

Abingdon News

September 2012 | No. 30

The Newsletter of the Abingdon Foundation Schools



A GOLDEN SUMMER



Abingdon's golden summer began in June when the 1st VIII won the Princess Elizabeth Challenge Cup at Henley Royal Regatta and achieved rowing's illustrious Triple Crown (see page 8). In July, four Abingdon oarsmen – James Richards, Thomas Pagel, Joel Cooper and Matthew Carter – won gold medals in the GB VIII, and bronze in the GB coxed IV, at the Coupe de la Jeunesse, and George Rossiter, OA, won bronze in the GB VIII at the U23 World Championships.

There was a bumper crop of exam results later in the summer, 73% of A level and 81% of GCSE results being at grades A and A*.

For some boys, however, the summer was crowned by their visit to Moldova where they accompanied a group of children on a lakeside holiday and found it more rewarding than anything else they had ever done. ■



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Music

Wednesday 3 October

Music Society AGM and
Music Scholars' Concert No. 1
6.45 pm: Charles Maude Room

Thursday 15 November

Strings Masterclass with Levon Chilingirian
7 pm: Charles Maude Room

Thursday 22 November

Joint Choral Society Concert
Lux Aeterna, Lauridsen,
Chichester Psalms, Bernstein
7 pm: Yolande Patterson Hall, St Helen's School
Tickets: £6, £4 concessions, £16 family

Wednesday 5 December

Christmas Concert No. 1
7 pm: Amey Theatre
Tickets: £6, £4 concessions, £16 family

Friday 7 December

Christmas Concert No. 2
7 pm: Amey Theatre
Tickets: £6, £4 (concessions), £16 family

Sunday 9 December

Thames Vale Youth Orchestra Concert
7 pm: St Barnabas Church, Oxford

Drama

Monday 10 September

God of Carnage, by Yasmina Reza
Upper 6th, student directed,
joint drama production
7 pm: St Helen's School

Tuesday 11 September

Pillowman, by Martin McDonagh
Upper 6th, student directed,
joint drama production
7 pm: Abingdon Drama Studio

Friday 28 and Saturday 29 September

The Hound of the Baskervilles
3rd and 4th year drama production
7 pm: Abingdon Drama Studio

Wednesday 28, Thursday 29, Friday 30 November

Joint Senior Drama Production
7 pm: Amey Theatre

Tuesday 4, Wednesday 5,

Thursday 6 December
Joint Senior Drama Production
7.30 pm: St Helen's School

Talks

Monday 24 September

Can Machines Think?
Andrew English
Edmund Society
4 pm: Charles Maude Room

Friday 28 September

How Strong is the Chinese Economy?
James Kynge, editor *China Confidential*, a
research service on China at the *Financial Times*
Economics Society
4 pm: Amey Theatre

Friday 28 September

The Role of Young People in the Arab Spring
Mezna Qato, Palestinian-American human rights
activist, *St Anthony's College, Oxford*
Royse Society
5.30 pm: Charles Maude Room

Thursday 4 October

Greece
Dr John Taylor, *Tonbridge School, Kent*
Classics Society
5.30 pm: Charles Maude Room

Friday 5 October

Chemistry Lecture
Professor David Phillips CBE, FRSC,
Professor Emeritus Physical Chemistry,
Imperial College, London
4 pm: Amey Theatre (tbc)

Thursday 8 November

The Iliad
Dr Jane Lightfoot, *Fellow and Tutor in Classics*,
New College, Oxford
Classics Society
5.30 pm: Charles Maude Room

Friday 9 November

The Business of Advertising
Joanna Chin, *founder and Chief Operating Officer*
of Languard, *the healthcare advertising agency*
4 pm: Duffield Library, St Helen's School

Friday 9 November

Professor Gary Sheffield
Professor of War Studies,
University of Birmingham
Middle School Scholars' Lecture
6.30 pm: Amey Theatre

Friday 16 November

Dr Tim Gunn
Royse Society
5.30 pm: Charles Maude Room

Monday 10 December

It was not me, it was my ...
Deborah Bennison
4 pm: Charles Maude Room

Events

Saturday 8 September

Heritage Open Days
Abingdon School Chapel open to the public
10.30 am – 1.30 pm

ASPA

www.abingdon.org.uk/aspa

Friday 5 October

Sixth-form parents' supper
7.30 pm: Charles Maude Room

Friday 12 October

Third-year parents' supper
7.30 pm: Charles Maude Room

Friday 9 November

Race Night
Parents and friends (adults only)
7.30 pm: Sports Centre Hospitality Suite

Friday 23 November

Fourth-year parents' supper
7.30 pm: a local restaurant tbc

FASBC

Friends of Abingdon School Boat Club

Saturday 10 November

Quiz Night
7.30 pm: Dining Hall

Touchliners

Saturday 1 December

Touchliners' Dinner
Abingdon's rugby supporters' dinner
7 pm: Charles Maude Room
followed by Dining Hall

Check details of all
these events on the
calendar at:
abingdon.org.uk



Staff profile: Marilena Kaye, Admissions Secretary

Marilena Kaye joined the Registry in 2007 as the Admissions Secretary. She deals with all admission enquiries as well as the registration and assessment process for prospective boys. Enquiries come in throughout the year from all over the world so there is never a quiet moment. She's always amazed when a 12-year-old boy from overseas handles his own application from start to finish – because his parents don't speak a single word of English.



Abingdon Opts Out of League Tables

Abingdon has decided to join a growing number of independent schools in withdrawing from the Independent Schools Council's A level and GCSE league tables, published in the summer soon after the results themselves. The reasons for this are many, not the least being that league tables are considered to be distorting children's education, in addition to being an inaccurate method of measuring a school's achievements. Many top-performing academic schools have already withdrawn so the tables are in any case not factually correct. Abingdon's results continue to be freely available to public scrutiny on the website and the School's results will be published in Government tables later in the year. ■

www.abingdon.org.uk/a_level_statistics_2012

www.abingdon.org.uk/gcse_statistics_2012

Governor profile: Andrew Douglas



Andrew Douglas, who is the current Master of Christ's Hospital of Abingdon, was educated at Berkhamsted School, Sandhurst and Churchill College, Cambridge – where he got a half Blue for shooting. He served thirty years with the British Army in the Royal Engineers – mainly in Germany and Northern Ireland. On leaving the Army he took up an appointment as Bursar at the School of St Helen and St Katharine, where he spent fifteen years. Now retired, he is free to spend more time offshore sailing, mainly cruising his yacht round the Channel Islands and France.

Christ's Hospital of Abingdon is an ancient charity founded in 1553, which has supported the School over many centuries. It owns much property in the town, which it uses to support its charitable activities, including six almshouses. ■

Born in Paris to Italian parents, Marilena grew up in Ontario, Canada, spoke Italian with her parents, French at school, learnt English and Spanish and speaks them all fluently. Following a degree in Translation, she worked at Laurentian University and the Royal Ontario Museum and then in 1990 came to England with her husband who had a two-year posting to Harwell. Twenty-three years later her home is now Didcot and her two sons speak with English accents!

In January 2001 Marilena began to work for the OA office and very much enjoyed the years she spent arranging OA events – and encouraging OAs to stay in touch with the School. Now in the Admissions Office she equally enjoys encouraging boys to join the School. ■

Abingdon's Impressive Range of A-Level Subject Choices

Abingdon prides itself on the wide variety of subject choices available to it's A level pupils. No particular subject combination is excluded before timetabling begins. Last year's 149 A

level pupils chose from 24 subjects and for 93 of them their combination of subjects was unique. There was only one boy who was unable to study his first choice combination of subjects. In making their choices, boys are encouraged to consider the subjects they enjoy – and for which they have an aptitude – the subjects they will need if they have a particular course or career in mind, and the breadth and balance of their combination. The ability to mix arts, sciences and humanities means that boys are able to avoid being forced to specialise too early. ■





Be the Best You Can Be

Lower School's participation in the Be the Best You Can Be scheme came to an inspiring conclusion at the end of last term when Commonwealth and European gold medallist, Adam Whitehead, who launched the scheme in September 2011, returned to present the medals. Adam, who spoke last September about the qualities needed to succeed in any area of life, and the fact that success was a choice not a chance, spoke in July about the meaning of success and the importance of always following your dreams. Special prizes were awarded for success across a whole range of activities and boys moving up into 3 Middle School were reminded to always aim to "be the best you can be". ■

Shadowing the Carnegie



The annual Shadowing the Carnegie scheme invites teams of readers from schools across the country to read all the books shortlisted for the Carnegie Medal, awarded to the writer of the outstanding children's book of the year. All the Abingdon schools join together and this year they decided on *Between Shades of Grey* by Ruta Sepetys, a compelling story about Lithuanian families being exported to Siberia. The official Carnegie committee chose *A Monster Calls*, from an original idea by Siobhan Dowd, which was completed after her death by Patrick Ness. ■

Linguistic Olympian

The International Linguistics Olympiad is a test of logical ability, patient work and the willingness to think around corners when faced with the world's toughest puzzles in language and linguistics. From a field of more than 1,100 other UK competitors, Omri Faraggi won one of the four places in the UK team entered for the final in Ljubljana in July. He here won an individual bronze medal, one of only 37 medals awarded in this international competition – a magnificent achievement. ■



From Athens to Westminster



by Bicycle

Matthew Landells, Mike Deeks and Clym Buxton cycled from Athens – home of the original Olympic Games – to London – host of the 2012 Games – to raise money for three charities – Starlight, Make a Wish and Action for ME. Leaving Athens for Petros on 5 July, they crossed to Italy and cycled up through Rome, Siena and Pisa into Menton with temperatures often touching 44°C. From Menton they crossed the Alps to Geneva, on to Paris via Dijon and then crossed from Dieppe to Newhaven arriving at Big Ben in the late afternoon of 3 August, a journey of 1,800 miles. Read their blog or make a donation at: <http://www.bike4charity.co.uk> ■



Prize Giving

Tim Parker, OA, successful businessman and Chairman and CEO of *Samsonite*, was the guest of honour at Prize Giving last term when, in addition to presenting the prizes, he spoke inspiringly about the importance of entrepreneurship in society. ■

Green Abingdon Projects Competition the essence of scholarship



This competition has given pupils the chance to explore chemistry outside the classroom, work as a team over a prolonged period, tackle a topic of their own choosing, deal with complex arguments and present their cases to an audience. Max English and Azarel Adebanjo won the competition with their paper on improving the environmental impact of Abingdon town through the application of anaerobic digestion of food waste. ■



CCF Biennial Inspection

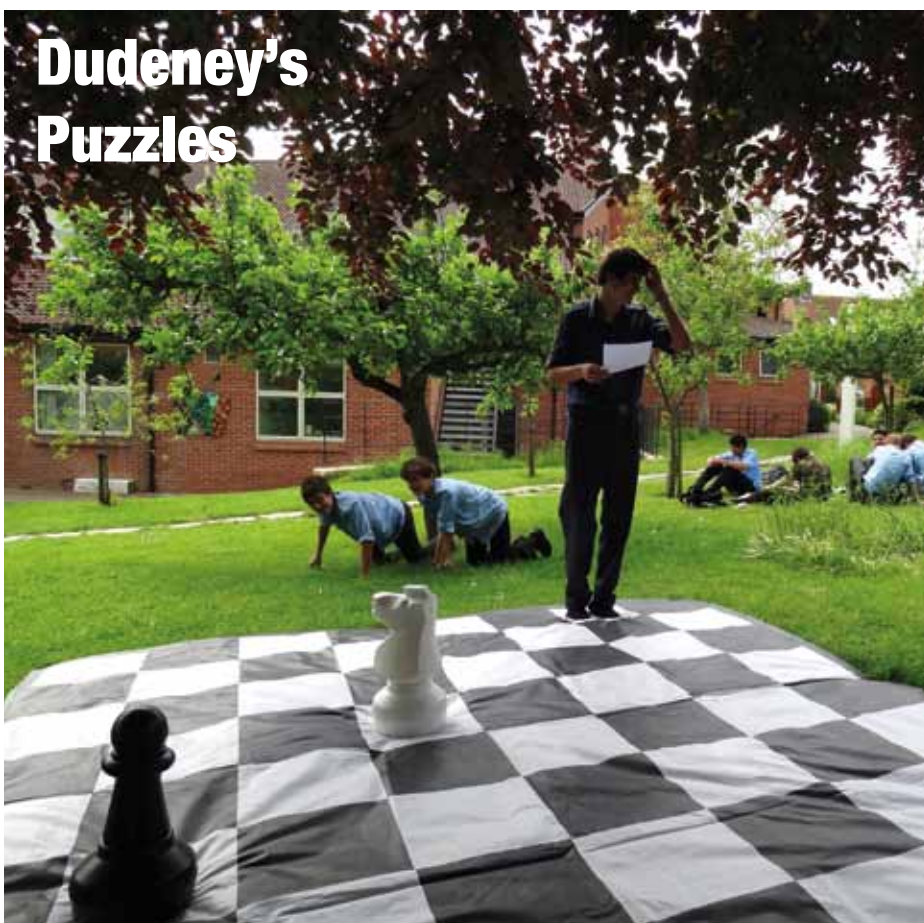
Under their Contingent Commander, Major Eleanor Kaye, the Abingdon CCF impressed Air Commodore La Forte with the smartness of their turn out and their proficiency at the biennial inspection on 9 May. ■



Abingdon in Honduras

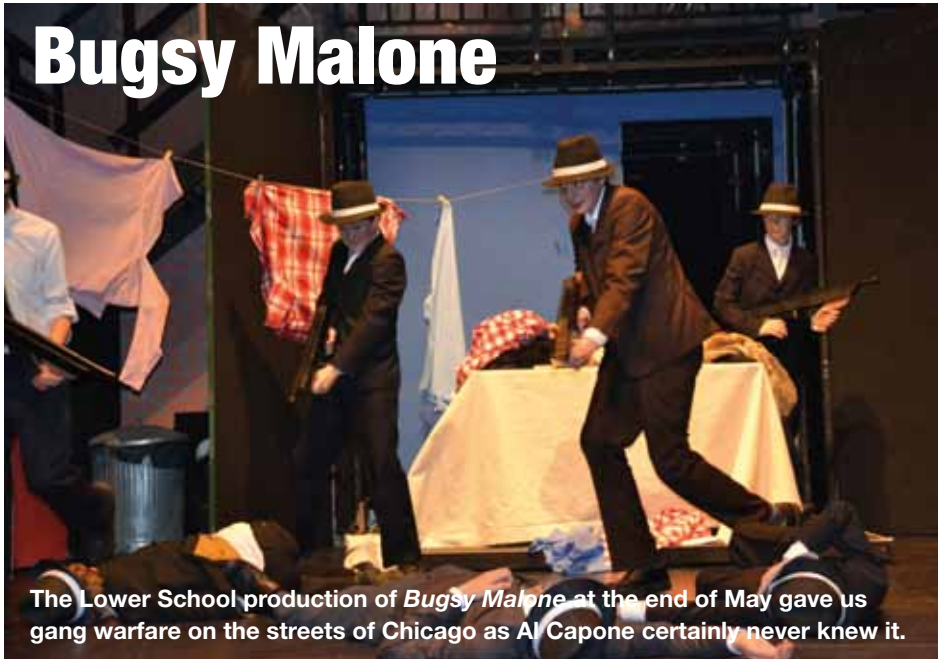
In July, Abingdon biologists spent a week doing ecological and conservation research in the Cusuco rainforest, and a week of marine biology on the island of Cayos Menor – the photographs say it all! ■

Dudeney's Puzzles



Although Henry Dudeney died more than 80 years ago his classic puzzles continue to amuse and challenge. On 29 May a group of fourth-form mathematicians set about solving two of them. Alex Munro managed to solve the tricky George and Dragon puzzle for his team, whilst two teams completed the Rook's Tour in 17 moves – very close to the minimum solution of 16. ■

Bugsy Malone

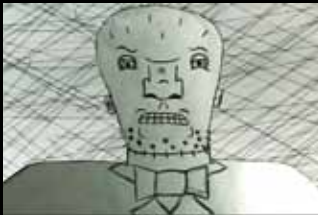


The Lower School production of *Bugsy Malone* at the end of May gave us gang warfare on the streets of Chicago as Al Capone certainly never knew it.

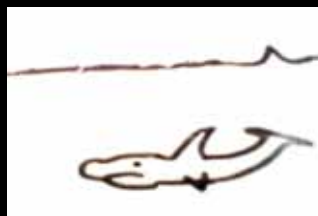


The cast's hard work and professionalism impressed the audiences, who look forward to watching their progress through the school.

Film Unit's Annual Screenings



Among the documentaries at this year's screenings, *Rene*, looked back over her life since coming to Britain from the West Indies 60 years ago; *Für Immer Mutter und Kind* saw the continuing relationship of care between a mother and her fifty-three-year old, learning-disabled son; *Under My Skin* examined some people's passion for tattoos; *Nirvana* looked at the mental and physical freedom needed to achieve this Buddhist ideal of ultimate spiritual freedom – and *Life of Fruit* examined the secret world of the Pineapples of Paradise and the Komodo Dragonfruit, so secret that it may only be known to the film maker, Ben Oliver. In *Refine* the audience watched a single drawn line transform itself over 45 seconds and in *3D-Night* saw a plasticine man's attempts to get into a nightclub. Blood flowed when plasticine warriors came to blows in *All is Fair*; *Money Talks* revealed that when it does it has some interesting conversations whilst *Warp Cops* was a full-blown blockbuster, sci fi fantasy adventure ... lasting five minutes. ■



These films can be seen at www.abingdonfilmunit.com/2012/06

Art Exhibitions

Pupils from across the country submitted 1,450 works of art to the Royal Academy A Level Summer Exhibition Online. Alex Wong's *Old Lady at a Party* was one of the 122 shortlisted and can be seen on the Royal Academy's website. For the Young Art Oxford exhibition at the Ashmolean, entries were submitted from schools all over the county and five Lower School artists had their work shown. All Abingdon pupils' A-level and GCSE Art and Design Technology exam work could be seen in the Arts Centre and the Warehouse at the annual end-of-year exhibitions, revealing an exciting range of talents and achievements. ■

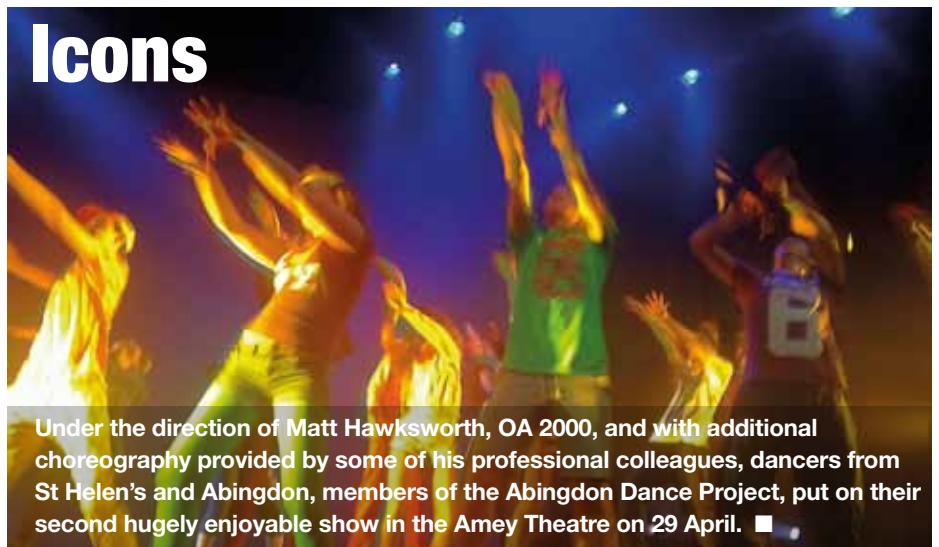


Summer Music

The term opened with a double first when the first ever Joint Chamber Orchestra of Abingdon and St Helen's gave the first performance of Frederick Naffel's *Song of Songs* in the Amey Theatre on 4 May. Term closed in spectacular fashion with a grand concert in Oxford's Sheldonian Theatre, which incidentally also marked Michael Stinton's 25th year as Director of Music at Abingdon School. In between these two events the Junior Music Scholars' Concert and the Lower School Gala Concert reminded us that there are plenty of fine musicians moving up the School to fill the ranks of those who have left. ■



Icons



Under the direction of Matt Hawksworth, OA 2000, and with additional choreography provided by some of his professional colleagues, dancers from St Helen's and Abingdon, members of the Abingdon Dance Project, put on their second hugely enjoyable show in the Amey Theatre on 29 April. ■

Rowing's Triumphs

Having won the Schools' Head of the River in March and the Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother's Cup for Championship Eights at the National Schools' Regatta in May, Abingdon's 1st VIII achieved rowing's illustrious 'Triple' when they won the prestigious Princess Elizabeth Challenge Cup at Henley Royal Regatta in June – a magnificent achievement by a dedicated and talented crew: Neil McKenzie, James Richards, Joel Cooper, Andrew Halls, Matthew Carter, Thomas Pagel, Alex Fisher, William Horlock and Felix Newman. Nor were the 1st VIII alone in their achievements. The 2nd VIII won the National Schools' Elsenham Cup and also qualified for the Wyfold cup at Henley; the J14As won the octos at Marlow Regatta, where the J16A VIII also won their event and the J14s won both the octos and the quads at Reading. ■



Photograph - Ben Rodford



1st and 2nd VIII at the National Schools' Regatta

Swimming's Silver Medallists

At the Bromsgrove Relays, Abingdon teams won silver medals in all four events – superb results against very fierce competition, which resulted in some very close finishes.

Michael Esnouf, representing the South East Schools, won silver medals in both the Intermediate Boys breaststroke and 4 x 100m medley relay at the English Schools' Swimming Association National Championships on 30 June – a great tribute to both his talent and his commitment. ■



National and International Karate Successes

At the Irish International Open Karate Championships in May, Joshua Valentine won the Champions Cup for captaining the winning team against the Russian squad in the sparring section. Jack Bevan, who lost in the semi-final by just half a point, won a bronze medal in the Boys Individual Kumite Under 5ft event at the British National Karate Championships, beating a number of Black Belt opponents on the way. ■



Representing GB

Fynn Ryley, third from left, was one of the four members of the British Schools' Shooting team competing last March in Dortmund at ISAS International, which attracts top shooters from around the world. His score of 584 earned him 27th place – 11 points behind the winner. ■

Fencing's Bronze Medallists

At the British Youth Championships in May, for which five Abingdon boys qualified – in itself a great achievement – Bernard Ng won bronze in the U18 and Herman Chan bronze in the U16 of the Boys' Epée. ■



Gold at the Mercers Schools' 'Olympics'

Abingdon First-formers were overall winners of the Mercers' 'Olympics' held at Dauntsey's in May having won two of the three events – the pentathlon and the tennis. In the pentathlon, Thomas Butcher won the 800m, Matthew Coleman the high jump and Alexander Moss the long jump, which helped put them in overall first place. In the tennis, the Abingdon pairs dominated their matches to win the gold medal. The event was rounded off with a combined 12 x 100 m relay won by the Abingdon squad. ■



Tennis

A successful tennis season saw Abingdon's senior pairs come second at the St George's Weybridge Pairs Tournament – Giles Waterson and Joel Morris winning through to the final before losing to Reed's, and Freddie Locock-Harrison and Peter Honey getting to the semi-final before being knocked out by RGS Guildford. At the Independent Schools' Tennis Tournament Abingdon's junior pairs – George Jefferys and Ed Green, and Alex Skelly and Jake Windsor-Lewis – came second in the final groups after a run of fine victories.

In the School's own singles tournament, the Buckley Cup, Giles Waterson in the Fifth year won the title for the third year running. ■

British Junior National Sailing Champion



William Dolin is the British Junior National Sailing Champion. In competition with a fleet of 105 other dinghies, he came 1st in the Juniors and 5th overall at the RS Feva British National Championships in Torquay over the Jubilee weekend and was selected to represent Great Britain at the World Championships. ■

Rain Didn't Always Stop Play

Despite challenging competition from the rain, Abingdon teams played some excellent cricket last season. The 1st XI notched up notable victories against two visiting teams from Australia, Carey Grammar School and Scotch College, Gregor Hearn scoring a century against Scotch College. The U15As only lost two matches all season, one of them to Tonbridge in the semi-final of the Lord's Taverners' SE Regional Final. Soumya Bhadra scored 106 in their match against Cokethorpe. Among the season's other noteworthy events were the U15Bs unbeaten record and Seb Hickman, in the U14As, who achieved 5 for 1, including 5 in 5 balls, in the match against Bartholomew School. ■





Mosaic Masterpiece

250 pairs of hands, about 300 hours work and thousands of pieces of ceramic, gold leaf and glass tiles came together to create a mosaic masterpiece to celebrate the Queen's Jubilee. All 250 boys at the Prep School were involved from start to finish with their ideas being used by Head of Art, Michele Kitto, to create the design and then everyone was involved in cutting and sticking the tiles. The mosaic, which is four feet in diameter, has taken pride of place at the entrance to the School. ■



Year 8 enjoy Normandy

The penultimate week of the school term saw the Year 8 boys heading for Normandy. A slightly rougher crossing than normal was coped with and we started our trips by tasting a little bit of cider and hearing about what happens to apples grown in the area. We enjoyed a range of tourist attractions, notably the Bayeux Tapestry, William the Conqueror's castle, the D-Day landing sites and a respectful walk around a British Cemetery with the moving epitaphs on the memorial stones. We had plenty of time on the beach digging holes, burying boys and swimming in the sea. Our last night saw a talent competition held on the beach. The weather was reasonably kind to us and we can be thankful for no sunburn! The added bonus was that all the boys were returned to their parents, exhausted of course, and the teachers went home to sleep all weekend. ■



Sporting round-up

Despite the weather we have had a successful cricket term with Max Smith, Jack Tomes, Luke Maslan and Gus Miller selected for the Oxfordshire County Cricket squads. Alex Ling, Toby Collins, Joseph Delafield, Ben Ling, William Finlay, Sam Collins, Joe Hornblow and Freddie Smith have also been selected for their respective district squads. Both our 1st XI and U9 teams were close to finishing the season unbeaten, losing just one of their many fixtures. Several of our pupils scored 50 and were presented with the match ball in assembly. The Colts 'A' XI thoroughly enjoyed their cricket tour to Devon and returned unbeaten.

Our tennis teams all played a full programme of fixtures and Tom Craig in partnership with Tom Buckle will challenge for the U14 IAPS National Tennis Title. ■





Pre-prep visit London's attractions



Jubilee Celebrations

The Jubilee assembly got celebrations underway with the national anthem by the school orchestra. All the boys and staff made Union Jack kites which made quite a spectacle flying in the skies above our playing fields. There were four Jubilee cakes, one for each house, displaying the house flag. Lessons took on a Jubilee theme for the day and the boys left school with a special edition mug to mark the occasion. ■



Art Success

28 boys had their work selected for 'Young Art Oxford' and their pieces were exhibited at the Ashmolean Museum. Charlie Chick and Henry Morris were prize winners gaining highly commended in their age groups. The Prep School's Summer Art Show was the highlight of the school year with Year 8 art scholarship boys showing off their talent alongside our future scholars in Years 6 and 7. ■



Exploring Science

Science is very popular at Abingdon Prep and it has been a busy and productive year culminating in our Year 8 boys, Jonah Walker, John Corran, Oliver Beaumont and Toby Collins, winning the University Prize at the Salters' Institute Festival of Chemistry at Oxford University. Boys have also been involved in the BSA Crest Awards studying the amount of vitamin C in drinks, the mental effects of playing video games and the impact of music on hamster activity. In Science Club, Year 5 investigated many fun things from the CO₂ action in making cinder toffee and air expansion in popcorn, to the streamlining effects of different shaped boats and seeing what's beneath a woodland footprint. They also built Wallace and Gromit's Cracking Contraptions (motorised vehicle kits). ■

Common Entrance Congratulations

Our Year 8 boys are to be warmly congratulated on an outstanding set of Common Entrance results which included nine boys securing five or more A grades. Joseph Curtis deserves a special mention for his 8 A and 2 B grades which he has achieved ahead of joining Abingdon School this September. The boys and staff can be very proud of this excellent academic performance. ■

And so, yet another school year drowns in the summer rains. Nonetheless, it has been a very successful year for ASPA both in the events we have held and the money we have raised.



Supper at the Cherwell Boathouse

In May, ASPA's first whole school supper was held at Cherwell Boathouse. Despite the (customary) chilly weather, it was a superb evening with live music provided by the Abingdon School Jazz Trio – Tim Davies, George Burrage and Henry Binning – and a three course meal served in the restaurant overlooking the river. Generous donations allowed us to raise over £700 in the raffle. ■



ASPAs Donations to School Projects

Money raised by ASPA in the course of the year, allowed us to give £500 to Icons, an Abingdon Dance Project performance by senior pupils from St Helen's and Abingdon in the Amey Theatre on 29 April, to buy a £650 infra-red camera for the Physics Department and to make a £5,000 donation to the new Chapel windows (no gain, no pane).

We continue to hold discussions with the School so that we can apply ASPA-raised funds to the benefit of as many boys as possible. ■

ASPAs Committee – present and future

As we look forward to the new school year, our thanks go to the ASPA committee members who have done so much over the years, especially Marilyn Moore for her tireless efforts with SUS – the Second-Hand Uniform Shop. It is perhaps timely to remember that ASPA is run by parents for parents, and provides useful networking and social opportunities. We are responsible for the running of SUS and for the Car Share Scheme. As in any organisation, it is important that new members join in, and contribute their time, as current members depart when their children leave the school. If, you could spare an occasional couple of hours to help, please contact the ASPA secretary at: aspa@abingdon.org.uk The next ASPA committee meeting is on Monday 10 September at 7.30pm in the Christ's Hospital Room, 117 Mercers' Court. If anyone would like to attend please know you would be very welcome. ■



ASPAs Photograph Competition

ASPAs annual photo competition – closing date first Friday of the Michaelmas term – challenges people to take a photograph of an item of Abingdon uniform in an unusual location. The winners will be announced soon after the beginning of this term - first prize £50, £25 runners-up. Entries should be sent to aspa@abingdon.org.uk ■

ASPAs Forthcoming Events

2012

- 5 Oct** Sixth-form parents' supper – CMR
- 12 Oct** Third-year parents' supper – CMR
- 9 Nov** Race Night – parents and friends – adults only
Sports Centre Hospitality Suite
- 23 Nov** Fourth-year parents' supper – CMR

2013

- 1 Feb** Fifth-year parents' supper – local restaurant (tbc)
- 8 Mar** Lower School parents' supper – CMR
- 17 May** Quiz Night – parents and friends – adults only
Sports Centre Hospitality Suite
- 7 June** Dinner at Pembroke College
all parents welcome

Check website for details

www.abingdon.org.uk/aspa

Second-hand Uniform Shop

Open during term time most Saturdays, 11 am – 12 noon, and Wednesdays, 12.15 pm – 1.15 pm

Michaelmas Term Dates include:

September: Saturday 8th / Wednesday 12th / Saturday 22th / Wednesday 26th / Saturday 29th

October: Wednesday 3rd / Saturday 6th / Wednesday 10th / Saturday 13th / Wednesday 17th

November: Wednesday 7th / Saturday 10th / Wednesday 14th / Saturday 17th / Wednesday 21st / Saturday 24th / Wednesday 28th

December: Saturday 1st / Wednesday 5th / Saturday 8th

The 2011 – 2012 Annual Fund

The School would like to thank everyone who has contributed to the 2011-2012 Annual Fund. Without your support, it would not have been possible for various departments to make these and other purchases, all of which enhance learning experiences for boys at Abingdon.

Abingdon's Annual Fund supports four key elements of the School – teaching and learning, bursaries, Other Half activities and the School's buildings and grounds. Donors to the Annual Fund help the School purchase items that cannot be funded from existing departmental budgets. This year, twenty-five grants were made enabling among other things:

- the purchase of two Lego Mindstorm kits for the Physics Department, including software and hardware to create small customizable and programmable robots. A 'Brick' computer with modular sensors and motors will be used to teach robotics. The newly formed Computing Club will use the kits to participate in Lego Mindstorm competitions.
- the purchase of a new piano for the Music Department – a Yamaha U1. The piano will be used in the Chapel for musical performances, for which the old piano is not suitable.
- external speakers, including professional writers, to be invited by the English Department to work with boys both in classes and as part of the Creative Writing Club to show them how studying English can lead to careers rather than just serve as a school subject.
- The purchase of a light tower and recording apparatus for the Fencing Club so it may host inter-school fencing competitions. The equipment will enhance training and makes competitions more professional and realistic. ■



New Chapel Windows

On 27 April, the Right Reverend John Pritchard, Bishop of Oxford, dedicated the new Chapel windows at a special service. The windows, four of which are made of coloured fused glass, were designed by Nicholas Mynheer and made by the firm of Daedalian Glass. A successful Appeal to the School community raised funds to complete this special project, and we would like to extend a big thank you to all 130+ individuals and organisations who generously donated to the Appeal. ■



The Summer Term window

Sixty-Three Mile Walk

It seemed like a good idea at the time – to mark the Quatercentenary of John Roysse's 1563 endowment of Abingdon School with a 63 mile walk from Worcester to Abingdon – and the thirteen prefects who volunteered for the adventure set off happily at 8.30 pm on Sunday 23 March 1963. It didn't seem like such a good idea to the eleven survivors of the wet and stormy night as they toiled up Broadway Hill, and two more boys were to fall by the wayside before the first arrivals made it back to school – to the accompaniment of the school bell ringing 63 times – 20 hours and 45 minutes after they had set out. ■



The North Wind

As a result of the installation of new windows in the Chapel, the beautiful stained glass panel made by the Arts and Crafts designer Louis Davis, OA 1876 – after whom the School's art exhibitions are named – has been moved into the Library where it fits exactly into one of the central mullions of the oriel window overlooking Upper Field. Given to the School in 1952 by Davis's widow, the panel represents the North Wind and is a reproduction of just one of the lights in the huge Choir windows in Dunblane Cathedral. Manufactured by the firm of James Powell and Sons, the blue glass was specially commissioned by Davis whilst the touches of red glass were created using gold oxide. The Library was the schoolroom in Davis's day.



Good Night

The School archives have recently acquired a copy of *Good Night* a collection of children's poems by Dollie Radford illustrated by Davis, which was published in 1895.



Who, Why, When?

A fine upstanding group of young men pose in front of the same oriel window that now houses the North Wind – who are they, why are they here and when was the photograph taken? ■

OA 60s Event

A report from David Brice (1961)

Bruce Mackay (1964) and his wife Beverley hosted this year's OA 60s event in Guernsey. Most of us arrived for Liberation Day on 9 May, enjoyed the festivities and then, in the evening, Bruce and Beverley held a highly successful buffet supper for the group at their home. On 11 May we toured Castle Cornet in St Peter Port and in the evening the party dined in the Hatton Gallery at the castle. The organisation, food and wine reflected the considerable taste and great hospitality of our hosts; throughout, no trouble or detail was spared and all had a memorable visit. Our warmest thanks go to the Mackays. ■



Tennis Tournament

The 1st VIII Tennis team took on OAs in this annual match on 4 July. The OAs fielded a strong side and were looking for revenge after last year's defeat. After 3 rounds of doubles and singles, the School side again took the honours winning 11 of the 16 matches played. There were however excellent wins amongst the OAs from Ian Garnier (1971) in both the singles and doubles and the irresistible Henry Mills and Henry Kibble (both 2010) partnership. The match of the day was the singles tie between former Tennis Club Captain Sam Murrell (2011) and this year's departing Club Captain Joel Morris (2012). At 5 games all, Joel powered his way past Sam and took the match 7-5. Many thanks to the OAs for playing and thanks to Rupert Waterson (2012) and Joel Morris who signed off in style. ■

OA Golf Day

David Blomley (1976) extended a warm welcome to OAs of all ages to take part in the 2012 OA Golf Day held at Frilford Heath Golf Club. Golfers met on 15 May for early morning coffee and bacon butties before heading out for nine holes. After a revitalising lunch, groups continued with afternoon play followed by a superb dinner in the clubhouse and prize-giving. Thanks go to David for organising the annual fixture. All enjoyed a great day of golf despite, at times, the adverse weather conditions. ■

An Invitation to all OAs

**Professor Mike Stevens (1968)
President of The Old Abingdonian Club**

requests the pleasure of your company

at a

Drinks and Canapes Reception

on

Wednesday 5 December 2012

to be held at

The National Liberal Club,
Whitehall Place, London SW1A 2HE

RSVP by Monday 19 Nov 2012

Alison Lester - OA Office

Email oa.club@abingdon.org.uk or

book online at www.oaclub.org.uk

01235 849098

6.00 pm - 8.30 pm

NLC Dress Code:

Lounge Suit (jacket and tie)

There will be no charge for this reception.

OA Reunion Brisbane Australia

Richard Bampton (1961) is looking to organise an OA reunion in Australia on Saturday 23 March 2013.

Suggestions for a suitable venue in Brisbane for an evening meal are welcome via the OA Office. ■

Email: oa.club@abingdon.org.uk

www.oaclub.org.uk

Forthcoming events

Mon 24 Sept 6.30-8.30 pm	Hong Kong Reception The Excelsior Hotel, Causeway Bay, Hong Kong
Sat 13 Oct 11.30 am	OA Club AGM School
Wed 5 Dec 6.00-8.30 pm	OA Club, Drinks and Canapes Reception Nat. Liberal Club, London
Sat 23 March 2013	OA Reunion Brisbane, Australia
Fri 10 May 2013	OA 60s Event Bath
Tues 14 May 2013	OA Golf Day Frilford Heath



Philip Johnson – Olympic Architect

A once-in-a-lifetime project is how architect Philip Johnson, OA 1990, described his job as project architect for the Olympic Stadium, the centrepiece of this summer's London Olympic Games. The challenge was to deliver a stadium combining architectural vision with the extremely demanding technical requirements of both the athletics and the ceremonies. The design also had to be capable of being scaled down to suit a range of different capacities and uses, as a lasting legacy, once the Games are over. From the admiring comments of those who visited the Games the stadium worked extremely efficiently – as well as looking good, so it's not surprising that it is one of six buildings shortlisted for the RIBA Stirling Prize.

Philip, who described being at the Opening Ceremony as one of those evenings you will never forget, is a graduate of UCL's Bartlett School of Architecture and a Principal at the global firm Populous. His past projects include the redevelopment of Ascot Racecourse and he is currently working on a masterplan for the future of Lord's cricket ground. ■

James Dibble – Designer

James Dibble, OA 1980, Design Director for the Qatar National Olympic Committee House, was given ten days to transform the Institution of Engineering and Technology at Savoy Place into the House of Qatar for the duration of the Games. Each of the seventeen rooms was given a lavish Arabic makeover to capture Qatari culture, heritage, sporting achievements and its vision for the future.



Earlier in the month, Abingdon County Hall Museum reopened following a £3 million refit. James designed the attractive new display case system, which perfectly meets the challenges set by the space.

James read Interior Architecture at university and set up his design consultancy *Equal Studio* in 2008. Past design projects have taken him all over the world, he's pleased now to be working closer to home. ■

Afterword To complete our Olympic theme, Abingdon's rowers featured – albeit very briefly – about five minutes into the Olympic Opening Ceremony. Watch them at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/sport/olympics/2012/live-video/p00wm0br>

Olympic Torch Bearers



There were at least three OAs among the 8,000 people who carried the Olympic flame on its seventy-day, 8,000-mile journey through the UK. Matthew Hill, OA 1998, carried it through Trewoon in Cornwall on 19 May. Matthew, co-founder of the not-for-profit Mentors DEN CIC, which helps disabled and disadvantaged people set up in business, was disabled himself following a spinal injury in 2009. Rowing coach Rory Copus, OA 2009, helped carry it through Luton, Bedfordshire early in the morning of 8 July and Peter Fry, OA 1959, who has spent many years raising funds for Action Medical Research and SPARKS, carried it in Chickerell, Dorset on 12 July. ■



David Tanner – GB Olympic Rowing Team Leader

Naturally a cautious man, David Tanner, OA 1966, British Rowing's International Manager and Performance Director since 1996, predicted that Team GB could win six rowing medals. His expectation was exceeded when the team won 4 gold, 2 silver and 3 bronze. Sixteen years ago the team would have been pleased to reach an Olympic final; in 2012 the team reached every final and were the top Olympic rowing nation. ■

From Abingdon to Zanzibar – a history of Abingdon School over 450 years
Abingdon County Hall Museum 31 January – 21 April 2013