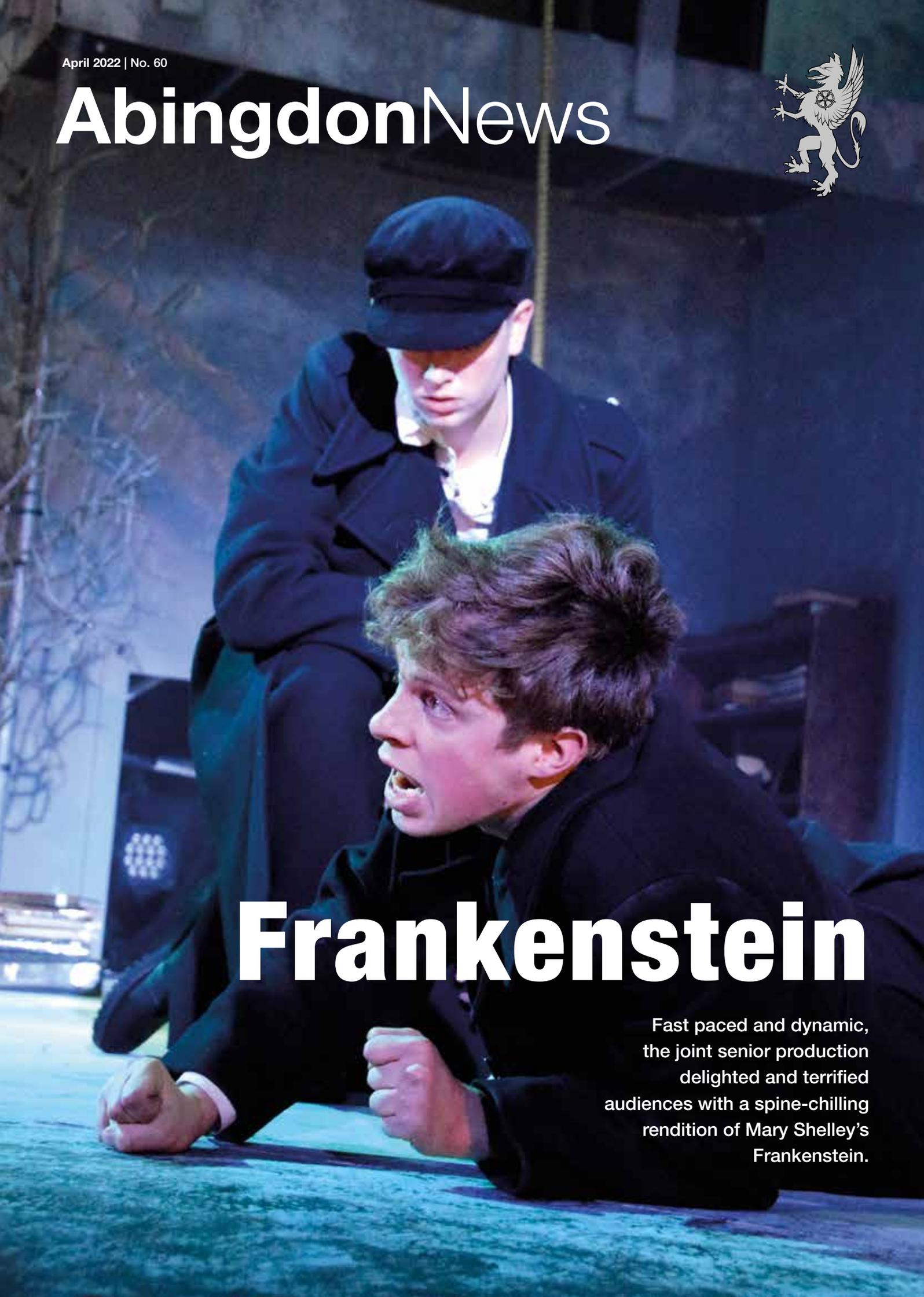


April 2022 | No. 60

# AbingdonNews



# Frankenstein

Fast paced and dynamic, the joint senior production delighted and terrified audiences with a spine-chilling rendition of Mary Shelley's Frankenstein.

## Message from the Headmaster

It has been a delight to see a return to ever greater normality as we bounce back from the various restrictions imposed on us by Covid-19. This includes a return to hymn-singing in the Chapel, making for a joyous and uplifting start to the day.

Although the return to normality has given us a spring in our step, it has of course been impossible to ignore the sad events unfolding in Ukraine, which we have reflected on in assemblies, Chapel services, tutor groups and lessons. Our thoughts have also been with our friends in Moldova, which shares a border with Ukraine and which has been flooded with refugees fleeing from the conflict. This year we celebrate the 20th anniversary of our link with the charity Agape which is based in Moldova, the poorest country in Europe, and every year, until recently, Sixth Formers have visited to help run summer camps for children. To mark the anniversary, our Charity Committee organised a fund-raising campaign which inspired the school community to raise over £15,000 - taking the total raised since the beginning of our association to over £100,000. These funds have been passed on to Agape to support their ongoing work, which the emerging crisis has only made more challenging. Let us all hope that peace and justice can return to eastern Europe soon.



## Total raised for 'The Moldova Project' surpasses £100,000

Since 2000, Abingdon School has enjoyed a partnership with Agape, a charity working to improve the lives of young people in Moldova.

Our most recent fundraising event in October, which saw record numbers of staff and students take part in a sponsored walk, achieved the phenomenal sum of £15,200, taking the total amount raised for Agape by the Abingdon community since 2000 to over £100,000. Agape used some of this latest donation to source and deliver beautifully decorated Christmas presents containing gifts of books, school supplies and sweets to 100 disadvantaged children in Laloveni and the nearby villages of Vasieni, Ulmu and Floreni.



## Chemical reaction...

One of the key features of the Chemistry teaching at Abingdon School is the amount of practical work that is completed by all students across the full age and ability range. This 4th Year practical explored the displacement and redox chemistry of halogens - group VII elements - with the products having distinct colours. Having the opportunity to explore this topic experimentally really helps develop the students' subject knowledge and understanding, hopefully inspiring them to further studies in the subject and careers in STEM.

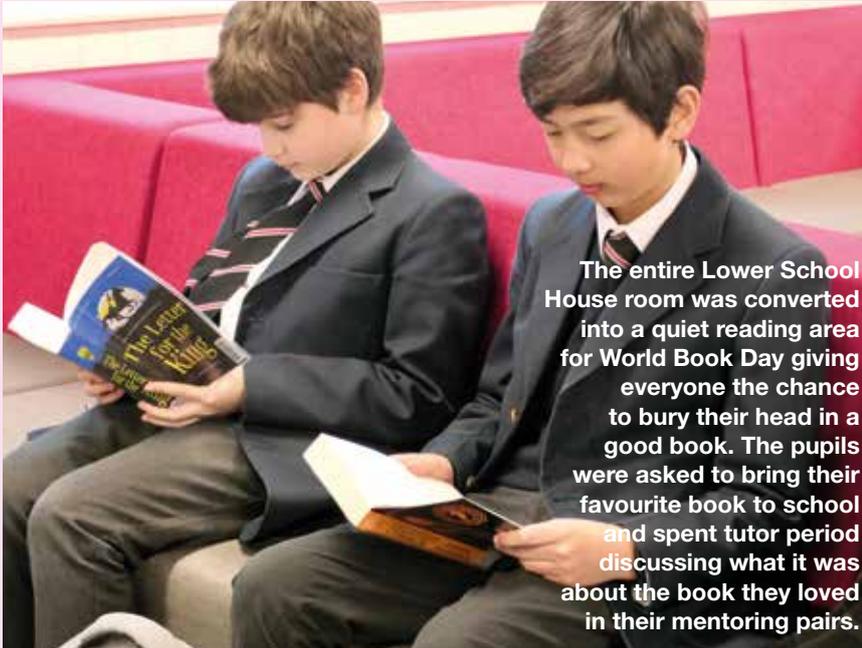


## Football and pizza

One Friday evening in March, Crescent House had a five-a-side football competition, followed by pizza. On an otherwise rainy day, the sun came out just in time and around 30 boarders and day pupils took part, with the winning team taking home a very handsome trophy. Following the football, everyone decamped to Cobban Games Room, where the pizza was demolished in record time!

## Marking World Book Day 2022

...with the chance to bury their head in a good book



The entire Lower School House room was converted into a quiet reading area for World Book Day giving everyone the chance to bury their head in a good book. The pupils were asked to bring their favourite book to school and spent tutor period discussing what it was about the book they loved in their mentoring pairs.

### ...with the pupils of St Helen and St Katharine

Lower School pupils from Abingdon and St Helen and St Katharine worked in mixed groups to prepare for a balloon debate, with each group choosing a figure from literature to tie in with World Book Day. After a very close vote, Snowy from the Tintin books was the somewhat unlikely victor!

## The Wonder of Science

In February, 4th and 5th Year students set out to the New Theatre in Oxford to listen to five renowned scientists talk about their areas of expertise, ranging from the wonders of material science to mind-boggling theories about time travel. The first speaker, Dr Anna Ploszajski, explained how both nature and science have come up with material designs that provide an advantage in certain areas, whether it be performance enhancing swimsuits with synthetic shark scales, or the evolution of jellyfish to be camouflaged thanks to the substance collagen. The second speaker was Dr Maggie Aderin-Pocock, a space scientist who presents BBC's astronomy programme, The Sky At Night. She talked about the work of the Hubble Space Telescope and the introduction of the new James Webb Space Telescope that was launched on Christmas Day 2021. The third speaker was Professor Robert Winston, a medical doctor who specialises in the area of human fertility. He talked about how genetic engineering and selective breeding can lead to all sorts of favourable traits. To prove this he showed how a breed of 'super rat' could run for several hours longer than a normal rat. The fourth speaker was Professor Alice Roberts, a clinical anatomist who looks at ancient human remains. She showed how, from looking at bones, you can learn a lot about the person who they belonged to. The fifth and final speaker, Professor Jim Al-Khalili, spoke of the possibilities of time travel. He talked about how travelling to the future could be done by travelling at very high speeds or by slowing time which can be done by changing the gravitational field strength exerted on yourself. He also explained that time travel into the past was more difficult as it did not obey Einstein's Theory of Relativity. He said, theoretically, the only feasible way time travel to the past was possible, was through a wormhole, essentially a connection between two widely separated regions of space time by something called an Einstein-Rosen Bridge. All in all, it was a great trip and we all learnt a lot from the speakers.



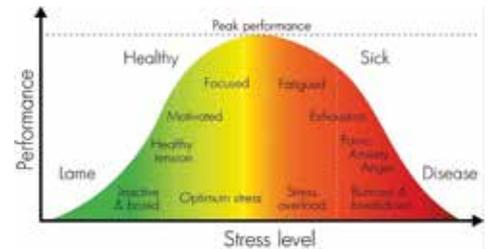
## Hamlet at the Globe

Upper Sixth English Literature students were treated to a performance of Hamlet at The Sam Wanamaker Playhouse, a near-replica of the old Blackfriars Theatre, and part of the Globe complex in London. This candlelit production adapted Shakespeare's texts in many unusual ways, incorporating lines from Romeo and Juliet, The Smiths' 'Bigmouth Strikes Again' and references to ITV's teatime quiz, The Chase. Purists among our party balked at the gravedigger's metatextual deconstruction of Act 4 Scene 1, but we all agreed that it was a thoroughly engaging day out with lots of drama!

# A mentally healthy approach to exams

Natalie Hunt shares her strategies for managing anxiety and stress.

As part of my role as Mental Health and Well-being Co-ordinator, I have been working with students on strategies for managing anxiety and stress. One of the key messages is that some stress is normal and can be good for us; it can motivate us, enhance our focus and drive us to achieve our goals or implement change. Ideally, we want to have just the right amount of stress to give our best performance, but if we are not careful, prolonged or frequent stress can leave us exhausted, anxious and at risk of burnout, as demonstrated by the Yerkes Dodson Law:



Learning to manage stress and anxiety is a crucial life skill; many of us are on the endless journey to find the perfect work/life balance and improve our overall well-being. But, in a world where we are accessible 24/7, maintaining boundaries between work and home is harder than ever. With the economic burden of mental health issues in the workplace, many industries are now exploring options for reduced hours and a 4 day working week as studies indicate that when employees work less hours, they are more productive and satisfied with their work<sup>1</sup>.

## So how can we best prepare our young people both for exams and developing a mentally healthy approach to work in the future?

Below are some evidence based strategies that can be used daily for ridding the body of excessive stress:

1. Movement (this can be gentle or sweaty, whatever works for you).
2. Mindful breathing - try sitting quietly and, over the course of 1 to 2 minutes, breathe in for 5 seconds and breathe out for 7 seconds. Try and do this 3 times a day to slow down your body's stress response.
3. Social interaction - be with people who make you feel good. Laughter and affection lower cortisol levels and increase oxytocin.
4. Creativity - do something creative or just enjoy listening to music. Doing something you enjoy mindfully can quieten loud, negative thoughts.
5. Crying - having a good cry releases endorphins (the same chemical we get when we exercise) and can instantly improve our mood.
6. Get outside - get outside for bursts of natural light throughout the day to immediately improve your focus and mood.



7. Prioritise your sleep - without enough sleep, we CANNOT function well. Aim for at least 8 hours per night, plan when you need to be asleep and try to wind down (without tech) 1-2 hours before you sleep.

When I ask students what they do for pleasure and relaxation, many admit leaning towards their smartphones, TV and other online activities as a source of distraction - with so much distraction available at the touch of a button, hours of so-called 'downtime' can be lost without reaping any cognitive benefits. It can also impact the quality and quantity of sleep. I suggest to students they think carefully about what brings them real enjoyment and to do this mindfully after a period of work, to rest and restore their focus and to boost positive chemicals like oxytocin and endorphins. If they want to go online, it is best to do this with clear intention, setting time limits and paying careful attention to their stress response (is scrolling Instagram making you feel good?). This also helps to create more self-awareness of when we procrastinate or distract ourselves by mindlessly reaching for our devices. With greater awareness of these behaviours, we are more likely to develop a healthy relationship with technology and use it to benefit, rather than rob, us of our focus and trigger negative thought patterns.

In 'Yes You Can', mental health activist and writer, Natasha Devon MBE outlines some simple ideas for managing revision and study:

## Prioritise your work

Make three lists:

1. Subjects/topics I love
2. Subjects/topics I hate
3. Subjects/topics I'm behind on

If you're finding it hard to get going, you might want to start with a subject you enjoy, but aim to study the subjects you're behind on/hate first. As James Clear suggests in Atomic Habits, just taking one small step, such as writing one sentence, can make a huge difference to overall productivity and progress.

## Have a pre-work routine

1. Brain dump - talk to someone or write down any negative thoughts from the day.
2. Change - get into comfortable clothes.
3. Re-fuel - eat/drink for sustained energy. Avoid caffeine/sugar/junk food where possible.

## Manage your time

During term time, aim for no more than 2.5 hours' revision per night and always take breaks. This could be done a number of ways:

- 1 hr study / 30 min break / 1 hr study
- 40 min study / 20 min break / 40 min study / 10 min break / 40 min study
- 30 min study / 10 min break x 4

## Set yourself up to succeed

Make a list of distractions and remove them whilst you are working. It might mean tidying your room, putting your phone in another room or into airplane mode and asking others in your house to help by being quiet or not disturbing you.

If you're working on a computer, you can block some websites e.g. YouTube for a short period of time to sustain your focus.

<sup>1</sup><https://www.4dayweek.com/> ; <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-57724779> ; <https://freedom.to>

## Abingdon's Woman of the Year 2022 is ... ... Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II

To mark International Women's Day, the Junior Equality Diversity and Inclusivity Committee ran a poll amongst students and are delighted to announce that, in her Jubilee year, the Queen topped the poll as our woman of the year. She is recognised for her integrity, her sense of duty and the extraordinary seventy years of service she has given to this country.

Her Majesty was closely followed by Emma Raducanu.



## Nature films to aid rehabilitation

Archie Wood and Milo Lennox have been filming and editing videos of the parks and riverside in Abingdon. Their collection of short films will be used to help patients with their recovery at Abingdon Hospital Stroke Unit in collaboration with Oxford Health Arts Partnerships.



## Boarders celebrate Chinese New Year

The Austin House boarders and staff had a wonderful time celebrating the year of the Tiger in February. Decorated with Chinese lanterns and Spring festival carpets, the Sports Centre Hospitality Suite was transformed into a magnificent banqueting hall. It was a lovely evening of celebration and a good excuse to tuck into some truly delicious Chinese food.



## Escape hunt

On Sunday 16 January a group of boarders went to Escape Hunt in the Oxford Westgate Centre, to take part in the challenges of their escape room puzzles. Two groups attempted two separate rooms, and each had an hour to complete it. One group successfully completed The Fourth Samurai with time to spare, while the second group cut it much more fine, completing Escape the Wild West in 59 minutes and 58 seconds! With pizza as a reward, a fun afternoon out was had by all.



## Les Joutes Oratoires

In February, two of our Lower Sixth took part in the annual regional heat of the Joutes Oratoires, a debating competition where teams of pupils from local schools go head to head on a number of controversial topics. Joe and David won their last round where they argued passionately and articulately in French for the motion "Black Friday is a scourge and should be abolished."



## Dragons Den

The Young Enterprise team "EcoCraft" entered the YE online Dragons Den style event in March. The representatives from EcoCraft had to outline their business plan, give a progress update and explain plans for the future. The presentation was conducted via Zoom and the team did well answering several detailed questions.

## 15 minutes with Dr Graham Gardner, Librarian and EPQ Co-ordinator at Abingdon School

Enjoying a wide-ranging career, spanning academic research, writing and bookselling, Dr Gardner joined Abingdon as School Librarian in 2014. He champions reading, research and independent learning and led and implemented the design of a new library at Abingdon, tailored for the diverse needs of students growing up in a rapidly changing world. In September 2021, he was appointed EPQ co-ordinator - which he regards as a natural next step in the evolution of his role - having supported the qualification since his arrival. Here, he discusses the advantages of students taking an EPQ...



### What is the EPQ and what has been the take-up by Abingdon students?

An EPQ (extended project qualification) is essentially an independent research task, entirely coursework based, worth half an A-Level (up to 28 UCAS points, depending on the grade achieved). Between its launch in 2014 and the 2021-22 cohort, engagement with the EPQ at Abingdon has grown steadily. This year, the number of students registering for the EPQ has increased by 70% from 76 in 2021 to 130.

### What is it that you think has led to such an increase in uptake?

The EPQ has a wide appeal. Abingdon students are ambitious, driven and interested in opportunities to strengthen their university applications, which the EPQ can do. It requires students to exercise creative ownership, responsibility and control; and the opportunity to do something different - explore an idea, test a hypothesis, build an artefact - is strongly appealing to many young people. I know that many students register because the EPQ has been endorsed by students in the year above and the pandemic has also played a part. Against a backdrop of sustained uncertainty, cancelled exams and a reduction in potential work placements and other extracurricular opportunities, the EPQ offers reassurance: students know that, come what may, the EPQ will go ahead and provide them with a valuable qualification.

### What are some recent examples of EPQ topics that students have done?

Students can choose any topic which interests them and can develop and deliver their work as either an essay, a

report on original research, or an artefact (practical work). Some of my favourite projects have been: designing and building a surfboard tailored to specific wave and wind patterns; a new type of air purifier for low-income countries; the significance of lay magistrates in the UK justice system; and research into the impact of sleep deprivation on the daily lives of late adolescents.

### Does an EPQ require a lot of work?

It does! Around 120 hours over the course of a year (January to December), of which at least 90 hours is independent work. Whilst the project 'product' - essay, research report or artefact - counts for 50% of the marks available, the other 50% of the marks is awarded for supporting documentation showing how a project has been developed from inception to completion, so they've got to be prepared to put the work in from the outset and over the long-term.

### Why should a student consider doing an EPQ?

In terms of personal development, EPQs provide an unparalleled opportunity to take a deep dive into a topic - either academic or non-academic - in which students have a genuine interest. This gives students something significant to discuss in personal statements and interviews for university applications. Plus, its basis in coursework means that students can (and must) be creative and self-driven to a degree that isn't possible with more conventional qualifications. The skills utilised in undertaking an EPQ are a fantastic foundation for future academic and career success.

### What skills do students learn when they do an EPQ?

Students get the opportunity to develop skills in research, critical thinking, independent learning and project management in a hands-on way. In my view and experience, it is one of the best ways for someone to bridge the gap between secondary school and university.

### Do universities like students who have an EPQ?

The majority of universities are very positive about the EPQ, and including it in a UCAS application can give candidates the competitive edge in what is an ever-evolving and increasingly competitive applications environment. More than half of Russell Group universities state that applicants studying for an EPQ are more likely to receive an offer than those that don't. On many courses, around half of these universities offer lower grade requirements to students studying for an EPQ, contingent on the student being predicted an A or A\*. Above and beyond those statistics, the EPQ can also be drawn on for personal statements and interviews, helping students stand out from their peers.

### How does Abingdon support those taking an EPQ?

All students are enrolled in a programme of lectures and workshops through which they develop the skills necessary to make their EPQ a success - whether that's project management, undertaking research, evaluating resources, writing etc. Every student is appointed a supervisor who provides a check-in point and whose role it is to provide feedback, to sign off each stage of the project log and ultimately to mark the completed project. Supervision is critical to the success of projects, and the EPQ benefits from teachers volunteering their time and expertise. Students have access to extensive research support from a wide range of print and online resources and the specialist skills I've acquired over the course of a decade as an academic researcher.

### What is your hope for the future uptake of EPQs?

I would like every student to recognise the value of an EPQ and so consider doing one and, with nearly two thirds of our current Lower Sixth registered for the qualification, I'd say we're nearly there.



Our CCF spent an amazing weekend at the Bramley training area in March. Not only were the cadets given the opportunity to practice patrolling and contact drills, supervised by active soldiers and experienced staff to ensure they were carried out to the highest standard; but they also got to see the night vision capabilities of the RAF Reserve Regiment first hand; as well as experience an ambush situation which included mass amounts of blank rounds! All in all, a truly extraordinary experience.



On the first weekend back after the start of the Lent term, a number of students completed a challenging Duke of Edinburgh's training expedition for their Gold Award. They faced foul, wet weather on the Saturday with good spirits and, undeterred by a night in sub-zero temperatures, woke to a frosty and beautiful sunrise on the Sunday before completing the expedition. They will now go on to prepare for their Duke of Edinburgh Gold practice expedition in the Yorkshire Dales.



## Greekist visit to the Ashmolean

In December, the 4th and 5th Year Greekists visited the Ashmolean Museum to see authentic Greek script on the pottery and inscriptions on display there. They also explored the History of the Greek language and script, looking at the Linear B tablets from the Minoan culture on Crete, and generally enjoyed the artwork on display.



## Fantastic at Physics

We are incredibly proud of our four Upper Sixth students who participated in the British Physics Olympiad competition at the end of the term. This three hour long paper includes questions which cover content both within, and beyond, the A-Level syllabus. All four students obtained awards with Cameron Eilbeck achieving a Bronze 1, Nicholas Owen and Dominic Wood achieving Silver certificates and Alexandre Peuch being awarded a Top Gold. Well done to all of them.

On 1 February 2022, Chinese New Year, 14 Chinese class pupils went to the Ashmolean Museum to see some treasured Chinese objects. The pupils then spent a memorable evening practising the language they had learned in class while enjoying a traditional hotpot meal! This experience enriched their understanding of the Chinese language and culture, beyond what can be achieved in a classroom.

## Joined up thinking

The 1st Year academic award holders met with some pupils from St Helen and St Katharine in January for a Joint Thinking Supper. The topic up for discussion was Artificial Intelligence and much detailed debate took place on the pros and cons of its use.



## Sustainable Eating comes to Abingdon Helping health and the planet

Claiming to both reduce an individual's carbon footprint as well as improve their health, it is little wonder that Sustainable Eating, in which individuals choose an eating regime that's mostly vegetarian yet still allows for the 'occasional' meat or fish dish, is becoming increasingly popular.

In 2019, our catering partner, Sodexo, teamed up with the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) to promote sustainable eating among students. Dubbed as 'Finer Diner', the campaign was rolled out to universities nationwide and, in February this year, was trialled at Abingdon by Sodexo under the new name of Planted+.

Victoria Hicks, Catering Manager at Abingdon and a member of the School Environmental Committee, says:

"Providing healthy and nutritious food, where impact on the environment is minimised, is central to what we do at Sodexo.

"At present, 75% of food consumed comes from just 11 plants and 5 animals. The carbon footprint of the meals we serve is a growing concern to both staff and students.

"We know that plant-rich diets can significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions, so by increasing the range of plant-based meals we offer, it is a positive step towards reducing our carbon footprint.

"Our Planted+ partnership with the WWF is an exciting opportunity to help entice the School community to make alternative choices to traditional meat-based dishes with creative and inspiring plant-rich alternatives. Inspired by modern street food, we have created a selection of new



recipes which use plants, grains and pulses identified as '50 future ingredients' by the WWF. These are ingredients that have been evaluated on their taste, low environmental impact and nutritional value and are considered amongst the most sustainable on the planet.

"We don't want students to feel they have fewer options; rather, we want to demonstrate the versatility that plant-based ingredients offer. The taster week in February was a really good opportunity to showcase this and both students and staff were invited to try the alternatives during break times over the course of three days. Some then pledged to opt for the plant-based option when it appears on the menu at School.

"The feedback we received from both staff and students was really positive. They liked the look and taste of the food; and knowing that opting for a plant-rich dish is better for them, and the planet, made everyone feel good. Highlights of the week were the super sticky Korean cauliflower and the proper puy lentil soft shell tacos."

Tony Gray, Chair of the Abingdon School Environmental Committee, adds: "Sustainability is central to our ethos at Abingdon and our aim for this taster session was to help our students make the connection between what they put on their plates and its impact on the planet and also to highlight that choosing the plant-based option can be equally as tempting and delicious."

Going forward, Abingdon will be holding another Planted+ taster week in the Summer term and has already started to incorporate plant-rich dishes into the weekly menu.





During the half term holiday, a group of 58 students and 7 staff visited Les Deux Alpes in France for the school ski trip. The accommodation was 50 metres from the main lift station in the resort and the students enjoyed 6 hours of ski lessons per day. A good snowfall at the start of the week ensured that conditions made for enjoyable skiing both on and off the piste while evening activities consisted of bowling, ice skating and the Les Deux Alpes ski show.

## Enterprising young students

With a focus on upcycling, two of our Young Enterprise teams had sales success at the Amey Theatre one evening in February in what was the first opportunity to sell directly to potential customers amid the backdrop of a very difficult trading environment.

Team Ecocraft were selling a range of Passive Amplifiers, made from upcycled materials and Team Epius were selling their innovative desk calendar, also made from upcycled materials. Many thanks to all those who helped to arrange the evening.



## Abingdon Model United Nations welcomes back live debate

Live committees are back at AbingMUN! In February, we welcomed students from St Helen and St Katharine and Larkmead schools to join us for an hour long debate on the current situation in Afghanistan. Due to the pandemic, this was the first time that many students had participated in an in-person committee and it was fantastic to hear the sound of lobbying and discussion in progress in the Greening Wing once again. We hope this will be the first of many events this academic year!

## Germanists



Traditionally made during the Christmas festive season in Germany and other German speaking parts of the world, German Plätzchen are delectable little butter biscuits. Germanists in our Lower Sixth very much enjoyed baking these traditional delights in the last lesson before half-term.

Our 2nd and 3rd Year linguists enjoyed the hilarious play, 'Horoskop' delivered by the Onatti Theatre team in the lead up to half-term. Aimed at students who have completed at least one year of German at secondary level, the play follows the story of Mia, a girl who reads that love is on the horizon in her horoscope and then can't understand when things don't quite go as her stars predict.

Our students were enthralled by the play and came out full of confidence at how well they could understand the plot.

### Putting our heart into sustainability

As we continue in our aim to make sustainability part of our everyday school life, we are delighted to say that Abingdon School's electricity supply is now 100% REGO (Renewable Energy Guarantees of Origin) certified. This has been helped by the installation of solar panels on school buildings and further cements our commitment to improving the School's sustainability. The Eco-Committee students are now focussing their efforts on how we can reduce energy consumption.



During the first half of term, the Lower School Science Club worked in groups to research and present a science demonstration of their choosing. Students had to plan their method and apparatus, decide what equipment they would need to perform their demonstration, rehearse, make posters to explain the scientific concepts behind it, and then present their science demonstrations to their peers and a panel of judges (made up of teachers and sixth form students). The imagination and creativity on show, plus the scientific explanations, were extremely impressive - demonstrations included flying teabags, density columns, self-inflating balloons, rockets, and even a human Newton's cradle!



### My father doesn't understand me!

In January, 2nd Year pupils were treated to a quirky French play entitled 'Mon Père Ne Me Comprend Pas', which follows the story of a girl who is misunderstood by her family on her birthday. The pupils enjoyed the opportunity to hear some French on stage and were able to ask the actors some questions at the end about life in France and their experiences travelling around the UK.

### La phonétique et la politique

In February, two teachers from Alliance Française Oxford gave a 2 hour workshop to our Lower Sixth students. They discovered the names and political manifestos of French candidates running for this year's Presidential election, and then practised their French pronunciation with phonetic exercises on nasal sounds and tongue twisters. We now look forward to hearing their best accents in our French lessons.

### Tingewick Panto Performance raises over £10,000

We were delighted to hear that Tingewick raised well over £10,000 from their seasonal pantomime which took place at Abingdon School in December. The money raised will go towards the Oxford Hospitals Charity and Calton Hearts.



## Joint MFL Society dinner

At the start of the Lent term, a number of Sixth Form linguists attended the joint MFL Society dinner, this year hosted by St Helen and St Katharine. Pupils listened to engaging talks from alumni from both schools who have held a number of roles over the course of their careers, including as ambassador to Lithuania, roles in the cabinet and foreign office and a global think tank. Both speakers spoke about how languages have played such an integral part in their professional and personal lives since leaving school. Pupils were then treated to a delicious three course meal and a language-themed quiz. Spirits were high and it was great to be able to meet together for the first time in two years.



## Financial seminars

Throughout March, Head of Career Guidance, Michael Triff, together with Financial Adviser and OA, Kieran O'Leary, ran a selection of financial education seminars. The five topics included the why and how of budgeting; differentiating various types of bank accounts and the appropriate uses of each; how credit cards and insurance policies work and the consequences of misuse; how income gets taxed and how to decipher a payslip; plus how the student loan system operates, including the cost of borrowing money and the terms of paying loans back.

"Intended to provide Sixth Formers with a foundational understanding of five key financial topics, as well as student loans, these seminars have provided the essential financial knowledge which every young person needs in order to prosper as an independent adult" said Mr Triff. He continued: "I am extremely grateful to OA Kieran O'Leary for sharing his knowledge and expertise with students, who I know have benefited greatly from these sessions."



The first joint senior production in two years took place in the Amey Theatre in February where students from Abingdon and St Helen and St Katharine wowed audiences with their spine-chilling rendition of Mary Shelley's Frankenstein. In this version, adapted by Rona Munro, the author was put at the very heart of the action as a character in the piece, constructing the story as it played out. Directed by Mr Phillips, Frankenstein was fast paced, dynamic and featured one or two jump scares both delighting, and terrifying, the audience. The technical team, led by Mr Lloyd, used eerie sound design and special effects including pyrotechnics to bring the chilling atmosphere to life within the multi-level set. It was evident the cast and crew had a fantastic time putting together what was a truly first class performance.

This year, Abingdon 5th Year students, together with St Helen and St Katharine Year 11 students put on a joint production of 'Chaos'. Directed by Ms Hutton, this versatile cast performed the play written by Laura Lomas about the challenges she personally faced as a teenager. Physical, honest and brilliantly chaotic, this production gave our actors the very best opportunities to express themselves using non-verbal communication and stylised theatre techniques. Our technical crew created an intimate, vibrant space in the Drama Studio for our actors to explore, in what was our first public performance in over two years.

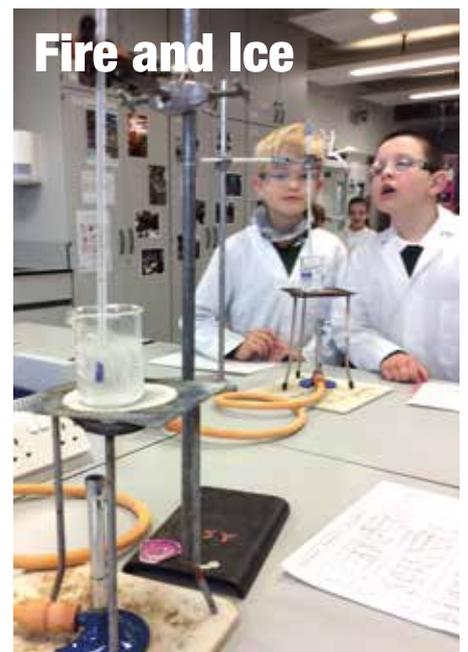


# Abingdon in Partnership



## TV Personality, Lindsey Russell, thrills students with a visit to the Oxfordshire Academy of Broadcast Journalism Showcase

On 4 March, a special showcase was held at Fitzharrys in which students from the Oxfordshire Academy of Broadcast Journalism (OABJ) came together to share pieces of their own work and enjoy career talks from freelance sports broadcaster, presenter and former teacher, Olly Hogben; freelance sports journalist, Blythe Lawrence; and much loved TV personality, Lindsey Russell. Organised by Jeremy Taylor, the day was deemed a great success being engaging, fun and informative.



## Fire and Ice

In February, fifty Year 4 pupils from St Swithun's, Kennington enjoyed two sessions in our Partnership Lab, learning all about evaporation and condensation in our 'Solids, Liquids and Gases' workshop; how to safely use a Bunsen Burner and how to record their observations scientifically.



## Designing a garden at Thameside Primary School

The Primary School Partnership group has been working with the Eco Council at Thameside primary school to design a new garden. The children plan to grow wild flowers and a range of vegetables in a series of raised beds. The meetings have taken place on Zoom. However, in March, students were able to visit and were delighted to meet the Year 5 and 6 pupils to discuss their ideas.

Later in the term, Year 3 and 4 pupils from Sunningwell Primary School enjoyed an 'Ice and Climate' workshop, learning the difference between sea ice, ice sheets and icebergs; and the impact of, and ways to combat, climate change.

## Marking World Book Day 2022...

### ...with stories of time travel and intelligent goo

Around 200 students from Larkmead, Fitzharrys and Our Lady Abingdon joined our Lower School Students in marking World Book Day 2022 (3 March) with a visit from bestselling author Alex Scarrow, author of the epic TimeRiders sequence and the terrifying Remade trilogy. In a hugely entertaining session, Alex told the story of how he turned his complete failure as a video games designer into a career as a successful writer. While none of his designs ever became actual video games, they helped inspire TimeRiders, a nine-book sequence in which teenagers battle dark forces trying to change the course of human history - for the worst. Alex followed this epic series with the Remade trilogy, in which an alien virus lands on earth and within three weeks reduces most of the world's population to biological goo - which then becomes a life force with bold ambitions for the future of the planet. Alex warned that Remade should not be read before a meal - a warning born out by a number of graphic illustrations, the sight of which prompted many members of the audience to emit groans of delighted disgust. Record numbers of students were inspired to buy signed copies of the books, and library copies are leaving the shelves at speed!



Record numbers of students were inspired to buy signed copies of the books, and library copies are leaving the shelves at speed!



## Rugby for all

As part of the drive to provide access to Rugby for young people across the community, Abingdon has been working closely with the RFU and Gloucester Rugby to create a town-wide Rugby Coaching Partnership.

Students from local secondary schools have been invited to a series of coaching sessions at Tilsley Park, providing all children, irrespective of gender with the opportunity to play touch Rugby and work with students from other schools.

In addition, Steve and 5th Year student coaches visited three local primary schools to introduce the children to Rugby in the form of Partnership Tag Rugby sessions. The 5th and 6th Year students have been enthusiastic to take part in the lessons which focus on fundamental skill development such as passing and evasion, working hard to help engage the children and make the sessions fun and active.



## Partnership Extravaganza!

Over 140 Students were hosted by Fitzharrys School on 8 February for a variety of Partnership activities. There was a real buzz and excitement around the event with students engaged and motivated to share and collaborate; and teachers valuing the opportunity to meet and discuss their thoughts and ideas. We are grateful to Fitzharrys for hosting the event so well.



## Abingdon Lower Sixth Former wins the Oxfordshire Senior Concerto Competition

Very many congratulations to Oliver Simpson who has won the Oxfordshire Senior Concerto Competition final in Oxford.

The competition, which is part of the Oxford Philharmonic Orchestra's 'Orchestra in Residence' programme at the University of Oxford, happens every other year and sees talented young musicians compete for the chance to perform as a soloist in a full-length concerto with the Oxford Philharmonic Orchestra. This year's final saw Abingdon Lower Sixth former, Oliver, perform in a head-to-head with two mature soloists, both undergraduates at Oxford University. Accompanied by the Oxfordshire County Youth Orchestra, Oliver played the final movement of Elgar's great Cello Concerto with great aplomb.

Michael Stinton, Head of Music at Abingdon School, said of the achievement: "This piece requires technical mastery, a grasp of rubato and strong singing melodic lines that can soar above the full orchestra.

"Oliver's performance was commanding and, winning against two fine soloists several years older than him, is a massive achievement which attests to his dedication and hard work, as well as to his talent as a cellist. We are incredibly proud of him."

Oliver will now perform a full concerto with the Oxford Philharmonic as part of the forthcoming concert season.



## Would you like a little music with your lunch?

**It has been terrific to hear music during lunchtimes once again this term!**

The Lower School musicians had their termly opportunity to play in front of their peers in the first half of term. After a great opening performance from Junior Strings, a range of soloists took to the stage with piano, violin, trumpet, guitar, drums and even bagpipes (!) on show. The concert was brought to a rousing conclusion by the Lower School Band with their rendition of the Match of the Day theme tune.

This was followed later in the term by clarinet players Stanley Wong, David Hrushovski and Rupert Mathieson who performed some lovely music by Saint-Saëns, Poulenc and Lutoslawski as the Friday lunchtime concerts resumed.



## National Chamber Music Competition success

This year, members of three Abingdon ensembles (Under 14 Piano Trio, Ryan Ng, Yubo Gao, Thomas Zhang; Under 15 String Quartet, Sean Hanlon, Wyatt Ip, Lachlan Keene, Thomas Wilson; and Under 16 Flute Trio, Edward Bennett, Humphrey Lee, Dilan Mandalia) progressed through to the semi-finals of the National Pro Corda Chamber Music Festival, with the U14 Piano Trio then securing a place in the finals.

Held at Millfield School in March, the finals concert saw the ensemble compete against a great array of musical talent from a number of prominent schools including chamber groups from Brighton College, Sevenoaks, Westminster, Dulwich College, Sherborne and Ipswich.

Thomas, Yubo and Ryan were one of five groups in the Under 14s. Their Chamber coach, Miss Stulting, said of their performance: "They played extremely well throughout the whole competition, but their final performance at Millfield was of an exceptional standard. The adjudicators commented on how together they were as a chamber group, but how their soloistic skills shone through at the necessary times. Many congratulations to them."



### A 'Tuba'rific purchase

In January, the Music Society funded the purchase of a second hand Boosey and Hawkes "Imperial" model tuba. A fantastic addition to the music department, this quality instrument will be of great use to the young tuba players we currently have in the School; and will provide future opportunities for other Abingdon pupils in the years ahead!



### Solo Concert Platform no. 4

The fourth Solo Concert Platform this year featured a wonderfully varied programme of music played to a very high standard. Celebrating the incredible solo musical talent we enjoy at Abingdon, the evening comprised fifteen solo performances from a wide range of instrumentalists including pianists, woodwind, strings and brass.

Delivered with impressive fluency and musicality, the piano performances included Yubo Gao (Vallier: *Toccatina*), Justin Mi (Clementi: *Sonatina*), Laurence Peverall (Schumann-Liszt: *Widmung*), Walter Liu (Chopin: *Valse in E minor, Op Post*), Daniel Zhang (Beethoven: *Rage over a Lost Penny*), Jimmy Ip (Burgmüller: *Les Sylphes*) and Thomas Zhang (Debussy: *Première Arabesque*).

Whilst our two woodwind players offered impressive performances of two advanced pieces. Howard Chung of the first movement of Mozart's *Bassoon Concerto*; and Julien Rohart, on the flute, played Gabriel Fauré's beautiful *Fantaisie*.

Brass was represented most ably by Laurence Peverall (trumpet) who delighted the audience with Tchaikovsky's *Ballet Suite*, playing the most memorable dances from the composer's well-known ballets with great control and technical mastery.

On the strings, Oliver Smith offered an elegant interpretation of the finale of Haydn's *G major Violin Concerto*; Yubo Gao (cello) then played Saint-Saëns' *Allegro Appassionato* with great conviction. A particularly riveting and highly accomplished performance was given by new Music Scholars, Ryan Ng (3rd Year) and Walter Liu (Lower Sixth) in Mozart's *Duet in G for violin and viola*. Ryan then also chose Sarasate's technically challenging *Malaguena*, with its high harmonics and left hand pizzicato which made incredibly impressive playing from a 13 year old.



### A musical evening

After a two year break, the annual chamber music evening returned in March. One of the highlights of the School's musical calendar, it featured performers from all year groups collectively presenting 95 minutes of their own work without staff direction or intervention.

We are fortunate to have some phenomenally talented and dedicated musicians and the programme featured a wide variety of genres including strings, woodwind, piano trio and duo and a jazzy trio for double basses.

From Bach and Handel to contemporary composer, Tony Osborne, and everything in between – Haydn, Schubert and Dvorak - the evening was a great success.

### Solo Concert Platform no. 3

The third Solo Concert Platform of the term featured some accomplished and polished performances, with performers ranging from 2nd Year through to Lower Sixth. The pianists were strongly represented with pieces including Debussy, Bach, Tchaikovsky, Chopin, Pachelbel and Faure. There were some superb string and woodwind performances including Bach's Flute Sonata in A minor, Brahms' Clarinet Sonata in F minor, and a stirring account of Saint-Saëns *The Swan*.

The programme was rounded off with a number of highly accomplished performances from our Lower Sixth. Oliver Smith impressed with an accomplished performance of Rachmaninov's *Vocalise*; Laurence Peverall deftly handled some fiendish passages in Mozart's Piano Sonata in F major; and Josef O'Connor gave a lyrical account of the Grovlez *Sicilienne et Allegro Giocoso*.

A huge well done to all our performers and thank you to our accompanist Lynette Stulting for a fabulous concert.

## Abingdon Sport



### Colston's Sevens

In March, the 1st VII's team headed to Bristol for the Colston's Sevens Tournament.

Up against some very talented opposition, it was to be a challenging tournament, with some good lessons learned in preparation for other tournaments to come.

In the first game against hosts, Colston's, their strong team and the vastness of the pitch tested our endurance and a yellow card resulted in a 21-7 loss for Abingdon.

Our second match against Exeter College (and on a smaller pitch) proved more positive, ending 24-12 to Abingdon.

We went on to face Monkton in which much of our training was enacted and our defence was (mostly) formidable to reach another victory of 28-14 and coming 2nd in our pool.

In order to progress to the Cup Final, we had to face Bristol Grammar - a notoriously strong side. After disadvantages including two yellow cards, we found it too difficult to claim the win with the score 14-35.



### National Success for Abingdon Squash

Abingdon's KS4 team took a great stride forward in the National Schools Championships this term. Having previously qualified for the second stage of the championships, the team stepped up to play their best tournament yet, winning each match overall by three games to two to come top of the group. They have now qualified for the National Finals having earned their place as one of the top eight squash schools in the country.



### Canoe polo

Over a weekend in March, seven students competed in the B-league at Cardiff University Canoe Polo tournament. This two day event started with a round robin and then went into a knockout competition. Our team came third in their group and then, subsequently, won one of their two additional games. It was also nice to see lots of OAs competing for Bath, Southampton, Bristol, Durham and Lancaster Universities.



### Water polo

The Abingdon Water Polo team have been increasingly dedicated in training to try and improve in advance of their next round of ESSA national competitions and it certainly paid off in their first 2022 fixture against Stowe with a final score of 21-5 to Abingdon. Goals were scored by: Can Tugcetin - 5, Zach Cooper - 4, Johnny James - 3, Will d'Arcy - 3, Alex Cooper Marcos - 3, Chris Skelton - 2, Rob Smith - 1.



### First Football Fixture for Two Years

It was really brilliant to kick off the New Year with a football fixture - the first for a couple of years! Played at Haileybury, the day was typically wet and windy, however, there was some great football on display with both the Abingdon and Haileybury teams battling well in the tough conditions and Abingdon lucky enough to see some great goals scored!!

## Making a big splash

Abingdon travelled to Eton for the first swimming gala in their new pool in the recently finished Athens Sports Centre. Out of the 22 races, Abingdon won 17, including all of the U18 races. The Abingdon B teams swam well and students who don't often get to race got some excellent times and some personal bests.



### Record breakers

On 11 March, we competed against a myriad of senior schools in the Bath and Otter relays, held at the London Aquatic Centre.

The first event was the 4x100 FS relay in which we qualified for the final in 7th place! Abingdon rarely qualifies for this final, so it was a huge achievement for the team.

In the final, the team dived in, swam their hearts out and finished 7th in a time of 3:53.26 punching well above their weight.

The medley event in the afternoon played to our strengths as, at 4x50, it was more manageable. The team of Skelton (backstroke), Tugcetin (breaststroke), Richards-Knight (butterfly) and Cooper Marcos (frontcrawl) landed a new school record, ousting the previous record held by Esnouf, Teh, Law and Eccleston set at the same event back in 2014.

Going into the final, Abingdon was placed 6th and finished 6th with a time of 1:54.70 - breaking the record broken only an hour earlier!

Huge congratulations and thanks to all our team, many of whom then went on to Wycombe to compete in the National qualifiers over the weekend.

## Badminton

The Badminton 1st team were back in action on 22 January to play their second fixture of the year - against Harrow.

Dominant from the start, Abingdon put in a great performance with all pairs playing with precision and vigour. The stars of the show were Harrison Cruikshank and Will Sue who won all four of their matches. In the end, Abingdon took the fixture 15 games to 1.

## Cross-country



**International success for brothers**

In January, the Miell-Ingram brothers travelled to Belfast to compete in the Northern Ireland International Cross Country meet. Competing in the U17 category, 5th Year student, Quinn, ran maturely and was the first Englishman across the line in 7th place. His brother, Rowan, competing in the U20 age group, faced stiff opposition from contenders but gauged his effort superbly, creating a gap from the main group of chasing athletes on the final lap and finished in 4th place. In doing so, he was selected to run for England in the Belgium Cross Cup held in early February in Diest.

A quartet of Abingdon runners travelled to Sevenoaks in January to compete in the prestigious Knole Run. At 9.4km in length and set within the hilly National Trust park, it is one of the toughest and most eagerly anticipated races of the season, attracting many of the top cross country schools from around the country. d'Arcy and Miell-Ingram set a fast pace and opened a commanding lead with d'Arcy taking the individual victory and Miell-Ingram finishing 2nd place. Special mention must go to 5th Year, Miell-Ingram, competing at his first Knole run and finishing in 10th place. Louis Trotter ran superbly well to finish in 69th, rounding off a successful race for the Abingdon squad.



**Knole Run**

On 3 March, the cross country squad travelled to Marlborough to compete in their annual invitational meet. A truly testing hilly course was made all the more challenging by the heavy rain earlier in the week, making conditions slippery underfoot. The junior and intermediate teams finished in 1st place, with the seniors finishing 2nd behind a strong Harrow contingent.



**Marlborough invitational meet**

On 9 February, the Abingdon squad travelled to Radley to compete in the Radley Relays. It was fantastic to be able to field 3 senior, 3 inter and 2 junior teams. On an unseasonably dry course, the pupils performed incredibly well to come away with 1st in the senior race, 1st in the inter race, and 3rd in the junior competition. Special mention must go to the senior B team for placing 3rd overall with all runners recording sub 12 minute times.



**Radley Relays**



## Cultural celebrations

### The Prep School has been celebrating our cultural diversity throughout the course of this term.

In January, Years 3 and 4 continued our theme of celebrating cultural diversity by focusing on Ukraine. The children learned about the tradition of creating beautiful embroideries on clothes and ceremony towels which are used for special occasions, including weddings and births; and about the symbolism of the stunning designs and how much love and care goes into making each unique piece. Then they were shown some authentic examples.

The similarities and differences of a number of different cultures and nationalities from around the world were celebrated in our first ever non English speaking assembly. Led by a group of our children, the assembly was taken in no fewer than five languages including Bengali, Danish, French, Mandarin and Russian (with subtitles in English). The children introduced and explained a little about themselves and went on to describe some of the festivities which are celebrated around the world. We discovered that whilst these can be different from each other, they all share two common themes - the importance of being with family and having good food.

In keeping with this theme, pupils have enjoyed helping our office staff add to the welcoming feel of the reception area by writing 'hello' in a range of languages they speak. It certainly provides a cheerful welcome to our visitors.

## What a performance!

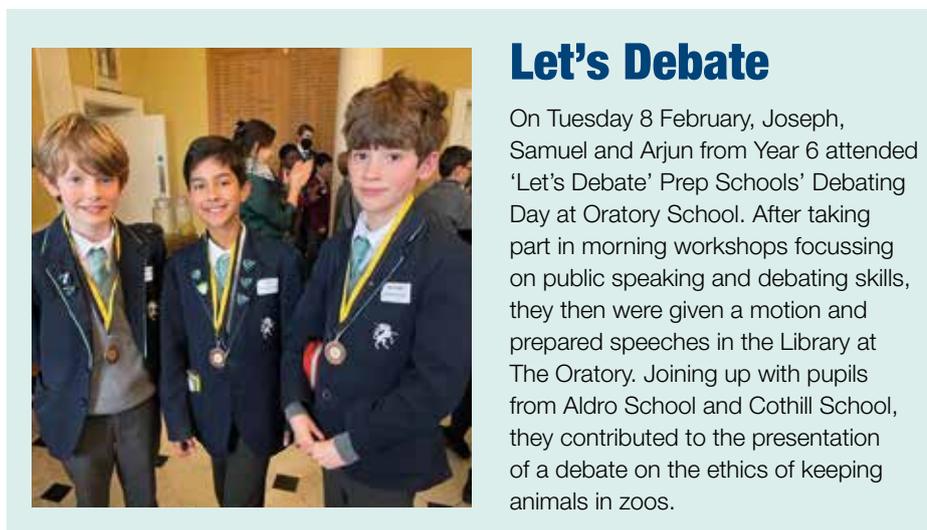
It has been a fantastic term for APS performances. Whether it was Years 3 and 4 who did a tremendous rendition of 'Eddie the Penguin Saves the World!' - a fabulous play all about environmental issues including recycling, saving water and conserving energy; Years 5 and 6 who produced a beautiful version of 'Aladdin'; or our own teaching staff who created much excitement in their flipping pancake competition as part of our Shrove Tuesday assembly!



## Green Fingered

Our Green Team gardening and eco club have started looking into decomposition times for common household items. We buried different materials in our regular garden compost and will be closely monitoring them over the next few terms - we can't wait to find out which ones rot away first!

On 24 January, our young leader, Toby, took the Green Team's weekly session. Toby led the group through how to germinate lemon seeds. He showed the pupils the process of extracting the seeds, removing the outer shell and then how to give them the best conditions for germination. Two seeds were also planted in potting compost so the pupils can compare the germination speeds of the two methods.



## Let's Debate

On Tuesday 8 February, Joseph, Samuel and Arjun from Year 6 attended 'Let's Debate' Prep Schools' Debating Day at Oratory School. After taking part in morning workshops focussing on public speaking and debating skills, they then were given a motion and prepared speeches in the Library at The Oratory. Joining up with pupils from Aldro School and Cothill School, they contributed to the presentation of a debate on the ethics of keeping animals in zoos.



## Terrific School Trips

Year 4 visited Ufton Court to experience a Tudor day earlier in the term. The children learned about the justice system and held a mock trial. They tried out Tudor board games and tracked down a priest's hiding hole in the architecture of the building. They also discovered long dried up fish ponds which used to play a vital role in feeding the people living at the manor house, alongside a Tudor fridge used to store the food and which also acted as the tunnel entrance and exit for the hiding hole. It really was a trip where history came to life and one the children will definitely remember!

Children in Years 1 and 2 were thrilled by a trip to The Story Museum in Oxford in January. The pupils had a chance to explore the museum's Whispering Woods and Enchanted Library which they found absolutely magical! Then they learned about the 'rule of three' used in traditional tales and, using the same pattern, then created their own fantastic stories. Well done everyone!

## Being Good Sports

**What a sports season it has been for Abingdon Prep School! A fantastic selection of sporting opportunities with some extremely talented young people and some very encouraging results. First and foremost though, it's been great to see so many of the children join in and have lots of fun!**

**In Cross Country:** Our Under 11s retained their National Title for the third year running in the IAPs National Under 11s team competition. Hosted by Malvern College, over 1,000 pupils from more than 80 schools competed, in what were perfect cross-country conditions. The Under 11 and Under 13 boys' races, yielded the following results:

**Under 11** - In a field of 187 runners, James came 6th in a time of 10:18 and was followed closely by a fast finishing and determined Noah, who finished in 10th place. The top three scoring runners all finished within the top thirty five to secure the IAPS National Under 11s team competition!

**Under 13** - In a field of 144 participants, all of our runners acquitted themselves extremely well, finishing in the top half of the race. George finished in 50th place, while Nathan finished a creditable 51st. With all of the runners performing beyond expectation, the team finished in 15th place out of thirty four schools.

Well done to all of the competitors who enjoyed a great experience and we look forward to defending the Under 11s title next year!



**In Swimming:** Year 5 pupil, Leone, made a great splash in the Oxfordshire County swimming finals in February and is now ranked No. 1 in the UK for both the 50m Freestyle and 50m Breaststroke in the 10/11 age category.

**In Biathlon:** Eight pupils from four age groups competed in the Midlands Regional Biathlon Championships at The Abbey Stadium, Redditch in January and four finished in the top 4 which was a tremendous achievement!

**In Football:** In January, our Years 7 and 8 played Oratory School, while our Years 5 and 6 played against St Hugh's. Almost every child in both the middle and senior sections was represented and our senior section enjoyed a clean sweep of victories, while our middle section won all but two of their eight matches.

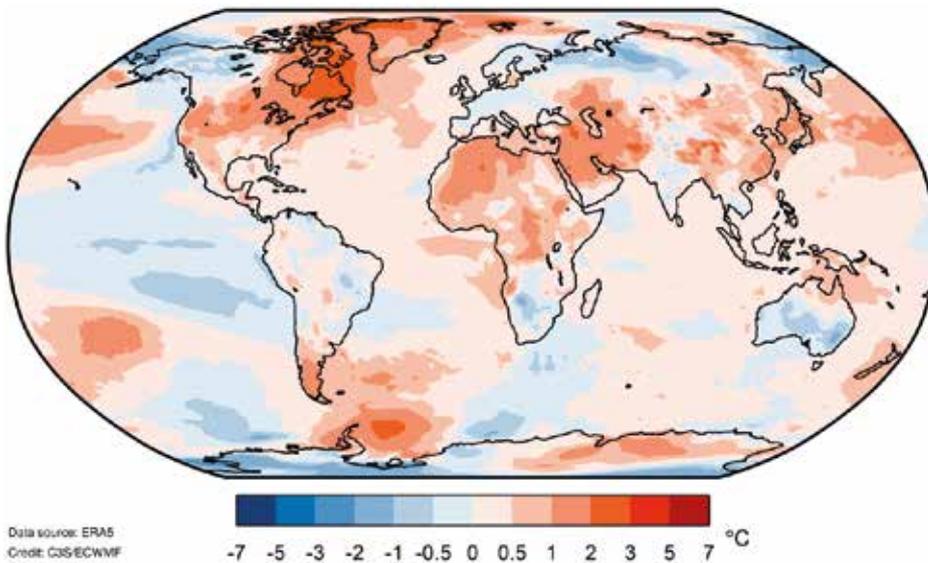
**In Hockey:** Year 5 played their first school hockey match against Dragon at the beginning of the year, securing two wins and two draws.

Against St Hugh's in March, our Year 7 and 8 teams were less successful but learned a great deal from playing a competitive match. APS demonstrated strong passing skills but need to work on following up their passes and keeping pressure on their opponents.

All the children contributed with a really positive performance, showing much potential. Well done everyone on an excellent effort!



## Talking Climate Change



Data source: ERA5  
Credit: Copernicus Climate Change Service/ECMWF

**Air temperature at a height of two metres for 2021, shown relative to its 1991–2020 average.**

**Credit: Copernicus Climate Change Service/ECMWF**

On 24 January, Dr Vincent-Henri Peuch from the European Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecasts (ECMWF) gave an online presentation to the Science Communication Club entitled “A quick roundup about climate change”. This was based on the recently published 6th Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and on the latest climate monitoring results from the European programme Copernicus, in which ECMWF plays a key role.

### New Era

There is unequivocal and overwhelming evidence that the climate of our planet has changed since pre-industrial times and that emissions of fossil greenhouse gases from human activities have been driving these changes. This is to the point that some are considering that our planet has entered a new era which has been coined “Anthropocene” (by analogy to geological eras), as the global surface average temperature is now well above what it has been in more than 100,000 years.

### Earth System Models

He briefly touched upon so-called Earth-System Models (ESM), which are used to both monitor the climate of the past decades and to predict what could be the future climate depending upon socio-economic scenarios which countries of the world may follow (the Shared Socioeconomic Pathways). These ESM are

closely related to numerical models that are also used for weather prediction. In recent years they have become increasingly realistic (higher spatial resolution, more physical, chemical and biological processes included...) to the point that plans are now for developing Digital Twins of the Earth, which will allow us to explore possible climate change adaptation and mitigation measures for guiding the governments.

He introduced the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) which is organising international efforts. One of the tasks of its secretariat, based in Bonn (Germany), is to organise yearly Conferences of the Parties (COP). The last one, the 26th COP (COP26) was held in Glasgow and allowed a significant agreement on reducing emissions of methane (CH<sub>4</sub>), one of the key greenhouse gases with carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>). In Paris in 2016 (COP21), countries agreed to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions for maintaining the earth’s global average surface temperature to not more than 1.5 to 2 degrees above the pre-industrial average.

### Predicting Climate

Using the example of the Galton board experiment, he also explained why, while weather forecasting becomes unreliable beyond about two weeks (the famous “butterfly effect” of mathematician E Lorenz), it is possible to predict climate in future decades. Actually, first attempts at

predicting climate in the late 1970s with rudimentary ESM actually have proven to have been reliable compared with what has happened since. He showed that there is a near linear relationship between the cumulative CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and global warming. Future CO<sub>2</sub> emissions differ across SSPs and make a very big difference on how much warming we will experience in 2050 and until the end of the century.

### Seven highest years on record

He concluded using IPCC’s word that unless there are immediate, rapid, and large-scale reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, limiting warming to 1.5°C will be beyond reach. Copernicus has shown that the last seven years including 2021 have been the seven highest on record. The changes we experience will increase with further warming. Unfortunately, there’s no going back from some changes in the climate system. However, some changes could be slowed, and others could be stopped by limiting greenhouse gas emissions.

Finally, Dr Peuch answered several questions on technological solutions to global warming and reaching net zero by 2050 from the interested audience both at Abingdon School and online.

*This article was contributed by Alex Peuch, son of Dr Peuch.*

## Connecting parents, supporting school life

Dear Friends,  
In March, we ran our first Cheese and Wine evenings for our Lower School, 3rd and 4th Year parents and I am delighted that, for the first time in over two years, ASPA is able to once again help parents connect through a series of hugely successful events.



The highlight in this calendar is most likely to be the whole school parent association fundraising event we are planning for the summer term. This promises to be a fun and exciting event, so please do keep an eye out for further information.

When I became Chair of ASPA, we agreed we should be focusing our efforts on parental engagement - both with the school and with each other - and fundraising. It is my hope that, as we build on these events, we can really make headway in both these areas.

*Richard Stone, Chair of ASPA*

## Project Funding

You may remember that we awarded several projects with grants in November 2020, most of this money has now been spent, and you can find full details and pictures of these awards on our website. There are a couple of projects still in development and we look forward to updates, and pictures, from Mr Bignell and Capt. Edwards.

## How can you help?

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

## So lovely to reconnect

### Cheese and wine evenings

What a fantastic series of evenings! We had a wonderful turn out, with over 200 parents coming over the course of all three evenings. There was a real buzz in the room as the wine flowed and cheese was eaten. We chose to focus particularly on the year groups that had joined the School community during Covid-19 and, as a result, had not had the usual social opportunities that have been available in the past. We hope the events help to build a stronger sense of community and connection with the School. Thank you to all those who attended; the ASPA committee for their help in organising the events; and to Hendred Vineyard who kindly supplied a welcome glass of fizz. Due to how well received these Cheese and Wine evenings were, we will be running similar events in future years and can't wait for the next ones!



## Informal events

On Tuesday 15 February, the 3rd Year Crescent House pupils went bowling, giving the boarders and day pupils a chance to socialise together outside School. Some of the students had never bowled before but they all had great fun. Not to miss out, some of the parents also had a go and they were surprisingly quite competitive! Parents helped transport the children all back to one of the students' houses near School where they feasted on pizza and cake and played table tennis. They were returned back to Crescent House in time for lights out at 9.45pm.

## Our volunteers

Our year reps continue to arrange informal events for parents. It's a lovely way to meet and get to know each other.

To find out what other events are happening please find your year rep on Classlists.

Year 1: Fiona Urquhart, Adele Zhu, Gayle Bell

Year 2: Bev Gold

Year 3: Caroline Ely, Marie Fleming

Year 4: Vacant

Year 5: Jay Hunt, Kathy Howat

## Vacancies

If you would like to join the ASPA committee we are particularly looking for reps in Years 2, 4, and 5. Please do get in touch via [aspa@abingdon.org.uk](mailto:aspa@abingdon.org.uk)

## Foundation Dinner returns to Abingdon once more - celebrating the support of our community

Abingdon's annual Foundation Dinner was back on Friday 11 March after a Covid-enforced absence.

Over 100 guests came together in the presence of both our Abingdon Foundation Headmasters, Mike Windsor and Craig Williams. The theme for the night was 'Building the Future', with each Head speaking on their school's latest headlines and looking to the future, before everyone moved from the CMR to a transformed dining room for a celebratory dinner.

During dinner, Chair of Governors Mike Stevens (OA 1968), spoke movingly of how, just as we have begun to learn to live with Covid, we face a new challenge in the wake of the Ukraine crisis. He reiterated the importance of holding onto our core values; the importance of remaining sensitive to the needs of others; and how the world works best when respect is mutual.

After thanking all those present for supporting Abingdon's partnership and bursary programmes, he went on to welcome OA Henry Carter (2006) as our guest speaker.

Henry spoke passionately about his time at Abingdon, how it led to studying Music at Oriol College, Oxford and the support his family received at Abingdon by way of a bursary when it was most needed.

**"I have been enormously impressed by the hard work and dedication from the Headmaster and School Community, in championing this impressive campaign that will have a transformative effect on so many young people's lives."**

*Henry Carter OA*



Henry's experience at Abingdon influenced his subsequent decision to become a regular giver to our bursary campaign and to become a member of the 1563 Society.

If you would like more information about how you can support our *Seven years to change a life* campaign please email Alexa Broad or Harriet Alderman in the Development Office:

[alexa.broad@abingdon.org.uk](mailto:alexa.broad@abingdon.org.uk)  
[harriet.alderman@abingdon.org.uk](mailto:harriet.alderman@abingdon.org.uk)

- or telephone on 01235 849107.

It is also easy to make an online donation by visiting the 'Support Us' page at:

[abingdon.org.uk/support-us/donate-online](http://abingdon.org.uk/support-us/donate-online)

## Spotlight on supporters

We asked Richard and Natasha Ginks to tell us in a nutshell, why they chose to support the School.

### **What is your relationship with the Abingdon Foundation?**

Former parents - we've had two boys at Abingdon Jake (OA 2021) and Will (OA 2019).

### **What were your reasons for wanting to support bursaries at Abingdon?**

Our boys loved Abingdon and they have always felt very lucky to have been able to go there. We wanted to support other children, whose parents don't have the financial capacity to send them to Abingdon, to be able to go to the School and benefit in the same ways our boys have.

### **Why did you decide to support our 7 years to change a life bursary campaign with your gift?**

We supported the *7 years to change a life* campaign because the time frame suits our financial situation at the moment. We also like the idea that a pupil's bursary is secure for the duration of their senior education. We feel that the outreach of the bursary campaign is broad and works hard to ensure that pupils from many different situations are able to find out about the scheme and apply.

### **And for a bit of fun! What piece of music would you take to your Desert Island?**

The Waterboys - This is the Sea.



## 1563 Society

We are looking forward to welcoming our legacy society members back to lunch at Abingdon on 18 June 2022. If you would like to find out more about the 1563 Society please contact Harriet Alderman

[harriet.alderman@abingdon.org.uk](mailto:harriet.alderman@abingdon.org.uk)

## In Conversation with Lord Kim Darroch (1972)

On Friday 18 March, Abingdon School and the OA Club welcomed Lord Kim Darroch of Kew (OA 1972). Kim served in key roles in a diplomatic career spanning three decades, including those of the Prime Minister's National Security Adviser (2012-2015) and British Ambassador to the United States (2016-2019).



After touring the School with fifth formers and MUN members Harry Litchfield and Philip Kimber, Kim gave an interview to our student journalists currently working on the next issue of *The Martlet*. Given the current conflict between Russia and the Ukraine, his expertise is in demand daily across many broadcast networks, thus the opportunity to 'pick the brains' of such a respected expert was quite a scoop for our students.



After lunch, history Sixth Formers were invited to attend a fireside chat with Kim at Lacies Court, an occasion that will no doubt resonate with them for years to come and stand them in good stead for their future studies.

The day culminated with fellow OA and LBC radio presenter Tom Swarbrick (2005) joining Kim Darroch on stage in a packed out Amey Theatre, for an 'in conversation' event. Parents, grandparents, staff, students, governors and OAs were treated to a unique discussion examining key moments in Kim's career, with time for questions from the floor.

Our greatest thanks are extended to Lord Darroch and Tom Swarbrick for giving their time and expertise to make this particular occasion possible.

## Early Finance Careers Masterclass

- Why me
- The Finance landscape
- Routes in
- Networking
- Post-Graduate study



## A Career Webinar Masterclass

The OA Club continued its webinar series with an Early Careers Webinar Masterclass with John Madgwick (OA 1979), Head of Finance Careers at Saïd Business School. With over 60 sign-ups, this event delivered insights and how to 'hacks' to young OAs on how to navigate application processes, make informed decisions about postgraduate study as well as how to become successful networkers.

For a demographic of OAs that have been hit hard by the pandemic, this event provided invaluable updates on the ever-evolving world of finance careers. The OA Club is grateful to John for the time and effort he put into making this event a success and we will continue to look at offering future events that appeal to the worldwide OA community.

## OA Club Events Calendar

- 6 May** - OA 50s, 60s Dinner  
Clevedon, Somerset
- 6 May** - North East Universities Reunion Dinner - Durham
- 9 May** - OA Golf Day
- 20/21 May** - OA Sports Weekend
- 18 June** - Decades Reunion for all 1990s and 2000s leavers
- 18 June** - 1563 Society Lunch with a talk from Abingdon Archivist, Sarah Wearne
- 21 June** - Decades Reunion for all 1970s and 1980s leavers
- Date TBC** - 360 Degrees: UCAS Advice Evening
- 1 July** - Henley Royal Regatta Strawberries and Pimm's

Please check the OA Club website for up-to-date information.

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

# Abingdon Out of the Past

## The King is Dead

The country's sorrow at the death of King George VI on 6 February 1952 is reflected in this sombre drawing by Richard Millard (1952) of the school flag at half-mast. Two days later the whole school was present in the Market Square to hear the proclamation of Queen Elizabeth II for which the school band had had to prepare itself 'with feverish haste' to play the National Anthem. A few days after this, invited by Sir Ralph Glyn the MP for Abingdon and a School Governor, the headmaster, James Cobban, and three boys represented the School at the King's lying-in-state in Westminster Hall. For John Westall (1953) it was a never-to-be-forgotten scene: the huge hall, the silent crowds, the soldiers standing vigil and at the centre the coffin, draped with the Royal Standard on which lay the Imperial Crown, orb and sceptre, the jewels flashing in the subdued light.

## Long Live the Queen!

There were many Abingdonians in London on the day of the Coronation, Tuesday 2 June 1953. Colin Wiggins (1953), then a senior CCF cadet, was one of six given a ticket to watch the Coronation procession from the Victoria Memorial Gardens. The Revd Thomas Layng (1906), in his capacity as a Queen's Chaplain, took part in the Coronation procession in Westminster Abbey; Peter Lucas (1951), Royal Artillery, carried the regimental Colours in the parade, and Roy Gibaud (1942) Royal Armoured Corps, had the misfortune to suffer a bayonet wound in the head from a rifle that went astray on the command 'Present Arms'.

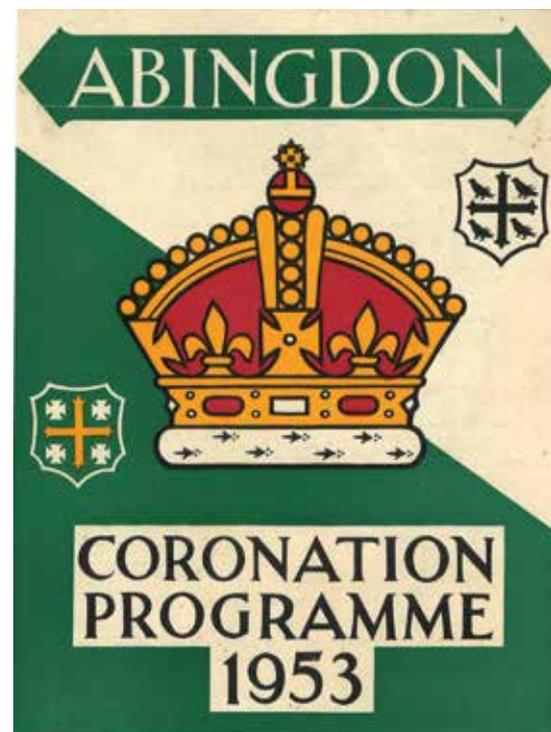


School flag at half-mast  
Richard Millard



Colin Wiggins' ticket

Colin Wiggins' photograph of the parade in The Mall



Abingdon town celebrated the Coronation with a ten-day programme of festivities in which the School played an enthusiastic part. Afterwards the Corporation presented every school child with a copy of its Coronation programme.

## Out of the Distant Past

Extracts from the diary of the Revd Joseph Hewlett, headmaster of Abingdon 1828-39, recording the death of George IV on 26 June 1830 and the proclamation of King William IV on the 30th.

