include doing some sport; being outside in the daylight; paying attention to sleep and nutrition. Now, whilst these things may seem boring, and possibly challenging to implement, it is worth doing them because they work. We know that when individuals do not take enough exercise, sleep well or eat well, they manage less well. Another useful tip is to write down thoughts and worries or to talk to someone - often a problem can feel less daunting when it is documented or shared. ”

For many young people, some of the best people to talk to can be their teachers - especially in exam season.



### Lucinda says:

“ Avoiding avoidance is really important and teaching staff are often best placed to help with that. I think it's important to acknowledge that different techniques work for different people and finding the strategy that works for you is the best way to cope. In my classroom, we quite often practise breathing techniques to help reduce anxiety or stress levels. Another highly successful strategy which I use with my students is a visualisation technique. I get them to close their eyes, place their hands on their desks and imagine they are in an anxiety making situation, such as an exam. Then we talk through all the possible scenarios which might happen. This provides the students with a mental plan of what to do if it all goes wrong and, crucially, helps them to put things into perspective. ”

### Natalie agrees:

“ Looking at the bigger picture is a really important message as it can be all too easy to get consumed by a task. Working out how to make a task easier through, for example, planning or prioritising, is a really useful life skill. Leading by example and showing others how we manage our own feelings and anxieties is also really significant and can be very beneficial to others - whether that's parents to children; managers to their staff; or peers to each other. Any of these strategies can help anyone who is struggling with anxiety - the important thing is to communicate, have conversations and check-in with those who are struggling. ”



## Berlin history trip



Over half-term, a group of 4th Year history students visited Berlin - a city rich in historical significance. On day one, the students visited the Reichstag, the seat of Government, which provided an insight into Germany's pathway from democracy to dictatorship; as well as memorials to those who were persecuted and lost their lives during Germany's tumultuous past. This was followed, on day two, with a trip to the Sachsenhausen concentration camp and the Wannsee Mansion, where in 1942, leading Nazi's and SS met to discuss their so-called Final Solution to the Jewish Question. On day three, students were plunged into Cold War life in East Berlin with an immersive experience at the DDR museum; followed by a tour of Checkpoint Charlie which left many in awe of the inventive ways people had managed to successfully escape. Then it was on to the Topography of Terror, an exhibition located on the former site of the Gestapo headquarters. On the final day, students visited the Stasi Prison Camp to gain a better understanding of life under the Soviets; the Soviet War Memorial and Cemetery in Treptower Park; and the Berlin Wall and documentation centre.

## Abingdon News



## Scrapheap challenge

Lower School pupils from Abingdon and St Helen and St Katharine joined forces for a scrapheap challenge in June. Having been provided with a basic remote controlled vehicle, their task was to improve its design using items of scrap in order to navigate round a track as quickly and accurately as possible. Congratulations to Abhi and Wilf, members of the winning team.

## A history of the school

The 1st Years spent one afternoon in June learning more about the early history of the school. After an initial talk from Mrs Wearne, the school archivist, they walked into Abingdon to visit sites connected with the school including the school room created following a donation from John Roysse in 1563. They also got to enjoy the spectacular views from the roof of Abingdon Museum.



## Experimental chemistry

A group of top-set chemists made ice-cream using common table salt to depress the melting point of ice; although the results weren't spectacular it was a great extension following their end of year exams.



# Abingdon Boarding

## It's a boarder's life...

Throughout our history, boarding has been an integral part of the Abingdon experience. This autumn heralds the opening of our two newly extended and renovated day and boarding houses. Arguably the most significant development in the history of boarding at our school, the purpose built contemporary accommodation offers bright communal House rooms, kitchenettes, study areas and single bedrooms for our 6th Formers.

Providing a dedicated weekend and evening activity and enrichment programme (more of which you can read about in the following pages), boarding at Abingdon helps our young people to become increasingly independent and responsible, preparing them for life beyond school. Boarders forge strong friendships and are able to access additional help during prep and study sessions, with our teaching staff on hand to provide additional guidance.

For more information about boarding at Abingdon, please contact our Admissions team [admissions@abingdon.org.uk](mailto:admissions@abingdon.org.uk)



Before half-term, 45 boarders enjoyed our annual fun-filled day at Thorpe Park. Home to some of the UK's most popular roller coasters, our boarders reached new heights on Stealth, took flight on the Swarm, faced a 100ft 'beyond-vertical' drop in the Saw before getting soaked on the Tidal Wave. Phew! Time to get back to school for a rest...

## A truly wild weekend

Boarders enjoyed a Sunday trip to Cotswold Wildlife Park at the beginning of term. As well as the chance to see exotic snakes and camels, a highlight was seeing a rare pygmy goat up close!



## Ready, Steady, Bake!



As a nice way to end a busy week, our Crescent boarders enjoyed making and decorating chocolate rice crispy cakes one Friday evening - delicious!



It was fantastic to see over 20 Abingdon boarders enjoying an afternoon at a local water park one Sunday in June. The students had great fun on the inflatable obstacle course, honing their climbing, jumping (and in some cases, swimming!) skills.





## Football crazy

Towards the end of April, boarders in School House enjoyed a football and pizza social on the MUSA. Over 70 students were involved with teams organised by Ludo (who surprisingly led an all conquering team!) and other Upper 6th students.



## Lasertag

Over the May Day Bank Holiday weekend, 3rd and 4th Year boarders enjoyed an action packed afternoon at Lasertag in Culham. Over 5 'skirmishes', the red team, heroically led by Tim, managed to overcome the blue team. A great time was had by all.



## Paintballing

A sun lit pine forest in the heart of the Chilterns was the scene for over 50 boarders to test their paintballing skills. Fortunately everyone returned home unscathed, even Mr Magee who kindly led this memorable trip! Medals all round!



## A taste of mediaeval England

On a sunny Sunday in May, a group of 20 boarders visited the historic Warwick Castle. As well as the castle itself, there was the opportunity to see a falconry display, practise archery and visit the town of Warwick. Everyone had a lovely time.



## Creasing up

As part of the boarding enrichment programme offered throughout the year, a group of Lower 6th boarders recently learned how to iron a shirt. Led by one of the Assistant Boarding Housemasters, the students were taught the proper technique for ironing a shirt and left the session feeling more confident in their ability to master this basic life skill.





## Sunday afternoon concert at Stonevale

On 7 May, Thomas, Walter, Laurence, Daniel and Josef took part in Stonevale's series of house-concerts, which have been running since 2006. The varied programme of solo and combined works was expertly performed by all the musicians. The programme opened with a work by Gurlitt, followed by some Debussy, Sibelius, Dragonetti, Chopin and Pierné; as well as a jazz sonata by Woods; and an impromptu rendition of Mike Cornick's *Jamaica Farewell for six hands* at the piano as an encore.

## Christine Bovill

On 5 May, the eve of the coronation, we welcomed Glaswegian singer, Christine Bovill to the Amey Theatre stage. Fresh from sell-out shows at the Edinburgh Festival, we were treated to a heartfelt programme of French chanson, charting its development over a period of some 35 years. The programme was delivered with heartfelt commitment in songs made famous by the likes of Piaf, Greco, Barbara and Aznavour through to the "Yé Yé era", the period of Johnny Halliday, France's answer to Elvis. Christine's narrative describing the evolution of chanson was engaging and personal as she described her teenage years of disenchantment with studying French at school - and how a vinyl record of Piaf changed her life.



Our annual summer concert took place on 23 June - the last for our Director of Music, Michael Stinton, who is stepping down after 36 years at Abingdon. Opening with the Gospel Choir, a great myriad of music followed from the Abingdon Academics, the Concert Band, and the First, Second and Chamber Orchestras. Pieces included the themes from *Schindler's List* and *Big Country*, as well as medley's from *Fiddler on the Roof* and Burt Bacharach tunes. One of the greatest highlights was the *Bruch Violin Concerto* with Oliver (Upper 6th) as soloist.

On 9 May, the final solo concert platform of the year was hosted. It was a splendid occasion with some exceptionally memorable performances including David performing Mozart's *Concerto for Clarinet, KV 622*, complete with string quartet; Laurence demonstrated his technical prowess on the trumpet, playing a movement from Arutiunian's *Concerto for Trumpet and Orchestra*. The concert concluded with fireworks, as Ryan performed Ravel's *Tzigane* - a suitably joyous way of concluding the series. Congratulations to all musicians who performed this year.





## Abingdon Music

### Sheldonian concert

Ahead of the Music tour to Argentan, Colmar, Paris and Sint-Niklaas, a pre tour concert was held at the Sheldonian Theatre, Oxford on 30 June. This was an excellent opportunity for our First and Second Orchestras, plus Big Band, the Chamber Orchestra and Chamber Ensemble to come together and perform some of the tour programme before a live audience. The musicians played a great variety of modern and traditional pieces to an exceptionally proficient standard receiving rapturous applause from a most appreciative audience.



Eight promising musicians took part in the Junior Solo Competition in May. Adjudicated by Sean Fitzpatrick, Music Director at Abingdon Prep, the event welcomed those who have not yet taken their Grade 6 examinations. Performances included Oboists (Oscar and Irfan), clarinettist (Toby), 2 pianists (Jamie and Laurence), violist (Kwame), bassist (Ethan) and trumpeter (Felix). All the students gave performances of a very high standard. The 2nd and 3rd prizes were shared between Laurence (Schmitz' *Progression One*) and Irfan (Tchaikovsky's *Land of Desolation, Land of Mists*), with 1st prize going to Felix for his lovely performance of the slow movement of Haydn's *Trumpet Concerto*.



### Lower School gala concert

At the end of a busy couple of weeks, Friday 16 June saw the whole of the Lower School come together in the Amey Theatre for the annual Lower School gala concert. There was a varied selection of music making from the Lower School Band playing a medley of tunes from *The Lion King*, to the Junior Rock Society getting the crowd involved with Blur's *Song 2*. Particular credit goes to all the soloists - Owen Nagi and Brian Chu from the 1st Year, and Felix, Louis, Justin, Harish and George from the 2nd Year. They all rose to the occasion wonderfully.



### Lower School music competition

This year saw each tutor group perform a song on the stage of the Amey Theatre. Each group provided their own conductor and instrumentalists and had been responsible for running their own rehearsals. All performed to a very high standard and judge, Mr Stinton, had a difficult job deciding who would win the trophy. Victory, by the narrowest of margins, went to 2H with their performance of *Beggin'* by Maneskin.

### Music tour

A group of musical students and staff departed on 4 July for Abingdon's Twin Towns of Argentan, Colmar, Paris and Sint-Niklaas, as they embarked on Mr Stinton's final Music Tour of his Abingdon career. The action-packed itinerary included a myriad of receptions and concerts with time also set aside for some sightseeing. Particular highlights included orchestral concerts in Falaise; and the L'Eglise de la Madeleine, Paris; a concert given by l'Orchestre National du Capitole de Toulouse; as well as participation in the Colmar Symphonic Mob with Frankfurt Radio Orchestra; and Big Band performances in Falaise; Grote Markt, Sint-Niklaas and Le Grand Hall, Paris. The experience was truly memorable and one which will be treasured by all who were lucky enough to go.



# Abingdon School in Partnership



## Oxbridge Club

On 9 May, 6 students from the 5th Year and Upper 6th participated in the Oxbridge Club, held at St Helen and St Katharine. This provides young people across the partnership with the opportunity to speak to older students about the Oxbridge application process and to ask questions about their experience.



## 'The Good Life'

In May, the primary school partnerships team put together colourful boxes filled with easy to grow seeds. These were then delivered to our partnership schools, along with a comprehensive set of instructions, so that younger pupils can enjoy growing their own herbs and vegetables.

## Pond dipping

In May, children from Marcham, St Swithun's and Caldecott Primary Schools enjoyed sweeping the pond and its well established plants with nets and then placing their finds carefully into sample trays. Having found a good assortment of snails, leeches, water boatmen, caddis, damselfly larvae and even a small frog (!), they selected a few specimens to inspect more closely under microscopes in the lab.

Whilst their pupils were 'pond dipping', their teachers were undergoing a training session, organised by Abingdon Science Partnerships and led by Laura Deacon of the Oxfordshire Science Learning Partnership.

## Let's communicate

Our let's communicate event in May saw 60 primary school children participate in workshops in sign language, secret languages, Mandarin, German and body language. Abingdon students helped lead several sessions and were delighted by the enthusiasm and confidence shown by the children as they tried out the new phrases and skills that they had learned.





## Solar observance

The ASP Astronomy Group made good use of the Coronado solar telescope, donated by ASPA, in May. The students were able to observe the surface of the sun and a series of really dynamic solar flares and prominences extending from its edges. At least 5 sunspots were also visible, as well as dark filaments and bright, linear plages across its surface. The students sketched their observations of these features which will provide evidence of compulsory observing tasks should they decide to take the Astronomy GCSE in the future.

## Ring out the old, bring in the new

Many thanks to our 2022/23 peer support leads (PSLs) and a warm welcome to our 2023/24 PSLs, each of whom had to pass a rigorous application and interview process.

On 6 June, they embarked on a training session at Larkmead School, where they met PSLs from across OX14, learned about the role and skills they would need; and explored the importance of safeguarding. Congratulations to them and best of luck for the year ahead.



## Model United Nations

On 22 June, we hosted the inaugural OX14 Model United Nations conference. Over 70 delegates were in attendance with students debating issues in committees such as the Israel-Palestine conflict, the treatment of Uighur Muslims in China and the Question of North and South Korea. There was so much energy, enthusiasm and excitement in the room. Students from all schools spoke with confidence, intellect and sensitivity.

## Biodiversity guided walk

Earlier in the term, a group from Abingdon Carbon Cutters (ACC) enjoyed a guided walk around Upper Field and the Art Garden led by local botanist John Killick. John focussed on the many trees edging the field, explaining their importance. The tour ended by looking at the grasses and flowering plants growing in the Art Garden.





Over the Easter break, 2 cricket squads travelled to India to enjoy the cricketing and cultural experiences of the sub-continent. Both sides enjoyed great success on the cricket field with some outstanding individual and team performances, including Oliver picking up his 1st ever 5 wicket haul; Jack smashing a destructive 80 in 50 balls; and Freddie's unbeaten century, to name but a few. There were some incredible moments off the field too, including the eye-opening visit to the Deepalaya Foundation in Delhi, witnessing sunrise at the Taj Mahal, a jeep safari in search of tigers, the visit to the stunning Amber Fort Palace and some excellent haggling in the local markets of Jaipur!



In April, the U18 basketball team played their annual netball match v St Helen and St Katharine school. It was a great fixture with lots of fun had by all. Well done to St Helen and St Katharine who won 19-11.



## Rowing

Well done to our J14 and J15 A and B crews who qualified into the finals of the National Schools Regatta in May, securing a spot within the top 6 schools in the country. The nail-biting J15 B final, which saw the crew neck and neck with Radley, and both teams being awarded a Gold medal, was a particular highlight.

Congratulations also to the J14 A crew at the Marlow Regatta who won in their category.

Both performances resulted in our 1st VIII prequalifying for the Henley Royal Regatta but 2023 was not to be our year and the team lost out on day one to a strong Hampton team.



Congratulations to our school golf team who entered, and won, the School's Golf Frilford Heath Invitational Tournament held in April. A particular mention to Edward (left) who was also victorious in the individual competitions as well.

## Athletics relays

The prestigious Achilles Relays at Iffley Road on 4 May proved a great start to the Athletics season for Abingdon as our relay squads competed against schools from across the country, achieving some impressive results - particularly in the sprints and middle distance events, where it is evident there is great promise for the future.

## Lower School battle it out

One Thursday lunch break in May, the Sports Centre hosted a table tennis and water polo competition for Lower School tutor groups. 1F and 2C each won 1st place in table tennis; with 1M and 2H coming 1st in water polo.



# Leavers Day





## 2023 A Level Results

### A Levels

Grade	A Level passes
A* and A	68.8%
A* to B	90.2%
A* to C	97.4%
A* to E	99.9%
42.4% of Abingdon students achieved A grade or above in all their subjects, with 19 students achieving straight A*s.	
<b>Extended Project Qualification (EPQ)</b>	
A* to B	91.5%

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 in subjects which are either taught jointly (Drama) or solely (Economics) by Abingdon teachers.

#### The Head, Michael Windsor, comments:

“ On behalf of everyone in the Abingdon community, I would like to congratulate our leavers on these excellent results. Throughout their time in 6th Form, our students have shown dedication to their studies and extra-curricular commitments, contributing greatly to life at School. They can take great pride in their achievements, which reflect the hard work and high standards which this year group have set themselves. These fine results are particularly notable as these were the first set of public examinations which this cohort had taken as their GCSE exams had been affected by Covid.

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

These A Level and pre-U results will open the doors for our leavers to a huge range of exciting opportunities and we look forward to hearing about their future endeavours and accomplishments in the years ahead. I wish them all the very best for the bright futures they have ahead of them. ”





### Fun. Friends. Memories.



It was an action packed few days for our pupils as they got back to basics with an authentic outdoor experience in June at our annual Year 6 Bushcraft residential trip. Team building and survival skills were top of the agenda and the children learned first aid skills; how to construct water tight shelters and traps, as well as learn how to camouflage themselves. They also had a lot of fun cooking their own burgers and toasting marshmallows on the open fires they had built. A great few days, fostering friendships - both new and old, having fun and creating life-long memories.

### IAPS national swimming final



Having successfully qualified for the IAPS national swimming final, 5 pupils travelled to the London Aquatics Centre on 3 June. First up were the U12 relay team racing in both the Medley and 4x25m Freestyle relays. Despite fierce competition, the team knocked 8 seconds off their previous qualifying time, respectively finishing 13th and 14th overall. The individual events were also a success, with Leo narrowly missing out on a place in the U12 50m breaststroke final; Satoshi finishing 4th and qualifying for the final of the U12 50m butterfly which saw him finish 8th place; and Leone cruised through to the final in the U11 50m freestyle in a time of 31.46 (3rd place), then going on to the final with a personal best of 30.81, which secured him a bronze medal and ranked him number 1 in the country within his age category.



## Experimenting with Science

A number of senior pupils have completed Science crest projects throughout the course of the year. The project requires students to evaluate an area of Science which particularly interests them, making predictions, writing out detailed methods and determining scientific conclusions of their work. Spanning biology, sports science, neuroscience, climate science, forensic science and computer science, the projects have enabled pupils to hone techniques in bread baking, fingerprint taking, cress growing and measuring air quality. This type of project based work builds important transferable skills in collaboration, communication, higher order thinking and problem solving, all of which will be useful in further education and future career paths.

## Jungle exploration

The intrepid explorers in Reception prepared themselves for their adventures to Brazil and the Amazon rainforest this term. They planned all of the things they would need to pack for their journey, with sustenance top of the list! The children have learned how to prepare some hearty sandwiches in order to maintain their energy levels and recognise the need for lots of water!



## Classical clues

As part of their topic on Ancient Egypt, Year 3 visited the Ashmolean Museum in June. The pupils became detectives for the day, hunting for evidence to discover what life in Egypt would have been like thousands of years ago! They even had the chance to hold some original artefacts including an axe and a mirror....



## Life skills

Our Year 8s have been developing their knowledge, understanding, resilience and teamwork skills on their leavers' trip to Poole in Dorset. They have been undertaking a number of different challenges including orienteering, archery, code-breaking and climbing, as well as many water based activities including raft-building, SUPs and canoeing. The glorious weather and idyllic surrounding of Poole's natural harbour truly made this a trip to remember!



# The Importance of Place in effective and sustainable school partnerships

As an avid Guardian reader I came across a headline that I was not expecting a few weeks ago, '**Spare a thought for the new persecuted minority: The privately educated**'. The gist of the story was looking at redressing the imbalance in education through policies such as the removal of tax breaks for independent schools and the growing number of Oxbridge places going to state educated students. As a teacher who has enjoyed teaching across both sectors, this made me reflect on the challenge of curating transformative educational policy from the top down. As a geographer I reflected on the 'Power of Place' in helping to drive educational change. According to the National Geographic, place refers to "an area having unique physical and human characteristics interconnected with other places." Having an understanding of one's place, with its past and present connections and physical and human features, helps one grasp the reasons why disparities in educational outcomes exist. In turn it can help one to establish what can be done about it....

In September 2019 I wrote a blog asking the question 'Is the time right for an Abingdon Town Learning Partnership?' Much has been achieved since then and as I pen this article in June 2023 the OX14 Learning Partnership is becoming increasingly embedded within each of its 6 member schools going from strength to strength. Since November 2021 when this partnership formally decided to work together for mutual benefit, we have organised over 100 separate activities involving over 8,000 hours of student participation. At the very heart of it is the notion of 'place'. The unique features of Abingdon and the surrounding OX14 area have evolved over time. The historic importance of industries such as brewing and car making have made way, like so many similar towns and cities across the country, for a more service and knowledge based economy. This can bring opportunities for some who can take advantage of higher skilled employment, but challenges for others who perhaps miss out. This, in turn, can lead to inequality of opportunities. Uneven access to transformational educational opportunities or the latest pedagogical research does not sit comfortably with teachers regardless of sector or stage and this is where place based educational partnerships can play an invaluable role in addressing local educational imbalance. This was at the very heart of why the School Heads, partnership champions and partnership coordinator from Abingdon, Fitzharrys, John Mason, Larkmead, Radley and St Helen and St Katherine decided to sign up to a formal Memorandum of Understanding in November 2021 based on 3 key aims:

**Challenge** - *Provide opportunities for aspiration and challenge through widening horizons for all stakeholders.*

**Inspire** - *Use extra-curricular activities to develop character, promote cultural engagement and support civic pride.*

**Support** - *Support the mental health and wellbeing of students, staff and parents using a whole school/partnership approach.*

These core values act as a rudder to help steer our direction as a partnership of schools. As educational institutions, pupils and families continue to recover from the impact of covid on lost learning and day to day habits working as a collective group of schools create enormous 'economies of scale' in areas such as shared lectures, staff professional development and numerous enrichment opportunities around STEM, performing arts, leadership and support.

Activities, such as our Oxford Academy of Broadcast Journalism, are designed to expose a broader diversity of young people to the skills associated with blogging, presenting or podcasting - all of which are transferable into the workplace. Leadership programs, such as our Academic coaching, helps older students develop their communication and active listening skills before supporting the learning of younger peers. In addition, we are seeing growth in areas such as shared preparation for university including a medic program, Oxbridge preparation club and a futures fair - all of which allow students access to admissions from a broad range of universities. Finally, it is clear that a residual impact of covid is the toll it has taken on the mental health and wellbeing of many people. Having a shared focus on support has allowed our schools to develop a number of strategies to help deal with these pressures including staff professional development, parental webinars and student support. Our flagship Peer Support Lead program brings 6th Formers from across the partnership together to be trained in wellbeing support and safeguarding, before supporting younger peers experiencing challenges. This helps foster a culture of support and understanding regardless of the educational setting.

It is becoming increasingly obvious that if ever the term 'a rising tide lifts all boats' is applicable it is within the realm of educational partnerships. As schools and students collaborate with one another they create an open dialogue and a greater understanding of each school's strengths, along with their respective pressures. An added and important benefit of working collaboratively is the creation and development of genuine sense of civic pride and community cohesion. Our annual OX14 student survey has seen a 15% growth in students who say they feel part of a community and from a professional perspective it is genuinely exciting to work with colleagues who bring different experiences and viewpoints to the table.

It would be disingenuous to suggest that the road to embedding a sustainable school partnership is smooth. Challenges arise on an almost weekly basis in terms of logistics, communications, budgeting and getting the balance between the strategic and the operational. But when you have a core group of people who share a common set of values and beliefs, along with a coordinator who can help align the systems with the culture, then challenges can be overcome and formative.

So while politicians at the national scale spend their time looking for political point scoring while trying to create policies that fit within their historic voting parameters, here at Abingdon and within the OX14 Learning Partnership we are busy trying to enhance local provision through educational opportunities, sharing best practice, widening access to resources and fostering social cohesion. Most importantly, and excitingly, there are similar examples of successful and sustainable school partnerships emerging in all corners of the country. Long may it continue....

**Rob Southwell-Sander,**  
*Assistant Head and Director of Partnerships*





## Connecting parents, supporting school life

Dear Fellow Parents,

A hearty welcome to a new school year!

To those new to our community, ASPA is the overarching parent association at the school with the aim of connecting parents - both with each other and the school. We do this through organising events and through oversight of Classlist.

ASPA runs entirely on the voluntary commitment of parents. I have agreed to Chair ASPA for another year and I would like to thank current and newly appointed officers and committee members for their unfailing support. As we look to the new academic year, many of our current committee members are coming to the end of their association with the school so if you are able to offer a few hours to support a specific event, or if you would be happy to represent your son's year, please do email [aspa@abingdon.org.uk](mailto:aspa@abingdon.org.uk)

I look forward to seeing many of you at our events this year (many of which are detailed below), and in the meantime, I wish you an enjoyable first term.

*Richard Stone, ASPA Chair*



## Cheese and Wine nights

We are very excited that the new term sees the return of our successful Cheese and Wine evenings - a great opportunity for parents to meet and get to know each other. A link will be shared nearer the time for parents to book their free tickets.



**In the meantime, please Save the Date!**

**Tuesday 10 October, 7pm, Hospitality Suite: Lower School parents**

**Thursday 12 October, 7pm, Hospitality Suite: 3rd Year parents**

## Burns Night Dinner

Save the date: 27 January 2024 for our Burns Night Dinner.

This ticketed event is open to all parents and will be held in the School's soon-to-be open dining pavilion - we are so excited to be able to use this new building and hope this event will be a real success.

## ASPA contribution to CCF

The Remembrance project started in earnest at the end of May, though still a work in progress due to the wider construction works. The committee is very much looking forward to the final memorial.





# Abingdon Development

## Abingdon School visit to mainland China and Hong Kong - June 2023



In June, Deputy Head Graeme May visited Shanghai and Shenzhen; and then met up in Hong Kong with colleagues Alexa Broad (Director of Development and Alumni Relations) and Peter Willis (Head of Computer Science and Crescent House tutor). The trip was a wonderful opportunity to come together as a school community and meet current and prospective parents and OAs and the team was very grateful for the warm welcome they received. Amongst the myriad of events was a reception at the Hong Kong Central Plaza, where over 170 guests were given the opportunity to hear from the Head via a special video message during which he updated everyone on the progress of the boarding and dining pavilion projects. The team also hosted a dinner for former Abingdon parents in the beautiful harbour room at the Kerry Hotel in Kowloon, as well as a Saturday coffee morning for those families with sons joining Abingdon in September 2023.



## Thank you garden party

Nearly 200 donors, volunteers and members of our parent groups joined Mike Windsor and colleagues for our annual garden party on Friday 23 June. Guests were thanked for their support over the last year and then given the opportunity to attend the Summer Concert in the Amey Theatre for a showcase of Abingdon's musical talent across the year groups.

## Save the date: Abingdon's 2nd Giving Day 8-9 November 2023!

A reminder that our next Giving Day is being held in November. We look forward to sharing more about this 36-hour online community fundraising initiative in the coming months.

## A new film for Abingdon's bursary story: Seven years of changing lives

In June, we launched a new short film summarising how far our bursary provision has come during the last seven years, and where we want to be in the future. The Head speaks about the great benefits of having a thriving bursary programme in place, and some of our current pupils give their thoughts about our ambition to support 110 bursary places. Please visit our 'Support us' pages on the School website to watch the film.



## Annual 1563 Society Lunch

We were delighted to welcome members of our 1563 Society to Abingdon on Saturday 17 June. Guests were able to reminisce over lunch and Sarah Wearne, Abingdon's Archivist, gave a fascinating talk entitled "Fact and Figures" - an appreciable play on words! The day was rounded off by a service with rousing hymns in the School Chapel, led with great sensitivity by the Reverend Simon Steer. Now in its 5th year, the 1563 Society is growing and we look forward to welcoming even more members back next year!





## Career Networking

On Tuesday 25 April, the OA Club hosted our Career Networking Event. The focus was on those who are working in the finance, investment, law, technology and consultancy sectors. Held at the City University Club, there was a fantastic turnout of recent graduates, OAs in career transition, partners and founders.

## Henley Royal Regatta

The OA Club's annual Strawberries and Pimm's event took place during Regatta week on Friday 30 June at the FASBC tent at Henley Cricket Club. Even with the persistent rain the Club welcomed over 150 OAs, current and former parents, staff and governors. It was definitely the best school turnout for any regatta tent!



## OA Cricket - OA team vs 1st XI

On Friday 16 June, an OA Cricket team, captained by Sasha Barass (2013) competed against the 1st XI, captained by Max Siriwardene (2023). The 35 over game proved to be exhilarating with the OA team narrowly winning by 17 runs. Many thanks to James Golding, Director of Cricket for helping make this occasion such a success.



## Year Groups Reunion

On Saturday 17 June the OA Club hosted a reunion for around 70 OAs from leaving years 2010 to 2019. After catching up with former and current staff over drinks on Upper Field, our OAs enjoyed touring the School. More memories were exchanged over an excellent buffet dinner in the dining hall.



## 50s, 60s Reunion

The annual OA 50s, 60s dinner was held on Friday 9 June 2023 at Villiers, a 16th century coaching inn, situated in the historic market town of Buckingham. This year was their 55th annual gathering since leaving Abingdon School! Hosted by Christopher Pickup (1960), the dinner took place in the hotel's refurbished Old Town Hall.



From left to right :  
Oscar Bennett (2022), Ianto Brewer (2022),  
Oliver Kirk (2022) and Matthew Jarvis (2022)

## Gold presentation

Mr Gooding met up with some OAs at the Buckingham Palace Gold Duke of Edinburgh presentation ceremony in May. The event was hosted by the Duke of Edinburgh and is a celebration of all the hard work and volunteering that these participants put into achieving this challenging award.

## OA Social Media

Search 'oldabingdonians' on twitter and instagram for pictures and updates for all OA events.



# Abingdon Out of the Past

## 1998 – a New Foundation

Twenty-five years ago, Abingdon School merged with Josca's, a flourishing preparatory school in Frilford, to form a new foundation educating boys from 4 to 18.



Abingdon School in 1870, the youngest boy is 8

The Infant Class, 1732 School Roll. As thought befitting of his station in life, Sir Henry's name is written in large black letters.



The Foundation may be celebrating its 25th Anniversary this year but the prep school is more than twice as old as this. It began life in 1956 in a house in Jack Straw's Lane, Oxford with five pupils, one of whom was nicknamed Josca. Later that same year it moved to 5 Latimer Road, Oxford. The following year Tony Savin joined the staff. By this time there were 90 pupils. In 1970 the lease on no. 5 expired and this could have been the end of the school. However, Savin, now headmaster, managed to purchase Frilford House and move 60 of the pupils there in 1970. Savin retired in 1999 a year after the merger with Abingdon. In 2007, Josca's was renamed Abingdon Preparatory School. The Abingdon Foundation now numbers 1,286 pupils.



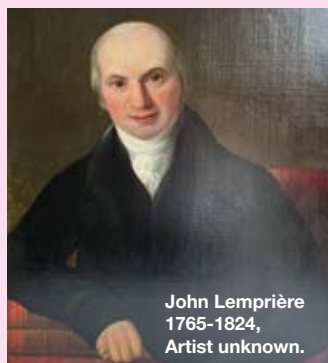
Frilford House, now known as Josca's House.

That Abingdon should educate boys as young as 4 was new but for centuries it had educated boys from the age of 6, the age Sir Henry Atkins was on the 1732 school roll. In 1785, the Speech Day programme records that James Kennedy was 7 when he stood up at the Visitation to recite from memory and in Latin Gaius Cotta's speech *To the People of Rome*. By 1870 when the school moved to Albert Park the entry age had risen to 8, where it remained until 1947 when the pressure of growing numbers in the senior school forced the closure of the 'infant' department. Then, after a gap of 50 years, the merger with Josca's allowed the tradition to continue. By that time Josca's had become one of Abingdon's principal feeder schools regularly sending more than 50% of its Common Entrance pupils to Abingdon every year.

To mark the new foundation, the School commissioned a coat of arms from the College of Arms. The crest combines Josca's unicorn and Abingdon's griffin.



Tony Savin, Headmaster of Josca's 1963-1999



John Lemprière  
1765-1824,  
Artist unknown.

## Revd Dr John Lemprière

The School has recently acquired a portrait of one of its most illustrious eighteenth-century headmasters, the Revd Dr John Lemprière headmaster of Abingdon 1792-1809. Lemprière's reputation in the academic world is based on the Classical Dictionary he compiled. Published in 1788 it is still in print today. His reputation at Abingdon is more ambivalent. Described by one historian of the School as 'the prince of litigants', he held several livings in contravention of the ordinances, and he happily flouted the requirement to educate charity boys from the town much preferring his fee-paying pupils.

The portrait comes to us on permanent loan from Pembroke College, Oxford where Lemprière was an undergraduate in the 1780s.



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