

THE STOIC



75TH JUBILEE 1998

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1998



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No. 196



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FRONT COVER

A Photoshop composite of pictures taken by AGE and Timothy Soar (courtesy of Light Projects Ltd).

BACK COVER

The Editors: Roy Chambers, Armand David, Fay Davies and Simon Post
with thanks to Laura Kaye, Mark Bowman and Sally Oliphant.

INSIDE FRONT & BACK

A collage of photos from Old Stoics and the School Archives celebrating 75 years of Stowe School.
Enquiries about the identity of OS in the pictures should be directed to the Old Stoic Registrar, Stowe, Buckingham, MK18 5EH.

THE PRODUCTION OF THIS YEAR'S MAGAZINE has been left, considerably more than recently, in the hands of the Stoics themselves, and they have managed magnificently. The editors are more or less the same team as ran *The Voice* last year, and between them they wrote a good deal of the **75 Years On** section, and virtually all of **Stowe in Today's World**; you will also notice them featuring prominently in **Stowe's Year** and yes, there they are again in **Stoics Abroad**. I expect they will mostly find their way to Oxbridge – two of them hold offers – or to equally first class University courses, and although they appear as mere also-rans in some reports – they are not the best actors or sportsmen or artists of their generation – they will leave with the confidence of having been the intellectual leaders of their year who, as prefects, Heads of House and the leading lights of the school's academic, debating, discussing and publishing activities, have made a real and significant impact on the life of the school. They will also leave with feelings of genuine friendship and respect for many of their peers, including the ones who could never aspire to their level of academic achievement, but may be every bit as successful in adult life. Any one of these superstars could have gone to any of the most selective schools in the land, where they would have been more or less, well, ordinary – on the same level as everybody else: could they really have come so far and done so much had they done so? Much is always made of how a school with a virtually comprehensive intake benefits from its brightest students, but it is often forgotten how enormously the brightest students, in turn, benefit from it.

In Stowe's Jubilee Year we find ourselves championing this view of education as other schools are forced into temporarily deserting it in search of success in the league tables that they all agree are fatally flawed. As the Headmaster pointed out in his recent letter to *The Times*, league tables encourage schools to be selective, which involves dividing and separating children as early as possible; it is a Brave New World caste policy of apartheid so obviously out of tune with everything that Western society has come to believe in that it cannot possibly last, and Stowe will, once again, be seen as the innovator who has found the way forward. Meanwhile we can also take mischievous pleasure in noting that this year our near comprehensive intake achieved the highest proportion of A* grades at GCSE ever, which was better than some of the local highly selective grammar schools managed, and we can report with pride that all those who received offers from Oxford and Cambridge Universities last year achieved the required grades to take up their places.

There are many other ways in which Stowe continues to feature nationally in the quest to find productive ways forward for education, and the section **The World Tomorrow** illustrates our position in the front line of the development of IT and Science teaching. GMH's textbook has been translated into its fourth language, Chandos' self-penned House play, a satire entitled 'The School Inspection' which was performed during our own school inspection, has been published by SchoolPlay Productions Ltd., and the continuing development of Visual Education has attracted considerable attention and interest. PDH's Buckingham Concertos, which were written especially for Stowe, are being published later this year, as is Faber's new clarinet tutor, "Paul Harris's Clarinet Basics". In an innovation which may look positively reactionary, we have re-introduced the teaching of formal precis exercises to those members of the sixth form who seem to have been having trouble doing themselves justice in examinations, as we find the blend of reading, note-taking and precise expression in such an exercise to be exactly the right one to improve examination performance across the curriculum.

As we watch and read with interest the plethora of white and green papers arriving from the new government we are heartened to see that much of what it seeks is already here: core skills and wider curricula in the sixth form and a greater emphasis on co-operation between local schools both independent and state, such as is exemplified by the Luffield Group, which was formed last year to extend the co-operation which has existed for many years between Stowe and its neighbours. Soon, the national climate may also catch up with our belief in mixing very different people within the same school, and doing the best by every child.

SGAH

Salvete

ARGT

Alice Tearle was born in Paris of a German mother and a French father. Her first language was German and she picked up her French at kindergarten. She went to university in Paris and took an MA in English and German with Economics and Law. After her degree Alice came to England for one year as a French Assistant. She worked at a school in Chesham, Buckinghamshire, but spent virtually all her weekends at

Stowe visiting a friend, Anne Triolaire, who was an assistant here in 1992/93. During that time, she met James Tearle and they married in August 1997. Alice joined the Stowe Modern Languages Department in September to teach French and German.



BTF

Bette Fox joined the Stowe English Department as a part-time teacher in 1996 and became a full-time member of staff this year. Educated at the Nelson Thomlinson Grammar School in Cumbria, she qualified as a teacher after studying at the Institute of Education at Durham University, and took a year out to travel. When the money ran out she returned through North Africa to Gibraltar where she taught at the Grammar School for two years. A succession of educational work followed in London before she and her family moved to Buckinghamshire in 1986. She taught in a variety of local

schools before joining Stowe. Beyond literature and the theatre, her main interests are Arsenal Football Club and attempting to maintain some degree of fitness.



DF

David Fletcher came to Stowe as Grenville Housemaster after a long career at Whitgift School in Surrey (following other former Whitgift masters LEW, RAC and CGT), where he taught English and indulged his passion for sport, coaching 1st XI hockey and cricket. He enjoys drama and has directed plays and reviews, listing Harold Pinter and Noel Coward among his favourite dramatists. Indeed he met his wife, Debbie, when they played opposite one another in Coward's 'Hay Fever'. They have two young children Edward (7) and Eleanor (6). When time permits, David enjoys golf, tennis and theatre.

MDGW

Mark has moved to Stowe with his wife Jo and two young daughters Katie (5) and Lucie (2). They previously lived near Shepperton, Middx. and are looking forward to living in the country again. Mark feels quite at home as he was brought up on the Gower Peninsula. He studied for his Degree at Brunel University and has taught since graduating in 1986. When time permits Mark is a keen sportsman. He has represented his University at rugby, badminton, football and hockey, the latter at club level up until this year. He also enjoys playing golf and relaxing to music. Katie has just started school, while Jo and Lucie are enjoying time at home together. Mark has settled quickly into life at Stowe and has already completed some developments in the Design and Technology Department. Since starting in September he has been impressed with the enthusiasm and politeness of the students and is looking forward to working with and helping them prepare for the future.





JAM

Anne Miller read Theology at New Hall, Cambridge. After studying for an MPhil she moved to Scotland and worked in Edinburgh Castle until deciding on a change of career. She completed a PGCE at Herriot Watt University in Edinburgh and went to teach in Fife before becoming Head of PSE at Fettes College in Edinburgh, where she was also a sixth form tutor and

taught Religious Studies. On moving to England she became Head of Religious Education at the Mandeville School in Aylesbury prior to taking up her post as Housemistress of Nugent here at Stowe. In her spare time she plays tennis and squash, enjoys singing and family life with her husband and children.

BJD

Already well known to many of us, Benjamin Davey had taught the Piano at Stowe for the last four years, and two years ago he became resident under-Housemaster of Chatham and recently Lower School Tutor. His joining the full-time staff was inevitable. Benjamin has studied at the Royal Academy of Music and in Paris with a French Government Scholarship. He enjoys travelling, having visited all but a handful of western and central European countries which allows him to cultivate his love of the great Gothic cathedrals.



DB

David Balfour was educated at Rugby and Cambridge (Gonville and Caius) and briefly ran a furniture factory for Terence Conran before 21 years in the electronic industry with Plessey and Decca. He spent many years working on airborne radar and the manufacturing of solid state electronic components. David took up Mathematics teaching and spent 16 years at Uppingham before his retirement. He now works on temporary contracts such as his two terms at Stowe this year and his hobbies include Jazz, woodwork and house alterations.



PSTJD



Paul Davies was educated at Chatham House Grammar School for Boys in Kent and from there went to Exeter University to read Mathematical Statistics and Operational Research. He followed this with a PGCE in Mathematics and Sports

Teaching at Bristol University. He is a dedicated all-round sportsman and particularly enjoys keeping fit. His skiing holidays have given him a taste to arrange school ski trips so that Stoics can enjoy the experience too.

JMcC

James McCulloch was commissioned into the Queens Royal Irish Hussars with whom he served for four years. It was here that his interest in teaching and instructing began, whilst training recruits in England, and serving in Cyprus and Germany. He also developed an interest in mountaineering and has led expeditions to the Himalayas, South America and Africa. After completing his degree as a civilian at Oxford Brookes University in Economics and Politics, he went briefly into international marketing. He began his teaching career at an international school in Shropshire before coming to Stowe. His interests include riding, scuba-diving, travel and photography. He leaves to do a PGCE in London.



AJJ

After twelve years in marketing, which began with IBM and finished in a London advertising agency, Alison James took a PGCE at Cambridge. She taught at Rugby School for a term, before coming to Stowe in February 1997 to teach German and English. At Stowe Alison is a fifth form tutor in Cobham, a member of the XX Club providing extra-curricular enrichment in the lower school, and will be responsible for Foundations' First Aid training from September. Among her leisure pursuits she enjoys skiing, aerobics and family holidays. Alison can still remember reading German and Philosophy at Oxford University.



Valete

CJGA

Atkinsons always seem to make a big impact. On TV we have had Big Ron and Blackadder. And at Stowe it has been Chris and Philippa, plus, of course, the various illustrious branches of the family tree: sons Adam, William and Marcus, brother Anthony and nephew Rupert. No less than four of the Family Atkinson feature on the Chatham Honours Board.

Chris himself first knew Stowe as a pupil in the days when the Roxburgh Hall was being built. Alasdair Macdonald was his Housemaster in Chatham, Eric Reynolds and Donald Crichton-Miller his headmasters. He ended up as Head of House, Head of School, captain of cricket, hockey and squash. He was also in the tennis team which won the Youll Cup at Wimbledon. Thanks to the inspiration of John Hunt, Geography Tutor at the time, Chris moved on to St Edmund Hall, Oxford. There he won blues for hockey and tennis and was President of Vincent's. After Oxford Chris went to work for Courtaulds, married Philippa and then, in 1971, was wooed back to Stowe by Bob Drayson, keen no doubt to strengthen not only his Geography Department but also his staff hockey team.

Chris joined a thriving department run by fellow Old Stoic, Tony Macoun. Another geographer was Stuart Morris, who had played against Chris in the varsity hockey match. Perhaps Geography in those days was considered one of the easier A-levels and attracted a mixed field of runners, but Chris's encouraging blandishments invariably got even those with the longest odds past the post. He was, of course, also a wonderful asset on the games field. Arriving in the summer term, he at once took over the 1st XI, starting as he meant to continue, with six wins and no school defeats. Thereafter he coached teams in all three major sports (including a ten year spell with the 1st XI cricket), passing on not just his own expertise but also his love of the games. Despite his cheerful air of unconcern, Chris very much liked to win and often did, by building up confidence, never knocking it down. I once or twice shared a cricket side with him. They were summers to remember. Chris also ran the school golf team for a while and for many years organised the prestigious Stowe Putter.

In 1978 Chris and Philippa took over Walpole from the Kirks. For the next nine years they made it quite simply *the* sporting house! For the rest of us, playing Walpole was like playing Liverpool at Anfield in the days of Shankly, with victory just as sweet and occasional. But for all Walpole's sporting success it was the warmth of their care and concern which characterised their reign. As a housemaster Chris was notable for his unflappability, his unfailing high spirits and his ability to put each and every situation



Chris Atkinson in 1959,
a winner of the Youll Cup and in the Rugby Seven-a-Side team.

into sensible perspective. He and Philippa also made two very astute signings in Rowena Pratt and Chris Haslam. Theirs was a wonderfully happy and united house. Walpole's fame, of course, soon spread and its list was always impressively oversubscribed.

All this sounds work enough! But Chris' former experience in industry led to his involvement in the first commercial use of the School in holiday time. He was for several years the managing director of Stowe Estates and Sports Club which developed into the present SSES. On the departure of Michael Fox and Pat Neal he took over too as Local Secretary of the Old Stoic Society and, with devoted support from Heather Meredith and Alison Ewens, forged valuable new links between the school and its Old Boys. The annual dinners in London have had impressive attendances. New Sports and Open Days were pioneered. He masterminded the Old Stoic Register, so much envied by other schools, and the Bulletin became the means of keeping Old Stoics in touch with each other and abreast of the many changes at school. In 1983 Chris left the classroom to run the Diamond Jubilee Appeal. After the million mark was passed the Appeal For Stowe was launched for the further development of the school and restoration of the buildings. This crucial work led to Chris and Philippa leaving Walpole for Dadford in 1988. History does not relate quite how many fork suppers followed, but certainly no-one can ever have charmed funds Stowe's way so urbanely and painlessly. The wide scope of these endeavours became all the more apparent when a whole new Marketing Department was inaugurated to develop them.

Chris loyally assisted the new initiative, continued his Old Stoic brief and, most recently, diversified into the Admissions Office.

Never one to take himself too seriously, Chris would always be to the fore in things like Common Room entertainments. Was there ever a scurvier pirate of Penzance? (Well, perhaps Mike Waldman!) Or a chirpier Covent Garden barrow boy? And when Guy Scott created *Oklahoma* at Stowe and there was a bright golden haze on our meadow, there too was Chris, tapping his way through one of

Chris at the
Old Stoic Dinner 1997
with Stuart Morris



Lionel Weston's tailor-made routines, the grin never more winning. And only Chris could have got away with 'Ol' Man River' in a staff revue, seemingly sung all on one note.

Philippa likewise trod the light fantastic in many a musical routine, as well as cornering the market in cameo roles of the severer type. In a piece of casting which owed more to stern necessity than *anno domini*, she once played my mother in *My Fair Lady*. 'What is it, Henry, what has happened?' 'She's gone!' 'Of course dear. What did you expect?' Could Gladys Cooper have played it better?

Throughout his long, distinguished service Chris has exemplified all that is best in the Stoic. He has a deep generosity of spirit, immense clubbability, unfailing optimism, disarming modesty and, above all, a burning zeal for his school. Philippa is, and has always been, the perfect complement, the ever-constant theme around which Chris could weave his variations. They have both given so much to the School in their different ways, been so much part of the place, that perhaps we may sometimes almost have taken them for granted, like the view from the South Front or the chimes of the North Front clock.

We wish them every success in the new venture, running The Brian Johnston Memorial Trust. It is good to hear that Chris will be maintaining contact in Old Stoic affairs as secretary to the Committee and we are glad that he and Philippa are retaining their base in Dadford, for the sound of bat or stick on ball will surely tempt them up the hill from time to time and Stowe may not entirely lose them.

AGM



Chris and Phillipa in the Marble Hall

DCM

Colin McCrea was educated in Ireland and initially entered the Civil Service. Quickly though he changed tack and studied for a B.Ed. at Worcester College after which he taught at Wyomondham College for three years. In September 1985 he joined the staff at Stowe and stayed for twelve years, dedicating himself to every aspect of life at a busy boarding school.

Primarily Colin was a Maths teacher, contributing across the age and ability range including Further Maths; his hard work in the department was much appreciated – nothing was too much trouble for him. On the sports field Colin was (sorry, is!) a talented player of rugby, cricket and hockey. He worked hard to make the most of his own ability and fully expected the same of Stoics. He put many, many hours into coaching his teams with much success. Not all pupils appreciated training sessions in Armoury field at the time, but on reflection most will acknowledge and thank Colin for the fact that he cared enough to dedicate himself to their cause as he did. Especially grateful should be those who benefited from the successful tour of Australia in 1995, largely organised and run by Colin.



As under-housemaster in Lyttleton, Colin was respected and appreciated by both CPM and GSJS for the no-nonsense approach he brought to that thankless, unsung job. He also spent countless hours helping tutees throughout the school with university and career choices as well as the day to day problems of living in a boarding school and studying for exams. His chapel talks exemplified his straightforward approach to life and religion and introduced a generation of Stoics to the mystery of Harvey.

Colin enjoyed hillwalking and assisted greatly with the D of E award scheme, including a brief period as master *i/c*. His final years at Stowe were largely spent fitting square pegs into round holes and appeasing those colleagues who thought their peg was being unfairly battered in the process – the job of a timetabler is a vital one in any school and Colin coped admirably with it at Stowe.

Perhaps, though, Colin's greatest success at Stowe was personal rather than professional; he found a wife, Belinda, and fathered a strapping son, Harry – a future scrum half for Ireland, no doubt. We wish all of them well as he leaves us to become Director of Studies at Tettenhall College, Wolverhampton.

SMcC

RAC

Tom Collins, Tony's son (not the cocktail!), when he heard of his father's appointment as Head of Wycliffe College, said: "What will the Headmaster do without you?" True, Tom, and your father leaves a big space to fill, big enough for three other people to pick up some of the pieces.

Tony Collins came to Stowe with his wife, Celia, and just Thomas, in January 1989, joined by Oliver and Rosie in the next two years, to run the Economics Department. He soon assembled, and rejoiced in, a Department of "all the talents" which forged a unified and harmonious and highly effective A-level 'engine-room' which stimulated high-flyers ever upward and received the less-able 3rd-choicers sympathetically, and did wonders by them. ELCT; MOMC; JLHJ all went on to greater things either here at Stowe or beyond and elsewhere. The sureness of his hand in these appointments augers well for his choices and judgement of people for the Wycliffe Common Room. He transformed the methodology and emphases of the Department. He was, also, a prime mover in the founding of the Easter Revision Courses, reserving a later week in the holidays to ensure those doing other courses could have unfettered time at Economics afterwards. An inspirational teacher of deep, probing thought and clear, easily assimilated digests and notes, Stoics' results during that time owed much to his command of the subject, the syllabus, the Stoic temperament and the 'exam mode'.

Tony's influence and achievements outside the classroom are varied and many: a strong supporter and contributor to Stowe sport (he lists, as one of his most satisfying moments at Stowe, the 3-wicket victory over Rugby by the 2nd XI scoring 168 batting second); the Cross-country team – his own performance in covering some 15,000 miles in his runs around Stowe, serving as a marvellous and muddy example, and a legendary tracker-down of miscreants and malefactors as, latterly, Second Master, his own smoke-free lungs and stamina easily outstripping theirs! – a strange irony, then, to be dubbed Dr. Death!

Tony was the catalyst and mover behind many initiatives, not least the 'policy wonk' on the original think-tank which later became the 1923 Committee, his own woolly bobble-hat complementing our 'coloured thinking hats': SMT; the main author and compiler of the Education Plan and its Reviews; Elysian Solutions and Educational Opportunities; a zealot in support of the Visual Education programme who saw the strategic and marketing implications as well as the educational possibilities. He chaired the PEAC and IT committees and was the driving force and catalyst behind the Acorn project; he prepared us for Inspection with SPIT and stood resolute at the reporting stage. He also sat on HALC and SC³. As Second Master from 1995 he redefined the role and honed up his people skills providing the pathway of communications between staff and the Headmaster's Office, imbuing trust and confidence in both the Common Room and Gothic Library.

He also most effectively bridged the two ends of Plug Street and the academic and support personnel of the School. His briefing papers to Committees and to me were models of clarity, scope and impeccable, though sometimes uncomfortable, logic – one would expect none other from a Cambridge man who was a Fellow at Wolfson College, Oxford for ten years and who claims to be an intellectual hybrid of Aristotle, Hobbes and the Scottish Enlightenment. There was, though, no keener nor careful listener and arbiter of the Sunday sermon.

I, personally, and Stowe School, Staff and Stoics (severally) all owe Tony much for his contribution to the functioning, provision, structure, thinking and reputation of the School. I shall remember with affection and warmth our intellectual wrangles, his *mots justes* and spider diagrams, dental details, etc. etc.

We wish him and Celia (of whom Tony says: "my greatest achievement") and all the family great success and happiness in their new life. Tom, you look after the Headmaster!

JGLN

CVC

Celia joined the Stowe community nine years ago as Mrs R.A.Collins, and rapidly impressed all with her friendliness, quiet modesty, and considerable intellect. Tony admits that she has the brains in the family. After a first in English from Wadham, she had been a College lecturer at Oxford for some years before taking up a five year post at Geneva. After only one year of this Doctoral Assistantship she 'retired'. It was a real bonus for us when she came out of retirement, three children later, in Autumn 1994 to become the Librarian. At this time the library was elegant, of course, but new acquisitions were soon lost on the many shelves of old books which were more of archival than current interest. Celia welcomed the challenge to bring more books to the Library, and more Stoics to the books. She found stack space, where none had existed before, and filled the shelves with loans from LISS(the School Library Service), which were directly relevant to our learning. An early idea to have modern shoulder high shelving all the way down the middle of the Library fell foul of Building and Works, who calculated that the weight would bring down the Gothic Library ceiling.

The library stock was computerised, and most departmental libraries have now been added to the database. The library is on line with its own p.c.s and CD-ROM drive. All this and more Celia achieved with the help of a Library Committee which she had set up at the beginning to give the Library the clout in budgetary terms which it had previously lacked. It is sad for us that Celia will not be here to see the full realisation of her vision of a centralised multi-media library in a few years time. Perhaps she will have similar visions at Wycliffe, and we wish her well in her new role there as the Headmaster's Wife.

GMH



DRF

Wellingborough School's loss was to be Stowe's gain when David Foster came to us in 1974 to be Head of Geography, taking over from a very popular predecessor, Tony Macoun (O.S.), and so it was greatly to David's credit that, to paraphrase the words of the great Eric Morecambe, "You couldn't see the join"! Under David's direction

the department increased its already good record of success, and with his fine combination of flair, imagination, organisation and great sense of humour, not to mention his abilities as a first-class, all-round classroom and field teacher, Geography became renowned as one of Stowe's leading departments. Though the kindest of men, when David was occasionally confronted by the idle, feckless and the deliberately ignorant, the steel would enter his soul, which he summed up as: "I think it's time to put 'The Frighteners' on!" It always worked. In the early days, he had a number of excellent sportsmen on his staff, causing him once to remark, sotto voce, to the writer; "We team-teach in my department; they take the teams and I do the teaching!"

In 1991, David was appointed to the newly created post of Senior Master, meaning that he was now responsible, amongst many other matters, for Staff Review and Professional Development (RPD), often referred to in those days as 'Appraisal'. In his usual highly professional fashion, David prepared assiduously for this task, a minefield for the unwary, where even a single false step could prove disastrous, for many members of staff viewed this new development with great trepidation and anxiety. Every text, guide and manual was read and researched thoroughly, every 'INSET' attended, and how he ever managed to find the time to sleep is still a great mystery, probably as much to him as to us. At his insistence everything was done 'by the book', for, as he often said, "That way everyone gets a fair deal", which typifies his highly developed sense of justice. Only someone as loyal, honest and totally trusted as David could have overcome the entirely understandable attitudes of many of his colleagues by his straightforward, sympathetic and sensitive approach to their problems, whether real or imag-

ined. The title on his door could well have read "Staff Psychotherapist and Dragonslayer (No charge for consultations!)".

Just as great batsmen always seem to have that little bit of extra time in which to play their strokes, David also had the ability to generate a touch of elasticity in the temporal world, no matter how many other problems demanded his immediate attention or presence. This endearing quality, coupled with his skill as a raconteur, put his colleagues instantly at ease, a mark of this most empathetic and experienced of schoolmasters. It should be remembered at the same time, David was also teaching Geography, responsible for the induction of new members of staff, in charge of producing a most comprehensive staff handbook, (virtually 'The Hitch-Hikers Guide to the Stowe Galaxy') and, in a continuing triumph of hope over experience, remaining a staunch supporter of Chester FC!

In his time at Stowe, David sat as chairman of many committees (and, having been a member of one or two of them, I can vouch for his subtle skills in this area), presided over the Common Room, and appeared at various times shaven, moustachioed or bearded, the 'Viva Zapata' hirsute growth on his upper lip once earning him the affectionate sobriquet of "Gringo" from his pupils. He was also a leading light in the organisation and coaching of Stowe's many successful tennis teams and, in years gone by, had even graced the boards of the Roxburgh Hall in staff productions.

Throughout his Stowe career David was always grateful for the wonderful support and encouragement he received from his wife, Susan. As a teacher, and indeed a headmistress in her own right, she understood clearly, and was therefore able to ameliorate, the great pressures generated by David's continuous hard work.

It was hard for us to imagine David in retirement, and sure enough, he brushed the rural regolith of Stowe from his boots only to exchange it for the tropical soils of Thailand, when Stuart Morris (ex-Housemaster of Chandos and ex-member of David's old Geography Department!) wisely invited him to become the Deputy Headmaster of his new school in Bangkok. We miss David and Susan very much indeed, but look forward to seeing them cruising around the countryside in the DRF-rebuilt MG-A (yet another talent!) and to welcoming them back to Stowe for many a future visit.

MW

RBJ

My first memories of Robert involve a very heated game of 'Diplomacy' during which three trainee vicars nearly came to blows over a particularly nasty bit of double dealing involving troop movements in the Tyrol! The event in many ways encapsulates Robert.

His passion; his fiery concern for justice, always to be found in support of the under-dog; his love of the military that he carried on from his time in the Navy, in his leadership of the CCF and his role as Padre to a local TA unit; his enjoyment of war games, his love of life and his sense of fun!

This picture does not quite do justice to Robert however, for it fails to include his love for, and pride in, his wonderful family. How Jane ever kept him fully under control remains a mystery!

It also fails to give due credit to his deep concern for the spiritual state of those whom he served both in the Parish and in the School. Stowe Church will long remember Robert's powerful and effective ministry which touched the lives of so many. The School too, benefited enormously from Robert's enthusiasm, and I am glad that he enjoyed Stowe so much that he has chosen to go into "full time" school chaplaincy. Lord Wandsworth School is indeed fortunate in its new chaplain.

He will be remembered above all as a committed pastor and teacher, who in his five years at Stowe gave of his all. A passionate Yorkshire man, who was touched by God, that his energies might be used in HIS Service! I was honoured and privileged to have served with him.

TMH-S

GGJD

Graeme Delaney came to Stowe from Bromsgrove School in the Autumn of 1993 to take over the Modern Languages Department and to oversee Stowe's development in a European context. He threw himself into both roles, developing ideas,



plans and schemes of work and pushing us all towards continental Europe with enthusiasm. He was instrumental in setting up a very successful annual exchange with our partner school in Bielefeld, Germany and gave strong support to the French exchange programme. He developed particularly close ties between the School and the Model European Parliament, and it was largely through his efforts that the MEP came to be held at Stowe in the Spring of 1997.

Graeme was full of energy and always ready to join in with trips, excursions and projects. His sense of humour and impatience for things to be done, not merely talked about, moved departmental meetings on at a lively pace, and he was keen to promote the awareness of pupils by filling the Modern Languages department with noticeboards, posters and pictures. When his study subsequently moved to the European Centre, he applied a similar policy and made sure that no one using the Centre was in any doubt as to its international outlook. In addition to his French and German teaching, Graeme took a keen interest in hockey, coaching both Yearlings and Seniors, and helping out on two hockey tours to Amsterdam. He also ran the RAF section of the CCF, and was attached to Grafton as a Lower School Tutor, later moving to be an Upper School tutor. In addition, he was a very competent horse-rider and enjoyed competing in shows. He had a strong interest in the theatre so that he continued and encouraged the annual visit to Stowe of the European Theatre Company. He took charge of the make-up for various Congreve productions, and we had hoped to see him on stage in the staff musical "Sweet Charity", but this was not to be as Graeme left Stowe at the end of the Autumn term, 1996.

REM

NEB

Nasr-Edine Behilil joined the mathematics department at Stowe in 1991. Stowe was Nasr's first experience of an English public school, having spent many years at the University of Algiers and then the University of Glasgow, first gaining his Doctorate in Theoretical Physics and then lecturing and teaching students. Nasr's breadth and understanding of the subjects which he taught were phenomenal, and he could turn his hand with ease to any mathematical challenge. He had a keen interest in computing and it was under his guidance that the computing skills of the mathematics department began to blossom.

In December 1996 Nasr-Edine and his wife Grace were delighted at the birth of their twin daughters, Salima and Sabria. We wish Nasr, Grace and their family well as Nasr leaves to return to university work abroad.

SMcC

MJH

Mike Harris came to Stowe as resident cricket professional during the Easter Term of 1985. Few people realised what an experienced and respected cricketer the School had gained. Since his first class debut as an opening batsman with Middlesex in 1966 he had scored in excess of 25,000 runs, played regularly in Middlesex, and later Nottinghamshire teams with world-class players such as Sir Garfield Sobers, Sir Richard Hadlee, Fred Titmus and John Murray, and had coached, toured and played in the majority of the test match playing countries of the world.



A man of considerable presence, his success as a player had been based on a simple formula combining the three factors of ability, knowledge and discipline. He was a talented ball-game player (in addition to keeping goal for Arsenal reserves, he played county squash for Notts), he knew which shots he could play with minimum risk of getting out, and he had the concentration and self-control to limit himself to those shots until he subdued the opposing attack. He had also been a safe pair of hands at slip, a more than competent wicket-keeper and an effective, albeit occasional, leg-break bowler.

At Stowe he preached what he had practised, and the past thirteen seasons have seen improving standards and better fixtures at all levels of the school game. The 1st XI have maintained successful records against some of the most competitive sides in public school cricket. Players of average ability have become good under his patient tutelage, and, for those of high skill, there was a wealth of knowledge and experience to draw on. The last few years have seen him shoulder the responsibilities of being master i/c cricket. Wintertime found him doing the same good job of work at the squash and fives courts. Throughout he set high standards, demanded full commitment, but was never heard to criticise unkindly.

Pasty (a nickname derived from his Cornish origins) not only brought simplicity and common sense to his coaching, but also to his life off the field of play as well. Persuaded that his inter-personal skills were ideally suited to becoming a House Tutor, he took up residence in Cobham but, on the arrival of his son, Richard, to the third form, was transferred to Lyttelton. His next port of call was Grenville, shortly to be followed by a final move to Walpole. It is a mark of the man that he established friendly relations and exerted a beneficial influence in all four establishments. The wheel has now turned full circle. Early in his time at he qualified as an umpire. His great experience of the game made him a natural for the white coat and for the past seven seasons he has umpired first-class matches during the school holidays as a member of the reserve panel of TCCB umpires. He now returns to the first-class game as a full-time member of the umpires' list and will be standing in county matches throughout the summer. Our sadness that he is leaving is tempered with gratefulness for the breadth of his contribution and the warmth of his personality. We hope that he is as successful on his return to the county grounds of England as he has been on the playing fields of Stowe.

GAC

MOMC

Before being appointed to the teaching staff at Stowe, most of us submitted an application form. Michael Chitty, however, sent a memo. At the time of its receipt it caused some puzzlement, not to mention consternation, amongst the members of the Economics Department and within the Gothic Library. You will perhaps appreciate why if I take you through some of its contents.



The origin of the memo was given as Room 5 138, MOD Main Building, Whitehall, London SW 1A 2HB. His job title was simply listed as: Military Operations, and in describing the work he did, Michael rather matter of factly said that he was responsible for – Deploying the British Army world wide. Under Reasons for leaving the army: he wrote “leaving the Army.” The memo was the measure of the man: crisp, clear, forceful and to the point. There was an economy of style though most certainly no economy with the actualite.

The Headmaster decided to appoint him to the newly created post of School Marshal, with its awesome responsibilities of processing late slips, filling in DES Annual Returns, shuffling proformae and fielding all sorts of miscellaneous chittery. Michael was also a member of the Economics Department – and it must be said that in comparison to the Irish Hussars he found us to be a somewhat loosely structured and irregular outfit. Here I should explain that Michael was unique amongst the members of the Department in that he was the only one of us who actually had a degree in Economics. And of course that’s precisely the reason why we made him teach Politics. To add insult to injury, we also insisted that this most British and patriotic of men should spearhead the Department’s European thrust so we made him responsible for launching and teaching the AS-level in European Studies. Emma Taylor, Jane and I took enormous pleasure – I think the Germans call it *Schadenfreude* – as we watched Michael grapple with all things European.

It is easy to list Michael’s many achievements during his time at Stowe – the list is long: He has been a key member of the Targetting the Prep schools Project Team; Chairman of the Leadership Training Team; A key player in setting up and running the Stowe Revision Courses; He is a hockey and cricket coach of distinction: and as a Free Forester an elegant and effective foil for the School’s bowling attack over the years. In the CCF he has run the Army and Advanced Infantry Sections: always ready to get his kit on, always the immaculately turned out cavalry officer even after the longest and darkest of night time exercises. More recently as ‘Michael One-take Chitty’ he has won new plaudits and credits as king of the late night cocoa party and star of the Stowe video. As I said, it would be easy to list Michael’s achievements: but I won’t do that. Instead I would like to return to the memo with which I started. When asked to expand on his reasons for applying to Stowe. Michael said that he was keen to work in a major public school capable of offering pupils a

balanced education and where the House is central to the educational experience. Well, Stowe is a major public school, in fact it is a great public school and one of the reasons why it is, is because of the work of Housemasters like Michael. Many of us will remember that Michael took over Grenville at what is perhaps best described as an interesting moment in its history. Within a very short space of time he increased the number of boys in his house, and gave them a much needed sense of pride, purpose and direction. Over the years he has built a strong and closely knit team of tutors and house officials, boys responded well to his enthusiasm and leadership, and parents respected his judgement and the care and concern he so patently shows for their children.

Most importantly Michael possesses that rare quality, what the ancients called “greatness of soul”, that generosity of spirit without which our common life can too easily become fraught and difficult. Above all he reminds me that one of the main aims of a moral life is friendship. It goes without saying that he and Louise take our best wishes to Ashfold, more importantly we hope they will take our affection, our love, and our friendship.

RAC

MOJ

MOJ first came to Stowe in September 1991 to take up the post of German language Assistant in the Modern Languages Department and he soon flung himself into the task of germanising our linguists as well as into the life of the school. As Under Housemaster in Temple under JSK a certain discrepancy became apparent to the trained eye as he displayed the uncanny knack of being able to see what was going on in the prep room whilst still being stood outside the Housemaster’s study. I am certain that JSK derived much mirth from their comparative tallness for which the most obvious proof was a hilarious scene in the staff production of *Half a Sixpence* where the latter was obliged to measure the former.

MOJ left Stowe in the Summer term of 1992 at the end of his year as Assistant having made a considerable impression on the staff in general and on one person in particular. On his return, this time to a full-time post teaching German in 1994, MOJ continued his whistle-stop tour of the Boarding Houses starting at Grenville and then moving on to Grafton in a free transfer deal. In his three years MOJ taught German to all levels in the school and helped to produce and nurture some accomplished Germanists and some excellent exam results. He was also the easiest member of the teaching staff to spot at a parent’s evening.

His knowledge of the school enabled MOJ to settle in very quickly and he soon carved himself a niche in the IT Department from where he was instrumental in setting up various new systems including Web pages and the networked TWO system.

On the sporting side MOJ had to be a basketball coach (and was a good one indeed) and obviously found himself in charge of high jumpers during the athletics season.

JLH and MOJ were married in July 1995 and MOJ got the opportunity to sample his fourth boarding house as JLH-J took over as Housemistress of Lyttelton in September 1996. As a Housemistress’s husband MOJ remains a part of the community at Stowe. We all wish him well in his studies for his MSc in Information Technology.

SJBA

Obituaries

DC-M (1907-1997)

Donald Crichton-Miller came to Stowe for the second time in 1958 as a highly respected and qualified public school headmaster. Having taught here also as a young man, Crichton-Miller was a Cambridge history scholar and rugby blue. He had gone on to win several caps for the Scottish national team, and, as well as being a captain in the Territorial Army, was a chapel warden in the Church of Scotland for more than twenty years.

Crichton-Miller took over the headmastership of Stowe at the age of 52 with over 25 years experience in the profession, having been in charge at Fettes and earlier Taunton, which he took over at the incredibly young age of 26. R. Snell, an Old Stoic and staff contemporary himself, to whom we are greatly thankful for this account, writes:

"It was with some excitement therefore that I called him



Headmaster when he returned to Stowe... I was eager to experience the injection of energy I believed he would bring."

Yet within five years, Crichton-Miller had resigned on the back of an independent enquiry, following a power struggle. What was seen by many to be an overly aggressive impact on his return, Crichton-Miller's domineering presence met staunch opposition with the hierarchy of the time. Hearsay of his imperious entrances to staff meetings and impersonal dealings with teachers perhaps unjustly cloud the work of an ambitious and dedicated talent.

However, despite his vindication in the report, he was compelled by the governors to leave on a charge of betraying a confidence. Crichton-Miller's authoritarian outlook and love for administration had led to numerous infamous clashes with senior staff and governors, and appeared generally at odds with a "JF ethos".

Following his premature retirement he remained active in the church and maintained close links with several schools, including Stowe, whose new headmaster, Bob Drayson, always made him welcome. His wife Monica, whom he met at Cambridge, also died last year. They are survived by their three children.

AMMS (1943 – 1997)

Alison Small came to Stowe with her husband Ian in 1979, and you had only to be in her company for a very few minutes to realise that you were in the presence of a remarkable woman and one who was likely to have a powerfully beneficial effect on the School. In her nine years here, she achieved a considerable reputation as a stimulating, demanding, highly respected and much-loved teacher of History. Although her Stowe years coincided with bringing up three young daughters, she managed to combine family life not only with teaching, but also with running the new Nugent House with Ian from 1985.

Alison's ability to cope with almost everything at once was legendary and absolutely essential in the circumstances. She was helped in this by Ian, who seemed to have energy in equal measure, and their partnership extended to the stage of the Roxburgh Hall where they both took a leading part in many staff productions. None was more memorable, perhaps, than Alison's performance as Miss Adelaide opposite Ian's Nathan Detroit in the 1984 production of "Guys and Dolls". It was typical of Alison, that as a fine leading lady, she not only gave her all on stage but also had great respect and consideration, as did Ian, for everyone else, both on and off stage. Opening up the family home in Chackmore for a cast party at the end of a performance showed yet another facet of this delightful trait.

Her dry sense of humour cheered the Common Room, her erudition spurred her pupils on to great exam success and her generous smile kept Nugent going even when the inevitable happened and the new studies weren't ready for the first intake of girls in September, 1985. Alison was never one to panic, however, and she and Ian coped as reliably as we knew they would. The girls rapidly came to realise that they could depend upon Alison to dispense justice and empathy in equal parts, and they developed a deep affection and respect for their Housemistress.

When Ian was appointed as Headmaster of Bootham School, York, Alison continued her teaching career, eventually becoming Deputy Headmistress at Queen Margaret's School in York where, to judge from the girls who came from there to our Sixth Form, she was as highly regarded as during her time with us at Stowe.

Over a period of many years, Alison refused to allow her recurring illness to affect her energetic lifestyle, but sadly it finally took her from us in the summer of 1997. The wonderful atmosphere at her funeral service and the numbers of people who attended were a fitting tribute to her immensely positive influence and the brightness which she brought to the lives of so many.

REM/MW

A TIME TO CELEBRATE

Anniversaries are a time both to celebrate and to reflect. Stowe has enjoyed many reasons to celebrate over the years and has become adept at finding the appropriate way. Solemnity often has a major role, yet the joy of lighter elements has also played a part. Above all, the magnificent house and glorious garden provide a natural stage for the performance of a wonderful variety of spectacles. In its former role as a private house, banquets, balls and outdoor events often entertained distinguished visitors and celebrated family occasions. Queen Victoria may not have been highly amused by the cold splendour of January 1845, but the Prince of Wales, forty years before, clearly enjoyed himself during his summer stays. In this century the school has developed such Stowe traditions in its own distinctive style, often adding, with a significant shift of emphasis suited to an educational institution, a service of thanksgiving and reflection in the new chapel, after its completion in 1929.

Meals have always been a key feature. In March 1923 a dinner was held to celebrate the founding of the new school. It was here that J.F. Roxburgh spoke so eloquently about the profound experience of the *genius loci* which would so influence every Stoic who would "know beauty when he sees it all the rest of his life". When the Prince of Wales visited in 1933 for the tenth anniversary, he took tea with the prefects after touring the grounds and addressing the school from the South Front steps for speech day. Commemoration dinners have also featured, such as on the Jubilee in 1973, when Lord Annan spoke with great effect, and the J.F. Roxburgh Centenary Dinner in 1988 with the Duke of Gloucester as guest.

Stowe is also well suited to commemorating events with the planting of trees. At the fifteenth anniversary in 1938, the Duke of Gloucester planted the cedar of Lebanon on the western side of the south lawn, while at the fortieth in 1963, Her Majesty The Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother, planted a liquid amber tree near the Temple of Venus. Ten years later the Duchess of Gloucester planted a tree beside the new swimming pool and at the Diamond Jubilee of 1983 Lord Chelwood planted a walnut towards Stowe Church, near the copper beech, itself planted by the Prince of Wales in 1933.

Each occasion mirrors the cultural ethos of its period. After the Archbishop of Canterbury had departed by helicopter in 1983, the school settled down to some lively "It's a Knockout" water contests at the Eleven Acre Lake, whereas twenty years before the Queen Mother had witnessed a display of swimming and sculling. Many distinguished visitors have been met by a guard of honour; the Dukes' Buckinghamshire Yeomanry has long given way to the school CCF, while the Yeomanry races in the park were matched in 1938 by a display of equitation on the south lawn by the Stowe Riding Club.

At the twenty-fifth anniversary in 1948 J.F. Roxburgh expressed both thankfulness for what had been achieved so far and sorrow for the great sacrifices suffered in the war. He looked forward to the changes of the new age and trusted that new Stoics would meet its challenges with "the love of man and the knowledge of beauty which keeps life humane and civilised in prosperity and adversity alike." Such sentiments well reflect the best of Stowe's celebrations.

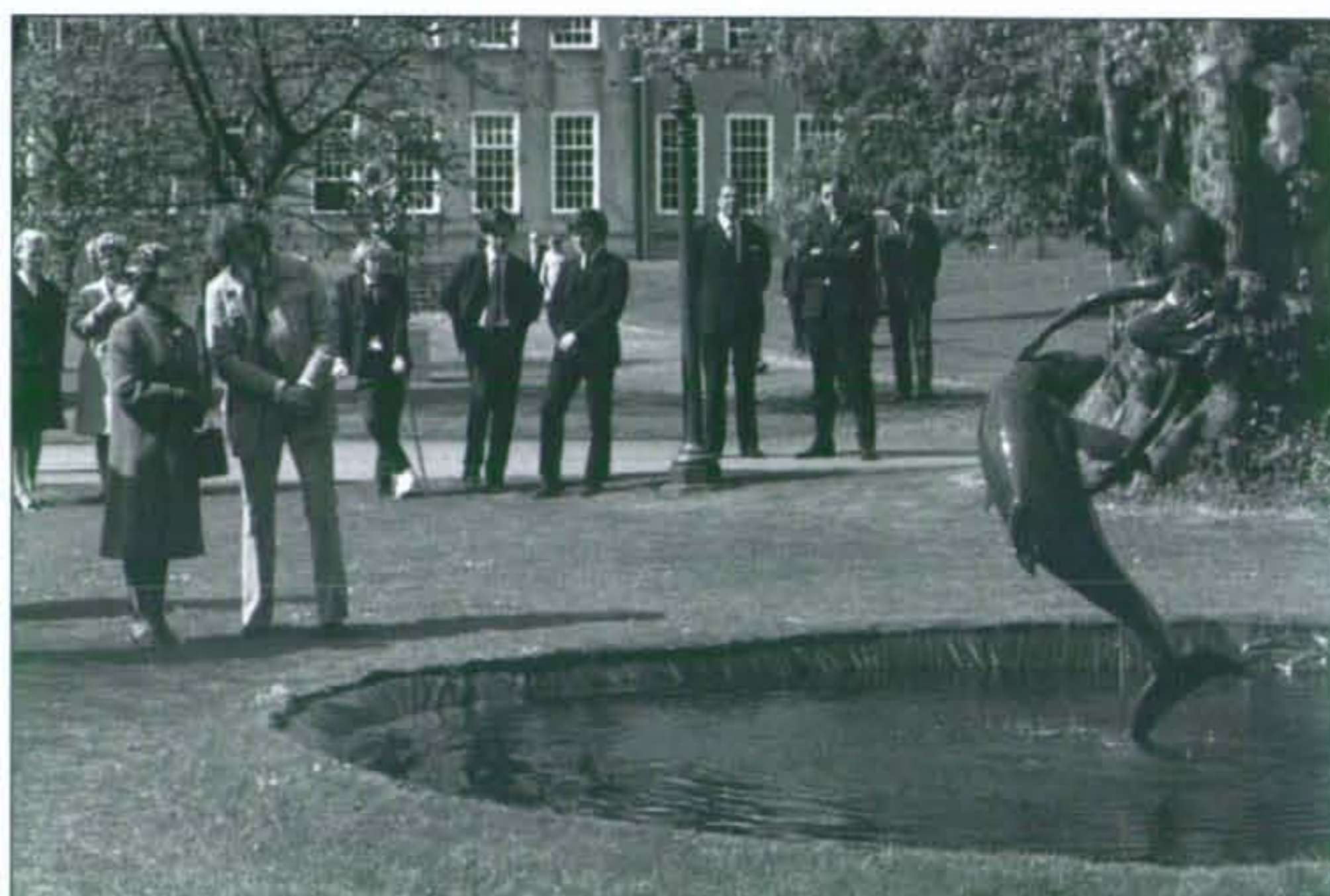
MJB



The Prince of Wales planting the copper beech, 1933. J.F. Roxburgh is on the right, Lord Gisborough (Chairman of Governors) in the centre, and the Revd. P.E. Warrington on the left



The Duke of Gloucester with Dr A.W. Pickard-Cambridge (Chairman of Governors) and J.F. Roxburgh, about to plant the cedar tree, 1938



The Duchess of Gloucester with David Wynne (OS) viewing one of his sculptures at an exhibition in Chapel Court, 1973 [photo: F.A. Hudson]

STOWE MEDICAL SERVICES 1923 -1998

Dr Chris Brown spent over 30 years looking after Stoics' health as the Medical officer. Here he offers a doc's eye view of Stowe's 75 years.

From 1923 infectious disease was the most important problem for the MO and Sanatorium staff. Most diseases were viral in origin. Measles, mumps, chicken pox, german measles, and especially influenza, frequently devastated School activities. The worst viral epidemic was in 1932 when the School was closed for three weeks by two cases of the dreaded infantile paralysis, better known as anterior poliomyelitis. The disease is now virtually extinct in the UK. Sadly in some parts of the world it remains lethal, especially to undernourished infants.

In the pre-antibiotic era general nursing care was the only treatment available for Infectious disease, and the heroic efforts of the Sisters in the Sanatorium were frequently mentioned in MO's reports. Sadly financial recognition was never thought necessary. In 1926 it is recorded that the School Doctor was worth £650 pa and Sisters in the San were valued at £90 pa plus board and lodging! House Matrons were occasionally mentioned – generally when they had to nurse sick boys in their Houses. One house matron was herself ill enough to be nursed in the San for six weeks; she then went into hospital. The House Matrons did occasionally become recognised by their Old Boys, who had them elected as life associate members of the Old Stoic Society.

Bacterial infectious disease was also a serious cause of anxiety to the MOs and Sisters alike. Pre-war the haemolytic streptococcus was a highly virulent and infectious organism which was responsible for much loss of school time. Scarlet fever tended to occur in epidemic outbreaks, but it

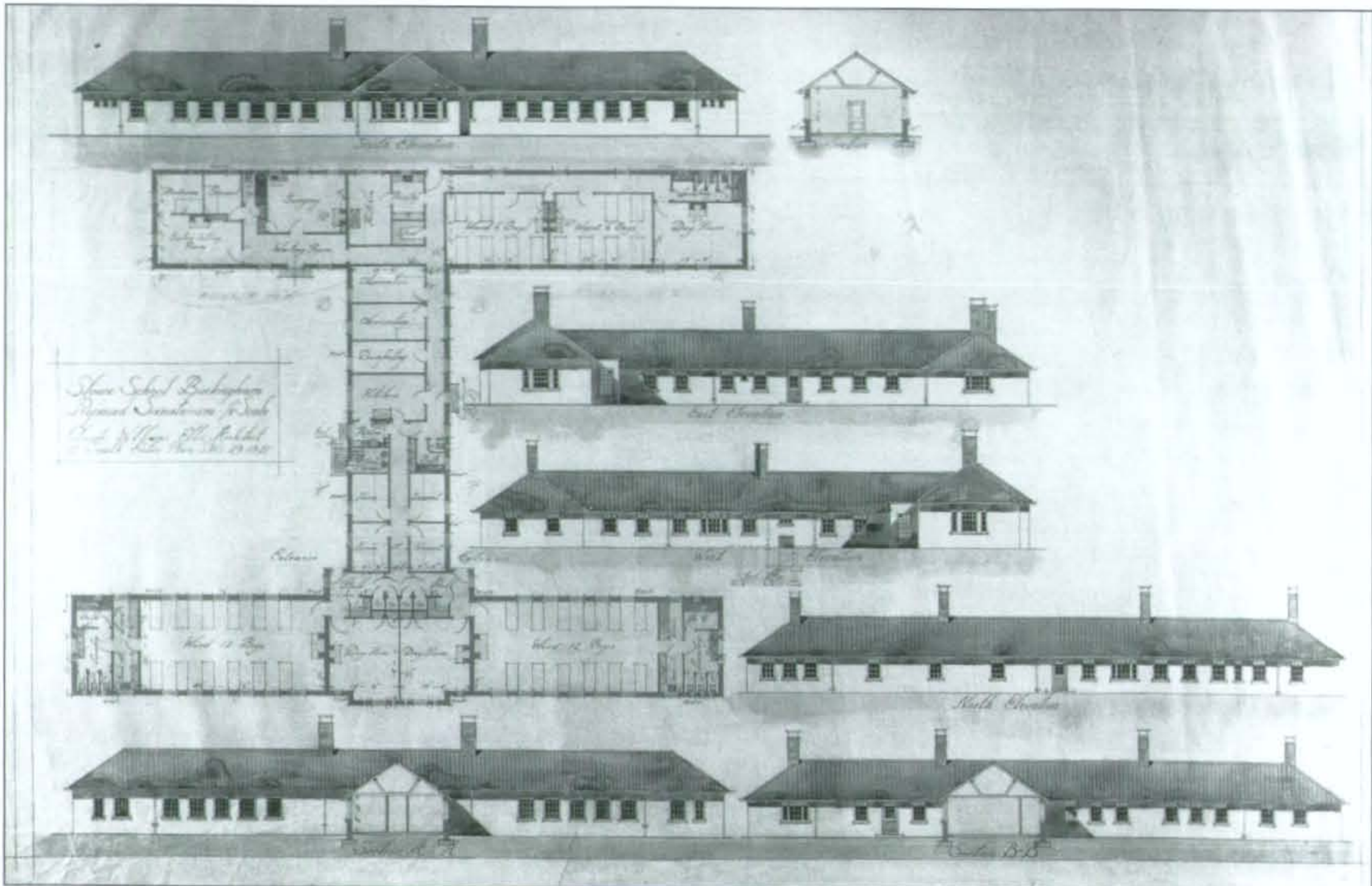
was the complications that caused real havoc. Acute and chronic ear infections, heart disease (rheumatic fever) and worst of all meningitis were frequent visitors to Stowe.

Injuries provided the other staple diet of the medical services. Whether sporting, or accidents around the buildings and Park, they have always tended to challenge the skills of MOs and San Sisters. An old X-ray apparatus was in use until the early 1970s; its use was usually to prevent a trek to an A & E Department many miles away.

The most dramatic events of the 1930s were the introduction of the sSulphonamides, and then in the 1940's the great miracle of penicillin. In 1944 a dying boy was admitted to hospital in Oxford where he became one of the first civilians in the world to be treated, and dramatically cured, by the "wonder drug". For the first 25 years it was an amazing fact (to modern eyes) that so much surgery, which would nowadays be classified as major, was performed on the premises. It was nothing to read of boys having an acutely inflamed appendix removed, in the San, or often in Buckingham Hospital. There are also instances of acute ear infections (mastoids) being drained in the San. The operations were normally performed by a visiting specialist, with TEP or JKB giving the anaesthetic. In the early years of Stowe as a school, there were often poignant reports of the deaths of pupils, during term time, and soon after leaving. One boy was at Stowe for three weeks only, before he succumbed to pneumonia.

Inevitably there are sad highlights in the MOs and HMs reports, where pupils have suffered major illness or injury. There have been at least three serious spinal injuries in 75 years, including one boy who attempted flight from an upper window! COMP saw one boy with unusually severe abdom-

Clough Williams-Ellis' plan of 1923 for the Sanatorium which was built in 1924



inal pain on the last morning of term. Thanks to his swift intervention, and the surgical skill of an Oxford specialist his life was saved. A few hours later he would have been on a long haul aircraft, on his way home. A young boy, practising cricket in the nets, stooped near the edge of his net, and was hit on the head by a ball from the adjacent net. He died in the San within a few hours. In 1980 eleven cases of fracture of the nose were recorded!

Preventive medicine has become increasingly important as various vaccines and other prophylactic immunisation procedures have become available. As recently as 1957 JKB proudly reported that ten such procedures had been completed. In 1963 BCG vaccination was offered: 33 pupils accepted. It is now commonplace to have at least 100 pupils per term immunised against all manner of diseases, including the tropical variety now so often encountered during School expeditions, or just going home for the holidays abroad. In 1965 there was the first recorded epidemic of tuberculosis. Since then BCG vaccine has become universal in the School.

The advent of female pupils in 1974 created its own problems of accommodation and medical care. Contraception has inevitably become available to 16 year olds, and more recently confidentiality has become a potential source of conflict between the medical department and teaching staff who are often acting in loco parentis.

One of the responsibilities of the School MO has always been the care of resident staff, teaching and domestic. In this respect, and particularly for the benefit of recently injured pupils, the developments at Buckingham Hospital have been especially useful since they began in 1976. On 7 Nov 1980 no less than six boys had X-rays taken at BH, to exclude, or prove, the presence of a fractured bone!

TEP, JKB and COMP always held their surgeries at the San after lunch at the 'Top Table'. In 1976, CRB changed this arrangement to 8.00 am, in order to allow pupils to be seen and if necessary to have investigations completed, before starting the school day. Masters in charge of various sports could then know whether their team selections were accurate.

Two Old Stoics have been knighted for their services in medicine; Sir Hugh Lockhart-Mummery was Serjeant Surgeon to HM the Queen, and Sir Henry Yellowlees was Chief Medical Officer at the Ministry of Health.

Stowe has always had problems with secondary care, due to its isolation from major medical centres. The introduction of Consultant services at Buckingham Hospital has been of major significance, and the improvement in transport has also helped. The rapid deployment of the Ambulance service has been critical in some life threatening situations.

The responsibilities of the MO have gradually evolved through 75 years of change. The antibiotic revolution has dramatically improved the outcome of so much infectious disease. The changes in facilities have brought their own problems. Imagine the use of the old Bathing Place in 1998! All weather pitches, indoor sports of all kinds, and the increase in sheer size and weight of modern pupils have all contributed to the illness and injury counts.

Stowe has had five School Medical Officers, all from the same General Practice, in Buckingham. All have belonged to the Medical Officers of Schools Association; at present RWEH is President Elect. In the year 2000, during his Presidency, MOSA will visit Stowe for the 2nd time.

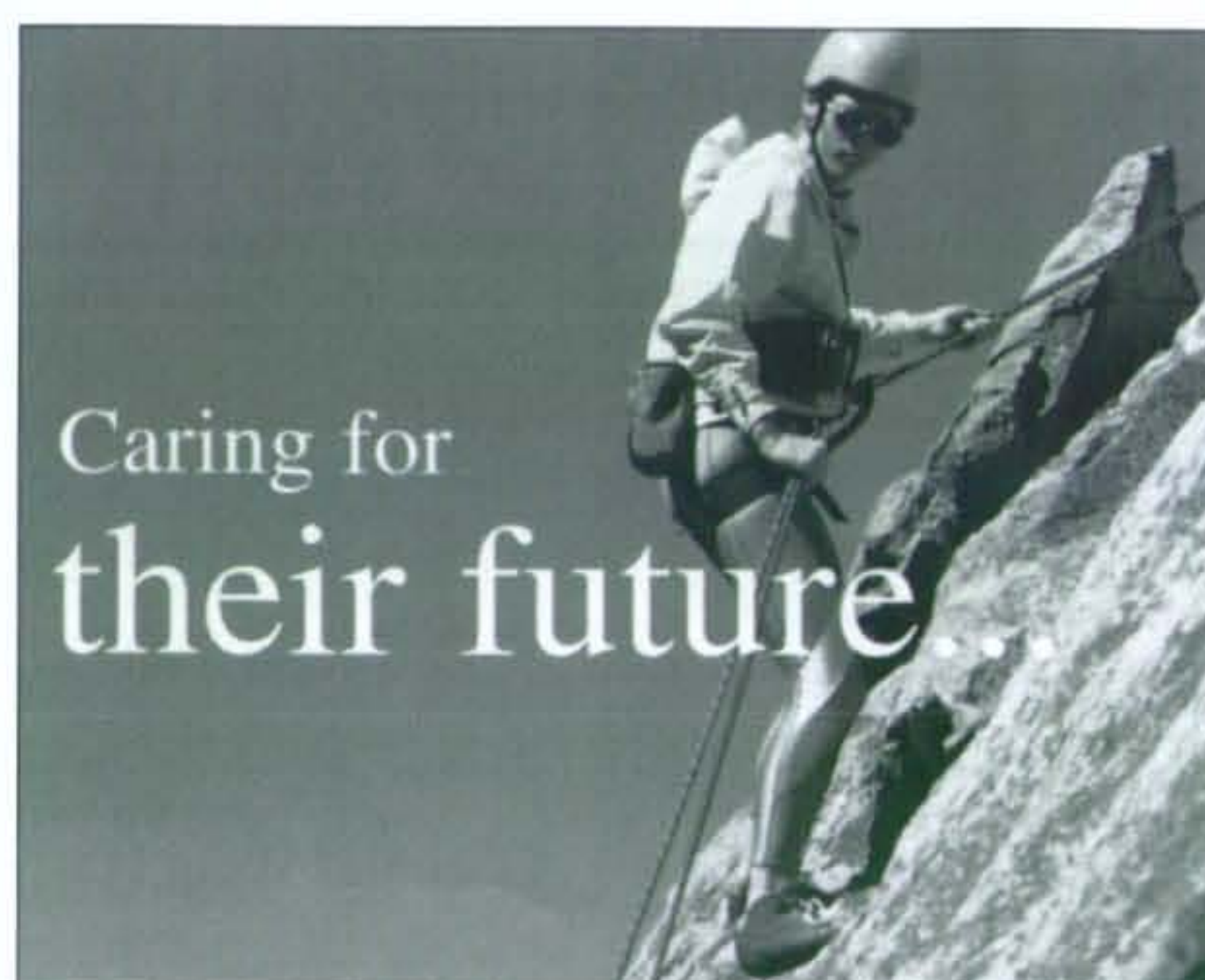
MEDICAL OFFICERS

Dr T E Pemberton	1923 – 1929
Dr J K Bostock MC	1929 – 1992
Dr C O M Priday TD	1962 – 1975
Dr C R Brown (Associate)	1964 – 1975
Dr C R Brown TD	1975 – 1989
Dr R W E Harrington	1989 – present day

SISTERS

Miss Traill	1924 – ?
Miss Buttenshaw	? – 1932
Miss Carew	1932 – 1936
Miss Quennell	1936 – 1962
Miss I Chapman	1962 – 1963
Mrs R Emery	1962 – 1976
Mrs J Wagland (Associate)	1968 – 1992
Miss R Rosser	1976 – 1977
Miss M Rendle-Short	1977 – 1982
Mrs S Kennedy	1983 – 1998

If this record seems incomplete, or inaccurate in any way, the author would be delighted to hear from anyone who can improve his knowledge. He was only given limited time to review the medical services, and some of the sources of information have serious deficiencies! The author is privileged to have been associated with Stowe for nearly half its existence as a School, and to have known so many wonderful staff and pupils.



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A RATIONAL MUST?

75 years ago Stowe School took on not only a stately home and education mission but also the stewardship of the magnificent landscape gardens. Ten years ago we enlisted the help of the National Trust with the gardens. Roy Chambers looks at the relationship between Stowe and that mighty public custodian of nature, The National Trust.

No-one can really have expected a perfect symbiosis to develop between the hordes of sub-paying NT visitors and the privileged fee-paying Stoic, rightly proud and slightly possessive of the 600 acres in which he or she is schooled. Yet are the horror stories of architectural decimation and illicit fouling of the gardens, both of dubious source, the objects of occasional hysteria or merely the tip of the iceberg? I paid a visit to the Bursar, Rupert Litherland, who willingly fielded my questions, and an adaptation of the interview is printed below. I initially asked him to clarify the aspects of the lease between Stowe and the National Trust [hence NT]:

In 1989 the Stowe gardens, including 39 grade one follies and temples, were entrusted to the NT coupled with a crucial £2 million endowment from an anonymous benefactor. The Trust have spent around £6 million on the gardens since, but it's worth remembering that they pledged to fully restore the site by the year 2000. There are several reasons why they won't quite achieve this, the principal one being the grant for the restoration of the Corinthian Arch from the Landmark Trust which has fallen through. They've come pretty close though!

So how much of a hold do the Trust have on the main mansion?

None whatsoever at the moment. Contrary to popular belief, the mansion, grade one buildings, and development strip etc. belong entirely to the School, and it's in fact SSES Ltd., the School's own company, which opens the doors during the holidays to the public. So while the buildings belong to the School as a freehold, the grounds have been leased back to the School for 250 years for the School's use.

What tends to compromise the relationship between the School and NT?

We in fact have a very understanding and amicable relationship. Stowe is in partnership with the NT to exploit the site as best we can and put the most money back into it. Trade-offs are what it's all about – the Astroturf is a prime example. We wanted an Astroturf – now we want another one – and in return we let the NT dig up the Palladian tennis courts and restore the garden there. As always happens with such places, people started to put listings on the buildings in the 1950s, as well as similar restrictions on the development of the Stowe site. Before then a number of buildings like the science block and Chatham were erected (which the NT hates), and the school got away with relocating the pillars from the then derelict Concord and Victory for the new

Chapel. Despite the Chapel now having a Grade II listing of its own, the NT now sees this as an act of vandalism.

From this emerges the NT's desire to restore the area to a certain date, definitely pre-1923, possibly 1843. The last thing we believe Stowe should be is a mausoleum though, which would be impossible besides, as countless artefacts were dispersed in the great sale before the school was founded. Anyway, any future development of course has to balance the ideals of the NT in preserving and beautifying the site while allowing us to maintain a viable school. For example, as the NT understandably wish to remove the science block, we require the funding and a suitable site near the "education zone" to agree. They'd also like the athletics track (the old kitchen garden) back, as well as the golf course, an invaluable asset of ours. Home Farm (at the 'bottom' of the North Front) is a much talked about site for development.

Doesn't such conditional dealing cause friction between the two bodies though?

Yes, it causes some friction, but in my opinion it would be the worst possible scenario for the NT if the School left. It's such a huge site to which the School brings many benefits, and the School, in the main, is a remarkably good tenant. You could just as easily value the main building, which after all took 100 years to build, at nothing as you could at £20 million. Very few people visit stately homes nowadays, and as an apartment block the NT would have an awful tenancy. We must also remember that historically the school effectively saved the mansion from demolition when it was bought in the 1920s from the Kinloss family; the alternative was to bulldoze it down.

What appears to be the future for the main building then?

There are certain people who believe the mansion is deteriorating at a rate faster than that at which we can maintain it. The School has launched an appeal to help restore and preserve the "house". The first phase of this is a £5 million two and-a-half year project to restore the North Front and colonnades. We're talking Temple of Concord and Victory 'quality' here too. A separate trust from the School has put in an application to the Heritage Lottery Fund for funding for this project. The success of this application will much depend on Stowe's attraction as a public site and benefit to the nation, rather than the public discontent it could arouse from funding such a place as this. In my opinion, Stowe itself is, realistically, not far away from becoming a world heritage site; as a landscape garden it is unrivalled- in Europe, at least.

Wouldn't such a donation take enormous pressure off the School?

Stowe would still have to find 25% of the project, that's around £1.3 million – hence the inauguration of the Stowe Foundation this summer to spearhead the fundraising. Although Stowe is a perfectly viable school, it could certainly do with a bit more money. One of the problems is its youth, and hence the very small Old Stoic-benefactor- base. However, the School itself has spent £2.75 million on 'heritage' since 1989, including the Aurelian project and fire protection. Both we and the NT are constantly trying to work together to get the best out of Stowe; they also are inconspicuously supportive of our lottery application.



Wouldn't extra money for the school and buildings weaken the NT and cause more friction?

I'd like to make clear that the whole idea of conflict between School and NT is quite genuinely over-exaggerated, and that generally we do have an excellent working relationship. I meet and discuss matters with Frank Thompson, the NT property manager every week and the Regional Land Agent Richard Wheeler regularly. The two bodies are always mutually very understanding. Of course there are exceptions: it's embarrassing for me if, for example, a barbecue in the Elysian Fields leaves a mess or if the Stowe Templars go for a skinny-dip in the lakes after their cricket match in view of the tourists – but these are rare, isolated incidents. An annual problem is Speech Day, when the gardens are re-opened on the Sunday and the full extent of picnic debris is unearthed by the public – it's a peculiarly selfish act by a few people which gets the gardener on my back. These are by no means "issues".

What do you think of as Stowe's future under this dual management?

Stowe is a unique place which both the School and the National Trust, in amicable partnership, will do their best to maintain and get the most out of for Stoics and the nation alike. I believe we are the best possible occupants of the building for the next 250 years and, subject to the direction of education, beyond.



BLOOD SPORTS

Some things will never change at a country boarding school – or will they?

The debate about the continuation of field sports, and in particular foxhunting, has never burnt more fiercely than at present. A recent bill to ban hunting by hounds is being debated in the House of Commons. In July last year a rally was held in Hyde Park by the field sports supporters, and a staggering 150,000 people attended. It was a unique and powerful statement by the countryside fraternity. No longer will they stay quiet and do what they are told, but instead they show that they are ready to fight back. The diversity of people there made a mockery of the claims that elitism and snobbery dominate field sports. Welsh sheep farmer, farrier and aristocrat stood side by side and bellowed their approval of the stirring speeches given. It was a truly momentous occasion, and I believe people will look back at it and say that it was the turning point when the countryside stood up and started fighting for its freedom. Freedom to do what it likes without being judged by people who barely know what a hedgerow is, and who certainly have no understanding of the countryside and the way it works.

A ban on foxhunting would have far-reaching social, economic and ecological consequences. For a start, 25,000 hounds would have to be destroyed. Hounds are not house-trained, are very expensive to look after and generally make very poor pets. So homes would not be found for the majority. Over 2,000 horses are kept in hunt kennels and a further 4,600 horses and ponies are kept privately, purely for hunting. It is impossible to say how many would be saved but of the older animals kept thousands would be shot. Instead of saving animals lives by banning fox hunting, effectively you are signing the death warrants of thousands.

Large-scale unemployment would follow for the 13,000 people employed full-time as hunt staff or engaged in the running of the sport. A further 33,000 are employed indirectly. The service industries would also suffer. There are over 9,000 businesses such as saddlers, farmers, horse feed manufacturers and suppliers, straw and hay merchants, hunting tailors, veterinary surgeons, dealers and horse-box manufacturers who rely on the sport for a substantial part of their income. In short many businesses and thus small communities would be crippled by a ban on foxhunting.

Foxhunting also contributes significantly to the conservation of the landscape and its wildlife. Woodland, hedgerows and grasslands are preserved for foxhunting. The hunt plays a large part in keeping bridleways open, maintaining hedges and fences, clearing and managing woodland and making an attractive habitat for wildlife. Hunts probably do more to preserve the beauty and the unique nature of the British landscape than any other organisation in this country. This is because the people who run hunts are generally country people who care passionately for the countryside and its contents. If hunting goes, the British countryside will be so severely effected that I believe it will never recover.

Point to points, puppy shows, horse trials, and fund-raising events are central to the countryside calendar. In deeply rural areas life evolves to a large extent around the functions of the hunt, which are a vitally important part of the countryside life. Ban fox hunting and without question the entire countryside will be in a state of turmoil.

People who wish to ban hunting base their arguments on the idea that foxhunting is cruel. These people see animals in human terms. This is a fake sentimentality that invests human feelings in all soft-coated, warm-blooded animals. The reality of animal behaviour has nothing to do with human feelings. A fox does not accept a pheasant's right to life, or a farmer's right to property. Animals do not have

The Grafton Hunt meeting on the North Front in 1929



man's sense of anticipation and this is clearly shown in their attitude while being hunted when they may occasionally pause to kill prey themselves and run on. Animals do not have the rights of human beings and to believe that they do is contrary to the entire workings of evolution. When the first hound catches the fox, by instinct it will immediately go for its backbone and break the spinal column, thus the fox will experience a relatively quick and painless death. Independent research has shown that alternatives to foxhunting are likely to be far more cruel and involve much higher degrees of suffering. For example, gassing and shooting can often leave an animal wounded for many hours.

However I believe this debate has now moved away from animal rights and instead revolves around human rights. Does one person have the right to tell another what to do involving something they know very little about and almost definitely do not understand? This is what has enraged the countryside and changed the debate from foxhunters versus

the anti lobby, to the entire countryside versus the anti lobby. This was reflected at Hyde Park, and I suspect the Countryside March will again show that to win this debate the entire countryside will need to be stopped, a near impossible task I think, and not a few people with red coats and horses. The countryside does not tell the towns folk how to live their lives, it would be inappropriate and arrogant for them to do so. They do not try to ban buses just because they do not like the people who travel on them. In the same way people who do not understand how the countryside works have no right to tell those who care greatly and understand the countryside how to behave.

Field sports are ancient and legal sports. They should not be banned. We must remember that just because one person decides of their own free will not to do something that does not make the act they avoid wrong, or themselves any better than the people who engage in it.

WILLIAM AUSTEN

ANIMAL SURVIVOR VERSUS HUMAN PREDATOR:

In Defiance of Basic Instinct

After all is said and done, right or wrong, today's society is dependent upon the slaughter of animals both for economic stability and in order to feed its omnivorous masses. However, there is an obvious line drawn – at least for the up to 80% of British citizens who oppose bloodsports and for the 160 local councils, including 37 County Councils which have voted against hunting. There is an obvious difference between eating the meat of one's local butcher, or wearing the leather of one's local cobbler, and watching one's dogs outnumber and destroy the life of another living thing. There is a difference between survival, and needless, violent killing. A fox must kill its prey, in the only way he understands, to survive. He is part of the natural circle of life. He is supporting his ecosystem. Human beings must also kill, according to most, to survive. Most would even argue that we are part of that same circle as the fox. However, the difference between humanity and the fox is just that: humanity. Somewhere along that long evolutionary line, homo sapiens decided that he need not kill animals that he was not apt to eat or use. That violent instinct to kill, is a long-lost urge within all of us. The difference between humanity and the fox, is the ability to suppress that urge.

Bloodsport is not the only manifestation of this violent urge. Consider rape. What is rape, but the violent urge of one human being, to take control away from another, and to inflict suffering upon that individual? Rapists are not out for sexual fulfilment. On the contrary, psychological studies show that most rapists derive an 'unnatural pleasure from inflicting pain onto another person.' Consider murder. Most murders are motivated by an unnatural urge for revenge. What bloodsport seeks to do is dress up a barbaric, violent, bloody, savage, primitive, disgustingly brutal event in the false Armani suit of a so called 'gentleman's sport.' Form, etiquette, and hereditary title do, in no way, negate the fundamental motivation for bloodsport, which is the violent, archaic urge found within all of us. We might as well all dress up in our best bib and tucker and make a polite social event out of gang-rape.

Have we not asserted, in our remembrance day services, that war is a bloody terrible thing, but one that has been necessary in the past in order to maintain the standard of liberty which we enjoy today. I ask all of you to consider the 'neces-

sity' of another bloody and terrible practice which in no way ensures the survival of personal freedoms or any other ideal. War is when two nations decide that their differences are irreconcilable, and that one is not powerful enough to force the other to comply. Bloodsport is simply when one or more 'human' beings decide that they must assert their 'evolutionary dominance' over another creature. There is no crime committed by the animal, besides the crime of survival. There are no preliminary discussions regarding a fair reconciliation between hunter and prey. There is simply the desire of a person or persons to play. In their desire for recreation, some have resorted to the infliction of pain upon beings they presume to be of an inferior nature.

Let us not paint this sanguine game a lighter shade of pink. In his epic novel 'Lord of The Flies', William Golding implies that bloodsport involves a kind of primitive lust, inherent in a society which depends upon pack hunting for its survival. We, as 'civilised' human beings are above 'outwitting a living thing, imposing our will upon it, and taking its life like a long satisfying drink,' as do Golding's adolescent characters. In a society in which violent scenes flow like water from the television screen, how can we tell our children that violence is wrong, while we splatter blood across their faces upon witnessing their first savage killing. How can some argue that all unborn children deserve the right to life, when hind hunting kills innocent fawns and pregnant deer.

Make no mistake: the fundamental drug, behind the adrenal intoxication of bloodsport is a barbarous human urge to viciously dominate an 'inferior' creature. We all have had this urge. We have all had violent feelings toward various creatures and things. But I submit to you, that it is our gift as human beings, that we have the ability to ignore this destructive urge or to channel it into something more creative. If we are meant to be superior to the fox, then we must not lower ourselves to his predatory nature. We are not animals. No, despite our apparent readiness to breed like them, human beings have been endowed with the contending – I would like to think stronger – gift of human compassion.

ANDREW CLARK

A TRAIN CALLED STOWE

My stepfather is of that early-40s generation which grew up dreaming of being a steam engine driver and never realising the dream. He's a jolly man and is surrounded by dozens of videos all dedicated to these Puffing Billies. I humour him, but unfortunately he has discovered that his pet steam preservation line – the Bluebell – which is not far from our home on the Kent/Surrey borders, has a steam engine named after Stowe School in its sheds and is awaiting money for its boiler to be rebuilt and recertified.

Actually, despite my initial reluctance at being dragged down to Sheffield Park (sounds more like the home of a steel works than a verdant corner of Sussex!), the visit to "Stowe" was very interesting. If you have ever been to look at a railway in preservation, you would know what I mean. Lots of overgrown schoolchildren dressed up as fathers, trainspotting with reluctant offspring wishing they were somewhere else, until, that is, a train arrives from Horstead Keynes. Lots of steam escaping noisily from 65 year old machinery which has been polished to an immaculate shine; whistles blowing, doors banging and eventually peace once more after departure.

"Stowe" is now in the sheds next to the platforms, parked, waiting; waiting for the necessary attention to get its fire box roaring again. Nonetheless, it's a magnificent sight in its bright green livery, in recognition of its days of as Southern locomotive.

"Stowe", a steam train built in March 1931, was designed by R.E.L. Maunsell. He had to design a locomotive which would be capable of hauling loads of up to 400 tons with an average speed of 55 mph. Maunsell knew the route which the trains would be taking so the engine would have to be able to comply with the severe route restrictions. On the Hastings route there was a

considerable width restriction of 8 feet 6½ inches. He therefore had to find a fire box that was thin and small so that the train was not made too wide. He endeavoured to use parts already in existence. The total length of the locomotive and tender which carried coal and water is 58 feet 10 inches. The tender weighs 42 tons 8 cwt and can hold five tons of coal and 4000 gallons of water. The total weight of the locomotive and tender is 109 tons 10 cwt. This class of locomotive was thought very modern and powerful and had a wheel-arrangement of 4-4-0, which was very popular in Victorian and Edwardian times. This locomotive was definitely one of Mansell's masterpieces and might justifiably be described as the finest engine of this wheel-arrangement ever to run in Britain, SO NATURALLY IT WAS NAMED "STOWE"!

From 1937 to 1962 "Stowe" was used in many locations around Britain, including Waterloo, Portsmouth, Bournemouth, Newhaven, Victoria and Brighton. "Stowe" was finally withdrawn from service on 17 November 1962. Lord Montagu saved it from scrapping and it was moved to Beaulieu, to stand with three Pullman Restaurant cars at his Motor Museum.

When a static restaurant was finally built, the Pullmans were sold off but the locomotive was retained in the family and went to David Sheppard's railway in East Somerset. There was a problem in fully restoring it there and The Bluebell Railway were able to carry out this work; therefore it came to the Bluebell Railway under a goodwill exchange of locomotives at the time to help both sides: that is The Bluebell Railway and the East Somerset Railway. The engine was restored by the Bluebell Railway and ran for ten years, but after ten years it is a statutory regulation that the boiler is thoroughly examined and the engine overhauled, and it is



this that is being waited for at the moment.

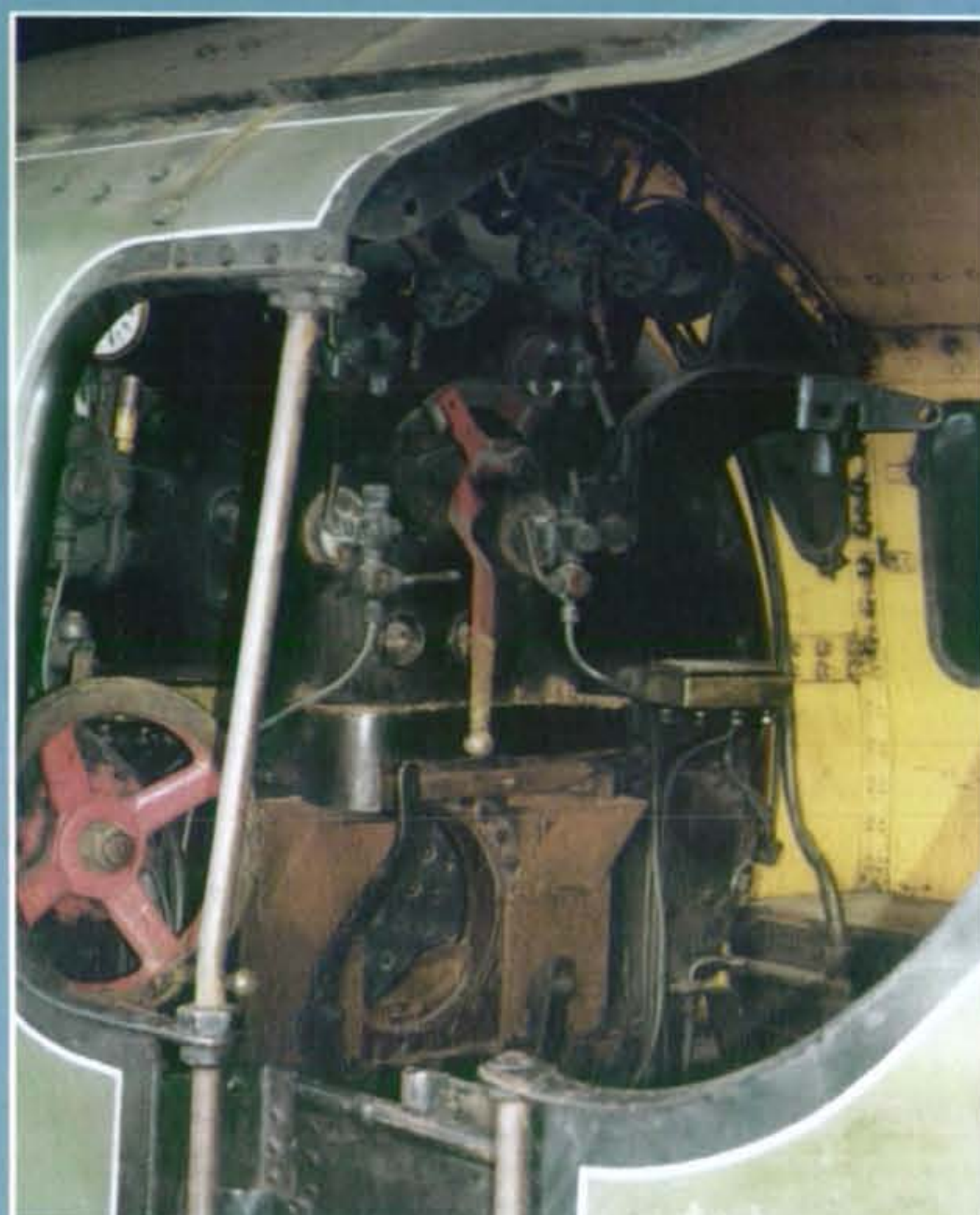
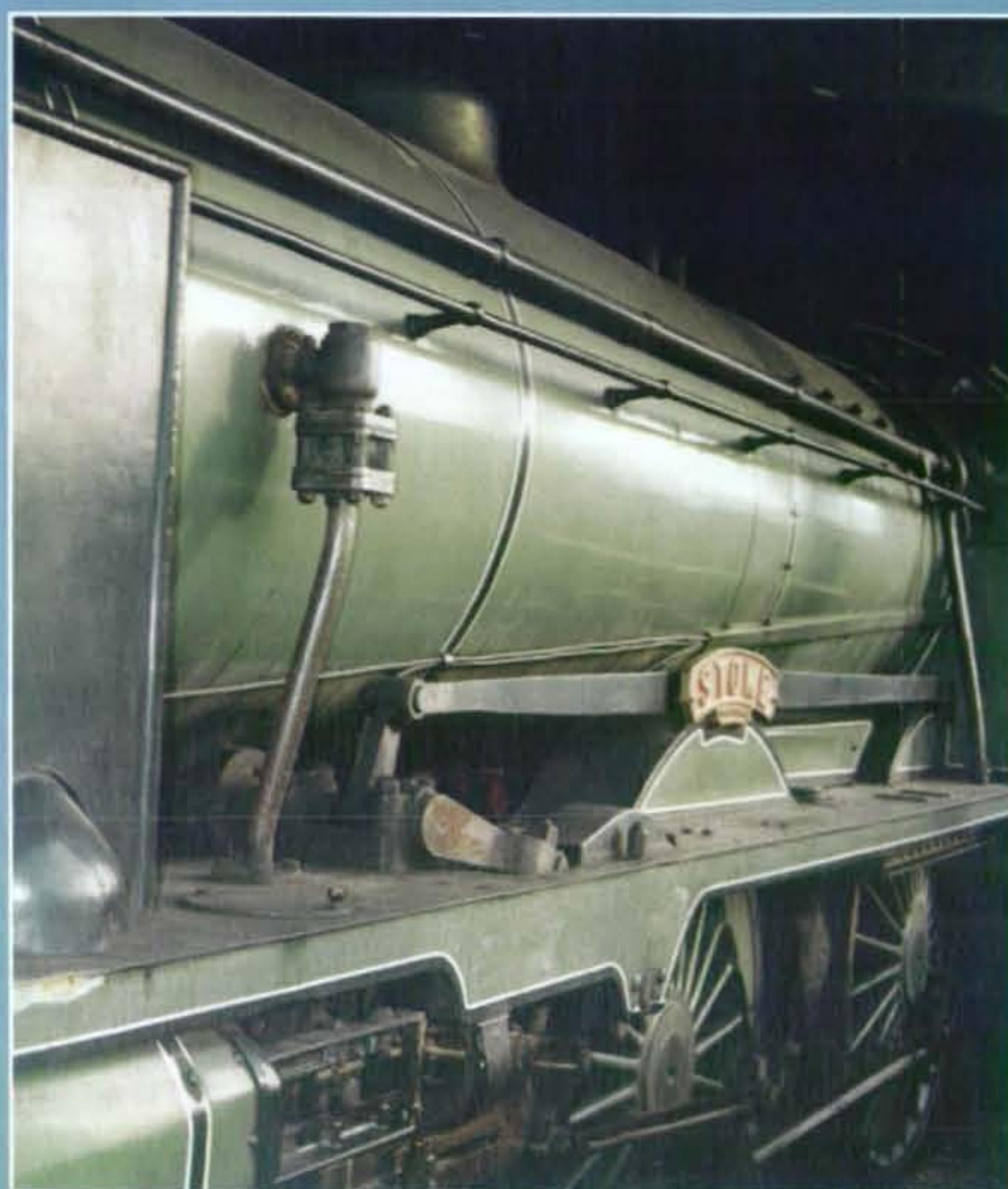
In total, 40 trains were built and named after famous public schools. The average cost of each train was £5374. The trains were called the "Schools' Class". "Stowe" was an express passenger locomotive built at the Southern Railway Works at Eastleigh. The Southern Railway had a policy of naming their locomotives after famous schools to gain publicity. Number 928 was given the name "Stowe" after the school.

So that's the story of "Stowe". A magnificent reminder of our past railway heritage; overtaken by progress but preserved to be enjoyed by Mums, Dads and Auntie Glads and yes, even me! My stepfather has got this daft idea that once it's back on wheels again – which should coincide with the Bluebell Line reaching the British Rail Main Line in 2 years' time he will drive it in steam back to Milton Keynes!

Well, he can dream, but maybe we could arrange a visit to Sussex to see it, and then, who knows, what we might be able to do to help. If you would be keen on helping Lord Montagu, who owns it, to realise a dream, send me your name, and if there is enough interest, I will arrange an outing to Sussex for us to see it.

ALEXANDER MEDWELL-BATES

Other schools to have trains named after them are: 915 Brighton, 916 Whitgift, 917 Ardingly, 918 Hurstpierpoint, 919 Harrow, 920 Rugby, 921 Shrewsbury, 922 Marlborough, 923 Bradfield (also called Uppingham for a short time), 924 Haileybury, 925 Cheltenham, 926 Repton, 927 Clifton, 928 Stowe, 929 Malvern, 930 Radley, 931 Kings, Wimbledon, 932 Blundells, 933 Kings Canterbury, 934 St Lawrence (also called Westminster for a short time), 935 Sevenoaks, 936 Cranleigh, 937 Epsom, 938 St Olaves, 939 Leatherhead.



GIRLS AT STOWE

Since 1975 Stowe has accepted the female race into its community to be educated with its boys. Things have progressed a great deal since then. The girls house, Stanhope, had no boarding facilities. Girls therefore lived with masters on site or in nearby villages, segregating the girls from the community. The school returned to a virtually single sex environment in the evenings after the boys had waved the bus to Buckingham off. What is now the European Centre though was a place for socialising in the day for the girls of Stanhope, one imagines much like the house rooms of Nugent and Lyttelton today, though unexciting it must have been before 'Home and Away' and 'Neighbours' started.

Not having their own studies, the girls had a prep room where the Career Centre is now. It was simply a large room with desks around its walls, like the third and fourth form house rooms of today. This meant that little peace or quiet was gained by anyone. But things did change, and girls gained slightly more comfort in portacabins in the quadrangle of grass between Stanhope and the Sanatorium. Nowadays things are quite different with girls enjoying the same privileges as the boys. All girls having twin or single studies for their whole time at Stowe, in official boarding houses on site.

This article is not just about the changing living conditions of the girls at Stowe, it is also about the School's attitude towards them and the girls struggle for integration and acceptance into such a tight community. When I asked Lord Annan, an Old Stoic, and author of 'Roxburgh of Stowe', what Roxburgh would have thought about having girls in his school, his reply was simple, "My dear girl! he would never

have even thought about it!" So for a school based with its feet firmly on masculine ground, it was a very bold step for those first girls who braved the oestrogen free environment!

Indeed, girls found it hard to be taken seriously in those pioneering years of the female community. Exam results were not as good as they are today. Girls' sport was certainly not taken as seriously by the school, and because of this by the girls too. Although today's girls achieve better exam results than the boys at Stowe there is still a battle on the sports side. Games, an area which brings pride to the school and is taken seriously by all those involved is still most definitely male dominated. How many people turn out to watch the girls' 1st XI on a Saturday afternoon compared to those who watch the boys' 1st XV? Even when there is no rugby match to watch and the girls' hockey is at home there is still never more than a handful of parents on the sideline along with the first team reserves. This could be down to the laziness of all Stoics in their reluctance to walk to the Bourbon, yet when the hockey is on the grass pitch on the North Front not much more of an audience gather.

When BLM was at Stowe (she is now a classics teacher here) between 1982 and 1984, she recalls things being rather different during the term time here. She is definitely an exception to the rule that girls' results were worse than they are now as she gained four A-grades (and went on to Clare College, Cambridge). When she was here, there were just over forty girls in the sixth form, including the Upper Sixth who stayed on an extra term, as she did, to take Oxbridge entrance exams. She recalls boys' attitudes towards them as if they were "something from another planet". With only one

Stanhope 1976





Stanhope 1984

or two girls in many of the sixth form classes it is hardly surprising that they were regarded as aliens! There was no official uniform or dress regulations as such for the girls other than "...a vague idea about it being below your knees". Rather than this being a privilege it simply seemed to alienate them more from the community. One only has to look at an old school photograph to see this, as BLM said herself "we stuck out like complete sore thumbs!" With our uniform, although one hears many a complaint about them being tent-like, at least we do not look out of place. However the picture of life as a Stowe Girl that I paint is rather a grey one. It was definitely not a life of complete segregation and unhappiness. There were, as there are today, great friendships

forged between both girls and boys even though we are now lucky in having a greater opportunity to do so. As BLM politely informed me "There were some pleasant boys – I mean in the love stakes!"

Girls here though still have a long way to go until equal standards are achieved. Until there are equal amounts of female teachers to male, until the girls' 1st XI have team breakfasts. The fact is that girls at Stowe have far more opportunities now than they ever have done. Future generations should look out for these stoic girls, who along with brains and versatility are well adjusted in a society where male domination is fast fading away!

FAY DAVIES

Lyttelton 1996



The Stoic – 75th Jubilee 1998

EUROPEAN INTEGRATION, MAD COWS, DUTCH DRUGS, MISSING BICYCLES...

Just some of the lasting memories from the Stowe Model European Parliament.



The UK delegation with Stoics
Mark Bowman, Nadine Tallala, Will Skidmore, Roy Chambers and Will Bathurst

The MEP foundation was created to increase awareness amongst the citizens – be they national or Euro – of tomorrow of the function of the European Parliament and the EU as a whole. Stowe, ever keen to pursue an international flavour, has had representatives at each of the preceding MEPs and was, as host, represented by myself, Will Bathurst, Will Skidmore, Mark Bowman and Nadine Tallala. The week was above all an amazing opportunity for personal development on numerous levels, as well as for making great friends with all our EU neighbours. Having previously met in the Hague, Paris and Dublin, Stowe was an idyllic and beautiful setting for the 1997 session, for the first time across La Manche in the UK – and I myself cannot believe it wasn't the most enjoyable...

What appeared to be an extra nine days of school term did not at first appeal to a tentative, impressionable, yet intrinsically (patriotically?) clichéd Euro-sceptic UK delegate. Nor did discussing the curvature of EU bananas or the social repercussions of European Monetary Union appear to be a particularly worthwhile use of the second half of the Easter holiday. Nevertheless, any other year the offer a free air ticket and quinz jours in Paris or any other European city would have been more than enough to draw me away from the south coast and its perfect wind and sunshine. The weather was, ironically for the UK session, a huge factor in the success of the Stowe MEP. Nine days of glorious sunshine and Stowe in the springtime fostered a wonderful sense of ease and inspiration amongst the sixteen and seventeen year-olds flown in on Saturday morning (only the French were late, later to be found, allegedly, in a pub). European integration was hard at first, with countries clustering behind their wine glasses (filled with orange juice) at the initial buffet supper reception. It was however, a perfect opportunity to meet the other members of the UK delegation, three boys and three girls from Cheltenham, Malvern and Sedbergh, all of them incredibly friendly, as well as intelligent. Team-building events and a spiced-up sixth form centre, (the

Grimbles moved in) helped to break the ice, as well as all the voluntary games sessions which were also on offer. As the saying goes, "when in Rome, do as the Romans do", and a wonderful chance to teach our continental colleagues the noble game of cricket presented itself, and was not without success. The standard of English of the foreign delegates did strike me as being quite exceptional throughout, as shown in the head delegates' speeches at the official opening- words were often used which many of us had never heard of. One delegate, the head of the Luxembourg delegation, spoke in six different languages, and at one time I thought she would carry on to all fifteen. Chances for some Oral French practice presented themselves, but it was mildly disheartening for your cautiously keen A-Level French candidate to test the water with a young French fille, only to get a fluent English response. The committee work was as a result almost completely representative and hence stimulating through all the cultures and ideas it embraced. UK delegates were never allowed a siesta though, as an Euro-sceptic view was almost always expected, and cross-national quarrels were often intense and contentious, yet always ultimately amicable. UK delegates, as well as useful walking dictionaries and thesauruses, in my committee at least, were heavily called upon for wording the final resolutions, the conclusion of the whole week's work, over which we deliberated and corrected for hours.

Tuesday evening saw a Marble Hall packed with delegates, politicians past and present and members of the press as the contentious Euro integration debate took place. The floor heard from distinguished speakers representing the British and more continental states talking on the speed and extent of further integration, while the proposition declared complete fast-track union in the interest of all members of the EU.

Honoured guests and renowned musician Lord (Yehudi) Menuhin laconically and clearly summed up the arguments with great style before the motion was put to the vote. Somewhat surprisingly, yet heartening

given the nature of the week, the motion was overwhelmingly carried and even the orthodox British and Danish Euro-sceptic votes were split down the middle.

Wednesday saw an interlude with further British culture on show, as a fleet of complimentary Jeffs coaches took us all for a visit to the capital. Many, myself included, were struck by the history and splendour of the Houses of Parliament, a timely reminder for us all on the mechanics and merits of democracy-British in particular! After a reception at the Guildhall, the delegations were later received at their own embassies, while the UK contingent took the leisure of further cultural visits to a few bars, and depending on personal taste, Fever Pitch or Star Wars in Leicester Square.

The second half of the week began with the privilege of assembly in the famous Oxford Union. Committees' resolutions were "aired" and put to the vote before the General Assembly, the mock European Parliament. Proceedings were presided over by esteemed President of the MEP, our own Mr. William Bathurst, and his team of vice-presidents. A firm hand and a solid chair were exercised throughout by the president, who was, at times, particularly acerbic and unmerciful on his "home" delegation. Euro-sceptic British favouritism it was not. The assemblies did provoke some passionate arguments and defence of the highly worked resolutions, the majority of which were approved. Numerous amendments to the above were also opposed though, and "open debate" before voting always led to an informed and heart-felt opinion. The resolution from the committee for Economic Affairs, discussing European Monetary Union was initially passed by single vote, before the mathematical realisation that one person had not voted. Mr President then

informed us that one of the Belgians had called off sick, and high tension ensued until an arithmetically nimble European pointed out, respectfully, to the president that he and his team had miscounted. On a recount, the vote subsequently failed by a significantly more comfortable margin than it had originally passed – bathos on Mr Bathurst's behalf I trust it was not! The end of the assembly session though was a wonderful climax to events, fate or higher powers choosing the reliably contentious women's rights committee to air their proposals- bravely defended by a convincing Dutchman. A successful amendment relievingly removed positive (female) discrimination from the clause, but the final document, amongst other things proposing female and/or male parental leave, was passed by seven votes to resultant applause and accompanying (high-pitched) screams. Mrs van Sminia, secretary general of the MEP, amongst several other distinguished bureaucrats, rightfully thanked everyone involved- in particular Will Bathurst, who following his Oxford Union presidency, she predicted, could go on to lead his country (Britain, I assume). He'd have to get past me first. The closing speeches from many "Euro-celebrities" then made way for the Disco and a wonderfully high-spirited closing dinner. Though memories post the Headmaster's toasts, while not unpleasant, were few and far between, the memory of this wonderfully enriching and rewarding week will stay with me, and I trust with all whom I experienced it with, forever.

Particular credit for the success of the MEP at Stowe must go to the marketing department: Bridget, Shirley and Anthony; Michael Chitty, Stuart Ayres, the Headmaster and of course Anna van Sminia and the MEP Foundation.

ROY CHAMBERS

The 1997 Model European Parliament at Stowe



NEW LABOUR, NEW DANGER?

'New Labour, New Britain.' For the past couple of years this message has been drummed relentlessly in to our ears by a party desperate to prove that they have lost their socialist tag of the 1980s. But has Labour magically metamorphosed into a new centrist party or does the enemy we know as socialism still remain hidden under the current façade? The fact that on May 1st they were voted in with a larger majority than Thatcher ever had enjoyed suggests the former, after all the electorate can't be that stupid, can they? In a word, yes! Though even I would be pushed to call 'New Labour' socialist, I'm sure that I am not alone in believing that we have not yet seen what *really* lies behind Blair's relentless smile. How can a party that was formed by the Trade Unions (and relies on them for 80% of their funding), desert their cohorts from the left? Admittedly they could rely on business men to give donations to the party, but with the Labour party around £4 million in debt, I wonder if Mo Mowlam will strike a similar deal with Mr Blair's new-found lodger, Gerry Adams.

Their 'Welfare to Work' programme, whereby the government plans to get 250 000 under 25s into work by offering them the choice of working for an environmental task force, taking part in charity work, going into education/training or taking up a temporary job sounds admirable. There are, however, two fundamental faults with this idea. Firstly there are in fact only 122,000 under 25s out of work! Secondly there are twice as many long term unemployed among the over 25s, and companies seem more reluctant to give jobs to these people. This idea pretty much sums up 'New Labour.' At first they seem to be full of bright new ideas, but when we dig deeper we find fundamental flaws and inconsistencies.

Though we are told that 'New Labour' is markedly different from 'Old Labour' it seems as though the former are making up for the latter's years in opposition. Since they have come into power it has been estimated that they have spent £8 million of taxpayers' money on entertainment alone. It seems as though anybody who is anything (or nothing) has been invited to one of Tony Blair's Downing Street parties. Around £100 000 of taxpayers' money has been spent on the refurbishment of No.11 Downing Street, yet the Blairs made

£250 000 selling their property in Islington.

The Labour government has shed their anti-European ethos of the 1970s and have stated that Britain is committed to signing the Social Chapter and playing a leading role in European politics. The Social Chapter is, in essence, full of socialist ideas, so is it any wonder that the Labour party are in favour of it whilst the Tories staunchly object to the whole idea? Whilst the idea of improving social protection for workers sounds worthwhile, the whole project will lead to Europe losing competitiveness against the Tiger economies of the Far East. Many of the decisions made will be made through Qualified Majority Voting, meaning that countries do not have the right to veto proposals, yielding yet more power to faceless Eurocrats.



The European Union is fast becoming an organisation with increasingly worrying powers, and the Single Currency is an issue which will play a huge part in domestic policies over the next decade. The Tories are largely against the idea of the Single Currency, though 'wets' such as Kenneth Clarke seem to have a similar belief to the Labour party, that we should join it as soon as it is practicable to do so. Though the Single Currency would ensure that transaction costs, whereby we change from one currency to another, are abandoned, and prices become more transparent, there are many problems with the idea. Britain is not the same as many European countries, whether socially, politically, culturally or economically. The last of these is the most worrying. With a Single Currency come single European monetary policies, whereby the whole of the EU will have one interest rate. This means that whilst we may want to raise interest rates to prevent inflation, Germany, the country most likely to dominate the project, may need to decrease them to stimulate domestic demand for goods. The fact that we have more non-EU trade than any other EU country suggests that we do not need to be a part of the project in the first place.

In Britain, European elections, where we vote for our Members of the European Parliament (MEPs), occur every five years. These MEPs are the people representing us in the European Parliament, the body that could well become dom-



inant over our national Parliament, and yet many of us have no idea who our MEP is, and fewer than 40% of the electorate turn up to vote in these elections. Perhaps the Labour government's position on Europe is not so beneficial.

The government is also in favour of creating a National Minimum Wage. Again this sounds admirable but may do more harm than good. It is likely to ensure that some workers receive higher pay than they currently do and that workers are trained to a better level to ensure they are doing a professional job rather than acting as a liability to the firm. However, on the down side it, will increase unemployment, as firms cut the number of workers they employ to cover the higher wages they are forced to pay. Alternatively a firm may choose to charge higher prices, but this will lead to inflation as people demand higher wages to cover the increase in prices. Regional disparities in England are likely to worsen as companies in the north generally pay their workers less than those in the South and will thus be hit harder by any new legislation.

Throughout their years in opposition the Labour party complained about how the Tories ran the NHS. They complained that waiting lists were too long and that too many people were waiting for operations. In June 1997 there were 380 people waiting for an operation for more than 18 months, the maximum set out in the Patients' Charter, and waiting times were down to an average of four months, the lowest ever. In December 1997, once the Labour government had settled in, there were over 800; well done 'New Labour!' They also complained about the internal market set up by the Tories in the early 1980s. The Tories created a system whereby the role of purchaser and provider was split, the former resting with GPs and the latter with the hospitals. Labour's new system of locality commission groups does not remove this internal market, it merely changes the scale of it.

'New Labour' has promised to ban tobacco advertising because smoking is the greatest single cause of premature death in the UK. If banning the advertisement of a product is the way to stop its use then why to thousands of people use illegal drugs? I don't see billboards with adverts for ecstasy and heroine. Surely a better idea would be to raise the legal purchasing age of cigarettes to eighteen!

Some of you will no doubt argue that I'm being rather cynical; perhaps I am! However, it seems to me that 'New Labour' is a mere mirage, it looks so real and assuring, but when we reach out for its help it isn't there.

If 'New Labour' is going to make a mess of things what are our alternatives? Let's be honest: the Liberal Democrats are unlikely to form a government for another millennium, despite the Labour government's pledge to hold a referendum on electoral reform.

But what of the Tories? The party that brought us great leaders such as Churchill and Thatcher has now brought us Hague, William Hague. It seems as though everything he has done has contained one mistake or another. His appearance at Thorpe Park with baseball cap did him more harm than good, and even his living arrangements with his then fiancée, Ffion Jenkins, came under scrutiny. His primary job at

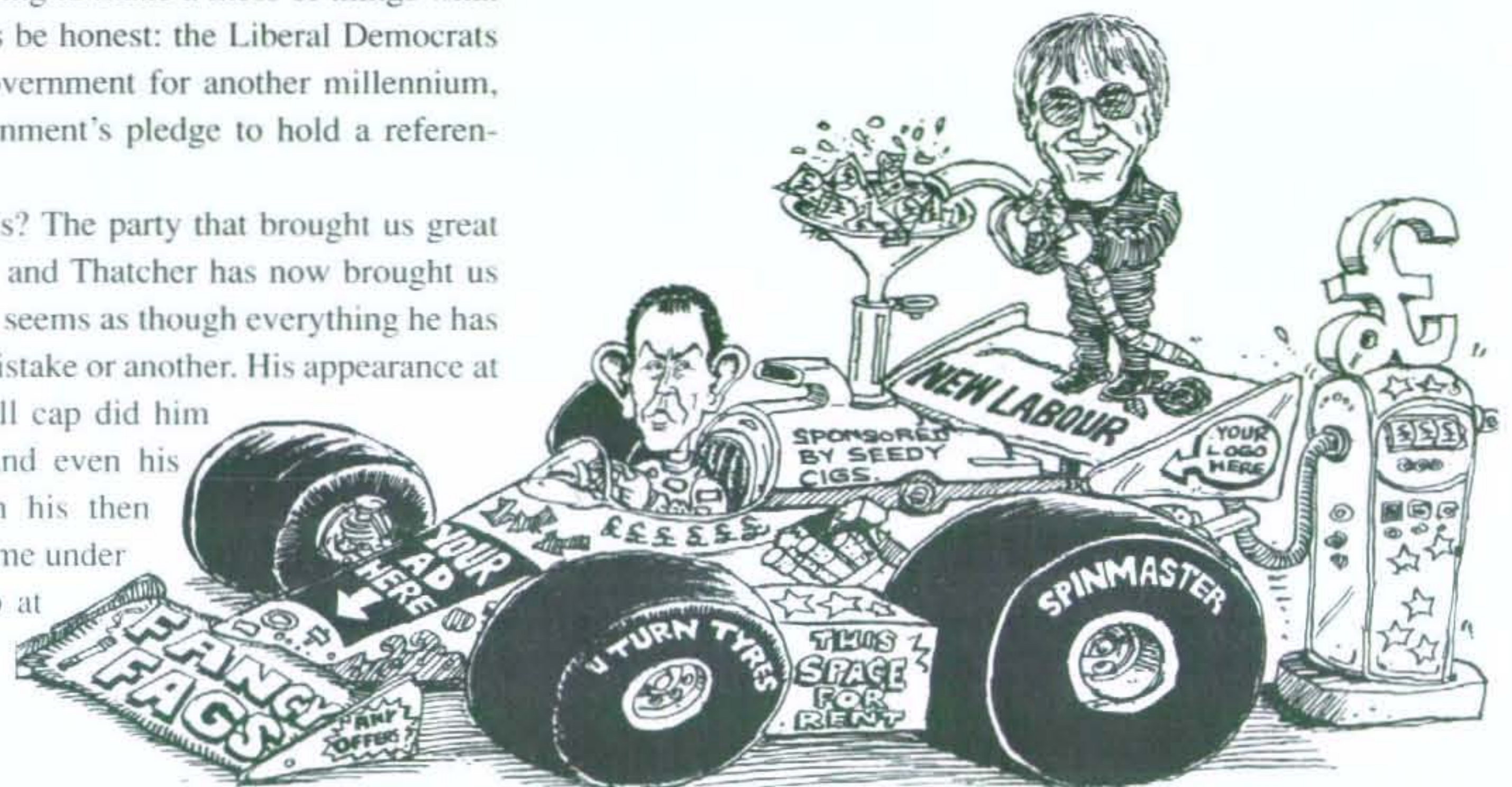


the moment must be to create a united Conservative Party, a party which gives the electorate confidence, rather than the shambles we currently see before us. The Party's primary aim must be to get rid of Hague and find a leader who can do the above and modernise a party whose members average age is currently 64. Who should this man (or woman) be, you may ask? Personally I'd like to see someone from the right of the party, someone who will ensure that we remain opposed to the Single Currency, and someone who would give the electorate more confidence than Hague. Unfortunately the only man for this job is not, at the moment, an MP. The man I'm talking about is of course Michael Portillo, and with him at the helm of the party the Tories might just stand a chance of winning the next General Election.

I can only hope that come the next General Election, the electorate rectifies their mistake of 1997, the Tories sort out their internal divisions, and are back where they belong, in government.

MARK BOWMAN

THANKS TO THE *ECONOMIST* FOR THE CARTOONS



Tom Stoppard's

Arcadia

at
Stowe



'A play of ideas, of consummate
theatricality and of heartache
for time never to be regained'

Sunday Times

The Jubilee Play -

11 - 17 July 1998

Contact the Box Office: 01280 813650

Tickets: £12.00 (Concessions £8.00)

Sir Tom Stoppard's *Arcadia* surely owes something of its germination to the playwright's time at Stowe as a parent, when he was frequently on the Landscape Gardens' touchlines. It is a glorious blend of enquiry, scholarship, debate, beauty, drama and good fun, set amid the re-fashioning of the landscape gardens of an 18th century mansion and the 20th century interpretation of events. As such, it is the perfect jubilee play for Stowe. In a typically enterprising and enthusiastic way, Arvind David (OS) is masterminding the production simply because he thought it would be a good thing to do, and various other Old Stoics and current staff have joined in for the same reason. One of the cast even studied the play for her English A-level here two years ago! The Marble Hall and South Front provide the setting that must be the play's spiritual home.

RICHARD BRANSON

Mr. Richard Branson, O.S. and multi-millionaire, remembering his own days of trying to procure interviews with famous people for a student magazine, graciously agreed to see us at his country pad one Sunday. Dictaphone obligingly in lap, he got us to summarise briefly the changes the school has experienced over the thirty years since he left. We were curious, naturally, what he thought of Stowe when he was here.

Well I think – I'm sure that lots of people got a lot out of it, but I personally didn't enjoy being forced to do things that I felt were just wasting my time. I started a magazine with Johnny Holland-Gems, who's recently written *Mars Attacks*. He was a very good writer, and we spent a couple of years preparing and working on it, and then I spoke to a man called Gavin Maxwell, who gave a prize every year and came down to present it. As I was going out to lunch with him I said that I was thinking of leaving to run the magazine, and he said: 'Well, why not? Give it a go.' So, I quit. But I think if there had been girls in the sixth form I would have stayed!

So what did he do after he was done with Stowe?

I carried on with the magazine for about four years, and it became the main magazine for young people. We had people in every university and school selling it; they would get fifty percent of the cover price and then they would send back – or they were meant to send back – the other fifty percent. It got quite a big circulation, and we got up to 100,000 copies per issue. We worked out of a basement in London – in fact it was Johnny Holland-Gems' parents' basement. There was a big boiler in the middle of the room so we slept there and worked there – and actually had a lot of fun as well. Because we didn't have any money to bring the magazine out we had to sell enough advertising to cover its costs: somehow we managed to cudgel about £5000 worth of advertising

Roy Chambers, Fay Davies, Richard Branson, Simon Post, Anna Kenyon & Armand David



from banks and others who wanted students for jobs, and that got the magazine out. Then we'd go banging on the doors of famous people for interviews – sometimes we'd contact them and sometimes we'd just hear that they were in England and turn up at their hotel room. We had massive tape recorders in those days! We actually managed to get quite a lot of good interviews. Since I wasn't a very good writer, if Johnny wasn't around I would just reprint their words word for word rather than giving any atmosphere, which seemed to work quite well anyway.

From the Student, he moved on to the musical arena.

Well, then a young artist came along with a tape – he was fifteen, and I was seventeen or eighteen at the time – and it sounded wonderful, beautiful – so we sent him off to record companies to try and get a record deal, but nobody wanted to sign him. So, we thought that we'd start our own little record company to put his music out. That album, which was called *Tubular Bells*, did enormously well – the artist was called Mike Oldfield. Then we started off a mail order company selling records cheaply to the public; Edward Heath had abolished Retail Price Maintenance which meant that you could actually sell products at a price less than the manufacturer's recommendation, so we were the first people to sell records at a discount. It was actually part of the magazine. Then there was a strike of the postal workers, so we couldn't send our records out. So, we went off down Oxford Street and found a little business space. We couldn't afford to rent a proper shop, so we found some space above a shoe-shop and asked whether we could stock it full of records. The owner thought that he could sell lots of shoes if we did, so he said yes, and of course we were the only place in the country selling records cheaper – we had queues of people outside the shop, and it did quite well.

So was it his musical interest that led him into the music industry?

I'm actually tone deaf! I've always advocated that when people go into businesses they should just go into something which they hold an absolute fascination for. I've always liked music, but because I didn't spend a lot of time at school listening to records, or going to university and listening, I didn't have the sort of grounding that most people have. I was fortunate that a cousin who came from South Africa called Simon Draper just loved music, and so in a sense I used him as my ears. He could differentiate whether a new band was completely original or not – I just knew whether or not I liked it. Over the years we've signed up about 200 bands. We were signing bands that we liked, and quite a lot of them were unknown at the time. Peter Gabriel, UB40, Phil Collins – the Rolling Stones were known when we signed them – Janet Jackson, Lenny Kravitz, more recently the Spice Girls... some of the bands we signed because we liked their music, Simple Minds for instance, and others perhaps slightly more cynically because we thought they'd be commercially successful. The most successful bands were generally bands that people really liked; because they liked the music they'd be willing to work long hours to make them successful. We had the Sex Pistols... the list goes on.

How does RB lead on from one thing to the next? Does he say, 'Well, I've done Virgin Music, so now I'll do Virgin Computer Games.'?

In the early days things led on quite naturally. You had a recording artist who needed a recording studio, so rather than using somebody else's recording studio we'd build our own. The recording artist needs to make videos, so we'd build video-editing suites to make videos of the artist. The recording artist needs music publishing, so we'd set up music publishing companies. He'd need foreign companies to distribute the product abroad, so we'd set up foreign companies. He'd need to merchandise his products, so we'd set up a merchandising company. So as well as most companies who just license the product to other people's companies, we wanted to be in control of all aspects of an artist's career, and set up companies across the board: within one company you'd have another. Leading on from the holiday company and using the – I think – rather good name Virgin, you come up with 'Virgin Snow', a skiing company. Some of our companies have literally evolved because of our name – although we didn't use the name on one or two of our companies: we decided to go into the condom business and decided that 'Virgin Condoms' might be done under the Trade Descriptions act! We set up a model agency, and the girl who ran it felt that 'Virgin Girls' was not quite right. Other names, like 'Virgin Brides', for instance, was quite a fun name for a company – all the girls who come in seem to end up getting pregnant, so we thought we'd set up 'Virgin Babies' next door! Many years ago I got a letter from the headmaster of Stowe, asking if we'd fund the first Girls' house at Stowe. We wrote back saying that we'd be happy to do it, but obviously the house had to be named after our company. We never got a reply! Headmaster?

How much pressure is there at the head of such a massive business?

Pressure – I don't think there's much. I don't see myself as running a business somehow – it's really a way of life and a way of challenging myself: it's like going to university and having a crash course in the financial services, and the financial services industry. I've just got into the train industry – that's bad: train industry, crash course... Anyway, it's just one long learning process, meeting new people. It's fantastic being in the position we are, being able to give a train service. We really think that we can transform the way trains are run in this country – and it does need doing.

They're red trains?

It'll be three years before they'll be delivered; they're called tilting trains, going sixty miles per hour faster than the current trains. They will be red, and Virgin; we're running them up the west coast of England, and we're trying to change the train industry in the same way that the airline industry has moved in the last few years.

Is he as motivated as when he started?

For most of my life I've been struggling to survive, and even up to the last few years I've always thought that the whole lot could go belly-up. If you don't have financial backing, things can get quite tricky at times. Now, in the last handful of years, we've climbed over the wall, and it would be very, very difficult for anybody to put us out of business. We've broken our business up into separate companies, so if the worst came to the worst and we made a massive mistake with one company, it wouldn't bring everything else tumbling down. So

now, it's not so much a struggle for survival but a struggle to create the best companies with the best values to shake up some of the big jams. We're trying to knock Coca-Cola into number two position, and that's an exciting challenge. If I ever lost interest... If the top person in a company is enjoying it, having a good time, is smiling, happy and cheerful then that will ricochet all the way down. The moment the top person starts getting boring and not enjoying what he's doing, then that again is a ricocheting-down effect, so if you are leading people you've got to be enjoying what you're doing. If I ever really did lose it, then I would definitely have to step aside and let somebody else, who's got that enthusiasm, take over. That enthusiasm is addictive, and likewise the reverse is true as well.

What does RB do in an average day at work?

Well it's very varied, which is what makes it fun. We're just starting a new record company and as chairman the work includes getting new branches going, fire-fighting when there's a problem, promoting what you've got – if you create something which you're proud of, you've got to get out and make sure the world knows about it. Virgin doesn't hide its laurels – we get out there and shout out what we're doing and come up with inventive ways of trying to put Virgin on the map. Building a strong brand name that's well known is very much an important part of the business. I travel a lot abroad: I'm on the move a lot: it's one of the advantages of running an airline!

What's entrepreneuring like as an occupation? Would he recommend it?

Yes, although it's perilous. I think that you have to accept that most people fail at some stage in the process, and most famous entrepreneurs in America have been bankrupt at least once, but they've picked themselves up and learnt from their mistakes and gone on to create great companies. I don't think one can just sit back – I think the key in life is to try to do what you enjoy doing as much as possible. You spend most of your life working, so you should try to go along the path of the thing you're interested in most, rather than try to change paths. If you feel that there's a gap in the market, people aren't doing something very well and you feel reasonably passionately about something, then it's worth giving it a try. Alternatively start off working within somebody else's company, learn the ropes, then go off and try doing it yourself. I would not swap it for anything, but I have been very fortunate. The conventional way of running businesses in England is to stay in what you know, and that's it: you never stray. For many years we thought that was the case, but then we got bored with doing it that way and found it more interesting to stray a bit.

Regrets?

I don't think so... First of all, I'm the kind of person that shuts out any bad things that have happened – I just don't remember them. I always try to think positively, so generally speaking I can never remember my mistakes! There have been plenty of them, though! I suppose the biggest regret was selling Virgin records, the record company itself, which we sold at a time when BA were really trying to pressurise the airline and we needed resources to protect ourselves. In a sense, though, I don't regret it, because we're now coming back and starting it again, and I quite like the challenge. I sometimes think that I've got regrets, but when I think of some others, we've been pretty goddamn lucky. So, um, I really don't regret anything!

Does he like his media image?

I think the press is apt to being quite kind to people until they've built them up, and then they knock them down. We try to be quite open with the media and have a fairly honest, open relationship with them, which seems to work quite well. They're there to do a job, and we know that they're watching all the time; they play a valuable role in England in keeping business people and politicians on their toes.

Two years ago, he appeared in more headlines than John Major and other political figures combined!

Well, as I said, we like to promote our business! I always used to say no to interviews, and let the businesses speak for themselves, keeping a low profile, but when we started the airline we realised that we were competing with the big giants of the world with massive advertising spans, and so I decided to just get out there and use myself to promote the businesses. So rather than, for example, turning up in a suit to the inaugural launch, I'd turn up in a pilot's outfit, have a bit of fun, get the front page pictures and make sure that people knew that Virgin Atlantic. Sometimes you can go to more extremes when it comes to launching bridal shops! Very nice bridal frock – I even shaved my beard off for it! Lipstick... the lot! If you get too stuck in seriously about what you do, it's not much fun for the public and those who work with you. It's important to let your hair down. When we launched Virgin Cola, the Sun's entire front page read: 'Now it's Virgin Cola' – you can't buy that kind of advertising. Sometimes the media is more powerful than anything you might try to put something on the map.

AT HOME

Stowe's very own "at home", the latest and most extravagant jewel in the crown of the school's marketing drive, proved delightful for teachers and privileged Stoics alike in September last year. I was among the lucky few to enjoy it. Despite the title "at home", there were, of course, no parents' puddings, but brandy snaps accompanied with port; no Stowe plonk, but Chateau Macon; no timid third form recitations, but music scholars blowing at a captivated audience; and no inebriated housemaster's harangue but the Headmaster spouting incomprehensible Latin phrases.

The distinguished guests, probably in need of refreshment, had been earlier in the day subjected to the rigours of a Stowe Thursday afternoon. The choice laid on between such outdoor amusements as Golf and Clay-shooting was rewarded by an impromptu "awards" ceremony after tea in the Marble Hall. The less athletically inclined yet eminently more sensible among us took the more cultured option of attending Lord Annan's delightful seminar on Stowe in the 1930s. Lord Annan, who wrote the now out of print *Roxburgh of Stowe* and signed for us the final few free copies, gave a fascinating first-hand account of his experiences here in Temple, under JF Roxburgh. No one was unmoved by his eye-opening anecdotes and his charismatic and charming address. At the earlier chance I had to speak to him over lunch, he expressed his indignation at the news of a part of Temple's conversion to what is now the housemaster's quarters. Such was his wonderful affinity with the requirements and minds of the boys, and at such an amazing age.

The highlight of the day, however, was undoubtedly the time given for questioning of a highly distinguished panel, less Lord McAlpine, the unsuccessful victim of the M40, and the less unpredictable absence of one Jonathan Aitken, MP, other-

How much time does he have away from work?

Well, weekends are normally pretty sacrosanct, and we get good holidays. I try to spend quite a lot of time with the kids, during the week the days are very long. In building the company, we had very few holidays, but now things are going quite well, I can spend more time with the family.

The Kids?

Up until now they've been at day school – Holly's nearly sixteen now. I remember when I was fifteen I walked around the garden about six times with my dad, telling him that I wanted to leave school, so when my son wants to take a walk around the garden I try to avoid it!

And his parents, they wanted him to stay at Stowe?

Yeah, I think any parent would, really. At the same time, I wasn't very good at school and I knew roughly what I wanted to do. So they said that if it didn't work out then they'd try to get me back in again. I'd been really keen on sport, but had damaged my knee, so I couldn't play any more – I spent all my time doing that and not learning. So, I just felt that I was a hopeless case and might as well go off.

When RB left Stowe, (after being refused his ultimatum of placing a phone in his study in Lyttelton, where he moved after having been in Cobham) he was told by the Headmaster that he would either become a millionaire or get thrown in jail. What a perceptive headmaster...

wise engaged. Tory presence, past and present, was of course in no short supply, and had the handy assistance of a Churchillian chairman, Andrew Roberts Esq., whose own opinions became more and more apparent and fascist as the afternoon progressed. One of them, thrown away at the end of a question from the floor, that "democracy and freedom of speech were" in his view, "decidedly overrated" seemed strangely lost on the audience.

A blast of fresh air thankfully arrived, as Liberal MP for Oxford West, Dr. Evan Harris having negotiated the M40, somewhat dissipated the rather stuffy and oppressive atmosphere and opinions previously existent. He was, in gratitude, thrown several hand grenades by the chairman, with which he dealt impressively, considering his handicap as a Lib Dem MP and hypothetically answerable to his party. The Revd. Lord Pilkington, who had most enchantingly and indignantly spoken on all subjects, and with particular relish and conviction about the death of Diana, Princess of Wales (which he incidentally described as a "terrifying phenomenon"), gave way to local MP (Tory, of course), John Bercow. Mr. Bercow was particularly impressive when quizzed on the situation in Saudi Arabia, but was lucky not to be reminded of recent revelations in *Private Eye*, which detailed his personal tactics for acquiring and then disposing of the fairer sex during his time at Oxford.

Political tensions were relaxed though, as topics ranged from dyslexia to devolution, and even Dr. Harris laughed at Sir Nicholas Lyell's joke during dinner. A highly impressive occasion, where Stowe succeeded in making MPs, staff, Stoics and, most importantly, prep school headmasters feel good.

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I HEARD IT ON THE INTRANET

Imagine. You can't find your lesson notes, you can't read the ones your mate took, and Charlie down the corridor missed that lesson. Where do you look? On the Stowe Intranet, of course. Revision notes, glossaries, past questions, model answers, pictures, audio, video... Whatever you need for your subject, it's there on the school network, all ready to retrieve with your favourite Internet browser and with hyper-text links to guide you to the information you need.

Fantasy? No, it's already starting to happen. The Stowe Intranet already contains notes that Stowe staff have prepared to help with A Level Chemistry and Theology, and all departments have a presence there that they will gradually build upon. Visual Education is especially well covered, with the whole of MJB's guide to the gardens on both the Internet and Intranet. ME and the D of E Silvers have gone beyond this, however, as you will discover if you click on any of the busts in the Temple of British Worthies photograph.

During the summer we shall use the school's digital camera to add pictures of staff and Stoics to the Intranet so that everyone will have the chance to emulate JF Roxburgh's ability to put a name to every face. Hardly a day passes without some new entry to the Intranet and as soon as it's made, it's available on all the machines on the network. Boarding house computers are not on the network yet but they aren't left out - each week a copy of the Intranet is loaded onto them from a Zip drive wielded by our new Webmaster, Matthew Young.

We are building a Stowe-based information system which can be accessed by Stoics from their studies and their homes, and by prospective students and their parents and teachers from their prep schools and homes. It requires a system of file servers and communications equipment that can be accessed from within and without the school whilst not compromising security, a network of wires (or fibre or radio) which takes access to any points deemed desirable, and computers which can plug in to the network points. Much of this is already in place and the rest is on its way. In particular, boarding houses should go on the school network during the 1999/2000 academic year.

The posh name for this concept is a Distributed Learning Environment, which provides learning for anyone, any time, anywhere, extending the reach of learning from the classroom to the library, lab, home, local communities and the world.

STOWE SCHOOL
BUCKINGHAM ENGLAND

Stowe School is an independent boarding school in the heart of the English countryside in Buckinghamshire.

The historic house and magnificent landscape garden and park in which it is set provide Stowe with a unique atmosphere.

Boys join the school at either age 13 or 16, and girls join at age 16.

[CLICK HERE TO CONTINUE](#)

INTERNET, INTRANET OR EXTRANET?

Internet pages are designed for access by the world, Intranet pages by a closed community. An Extranet lies between the two and implies an Intranet which can be accessed by a restricted external group such as parents, Stoics when at home, prep schools and the local Luffield Group of schools. Stowe is developing all three since, while we need a public face, the Intranet has several advantages:

- ▲ pages can be accessed over our local network without incurring any telephone charges.
- ▲ Stoics can be allowed unsupervised access to the Intranet but not to the Internet.
- ▲ its pages do not have to be sufficiently polished to show to the world, though the Intranet is a useful proving ground for prospective Internet pages.

Material which is of interest only within the Stowe community or which is inappropriate for full outside access can be published on the Intranet or Extranet. Classified advertising might be appropriate at some level. While the academic material will primarily be to aid Stoics' learning, it could also be a service to prep schools.

We already have a large Internet site (www.stowe.co.uk) which includes the following:

- ▲ Prospectus material
- ▲ Stowe news and events
- ▲ Job vacancies
- ▲ Academic Departments
- ▲ Historic Stowe
- ▲ Boarding Houses
- ▲ Old Stoic news

Like the Intranet, our Internet site changes frequently, with, for example, the latest school sporting results being added weekly. Keep watching this cyberspace!

ME

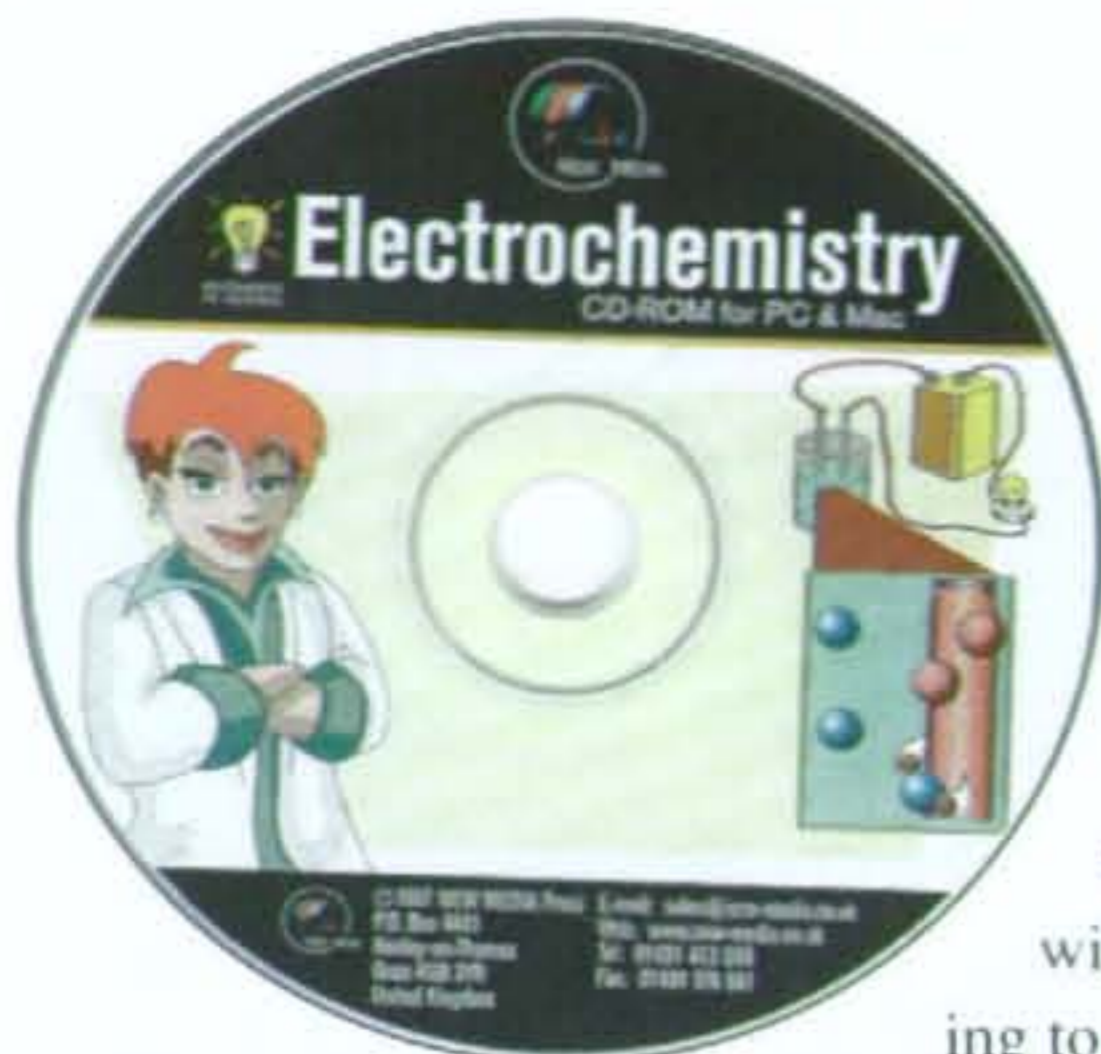
STOWE SCHOOL
Intranet

YOUR GUIDE TO THE INTRANET

- HOME PAGE
MAIN PAGE WITH DETAILS OF NEW SECTIONS ON INTRANET
- MAP OF STOWE
CLICKABLE MAP OF THE SCHOOL BUILDINGS
- HOUSE PAGES
INFORMATION FOR AND ABOUT EACH OF THE HOUSES
- DEPARTMENT PAGES
PAGES FOR EACH DEPARTMENT INCLUDING REVISION NOTES
- VISED
INFORMATION ON THE GARDENS AND PARK
- STOICS WORK
PAGES WRITTEN BY STOICS AND HOSTED ON THE INTRANET

CLASSROOM 2000+

VIRTUAL CHEMISTRY TEACHERS AT STOWE?!



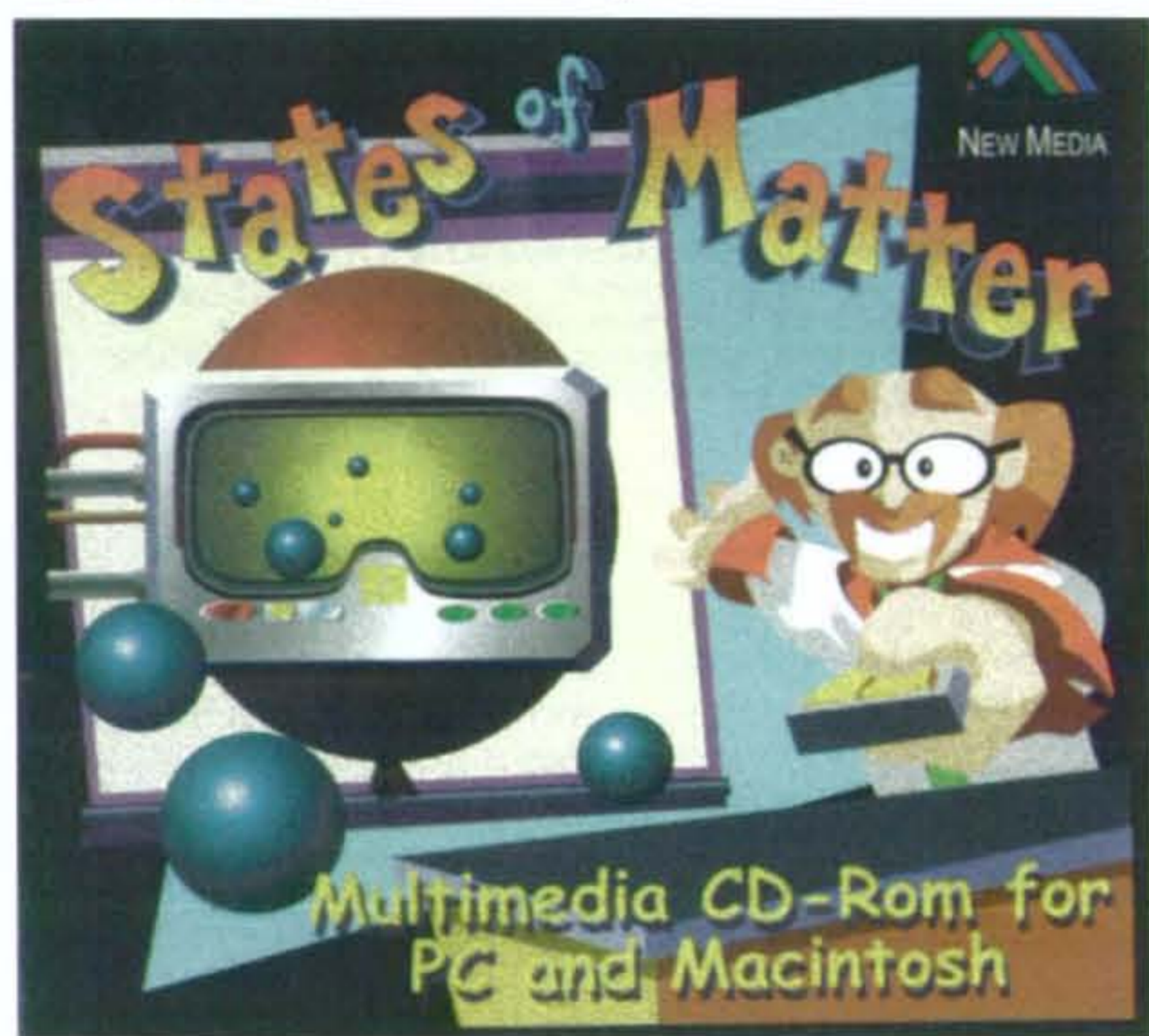
Recently two new chemistry teachers have joined the staff at Stowe – without the Bursar having to shell out a penny!

Yardley McClutchin and

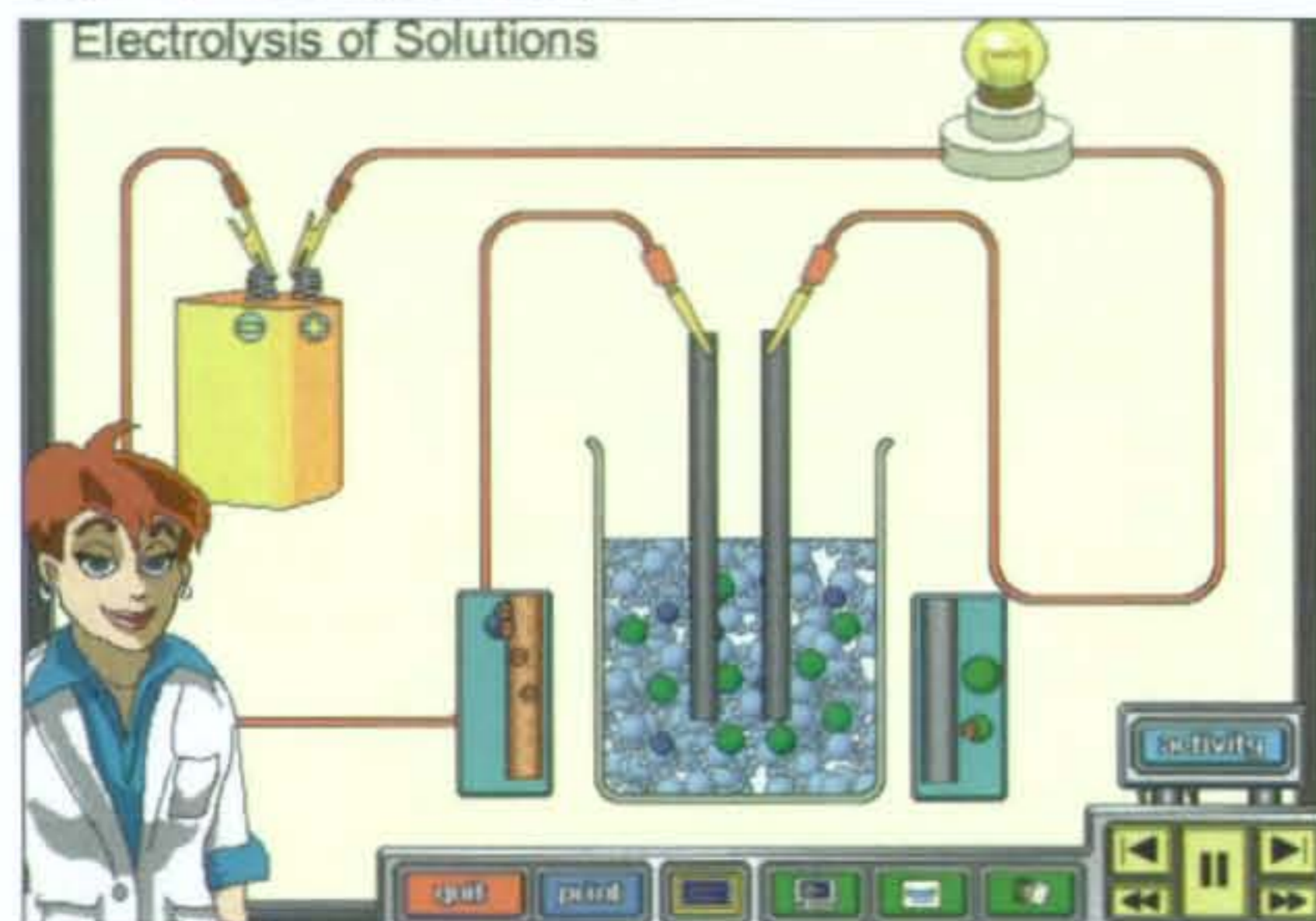
Heather Philpotts have come by courtesy of New Media, a multi-media company specialising in the production of educational CD-ROMS. Their first venture into the science area about four years ago, the Chemistry Set – an illustrated Periodic Table – was ahead of its time and remains a remarkable resource for chemical information in the form of pictures, video clips, moving molecules and data. The glass bowl shattering explosion of Caesium metal dropped into water is surely the most watched video clip from a CD in the country!

About two years ago two members of the Stowe Chemistry Department, Brian Orger (Head of Chemistry) and James Tearle, became involved as consultants and advisors to New Media on the development of a new series of CD-ROMS aimed at Keystage 3 and GCSE Chemistry. Four CDs have now appeared on the market:

STATES OF MATTER (about solids, liquids & gases) – on which the eccentric Yardley made his debut.



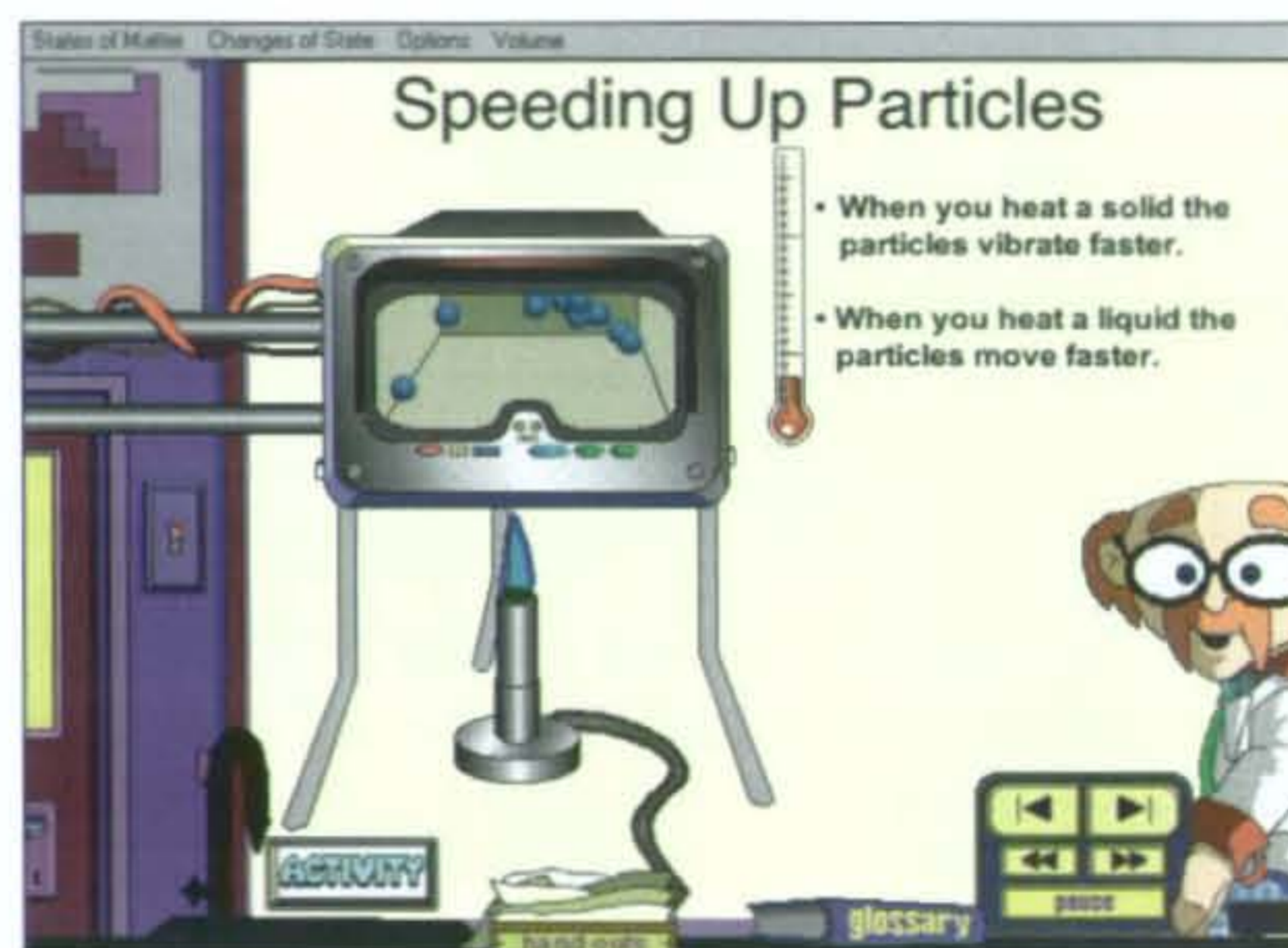
ELECTROCHEMISTRY – glamorous Heather Philpotts' first chemistry presentation.



ELEMENTS, COMPOUNDS & MIXTURES – featuring the return of Yardley!

ATOM VIEWER – no teacher this time, just a tool to enable the structure of atoms to be presented in animated form.

On the first three CDs the students are led through a sequence of 'slides' which develop a chemical concept via animations, pictures, text and 'live' laboratory sequences – filmed at Stowe. The virtual chemistry teacher is ever-present, providing a linking commentary, but the student controls progress through the slide sequence and the program as a whole. Revision exercises test mastery of the new material at the end. These CDs can either be used to introduce a topic for the first time, or for personal revision, or by a teacher in class using appropriate 'slides' to illustrate a lesson.



Although chemistry teachers will never relinquish the smells and bangs of a 'live' chemistry lesson (least of all Mr. Tearle!), they have always craved visual aids that would provide them, at the touch of a button, with animated, moving, colliding, reacting molecules. On these CDs the New Media illustrators bring the contents of the test-tube and the beaker alive in a striking way, enabling pupils to see the invisible processes going on and helping them to understand the concepts involved.

Stowe has benefited considerably from this co-operation with New Media which continues (see Lessons via the Internet). Class sets of the above CD-ROMS have been made available to Stowe, sometimes even before publication, and Stoics have even had the opportunity to evaluate trial versions. The combined expertise of experienced classroom teachers and state-of-the-art multi-media developers has ensured the production of material that is directly relevant to, and immediately usable in, the classroom. We may be biased but we haven't seen anything better yet!

Our thanks to Dick Fletcher, Owen White and David Tymms and other New Media staff for the opportunity to share in this exciting enterprise, enabling Stowe to stay at the forefront in developments in multimedia-based science teaching.

BHO & JMT

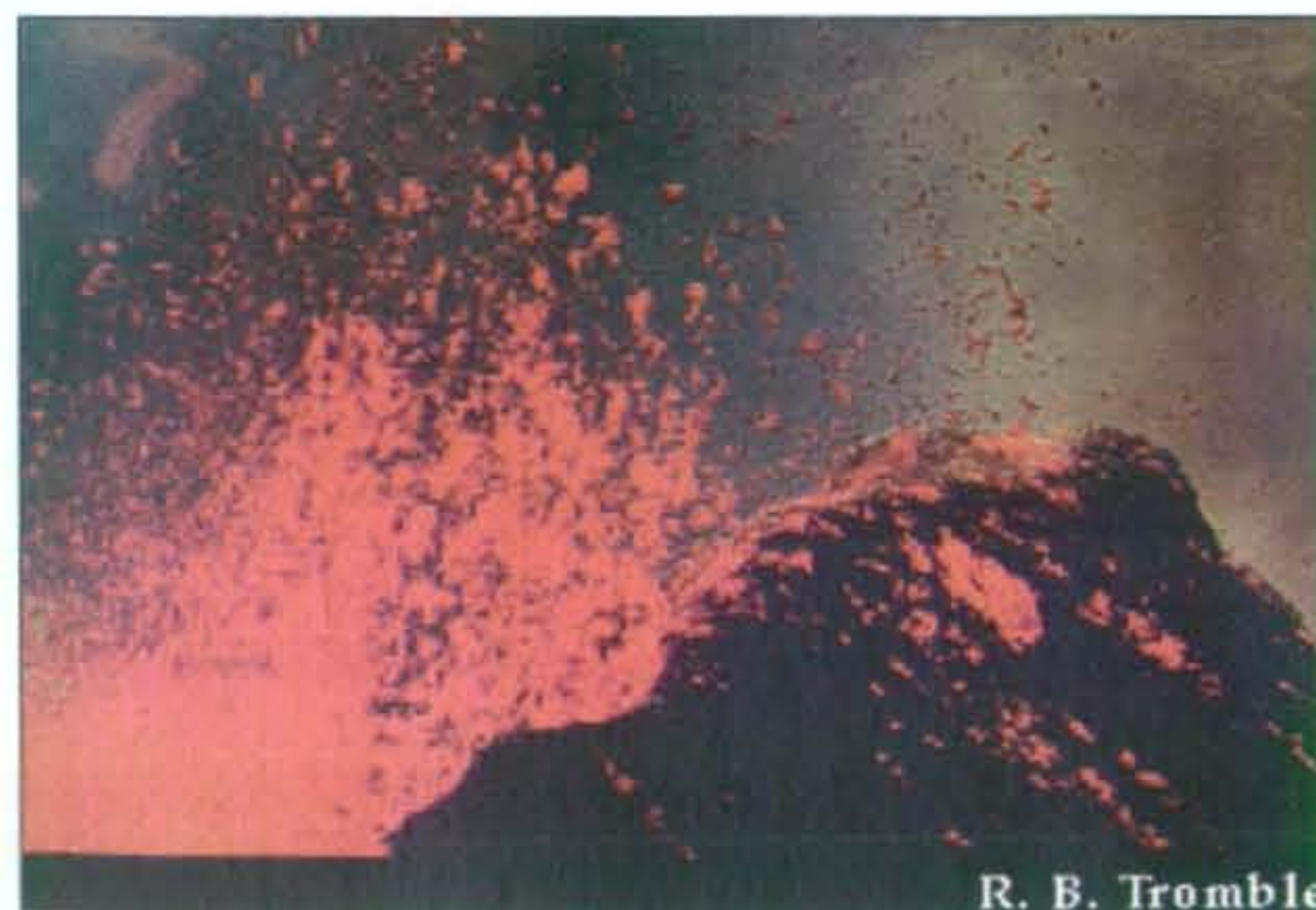
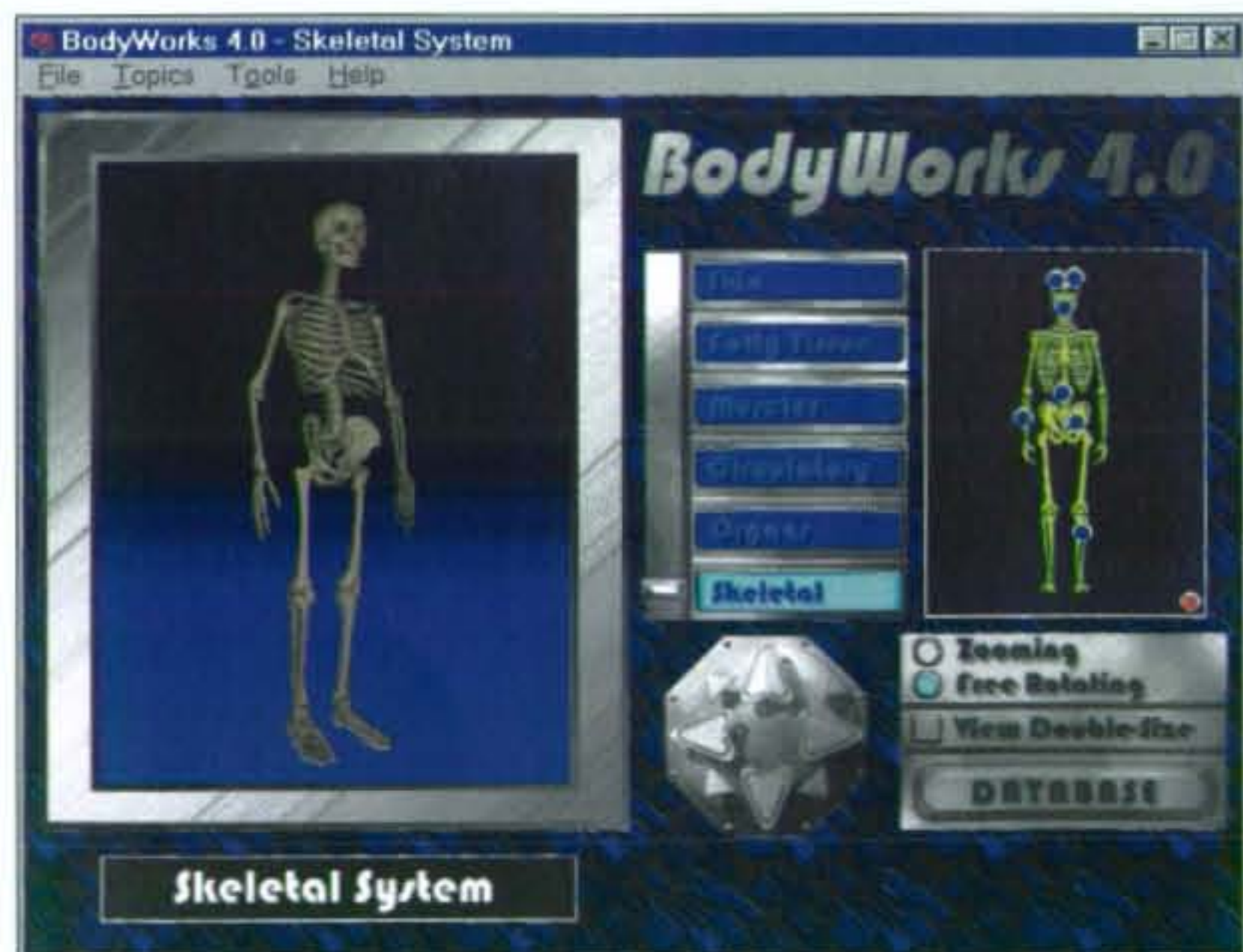
THE FUTURE ALREADY AT STOWE

SCIENCE IT LAB – AHEAD OF THE FIELD

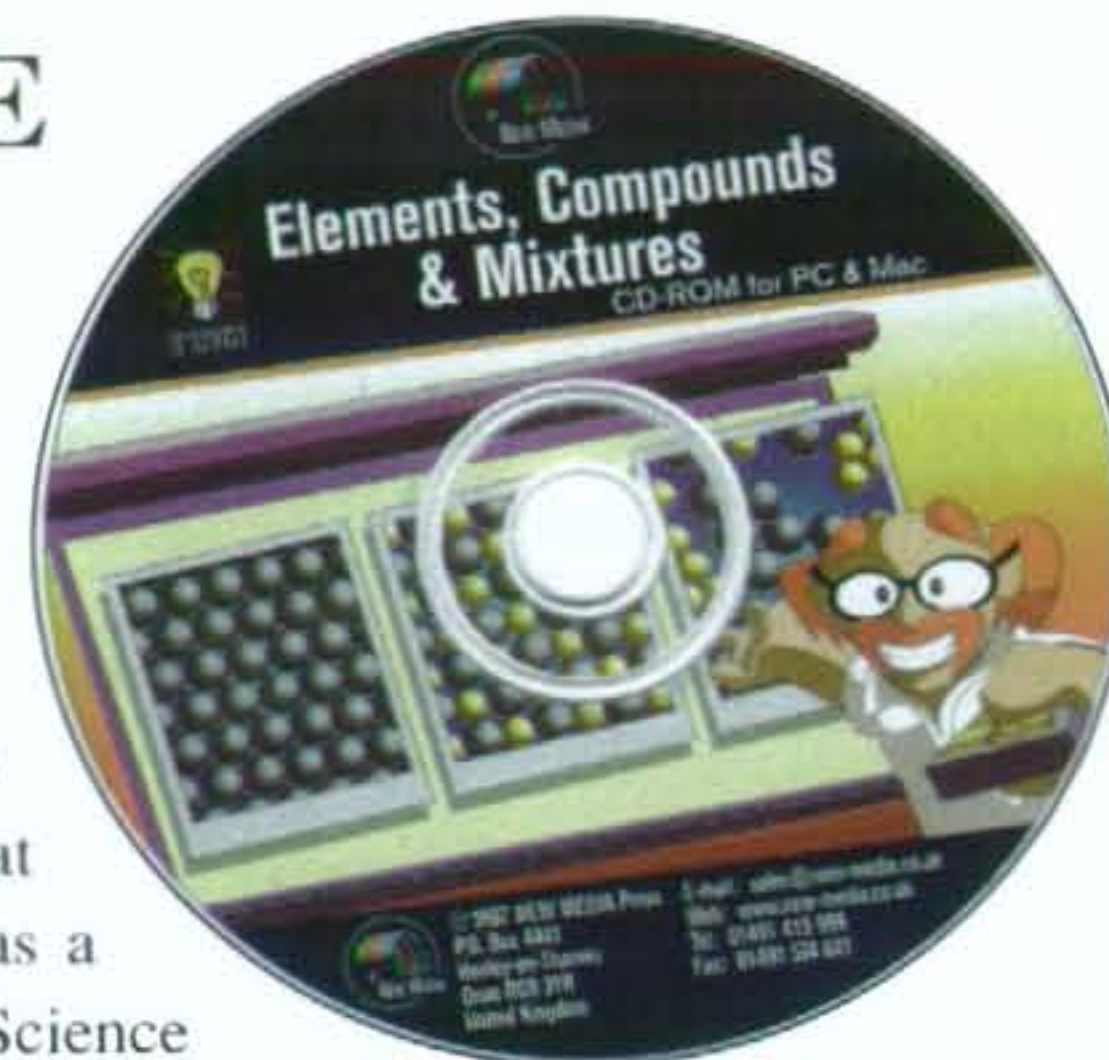
Since its opening in September 1996, the Science IT Laboratory has had a huge impact on both science and ICT (Information and Communication Technology) here at Stowe. The concept of teaching ICT through science has not only greatly improved the ICT skills of Stoics but has meant that computers are fully used to enhance the teaching of science.

The facilities available in the Science IT Lab have steadily grown and now put the Stowe Science Department at the forefront when it comes to using modern technology. A fast digital connection to the Internet allows rapid access to the wealth of information now available on the World-Wide Web. Every lunchtime a Cyber Café is open so that pupils can access the Internet and learn the necessary search skills. This time is also used by Stoics to check their e-mail. The school provides a free personal e-mail address for every pupil who wants one – a great way for Stoics to save on postage and familiarize themselves with this modern method of communication. Overseas students find this particularly useful.

There are colour printers and a scanner to help pupils prepare coursework – the work that Stoics produce is very impressive and helps them to gain good grades. We teach Web-page writing skills too, so that pupils can create their own Web pages. These are then put onto the Stowe Intranet for all to see. This stimulates creativity and helps foster an understanding of how the Internet works. We also use our Intranet to deliver teaching material and revision work.



R. B. Trombley



Last summer the whole of the Science Block was networked so that every laboratory has a connection to the Science IT Lab. This means that we can follow experiments by datalogging on computer and directly transfer the information to the IT Lab. This greatly speeds up the processing of data and leaves more time to discuss the results of and theory behind the experiment. An example of the use of such datalogging follows on page 37.

Science CD-ROMs and programs used on our network help pupils to visualize new concepts. This makes the science come vividly alive, especially in Biology! Here Stoics can examine and rotate virtual bodies in 3-D to see how the body really functions. We even have a program to show slices through a real human body.

Physics uses virtual circuit building programs to allow the design and investigation of electronic circuits. These show light bulbs blowing up when the voltage is turned up too much! They also use the processing powers of computers to number crunch large amounts of practical data, especially at A-level.

The Chemistry Department uses CD-ROMs and molecular graphics to show what is really going on when chemical reactions occur. You can see your favorite explosions on screen without having to clean up the broken glass afterwards!



Photo by R. B. Trombley

The Internet is used more and more in Geology. There are some vivid Web-sites on volcanoes and earthquakes. It is also possible to view live images of dramatic geological events as they happen thousands of miles away. Geology also uses some superb CD-ROMs.

These are just a few of the many ways in which we at Stowe are using computers to enhance science education. Our facilities make science a pleasure to teach, and create a really stimulating environment in which Stoics learn about science. There is a tremendous buzz around the Science Department and computers are at the heart of it.

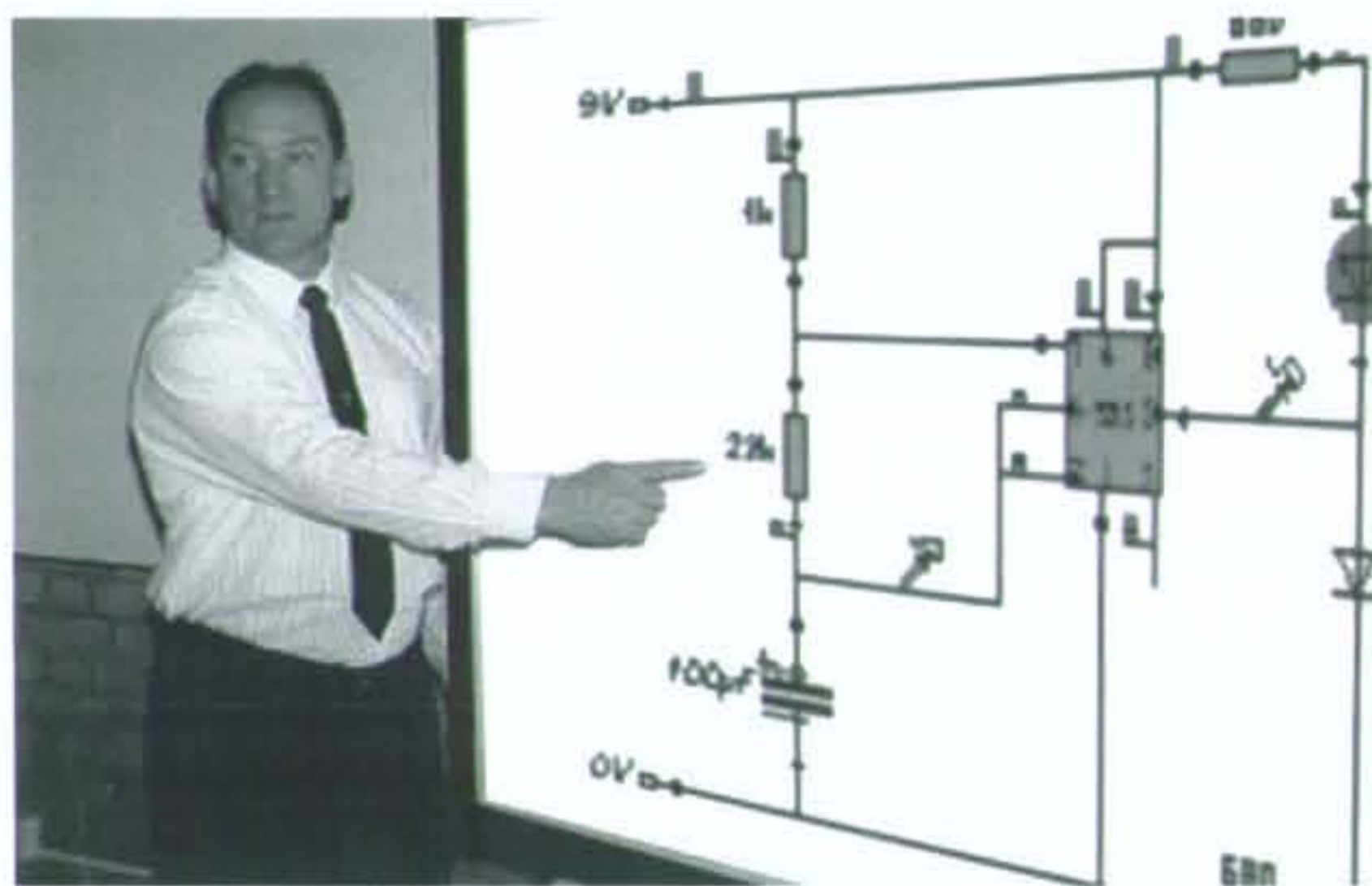
JMT

CLASSROOM 2000+

CHALKFACE OR WINDOW TO THE VIRTUAL WORLD?

Physics through the Looking Glass

Two years ago, at a BETT exhibition in London, SHM (Physics) and JMT (Chemistry) spotted a teaching aid that would transform classroom teaching. It was very much pie in the sky as it looked expensive and was a year 2000 concept. Even so, enthusiasm and motivation was high and arguments for having one developed over time. A year later, ME went to BETT and saw for himself the wonders of the new technology. As a result, a projector that could display a computer screen onto a larger area was purchased and shortly after followed 'the whiteboard'.

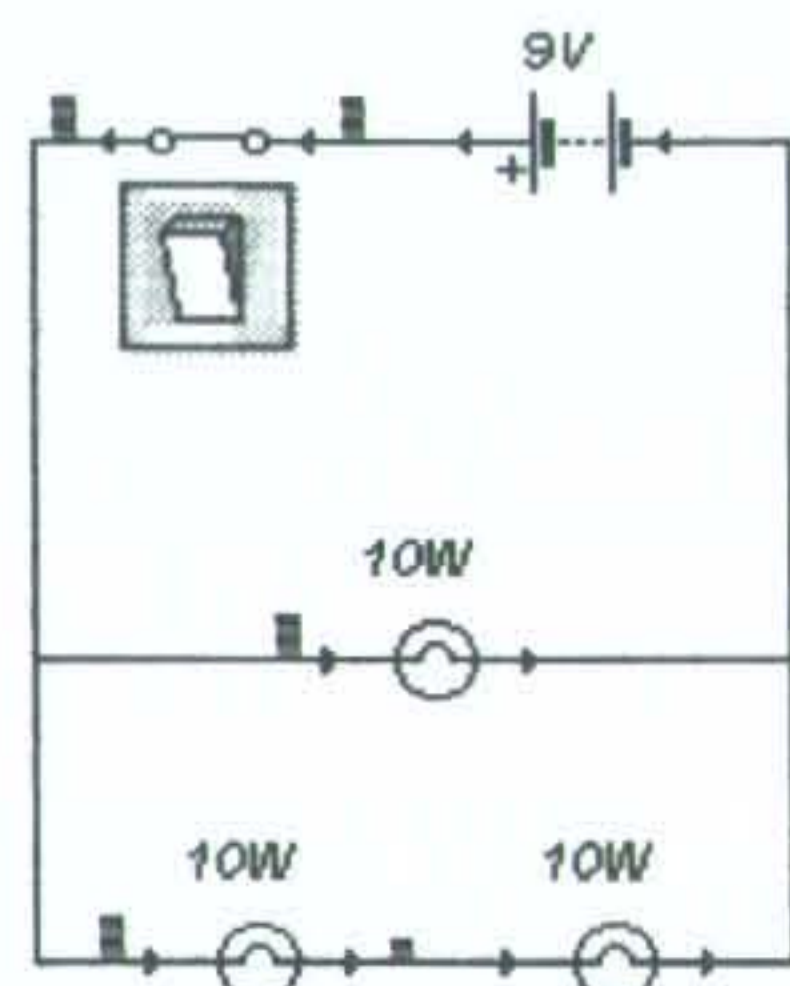


So why the fuss over a projector and whiteboard? The whiteboard is no ordinary whiteboard. Once I have projected my small laptop screen onto the whiteboard to produce a crisp image, I can configure the board quickly and easily to enable me to operate the computer from the board. Yes, simply by touching the board on the relevant icons I can load up and run programs, access the internet, retrieve information/diagrams from Encarta and run simulation software such as Croc Clips (more later). The white board is mobile and can be wheeled from my lab into the science dedicated ICT lab to assist the teaching of ICT skills to 3rd year groups.

Surely it is just a toy, a gimmick? A classic case of funds being redirected from far more direct areas of educational improvement, chasing technology for the sake of it? How can it be justified?

To answer this, I can tell you how we currently use it in the physics department. Once the technology has been accepted (i.e. moving on from the initial barrage of "How does it work? Sir"), excellent simulation packages such as Croc Clips can be used. I can construct colourful and highly visual electrical circuits, ask questions about them, get the class to make predictions, show bulbs exploding when we get it wrong and work out why it went wrong, all at my fingertips. The response of the board is instant and a difficult subject such as electricity can be covered in a far more visual way. The

Example of a working circuit displayed by 'Croc clips'



visualisation of circuit symbols becomes more direct, especially when the third year moves into the ICT lab, to try the package for themselves. Here they move on from the mundane bulbs and are quickly asking how to get the seven segment display working. Watching me use and find my way around software packages provides Stoics with confidence as they explore the package themselves. The questions soon become "I want to be able to do this, how do I do it?" At the edge of their imagination rather than "What does this button do?"

Leaving exploding bulbs behind in electricity, we are currently looking at Space. I can access the Internet from the lab, and quickly call up brilliant photographs of any of the planets. Interpretation of the images using existing scientific



knowledge follows as we discuss features of these photographs in open forum. I back this discussion up by calling up Encarta and looking through the data on the planet. Does it fit with our discussion? The predictions and research have a live feel as the information is explored first hand together. I can demonstrate how to save the image from the Internet – a skill they will need to develop when they undertake a project on a particular planet and present it in MS Word.

At the top end of the topic Sound, as an example of wave motion, I am able to demonstrate the different waveforms corresponding to different sounds. We can then add echo etc. by changing the waveform. By cutting and pasting, I can change a football score around and play back the new score. I can then demonstrate the computer speaking text. I can voice command the computer to open and close programs and display what I am saying in text. The grand finale occurs when we talk to people all over the world using the Internet connection and the Web phone. Our international students come into their own here as we communicate with different countries all for the cost of a local telephone call – a fine example of converting one form of wave energy into another.

Powerpoint presentations to the sixth form make it possible to include much clearer diagrams to supplement teaching and provide variety in a more business like way. Experimental data can be displayed, as it is data logged, live onto the large screen. Graphs develop as the readings are produced. The simple harmonic motion of a pendulum or mass bouncing up and down become obvious when the results are seen live... Oh, we wish we had one each!

SHM

INSTITUTE OF PHYSICS 16-19 INITIATIVE – ADVANCING PHYSICS

'A radical, forward-looking initiative by the Institute of Physics to revitalise physics post 16, attract students, support teachers and influence the direction of future syllabuses'

Stowe Physics Department is contributing to this important national initiative. Head of Science S.O. Collins is part of a working group developing ideas in the area of Communication (Instrumentation & Information). His group is developing teaching strategies in storage, transmission and processing of information and instrumentation and system design. Other groups are working in: modelling, the very large and the very small, matter in all its forms, energy technologies and making science more human. Use will be made of leading edge Information and Communications Technology, including the World Wide Web, for delivering the course and its resources.

The circle of: "It can't be in the syllabus because it isn't in the textbooks, and it isn't in the textbooks because it isn't in the syllabus", has to be broken.

The new course will be thoroughly up to date, have an imaginative Advanced Subsidiary component with real breadth, and permit physics to be taken freely in combination with other subjects. Our economy depends on a flow of high calibre scientists and engineers. The UK has an urgent need to attract more young people to study physics through high quality courses which excite and challenge them. The course aims to be more attractive to young people, by :

- building in variety and individual responsibility and choice for students
- showing the range of interesting career paths opened
- creating a culture of success with targets that are challenging, achievable and individualised
- building on present examples of imaginative good practice.

We think we are well on the way to these goals at Stowe already.

Current amp	Voltage volt	Resistance Ohms
0.89	4.326	4.86
0.871	4.238	4.87
0.804	3.915	4.87
0.752	3.68	4.89
0.659	3.226	4.90
0.621	3.021	4.86
0.552	2.713	4.91
0.438	2.126	4.85
0.376	1.848	4.91
0.304	1.481	4.87
0.261	1.276	4.89
0.237	1.144	4.83
0.192	0.938	4.89
0.153	0.748	4.89
0.089	0.425	4.78
0.035	0.176	5.03

DATA LOGGING EXAMPLE

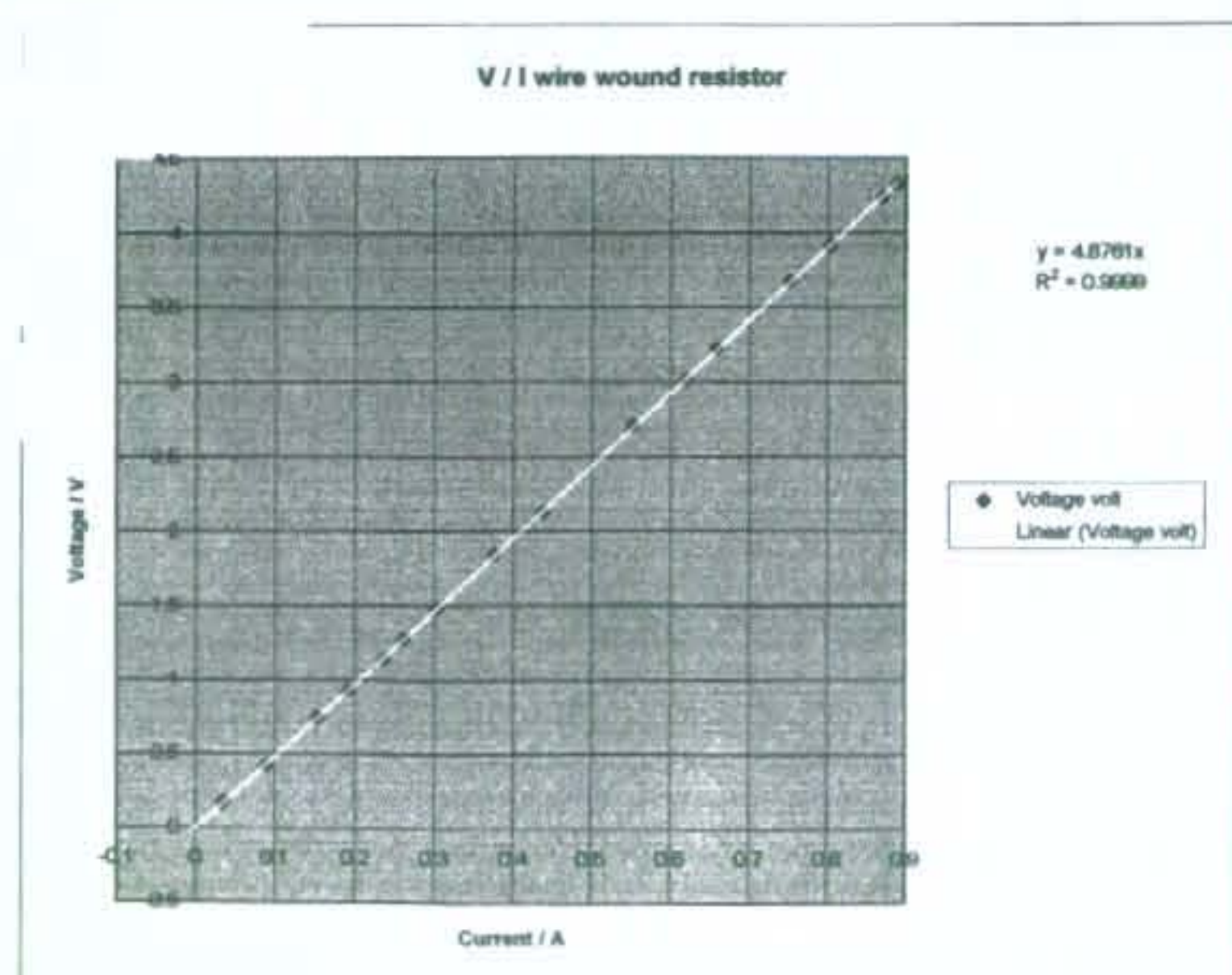
This data was logged using snapshot mode and by varying the voltage across a wire wound resistor using a potential divider.

Data has been measured to the nearest 1mA and 15mV.

The linearity of the graph illustrates the Ohmic proportionality between Voltage & Current for a metallic conductor at fixed temperature.

The resistance is measured at 4.9Ω for a nominal $4.7 \Omega \pm 10\%$

The Excel trendline function demonstrates the excellent linearity with gradient of 4.88Ω .



FOUNDATIONS OF ORGANIC CHEMISTRY

The Oxford Chemistry Primers are short books on specific topics, published by OUP for undergraduates. Some years ago, Dr Jo Peach asked me to join her in writing the basic Organic Chemistry book of the series. After working out our overall structure we wrote three and a half chapters each, getting together frequently to shred each other's efforts. Jo corrected my chemistry, whilst I fought to keep the content at school rather than university level.

The first three chapters on the fundamentals of atomic and molecular structure, thermodynamics and kinetics, set the scene for a rigorous discussion of organic reaction mechanisms in the rest of the book. Jo undertook the labour of the diagrams, but with ChemDraw on my computer I will be expected to do my half next time. We chose the cover colour, Iceberg Green, together!

We were delighted that *Foundations* was taken up by Universities and Colleges, becoming a popular starting text for the first year of chemistry degree courses. Six years later we are into our fourth reprint and fourth language! We are well ahead with the preparation of Volume II which should hit the bookshops in 1999.

GMH



DATALOGGING AND THE SCIENCE NETWORK AT STOWE

For some time we have had the ability to log experimental data automatically by teacher demonstration and take the data on floppy disk and transfer it to the science network for the students to analyse. The possibilities that we are now realising with the network links in each science lab are really exciting, since we can now log data and transfer it electronically on the network. Not only that, but with the purchase of more sensors for the palmtop computers, students can log their own data in a class set of twelve, and then have it pumped down the line to their work area for detailed analysis.

The gizmology is of itself very exciting to use, introducing the Stoics to the very latest capabilities of modern technology, but it is also very enabling. It allows data to be gathered more quickly and effectively and then to be analysed more fully with the advanced commercial software we have available, especially the MS Office suite and Word & Excel. This makes a great contribution to the life skills of the Stoics.

An example is included of the kind of data gathering and analysis that is now possible, Ohm's Law was never so easily or accurately demonstrated in a school lab. What would George Simon Ohm have said?

SOC

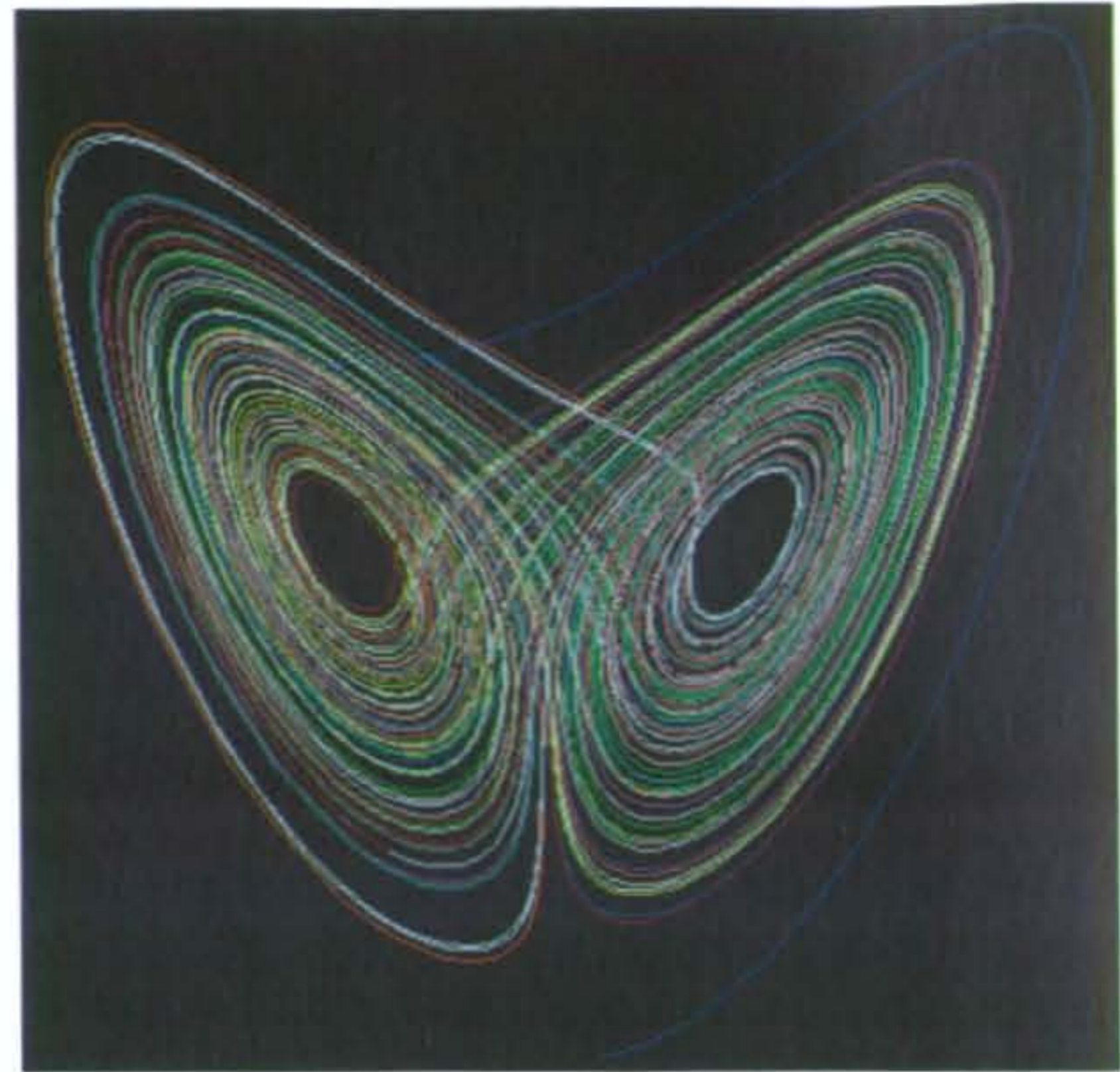
XX CLUB INTRODUCED TO CHAOS BY SCIENCE DEPARTMENT !

No we are not pursuing courses in anarchy ! but the XX Club enjoyed the opportunity of being introduced to some ideas in the scientific and mathematical delights of Chaos the Theory and Fractals by SOC. After dissecting a cauliflower and seeing it had grown self-similarly and recursively on 7 levels of iteration, other naturally bifurcating structures were enjoyed. These ranged from an asparagus fern and a veined leaf on 5 levels to a beautiful textile cone shell.

Then the deeply beautiful and fascinating infinitely recursive Mandelbrot set was investigated using Fractint and the Smartboard. Time only permitted us to find mini-Mandelbrots down to about 5 levels of recursion, see illustration.

They were carefully guided through the importance of non-linear elements in the determining equations for chaos to be possible, and for the extreme sensitivity of the unfolding states of a complex system to their initial conditions – this being the butterfly effect. A butterfly wingbeat on a Pacific island today could affect the rainfall at Stowe next Autumn ! never mind the El Nino event – this effect having been discovered by Ed Lorenz using numerical solutions to solve analytically intractable differential equations in weather modelling.

The dear old BBC B computers were then used by the students to investigate some mathematical models, particularly the logistic difference equation, designed to model insect population fluctuations. Here X models a population size and k is a growth parameter:



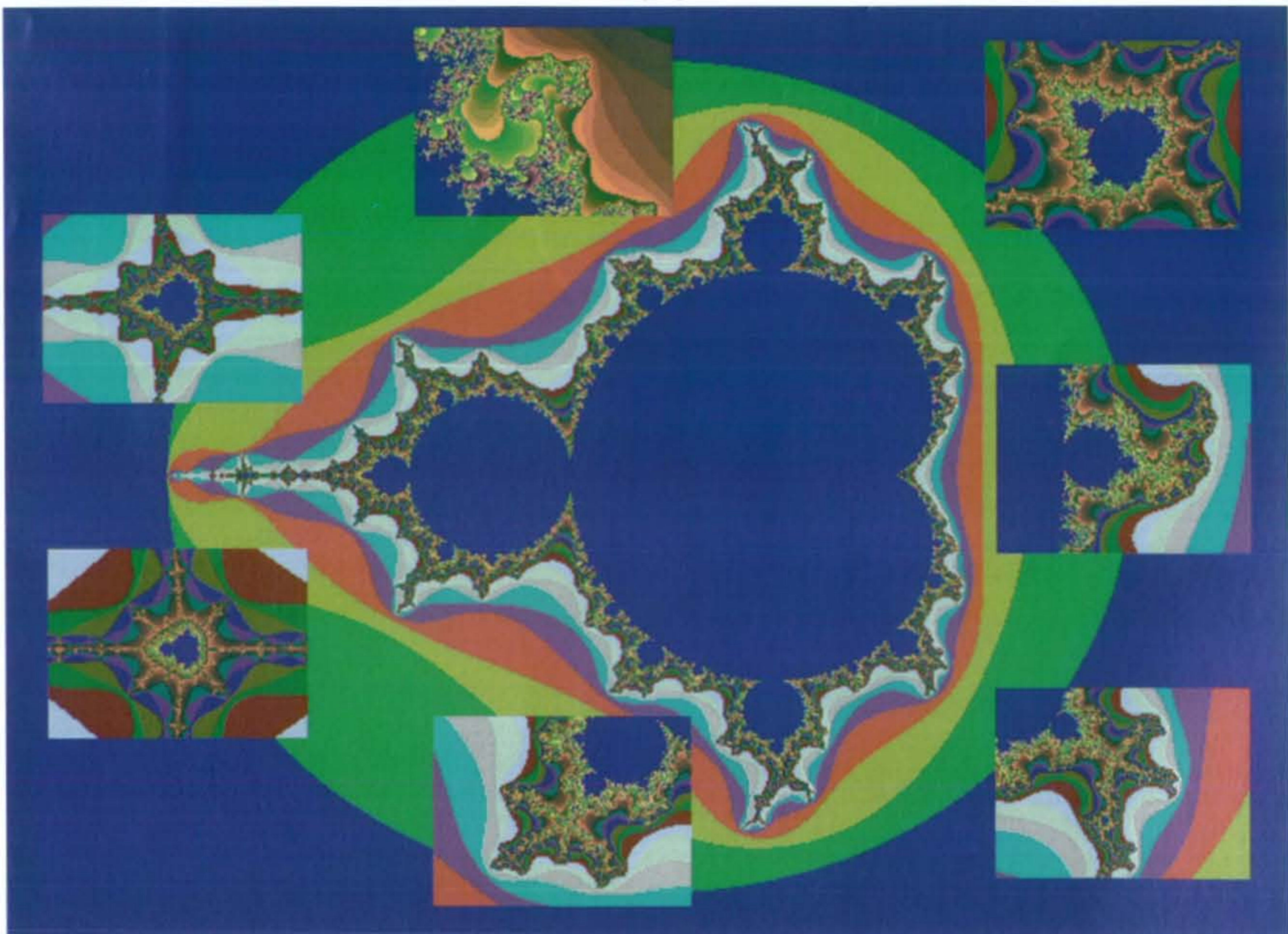
The Lorenz fractal attractor

$$X_{\text{new}} = k \cdot X_{\text{old}} \cdot (1 - X_{\text{old}})$$

Under iterative repetition it demonstrates the exponential divergence of states from infinitesimally different initial conditions, the butterfly effect again.

The same equation also demonstrates elegantly the concept of an attractor state as solution prior to the onset of chaos as the growth parameter is tweaked up. The solution bifurcates into a period two state and then a cascade of further bifurcations leads on to the strange attractor state which is the hallmark of chaos, demonstrating it's link to fractal concepts. Mysteriously, as growth parameters are further tweaked upwards, windows of ordered solutions reappear,

The Mandelbrot set with some zoomed highlights and mini-Mandelbrots from Fractint



“order within chaos”. The implicit complexity hidden in such a relatively simple system is both beautiful and quite mind-numbing. Simple models, or local physics can cause wonderfully complex outcomes or behaviours, hence the “new science of complexity”.

There are some nice weird science coincidences in Chaos theory too, Mandelbrot’s name in translation is a form of Polish bread, and his set looks like a gingerbread man ! Lorenz’s strange attractor, that lead to his discovery of the butterfly effect has two interconnected loops that look like the wings of a mathematical butterfly !! Some X-files stuff for the XX club.

SOC

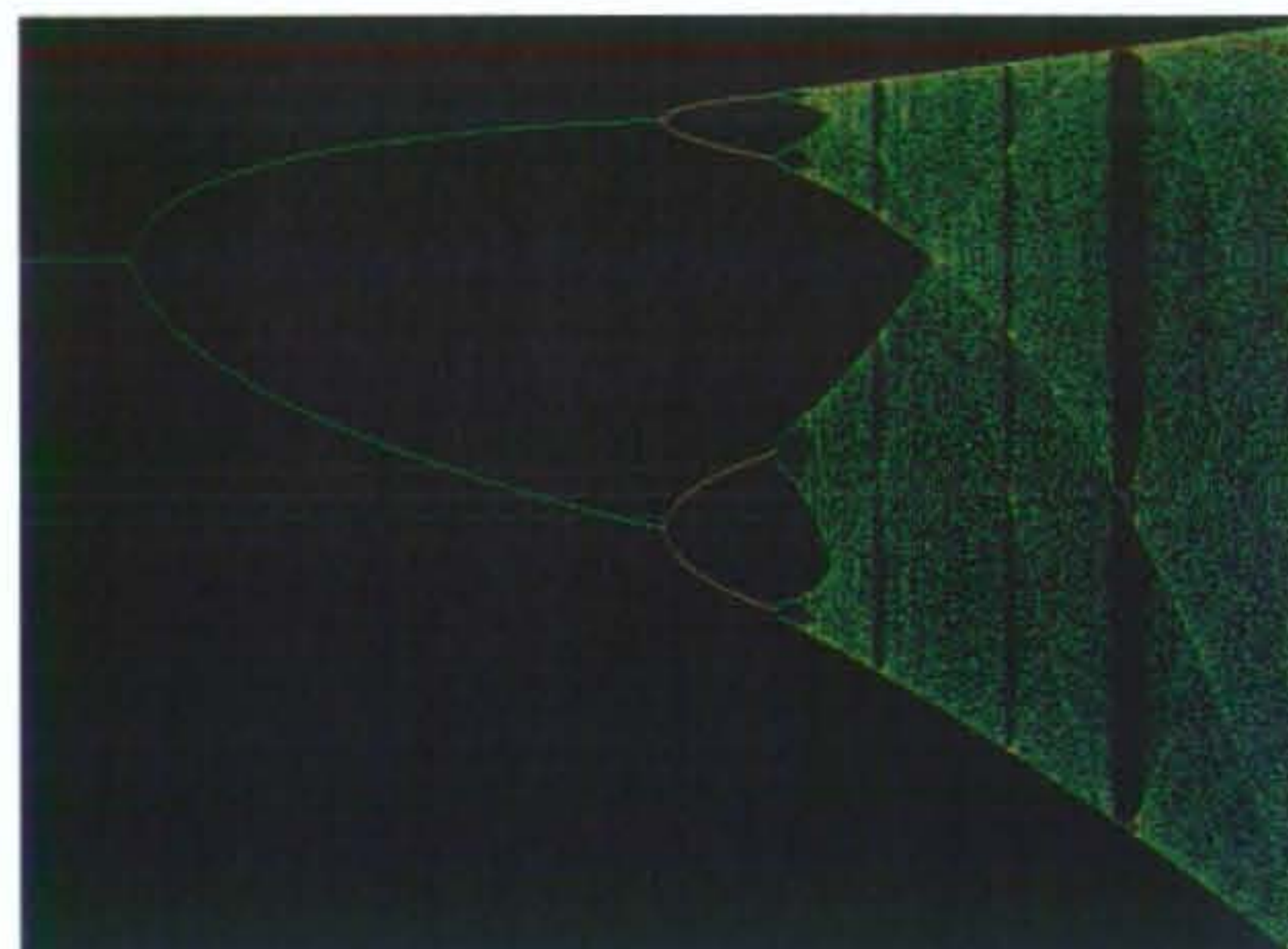
LESSONS VIA THE INTERNET?

Multi-media resources for teaching, whether they be CD-ROM based or Internet (World Wide Web) based are beginning to proliferate and steadily improve. They will in due course replace our textbooks, our videos and our beloved OHP transparencies! The big issue confronting teachers now is how to integrate this powerful new technology into their classroom teaching – much needed time for development work as always being at a premium.

On-going collaboration between the multimedia company New Media (see ‘Virtual Chemistry Teachers at Stowe’) and the Stowe Science Department has now led to a second development project, funded by the Nuffield Educational Foundation, which seeks to address this problem using a small group of schools of all types across the country to develop trial multimedia based lessons in Chemistry.

Teachers in the project schools have been supplied with CD-ROMs containing the chemistry resources and linked to New Media via a Website and Internet Bulletin Board. At Stowe lessons on GCSE Chemistry topics have been developed for the project which, when loaded on a computer containing the CD-ROM, then call up the appropriate resource (video clip, animation, picture or data) exactly when needed during the lesson – no more frustrating searching to-and fro. The lessons can also be used by individual pupils in a ‘programmed learning’ mode – but programmed learning with a difference, containing video sequences, moving molecules and sound!

This at last empowers teacher to use the exciting material provided by the new multimedia resources to the full in a



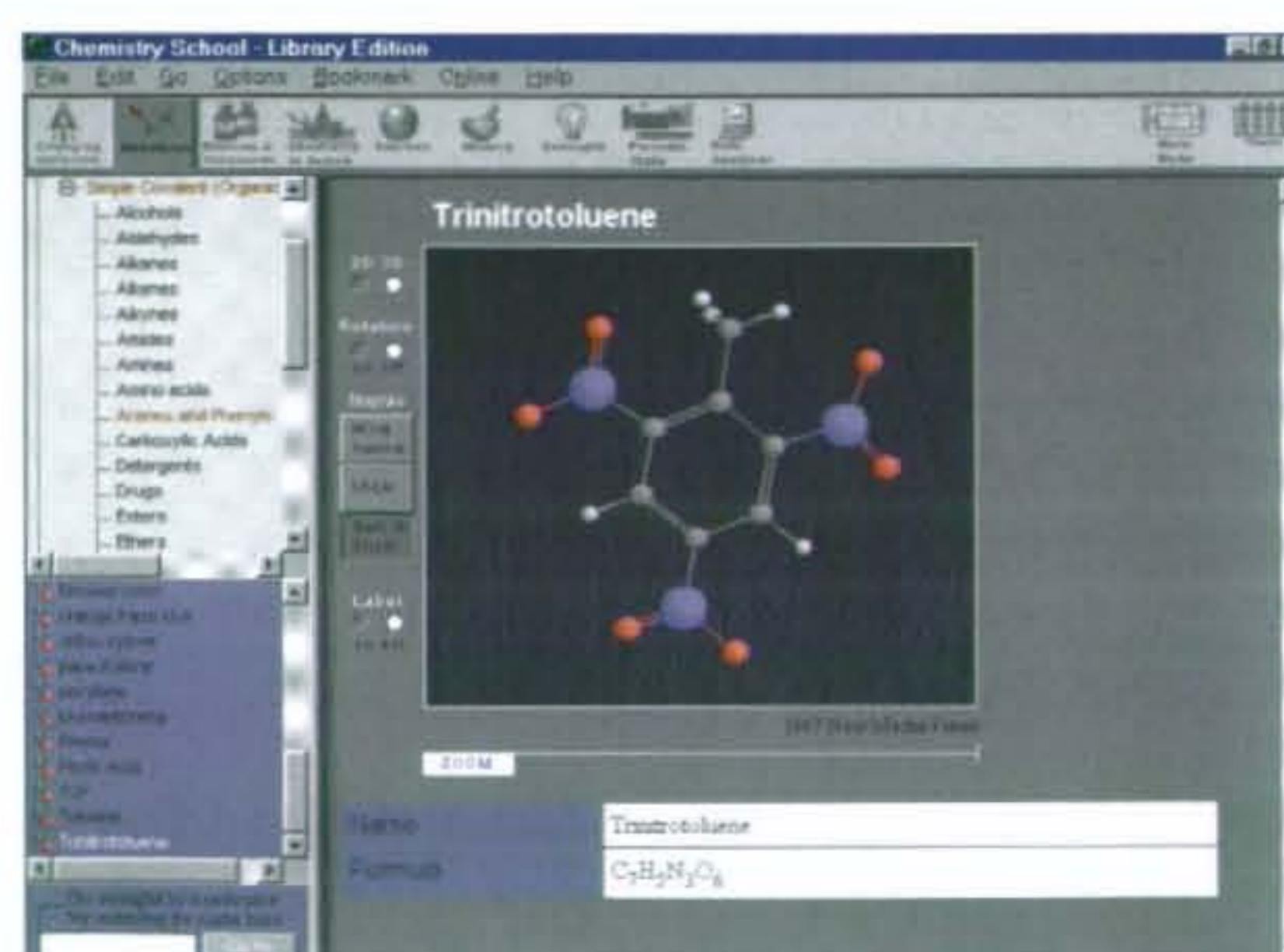
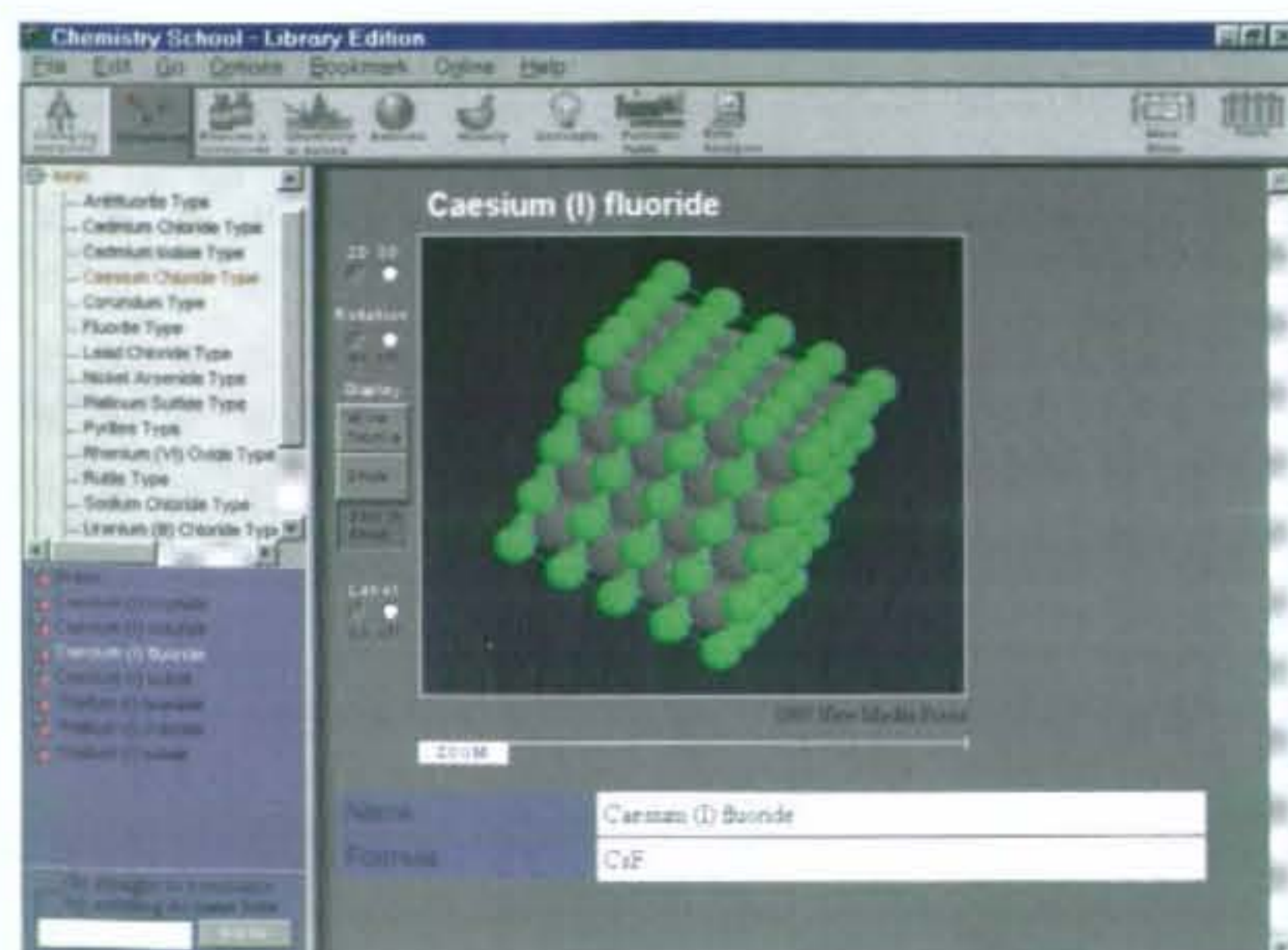
A cascade of bifurcations from the Logistic Difference Equation

structured and organised way in the classroom – at the touch of a button or mouse! The lessons have been delivered to the pilot schools by New Media via the Internet. The first phase has been as much a test of the technology as of the lesson material and classroom management and valuable feedback has been obtained. It is hoped that this will be the forerunner of a Web-based teacher community where teaching material and lesson plans can be exchanged and experience shared on a regular basis.

Now glimpse the future. The teacher projects the computer screen image up onto an electronic, touch-sensitive whiteboard in front of a whole class and has total control of the computer-based resources quite literally at his or her fingertips – Classroom 2000 perhaps? Well no, it’s already here, in action almost routinely in the Stowe Science Department – so come and join us for a mind blowing experience on Speech Day!

Financial support of this project from New Media has not only enabled Stowe to release two members of the Chemistry Department from some of their commitments to undertake this development work, but has also released funds to provide more supervision and assistance in the Science IT Lab, making it available for Stoics for a considerable number of extra hours a week. Thanks are due to Mrs Shenal Yates, former Biology Lab assistant and now School IT Room Assistant for taking on this extra task so enthusiastically. Judging by the fact that it is ‘standing room only’ most afternoons, Stoics are making good use of this facility to correspond via e-mail, surf the Net, write up their projects and process results from science experiments. They will be well prepared for the world that awaits them beyond Stowe.

BHO & JMT



Chapel

THE CHAPLAIN WRITES...

As I look back over the last six years, I do so with a profound sense of gratitude. It has been an honour and a source of incredible joy to be at Stowe. I can honestly say, I have loved every minute of it, and I really cannot call it work. It has been fun, and I thank God for it, as He calls me away to another field of work.

But, it is also with a sense of enormous gratitude to a whole host of people for the work they do, to make the Chapel flourish.

Gratitude to speakers and preachers. This year, they included Baroness Young, Baroness Cumberlege, Bishop Peter Dawes, Bishop Peter Ball, Lord Archer of Sandwell, the Marquis of Reading, Dr John Lennox, the Earl of Sandwich, the Right Hon Frank Field MP, the Bishops of Oxford, Tewkesbury, Buckingham and Peterborough and the Hon Nicholas Soames MP. My thanks to them and to all the others who, over the years, have made Stowe Chapel's preaching programme one of the very finest in the country.

Gratitude to those who lead Chapel, Bible studies and Confirmation classes. My colleagues are, I believe, without equal in terms of the support that they give. AD, SJBA, PASF, MJB, REM, LJG, Patricia Smith and most particularly RERD, whose contribution during his two years at Stowe has been quite incredible. His particular work in developing Crossfire and the network of Bible studies throughout the School will have an impact not just over the next few years, but in eternity also! Rupert will be greatly missed as he moves on to theological training in the summer. I have written of RBJ and his contribution elsewhere. He will be greatly missed, but I am thrilled that he has chosen to become a "full time" School Chaplain. Stowe has unquestionably played a major part in drawing him down this path.

My gratitude, too, extends to the many "unsung" heroes of the Chapel whose roles are not always so obvious: the team of cleaners; Paul Reid and the House staff; Annie Nichols and the flower arrangers; John Green, Jamie Henderson and the choir that they lead. Rarely can a Chaplain and Director of Music have enjoyed such a harmonious and, indeed, fun relationship. My successor is indeed fortunate in having a Director of Music who so loves the Chapel.

But, above all, my gratitude is to the Stoics themselves, who have made life here such fun! The Chapel committee (who were instrumental in raising over £7,000 for various charities this year); the leaders of Crossfire whose spiritual paths I shall continue to chart over the years, and my long suffering Chapel Prefects! It is often remarked that they could run the Chapel without me! Often, they do! This year Toby Dixon and Harry Speir did a tremendous job providing, (quite unexpected), efficiency and huge quantities of good natured support. The mantle was handed on to Dominic Spencer-Churchill and Tom Sleater.

I shall miss Stowe enormously, but it has taught me so much that I feel happy to move on equipped with the Stowe

vision of education. It is embedded in the concept of all people being equally valuably made, as they are, in the image of God. It is a vision that puts God at the centre of education, giving meaning and purpose to all that we do. Jesus, I am confident, would revile the idea of league tables with their insidious implications that 'intelligent' people are 'better' than those who are less good at exams. Stowe shares that righteous disgust!

So, farewell Stowe. I pray that some of what I have done will be found to have been built with precious materials (1 Corinthians 3 10-15). God alone will know that at the due time, I am content to leave things at that!

CHRISTIAN LIFE AT STOWE

During the week there are many events which are open to the whole school, enabling those who are interested in the Christian faith to learn more about God. These take the form of Bible studies throughout the week, a Holy Communion service and Crossfire on Friday evenings, as well as the two morning chapel services and a full service on Sundays.

On Tuesday evenings there is a Holy Communion service. The preacher this term has been Tony Jones, currently in training at Wycliffe Hall, Oxford, and the communion service has been led by Tim Hastie-Smith.

During the week various Bible studies take place for different year groups and Houses. The sessions give people the opportunity to learn more about the Bible. The Bible studies are led by various members of staff.

On Friday evenings there is a Christian Union called Crossfire, which is run by a middle sixth committee with the help of Mr. Demery. The evening usually involves some songs, an open prayer and a talk given by various people from different walks of life. The two biggest audiences for Crossfire were for Chris Lambrianou and Ron Simms, both ex-convicts. The talks were based around their lives before they became christians, what made them turn their lives to Christ, and the difficulties they face leading their lives as christians. Other speakers at Crossfire include: Simon Scott, Simon Guillebaud and the Revd. Jonathan Fletcher, who led the Lenten Addresses this Spring.

The Lenten Addresses were a week long series of talks entitled "A Sneaking Suspicion". During this week a group of christians stayed at Stowe helping to answer questions about christianity and the talks that took place. We also enjoyed a concert performed by "Fractal Edge" called "Alienation" – which was open to the whole school and was well attended. This christian band travels around various schools and other centres performing.

At Stowe there is also an opportunity to get confirmed. The candidates wishing to get confirmed are split into groups, which have meetings once a week with a designated member of staff to prepare for the confirmation. As well as these classes there is a retreat led by Revd. Alastair Tresidder for all those getting confirmed. The service usually occurs at the beginning of May.

There are so many opportunities for christians and non-christians at Stowe to broaden their faith and to learn more about God and the gifts that he offers us. All the many events that take place make christianity at Stowe an important and highly regarded part of the everyday routine of school. Thanks to RERD and TMHS.

EMMA DIXEY AND TATTY SLOANE

REFLECTIONS ON VISITING STOWE

By the Baroness O'Cathain of the Barbican (who is preaching at Stowe, once again, on Sunday 7th June 1998).

Trinity Sunday 1995 found me stopping outside the entrance to the glorious parkland of Stowe at about 9am and, not for the first – or even the one hundredth and first – time asking myself the question “How did you EVER agree to this?”. And not for the first time (plus, plus) I took a deep breath and said “Right, you agreed, do it as best you can and remember it is rather like going to the dentist – it will all be over in a matter of a few short hours”.

I was on my way to PREACH at a Morning Service. A ‘first’? Yes. Why? Nearly two years on I still do not know the full answer to that! It is a combination of the hugely persuasive powers of the Chaplain, the Revd. Tim Hastie-Smith and a sense of responsibility to share “The Good News” with anyone who is prepared to listen (but up to that point it had never been “shared” in any place more formal than a tea-shop, an office during a lull in business, or in one’s home).

I do, however, hold to the belief that if someone you respect greatly encourages you to do something which is seen to be useful you should take a risk and do it – putting your heart and soul into it AND ENTRUSTING THE DIRECTION AND SUPPORT TO THE LORD. I was encouraged by one of my Christian Fellowship colleagues in the House of Lords... and there I was!

My impressions of Stowe, which have been greatly heightened by a subsequent visit, fall into three distinct yet relating categories. The initial impact of the sheer beauty of the setting – a glorious manifestation of God’s Creation entrusted to the talents and care of man and so ably maintained for generations; the wonderful warmth of the welcome, instantly removing a large (but not all!) element of the terror inherent in the prospect of PREACHING at a Morning Service; and the genuine openness, willingness to listen and consideration of the pupils were each quite staggering and unique to my experience.

Stowe is beautiful. There is an air of tranquillity, steadfastness and goodness about the glorious parkland and the buildings. People move back and forth in a studied, purposeful manner but look serene whilst doing so. Coming from the centre of bustling London the difference was formidable particularly in the faces – not for Stowe the tortured, screwed up faces, the hunched shoulders, the apparent disregard for every other human being. This has got to be a reflection of both the setting of the school and the ethos engendered there. It is a real tonic to visit!

I had chosen to preach on the psalms – not all 150 of them! Prior to preparing my words I had prayed for guidance and was led to the verse “Be still before the Lord and wait patiently on Him”. This seemed to me to encapsulate the advice I would like to give to people soon to start out on their ‘adult’ life and I thought it not inappropriate to point out that we so often surround ourselves with noise, clutter, the impedimenta of our frenetic world that we risk not focusing on the REAL purpose of life and the fantastic, comforting,

sustaining support we get from a deep relationship with the Lord who is CENTRAL to our existence.

Following the service I met members of staff, students and family members of students. It was a universally uplifting and encouraging session. I was then entrusted to a senior student who gave me “the guided tour”. My goodness, how life has changed for students since my boarding school days! I was enthralled, completely overwhelmed, by the courtesy, confidence, ability to communicate shown by my guide. Not having children of my own I have never been in the position of making judgements about “the youth of today”; and I will, I hope, never fall into the trap of so doing, but I was hugely uplifted by my hour or so with that young man... and feel much more confident that my future is in good hands if he is representative of the youth of today.

Finally, to round off a day which had started in terror I had one of the most enjoyable, fun, sparky lunches of my long life. In the bosom of the Hastie-Smith family and sharing with several of the Sixth Form we all put the secular World to rights but the foundation of our Faith was the basis of the opinions exchanged, the hopes expressed, the genuine friendship shared.

I left Stowe with a sense of sadness that a wonderful few hours had come to an end. What a contrast to my initial feelings when I entered that magnificent parkland such a short time previously! I have never felt sad a few hours after being to the dentist – so it wasn’t like a visit to the dentist at all!

Thank you, Stowe, for giving me a very precious cameo in my ‘memory box’, thank you, Tim Hastie-Smith for inviting me but, above all, thank you, Lord, for making it all possible – possible to be a witness on such a marvellous day.

CONFIRMATION

A candidate writes “I had always expected my Confirmation to be like the one that my brother went through at (name deleted!), but far from being boring and a simple excuse for a few expensive presents, it became, for me, the focus of the year at Stowe. Amazingly, I looked forward to the weekly classes and found the weekend away led by Revd. Alistair Tresidder, brilliant. It suddenly opened my eyes to the true meaning of christianity. The service was wonderful too, and although the weather was foul, nothing could dampen the spirits of those of us who were being confirmed. I shall remember that day all of my life”.

The following were confirmed in Stowe Chapel on Sunday May 11th 1997 by the Right Revd. Colin Bennetts, the Lord Bishop of Buckingham.

Daisy Brook, Thomas Buxton, Henry Craik-White, William Messenger, Nadine Talalla, Henry Billingham, Thomas Irvine, Mark Ollard, Guy Pelly, Harry Trotter, Sam Barratt, Rupert Burchett, Thomas de Serville, Jonathan Howorth, Alexander Laing, Alexander Lyell, Henry Coram James, Angus Elphinstone, Blake French, Kaunda Kavindele, Hugo Pilcher, Sami Robertson, Charles Bingham, Rupert Connell, Emma Dixey, William Keeler, Sarah Parker, Shelley Wisner, Hugh Arbuthnott, Ross Griffin, James Johnstone, Mark Mackay-Lewis, James Nettleton, Bertie Marsh, Edward Morley, Robert Prentice, Christopher Reeves, Alexander Winter, Babafunso Alakija, Edward Balfour, Hugh de Sales La Terriere, Alasdair Gaston, Jack Mann.

SERMON GIVEN BY THE RT. HON. BARONESS YOUNG

I expect that many of you are studying history. Some no doubt are taking it for A-level, and are already in the midst of your exams, some of you at GCSE, and I wish you very well.

Almost all of the rest of you will be studying history as part of your curriculum. I hope that some of you enjoy it as much as I do. Today the way history is taught is very different from the way I learned the subject when I was at school. You do so many projects and learn about the past social and economic changes – the Industrial Revolution – the rise of Communism – and the great changes in the lives and positions of women. My grandsons tell me that they are studying respectively the First and Second World Wars. And these are all great and important events which have shaped the way we live today – riches from the industrial revolution and all the advantages from the social changes.

But I hope you enjoy reading about the great individuals who have shaped our history. Henry V at Agincourt, the first Queen Elizabeth – one of the greatest women who ever lived if not the greatest. Nearer our own time there is Sir Winston Churchill, whose speeches inspired everyone during the Second World War. I can still remember the time when I heard him speak shortly after the war.

Then there are the great events themselves. I wonder what you would all say if you were asked what was the greatest event in history? You are all going to live through – some while you are at school – a great event. I hope you have guessed what it is. The Millennium: we know the date 2000 – now what is it? To read the newspapers one would think it was a giant ferris wheel somewhere in London: or more romantically the lighting of bonfires starting with one on our island, to one in the Pacific Ocean, where the rising sun will first be seen. Or more practically the planting of two lines of trees the full length of the Greenwich line of longitude through Great Britain, Spain and Africa. But is that really all? We all know that the Millennium is only important because it marks 2000 years since the birth of Jesus Christ. And to a Christian the birth of Jesus is undoubtedly the most important event in history. Jesus and Christianity have dominated our history and even today influence us more than many think. It is impossible to understand the medieval world, to see the great cathedrals, and look at many of the greatest paintings, or hear much of the greatest music without knowing the source of the inspiration – Jesus Christ.

And why is this so? You have heard and I hope have read, the first chapter of St. John's Gospel. It is always read at Carol Services. St. John writes "And the word was made flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld his glory, the glory of the only begotten of the Father full of grace and truth)." Put another way God became Man. What does this extraordinary statement mean? Let us think about Jesus' birth and his death. First we know about the birth of Jesus. Matthew tells us that he was

born when Herod was king. Luke dates it by a piece of tax policy when Caesar Augustus was on the throne in Rome, and Cyrenius was Governor of Syria. Joseph and Mary went to Bethlehem to be taxed. These are all established historical facts. We know that Jesus lived for approximately 33 years. If we move on to Jesus' death, that is well documented too. He was tried both by the Jews under Herod – who accused him of blasphemy – and then by the Romans when Pontius Pilate was Governor of the Province. He then suffered a singularly unpleasant and agonizing death. Joseph of Arithamea took Jesus' body from the cross and put it in the tomb in the rock. And then what happened? The stone, part of the entrance of the tomb was moved, and the body disappeared. It is very strange: two groups of people were interested. The Jews thought that they had seen the last of a blasphemer, the Romans the last of a trouble maker and it would look extremely incompetent to have lost the body. Can you imagine the meeting afterwards? "What do you mean its gone? Where?" Someone must have taken it. But if they had found that someone, and everyone had an interest in doing so, I feel sure we should have heard. As it is, the Gospel writers tell us that Jesus re-appeared in the garden to Mary Magdalene, and subsequently to the disciples.

What extraordinary events. No wonder at first the disciples did not really believe what was happening. How could they? Jesus whom they had known. Jesus who had healed the sick; Jesus who had told them his parables to illustrate his faith; Jesus who had been to weddings and loved children. Jesus who had preached in the Temple. Jesus who had set them a perfect example of how to live, had disappeared from the tomb, and re-appeared not entirely in a recognizable form to speak to them. Jesus was not dead. He had overcome death: that truly He was the Son of God.

So what we are celebrating at the Millennium is this absolutely extraordinary fact – absolutely amazing event, namely that God became Man. The early Christians always asked an essential question "Do you believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God?". And it is one that each one of you have to ask. To be a Christian is to believe this astonishing fact.

I return to my original point, which I hope you will remember when the Millennium comes. What is it we are celebrating? When the last champagne cork has popped, do not forget that the Millennium commemorates the day when God visited our planet.

I would like to leave you with some words that I have always found helpful and I hope you will too. They were spoken by George VI at a very difficult time during the Second World War. They are:

"I said to the man who stood at the gate of the year 'Give me a light that I may see safely into the unknown'. And he said, 'Put your hand into the hand of God, for that is better than a light and safer than a known way'."

Drama

JUNIOR CONGREVE: A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM

Roxburgh Hall, June 1997

Four hundred years old, and still going strong! Shakespeare's midsummer mixture of romance and comedy has provoked many outstanding performances. The RSC a few years ago gave us a punk Dream, the woodland setting a metal scrapheap outside Athens. Then there was Frankie Howerd, leaving "Up Pompeii" for the Old Vic and Bottom. Beerbohm Tree, also playing the weaver, had real rabbits cavorting in his woods, but the ladies in his audience at Her Majesty's only had eyes for Lewis Waller's manly Lysander. Some, meanwhile, talk of Samuel Phelps at Sadler's Wells and some of Mrs Faucit's Titania at Covent Garden...

The play has been equally popular with amateurs. Ian Small's production for the Senior Congreve back in 1981 is remembered for its inventive comic business and its romantic settings, all shimmering limelight and plangent music. Chatham House's colour-coded version of 1994 had the virginal Hippolyta/Titania and company in white and the hot-blooded Theseus/Oberon and company in red: Leeds United playing Liverpool. The trees danced around the Dobinson in glee and so too, in a way, did the bank where the wild thyme blows. Then, in the summer of 1997, came the Junior Congreve, directed by Fiona Baddeley and Leah Hamblett...

They sensibly eschewed live rabbits, Premiership colours and metal scrapheaps. Instead they set things in the hippie days of the 1960s. This allowed for fairy spirits who were seriously swinging and distinctly groovy. "The fairies in our wood," noted the programme, "are totally cool and believe that it is better to make love than war..." It also allowed for a performance which gave us the play (sympathetically cut) in all its richness.

This was a production without fuss, light of touch, played with pace and helped by some fine settings, lighting, sound and special effects. Emphasis was very much on understanding the text and putting it across in a meaningful way, something which was triumphantly achieved. The verse was spoken with sensitivity and relish, the comedy deftly

The Mechanicals



handled. The mechanicals, who perhaps have the best of the script, made much of it, whilst the lovers pointed their lines with great finesse and found much in them which was totally fresh. As in recent Junior Congreves the boys of the Third and Fourth forms were augmented by the girls of the Lower Sixth. The latter were outstandingly good, so it is very much to the credit of Demetrius, Lysander, Oberon, Theseus and Co. that this in no way unbalanced proceedings.

Nine months on since the last curtain call, the characterisation which most endures is Susannah Galsworthy's southern belle of a Titania, a most arresting performance and one which perhaps lifted all around her. Bella Arbuthnott and Alia Brahimi also created heroines who will long be remembered. In some productions Helena and Hermia can blur together. Here, however, were two beautifully delineated characterisations, with much more than just their height to distinguish them. David Widdick and Max Lawrence represented the opposite sex with considerable assurance, and Henry Cavill brought off a remarkably mature performance as Oberon. The temptation to use the same actors for Theseus/Oberon and Hippolyta/Titania was resisted - a big temptation, for it does help bring out the unsatisfactory background to the wedding - and Simon Creek and Verity Scott did well with the human pair in this quartet, neither an easy part. Meanwhile, back in the woods, Guy Pelly went about his business as Puck with mischievous aplomb.

Another performance lasting in the memory was Alasdair Gaston's Bottom. He overcame the disadvantage of being a little young for the part by sheer force of personality. There were delightful outbursts of pride, not least when the parts of Thisbe and Lion came into prospect. His ego steadily inflated before our eyes, scene by scene. James Johnstone did particularly well as a fluttering Flute, whilst Sean Harker (Quince), Charles Stanton (Snout), Alex Wilson (Snug) and Tom O'Halloran (Starveling) all relished their comic opportunities as the rustics determined to entertain their betters in a seemly way.

All in all, it was a delightful summer's evening. The quality of the production quite belied a rehearsal schedule which suffered considerable problems as a burgeoning number of summer activities competed with each other for some limited time slots. The determination of the directors in seeing things through was almost as impressive as their success in eliciting such accomplished performances from their very large cast. It was a sad moment indeed when Puck came in sweeping through the palace with his broom to herald the end of the play.

"If we shadows have offended
Think but this, and all is mended,
That you have but slumber'd here
While these visions did appear..."

We certainly didn't slumber! Yet, can we be totally sure? Maybe it was all a dream? Maybe the whole evening was not real after all? Just wafer-thin fantasy, now gently disintegrating, weathered by time? A dream (past the wit of man to say what dream it was)? If so, like Bottom, we can confidently assert that we had a most rare vision... There will certainly be many fond memories of that Junior Congreve Dream, back in 1997, when the next Stowe version appears, sometime in the new millennium.

AGM



Guy Pelly as Puck



Harry Cavill as Oberon



Arabella Arbuthnott as Helena



Alasdair Gaston as Bottom

MIDSUMMER DREAMING WITH 3RD & 4TH FORMS:

A Sixth former's experience of acting in a Junior Congreve

This year's Junior Congreve production of "A Midsummer Night's Dream" was performed by the third and fourth form boys and a handful of lower sixth girls. Instead of the traditional Shakespearean dress, all the fairies were in 1960's hippie mode with American accents, whilst the courtiers were in evening dress. This gave a new light to a rather clichéd play.

When "A Midsummer Night's Dream" had been confirmed as the school play, it was received with mixed feelings. The thought of doing a serious Shakespearean play cast a shadow of doubt on many a Stoic, but from day one, of rehearsals, the supposed theory proved wrong. One of the highlights of acting in the Junior Congreve is that one has to work with and get to know the junior boys, whom otherwise I would not have known. The barrier of different years was broken as one has to work in a team with people of different years and sex.

There was a limit on the rehearsal time we had, so lines had to be learnt with speed. Everyone wanted the production to be a success, and the enthusiasm and will to get on and work hard was visible amongst everyone. For the first half of term rehearsals had to be done in the Dobinson Theatre as the Roxburgh was under maintenance. This was a slight setback as it meant that we had to work on a much smaller scale.

Meanwhile the stage crew had been working extremely hard on the set, which lived up to the usual Stowe reputation. The performance came together about a week and a half before the first night. Two songs were added in for Titania and the final touches were put in place. There were no sudden mishaps and the first performance was reached on schedule.

The first night was performed to a few neighbouring prep schools and various staff. It was not the hit that we imagined, but we put it down to the younger watchers not understanding the Shakespeare wit and words. However, there had been no major mishaps, apart from the fact that Demetrius made a slightly late entrance! The second of the three nights we performed to a virtually full auditorium. Everything went according to plan and the audience responded better than we could have imagined. The final night perhaps brought the most laughs, partly because the auditorium was almost full with Stoics. Thus the 1997 Junior Congreve ended triumphantly. It was a mixture of hard work and fun. Everybody enjoyed working together, there were no last rehearsal nightmares and it all went according to plan. I would have done it all over again if I could.

ARABELLA ARBUTHNOTT

David Widdick & Max Lawrence as Demetrius & Lysander



AN INTERVIEW WITH SIR DEREK JACOBI

In September we were delighted to welcome Sir Derek Jacobi to Stowe. As the godfather of Rose Hickie, one of our MVI Theatre Studies candidates, he kindly agreed to be interviewed by a group of Stoics about his life as an actor and director, on stage and screen.

How did you get into acting?

I had always wanted to be an actor. I had really never considered anything else. At school I was often featured in plays, and one year we took the production of "Macbeth" up to The Fringe at the Edinburgh Festival. It caused quite a stir. After school I went to Cambridge and then to drama school, and it just took off from there.

What are the differences between acting on stage and screen?

The stage is much more physical and you are able to become emotionally involved with your character and what you are doing. Whereas on screen that is virtually lost as filming is done out of sequence and the amount of waiting around one has to do kills almost any involvement one might have had. On stage, performing live creates a tremendous buzz. The audience are there and you are acting directly to them. The buzz is lost in filming: as there is no audience and instant response from them, the sense of achievement is slightly lost. However, saying that, it is always great watching the completed film. Unfortunately it is much easier to criticise oneself on film than on the stage. I would say that I definitely prefer acting on stage to screen.

How would you prepare yourself for a role?

I always learn my script by first rehearsal. Having a photographic memory helps. Having to prepare for so many roles, it is not easy to become so involved.

What do you think about the modernising of some of Shakespeare's plays?

Brilliant. I think that it is marvellous. If it helps people, especially young people to understand and like Shakespeare, I am all for it. I thought the modernising of "Romeo and Juliet" was brilliant. Especially the way that they involved Shakespeare directly by putting him in the title, "William Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet". It instantly reminds people that it was Shakespeare who wrote the play.

Do you feel that you have been classified as a classical actor?

Yes, I do rather. I would say that was one of my regrets that I did not do more out of the classical plays and films. I enjoyed very much doing the television series "Cadfael". They were quite surprised that I auditioned for it as it was not what I normally specialise in. They also were surprised that I was auditioning for a series for ITV. I had been classed by them as a 'posh classical actor' and therefore a BBC actor.

What did you think about the performance of "Macbeth" with the Royal Shakespeare Company?

This was a challenging role. I do not normally enjoy playing Macbeth. I felt that I had not quite perfected him and I wish that I could re-do it so that I could get the character up to standard. The director had had this vision of what the set was to be. It was a disaster. The stage was cluttered with all kinds of props and not only was it hazardous but dangerous as well. At one stage it actually said in the lines that the stage was bare, and the director, instead of changing the complicated set, just simply scrapped the line. There was one scene where Lady Macbeth and myself had to climb down this extremely steep staircase whilst saying my speech. It was one of the most challenging roles that I have had to play.

The evening was extremely enjoyable and it was an education learning about one of the greatest classical actors of this century. Everybody was interested to hear and learn about Sir Derek's acting techniques and life on screen and on the stage.

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HOUSE DRAMA FESTIVAL 97

This year's House Drama Festival was presided over by Rachel Nichols, professional actress, currently touring with the Oilly Carte and Zillah Eagles, director and student of musical theatre. They both offered some sound advice, inspiration and a considerable amount of praise.

The Chandos House play managed to combine all the usual requisites of a house play (including fitting all of the house on stage) and produced a highly entertaining view of the staff room courtesy of the Lower Sixth. The latter were particularly adept at lounging about, playing bridge and indulging in idle gossip. As Henry Coxe remarked "The children, what have they got to do with it?" There were a few words of wisdom from "Flash", known to his friends as Peter Gomme, who was indeed "quicker than he seemed" although his first line was some fifteen minutes into the play. As for the rest of the cast, Simon Post was alarmingly convincing as the Headmaster, as was Henry Craik-White speaking "ironic crap". The Chandos fifth form, and predictably Oscar Humphries in particular, had their say with their novel tie-dye uniform – "instantly recognisable in the city" but not yet in the school shop.

The play meanwhile tackled such contentious topics as the EU, Rugby professionalism and the inspection itself. To the delight of many members of the audience, a vicious caricature of Rugby was painted, one of the best lines being "we don't necessarily play the nearest sides but only those who play the right sort of way". The politically correct euphemism for otherwise known "Mickey-Mouse" subjects as "those simply more reliable in terms of results" is indicative of the ironic tone of this cleverly conceived play. Written by SGAH, "The School Inspector" has since been published.

Lyttelton's production was described by our commentators as a "really good attempt at a difficult play". The actresses worked well to support each other and to bring out the comedy as well as the more morbid messages of the script. 'Steel Magnolias' is set in Tracy Jones' beauty parlour. Tracy, who believes "there is no such thing as natural beauty!", was brilliantly played by Ali Sennett. Her customers pay to be beautified and get a lot more besides. Tracy has recently employed the hapless Anelle, played by Anna Kenyon, who was particularly good at standing in the corner and twiddling her dress, while being sympathetic to the clients. Charlie Peevers stood out both in terms of costume and acting.

Much of the time is spent discussing and supporting Shelby in her marriage. As Shelby's mother says "we like being nice to people, there is not much else to do in this town". Niceness can also take the form of pretence which we are told is "worth a pound of manure". There was no pretence in this production though and special credit must go to Fay Davies who stood in for Charlotte Oliver as well as directing this accomplished production.

The Nugent House play "Shakers", albeit it a little "shaky" on the first night, was a lighter and more glittery affair. Laughs abounded throughout and the Dobinson theatre was filled on both nights. All four waitresses (Sarah Parker,

Serena Thynne, Verity Scott and Alia Brahim) acted brilliantly and were totally convincing as the downtown working girls who spend their lives shaking cocktails and pregnancy test tubes while dreaming of a brighter future. Alice Beaumont deserves a particular mention for her portrayal of grumpy old men and laddish louts, as does Verity Scott for her soliloquy. Polly Viccars must take the credit for directing one of the most enjoyable house plays this year.

Chatham's "Wyld Stallyns" was, in its own way, a remarkable achievement. Written by our very own Armand David, it borrowed hilariously and unashamedly from 'Bill and Ted', who came to Stowe, "sorted some stuff", bought the T-shirt, sang Bon Jovi and left in time for a donut and a Dr. Pepper before bedtime. The musical backing, courtesy of the renowned "Physical" (Armand David, SHM and BJD) was memorable. The riffs and accompaniments blended with the mood and context of the play as the suave, D-J-ed, cross-legged musicians delighted the front rows.

Bill and Ted were energetically played by Tom Sleater and Hugo Gordon-Lennox, with Tom introducing his own idiosyncratic brand of humour to help the play along to its three alternative endings. All in all a surprisingly original and well produced play.

Grenville produced a skit on our noble playwright William Shakespeare. "All's well that ends as you like it" was directed by the renowned, if unlikely, pairing of John 'economist' Viney and James 'classicist' Neary. It certainly provoked a lot of laughter from both sides of the stage and MOMC fortunately found the funny side of it too. Our commentators particularly liked the throne and the bush.

Temple House's play was on the whole a success with genuinely funny performances from Kunal Kapoor, Will Bloomfield, Ashley Smatt and Will Morley. The play was a comic melodrama about small town country life in which Ashley Smatt, the rastafarian gypsy, put a voodoo curse on Corinna Vere Nicoll resulting in her marriage to the evil, rich city man who finally murders her. Good fun was had by all, audience and actors included, and suitably melodramatic acting abounded.

Grafton House's play saw Kristjan Byfield having fun as Basil Fawlty and the audience also enjoyed their rendition of a classic television episode. Good fun and well received.

Walpole's house play was an altogether more ambitious project. Will Skidmore and Charles Bailey directed "Chips with Everything" and, although they clearly had difficulty cutting the play to a manageable size, the themes came across strongly and individual moments of humour were well realised. The blocking was also excellent. This was a hard-hitting and worthwhile production which sadly did not attract the audience it deserved.

The final word must go to Zillah Eagles who found the Drama Festival "an impressive, varied, and thoroughly entertaining event that admirably displayed Stoics' talent and initiative".

ADAPTED BY FAB FROM *THE VOICE*

DOUGLAS ADAMS' DIRK

It had its humble beginnings in 1992, as a mere seedling in the creative minds of James Goss & Arvind David as they decided to spend one summer holiday productively. At great expense to their parents on international faxes, Arvind (Chatham 1993) and James (Chandos 1992) managed to piece together a hysterical adaptation of Douglas Adams' less well known work, *Dirk Gently's Holistic Detective Agency*, for use as a Chatham House Play. Adventurous, exciting, and entertaining, the play was successful with its jazz overtones and cryptic quotations of the *Rime of the Ancient Mariner*. And that could have been the end of that story...

But James and Arvind went on to Oxford, and by 1995 could resist no longer – *DIRK* returned, but not, needless to say, on the modest Dobinson stage, but at the slightly more exorbitant Old Fire Station in Oxford. After a significant redraft, this time co-ordinated between the authors by email, Arvind got this production together with the same indomitable style and panache as he used in his Chatham days. A bigger budget, better posters, improved script and bigger set, the second production of *DIRK* also boasted beautiful computer animations projected onto a large screen. 'Aha!' thought the authors, 'We could be onto something...' This production was similarly successful, and Matthew Wreford (Bruce 1993) and Mark Chamberlain (Grenville 1993) also stepped in to help, helping make its week long run a sell-out. And it could have ended there.

1997: The year of the rat. *DIRK* is reborn.

Another re-write later, Arvind & James bring Douglas Adams in to see it, and a small privileged group of current Stoics got down to the Playhouse in Oxford to see the biggest and best version of *DIRK* to date. With a newly formed production company, Crossbow, managed by Arvind and Matthew, the new *DIRK* was hugely hyped, wonderfully witty, and superlatively successful. No Stoics involved in the direction of the play this time, but with Arvind, James & Matthew's enormous expectations, appropriate frenzied tactically applied whipping at the various different members of the production crew resulted in industrial grade animations projected onto an 8' by 10' screen. This was the centre of an elaborate and intelligent set, which portrayed, often simultaneously: prehistoric Earth, a Don's room in Cambridge, and the offices of one Dirk Gently, esq, Holistic detective, resulting in a beautiful structure appealing to the aesthetic senses of those who seek order within chaos.

The story of *DIRK* is too complex to summarise efficiently here, but it is essentially a whodunit stretching across four billion years of Earth history. Dirk Gently, Esquire, has a detective agency which he runs on the principle that all things, fundamentally, are interconnected. He seems a

conman, who denies that he comes from the smarter end of East Transylvania, that he has any 'psychosassie' powers whatsoever and that he is directly descended from a vampire bat. Consequently everyone believes that he is all of the above, and he manages to get a certain amount of work. In this story, he saves the world from never having existed by stopping a 4 billion-year-old ghost from stopping life on Earth beginning. It also has rather a nice angle on sofas...

The production was sharp and professional (despite the fact that students were acting), the story weird and hysterically amusing, and the lines periodically had the audience spouting into paralytic fits of laughter. It was a great success and a testimony to the Old Stoics who put it on.

Matthew and Arvind are using their production company, Crossbow, to put on more productions, the next of which is Tom Stoppard's *Arcadia*, inspired by Stowe, and, appropriately, to be performed in the Marble Hall in the run-up to the Jubilee Celebrations this summer. It should be a huge success, involving Stoics past and present, and SGAH will be lending a hand as Arvind directs his first play at Stowe since the first production of *DIRK*, many years ago...

The *DIRK* website is at <http://www.dirk.clara.net/>

The *Arcadia* website will soon arise at:

<http://www.stowe.co.uk/arcadia/>

Arvind's personal website is at:

<http://www.pessoptimist.clara.net/>

For further information on *Arcadia* email:

arcadia@stowe.co.uk

ARMAND DAVID

After The Hitch Hiker's Guide to the Galaxy came...

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SFX Magazine

'It was wonderful...very entertaining'
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Dirk

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SENIOR CONGREVE: GUYS AND DOLLS

If any areas of Stowe life have been underrated in the past, the school Congreve productions have been most certainly one of them. This year's finished product was no exception, and several members of the outgoing Middle Sixth, who have been consistently outstanding, are deservedly considering taking tentative, professional steps onto the boards in the future.

The quality and diversity of Stowe drama never ceases to thrill, a fact no longer lost on the school's marketing strategy. This year saw the first real "commercialisation" of a Stowe production. On all the days the Roxy was very nearly full, including Saturday, a ticket-only affair; a professional orchestra was squeezed out of the bursar and there was even television interest in filming part of the production.

With its rather "straightforward" plot, a musical such as *Guys and Dolls* sinks or swims on the dynamism of the characters and strength of foot-tapping musical numbers. Bouncing up and down in the pit, conducting his orchestra, playing the piano and prompting the soloists, often simultaneously, James Henderson was his usual success as musical director. He was of course lucky to have so many talented choristers at his disposal: Dru Clark as Nicely Nicely got all the favourites, but also outstanding were Susannah Galsworthy and Ali Sennett, who was incredibly gifted at making ear-piercing Betty-Boop noises without the use of helium.

The play itself revolves around the conflicting lifestyles of glitzy crap-gamblers Nathan (Kristjan Byfield), Sky (Ben Schofield) and their crew, and the repressed Salvation Army missionaries led by the prim sergeant (Susannah Galsworthy). Their measured gospel marches scythed through the decadent masses and their demure existence contrasted well with the surrounding bootleg lifestyle.

And so it is left to slippery Sky Masterson and a surprisingly effective chat-up line – "Do you take sinners here?" gradually to merge the two worlds, and his wager to deliver "twelve genu-ine sinners" is fulfilled in an exhilarating penultimate scene in the chapel. Dru and company's exhaustive rendition of 'Sit down you're rocking the boat' stretched to four encores on the final night and was a thrilling climax of the play for many. As a whole the production was of course embellished by copious swaggering toffs and scantily-clad dancing girls – the Hot Box routine being a personal favourite – and plenty of slapstick side-show antics with Nicely and Benny (Al Gaston). The play's happy resolution was effectively realised after another of Ali Sennett's laments, bar the first night when the conclusion of the final scene was overlooked by the orchestra and the audience left on tenterhooks over the final matrimony.

Guys and Dolls may not have had the spine-chilling drama of *Cabaret*, nor the thespian finesse of *The Importance of Being Earnest*, but the glamour and vitality which David Barr and his cast gave it made it immensely memorable.

The production of *Guys and Dolls* was dedicated to Alison Small who had played Adelaide in the staff production of 1984.

ROY CHAMBERS



Societies

ANACREON

The Anacreon Society was set up to organise events where students meet and cook a meal for a staff member (and family) of their choice. There are currently 18 members of the society, both boys and girls, who have had three meetings this term which have all been very successful. They take place either on Saturday evening or Sunday lunch, although all the meals so far have been on Sunday, and are intended as formal occasions allowing Stoics to practise their social graces! The week before each meeting two members are chosen to cook, and it is their responsibility to find a location for the meal. On the Friday before each meeting, these two students have to buy the necessary food and wine, which is budgeted at £26 per head (including wine). The chefs arrange a time with the staff member, whose house we are invading, to start preparing the food.

Rowena Birkett-Jones and I cooked for the first meeting of the year, held at Dr. Hornby's house, which was very daunting. Although we arrived two hours in advance, we had a lot of vegetables, which took ages to prepare. However, despite the time factor everything else seemed to be well organised. We cooked chicken breasts with a tomato, wine and olive sauce accompanied by pasta, mangetout, leeks, baby sweetcorn and green beans. This was followed by brandy-snap baskets with vanilla ice-cream and a summer fruit coulis.

The second meeting was held at Mr and Mrs Dalton's flat in Chandos house, and the meal was cooked by Anna and Natalia. When we arrived we were all very impressed by how calm and organised they seemed to be. They had prepared a starter consisting of parma ham and melon, which was delicious, followed by fish with a tomato and herb sauce. This was accompanied by rice, and a very tasty salad, complimented by Jack Hazell's honey and mustard dressing. For pudding we had a biscuit and strawberry creme-fraiche layered flan.

The third and most recent meal was made by Jack and Dominic Gwyn-Jones at Mrs Mullineux's house. They had brought a large quantity of food but we somehow managed to devour most of it, leaving only a few left-overs for her dog! They started with Irish smoked salmon (imported from Ireland by Dom), with a prawn cocktail salad. This was followed by three enormous roasted chickens, served with red cabbage, mangetout, roast potatoes and carrots. They also prepared home-made gravy and bread sauce and if that was not enough, they presented us with two huge chocolate cakes and a fruit salad to end the meal with.

We all certainly look forward to future meals; if the idea of creating an easy and delicious meal appeals to you and you would like to become a member of the Anacreon Society next term, please see Dr. Hornby.

KATHERINE COWPE

BRIDGE

The Stowe Bridge club had its most successful season last year, reaching the dizzy heights of the EBU national plate final, a two-day, 90-hand event, for the first time ever. We joined sixteen other teams in Sheffield for a weekend in the spring holiday and, somewhat daunted by the obsessive, intimidating yet admittedly fluent opposition, finished an honourable second-last in the event. This did by no means overshadow a successful run through the normal formality of a Bedford heat which we perennially lose, and a blinding "second-rubber" (half) recovery in the Chelsea semi to qualify for the finals.

Ever keen to dispel Bridge's stereotypical and unfair "old maid" image, the club meets once a week, attracting a dozen or so players, and more regularly before team events. Other year highlights included Chandos yet again winning the house cup- despite the unexplained absence of their captain; first pair Ed James and Roy Chambers emerging in the top twenty of the EBU simultaneous pairs event, and the staff match which, as is custom, the staff were allowed to win again.

ROY CHAMBERS

CHESS

The club continues to be active, although numbers have fluctuated. A lively spirit of competition prevails, but there is still a reluctance to log games, study them afterwards and read relevant literature. Mr Thompson and Mr Taylor, our Teacher-coach and Parent-coach respectively, offer specific advice whenever they can.

High spots of the year since February 1997 have included a keenly fought inter-house competition in June, won by Cobham, whose Russian players stood them in good stead, other houses have commented! (However, it is Walpole which currently has the school's best player in the person of Alexi Sorokin.) Notable was Stowe's 7-1 victory last December over Swanbourne House, where one should note that the age difference is less crippling than in physical sports. (For instance, those who read Press chess columns will know that Luke McShane, who recently played in the Hastings Tournament at the age of 13, was beating masters at the age of 10-11.) We are grateful to Swanbourne House for their warm welcome.

Particularly pleasing is the influx of keen young third years into the club. So, as seniors leave, young blood is coming through.

For the third year running, the club will participate in a national speed chess challenge, the first round of which will be played in the Stowe club: seven games during the Spring Term per entrant; our finalists meet opponents in regional and national competitions in the Summer Term.

EST

CLASSICAL

Last March our A level Classical Civilisation students benefited from going to London for a day of lectures on Homer by leading classical specialists. Many then joined Mr Meredith's visit to Greece and were able to revise another part of the syllabus on location. This was followed up by a series of lectures on Greek sculpture. Another lecture, which also proved relevant to those studying the classical languages, was on new approaches to literary criticism within the classics. This was given by Mr James Pile, a recent graduate of Durham University, who took Mr Meredith's place in the department while the latter was master-minding the new Stowe Visual Education course. All the third formers again visited Roman Bath and a new venture was a busy three-day visit for fourth-formers to Hadrian's Wall led by Mrs McCrea and based at Otterburn Hall.

MJB

COMMUNITY SERVICE

Community Service at Stowe was one of the first such organisations by a public school and is still thriving. This year's committee, designed to streamline the planning of events and visits, is led by DSB, with Henry Coxe as Secretary and Anna Kenyon and Roy Chambers also on board. Events this year included the regular visit to the school firework display; the highlight of the year for many with the CS Christmas party (Father Christmas—LEW—came again, albeit rather late; and future plans to invite more elderly Bucks residents to some of the many mixed events at Stowe.

CS visiting itself continues at least four days a week, with a bus dropping Stoics for about an hour in the afternoon to visit their "grannies" at housing estates and retirement homes in and around Buckingham.

DSB

DEBATING

The Debating Society made an exciting start to 1997. A Balloon Debate took place. The six contenders to remain in the balloon were The Rt.Hon. John Major, MP (PASF), Madonna (LJG), Michael Jackson (Tom Honeyman Brown), Richard Branson (Charlie Williams), Pamela Anderson (Jane Collingwood) and Mr. Peter Farquhar (Rupert Jupp). Eventually, there was a stand-off between Michael Jackson and Mr. Farquhar which, despite his obvious paedophiliac tendencies towards the Third Form, Michael Jackson won.

In March, there was some interesting gender switching and cross-dressing when Alexandra Sennett, Susannah

Galsworthy and Georgina Mackay proposed the motion that "This House Believes that Women are Puppets in a Man's World". The very feminine opposition was mounted by Alex Clempson, William Barratt and Tom Smith-Walker. However seductive the last of these tried to be, his short skirt revealed legs so extremely hairy as to undermine the ladylike charm of his speech.

The final debate of the academic year took place in May when Jacques Bingham, Georgia Levison and Will Stanton proposed the motion that "This House Believes that Modern Music is Primarily Commercial" opposed by Sunny Moore, Matt Rader and Alexis Marcq.

For the first time, the fabulous Debating Society Dinner had to be moved inside from the South Front Colonnade to the Music Room, so consistently dire was the weather in June 1997. Nevertheless, the spirit of the Stoics and the culinary expertise of the Caterer combined to lift the occasion to its accustomed level of elegant festivity. PASF, the President of the Debating Society, took the opportunity at the Dinner to thank this year's Chairman, Tom Smith-Walker, for all that he had done to make the Debating Society such a success during the year. It would be impossible to imagine a more



Blood Sports Debate. The Supporters: Richard Going, Rupert Hayward, Tom Sleater and Leo Fenwick. Debaters: Oscar Humphries, Dru Clark, Arabella Arbuthnott, Roy Chambers, Will Skidmore, Richard Briggs, Emma Dixey and Charlie Hart.. Photos: Georgina Gilbert-Denham



able and dedicated Chairman, both in organising the meetings as well as in chairing such large gatherings of potentially excited young people. Tom could be relied upon to do everything to perfection. Tom's genuine interest and administrative skill were matched by an exceptionally humane sensitivity, loyalty, thoroughness, delightful wit and sparkling joie de vivre.

However, the two current Chairmen of the Debating Society, Roy Chambers and Armand David, have taken up the mantle (if not the tie!) with great distinction too, showing very considerable initiative and authority.

The first debate of the new academic year saw Jerome Starkey, Sarah Parker and Roy Chambers advancing the motion that "This House believes that the current level of intrusion by the Press is broadly acceptable", following the controversy which succeeded the death of Princess Diana. They were, however, defeated by Oscar Humphries, Alia Brahim and Ben Bloomfield.

Equally controversial, was the debate in November 1997, when Arabella Arbuthnott, Richard Briggs and Drew Clark proposed the motion that "This House believes that Blood Sports should be banned". Despite the exceptional quality of Drew Clark's speech, they were, however, defeated by William Skidmore, Emma Dixey and Charles Hart. Interestingly, and appropriately, some members of the audience had dressed for the part!

The Christmas Debate comprised another Balloon Debate. The distinguished passengers on this occasion were Hercule Poirot, Queen Elizabeth II, Mr. Steven Thompson, Saddam Hussein, Freddie Mercury and an unborn child. PVC was quite happy to adopt Hercule Poirot's underhand and cunning methods against Mr. Thompson (James Lyon) but to no avail. Even the terrifying Saddam (David Wills), was ejected by the Stoic audience. This year's Harvard Fellow, Mr. Joshua Bloodworth, presented an amazingly convincing Queen Elizabeth II, demonstrating all the dress sense of our revered monarch. But it was Mr. Thompson (as represented through James Lyon), who survived to continue to set those swinging English preps for many a year ahead.

The standard of some of the speeches during 1997 has been particularly high. Equally commendable has been the exceptionally mature behaviour of very large audiences (frequently well in excess of 100). The quality of attention to the speakers has been excellent; just sometimes we are beginning to think that we could do with a few more speeches offered from the floor.

PASF

BRONZE DUKE OF EDINBURGH

When asked in the fourth form to choose a Monday activity, the Duke of Edinburgh award is not always the first choice to spring to mind. People associate it with expensive kit, first aid and long hours on deserted hill-sides. While these are all parts of the Bronze award, the scheme does not revolve around them. To obtain an award each of 4 sections must be completed – Service, Skill, Physical Recreation and Expedition.

The Bronze service is the compulsory first aid course, comprising 12 weeks of intensive life-saving practice, or at least 8 weeks of theory and 4 weeks of C.P.R. on practice dummies, before the final exam. Gaining the First Aid award ensures that, providing you have the motivation to sign up the other sections, the Bronze award is there to be collected.

The Skill section requires a Bronze candidate to follow a course of their choice for at least 6 months (such as creative textiles or learning a musical instrument) and then getting their record book signed. The Skill may be an existing interest, or something new providing that the 6 month course is completed.

Physical recreation requires at least 12 weeks of a sport to be completed. The sport must be one in which you participate without competing against other schools (such as squash for non-team members). Again, signing the record book ensures completion of the award's requirements.

The final section, the Expedition, is by far the most popular. It involves setting out for a two-day (15 mile minimum) tour of the British countryside. Unfortunately the award states this must be done on foot with an excessively large back-pack; "to encourage the spirit of adventure and discovery" the award proudly states, but this becomes slightly ironic by the time you've crossed your 10th barbed wire fence and are miserably lost in a field where you could have sworn the map said there was a footpath. The weather conditions are typically British with one of the driest winters on record coming to an end just as the Stowe DofE bus pulls up in desolate lay-by in the heart of rural Shropshire. Stowe DofE appears to be cursed in this way with no camping permitted in dry weather.

It seems, however, that if you can survive the expedition's natural misfortune and overcome the difficulties presented by the kind and considerate first aid examiners, then the Bronze award is a Bonus for your C.V. and Silver is hard to refuse.

SIMON CREEK & ALEC LAING



THE HEADMASTER'S ESSAY SOCIETY

Mahmoud Abdulhadi	Arabella Arbuthnott
William Austen	Mark Bowman
Roy Chambers	Henry Craik-White
Armand David (Secretary)	Fay Davies
Lucy Francis	Alexander Kemble
Anna-Jean Kenyon	Yeo-Jung Park
Sarah Parker (Secretary)	Charlotte Peevers
Simon Post	Maria Sorokina
Joseph Townsend	

The Headmaster's Essay society is a forum for Stowe's intellectual elite to air their opinions in a constructive manner. The Headmaster very kindly hosts each meeting in his home, where one of the members of the society reads an essay and discussion ensues shortly after.

The secretaries were introduced to the last meeting of the Essay Society of 1996-97, where Lorien Pilling spoke elegantly on the subject of human stupidity, and the role it plays in society. The cynical view of the speaker was that our society 'a society in which stupid people thrive', is a society that cannot hope to survive. Needless to say, there was much fruitful and stimulating discussion.

Armand David presented the first essay of 1997-98 on the subject of a borderless world, discussing the increasing importance of technology in society and of an age where computers and high technology are second nature to all. The concept of a high-tech world was seen as both appealing and cold and impersonal.

Mahmoud Abdulhadi followed with a talk entitled 'An eye for an eye' on the subject of Islamic Law, an issue close to the heart of the speaker. There was much heated discussion as issues such as capital and corporal punishment were raised.

Anna Kenyon spoke on social irresponsibility when it came to dealing with disease, and the consequent spread of resistant strains of bacteria. Multinational drug-company scandals were speculated upon, and the role of both society and government in dealing with the issue.

'All animals are created equal... but some are more equal than others,' is the quote Roy Chambers used to introduce his talk, considering the position of intellectuals in society, which he speculated could be differentiated from the less intelligent and discerning in our community.

Simon Post questioned the intellectual position on music, suggesting that it cannot be judged objectively on any criterion, however, arguments were raised for using sales, and the timelessness of music as a basis for objective judgement.

Sarah Parker spoke on existentialism and its influence on literature, quoting from Albert Camus' *L'étranger* (The Outsider) and Dostoyevsky's *Crime and Punishment*. There were obviously heated arguments both for and against, the more religious in the group discarding the principle of existentialism as meaningless and depressing and those more cynical on the monotheistic view of the universe felt that it was an obvious state of affairs.

With several essays still to be presented, it is left to us to thank all those who have presented essays, and those who have had a role in creating and cultivating this society into something which we all enjoy, particularly JGLN, GMH, KFD, SGAH.

ARMAND DAVID & SARAH PARKER

CAN MUSIC BE JUDGED OBJECTIVELY?

The appreciation of music is frequently considered a great deal more than an act of merely listening to individual sounds and textures; while most individuals regard themselves as possessing specific tastes towards various forms of music, what often remains unclear is the reasoning behind such preferences. The commonly used phrase 'listening to music' could be considered a generalisation, overlooking some of the more intricate and personal aspects of musical appreciation. Proposing that music can be judged irrespective of personal emotion and bias is perhaps a slightly unconventional idea, nevertheless an ambitious one; what is attempted to do is examine a fraction of the logic making up any musically sensitive aspects of our characters.

Throughout the 19th century, a period in musical history called the Romantic era, composers attempted to move away from the ground rules set down by classical composers and concentrate more on the expression of emotion. Love and nature were two themes explored intricately by composers from this era, attempting to portray images and associations to listeners through using newly developed styles of composition. While such expressionism doesn't exist in such an extreme form today, the principles introduced during this period of history have established a firm grounding for a compositional style still used a few years short of the 21st century. In the 19th century composers such as Chopin and Rachmaninoff concentrated on using much larger orchestras to perform their musical writing, using relatively simple devices to communicate highly complicated qualities of emotion. A slightly sceptical view of the Romantic period is that the experimentation went just a little too far, taking the bounds of musical influence to an extreme. Despite the neo-classicist reaction against the romantics, what remains clear is that music expressing qualities of emotion has a significant impact upon its listeners, which certainly forms a substantial part of composers' ideas in modern writing today.

Leaving musical history aside, the make-up of any style of music follows certain guidelines that help ensure the work's success in communicating its message. These guidelines will inevitably vary between styles of music, but experimentation has certainly led to some highly effective techniques that every composer wishes to use at some stage. One of the simplest examples is perhaps the distinction between composing in a minor or major key: a minor chord will immediately provide negative connotations to a piece of music, whether the emotion be sadness, fear, cruelty or another similarly linked sentiment. Adding certain notes to a chord will inevitably produce an altered effect: jazz musicians frequently flatten notes of the scale to characterise their compositional style. However, the intrinsic qualities of music can evolve and separate into individual styles until the number of such styles is innumerable, but there is one aspect of musical appreciation that will not change: the associations brought forward by hearing sounds that seem familiar to an individual's ear.

The whole prospect of judging music objectively is contradicted by the fact that we react so strongly to associations tied up with pieces of music. Whether a piece brings about nostalgia, an image of a close friend or even a place visited in the past, the act of having such a dramatic effect on an individual has to be recognised. It is for this reason that the ruling out of personal emotion and bias in judging music cre-

ates a somewhat hindered view in itself, since so much of judging music is reacting to certain sounds that hold an association within the mind. Associations don't necessarily have to be tied into a specific person or place, either: they can frequently act as a stimulus to a state of mind. Perhaps this is one of the reasons we listen to music as a relaxant as well as a means of enjoyment. Despite often consciously listening to music, similar effects can be the processes of our subliminal thoughts too. A typical example is the playing of music in public places, and how the style of that music changes with the place in which it's played. Take the example of commuting to London for a day's work: we might step out of a train at Euston and begin walking either out of the station or towards the underground. Although a number of people may not consciously notice it, there's occasionally music playing that is designed to raise the spirits of those passing through: up-tempo, usually highly rhythmic music that subconsciously has an affect upon our attitudes. In the evening, on the other hand after the day's work, an entirely different style of music would be played: the strict rhythm might have declined to a slower, lazier feel, helping us to relax on the journey home.

The vast majority of individuals wouldn't listen to a piece of music to hear a certain melodic interval or a single device used by the composer; most of us find enjoyment in listening to a piece of music as a whole rather than individual strands. An interesting point is raised when considering some of the early 20th century music, such as Cage or Webern. In 1952 John Cage wrote a piece called 4 minutes 33 seconds, which naturally lasted the length of time stated in the title, only contained no music whatsoever. The music, Cage argued, was created by the audience's reaction to such an abstract display of a musician's capabilities. It is in this kind of situation that the argument for being able to judge music objectively stands a chance of justification: one can even argue here whether Cage's 4 minutes 33 seconds can be classified as music. A great number of musicians consider music anything the composer wishes it to be, that is, if somebody wishes to call the sound of dropping a bunch of keys onto a marble floor music, he can, and it is therefore music. Cage also composed for prepared piano, which involved inserting various objects – such as nuts and bolts – between the strings on a grand piano, hence creating different sounds to those everybody had become accustomed to. A great deal of this argument is influenced by standards: if a new style of music appears to approach the bounds of fashion, there will usually be both a positive and a negative reaction, therefore ruling out the possibility of an objective judgement.

Within music, there are most certainly a number of features that we will expect to hear or notice in order to consider it effective and worthwhile. Such expectations aren't as clearly stated as the Ten Commandments, but they exist nevertheless within the etiquette of composition. In the Baroque era, J. S. Bach was responsible for a great deal of chorale writing, which is still analysed and replicated today. His compositional style can be summarised not only into a set of expectations, but in fact into a set of rules, the breaking of which destroys the overall effect of the chorale. Therefore an attempt at writing a chorale in the style of J. S. Bach that disobeys his compositional techniques could quite conceivably be dismissed as an offensive misinterpretation, irrespective of whether it sounds pleasant or not.

It is, without a doubt, surprisingly easy to sneer at certain

types of music, especially contemporary forms where often all that exists is an atmosphere that is kept alive by a monotonous musical pulse, decorated occasionally by electronic samples. Despite criticism for the musical content of such work it's also possible to demonstrate the satisfaction and enjoyment that listeners receive from the many variants of rave music. The musical taste of an individual is most certainly not something to mock or criticise merely on account of disagreeing with it: preference is obviously a highly personal decision for everybody to make. For this reason I feel that music is a highly subjective matter, virtually incapable of being judged from an entirely impersonal viewpoint. However, in certain cases, where musical history has evolved into such rigid and effective styles of composition, objective judgement becomes possible after identifying discrepancies from the original style.

SIMON POST

CLEARING UP MUDDIED WATERS

There is a great deal of confusion about the position of the Christians in our society, no-one being entirely clear of the position of this weird 'cult' grouping that has so much to do with the way society seems to function. A large problem with this is that a line of thinking known as relativism leans to the perhaps easier-to-relate-to line of thinking that no-one is wrong, everything is okay, and it doesn't matter huge amounts anyway.

Easier-to-relate-to it may be, but it is, in fact, harder to understand. What each of the major religions is, in fact, saying, including Hinduism, Christianity, Islam and Atheism, is that they have the absolute truth. What relativism is saying is that all these truths are correct for some people. This is a contradiction, and thus if the relativist is right, then all Hindus, Christians, Muslims and Atheists are wrong, and if they are wrong, then so is the Relativist, who is trapped in a logistical paradox.

Relativism is, in my opinion, the greatest problem being faced by the Church and, in fact, all religious groups. In fact, in the world of absolutism, it is, in fact, the greatest problem faced by humanity because, as a result of it, people are losing sight of the truth. By stating that everything is equally correct, they are in fact contradicting themselves. Muslims and Christians cannot both be correct because they claim directly opposing things! However, it is extremely tempting to fall to the Relativist perspective as there is no thought required – it is easy to say that everyone is right as it is an easy statement to make. It has no grounding because, by it denying absolute truth, it states an absolute truth!

The Church deals in absolute truths: something that is undoubtedly true, from whatever perspective. You may think you are in a chair reading this, but perhaps you are not. Perhaps you are asleep and are dreaming all this- perhaps what you perceive as your consciousness is actually your dreamland, and your dreams are the reality. There are no absolute truths but those given in the Bible- that an all-powerful God created the universe and everything in it, and that He gave us His son to save us.

A Christian believes that the word of God is given to us in as entire a form as humanity shall ever receive it in the form of the Bible. There is no lukewarm intermediate. A Christian believes that Jesus Christ is the son of God, born approximately two thousand years ago for the salvation of

humanity. The next time Christians hope to see Christ again will be at his famous second coming- on Judgement Day.

There is a huge amount of evidence for the Bible. As a history, we have more reason to believe in the existence of Christ than we have to believe in Julius Caesar. There are over five thousand copies of the New Testament (at a time when 'copies' were laboriously copied out by hand over lifetimes) dated within three hundred years of Christ's death. There are no fundamental discrepancies between any of the copies. There are references to Jesus from various other sources, in Greece and Italy, at the time that wrote of him as an amazing man- a carpenter from Nazareth. So Jesus of Nazareth definitely existed, had a following, and performed what seemed to be miracles while claiming to be the Son of God.

But what reliability do we have that the content of the Bible is true? And that it is the only truth? It is all too tempting to pick and choose beliefs and tailor-make a religion that suits our personal needs, but there is only one that is right! If we think back carefully to the early ages of Christianity, we remember that most of Christ's followers were uneducated fishermen and so on. These were the same people who eventually wrote the gospels, which reflect the authors fairly. Also, the four gospels give overlapping accounts of Christ's life, which never contradict over anything fundamental but occasionally do over some trivial issues- had they been collaborating in some immense practical joke, there would either have been some more fundamental discrepancies, or none at all. Also, still in the first few centuries A.D., we must think of what treatment our early Christians were receiving from the largely non-believing public, and the entirely unbelieving ruling class that were the Romans. They were persecuted. Not persecuted in a mild sense, being-told-that-they-were-not-allowed-to-worship-then-sent-home sort of way, but more in a throw-them-to-the-lions sort of way. Why would anyone in their right minds pursue something that they weren't absolutely sure about? And if they weren't in their right minds, how did they manage to persuade so many clearly sane people that they weren't talking malarkey, in such a way that two thousand years down the line over one billion people are Christian.

So are all Christians as crazy as they seem to be? Perhaps not...

ARMAND DAVID

THE STOICS' TALE

As part of his talk to the Literary Society on *The Merchant's Tale*, SGAH illustrated some arcane point or other with his own version of Chaucer, based loosely on *The Canterbury Tales*, but also on some late-night stand-up comedian he had seen on television one night... *The Stoic's Tale* is, then, a pastiche for which no one author has to take sole responsibility, and it may also be worth quoting Chaucer's oft-expressed opinion on the use of language in such writing: "But first I pray yow, of youre curteisie,/ That ye n'arete it nat my vileynie,/ Thogh that I pleyntyly speke in this mateere..."

Three Stoics there were, of indeterminate name,
That lusty and joyous were, and desirous for a game.
Banned from Club for practices deemed illicit,
They by fortune had arranged a restaurant visit.
Earlier in Buckingham had they been in such hurry-
That they had only time enough for a vindaloo curry
So that the very best thing for school food that night
Was to test diverse ways of endowing it with flight.
And so already were all three in right fine good cheer
Arriving at the hostelry that called is The Reindeer.
In that place there is more glee
Than is seen on the face of that man Jack Dee,
Although seeing as he had not yet been born
That is a comparison that may not be drawn.
But swiftly for to continue with my brief saga,
Each one downed five and one half pints of lager,
After which, verily, the house now seemed such fun,
That of places as good can I think of not one.
And as sooth as in this world is both bird and eek bee,
After a mass of ale must men think on lecherye.
At the bar were three girls all quite as pretty
As any at all in the whole of Westbury.
"Verily," says our lad, "I will bust into bits
Any that competes with me for the one with big... smile"
They seeth them, they eyeth them and otherwise leer,
They courteth them wooeth them with many a jeer -
For sooth it is that a yong man as drunk as a hog
To impress a girl will say she looks like a dog
And straightaway ask for the number of her phone
And express his desire to give her a bone -
Sodeynly at the very peak of their wit
they feeleth to be less than utterly fit
And a jest that seemed funny - but could not be duller -
Came out in words that were in technicolour
With a hink that cleared in the back of the throat
Vile extrusions erupted all over her coat
Rough hands was all that was laid on them then
As they were ejected by some irate young farming men
They landed in a ditch that filled was with shite
And got up and grinned "What a brilliant night!"

ISLAMIC APPRECIATION

The Islamic Appreciation Society was founded last academic year as a cultural society for the Muslims of the School. This year, it has taken a new direction by addressing the needs of the Muslim pupils by liaising between them and the School's administration. As a result, special arrangements have been agreed upon concerning the availability of non-pork based meals, the lifting of compulsory Sunday Chapel in favour of a noon-time meeting and special arrangements for the holy month of Ramadham.

I would like to extend my gratitude to the Headmaster for making these arrangements possible, and I would like to thank the Housemasters, Matrons and the catering staff for all their cooperation and support - especially LEW and Miss Pratt - thank you!

MOHAMED ABDUL-HADI

INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY

The International Society comprises members of the School from 24 different nations around the world. Through different events and activities, these members have the opportunity to intergrate and explore each others' cultures.

The Autumn term started with an International supper. A deliberate haphazard seating plan ensured that new pupils were introduced to other international Stoics who were able to share their experiences of the transition to a new culture. A Pies & Wine evening was held to celebrate Christmas and ensure that relationships established at the beginning of term were monitored. Throughout the year numerous events organised by particular nations are held, such as an Italian or Korean evening.

On certain days of the year, which are attributed to world organisations or events, members of the society meet to discuss and debate world issues such as on U.N. Day, and on Commonwealth Day, members attended the The Queen's Commonwealth Service held in Westminster Abbey.

The International Society has proved to be of great benefit to its members and thanks are extended to everyone involved, particularly EGJ and JDB.

ANNA-JEAN KENYON

LITERARY

In November 1996, Mr. John Venning, the Head of the English Department at St. Paul's School, arrived in a gloomy Stowe, decimated by the influenza epidemic, but most successfully related his own clever and incisive insights into 'The Tempest' to the indomitable and positive approach of the Stowe survivors, who were as determined as Mr. Venning to make the evening a great success.

In January 1997, Mr. Stephen Hirst gave a wonderfully witty, off-the-cuff presentation of Chaucer's 'The Merchant's Tale', together with his Middle Sixth A-level class, with Damian Hoare and Alexander Clempson most notably acting parts of the tale amusingly and convincingly before the audience. The following month, Mr. Steven Thompson and the Creative Writing Circle gave an excellent presentation of writing in the Library. The Stoics were very courageous and some of their work was extremely good. We were honoured with the presence of Mr. Barry Humphries to listen to his son reading one of his own poems and Old Stoics Jonathan Morrison and Matthew Furse-Roberts presented poems of a particularly high quality.

On the 2nd of May, Mr. David Barr spoke with intriguing innovation on Chaucer's *The Merchant's Tale* and one week later Mr. John Hunt kindly came up from Aldenham to read three of his short stories. Some of us had been privileged to hear Mr. Hunt's stories on the radio and we were impressed by the variety which he offered here at Stowe on the night. The final meeting of the academic year was presented by Dr. Valerie Sanders (Head of the English Department at Buckingham University) who gave a fascinating talk on "Wuthering Heights" (an A-level text), full of rich insights about the characters, the reliability of the reported narrative and the elaborate structure of the novel. The weather that night suited the sublime mood of the novel when we had a massive thunderstorm, reverberating round Stowe Park, with cascading rain and thunder and lightning. Heathcliff himself could not have wished for more!

The new academic year began with distinction. On the

15th of October, Prof. John Bayley guided the audience on poetry appreciation by providing personal insights on some of his own favourite poems and making fascinating links between these. John Bayley's warmth as well as his intelligence communicated readily to a large audience and we were privileged indeed to have his wife, Dame Iris Murdoch, with us that evening.

In December, Mrs. Elizabeth Cairncross, the Deputy Head of Christ Hospital and the Inspector in English during our recent HMC Inspection, gave a very clever and interesting talk on Chaucer's *The Franklin's Tale*. The audience decided that, contrary to the opening remarks of Mrs. Cairncross, she was very far from being a 'burel' lady.

At the time of writing, we are anticipating our Jubilee Meeting of the Literary Society and are much looking forward to a talk on 'Comedy' by Mr. Barry Humphries, who has very kindly agreed to take time away from Dame Edna Everidge, Les Patterson and Fagin for an evening, most generously fitting us into his very busy schedule.

Once again, we have been extremely fortunate in the high quality of our Literary Society Secretaries. It would be impossible to find someone more dedicated, enthusiastic, efficient and gracious than Tom Smith-Walker, and this year, too, we are very fortunate in the superb organisation and initiative already shown by Roy Chambers. On a number of occasions, Stoics were able to meet our distinguished visiting speakers more informally over supper in the Blue Room before the meeting.

PASF

THEOLOGICAL

This year we have had fewer visitors, but we have been privileged to hear some talks from some very inspiring people, especially on topics relevant to our A-level syllabus.

In May, John Russell, Chief Examiner for the Northern Board, presented a seminar to the MVI on Gospel Criticism, followed in the evening by a lecture to the LVI about the signs in John's Gospel. This was a particularly useful talk, as it linked with his four books which we use extensively on the A-level course.

In the Autumn term, we were very lucky to have a joint meeting with the Political Society, in which Sir Nicholas Soames kindly came to speak about the Arms Trade and related issues, such as the use of nuclear weapons and the Gulf War. This was very helpful, not only in giving accurate and perceptive comments about current thinking, but also in making us aware of present fragile situations.

In many ways the main highlight of the year was the Inaugural Annual Dinner for all sixth-form Theologians. This was held at the Kingfisher Country Club, and was an especially enjoyable evening for staff and pupils alike. It gave us an opportunity to say farewell to Revd. Jackson, and also allowed Chesney Clark, the secretary of the society, to present an excellent speech, giving an overview of the previous year. As this article goes to press, we are looking forward to the second Annual Dinner, and also a talk by Dr Denis Alexander, one of the country's leading geneticists, who will be speaking on the ethics of current developments in that area.

TATTY SLOANE

SIXTH FORM CENTRE

The idea for the Sixth Form Centre came about in Spring 1992 and was in place by November of that year. The site chosen was the old bookshop, which was moved to its current position in the Menagerie over the summer break. However as I read the records of the Centre I find much grander ideas for most of the colonnade and Plug Street to become part of a huge 'civilised attractive social centre for members of the Sixth Form'. Leading lights in the implementation were CGJA and Simon Taylor. Their original vision of the Centre was this:

- ▲ To counter the absence of appropriate social facilities for girls and boys to socialise in their own houses.
- ▲ To counter the antisocial gathering in public places.
- ▲ To assist in achieving a greater sense of unity in the Sixth Form
- ▲ To display the school's approach to the social interaction of boys and girls.

It was deemed that the Centre should be:

- ▲ A place which provides the Sixth Form with a facility specific to their needs.
- ▲ A place to encourage cultural development.
- ▲ A place that is retreat from the pressure of House and Academic life.
- ▲ An opportunity for the boys and girls to take on a role in the management and therefore a greater feeling of ownership
- ▲ A place where all groups feel comfortable.

In the six years the Centre has existed the values have not changed and it is pleasing to see that the vision I have is identical to that of the Founders back in 1992.

The early ideas were visionary, with relaxed careers rooms, a writing and reading room, a games room, a beverage room and (oh, I wish this could have happened!) a Chairman's Office planned. The original plans showed a paradise with ten sofas, twelve coffee tables and forty chairs with a note, ironic with hindsight, considering current Sixth Form numbers, commenting that this would not be nearly enough. The Centre's current furniture inventory lists 'one stained sofa, twenty chairs, one piano, fifteen bedside table lamps (!), and no coffee tables'!

A survey conducted by CJGA of comparable schools' Sixth Form leisure facilities showed that most Sixth form Centres were 'typically little more than drinking clubs, with music and amusement games.' If Stowe could implement their plan then it was probable that they would 'be taking the lead' over five years. I was made Chairman of the Sixth Form Centre in September 1997 and have been very grateful for his determination to claim a well-deserved budget. However if a long term strategy for the Sixth Form Centre was to be implemented a further cash injection had to be provided.

I introduced a membership scheme, whereby Lower Sixth pay £10 p/a, and Middle Sixth (who had their own exclusive Club) pay £5. This gave my committee and I some funds to improve the leisure facilities within the Centre. The Centre now proudly boasts: satellite television so Stoics can catch the latest sounds on MTV, follow current affairs on CNN, and improve their education with the help of the History Channel and Discovery Channel; a C.D. juke box to provide the all important democratic choice of music; table football; a Coca Cola vending machine and coffee machine that has never worked in all the time I have been Chairman. Tuesday nights are a chance for the DJs and mixers of the school to show their skills on the turntables, giving the dancing masses a chance to groove to the latest 'Speed Garage', and 'Jungle' tunes. Thursdays are quieter and more reflective

I am lucky in that the resurrected Sixth Form Centre Committee have been most active and very keen to support my vision of it being a Centre for the Sixth Form run by the Sixth Form. Alex Prideaux, Robin Jones, Tim Hook and Sophia Kakabadse have all performed their committee roles marvellously. Their contributions and desire to make the Sixth Form Centre great often require far more money than we have and they have got used to me disappointing them and pouring cold water onto their burning desires for the place. This year however is just the start. The vision of the founders is still there and will continue to flourish.

In the next couple of years I plan to consolidate the Sixth Form Centre as a place the Sixth Form like to be. I want it to become run more and more by the people who use it. Making the Sixth Form Members of their Centre gives them ownership and with ownership comes responsibility: all good skills to take out into the real world.

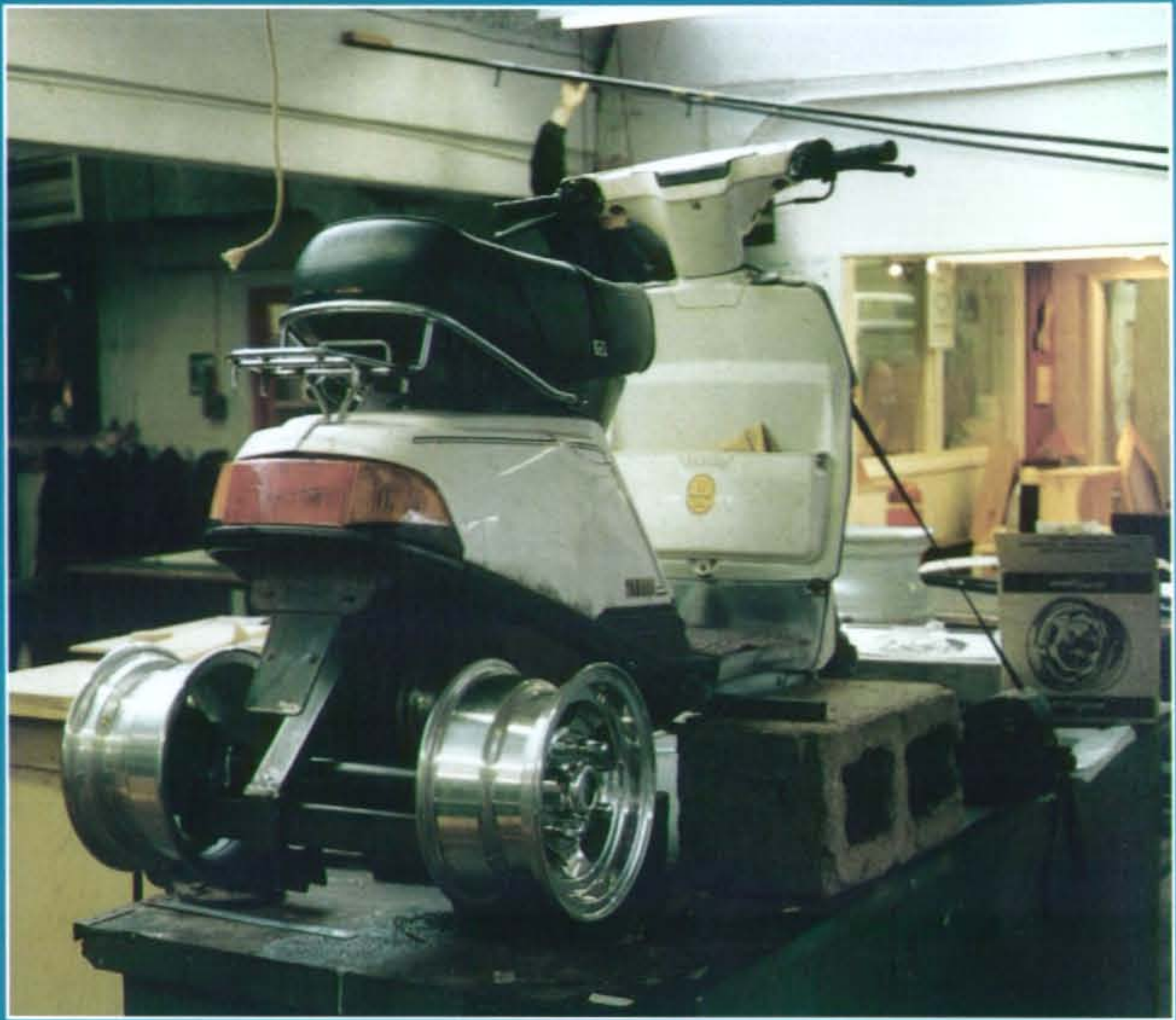
I would like to create more leisure facilities, the careers section of the Centre is still a possibility, although, in fitting with the relaxed attitude of the Centre I plan to focus more on Gap year projects and working around the world. The Centre has room for such a facility and it would be cheap to install. A film Club has been trialled and will be trialled again; House General Knowledge quizzes will be attempted on certain evenings. I also plan to tackle the decoration but I am hampered by the fact that the Centre is such a nice environment it is used for other functions as well. To allow the Sixth Form to cover it in their own art, photographs and posters would show it was their Centre but would mean that the School would lose an important all-round facility. All that holds back the Centre is lack of funds. We will work with what we have got. Dedication and a desire of the Sixth Form to make the Centre great makes money go a long way.

So is the Centre 'little more than a drinking club and games room'? Well we don't serve alcohol and games are played, but I would like to think that the original vision is there. The Centre is seen as central to life as a Sixth Former and its facilities have been provided with due thought to all in the Sixth Form. It is not perfect but, given time, we will get there.

RAYMOND DENTER,
CHAIRMAN OF THE SIXTH FORM CENTRE

A-LEVEL COURSEWORK

Toby Adams
Lighting minor project



Kristjan Byfield
3 wheel conversion kit for scooter



Ken Yuktasevi & Roland Plyer
Lighting minor project



Charlotte Lowe
Lighting minor project

CLOCKS – FOURTH FORM TEST

Oliver Weston

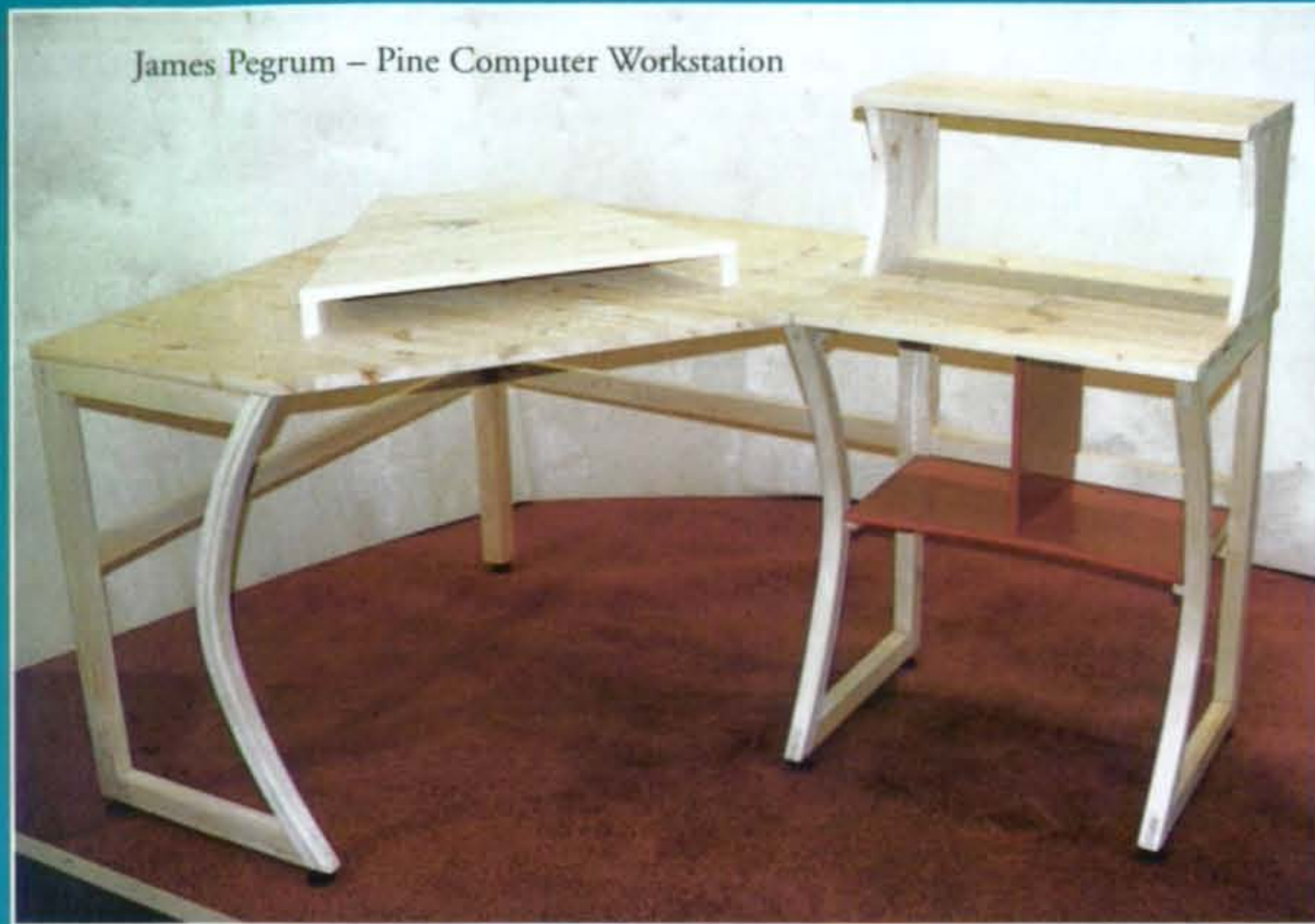


Alistair Clutton



Henry Watson





James Pegrum – Pine Computer Workstation



Will Pudney – Bedroom Chair

GCSE COURSEWORK



Rakan Alfadi – Dining Chair



Angus Elphinstone – Coffee Table

Robert Prentice – Honey Warmer

Ben Hart – Tambour door TV cabinet



CCF

A NEW CONTINGENT COMMANDERS REPORT

The planning for this year started well before it began. As a result much of the first term's programme was ready to implement from day 1. We even had all our dates for the school calendar a year in advance!! With such incredible forward planning it has been no surprise that Monday activities in the CCF have gone very smoothly indeed.

This year has seen the departure of Mr. S. Scott and the arrival of an enthusiastic Mr. P. Davies. Mr. T. Knight has now taken over as Officer Commanding the RAF section and Miss L.J. Greatwood will be re-commissioning from the Army to help out with the RAF section. Numbers in the RAF and RN have increased steadily and these will both be flourishing sections next year. An exciting link with Aquilla gliding club at nearby Hinton in the Hedges provides the CCF with some excellent gliding facilities and enthusiastic instructors. We have also been fortunate to be provided with the regular assistance of Cpl. Smythe from the Pioneer Regiment at Bicester.

The introduction of taster sessions for the fourth year proficiency is a new addition to the programme. This means that, at two to three week intervals, all the fourth year sections experience taster sessions in gliding, diving, signals, shooting, abseiling, first aid, sailing and camp craft. At the end of the proficiency programme, across all sections, Stoics will have tried out all of these interesting pursuits. It is intended that they have the opportunity to take some of these activities further, qualifying as an open water diver or perhaps solo glider flying in their 5th year in the CCF. The Easter camp provides further opportunities for them to try canoeing, hill climbing and a range of other outdoor pursuits.

We have re-introduced full contingent parades to announce promotions and awards and as a contingent we look very good indeed when seen collectively. We are placing more responsibility on our NCOs, expecting more of them. This term they have responded very well indeed to the challenge with several NCOs now shining through with a more business like approach to their duties. Consequently, more promotions are possible and competition for higher rank is much better.

Expedition Days are very busy occasions for us with all sections undertaking a range of activities. As the section reports indicate, a good deal of effort is put into arranging an interesting and enjoyable two days. A variety of activities and outside locations provides a large number of opportunities. Congratulations to Chandos House on winning the Casualty Cup and to Nugent House as the best girls' house.

What of the future? The CCF will provide opportunities for Stoics to experience a range of activities that they may otherwise not consider. They can then take some activities to as high a level as they wish, gaining qualifications where possible. Many are seeing the Liaison officers with intentions to join the services. There are plans to relocate us should we find sufficient funds from somewhere (help!).

I would like the CCF to put together one overseas tour every two or three years. I would like the girls to be involved and I intend to set the section up to take girls in the near future. I would like to get our own staff more qualified so that we can run our own expeditions instead of relying on outside help. This means encouraging their own personal development to attend courses and gain these necessary qualifications. We have welcomed assistance from non-academic areas of the school. This has been supported wholly in the majority of areas where staff need to be released from their normal duties. This recognition of staff needs and support for the CCF was rewarded by TAVRA who presented the school with a plaque.

My thanks must go to the Pioneer Regiment who have kindly provided Corporal Smythe to help out on Mondays. I must also thank Jack Frost, who continues to provide valuable support with our abseiling program and with the Army section and Pony who regularly gives of his time with the naval section. Thanks to Flt. Sgt. Derek Routledge, who now finds himself regularly booked on the Mondays he is here. Lee Horwood (ground staff) provides experience as a regular member of the section helping the advanced infantry. Dougie and Mark have been released from catering to provide welcome nourishment on field days and Mark will be supporting us on Easter Camp '98.

Finally I must express my sincere thanks to the officers and Ray Dawson who work behind the scenes to ensure we move forward every Monday. The organisation and work involved can be significant on top of their other school commitments. Their contribution is highly valued.

SQUADRON LEADER S.H. MALLING

THE CASUALTY CUP

The day arrived for the chosen few, the elite from each house, to gather up at the Bourbon playing fields to prove themselves on the school obstacle course. It's strange how during the selection of the teams, the matrons had a sudden influx of people with injuries, cracked fingernails and sprained eyelashes.

But despite that, it was great to see such a range of people of all shapes and sizes and different fitness levels. Congratulations go to the winning girls' house of Nugent and the winning boys' house of Chandos. Well played people!!

But on the whole, congratulations to everyone who took part and I hope you all enjoy the new 'confidence course' as well.

RICHARD HIGNETT (WARRANT OFFICER 2)



AND THEN I WAS ALONE...

During the Easter holidays of '97 I had the opportunity of learning to fly, kindly paid for by the Ministry of Defence, and organised by Stowe CCF. I set off to North Wales where 11 others and I prepared for a week and a half of intensive training. Our purpose was to accomplish a solo flight that was entirely 'professional', completed by a safe landing. The difference, however, with this light aircraft was that it had no engine. Made almost completely of fibreglass, this delicate glider could be hauled by a winch up to an altitude of 1000feet in seconds.

We were taken through the rigmarole of navigation, handling of the aircraft and various other important procedures in the class room. We learnt on the first day that the whole operation relied entirely on teamwork. During the first afternoon each of us was taken up by our personal instructor to merely 'get the feel' of the aircraft. We would watch to see how the instructor would handle it and cope with the difficulties that arose. The, what first appeared as, flimsy glider would also demonstrate to us what it could accomplish. Up to two hours at a time was spent in the plane, taking off, landing and soaring across the hills ranging from 1 minute airborne to 39 minutes. Obviously the great danger was that we would not be able to sustain the height needed in order to land safely and so everything had to be planned carefully. Step by step the trainees would take over the controls, learning the basics and then learning what we would do in case of an emergency. This would range from the cable snapping during takeoff (which actually happened the first time I had control) and violently wrenching the plane towards the ground, strong winds blowing us off course, a dramatic loss of lift and the unlikely event of having to bail out.

Eventually, when it was my turn to do my solo flight, I was taken up a couple of times 'ghosted' by my instructor. Just before takeoff on the third time I turned round to find that my quiet instructor was nowhere to be seen and the seat was strapped up, complete with parachute, ready for a solo takeoff. Turning back, I caught the eye of my instructor and received a huge grin. Within a week, due to good weather and good fortune, the group of twelve people, from all around the country, passed with distinction. It was a thoroughly enjoyable week which allowed just as much socialising as it did work, with the result of each of us gaining our BGT wings.

FLT. SGT. JOHN VINEY



ROYAL NAVY

1997 has been an exciting year for the Royal Navy Proficiency Section which has flourished and is now at its largest for several years. Under the leadership of Petty Officer Ford, the fourth form recruits have enjoyed a very active first term in the section, all passing their Part 1 Training tests in Basic Seamanship, Bends and Hitches, Rigging and Weapons Handling. Training has not been confined to the classroom, however, and the cadets have all had the opportunity to jump off the top of Lyttelton under the expert guidance of abseiling instructor Jack Frost – congratulations to Cadet Burchett who managed four descents in one afternoon! Sub-aqua diving is now part of the Proficiency course along with basic gliding training, weapons handling training, signals and of course, sailing. The Autumn Field Day was spent at Yardley Chase under canvas. After an introduction to camp craft (and how to make a shelter from a poncho and a piece of string) NCOs Burchett, Burnell-Nugent and Winter led their divisions for a night-ex. The Proficiency Section would like to say a big 'thank you' to Dougie the chef and his team for the great breakfast which they provided at base camp! Training resumed at Stowe on Monday morning with water based survival training run by the HMS Sultan Survival School Training Team. This year the orange once-only suits and life rafts were tested in the relative comfort of the swimming pool. We are looking forward to our next Field Day aboard HMS Bristol in dock at Portsmouth. Many of the Proficiency section will be attending the Stowe C.C.F. Annual Adventurous Training Camp in Cumbria at Easter, where we hope to continue the tradition of sailing, abseiling, mountain biking, mountaineering, rock climbing, raft-racing, orienteering and of course the beach barbecue and ten-pin bowling. KFD visited Portsmouth for ten days last summer for the Royal Navy Annual Summer Camp aboard HMS Bristol. The opportunity for sailing, powerboating, orienteering, canoeing and sports has proved tempting and ten of the recruits have signed up to go this summer. Congratulations to all Cadets who have made a terrific start to their C.C.F. careers and to the NCOs, all of whom have worked very hard to help the section run smoothly.





EASTER CAMP 97

The annual 4.5 hour coach trip up to the campsite in Cumbria, a few miles from the small town of Keswick, was well worth it. The campsite, which is situated not 200 feet from the shores of the famous Bassenthwaite Lake, was to become a hive of action for the next nine days, with activities ranging from basic orienteering to canoeing, abseiling, rock climbing, topper racing and not to mention the all-important walk up the peak of Skiddaw, which can be seen from the campsite. We are always kept very busy during the day, which is just as well if you consider what we get up to back at base. I seem to remember a rather amusing game of netball with the staff and a very competitive tug-of-war.

All four teams, which we name after the surrounding countryside, managed to put aside their competitive nature (most of us anyway) for the barbecue and campfire gathering down on the lakeside's, rather rocky beach, in the evenings. Well done Ed Tighe for getting 'Best Personality of the Week Award' and also to Taro 'Best (overall) Cadet Award'. Well played both of you.

I look forward to attending my final Easter Camp this April, and I urge all you younger members of the CCF to attend at least one of these Adventure Training Camps during your time at Stowe. It's amazing what you learn when you're not really trying (well, OK you do try a bit). There is always something for everyone, and most of the time, everything for many people. I hope to hear many more good reports about future Easter camps and am sure they are enjoyed as much as I enjoyed them.

RICHARD HIGNETT (WARRANT OFFICER 2)

RAF SUMMER CAMP

Summer camp this year was at RAF Brize Norton. This camp presented us with a significant amount of flying time. VC10 and Tristar refueling tankers are not the most glamorous or even most modern of RAF aircraft but we grew quite attached to them by the end of the week. The highlight of the camp saw us flying high over the North Sea (aren't those oil rigs tiny!) waiting for aircraft of all nationalities to come and refuel. Although this giant petrol station in the air was not the busiest one I had ever called at, it was a real treat when two German Tornados appeared from nowhere and sat at the tip of the starboard wing. The pilots waved as the jets floated alongside. Then one jet would drop down to the refueling drogue whilst the other waited his turn. When finished, the aircraft moved to the port wing tip and the other customer dropped into place. The tornados were soon followed by Harriers and American aircraft as the visits became more and more regular. It was a tremendous sight to be alongside a fast jet in mid air. Some cadets were able to gain work experience in the sections on the camp and we went air experience flying in a Bulldog. The other cadets were a credit to their schools and the camp was enjoyed by all. Summer camps really are worthwhile experiences with much on offer and I would recommend them to all RAF cadets.

SQN. LDR. S.H. MALLING



DIVING SECTION

Where's the cheque book? We need one of those. This was a common turn of phrase at the Stoney Cove diving shop as SHM took to diving as Toad took to motor cars. As a result, the diving section of the CCF is showing signs of flourishing. Apart from open water, the section is self contained (SHM has not found a suitable quarry to buy yet!) and is well qualified to provide top class diving instruction.

This recent spree started last summer when IJM (our resident instructor) ran a staff open water course. It was here that SHM and LJG learnt to dive. Both passed the course and were soon joined by JMcC who had qualified elsewhere. SMcC was meanwhile progressing towards his divemaster and it wasn't long before SHM followed in his footsteps by purchasing all the latest equipment.

A planned diving trip to Cornwall unfortunately fell through, however much diving was to be had at the National Diving Centre at Stoney Cove. Like naughty schoolboys, moments were stolen after school on Wednesdays and on the occasional Sunday to gain greater experience. SHM gained his Advanced Diver in the cool waters of the diving centre whilst JMcC (see later) trolled off and became a fair weather diver in the Red Sea. It was here that he qualified as a Warm Water Advanced Tourist Diver!(Envy). SMcC eventually attained his divemaster and now helps IJM with tuition.

The divemaster course for our friends from Cornwall proved to be a highly enjoyable experience. IJM had set the scenarios and the trainee divemasters were provided with some tricky customers. One diver with a displaced hip could not fin straight and kept veering to one side and



another highly experienced diver not only had survived underwater on raw fish for a week, but had been involved in the sinking of the Greenpeace ship a few years ago. Two survived this to qualify and a good future link was established that I am sure the section will use next year.

But what now? We are to be deserted by SMcC who leaves the section without a divemaster. Good luck to him in his new diving environment and thanks to his good wife for allowing him to buddy me as I desperately try to get my 60 dives in to qualify to take his place. All our fourth year CCF cadets will get the chance to try a taster dive in the swimming pool this year. As a result, many will take courses this summer in Tenerife or next year in school. More advanced courses are planned for those already qualified and several levels of qualification are possible.

In the background to all this enthusiasm and bedlam is the ever patient, ever encouraging and enthusiastic maestro himself, IJM. We all owe him a great deal as he has made so much possible. The current strength of the diving section is down to him. He organises and runs courses to qualify even more Stoics so that they have the freedom to dive anywhere in the world and enjoy first hand the splendours of the underwater world. Thanks!

SHM

CCF RAF SECTION

With an increase in recruits, a new Section Commander and a new link with the local gliding club, the RAF section now finds itself not only popular but also in the air! Flying Officer T.F. Knight keeps the fourth year recruits on their toes to ensure that they all make progress through the part one syllabus. There is much more gliding to come when there are more daylight hours and the weather improves. The Aquilla Gliding Club at nearby Hinton in the Hedges, are keen to support the CCF and will hopefully get several RAF cadets flying solo as soon as they reach the grand age of sixteen. (They can't drive a car though). There are several keen to do this and the section is thriving with enthusiasm.

On field day, the RAF carried out exercises with the Naval section, at Yardley Chase, the ideal terrain for concealed bivvys and sleeping out overnight. Hasty lessons were learnt from the senior cadets in order to survive the night exercise and good fun was had by all. A welcoming bonfire provided a focus in the still night air broken occasionally by the shrill of another night ex. victim.

Last year, summer camp was at nearby Brize Norton where we were able to get an unprecedented amount of flying in the VC10 and Tri-star refueling tankers. The mid air refueling over the North sea was breathtaking as fast jets of all nationalities joined us to refuel, just feet away from our viewing windows.

Two cadets, Cpl. Tull and Cpl. Corbishley have been fortunate in gaining places for summer '98 camp in Germany. Cpl. Corbishley has applied for basic glider training and it is hoped that he will go solo this summer. All but one of the fifth years have passed their part two tests and they can now relax and enjoy their gliding over the summer term.

The RAF section looks very healthy indeed with some good NCOs ready to take charge of the new recruits next year. I expect the numbers to increase and LJG has kindly offered to change colour from green to blue to provide further support.

RED SEA DIVING

As part of his dive training continuum, and in order to get his Advanced Open Water Certificate, J.M. McCullough undertook the arduous task(!) of a diving trip to Egypt's Red Sea.

Strangely there were no other volunteers to escape the winter blues, (he had kept the whole idea a secret), however there was no shortage of international dive buddies in the town of Sharm-el-Sheik on the tip of the Soaai peninsular.

The week's package included the two day advanced course and four days recreational diving. The advanced course consisted of a navigation dive, a night dive and a deep dive. A wide range of marine life was observed, including reef sharks, dolphins, stingrays, octopus, barracudas, moray eels and a turtle. The area is renowned for its prolific coral and aquatic life and several outstanding wrecks. It was here that the Stowe Diving Section's new underwater camera was first used to good effect.

Mr. McCullough is currently undergoing his Rescue Diver course with two other members of the Stowe Diving Section.

JMCC

ADVANCED INFANTRY PLATOON

Someone passing by the armoury at 2pm on the first Sunday in November would have stumbled across 32 well-trained, lethal, lean, mean, fighting machines at the peak of physical fitness and raring to go! Well almost.

Maybe one would have found the Advanced Infantry platoon instead, getting ready for their Expedition Day.

After turning away the people with two suitcases, four pairs of shoes and three man-servants, we embarked on our journey to Yardley Chase in Northamptonshire armed to the teeth with chocolate and extra pairs of socks.

Not to be put off by sharing this modestly sized training area with Stowe School 10th Brownies group (aka. the Navy and RAF sections), we delved deep into the dense forest that makes up Yardley Chase. Splitting into two groups (friendly and enemy forces) we made defensive camps (patrol harbours), and then busied ourselves walking aimlessly through a forest, trying to locate the enemy but getting hopelessly lost, cold and wet! It was, however, to result in significant gathering of information of tactical importance (i.e. fun).

At one point the Navy section were mistaken (!) for the enemy, but our enthusiasm was held in check for the next day's activities.

After a cold night we were woken to a surprise attack by the enemy section at dawn. After relocating to a new position, we carried out a series of platoon attacks on the enemy positions discovered during the night patrols (or secretly found on Captain McCullough's map!). After firing off about 3000 rounds of ammunition, we had succeeded in taking out all of the aggression built up in the first six weeks of term, and a few enemy of course.

With the excellent food provided by Dougie and Mark, our morale was high on the return home, fuelled by personal fantasies of Goose Green and the liberation of Kuwait.

CAPTAIN J. MCCULLOUGH/H.GORDON LENNOX.

Music

THE ORCHESTRA

There have been three very fine orchestral concerts given during 1998, two by the first orchestra and one by the newly formed Chamber orchestra. The Speech Day Concert always throws the orchestra into great prominence and makes great demands upon them. The rise in the standard of brass playing at Stowe gave us the opportunity to choose some pieces which allowed them to come to the fore. These included Walton's "Crown Imperial" which began the concert with tremendous strength and vigour and Henry Wood's arrangement of British Sea Songs which brought the concert to a jingoistic finale. Other works included Vaughan Williams' "English Folk Song Suite" and Stanford's own orchestration of his "Te Deum in B flat" accompanying the Chapel Choir.

For the end of the Autumn Term Orchestral Concert Paul Harris chose to delight us with yet another of his Buckingham Concertos, especially written for pupils at Stowe. His latest is No.5 and is written for piano duet and was performed by Simon Creek and Alexander Winter. This wonderful work in three movements has some of the most lovely material that PDH has ever produced and we are sure it will become a great favourite with other orchestras, whether amateur or professional. This same concert also included the Russian composer Kabalevsky's Overture to "Colas Breugnon" and Berwald's "Sinfonie Singuliere". The Kabalevsky has all the colour and vibrancy that we expect of this Russian Composer and the orchestra brought it off brilliantly. The "Sinfonie Singuliere" is a difficult work to perform with many intricate passages but the orchestra, under the skilled direction of PDH, really brought the work to life. Appealing to the populace and acknowledging the time of year this very enjoyable concert was brought to an end with Leroy Anderson's ever popular work "Sleigh Ride".

The Chamber Orchestra Concert in November gave various soloists the opportunity to play with an orchestra and the works chosen were not only unusual but varied. Alan Ridout's spiky and rhythmic "Concertino for Clarinet" was given a sparkling performance by Rupert Burchett which showed incredible technical and musical accomplishment. There were then two completely contrasting instrumental slow movements from Bach's Cantatas, each of which featured a solo violin and flute. The long sustained lines were beautifully executed by Dominique Dumaresq and Alexander Medwell-Bates on the violin with Debbie Fletcher on flute. Few schools can have two classical guitarists of Grade 8 standard, and we therefore took the opportunity to perform Vivaldi's Concerto in G for two guitars. Jaime Zaldua and Robert Mills really brought forth the energy in the two outer movements which contrasted so well with the relaxed soporific central slow movement. This excellent concert ended with Sibelius' thought-provoking work "Valse Triste" which had real control of every nuance.

CHAPEL CHOIR

The Chapel Choir appears to go from strength to strength, and just as they appear to achieve one summit they immediately surpass it with another. The Carol Service was, as usual, over-subscribed but those who were fortunate enough to attend found it to be a most moving experience. The carols ranged from the simple unaccompanied setting by Vaughan William's of "This is the Truth Sent from Above" to the more complex accompanied "Holly and the Ivy" by Jonathan Willcocks. Another of the carols "Mid-Winter" was written by Bob Chilcott, who judged our House Singing Festival, and whose wife Polly now teaches 'cello at Stowe. A recording was made of the Carol Service and it is hoped that it will be available early in September.

In July we said farewell to Emily Williams and Tom Smith-Walker who had been two outstanding heads of choir and had delighted us with their very fine solo singing in Chapel. In September their place was taken by Fay Davies, Corinna Vere-Nicoll and Simon Post who are giving great leadership to the choir. The new system of exeats has enabled the Director of Music to be more adventurous with the anthems each Sunday knowing that he will have the forces on hand to perform them. These new choir items have included Willcocks "O clap your hands", John Rutter's "Te Deum" and Stanford's "Evening Canticles in A" all of which require large forces. Soon the choir is to sing evensong in St Paul's Cathedral where they will perform a work specially written for them by Howard Goodall for the Jubilee Celebrations.

CANTATA STOICA

The first music edition of "Cantata Stoica" was published in 1953 a year after the death of the great Director of Music Leslie Huggins, whose portrait hangs in the foyer of the Roxburgh Hall, and to whom the book is dedicated. The last revision was undertaken in 1982 and a few hymns were added at this time. Stocks of "Cantata Stoica" are now so depleted that it has become necessary to order a new set of books for September 1998. The new edition will be the most radical revision of the hymn book and is being undertaken by the Chaplain and Director of Music. For a long time now "Cantata Stoica" has been failing to fulfil many of the requirements of a modern hymn and service book. To overcome the inadequacies of the current edition of the present hymn book "Psalm Praise" was brought into chapel and additional hymns and services were printed in a small handbook which had become increasingly tattered and unreadable.

In addition to hymns the new "Cantata Stoica" will contain all the order of services, psalms and Congregational settings frequently performed in Chapel. Over 120 of the hymns which are never sung at Stowe will be taken out and replaced with new ones and many of the hymns will be given their correct tunes and keys. In addition we will be putting back the tunes by L.P. Huggins which are part of Stowe's history and were taken out in the second edition. These include "Chatham", "Grafton Regis" and "Queen's Temple" to which new words have been set by Brian Stephan. It is hoped that this new "Cantata Stoica" will further enhance our worship and raise even further the standard of our singing in Chapel.

JCG

PIANO COMPETITION

Last year's Piano Competition took place on the 1st June in the State Music Room with a backdrop of golden greens and blazing blues. The mellow Bösendorfer played host to nearly three hundred fingers and thumbs as we listened to a rich programme of music from all the ages Stowe has known. We were delighted to have the very distinguished and much loved Miss Ruth Harte to adjudicate. She brought a wonderful sense of purpose and unity to the day, rewarding each pianist's pains with critical comments born of a discerning ear and delivered with warmth and, above all, encouragement.

Piers Winton made a fine start to the day in the Elementary Class with a short but nearly perfect performance of a piece by Lushtak. Howard Thomson's Tchaikovsky won the next class and the highlight of the Intermediate Class was Yelena Bajenova's poetic Allegretto by Schubert. Christopher Vane-Tempest's Debussy displayed tremendous flair in the next class, but he was in just too much of a hurry to catch up with yesterday and Yuki Soga's elegant Mozart was deemed the most successful. The Advanced Class saw the entries playing a short programme and we were able to witness the great progress made by Alexander Winter and Simon Creek since arriving at Stowe. However, the class was won by Regelind Brinks. Her playing of a Beethoven Bagatelle was reassuringly Germanic and her Chopin Nocturne reassuringly un-Germanic. The pianists were never without a receptive audience and we were extremely grateful to the large number who came to support their friends and charges. BJD

MEMORIAL SERVICE FOR MELISSA CHASE

There can be few better ways of honouring the memory of someone so loved by her friends than performing a concert in her memory. Melissa was the daughter of two professional musicians and two poignant works by Mozart were chosen for this concert. The first was Mozart's Piano Concerto in D minor K466 performed by Benjamin Davey. This was the work that Mozart's wife, Constance, had chosen to be performed by Beethoven at a memorial concert for her husband a few months after his death. Benjamin Davey showed loving care to every detail of this work and accompanied magnificently by the orchestra, the concerto was given a memorable performance.

The main work of the evening was Mozart's "Requiem" which the composer failed to complete before he died. Before its performance the Chaplain spoke about Melissa and what she meant to her friends; it was strange to think that she, as a member of the choir, would have been singing in this Choral Society Concert. It was now a fitting tribute that her friends should perform this work in her honour which made the whole performance very special for performers and audience alike. It was also fitting that one of the soloists Henry Herford (Bass) knew Melissa as he had worked professionally with her father, Roger. The "Requiem" is an emotionally charged work anyway and this performance gave added poignancy to all that was sung. After the final words "Lord, grant them eternal rest, and let perpetual light shine upon them", a time of silence was held as we remembered Melissa, her family and friends.

MUSIC TECHNOLOGY AT STOWE

We now have recording facilities at Stowe capable of producing professional quality recordings. The range of equipment includes a 24-track mixing desk, effects unit, compressor, DAT and hard disc recorders. This year we have been able to add a sampler and good quality monitor speakers. We have a reasonable selection of microphones and are looking to add more in the future. For sequencing we have Apple and Atari computers and a JVI080 to improve sound quality and give more selection of voices.

The question might be asked, why do we have all this equipment? When pupils first arrive at the school they are given the opportunity to do some simple sequencing as part of the third form music syllabus. Sequencing is a way of arranging or composing music on a computer. It is possible, with skillful use, to create a piece of music which sounds remarkably close to that of live musical instruments. Far more interesting is trying to create new effects and sounds. However, much of the impetus to acquire all this equipment is the new A-level in Music Technology. Our first music technologists, Dan Westwood, James Clark and Christopher Vane Tempest all did well in their A-levels last summer. We now have students taking both A- and AS-levels in both the LVI and MVI.

Visitors are always welcome to our department, although advance notice would be appreciated.

RJSS

CONCERTS WITH A DIFFERENCE

A recital or concert is given every Tuesday at Stowe and on many Sunday evenings. They follow the usual pattern of all concerts with performers playing to a seated audience, yet enjoyable as these are it is good to do something different once in a while. Given that we have the privilege of being surrounded by one of the country's finest stately homes, our answer is to make use of our environment. "Dinner 'n' Jazz" has established itself as one of the most popular events in the calendar at Stowe with tickets being sold out within a few weeks of going on sale. In the splendour of the State Dining Room the audience has a four course meal with Champagne Cocktails beforehand and then dances to the music of the Jazz Band. In the Summer the Jazz Band also undertakes "Summer Jazz", supposed to be held outside at the Temple of Venus but because of the vagaries of the English weather, it has never yet been managed. However, which other schools can boast such a fine alternative venue as the Marble Hall?

We were slightly more fortunate in our weather for "Music for a Summer's Evening" which is held in the Headmaster's garden. The beautiful surroundings allow the audience to wander around the garden whilst enjoying one of the many musical ensembles – a passing reminder of what life might have been like at Stowe a couple of centuries earlier.

With "Music for a May Morning" JECH and PDH make great demands on Stoics by inviting them for breakfast at the Temple of Ancient Virtue and wake them up to a Spring morning with such works as "Now is the Month of Maying" and "Teddy Bears' Picnic" from the Clarinet Quartet. Life for the musician at Stowe is therefore never dull and one wonders what venue the music department will come up with next – Water Music in the swimming pool? JCG

COMPOSERS AT STOWE

I'm always delighted and often amazed at the musical outpourings of our composers here at Stowe. This year has been no exception.

The whole subject of composition is a very subjective one. Musicians have profoundly varying conceptions of what they like and dislike; what they consider to be effective or not effective; some even apply value judgments on composers and their music. This is all very questionable in my opinion. Yes, some music is sophisticated whilst some may be more 'native'; some may be fashionable or functional whilst other music may be entirely written for art's sake. Whatever the qualities, it's all music and one should be wary of making judgments on quality or significance.

Having said that, I must single out Simon Creek this year as his Piano Sonata in D minor came second in the 1997 National Young Composer of the Year competition. It's a work of considerable technical achievement as well as emotional intensity – a real coming-together of left and right brain skills!

Though they didn't make it to the finals of this prestigious competition our other composers have produced no less fine works. Alex Lyell's Trombone Concerto is a very effective work. It is full of exciting orchestral effects as well as some very demanding trombone writing. I hope other trombonists will wish to play it; there are very few such works in the repertoire. Alex Winter has written a powerful opera and indeed has also arranged it for piano trio – a useful combination. Rupert Burchett is in the process of completing his clarinet concerto and joins a distinguished list of composers, among them Mozart, Weber and Copeland, in writing for this medium! Ben McCarey is writing an Anthem at the moment where his experience as a chorister at Christ Church should prove most useful. Michael Jones is writing a set of piano pieces, following in the footsteps of the great Russian pianist Rachmanninoff.

The concert next term, when many of these works will be performed, should be a very memorable one.

PDH

THE STOWE CLARINET QUARTET

Rupert Burchett, Rupert Burnell-Nugent, Alec Laing and Peter Rossiter.

A new year, a new group – well, two new members anyway! This is the sixth Stowe Clarinet Quartet and in many ways the most exciting. We are already playing very well together and this particular ensemble, all being well, should stay together for three years! All previous groups have never had more than a year together.

We have just returned from our annual prep school tour visiting Cothill House, Sunningdale, Papplewick and Edge Grove. It was the usual mixture of much minibus driving, delicious prep school food, excellent concerts, delightful hospitality and fun!

Prep schools have a certain friendly ambience about them that makes them quite unique – always warm and welcoming, the pupils always eager to learn and discover. We met some wonderful people and our concerts were greeted with much enthusiasm. They're not really concerts as such – during our 'presentations' we talk about the clarinet and other members of the clarinet family, (this year we had fifteen different clarinets with us!), its sound world, its history

CHURCHILL CONCERTS

For the past three years Stowe has been proud to play its part in the raising of funds for the Churchill Cancer Unit in Oxford, and during this time over £15,000 has been donated. These large scale choral concerts are the brain-child of Bruce Kershaw, a member of the English National Opera, whose career was suddenly halted when he contracted cancer of the tonsils. Through his enthusiasm Bruce has managed to persuade many top rank professional singers, conductors and orchestra players to give their time free for this charity.

The first concert took place in the Chapel on October 15th 1995 with Sian Edwards, the then Music Director of the English National Opera, conducting. The work chosen was Verdi's "Requiem" and a packed Chapel was fortunate enough to hear this monumental work given a breathtaking performance with soloists Elizabeth Woollett (Soprano), Jean Rigby (Contralto), John Daszak (Tenor) and Paul Hodges (Bass).

For the next year Bruce chose two popular but smaller scale choral works – Vivaldi's "Gloria" and Faure's "Requiem". Once more the chapel was packed and these beautiful, but contrasting works were performed exquisitely with Bruce himself conducting.

This year's concert was a real tour de force as Bruce had chosen Elgar's great oratorio "Dream of Gerontius". Originally it had been intended that Richard Hickox would conduct but unfortunately he was unable to do so, but Bruce, undaunted as usual, took to the rostrum despite having gone through massive doses of treatment only a few weeks earlier. The orchestra came from all over the Midlands and London and the chorus was mainly members of the Danesborough Singers and Milton Keynes Chorale. The soloists were quite outstanding. Adrian Thompson (Tenor) took the part of Gerontius, Stephen Varcoe (Bass) the Priest and Angel of the Agony and Jean Rigby (Contralto) that of the Angel. This highly charged and emotional work was one that those of us who were present will never forget and a great tribute to Bruce Kershaw. We look forward to many more of these concerts in the future.

JCG

and even the way it works (without getting too technical!) Each member plays some solo pieces and we play a sequence of quartets to demonstrate the clarinet's great versatility.

We always end with a question session. This year, as ever, saw many of the usual enquiries, but also one or two new ones: 'what other colours do clarinets come in?' and 'how long does it take to learn a piece?' – reminds me of that old chestnut: 'how long is a piece of string...'

We have also been playing an occasional concert at the Royal Institution in London and, most exciting of all, are off on our first international tour at the end of the Spring term. Hungary is one of the most interesting countries in the world in terms of its musical teaching and we are much looking forward to both playing to and listening to the young Hungarian musicians. We're taking with us a new work especially written for the quartet by Robert Tucker, the Director of Music at the Royal Latin School in Buckingham. More about this particular trip in the next issue!

PDH

Sport

ATHLETICS

During the summer term last year we had a very enjoyable athletics season. Despite some unseasonable weather (one match was halted for a snowstorm in May!) there were some fine performances both in field events and on the track. This was mainly due to the great work put into the team throughout the season by RGD, CJAT and MOJ who ensured lively and enthusiastic training sessions and were very supportive on race days. The boys' captain and the girls' captain led the way in fine performances as Dan Pinna came closest (but did not eclipse) breaking the 1500m set in 1957 but certainly won all the inter school matches and county championship races in both the 800m and the 1500m. Sarah Flavell sprinted magnificently and had broken 3 school records in 2 matches until she stumbled to a very bad hamstring tear, which ended her season.

In the juniors a new high jump star was found, under the supreme coaching of Rasheed Banda, Jamie Zaldua set a new mark for the under15's on Sports Day. There were some other fine performances on sports day, none better than the 100m victory by a reliable member of the team who worked hard at training throughout the season, Charlie Williams. Charlie Tull was also a fine performer on Sports Day winning the 1500m for the inters convincingly still with another year in his age group. The shot was also fiercely contested with Luke Woods finishing out on top with a throw of 10.49m. I would like to thank Mr McDaid for organising the events of this season and without him we would not have been as successful as we were.

BADMINTON

Stowe's usual dominance on the schools' badminton circuit was very much missing this season. In the Senior VI it did not help that 5 of the top 6 players of the previous season had left and our usual coach from the England Badminton Association at Milton Keynes could no longer come and coach. Robert White was nonetheless a magnificent Captain, always reliable and in good spirit. He obviously enjoyed his badminton regardless of the poor results. In fact he and partner Mark Bowman on many occasions won all three of their rubbers but the other pairs found it difficult to win two more to clinch victory.

Bird Chanprabhap (4th Form) made one or two appearances for the Senior VI and will be a force in years to come. Results: v Oundle L 0-9; v Uppingham L 2-7; v Rugby W 7-2; v Bloxham L 2-7; v Oakham L 3-6; v Oratory W 6-3; v Abingdon L 0-9

The Girls' VI had a very similar season to the boys. They were well organised by Captain Arabella Arbuthnott but needed more coaching sessions. Several of the Girls' VI will be back next season so we can expect an improvement in the playing standards and match results.

Results: v Oundle L 1-8; v Oakham L 0-9; v Uppingham L 2-7; v Rugby L 3-6; v Bloxham W 9-7

IM



BASKETBALL

Basketball at Stowe was given a tremendous boost with the provision of 3 full-size outdoor basketball courts. Added to the existing outdoor court behind the sports hall it means that there are enough courts for all year groups to use in their free time all year round.

Stowe had potentially one of their best U19 sides ever with size, fast breaking ability and an outside shooting threat, however, were they going to be consistent and disciplined enough to play as a team? The first match of the season against Winchester is always a good indicator of how the remainder of the season is likely to turn out. As it happens Stowe ran out winners by 10 points. We then had a comfortable win against Harrow 72 - 42. Next match was away to Eton and although they had a narrow court we were still able to run our fast break effectively. They found it very difficult to break down our defence and we went on to win 76 - 31. We normally expect Radley to have a big side with a couple of rugby 2nd row forwards as post players but again this Stowe side was proving to be quite a handful and ended up winning 65 - 37. A 35 - 17 win at Uppingham set us up nicely for the trip to Bradfield. We were now having thoughts of a possible unbeaten season and all was going so well in the first 10 minutes of the Bradfield match. Stowe had taken a commanding lead when Giudice sprained his ankle badly. Our most valuable player was reduced to being a spectator and all credit to Bradfield, they clawed their way back to win a very exciting game 35 - 32. The team soon got over the disappointment of losing to Bradfield and won their last match of the season against Mill Hill 58 - 45.

	Played	Won	Lost	For	Against
U19 Team	7	6	1	388	247

The U16 team was not as strong as usual but worked very hard and competed in every game. We were comprehensively beaten by a good Winchester side 49-70 and the only other defeat of the season came against Bradfield in a very exciting contest which we ended up losing by 2 points. In the other matches we recorded fine wins over Buckingham 41-28, Radley 47-30 and Uppingham 35-23.

	Played	Won	Lost	For	Against
U16 Team	5	3	2	206	187

The U15 team was inspired by 6'9" German coach Herr Jahn and produced some fine basketball throughout the season. They started with an excellent win at Harrow 28-22 followed by a comfortable win against Akeley Wood 57-36 and ended the season with a 'ding-dong' battle against the local Buckingham School. The match went right down to the 'wire' with Buckingham edging it 43-45.

	Played	Won	Lost	For	Against
U15 Team	3	2	1	128	103

This year's U14 side was very enthusiastic about the game. Some of the players had previously taken part in the annual Stowe Prep School basketball tournament. They were quick to pick up the basic tactics of the game and were very efficient in their movement and finishing. They had an unbeaten season with wins over Buckingham 27-24, Eton 46-13 and Akeley Wood 68-17.

	Played	Won	Lost	For	Against
U14 Team	3	3	0	141	54

The Girls' Captain, Rosemary Weston was very influential in all the girls' matches. She had pace, control and touch; just some of the reasons why she was asked to join the local Buckingham Ladies team and is continuing to play at Cambridge University. She was ably supported by a very committed group of players. There were wins over Bloxham 51-8 and 45-12 and a superb win at Bradfield 67-35. The only defeat came when a very depleted side made the trip to Buckingham coming very close to victory but eventually losing 27-30.

	Played	Won	Lost	For	Against
Girls Team	4	3	1	190	85

Once again Stowe entered the Individual Schools U19 National Competition and also the U16 Competition for the first time. It was very good experience for the players who improved after each game. Stowe is slowly closing the gap on the top basketballing schools but there is still much work to be done. Schools played included Itchen (Southampton), European School (Oxford) and Aylesbury Grammar.

On two Sundays in the Autumn Term the Inter-House Basketball Competitions are held. The Junior Competition featured in October with the two Girls' Houses also involved. After all 10 Houses had played 4 matches each Chatham topped Pool 1 with Bruce runners-up and Walpole topped Pool 2 with Grafton as runners-up. In the semi-finals Grafton beat Chatham 8-4 and Walpole beat Bruce 12-2. The final was a pulsating affair with Grafton taking the trophy 8-6 after over-time.

The 'Pearl Cup' provided by Harry Pearl (basketball enthusiast and former pupil) was being played for in the Senior Competition in November. Bruce won their Pool with Grafton as runners-up and Chandos won their Pool with Walpole as runners-up. In the semi-finals Bruce beat Walpole 17-14 and Chandos beat Grafton 12-10 after over-time. Some very determined play by Bruce saw them through to victory 20-12 and lift the 'Pearl' Cup.

In the Spring Term the girls have another chance of a trophy but this time without the Junior boys to compete against. The House match ended in victory for Lyttelton.

PREP. SCHOOL BASKETBALL COMPETITION SUNDAY 2ND MARCH 1997

RESULTS

Millbrook (4) v (12) Aldwickbury
 Summer Fields (15) v (10) Blue Coat
 Blue Coat (18) v (12) Millbrook
 Summer Fields (11) v (13) Aldwickbury
 Summer Fields (8) v (6) Millbrook
 Aldwickbury (12) v (8) Blue Coat

	P	W	L	F	A	PTS
Aldwickbury	3	3	0	37	23	6
Summer Fields	3	2	1	34	29	4
Blue Coat	3	1	2	36	39	2
Millbrook House	3	0	3	22	38	0

1997 Champions: ALDWICKBURY

IM

BEAGLING

The sport of beagling takes place during a season which starts at the end of September and continues until the middle of March. Beagling is a method of controlling and maintaining a healthy population of hares in the countryside. There are many different aspects of beagling that may not be seen by the majority of people. Very careful and loving care is given to the beagles. They are walked out twice a day and fed on a diet of flesh, and swill which is the leftovers from our school meals (which some of the hounds will not eat either). There is also a very selective breeding program that is carried out by the kennel huntsman – which involves breeding hounds with good confirmation so that they can live for a long time and hunt to the best of their ability.

At Stowe beagling may not be seen to be one of the major sports or one that many people wish to do, but it is probably one of the most successful parts of the school. In the summer the hounds are no longer hunting and a new side of beagling is seen, these are the hounds shows. Last summer we had a very successful time at the hound shows that we attended. At the first show we attended – at Ardingly we picked up nearly every prize that was available and also took away the prize for best school pack of beagles. The next show that we attended was in North Wales, despite the dreadful weather conditions we still managed to come home with a cluster of trophies.

In the Autumn term the hunting starts, and every Tuesday and Saturday the beagles meet at 1.30p.m. for the days hunting. There are usually about twenty foot-followers who come out regularly. Beagling is not just a sport for those who want to run miles, running is optional and most people tend to find a good viewing point and remain there most of the day watching the hounds running in large loops around them. There are four people who wear uniform- (Black hunting cap, white breeches, blue socks, white hunting ties and green coats with royal blue collars) these are the Kennel Huntsman – John Fretwell, the Master – Emma Dixey, the Huntsman – Mark Ollard and the First Whipper-in – Guy Pelly, and these people play a large part in the days hunting. The Master will have put together the meetcard and written to all the farmers before a days hunting, the Kennel Huntsman organises the hounds and makes sure that they are fit and well, the Huntsman carries the horn during the days hunting, and the Whipper-in is there to help out with various duties during the days hunting.

The hounds will always meet whatever the weather, although if the weather is really poor the number of foot followers does fluctuate. The only weather that may stop hunting is if there is a very long period of frost because the ground becomes so hard that it cuts the hounds pads (their feet). Generally hounds will always meet, although occasionally hunt saboteurs can be a problem, and if they come to the kennels before we leave to go hunting, it tends to be called off, and if they arrive at the meet then it is very difficult to carry on hunting because the antis blow horns and make lots of noise which confuse and distress the hounds.

Beagling at Stowe is open to anyone who would like to do it, no experience is needed to go down to kennels or even to go hunting, and with the present threat to hunting and the countryside at the moment it is an opportunity that should be taken.

EMMA DIXEY

PHOTOS: MATTHEW FURSE-ROBERTS



CLAY PIGEON SHOOTING

At the Warwick Challenge late on in the Spring term, the team produced a superb performance coming away with gold medals. In early May we had high hopes at the National Championships and although missing two key members, managed a pleasing 13th position out of 31 schools which included beating Oundle, St. Edward's and Cheltenham. Our ladies' team also performed most creditably.

The 96/97 season ended successfully with a resounding victory over the Old Stoics on Speech Day. Here we retained the Triangle Cup, the winning team being Henry Craik-White (Captain for the year), Charles Wright and James Nettleton, shooting 57 out of 60 clays. The Father and Son Competition was won by Sam Tylor and father. The Inter-House Competition also took place in June, Chatham achieving a well-deserved victory with a score of 45 out of 60.

With many of the younger guns coming through well, we had a good base on which to build a competent squad for the 97/98 season. Having only one competition at the end of term meant that although short of match practice, the guns had plenty of time in which to sharpen their skills. However, come the day of the competition, we had to take a slightly weakened squad owing to a clash with School play rehearsals. On arrival at the Garlands Shooting Ground at Tamworth, we elected to begin with a difficult stand which required great concentration. This we maintained throughout the day, and as a result we handed in a set of very respectable scores for both teams. As other results started to come in, it became apparent that all the schools had struggled on this most technical course.

In the end both Stowe teams were victorious in their respective categories, with the "B" team scoring 122 and the "A" team 169, beating second place Warwick by 18 clays. Henry Coxe shot splendidly all day for his 36 out of 50 on this tough course and managed to secure joint 3rd place in the Individual High Gun Competition.

The Spring Term has not been as busy as we would have liked, nevertheless, we did manage to return to defend our gold medals at the Warwick Challenge. On an extremely difficult course the "A" team posted a potentially weak score. Other teams seemed to find it just as difficult, however, and Stowe finished with second place, achieving medals in the Invited Schools category.

We now look forward to continued success in the Summer Term and to a good performance in the National Championships, where we hope to be accompanied by an Old Stoic team and supported by our usual group of loyal parents.

HENRY C. CRAIK-WHITE

CROSS COUNTRY

Once again we must take our hats off to the Cross Country runners for yet another impressive season. The Senior VIII were unbeaten in school matches, including victories over Radley, Harrow, Oundle and Rugby. They went on to record 3rd place in the Southern Championships out of 27 schools; a truly brilliant performance. In the County Championships Daniel Pinna won the individual race and the Girls won the team event for the second year in succession. Daniel Pinna, Kate Chambre, Camilla Hicks and Laura Humber were also selected for the County.

Inter-House Individual Winners:-

Girls	Kate Chambre
Senior Boys	Daniel Pinna
Intermediate Boys	Charles Tull
Junior Boys	Roderick McLauchlan

Inter-House Team Winners:-

Girls	Lyttelton
Senior Boys	Grafton
Intermediate Boys	Walpole
Junior Boys	Walpole

IM



CRICKET

1ST XI

In a season dominated by the weather, the 1st XI had a very good season - 2 games were won, 1 was lost, 5 were drawn, 2 were abandoned and 4 were cancelled. The side, nine of whom will be back next year, was well captained by Richard Harris. Significant bowling and batting achievements contributed to this success. Two bowlers took 20 wickets each. R. Harris averaged 20.8 which included 5 for 35 against Northants. U/16. R. White averaged 22.3 with figures of 5 for 74 against the Free Foresters. Significant contributions were made by Tom Sleater, with 10 wickets, and by Gareth MacIntosh. The bowlers were well supported by James McDonagh, who set a high standard behind the stumps. The close to the wicket catching was of a high standard also. There was a big improvement in the general fielding. In the batting 4 players scored over 200 runs each. 3 hundreds were scored, 2 by Robert White with 116 against Northants and 112 against Oundle, and 1 by James McDonagh with 100 not out against Northants U16. White scored 560, averaging 46.6, McDonagh scored 359 at 42.2, Harris scored 317 at 28.8, whilst Pearce scored 237 at 19.7. Good support was given by Sleater, Saunders, MacIntosh, Hayward R. and Denning.

For the first time in many years two boys, Harris and White were selected for the H.M.C. trials at Oxford. White went on to play several games for Northants 2nd XI in the 2nd XI County Championship.

The pre-season Coaching course continues to go from strength to strength. 26 boys took full advantage of the coaching skills of Harold Rhodes of Derbyshire and England, and George Sharp of Northants and now an international umpire. The boys were fortunate to receive further coaching twice a week from Harold Rhodes. Thanks as ever go to those who helped in the smooth running of the matches, to all the umpires - Clive Cross, Keith Timpson, Peter Gladwin, and Chris Jones; to Tim Knight who ran the Junior Festival; to James Wright, our scorer; to Steve Curly and his staff for all their efforts in improving our wickets and keeping things dry in a very testing season; to all the members of the teaching staff for their time and efforts; to the caterers for their continued support and to the Headmaster and Bursary Staff for their help in administration.

MJH

2ND XI

Stowe had potentially a very strong 2nd XI side but for one reason or another failed to live up to the high expectations for the season. There were several fine fielding performances over the season which was seldom backed up by application with the bat. In the first game against Bedford a total of 104 runs was never going to be enough against a useful Bedford side who cruised to a 9-wicket win. The Winchester match was a wash out and so too the Bradfield game. The next match at St Edward's could easily have seen the home side all out for under 80 runs but somehow they 'got out of jail' to finish on 162 runs with Bathurst taking 5 for 43. Just as Stowe were about to bat the rain came down.

The next match against Radley was one of the best in the season and certainly did not lack excitement. Radley were

reduced to 156 all out mainly due to some splendid outswing bowling by Bathurst (7 for 33). When Wainright-Lee was batting the Radley target was well in sight. He hit some very ferocious boundaries but got out after a splendid half century going for another 'big one'. Then wickets started to tumble and Stowe faltered just 12 runs short of their target. Poor batting against Oundle made proceedings very one-sided and defeat by 8 wickets was always on the cards. The season was rounded off on a high with an excellent 1 wicket victory against Rugby.

IM

COLTS

This season began more promisingly than any during my six years as i/c the Colts. On viewing my squad list, I had only lost one Colts cricketer (Charles Randall) to the 1st XI, and it was clear I would have the unprecedented luxury of being able to actually select a second XI. Indeed, rather than the token eighteen or so players turning up on day one of previous seasons, I had thirty-four; enough for three teams! I am extremely grateful to IM for the games policy reforms that have made cricket the sole 'key' sport of the term.

Our first match was against Bedford. Unusually, the Colts A XI found themselves relegated to a marginal square with a tiny boundary, while the 3rd XI were given the run of the main square. Not surprisingly, ours was an extraordinarily high scoring game (411 runs in 73 overs); wonderful for the batsmen - a nightmare for our bowlers. We set about their impressive score of 218 for 2 with an astonishing confident exhibition of free hitting from William Watson (51 runs) and a delightful exhibition of stroke play from Adam Cottrell for 63. A tremendously exciting finish ensued with us finally closing up shop with two overs to go and 8 wickets down for 193 runs; result, drawn.

Against St Edwards we were feeling confident and put them in to bat. William Watson, Alexander Garbe and Harry Girardot took vital early wickets and reduced them to just 45 for five. However, they struggled on and finally declared on 167 for 7. Sensing victory, James Defty and Adam Cottrell strode confidently out to the square beneath a forbidding sky. Two overs later they returned in the rain and there was no more play that day.

We were delighted to welcome Charles Randall back from the 1st XI for the Radley game and he immediately made his mark. Confronted with some blistering pace, Radley withered under Charles' onslaught and with James Fielden's accurate 'wicket to wicket' swing bowling at the other end they picked up 4 and 3 wickets respectively. A somewhat bemused Radley managed to recover and ended up declaring at 145 for nine. Sensing victory, James Defty and Adam Cottrell strode confidently out to the square... but wickets fell swiftly and despite Henry Gillingham and Harry Girardot restoring some order, we collapsed to 102 all out; result, lost.

Our last game of the season was at home against Oundle. We elected to bat, so yet again James Defty and Adam Cottrell strode confidently out to the square... but returned fairly swiftly. William Browning then proceeded to show us what a fine batsman he is by scoring 31 almost entirely in boundaries. A middle order collapse ensued with overly con-

fidet young men trying to slog from the minute they reached the square, before Harry Girardot steadied the innings with a Knott'esque style 44. He was ably supported by James Lyon, James Fielden and Tim Barker who between them put on a quick 40 runs. We ended up 197 all out. Randall again set about their batsmen with a passion and secured another 4 wickets. James Defty at last began to realise his potential as an off spinner of true class and picked up three vital wickets. With Oundle 50 runs short and with just three wickets left we were beginning to sense victory, before... the rain began and we were forced off the pitch. All other matches at Stowe were abandoned, but ours was winnable by both sides, so in fine drizzle we resumed. The rain could not dampen the thrilling finish that followed; we took two more wickets, but with their last man in and two overs to go, they nudged the winning runs; result, lost.

The season was particularly disappointing because of the rain which forced us to either cancel or abandon all but three fixtures. The final analysis of played 3, drawn 1, lost 2, says far more about the fact that the weather prevented us ever getting into the season, than about the side's talent and I fully expect to see many of them playing for the 1st XI next year. My thanks to Mr Meredith and Mr Malin for their coaching assistance throughout the season with both Colts squads.

MOMC

JUNIOR COLTS A

Played - 5, Drew -3, Lost - 2

The season started off well with a good result against a strong Bedford side, where Richard Worrall and Hugo Pilcher provided a fine late order stand to secure a well deserved draw. There was plenty of ability in the team and a good season was there to be had, however rain stopped play in many matches, ruining chances of expected wins. Jamie Peel, Henry Coram James and Tom Oliver played well throughout the season (Jamie claiming two 50s), showing talent and promise for the future. The bowling attack was also proving strong with Richard Worrall's accurate away swing and Lakan Akinjide causing many problems with his quick left arm over the wicket. A deserved victory against Rugby escaped us as we did not quite manage to pick up the last wicket in the last over. However the match that followed against the Oratory was a disappointment as a lack of concentration in the field and with the bat saw them steal a closely fought match.

There is plenty of talent in the team and we look forward to successful seasons in the future.

HENRY CORAM JAMES



GOLF

Golf has had a good year well led by Alastair Barne and Jonathan Corbishley. The team ended on a strong note with wins against Harrow, St Edward's and Buckingham Golf Club.

Golf ties have been awarded to Matthew Nicoll and Richard Thomson-Moore.

HOCKEY CLUB

The Girls and the Yearlings Hockey took the stage in the Autumn Term. The Girls having a mixed season unbeaten in 7 out of a possible 17 matches beating Bloxham, Haileybury & R.L.S. and drawing with Cheltenham and Kimbolton both very strong fixtures. For the second consecutive season we fielded 2 teams for every fixture; the 1st XI were a commendable 3rd overall in the County round of the U18 National Hockey Tournament and Lyttelton beat Nugent 3-1 in the Inter-House competition.

The Yearlings trained very hard with good results from the CXI & DXI's, the BXI winning three times ; the AXI struggled to get the results their play deserved; this season there were no natural hockey players but I am confident next year will see the benefit of some hard work. The Yearlings Inter-House 7's was won by Chatham House beating Cobham 1-0

Girls results:

	P	W	D	L	GF	GA
1st XI	10	3	2	5	14	20
2nd XI	7	2	0	5	6	16

Yearlings results:

	P	W	D	L	GF	GA
A XI	6	4	1	1	12	6
B XI	6	3	0	3	21	16
C XI	6	2	2	2	11	9
D XI	4	2	1	1	11	2

The Spring Term and Senior School Hockey began superbly with an 8-1 win against the RLS. and a Pre-season against Stamford 6-3; a first Saturday draw against St.Edwards 3-3 followed by a 5-1 win over Shiplake was very impressive. The 1st XI are beginning to look like a real hockey team; the Astroturf pitch and all the indoor work covered is beginning to pay off. Their overall results of 5 wins and 3 draws meant they were unbeaten in 8 out of 11 matches which was quite significant and a great improvement.

This was echoed throughout the teams, the Colts sides both winning 4 games apiece, the Colts BXI only losing once to Oundle. Overall the results were excellent 31 unbeaten games 19 wins and 12 draws out of 61 matches played.

Senior results:

	P	W	D	L	GF	GA
1st XI	11	5	3	3	36	27
2nd XI	8	2	3	3	13	8
3rd XI	6	0	1	5	3	18
4th XI	3	2	1	0	9	6

Colts results:

	P	W	D	L	GF	GA
1st XI	8	4	0	4	34	21
2nd XI	6	4	1	1	15	12
3rd XI	1	0	0	1	0	1

Junior Colts results:

	P	W	D	L	GF	GA
1st XI	8	1	1	6	2	21
2nd XI	7	1	1	5	10	37
3rd XI	3	0	1	2	5	13

We were able to field 10 teams each Saturday if required, but sadly some opposition schools can no longer fulfil this commitment. The Inter-House Competition was played entirely on the Astroturf this year and proved to be an even greater spectacle than usual with some very good hockey matches. In both the Junior and Senior competitions the Finals were drawn after extra time and had to be decided on penalty strokes. The Inter-House Junior Cup was won by Temple House 3-3 and then 2-1 penalty strokes. The Inter-House Senior-Cup was won by Cobham House after a 1-1 draw with Grafton and then 3-2 on penalty stroke

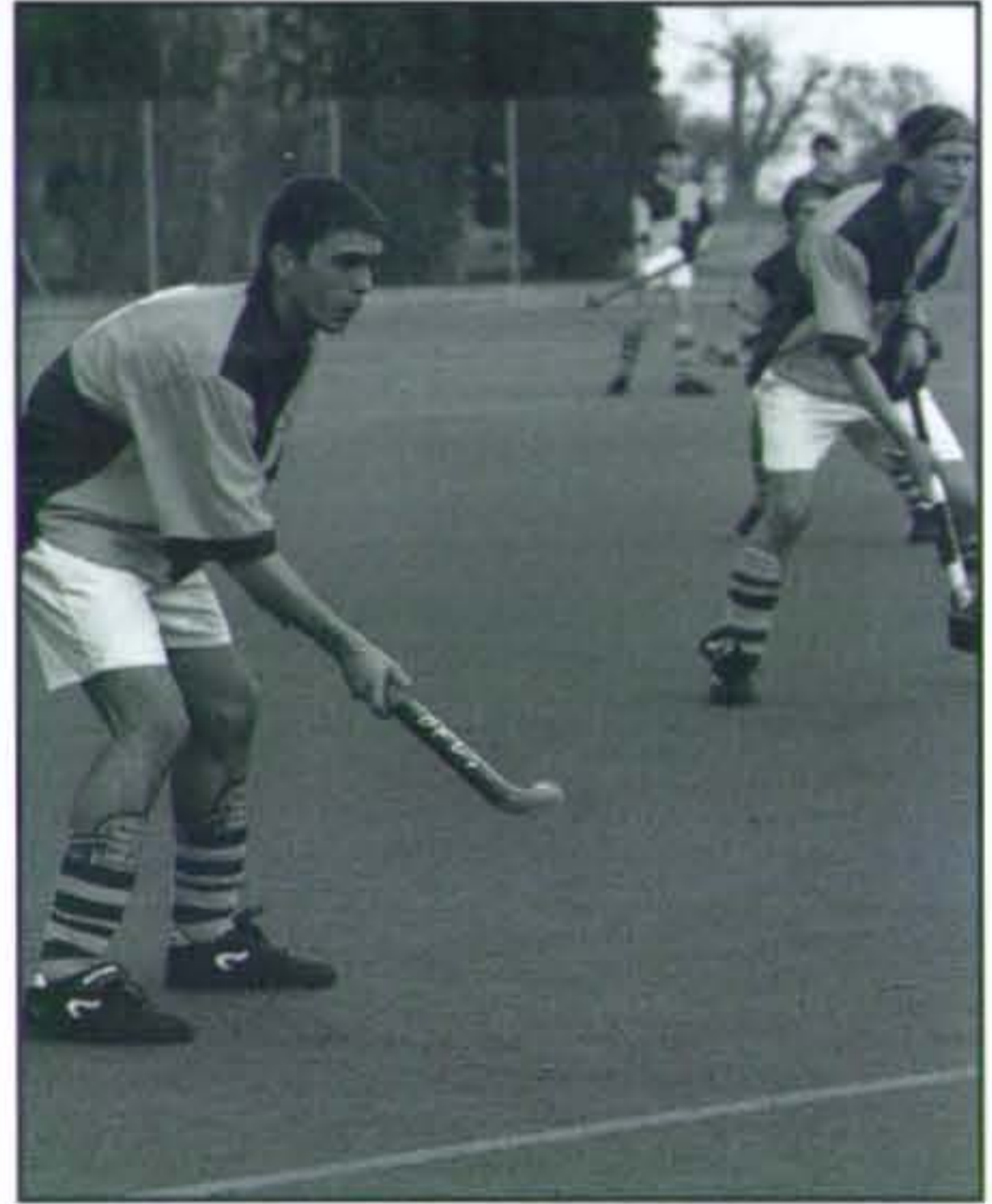
Results worth looking for in the future. A big thank you to all the staff who work extremely hard to maintain the standard of hockey we have come to expect and particular thanks to Steve Curley and his staff for continuing to maintain all our pitches and not just the Astroturf; our grass pitches are the best on the circuit

DCB

HOCKEY 1ST XI

Senior 1st XI hockey was destined to be exciting, as after half term 1996 over twenty four boys were regularly training once a week. They played a pre-season match against the RLS. and managed a convincing win giving GGJD and myself great enthusiasm for the new senior hockey season.

Pre-Season was well attended and a very useful training match against Stamford made an excellent beginning to the term's fixtures as we managed to win 6-3. The boys had a very mature approach to all their training and with help on the coaching front from Gareth Terrett, Cannock League and Welsh International player, the team settled with a superb attitude, despite losing half of our coaching team with GGJD leaving. We were all determined to have a brilliant season and we did just that. Competition for places in the 1st XI was high and with Lee Malin, a competent coach with the 2nd XI the team gradually fell into place. The arrival of Fabian Polonius into the LVI was an added bonus, he certainly earned his place with a hattrick on the first Saturday against St.Edwards when we held them to a well deserved draw 3-3, having been 0-1 down at half time. The following Saturday we met Shiplake and gained a convincing 5-1 win; however after a fixed exeat weekend the next match against Rugby was a little disappointing; they are always stronger than us but we played poorly and did not challenge enough and eventually lost 1-5 turning the previous week's match completely on its head; this often happens on Astroturf. The next encounter against Berkhamsted was another turn around with Stowe winning 5-1. After half term we played Oundle with Harris and Polonius scoring in the first half and hopeful of success, however, Oundle came back and despite some excellent saves from GK. Tom Honeyman-Brown, we lost our superiority and eventually the match 3-7. Other results followed with a 1-0 win over Abingdon and a superb 2-2 draw away against Radley, surprising our opposition. Unfortunately we allowed the last game of our season to be



a 0-1 loss against Pangbourne, losing a goal in the last minutes of the game. The season however was one of the most memorable ones – playing 11 matches winning 5 and drawing 3 games with Goals scored 36 and goals against 27. The senior 1st XI are now looking like a hockey team with the skills and fitness needed to challenge even the very best and bigger schools. The Astroturf pitch has made a significant difference to our hockey at all levels and the continued coaching of the younger boys and the general togetherness of the hockey club at school is beginning to ‘reap its reward’.

1st XI Squad 1997

T. Honeyman-Brown, A. Barnet, L. Pilling*, E. Wainright-Lee
G. Hayward, T. Sleater, S. Moore, *F. Polonius, R. Hayward.
William K. Lawal, R. Harris, C. Floyd*, C. Clark, *R. Connell
(res. GK)*

DCB

2ND XI

The 2nd XI team had an interesting season to say the least, with plenty of close games and good wins. The season was marred with injuries, field trips and other distractions. It is probably correct to say that the team did not field the same XI two weeks in a row. This did create problems with positions for many players and unsettled the balance of the team.

Despite all the problems with the season, all the boys bonded well and thoroughly enjoyed the season. The first game was against St Edwards. This game showed a lot of promise for the rest of the season. The backs, comprising of John Corbishley, Mark Denning and Kristjan Byfield, were rock solid in defence and somehow managed to stop wave after wave of attack. We lost this game 1-0, only to a penalty flick for an infringement near the goal.

After this setback, we bounced back with a draw against Shiplake and then two sensational wins against highly fancied Rugby and Berkhamsted. Even though we did win these games, a problem was noticeable in our side, we didn't have the firepower up front to finish off the good work from our halves and backs. Game after game, we would set up camp in our attacking third, but we could not put the ball in the net. This was particularly the case in the next game against Oundle, where we were denied goals from the goal post and opposite backs putting their body in the way. At this level of hockey we need to capitalise on any opportunity given to us to score. Losses to Abingdon, Radley and then a draw with Pangbourne did not finish the season off as we would have liked.

Rupert Connell was fantastic in goal, only letting a handful of goals in throughout the whole season. Rupert saved the team from many an embarrassing moment with his fine saves and he always made training sessions interesting, as you would not know what to expect from him. Tom Smith Walker was superb as captain, leading by example and often made my job easy. Jon Elkington, Ed Bowring and Charles Bingham all had steady seasons but were plagued by injury. The loss of Tom Sleater up front left a huge hole in our side and we never managed to fix it. Several players tried hard up front but we could never find the right combination to become a fearsome attack.

Special thanks must go to all those boys and DCM who helped the 2nd XI fill a team each week when we suffered with injuries. There is a lot of talent in this team and with many of them still at the school next year, the 1st XI looks promising. Thank you boys for such an enjoyable season.

C Rupert D Connell, Edward, HB Bowring, Henry W Craik-White, Jonathan R Elkington, Charles N Bingham, Mark Bowman, William JE Keeler, Charles E D Saunders, Jonathan P Corbishley, Thomas A Smith Walker, Adam J Carpenter Couchman, Kristjan D R Byfield, Mark W Denning. Coach: L Malin.

4TH XI

An unbeaten season we were happy to have, but not an uncontested one. Word must have got out that we were to be hot stuff this year: Teddies instantly cancelled – something about being too wet – and then Rugby frankly admitted that they couldn't raise a fourth team to face us. Just because we'd beaten our own third team was no need for our opposition to lose heart – after all, everybody beat our third team... Oundle didn't let us down, and duly arrived, and we were all over them. Then we eased off and let them back in - oops - and settled for a two-all draw in the end. Going away to one of Radley's more interesting pitches (a-hem) we did exactly the same, letting them draw level for half-time and provoking some fairly stern words from the coach not usually his style. We regained control and won three-one, then went off to Pangbourne whose coach had bottled out but whose team had turned up. JP, in charge for the first time and umpiring his first match, was surprised to have to umpire it alone. Magnanimously, as they had no goalkeeper, he ordered our man to take his pads off too. Our four-three victory was an interesting climax to an unusual kind of unbeaten season.

The largely unsuccessful house teams of Chandos and Walpole made up the large majority of this successful team, though we also had Hamish Gordon-Lennox, voted unanimously the centre forward least likely ever to score and thus moved to the left wing from where he promptly got most of our goals. Tom Morley was a handful in front of the opposition goal, and Ollie Trethewey disconnected his verbal energy supply and plugged it into his legs and arms instead to devastating effect – he also provided real relatives who turned up at an away fixture to support, an alien experience for many of the team. Martin Marston was lethal. The Double Dom Defence of Dominics Gwyn-Jones and Taylor was an absolute rock on which opposition attacks foundered before stumbling into Will Austen or being picked off at high speed by Ollie Harrison, with Ambrose Dudley and Charles Bailey also dredging the area. Captain Tristan Lake stayed in the midfield while Jack Hazell shot up the right wing and no-one was ever sure where and when Simon Forster might appear or super-sub Anthony Burnell-Nugent pop up. We enjoyed ourselves, and won as well.

SGAH

JUNIOR COLTS 3RD XI

The team played with great enthusiasm and commitment but was pitched against more expert sides in every game for a variety of reasons. Against Shiplake's 2nd XI the 3-3 draw was a great credit; it certainly made for a lively match to the very last moment. Rugby fielded their Yearlings A side instead of an equal one but even the two goals by Stowe were

very respectable against their total of five. Against Radley we had five members of the team out of action but defended well against the odds, eventually going down by five goals. All the team played hard and Thomas Radmall, Pok Pundarick, Alec Pooley and the goalkeepers, Bill Dean and Ben McCarey, deserve special mention.

MJB

YEARLINGS D XI

All members of the D team played with great determination and vigour throughout the season. Several of the six matches ended with impressive results, especially the 8-0 win against Loughbrough, where several players aimed for and achieved their hat-tricks. Many novices to the game improved their skills markedly at this level and were rewarded by transfers to higher teams during the term.

MJB

LACROSSE

The Lacrosse team did the school proud in their Midlands tournament finishing 2nd from 6 schools. Their season finished on a high with an 11-0 win over Tudor Hall.

Arabella Arbuthnott and Iona Graham were selected for the County.

The House Competition was won by Nugent.

NETBALL

The girls Netball 1st team were all set to have an outstanding season but suffered a severe set-back when Jacqui Larsen, their prolific goal scorer, missed the opening matches through illness. There was a revival on her return as the team finished with a winning season. The 2nd team did extremely well to win 4 of their 5 matches.

In the Bradfield Tournament Stowe came 3rd from 8 teams and lost narrowly to Bradfield in the semi-finals who were the eventual winners.

House Netball Winners: Nugent

RUGBY 1ST XV

The season began with a few significant changes to last years successful group. Firstly the loss of 'Budge' Pounney, when he sadly had to return to his professional playing career with Northampton, and now Scotland, after a switch with their training times. Also with him, sadly, went numerous connections with Northampton, yet we realised that in order to do ourselves justice, then we could not dwell on this. Mr. Terry, a member of the present teaching staff stepped into the difficult shoes, and did exceedingly well, both in coaching and in support, in hard circumstances. When things did not go Stowe's way, he, with the ever present help of Mr. Michael, and on occasion Mr. Ayres, stepped in well to put us back on track.

Returning to pre-season, spirits were high which was helped by a full turn out by the players. The commitment at the start set a standard that remained throughout the difficult season, and the team stuck together well. It was here that roles were filled, with Tim Pearce selected as vice-captain, and Giles Hayward as club captain. My thanks sincerely to them, and to the other senior players, with special mentions to Rupert Hayward, Stewart Boyd and Will Keeler, who were ever present and encouraging, even through the injuries that were sustained by some of them.

So, after a full turn out at pre-season and some good training days, spirits were high as we travelled to Northampton to play their 'master-class'. The mood was perfect and attitudes were right, facts that we unfortunately found hard to repeat with our other away fixtures. In the match, after an incredible team performance, and a bit of Tom Sleater magic, we came away with a well deserved win, and returned to Stowe with high optimism for the rest of the term.

From here on we found the difficulties that come around with first team rugby. Although the pack was mobile, its size was significantly smaller than many of the teams that we

faced on the circuit. Where this was exploited most was against teams such as Abingdon, where their game was with the pack, and there was not much that could be done.

In spite of this, the Daily Mail cup gave us extra fixtures, which we took full advantage of. Getting through to the fourth round meant many home games during the week, which showed much of our best rugby and we managed to clock up many points. There was good support from the rest of the school and they were repaid with some great rugby. Our run came to an end against RGS High Wycombe but it is not as bitter now, knowing that they have now reached the final!

The cup was not the only place where good rugby was played, and there were good shows elsewhere. The narrow defeat at the hands of Pangbourne left us with a sour taste, but in retrospect we were the better side. Good wins also against John Cleveland School, and the ever improving Royal Latin. As said though it was a shame that we could not capture the home form when we were away.

My thanks too, to the ground staff, led by Steve Curley. There are always the remarks from the visiting team about the pitch, for it is the best kept pitch on the circuit.

I have had great pleasure Captaining this years 1st XV, and my thanks to everyone who has assisted us in any way. My good wishes naturally go to next years team, many of whom have at least been involved with us this season and the few that held down their regular places well.

Those who have represented the 1st XV: M. Denning (c), T. Pearce (v.c.), G. Hayward (c.c.), R Hayward, P. Mann, K. Byfield, B. Bloomfield, J. Jones, N. Mullineux, R. Going, A. Rykens, C. Fenwick, C. Howard, J. Defty, T. Sleater, K. Kapoor, D. Dumaresq, J. Neary, D. Taylor, W. Ricketts, W. Keeler, C. Saunders, J. Peel, K. Kavindale

MARK DENNING



1st XI Hockey Team 1997

Holly Anstey, Sarah Parker, Nia Goodyer, Anna Kenyon,
 TLH, Olivia Armitage, Gemma Coles, Serena Thynne, Sarah Dalby, Louisa Jones, Emma Nicholas, GAC,
 Charlotte Wainright-Lee, Laura Humber, Charlotte Oliver (captain), Lucy Keenan, Claudia Bodikan.



1st Lacrosse Squad 1997

SC Galsworthy, AM Jones, LE Francis, TB Sloane,
 LJG, FA Jolley, KE Rankin, VJ Keegan, NA Moffat, DKOG,
 LS Howes, ER Willis, AE Arbuthnott, IS Graham, LF Kaye.

2ND XV

Record:

P	W	D	L	F	A
10	4	0	6	177	231

During the season a total of 41 Stoics represented the Second XV which tells a tale of injuries in both the first and second teams and of opportunities for many senior boys to represent the school at A or B team level.

The Seconds started with two hard fixtures away at Radley and home against Uppingham both of which we lost without scoring a point in spite of periods of play spent in the opposition 22. Although this was not the best way to start the campaign it was from then on that the second fifteen could boast a much more settled side.

A good win away at Bloxham with tries from Bell, Pearson, skipper Gordon Lennox (Hugo), and new-signing MacIntosh was followed by a 5-7 defeat at home to Abingdon in an exciting match which we were in a position to win on several occasions.

The squad's courage temporarily failed after a nightmare coach journey to Stamford and a kick-off directly our team had emerged from the changing rooms, but it is fair to say that having been comprehensively beaten in the first half the seconds rallied valiantly to prevent the score-line from assuming embarrassing proportions.

John Cleveland College at home proved to be a try-fest and clearly the most enjoyable match of the season for both players and coaches alike as running rugby was the order of the day in a 77-14 win with Cottrell and Wood both scoring two tries each.

A win in the mud against Mill Hill away was encouraging as were reasonably close defeats at the hands of Pangbourne and St. Edward's but a final victory against Magdalen College School on the North Front not only rounded off the season positively but allowed the capacity crowd to leave in good spirits.

Our thanks to all who represented the Seconds and especially to our more regular players: Viney, Choomduang, Bagge, Gordon Lennox, Wood, Webster, MacIntosh, Gillingham, Cottrell, Bell, Pearson, Rykens, Harrison, Hook, Ogle, Clapham, and last season's old boys(!) Borradaile and Byfield.

SJBA AND LEW

COLTS A XV

Colts A team: Played 10 Won 4

It started with pre-season training! As a result, the term had got off to a good start with the squad making significant progress in these first few days. This proved to be virtually the only time that we had the whole squad together for any significant amount of coaching time. Progress this time around for the colts rugby teams was unfortunately hampered by the frequent disruptions and demands of other areas within the school. As a result, we were not able to ensure the progression in the team skills and to a lesser extent the individual skills we had come to expect at Colts level. The promise that the A side showed in the pre-season training was not realised and as a result they finished the season well below expectation. The necessary pattern to our play had not developed and we played in many ways the same style of

rugby that we had started with.

Our first game saw us play Radley (lost 33-0). With one week coaching behind us we narrowly lost to Uppingham 22-21 and were looking competitive. Bloxham proved to be easier (W34-8) and Abingdon (lost 23-18) stole the show. A win against Stamford (22-18) that should have been much more indicated that we still had not established a dominant pattern to our game. It was following a defeat by a strong John Cleveland College that our next victory was obtained. Mill Hill, as always, were a huge side and we had recently lost Jamie Peel through injury playing for the first XV. An 8-7 win was fought hard for and deserved. Pangbourne, the following week, took advantage of poor tackling and lack of determination and beat us 40-10 and St. Edwards followed with a bigger result. St. Edward's school, in the last two seasons, has been the key fixture of the season and has been a good indicator of progress for the colts. Indeed we have held them to close scores recently. This could have been the side to have beaten them. The season finished on a slight high as Magdalen College School (W17-0) were overturned in the second half with Ed Lake now playing in the centre instead of the second row! He found the going tough as a centre and bowed out with suspected concussion late in the first half. Marcus Williams captained with determination throughout and led by example as he moved from the back row to centre. Tom Oliver, when focussed, saved the team on a number of occasions with his cover tackling.

COLTS B XV

Colts B team: Played 8 Won 7

It went to the last game before a disrupted B team were eventually beaten by St. Edwards away from home. The boys enjoyed immensely a successful season that has not been seen at Stowe for a long time.

Uppingham (26-17), Bloxham (31-17), Abingdon (20-7), Stamford (24-17), John Cleveland College (24-10), Mill Hill (41-0), Pangbourne (19-7) all fell by the wayside as the B team stormed on under the careful guidance of RTD. Due to injury, it was a weakened side that was eventually defeated by St. Edwards (0-24). Henry Coram James, Hugo Wilson, Ian Grant Peterkin and Ed Gambarini were key figures throughout with Sam Musker showing good determination and high work rate. Charles Tull and Sean Harker Figell both improved significantly with Tom De Serville playing for the A XV with greater aggression. The victorious B team rounded off their season with a dinner in the pavilion where they were kind enough to invite the A team to join them.

The County season went very well with Jamie Peel, Angus Elphinstone, James Kayll all playing for the Buckinghamshire side. Jamie showed promise and could have gone much further had he not been injured playing for the first XV. Angus did well to reach the South West trial and learnt very quickly as he played each game. My thanks to Ray Dawson, Tony McDaid, Steve Taylor, Callum and Mark for their help and support during the season.

SHM

JUNIOR COLTS A XV

The season started with two difficult matches against Radley and Uppingham. We succumbed to heavy losses which deflated our self-belief badly. A lot of work was put

into training and progress was being made but lack of confidence meant we didn't take chances of victories against Bloxham, Abingdon and Royal Latin. We managed to put good performances together to beat Mill Hill, Chesham High and Akeley Wood easily but there were more severe tests to come against some extremely impressive sides.

The team should be commended for their continued efforts throughout the season and there was tremendous improvement in individuals and team play. Special mention should be given to W. Hook, J. Zaldua, P Gambarini and H Trelawny for their input on and off the pitch.

RCS

JUNIOR COLTS C XV

Nineteen ninety seven has been a very encouraging season for the Junior Colts C XV. Unfortunately other schools were not as enthusiastic as we were at this level and cancellations left us with only three fixtures. The first, extremely early, fixture was against Uppingham who due to far more practice than ourselves beat us 37-8, although Mark Harper's try was as good as any they managed to score. We then had a very close match against Mill Hill and with a try from Ilya Temnianski and some solid tackling from Mark Mackay-Lewis were unlucky to lose 15-7. Then came our last and toughest game of the season against St Edwards. This was by far our best performance of the season and we soaked up immense pressure in the first half to be only 5-0 down at the turn around. This was my proudest moment of the season as coach as the boys were really playing some superb rugby and giving one hundred and ten per-cent. We didn't manage to turn the score around in our favour in the second half as St Edward's eventually proved too strong, but I couldn't have asked anything more from the boys. The final score was 25-0.

It was nonetheless a very enjoyable season with awards going to George Simms, Ross Griffin and John Harris for team commitment, Richard Wolfe for most improved player and Mark Mackay-Lewis was the overall Junior Colts C XV player of the season for 1997.

PSJD

YEARLINGS A XV

All the Yearlings rugby sides battled hard against tough opposition many of whom do two-terms rugby. Although the results were not impressive there were certainly many encouraging moments, especially where the Yearlings A notched up two wins in the last three games against Sponne

15-12 and Northampton B S 19-10. The Yearlings rounded off the season with an Inter-County Sevens Tournament at Canford School.

In the Yearlings Inter-House Sevens semi-finals Chatham beat Cobham 33-5 and Walpole beat Bruce 43-0. Not surprisingly Walpole were the winners beating Chatham 14-0 in the final.

IM

7-A-SIDE RUGBY

The Senior Sevens players entered the County and Windsor Sevens Tournaments in preparation for the Rosslyn Park National Competition. In the County Tournament held at Stowe the Senior 'A' team lost to The Royal Latin School and Dr Challoners who were the eventual 'A' Group Competition winners.

The Senior 'B' team won all its matches comfortably to lift the trophy. On their way they beat Akeley Wood, Dr Challoners and The Royal Latin School.

In the Windsor Sevens Stowe got off to a very good start beating St Olave's 25-10, however, the team were unable to repeat that performance and lost to Bryanston and Gresham's.

The Rosslyn Park National Sevens Tournament was a great occasion and was thoroughly enjoyed by the boys, staff and parents. The team was very competitive but lacking in pace and considering the make-up of the squad the results were very encouraging.

The squad included:-

Buddy Wheatley (Capt), Luke Woods, Tim Pearce, David Knowles (V. Capt), Alex Heath, James McDonagh, James Neary, William Keeler, Edward Dobbin.

RESULTS

Stowe	12 v 17	St Paul's
Stowe	17 v 15	Duke of York's
Stowe	14 v 26	Bryanston
Stowe	29 v 19	Caterham

Played	Won	Lost	For	Against
4	2	2	72	77

The Colts Sevens players came closer still to qualifying for the last stages of the Rosslyn Park National Sevens winning two of their three games against Reading (45-0) and Torquay (29-17). Unfortunately the opening game against Haberdashers Aske's was lost 12-17.

IM



POLO

Again the number of Stoics playing Polo has risen. This term 25 stoics had lessons or played polo. For the first time we have had two teams playing all Summer. Apart from playing in the Kirtlington Polo Club chukkas, we have played in two tournaments and will be playing in the Schools Championships on Sunday 6th July.

Both teams have played 4 matches and only won 1 each but it must be remembered that we have a large number of very young players and are looking forward to several years of increasingly good Polo.

1997 was a successful year for polo in the school starting with players going to the West Wycombe Arena polo playing school and two teams playing at the Inglesham Arena tournament. By the summer we had 25 Stoics signed up for lessons or playing club chukkas at Kirtlington and for the first time had two official teams playing all through the summer term and both went to the National Schools polo championships at Windsor. Stowe A team started off in great style beating old rivals Bloxham despite a 3 goal advantage against us and then winning the 'Plate' in the subsidiary tournament, beating Cheltenham Ladies soundly as the Headmaster and Mrs Nichols arrived at Windsor. The B team beat the Harrow B team but otherwise had a hard season.

We have five Stoics and two others going to South Africa to play at Easter against South African schools. In the summer there is a trip to Ireland for 8-10 learners with Major Hugh Downey who is a very highly recommended teacher.

1998 so far looks very promising with a 2 goal team – the highest Stowe has ever had and a 6 goal B team, and we would all like to thank MAC for all the effort he has put into making polo at Stowe work as it does.

SAM TYLER

SAILING

The sailing team achieved some excellent results in their matches despite severe difficulties. In particular, the ever-increasing pressure of public examinations in the summer term makes it almost impossible to maintain a consistent membership of the team or undertake practices with all present. Nevertheless, the team did well to win half its matches, including those against Oundle and Rugby. In the Midland Championships of the British Schools Dinghy Racing Association competition, the team came third in its league and reached the quarter-finals of the Rose Bowl Competition before the rest of the event was washed out by the weather. It was good to see some effective team tactics in operation before the end of the season, although light winds in the final race against a staff team gave a mainly inconclusive, but highly disputed, result. Thanks, as always, are owed to DWJ and SGAH who helped when they could.

HOUSEMATCHES: Bruce

HELMSMAN'S TANKARD: Simon Oldridge

JUNIOR PENNANT: Sammy Barratt

SCHOOL MATCHES: Radley lost 0-2, Magdalen College School cancelled, Rugby won 3-0, Bloxham won 2-1, Oundle won 3-0, St Edward's lost 0-2, Uppingham lost 0-2, Total: won 3, lost 3, cancelled 1.

Team: Peter Mackay-Lewis, Simon Oldridge, Conor Ramsden, Hugo Gordon Lennox, Michael Hyslop, Daniel Ferris; James Watson, James Clark, Nicholas Mullineux, Bertie Marsh, Charles Sargeant (reserves). Colours have been awarded to: Peter Mackay-Lewis Simon Oldridge and Conor Ramsden.

MJB



SCULLING

Although sculling is classed as a 'minor' sport, it attracted close to one hundred participants again last summer, and the eleven-acre was once again covered with 'athletes'. Due to the restricted space, not everybody could scull at the same time, but thanks to help from Mr Vernon, Mr Henderson, and the Revd Mr Hastie-Smith, we were able to scull four afternoons a week, and cater for just about everybody. This year the house matches were held in the form of a one day Sunday Regatta. Unfortunately, the full length of the lake could not be used: Firstly, one end was totally over grown with weed, and secondly, somewhat more worryingly, a pair of swans had decided to make the eleven-acre the place to rear their young, and they did not take too kindly to us sculling past them, in fact they attacked us if ever we strayed too close. Despite this, a course was marked out, and Mr Henderson manned the lifeboat kindly lent to us by the CCF. Ed Gambarini won the shell class just managing to beat Willam van Lynden in the finals, the toothpick class was won by James Sleater, and the clinker class by Mark Worrall.

The team (Ed Gambarini, Alex McMicking, James Sleater, Jamie Cara-Southey, Jerome Starkey, Suzy Rasch and Willam van Lynden) attended the Coates Water Regatta. This was essentially to gain experience, as we were unprepared for the 800m course having only been able to train in 300m lengths, and none of us managed to score. The season ended however with four of us (Alex McMicking, Willam van Lynden, James Sleater and Jerome Starkey) sculling from Oxford to London. The journey took four days to complete and was carried out using the two best singles, and the double scull. All of us had finished public exams, and so made the trip at the end of June. Setting off from St Edwards' boathouse at 7am, we finished the first day at Watford, drenched by hours of rain. Spirits were low, and when we began the next day, the weather didn't look like improving. Then, a few miles from Pangbourne, we encountered our first problem; the double was split, and taking on water. Armed with mobile phones, we agreed to meet the support vehicles at the next lock, before setting off at full speed.

Fortunately, the Pangbourne College boat club was almost adjoining the lock and they agreed to help us. A few hours later, a little bit of glue and some elephant tape applied, we set off again (the split wasn't that bad!) and thankfully the bad weather improved. The next day, we passed Henley, just a few days before the regatta week, calling in briefly at Leander,

for coffee with Matt Pinsent. We stopped at Eton, and then at Shiplake, where we were very kindly allowed to leave our boats over night. Eventually, at about four o'clock on Sunday 29th June, hands raw and blistered, muscles screaming for a break, we made it to Mosely Boat Club, Hampton Court -the one hundred mile course completed. Over the four days, Willam (captain) fell in once, but Alex managed to improve on that, leaving his boat in favour for the Thames twice. The whole expedition was only made possible by the constant parental support, driving from lock to lock after us for which we are very grateful.

We have purchased a new shell from Peterborough RC, giving us six racing boats in all, and the boats we have already were 'serviced' over the summer holidays. The new year has meant new appointments, with the departure of Willam, Charlie Bell, and Ed Taylor, Alex McMicking has been appointed secretary, James Sleater vice-captain, and Jerome Starkey captain. All three received colours, as did Ed Gambarini. With new leadership, and a new boat, hopefully we will be performing even better next season than we have done already!

JEROME STARKEY

SOCCER

The 1996/97 season was not particularly successful in terms of results – apart from the Douai 6-a-side competition, the team won one, drew one and lost two of their other matches. That said, there were plenty of gritty performances, especially in the final rousing game of the season when Rugby were beaten 2-1 on their own soil.

The highlight of the year, though, was the visit of the famous Corinthian Casuals in February. They played some wonderful, open football and beat our boys 4-2. The return match is eagerly awaited.

AKM



SQUASH

In all year groups Stowe had one of its most successful seasons for many years. The hard work that the players put into their practice sessions and their will to win paid off. All the squads had strength in depth.

Results

	Played	Won	Lost
1st V	13	8	5
Colts	12	10	2
J Colts	4	3	1

Squads (*denotes colours) 1st: R A Harris*, H J Speir*, C W Bingham*, C D Woods*, W J E Keeler*, T J Dixon, W J P Watson, A M Lockhart-Smith, J N Mehta.

Colts: B B Scholfield, M D Webb, W M Ingram, R D C Plyer, W R Browning, T W Radmall.

J Colts: H I Watson, A R Bowman, T F Kemble, J Champrabhap, T R A McLaughlan, E J Clark

School Knockout Competition Seniors:

R A Harris beat H J Speir 3-1

Juniors: H I Watson beat A R Bowman 3-0

MJH



SWIMMING

The Swimming Inter-House Competition hails the beginning of the Stowe swimming calendar on Sunday, 17th January 1997, with the swimming team not forming properly until the summer of 1997. The swimming Gala was as usual a highly competitive affair with Grafton House achieving an almost white-wash of the trophies, with only Chatham Seniors stemming the tide. There were some very notable performances from several individuals; Damian Hoare winning both the 100m Freestyle and the 50m Butterfly; Will Skidmore winning the 50m Freestyle Sprint and the Senior Individual Medley. Georgina Rolt, the Girls Captain swam particularly well to take the Thomas Hobbes Ind. Medley and the Geh-Spencer Trophy for individual achievement, she was first in the Freestyle and the Butterfly. Other trophy winners were Sami Robertson for the Intermediate Ind. Medley and Hugo Wilson the Junior Ind. Medley.

Grafton House were the overall winners gaining the Junior, Intermediate and Relay Cups. The Girls competition was won by Lyttelton.

With comparatively little time to form up, the swimming matches are always well contested and Summer 1997 was no exception. This season saw Stowe convincingly beating Uppingham and Rugby, also Felsted, Oakham and Merchant Taylor's at Senior level. The team of the season was undoubtedly the Girls'. Led by a very enthusiastic and dedicated Georgina Rolt, they were unbeaten until the last match of the season when they struggled with illness and unavailability to even raise a team to compete at Rugby. The Stowe Girls Relay record was broken at the Harrow Six Schools Gala when they came first in 2.19.47.

On Friday, May 9th 1997 a boys and girls Relay team went to Crystal Palace for the Public Schools Championships for the third consecutive year; it is a long day but well worth the experience of swimming in such grand surroundings and in an Olympic 50 metre pool. The Girls team was 24th out of 34 in the Freestyle Relay, failing to achieve anywhere near their best time; the boys struggled with the 4x 100m.

It was the second year of the Inter-House Waterpolo Competition, held in the second part of the summer term. This year it was won by Temple House who beat Walpole and Grafton in the semi-final and the final respectively. An inaugural competition was held for the Girls and Lyttelton were the winners of the shield.

Colours were awarded to: Mark Pearson, Vladislav Raimov, Shelley Wisner, Katherine Bruce, Matthew Cumani.

Next year's Captains are Jonathan Hyam & Vice.Capt. Will Skidmore, Shelley Wisner & Vice.Capt. Katherine Bruce. Many thanks to all those staff who have enthused the swimmers throughout the year, and thanks to Graham Porter for maintaining the pool and surrounds to such a high standard.

DCB



Careers

TESCO MARKETING DIRECTOR SPEAKS AT STOWE



Members of the Lower Sixth were privileged on February 12th to hear about the world of Marketing straight from the mouth of someone who's the best in the business. Tim Mason, Old Stoic, came to speak at one of the regular series of careers seminars held in the spring and summer terms which are designed to give Stoics an insight into many and varied aspects of the world of work.

He spoke in the Music Room which was a return to his roots, since when Mr Mason was in Bruce (71-75), this had served as his House Room. Things certainly change!

Having ensured that all of us had a clearer idea of what 'marketing' really means, the audience was invited to consider some of the real decisions and interests faced by a product manager. It seemed clear that managing the many aspects of 'the marketing mix' (product, price, place & promotion...) could be fascinating as well as hard work. Mr Mason let us in on some of the gritty truth of the world of advertising and recommended that those thinking of going into advertising should gain some wider experience of marketing in general.

Students were left with plenty to think about when Mr Mason, who was voted Marketeer of the Year in 1997 by the Marketing Society, discussed both his rise to the top and his

advice to those for whom this line of work seemed appealing. Rather surprisingly perhaps to some, he warned against the allure of Business related degrees and recommended 'purer' subjects, adding that high academic achievement was de rigeur these days. The ability to persuade and to get on well with people was important. He also spoke from personal experience about the value of work experience before attempting to apply for that first post. He himself had worked in a PR company, before gaining invaluable wide ranging training at Unilever.

Mr Mason has certainly found a satisfying career since his time at Stowe, where he remembers fondly, among other memories, his time as Chairman of the Corkscrew Society and his enjoyment of athletics. Many pupils were left planning their own futures as a result of his visit and I'm sure that in the not so very far future some of them will be returning to Stowe to give future pupils the benefits of their advice.

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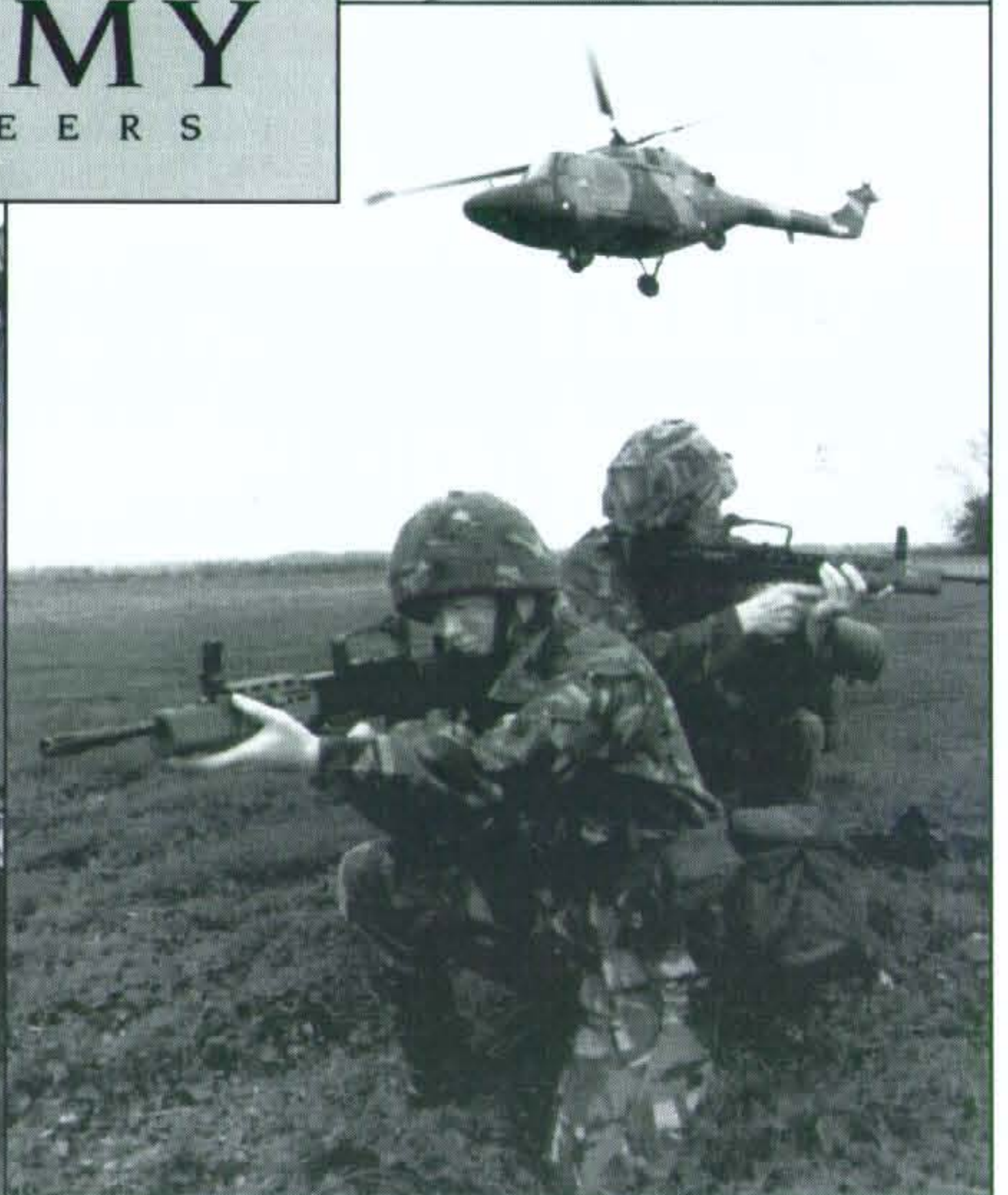
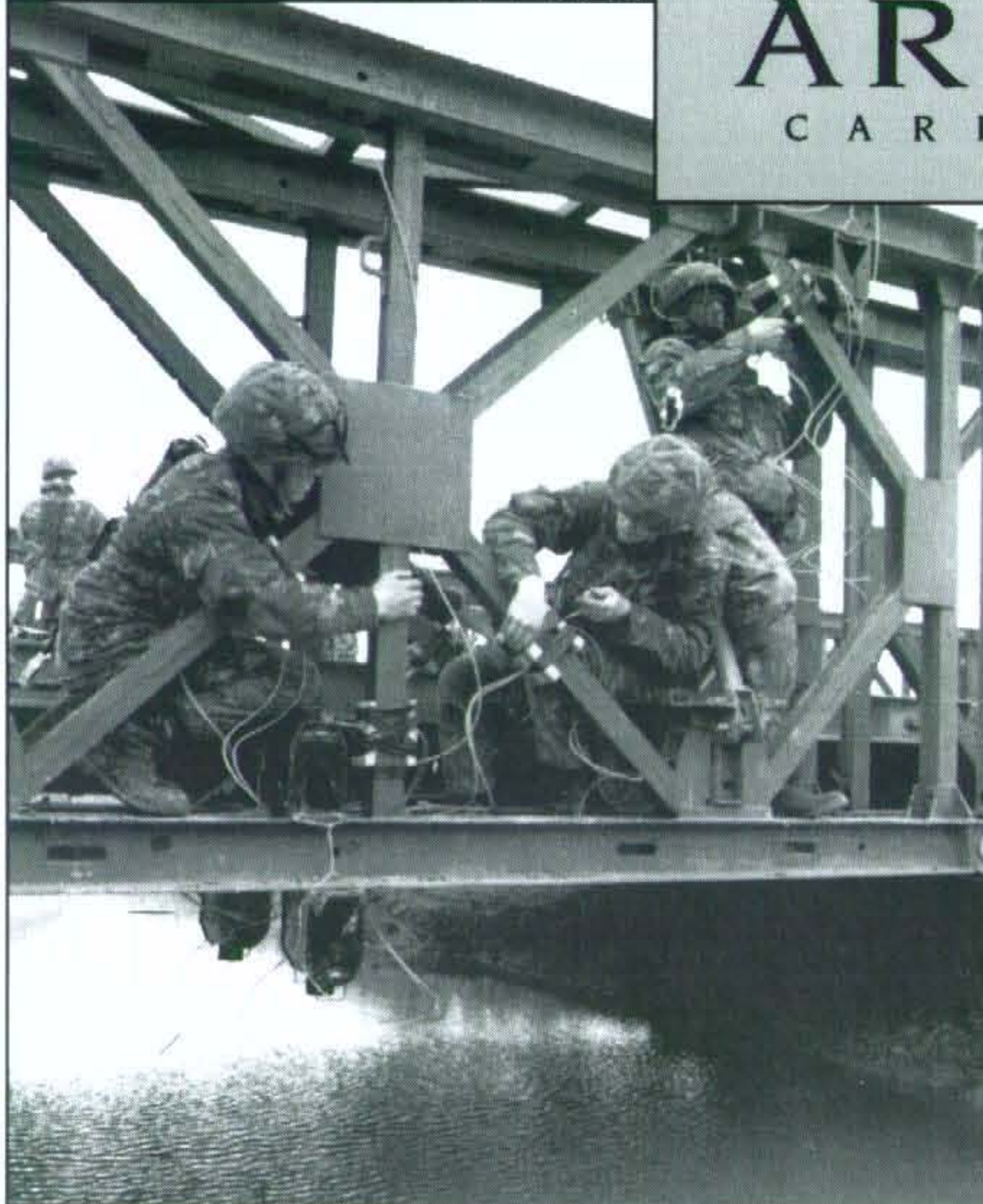
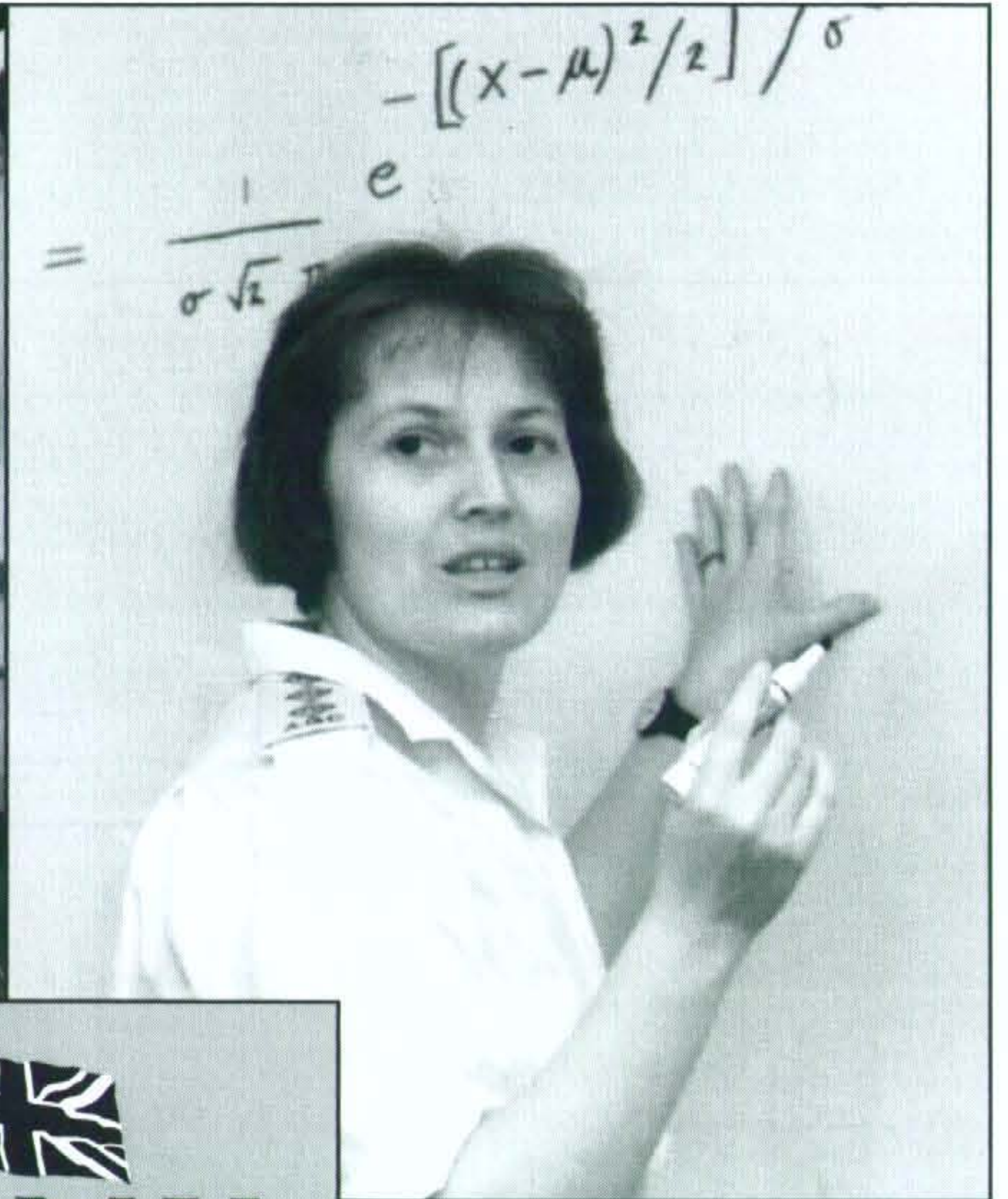


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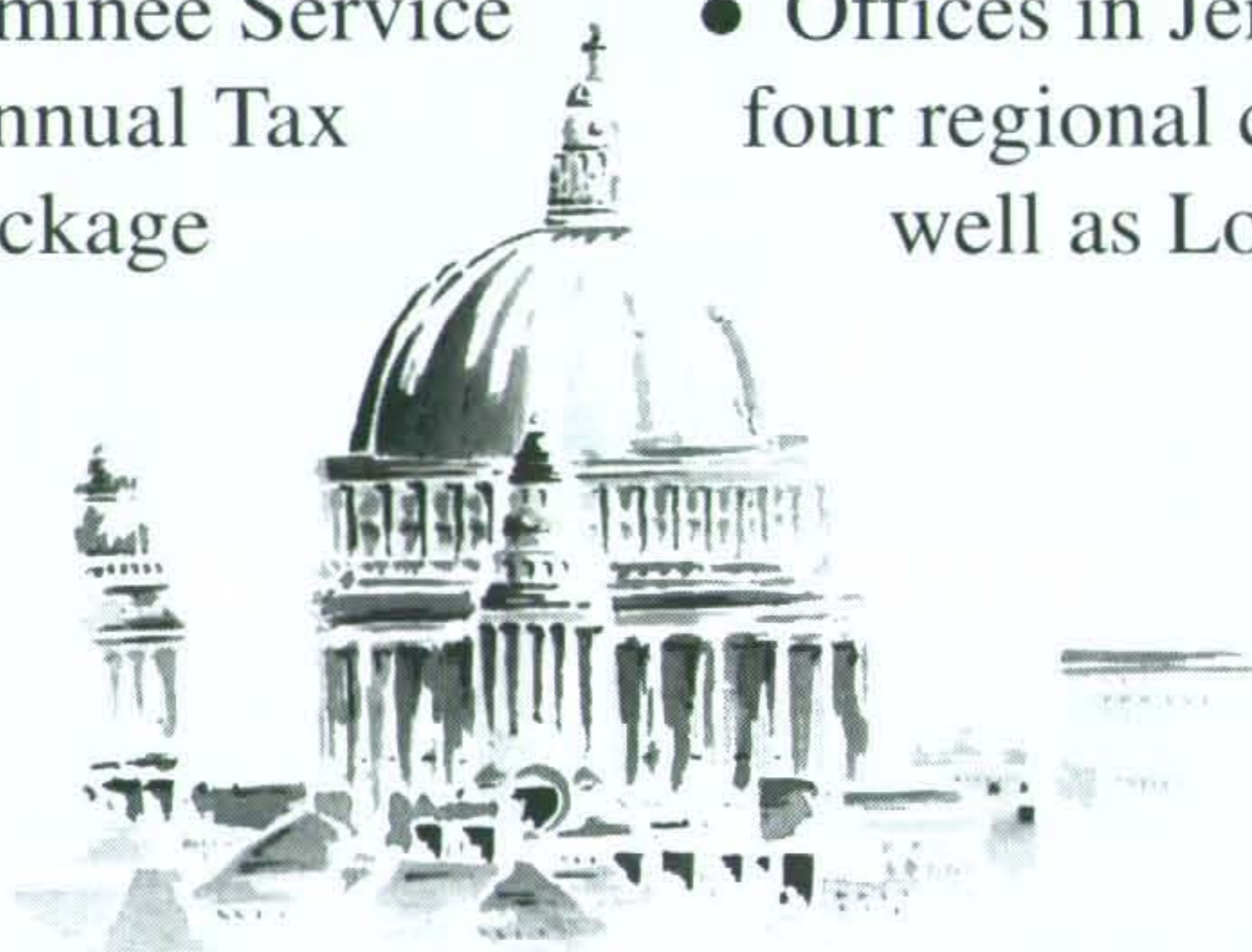


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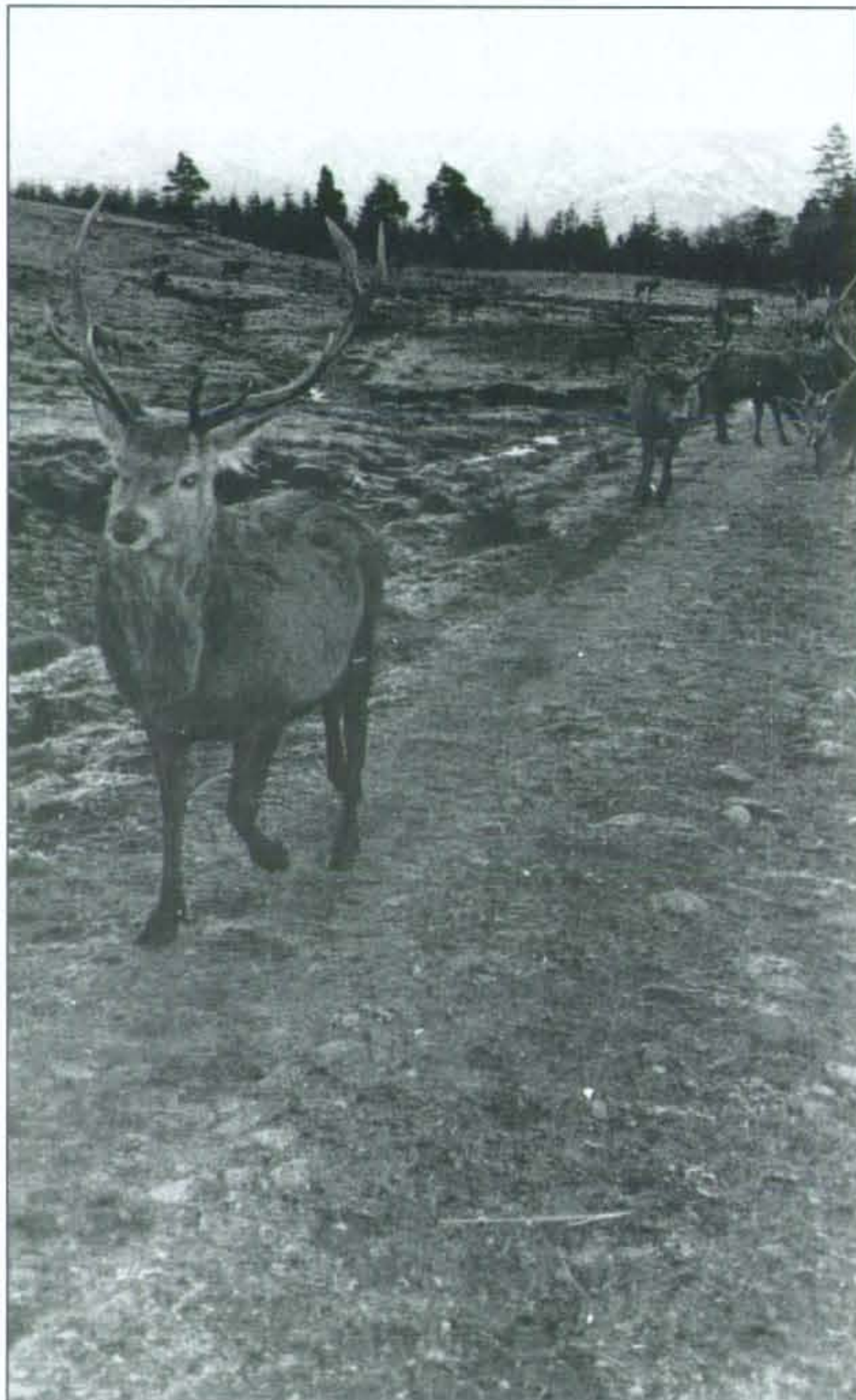


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The Roxburgh Prize for Verse

The theme for the 1997 Roxburgh Prize for Verse was Metropolitan Musings. There was a wonderfully varied and imaginative range of poems in response to this subject. Many of them are reproduced here, together with poems on other themes. Admirable intelligence was shown frequently in conception and handling of image and form. (As always the author's year group is that when they wrote the poem, often a year having elapsed since.)

METROPOLITAN MUSINGS

*The streets, the lights, the usual noises,
Some weird shapes and people's faces,
Some kiss, some beg, some drive Rolls Royces,
Most just go by and leave no traces.*

*Chaotic life so full of order
And blind motion of every kind,
It's like a magic tape recorder:
Just plays, can't pause and can't rewind.*

*The cars, the dust, polluted city,
The smell of which is yet so dear,
The high-street shops and wall graffiti
Combine so beautifully here.*

*The lights are bright, the cars are loud,
I walk and stop; I live, I'll die;
There'll always be another crowd,
And someone else to watch cars go by.*

*But I feel no unease or sorrow:
I feel immortal while I'm here,
I'll come again this way tomorrow
To feel the breath of motion near.*

*I've lost my way – I feel no worry,
The lights go blurred – it looks so great,
And all I feel – the monstrous glory
That sleepless streets here radiate.*

*And I don't think or look ahead,
I might be lost, confused, unsure.
I want no help or cure – instead,
I'll walk ahead to feel secure.*

ALEXEI SOROKIN (V)
JUNIOR ROXBURGH PRIZE WINNER

LONDON LIVES

*'Residence of Oscar Wilde 1884-1895'.
House next door residence of Christopher Fallow
1983 – 1997. Where his wife had died.
She always found Oscar a nuisance
A neighbour who far outstayed his welcome,
With visitors who mistook the bloody plaque
And came to see Christopher instead
(Notorious in his own way
Down the 'Cricket and Bat')
She always swore one of them had to go,
Him or her. Too much bloody fuss,
He was only a sodding writer.
"You can put a plaque up when I die,
Christopher. For putting up with the bastard for so long."
The house remains plaqueless.
But the epitaph is kind
(Though the engraver said that to mention tolerance
Might not give the right impression
Of their childless marriage.)*

*Oscar's house preserved with care.
Christopher's had a touch of paint
A few Christmases back, for the in-laws –
Nearly completely covered the rot in the toilet.
He still cleans the doorknob by habit
On every religious festival (including Bank Holidays)
In case they pop in for a cuppa.
They died four years ago, one after the other.*

*Saturday he gets out for a while
(Oscar's busiest visiting day.)
Goes to see Nelson on top of that pillar.
Remembers what his wife said:
"Can't see his face it's so bloody high up.
Shame – he was meant to be quite a stud in his time."*

*Drops in at the pub afterwards,
'So old it used to be frequented by Henry VIII.'
(Now frequented each day by Christopher, and when he's
Been in there too long tells the barman that he should
Put up a sign for him. He's a much better customer.)
Finally makes his way home, stopping only for fags,
Bought at a shop which sells postcards
That tell the world about 'Beautiful, Historic London'.
There's no-one to welcome him in,
But he's never late. You never know
Where she might be watching him from.*

*In the bustling, heaving core of the city
Christopher continues to live surrounded by ghosts.*

SABRINA WOLFE (MVI)
SENIOR ROXBURGH PRIZE WINNER

DOORWAY MUSINGS

*I mused upon the world around me
Concrete high, like some mountain scree.
I mused upon the toxic filth and litter
Choking the city with a smell so bitter.*

*Hmm, I mused,
The rat race carried on.
Ah, I mused,
And life tumbled on.*

*I mused on the throng of people, the crowd
Who flowed throughout this world so loud.
I mused on the traffic, the tangle of cars
Looking like things beamed down from Mars.*

*Hmm, I mused,
The rat race carried on.
Ah, I mused,
And life tumbled on.*

*I mused upon what I did, curled up
In a doorway, wrapped like a newborn pup.
People walked past, avoiding eye-contact
Too busy musing upon some new business pact.*

*Hmm, I mused,
The rat race carried on.
Ah, I mused,
And life tumbled on.*

DAVID WIDDICK (IV)

LONDON SONG

*We rode atop a London bus,
To better see the view
Of Tower Bridge and Monument,
Just like the tourists do.*

*They come to here from everywhere,
By plane then road or train,
To see the city's many sights,
And then go home again.*

*Many languages I heard,
From French to Japanese,
As many a queue we waited in,
"This way now, tickets please!"*

*When we'd passed through all the queues
And there was no more waiting,
Everything from there on in
Was free and fascinating.*

*With visual aids and commentaries
We learned about our past;
How Kings and Queens ruled o'er the lands
Of England's empire vast.*

*Outside along the River Thames
The boats plied up and down
While Marathon runners filled the streets
Of sunny London Town.*

ANTHONY STORMONT (III)

LET'S BE FRIENDS

*When circumstance brought two together
Like colliding leaves in an autumn breeze,
Friends were made,
Were happy:
We spoke of nothing
And laughed at less,
And all the time we smiled.
Just being there, at once together,
Those leaves were set ablaze;
Friendship scorched for something more
In a brief flurry of amber flame,
That warmed, but soon went cold.
Now,
Smiles are few, and laughter rare,
Circumstance our enemy.
We meet;
Chance encounters, averted eyes,
A crying man inside.
That precious time is lost forever
Because when loving starts, all else ends,
Whoever said, "Let's be friends."*

JEROME STARKEY (LVI)

METRO-MUSE

*The tall, the small, the dark alley-ways,
Home to many – drunks, strays, exciting escapades...
And outside the screaming of cars, the flashing of lights,
A juggler grins by, swanning along in pink tights.*

*City bustles, the grey clouds swirl,
Lost in my travels I pass another poster: Missing Girl.
The noxious, the searing, the happiness all in one,
The city – fun for some, for others the pain has just begun.*

*The sun goes down, night sky high,
Street dealing on corners, people think they can fly.
Night clubs ablaze, reflected in glass walls that shine,
People move in droves to dance, drink and dine.*

*Morning ascends, the moon is denied,
Parks open up, pigeons swoop and glide,
The city smog rises, the sky-line defied,
People live on, ignoring those that died.*

ALISTAIR LOCKHART SMITH (MVI)

A METROPOLITAN'S MUSE

*Hello, God, can you hear me?
It's relieving to know that you're there.
I'm here to ask for a little advice
And I fear you're the last one to care.
My job, as a Bishop, I see it, Lord,
Is "to nurture belief in one God",
But the method you take to order your land
Comes over to me as quite odd.
I tend to the wants of a city,
Providing for Manchester's needs,
But despite my continued attempts to convert
All are too busy to believe.*

*It's not that I mind them employed,
I'm pleased they're not wasting their time,
But too few of your flock have legitimate jobs,
Preferring more profitable crime.
A district, shall I say, that's – in need?
A clergyman's "NO-GO" zone,
Moss Side's a place where poverty rules
And Police don't dare enter alone.
I fear for that desperate brigade,
Born in such poor condition.
I'd like very much to impress my belief,*

*But I know they'd reject our religion.
What really goes over my head, Lord,
Is the way that you've shared out the wealth.
In contrast to Moss Side there's the Cheadleholme folk
Who've had more than their fill of "Good Health".
Religion's too "low on the agenda"
For mansions with white picket fence,
Where thoughts of the poor and religious belief
Don't come close to a Mercedes-Benz.
Political views are crucial,
And evening parties galore.
A cushy job that reaps in the cash,
For each respected family of four.*

*But my quest will continue regardless
To make each individual's soul free.
Now I must catch the train to go home, Lord,
To Cheadle for afternoon tea.*

SIMON CREEK (IV)

CITY NIGHT

*I wake to the neon glow on my sleep-soaked body
Like a character in a bad film
Making me feel cheap.*

*Intrusive noise above numbs me.
The forever-crying girl is rocked to sleep
By lover's angry shouts.*

*Cold seeps up from my mattress, absorbed by skin.
I rise, my only protection a blanket,
Looking out whilst prisms of water hit uncurtained
Windows leaving their tear-stained shadows
On my unwashed face.*

*The heavy breathing of the vehicles drifts over me.
The smell of industry, stale take-aways and
Drizzle make me drunk.
Dim sky, grey with mundane thoughts lulls,
Hides me from continual din. Pedestrians
Look bleakly for an answer, obstructed
By the throng, each a symbiote of the city
Needing it, it needing.*

*My feet are no longer lost in the cold floor.
I rush to my soft sanctuary, colours
Flare above me. Enshelled by their warm strength
I slip into repose.*

POLLY VICCARS (LVI)

DAYLIGHT

*An ashy haze clouds the chimney tops –
affluent pinnacles piercing the heights,
their filthy effluent mixing with the skies.
These pawns, figures of endeavour, a canopy
shrouding the city, smoke on.*

*Glass windows reflect the light's advances
out of a still summer day.
By night, beacons of progress imprint
smears of light throughout the starry darkness.*

*Inside, people pass by.
Cars insulate lines of pilgrims fleeing
on to cloistered rooms.
Red lights momentarily stem the flow;
wheels and minds shriek and skid to a halt.*

*Painted borders line the streets,
a sea of traffic pines for movement.
Pigeons perch on precipices;
flocks gather to feed around a central axis.*

*Beyond cemented surrounding boundaries,
a car breaks free. Pace slows.
The sun's light faltering, it heads for home.
Bodies fill their houses; noise clusters;
light returns.*

ROY CHAMBERS (LVI)

BALLAD OF CASTLE HILL

*Little girl begins to weep
counting all her useless sheep –
eyes open, blood seeps,
losing cotton candy sleep.*

*Daddy waves goodbye,
another night. Another sigh,
thoughts begin to fly.
Another woman. Another lie.*

*Mummy feebly sips her tea.
Counts the time. Half past three.
With brandy added, lost
dreams won't break free.*

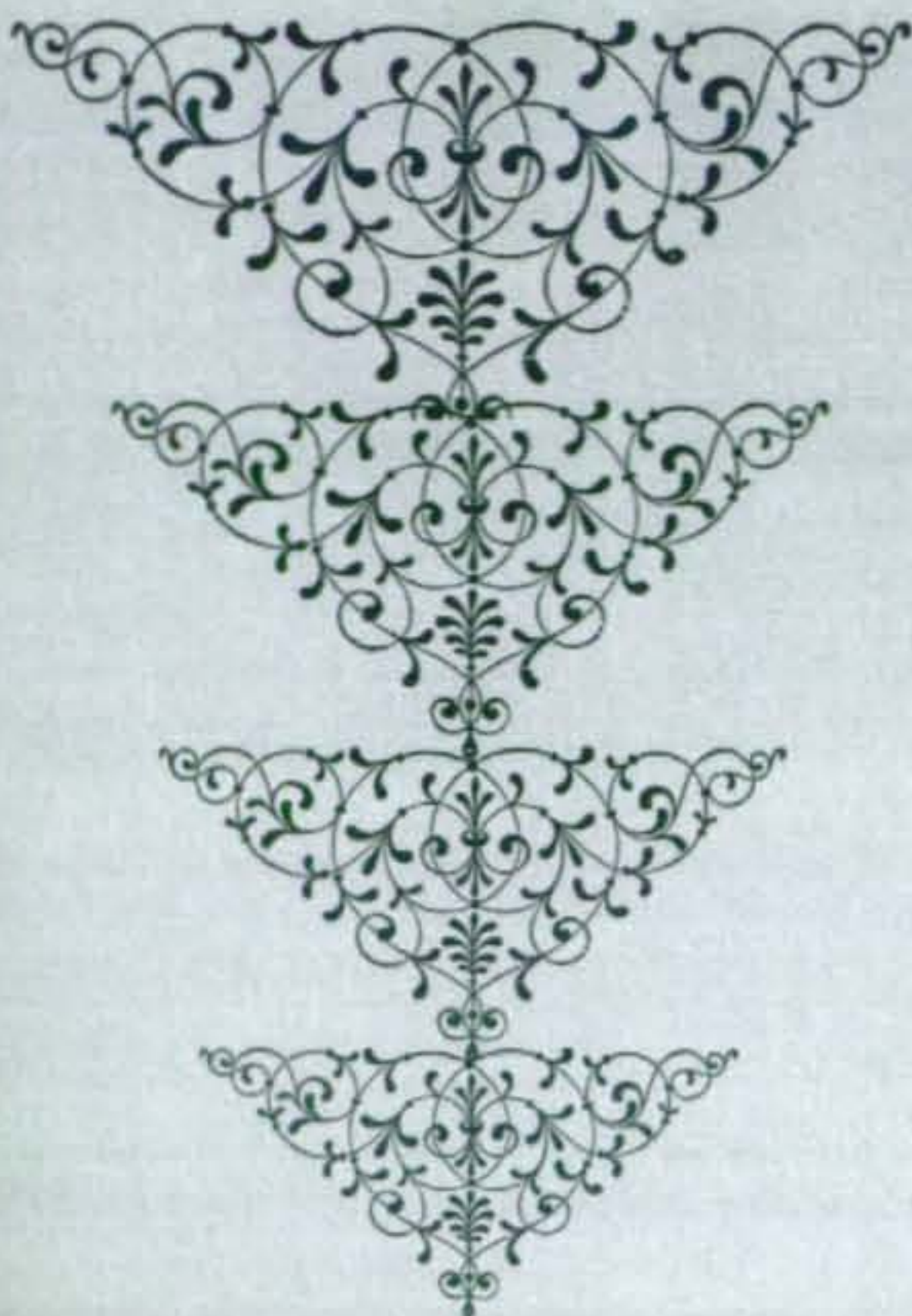
*Little girl turns into whore,
another man, what a bore.
Learnt the family law,
she's now left – even score.*

*Daddy alone in the house,
curtain falls, actor bows,
quiet as a door-mat mouse.
No more wife. No more rows.*

*Mummy buried six foot under
Forever in her drunken slumber.
Piano plays another number
burying discarded lumber .*

*Little girl, no more dreams,
fallen out of worn out seams.
Was a member of the team-
one more bottle of Jim Beam .*

NADINE TALLALA (MVI)

**LIFE**

*Fickle passions lead my life,
Pledging joy and spawning strife,
Spirits pine inside my heart
Power to blow the world apart.*

*Smiles disguise a hungry soul,
Love and music fill the hole,
Nervous faith may take my hand
Proffers of a promised land.*

*Sex and sinning have their place
Silly lot the human race.
Manic thoughts imbue my head;
Consume my life; I might be dead*

*A heap of bowed and brittle bones,
A six-inch nail, some worn-out stones.
Some sharpened tools, eight pints of blood,
A scraggy mop – assorted crud.*

ROY CHAMBERS (MVI)

**THE METROPOLIS
IN MY MIND**

*New York
Jakarta
The great cities of our lives –
But none of these
Can compare
With the metropolis in my mind.*

*Confusion
Corruption
The habits of our kind –
But all of these
And more exist
In the metropolis in my mind.*

*The buskers
The hawkers
The homeless mother cries;
The empty thoughts
The confused meanings
The metropolis in my mind.*

BEN MCCAREY (IV)

OUR WORLD: A DIALOGUE

*Sleek trunks reaching into the sky
Concrete towers climbing to eternity
Green lusciousness purifying the darkness
Chimney stacks spewing out contaminated filth
A canopy filled with every form of life
Overhead bridges, flyovers, elevated trains
Down below, the undergrowth, thick and alive
A maze of sharp corners and wrong turnings
Lost in the beauty and immensity of nature
Pollution, destruction, depravity and danger
Rivers; virgin water, safe from perversion
Seas and oceans of unmitigated hatred*

*Water droplets fall from the heavens
Receptive curved leaflets guide them to the earth
Acidified rain kills everything it lands on,
The innocent; the dying; no discrimination.*

*I am real. I hold life. I am eternal.
I am here. I bring death. I am growing.*

*Help
Help*

ARMAND DAVID (LVI)

A METROPOLITAN EPISODE

*My train has arrived, my train has arrived,
I spy an old dear with excess baggage.
Necessity survived, opportunity connived,
I guide her onto the carriage.*

*Equal Rights politician from television,
Eyes wandering as fast as the train.
Teeth gleaming at stares of recognition,
Glance halting at the face with a stain.
Hand slides in his pocket.
Grip tightening on his wallet.*

*T-shirt 'Against Cruelty to Animals',
Daughter so prudent and mature;
Passion that knows no walls,
Public re-assured for she is our future.
Her morals solid as feathers,
Her shoes made of leather.*

*Beard, beads, thobe by the book,
Fundamentals for his God-given quest.
Girl doesn't respond to the inviting look,
Girl doesn't enjoy the gaze on her breast.
Tears for his Prophet's nobility,
Leers that violate chastity.*

*My stop has arrived, my stop has arrived,
We draw nearer to my station.
My conspiracy contrived, my hypocrisy revived,
I snatch the old dear's bag and run.*

ALIA BRAHIMI (LVI)



TO EUSTON STATION, PLEASE

*With suitcases I grapple upon my knees,
Touchdown, the lamps turned on: the wire fused
To the underground: but which to choose?
As on a computer keys are now pressed-
Mannequins on automatic, meticulously dressed,
The tube whirrs – it's the morning influx.
Into pounds dribble my Aussie bucks.
Slapped in the face then a feeling of unease*

"To Euston Station, please."

*The dawn's rosy fingers arise into clear sight,
Why am I still hidden from the daylight?
As I begin to creep outside my brain's dome
And into this underground superdrome,
Curious eyes absorb the plastered tile walls
Engrossed within the cosmic coloured waterfall.
A frightened child on Piccadilly Line begins to fly...
Now a woman on a chariot mounting the sky:
Do I belong to grey faces that once ruled the seas?*

"To Euston Station, please?"

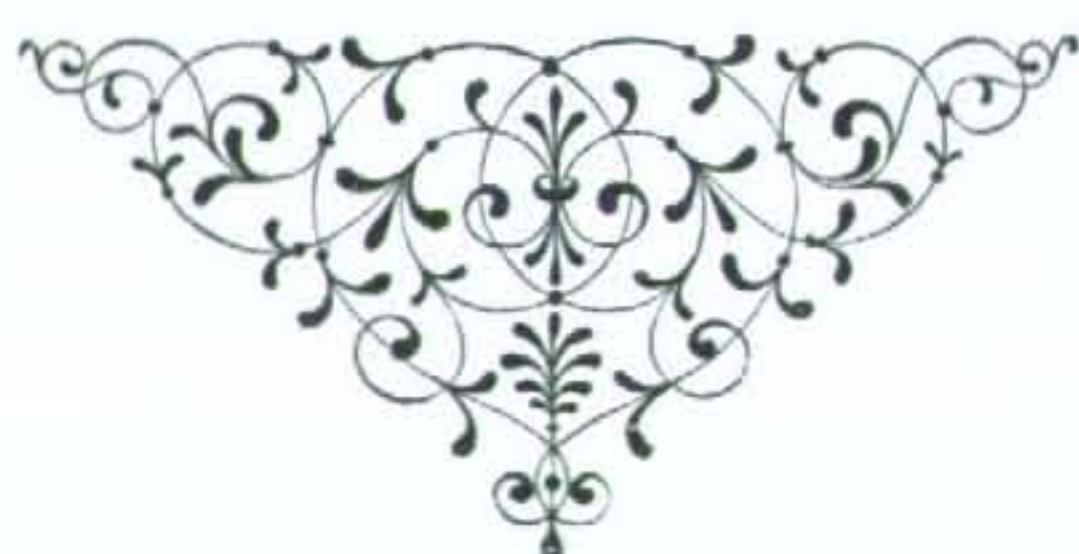
*Into the steel staircases of the sky I infringe
As these metallic cages fill to the brim.
Androgynous masked foundations freeze,
"To Euston Station, please?"*

NADINE TALALLA (MVI)

A DAY IN THE LIFE...

*The sun fills the sky with an immense glow
setting each matchbox house alight
with its brilliant orange stare.
Each tiny window opens its eyes
with a twinkle which reflects onto the next,
spreading the news of another new day.*

*Murmurs echo as the city stirs
and a solitary milkboy begins his monotonous tasks.
A stray cat traces his invisible steps,
softly, cautiously, yet not unnoticed.*



*Doors slam like an eternal drum beat
as businessmen, like an army of ants,
progress to their destinations.
From every corner life stirs
and the city lives once more.*

*The city operates in a domain of its own
with practiced ease in a chaotic world,
a routine of ever-expanding circles,
a giant heart beat which will never die.*

*And as the day closes silence returns
and the sun is extinguished like a flame in the wind,
but the city never sleeps,
not in some unchartered corner,
which is better left unknown.
The people retreat with robotic fluency
And the city rests, a dormant beast.*

ANTONIA STOCKER (LVI)

Gavin Maxwell Essay Prize

The 1997 Gavin Maxwell Essay Prize competition asked participants to write about a personal experience, real or imagined, concluding with the words: Never had the world felt so big or I so small. A Junior prize was not awarded this year, but one can admire and enjoy Armand David's new take on the stranded-on-a-desert-island situation. The other stories range from the historical, through the psychological to the futuristic (and horrific). Each displays a measure of sophistication as well as vividness. (Again, the author's school year is that of composition).

BOUNDED IN A NUTSHELL

The sun was hot on my back, baking me as I lay, face down, in the sand. I'm alive. I'm alive! My hands clenched moist sand as I dragged myself to my knees and thanked God. It was a surprisingly painful exercise; the sea had me. Sand and aches permeated every part of my body. I spat out a mixture of brine, sand and saliva and then began to cough violently. I found that I had tears in my eyes, and, to my surprise, was weeping.

"You all right there?" came a bellow from further up the beach. "Awful storm, wasn't it? And that iceberg, it was something to see."

"Iceberg? We hit an iceberg? In the mid-Pacific? Iceberg? What was he talking about?"

"Yes, I rather think we did," he confirmed.

His thin gray hair blew about in the hot, tropical wind. The sorry remnants of a Hawaiian-batik style shirt clung to him, and he wore the shorts of a colonial explorer. It seemed odd, somehow, almost anachronistic, as if he belonged in the old empire.

"Where are we?" I pulled myself to my feet and walked over to him, where he lay a short distance from me in the shade of a coconut palm.

"My dear fellow, I haven't the faintest idea." He spoke with a pronounced, 'proper' British accent, his voice was deep, resonating and powerful.

"Is this an island?"

"Do you play chess?"

"Chess?"

"What?"

"What?"

"Look – right, all I want to know is: Is this an island?"

"A-one quality Acme desert island, slightly used. Inhabitants: two."

"No one else?" He shook his head sadly.

"Are you sure?" He did not reply this time. "Is there any hope that we will be rescued?"

"My dear fellow –"

Stop calling me your 'dear fellow'. I am not your dear fellow. I thought myself angry, and so I was – perhaps misplaced and caused by frustration.

"O, there is always hope. Hope that miracles will occur. Hope that good will triumph over evil when Armageddon comes. Hope that we will be saved."

"Great. So there's no chance of our being rescued."

"My dear fellow, I'm afraid not."

"What about a signal fire?"

"Signal fire, signal fire, signal fire. Ralph wanted one. Wasn't there a pig's head on a stick? And a lot of buzzing insects. No, no, no flies, no pig, no fire."

I threw my hands up to the sky in exasperation as I began to walk towards a thin line of trees a little way inland. I spun around, trying to take in as much as possi-

ble of my surroundings; sea, sand, ocean in beautiful and bountiful supply. No people.

Skirting round the island, I found nothing noteworthy. This was a desert island in the traditional child's drawing sense: two men, a lump of sand, and a few coconut trees. Later in the day, I returned to the beach and my companion.

"Would you like a doughnut?" he asked.

"You're crazy!"

"No, I'm Drake, John Drake. And you are? Coffee?"

"Christ's sake!"

"Well, Sake, pleased to make your acquaintance. Do you play chess?"

"My name's not Sake, it's Richards, Justin Richards. What's the fixation with chess?" I can, in fact, play chess, with minimal proficiency, but once again, the irregular context in which the question arose made me both curious and a little irritable.

"I take it you don't. Well, Richards, if you can't play chess, can you speak?"

"Speak?" I was completely confused by this stage.

"You know, converse, discuss, parler, sprechen, talk?"

"Is this a trick question, Drake?"

"If a tree falls in the jungle, and no one is there to hear it fall, does it make a sound?"

"I've heard that one before."

"So what's the answer, Richards my boy?"

"I can't remember," I admitted, and then there was a pause; "So, what's the answer?"

"I don't know. But I don't understand why no-one has ever just tape-recorded it to find out." At this stage, I decided to make the best of it.

"Yes – I did, actually do that. I left my tape recorder in the jungle next to a tree that looked like it was going to collapse."

"And what was the result?" asked Drake, genuinely curious.

"I don't know. The tree landed on the recorder and it broke."

A camera panned out from me and I watched myself walk away from the man. Away from the intense, sapping heat into the shelter and security offered by the trees on the edge of the beach. Back in my own skull, I looked out across the ocean. It's endless, spanning the horizon, no land, no ships. Nothing to break the endlessness of the rolling waves.

Water, water everywhere, and so the boards did shrink,

Water, water everywhere, but not a drop to -

"Alone on a desert island, can a man sin?" The old man had crept up on me.

"What?"

"It was entirely hypothetical, Mr. Richards, you needn't worry about my intentions. Well?"

"Well what?"

"If a man is alone on a desert island, can he sin?"

"Well, I can probably arrange for an experiment" I clenched my fists.

"Sorry? Didn't quite get that – the waves, you know, jolly loud."

I slid to the ground, assuming a collapsed position and considered the situation, momentarily oblivious to the old man babbling on insanely. I remember that the mid-Pacific isn't the ideal place to commute from, and as such I am left with limited options. Stay here, talk to the old man between foraging for food and building a shelter like a misplaced Robinson Crusoe, or else, nothing.

"Would you like an apple?" Drake spoke suddenly.

"Apple?"

"Yes, red fruit, sort of ball shaped, very nice."

"Please."

"So would I."

Days passed. The sun flung itself across the sky, which was eternally blue and forbidding. The heat, that was intolerable at first, soon became bearable, and soon after I didn't even think about it. One idea that was lodged in my brain was the thought of rescue. More precisely, the thought of not being rescued. I was young; the idea of spending the rest of my life on a desert island with an old man was not a pleasant one. Drake appeared to share none of my fears.

We'd never spoken about the wreck. I thought about it sometimes, but the storm that had resulted in us being here had been so ferocious that I scarcely remembered anything between pulling on a pair of trousers upon being awoken on the boat and waking up on the beach. It was a cruel interruption to my holiday, such as it was. I had been completing a book on the ship, and due to luck and a little forward planning, I had not lost huge quantities of work. In fact, if I could get back to civilisation, insurance would take care of everything and I would have lost nothing. Pity the same could not be said for the others who had been aboard the ship.

One evening, we sat around a rather smoky fire, created at my insistence, and at first silence reigned. I had grown, in an extremely peculiar fashion, to like the old man. He was slightly insane, but was always in a good mood, which lifted my spirits.

"Are you married?"

"No, not yet." I replied.

"Engaged?"

"No."

"Homosexual?"

"No."

"Ah, waiting for the right woman, then."

"Yup. And yourself?"

"I'm married to the army, the army's my only mistress." This seemed a contradiction.

"So you're a military man."

"No, but I've always wanted to say that. Wife and three kids." He went quiet after this.

The next morning, after a tolerably satisfying night's sleep, I found Drake staring into the cinders with a bemused expression on his face. He began to speak without giving the impression that he had noticed I had woken.

"As I've just been saying, sailing is a tremendous sport." He hadn't been saying, this was a statement from nowhere, but I felt pedantry was unnecessary at this point.

"Really."

"You needn't say really in that fashion, young man. If you don't want to know about it don't be so sarcastic!" He seemed quite hurt, and I suddenly felt quite sheepish.

"Sorry, no sarcasm inten – " but he had already started talking again.

"Out on the open sea, your hands occupied with the steering of this boat across the infinite oceans. The power in your hands as you take this marvel of human engineering – this testimony to human civilisation – to wherever you see fit. Gliding majestically across the uncountable waves, limited only by your imagination." Drake definitely had a way with words, he moulded images with his voice and vocabulary.

"Yes, Richards, sailing is a truly magnificent sport.""

"Do you know a lot about boats, then, Drake?"

"Not a thing. But I do have a good imagination."

Time passed. An itchy growth of hair covered the whole of my face and hope was diminished. Drake seemed no more or less cheerful than when I had first found him on the beach – or perhaps, as when he found me. I have no recollection of seeing him on the boat with the multitudes of children and their mothers who had crowded the boat, but I had always kept pretty much to myself. A wave of nausea rippled through me. All those people dead!

My eyes scanned the horizon as I thought. The ocean seemed endless and empty as ever. What chance was there of –

"A boat!! Look, Drake, a boat!"

I made a frantic scramble for bits of wood and ran into the trees to grab armfuls of dead leaves. Fumbling with my lighter, I eventually managed to create a small inferno, upon which I threw my bedding of green coconut palm leaves. Smoke billowed up in a thick mantle of soot.

I sat down, and pulled Drake down next to me. I was laughing. It was just a matter of time now.

"So, Drake, holiday over, eh?" I noticed now that Drake did not share my glee on sight of the ship.

"Holiday? With the family. Martha and the kids. I promised them. It was fun, too, till the boat sank. I had read them *The Old Man and the Sea* by Hemingway. They thought it was a sad story, but they really wanted to get on a boat and see the sea. See the sea." He chuckled sadly.

"I don't think I'll go back, Richards. I think I'll stay here for a while. Goodbye, Richards."

"Bu –"

"Goodbye, Richards."

"Wait –"

"I said, goodbye, Richards." I sighed.

"Goodbye, Drake."

As I watched him walk into the fruit trees, I understood. For me, this island was small and lonely and I wanted return to civilisation; to people; to life. I was oblivious to the size of the world when I was with the people important to me. But what if I lost the people closest to me? Were I Drake, the world could never have felt so big or I so small.

ARMAND DAVID (LVI)
WINNER OF THE SENIOR PRIZE

MY BROTHER'S ROOM

It was one of those places that take you back in time, whether you wanted to go or not. My parents had always discouraged me from going in here after my brother Ronnie died. I do not remember much of him, only a few sketchy episodes, and only that my parents thought more of him than of me. I clearly remember when we sat at the table and all my father would talk about was football and telling my mother that she had made the meatloaf too dry. Ronnie would be trying to change the subject to the stories that I write. Every time he almost succeeded, my father would change it back with mumblings of: "Writing's not a career; football is...the thrill of the field, not the pen". I can understand why he got excited about Ronnie's football career – he was an A* quarterback that was likely to have been picked for the state side had he not gone into the army, and thus had his accident – but I would have appreciated some attention too.

Ronnie died in a Jeep accident. He was the one who should have lived. He took a ride home in a Jeep that went past; he was only in it for ten seconds – not long enough to realise the driver was drunk. The first corner they took the Jeep flipped into a ditch and bounced. The occupants flipped out and bounced as well, but Ronnie didn't bounce far enough – the Jeep bounced on to him. All the occupants got away with cuts and bruises, except Ronnie who came away in two halves.

I am a small boy, built small – a shortie – who is thirteen and lives in the small, low-density, low-activity town of Vanity in Oregon, USA. It is not a happy life that I lead. Although it is years since Ronnie's death – my parents still have not got over it and I am almost ignored. They feed me, but that is about it.

That day, I carefully placed my elbows on the windowsill; I felt reluctant to do this as though I might disturb something that would send me to Hell and back, even the dust seemed to have its own special place there. I stood there, uncomfortably staring at the garden in front of me. My father cutting the grass, my mother cutting the borders – both like zombies.

I turned around and I cast my eyes over Ronnie's room. I began to recognise some of the things there: his Yankees cap that had Babe Ruth's signature on the peak, the pen he had of a girl in a bikini, that much to my interest fell off when you pressed a button. His guitar. Memories came to me of us all sitting around the radio intently waiting for the DJ to play one of the records by Ronnie and his group – The Vipers – and how great we felt when Ronnie had a guitar solo.

The only thing my father had to say at times like this was: "The harmonica's no instrument, is it Benjamin?" I would have to leave the room to hide the tears.

Looking round the other side of the room and putting the memories of the guitar to the back of my mind, I saw Ronnie's pictures of his girlfriend, Susie. They had been going steady at the time of Ronnie's death. Ronnie's death nearly killed her. She was in therapy for a long time, but now she's over it and is married to some dropout. They have three kids and live in a run-down trailer park. My parents think she should have stayed loyal to Ronnie's grave instead of getting a life, albeit not a good one, and they have not forgiven her.

I saw his khaki water bottle. It was his "souvenir" from boot camp. This brought a lump to my throat as I remember him bending down and saying to me, "When I come back from Fort Douglas you can have a helmet too!"

He never came back from Fort Douglas.

The doorbell rang.

Moving on from the bottle I saw his water-colour book. Picking it up I flicked through it and looked at all the pictures of highly detailed cars. Cadillacs, Pontiacs, Dodges – all the best American cars. I remember one day when the people opposite had family visit in a big old Chevrolet that Ronnie just had to run out and sketch. Later at the dinner table he showed it to all of us and once again my father couldn't stop himself from saying: "Look son, painting's an art. Writing stories is only gonna end you up in a dumpster or a jail cell." The way he could just say things like that and just walk away, I really hated that.

Suddenly the door flung open and Dad's stern face was there.

"What are you doing in Ronnie's room?"

"Oh, just looking," I said, meaning remembering.

"Well don't. Your friends are outside. That group of thieving, lying layabouts..."

"Dad, stop it, they're my friends."

"Some friends. Why couldn't you have friends like Ronnie's? Eh?"

At this point I walked out. I turned around and looked into eight years ago. I brushed away a spasm of remembrance and a snarl of hatred for my father. I went out and grabbed my bike. Just as I was about to go I looked back. There was my father. Dimly lit through the window of my brother's room. He was crying.

DAVID WIDDICK (V)



TWO LANDSCAPES AND DRIPPING WATER

It was to be a long drive, from the north of the country, down to my destination, a reserve south of the Luanguwa region. And my purpose? I don't think that I was that sure at the time, as I was running away from what I didn't want to feel back in the north. Isolation. It was always so arid and dry there, and so unlike anything that I was used to. I longed for some lush vegetation, somewhere green which would give me a moments sanctuary from the incessant heat which even invaded my sleep, such was its oppressive nature, and I thought the South was where this haven lay.

I had heard stories from the locals, none of whom had travelled further than the nearest village, that the South was verdant, and as I drove down the dusty track I wondered if it was not just universal human nature which insisted the grass was always greener on the other side. Surely this too applied to the other end of a country. As I thought, the drive was long, and the dust that we threw up as we rumbled past obscured my vision from the back window; it was appropriate that I could not see where I had come from because the memories were vivid enough, and I could not have coped seeing as well as remembering all that I was leaving behind. I had successfully convinced myself that I all I needed was a break, and I had another 2 months to go so giving up was not an option. No, all that was needed was time to get away, and have a rest...

I lay in a canvas tent, in the shade, with a drip of water as the only noise. Two days after the long journey, and I had just discovered that it was this noise which I had had to travel all that way to hear. It was not the view of the verdant valleys of the south erasing the arid landscape of the north. Selfish of me, I suppose, to have travelled all this way simply to appease a growing sense of oppression, but it was something that I had to do, something that 5,000 miles does to you, when your mind simply needs to let the eyes roam over a familiar setting. Something inside me needed a smell, a face, a texture, that would have some meaning to me, and not threaten my senses, and here I had found it – in a drip. Something that I used to hate at home was listening to a tap dripping, and having to get up to screw the worn down washer even further. Now I thanked that washer for being its worn-down self, as it gave me a scene to visualise. The smell of the rain on the long grass differed, the amount of rain that fell differed, but the sound was constant. All the other attractions that I had been offered now held little interest for me, as they were all

still alien, the new animals that I saw, the new people that I met and the new food that I tasted, all fell into that encompassing bracket that was foreign, and I nestled further into my sheets and then lay still so that I could focus my mind on the noise. School desks were the first image that entered my head, as the damp was always evident on the walls of the classrooms; and then home where the windows were leaded, and the little panes of glass were irregular and ill fitting. In the wind they would rattle, and after the storm the insides would drip with water, just as the bathroom tap would, and it was there, in the storm, that I found my haven.

The remaining days passed uneventfully, as they were spent at the river's edge watching the hippos sink and float, rising and falling on an unseen platform as we watched. The birds continued northwards, as did the water, brown and silt-laden, and I knew that that was where I must go, and so when the jeep came to pick us up, it was not with reluctance, but a renewed sense of excitement and determination, that I headed north back to the situation which I had run from just a week ago. The dust was behind me again, but this time not saving me from any sight I wanted to see. I looked only forward and convinced myself that 2 months was only 9 weeks, and nine weeks was only 63 days, which was only...

As the car progressed, and retraced the tracks that we had made only a week earlier, the sun was dwindling in the western sky and the lone trees were but silhouettes, outlines against a red hue. All this was familiar to me, as to know somewhere is only to have been back there repeatedly; this was not new ground to me now, and the tracks were not strangers leading me places which I had never before seen, these were companions guiding me back to what was, for the next while, home. Riding in and out of the gnarled tree stumps and soil tilled with determination and drenched with sweat, I realised that this was an experience that I was only going to be privileged to have once in my life, and never could be repeated. Each second was a unique one, which I had travelled thousands of miles to experience, and each hardship was something that I would look back upon and remember as a memory which formed part of my personality. As I stepped out of the jeep, and surveyed the expanse of dry land which lay before me, I knew that I had so much to see and do, and so I grabbed my bags, and set off, all the time thinking that the world had never felt so big, or I so small.

OLIVER TRETHERWEY (MVI)



NEVER HAD THE WORLD FELT SO BIG OR I SO SMALL



I sit writing this, I can see my tower on top of the cliff, distant and aloof. Three hundred feet below me, the waves beat against the lonely deserted beach. In the half-light Castle Rock stands like a proud bastion, rising high out of the sea. A colony of cormorants resemble black arrows as they dart into the deep waters below. My tower is only

small, twelve foot square and three storeys high. From my vantage point the windows look dark and troubled, having seen many things past, and all nearly forgotten. In that place the old Lookout Master sat for hours using those dark holes as his eyes, relaying information to coast guards either side of South Down. I can see Portland Bill's lights blinking on the horizon, waiting to be enclosed by the dark, then, but for the light house with its intermittent lantern searching into the night, I will be completely secluded.

It is very isolated up here, a place where I find time to delve into my thoughts, forgetting everything that is weighting me down. On a beautiful evening like this it is hard to believe that only nights before I had to seek shelter in the warmest part of the tower, as the wind and rain swirled around me beating down on ground and rock as if in protest against this concrete intrusion upon nature.

It is a magical place, isolated, yet not undiscovered, a place taken from reality where absurd things often happen. From this very spot, looking down, I once saw a forty foot Colgate toothpaste tube running along the pebbles. When young, I was made to believe that this truly was a mystical place where anything could happen. It was only after seeing the ever familiar beach on television that I realised the film crew must have been hiding. Last year a cow jumped over the cliff, maybe she was aiming for the moon, who knows? Perhaps she was just another young, impressionable creature persuaded to believe in the impossible. She survived.

The strangest sights are yet to be described. It was not long ago that a group of Buddhist Monks walked past, with shaven heads and in full saffron robes. I was not there when the naturists went by in just backpacks

and hiking boots. My tower however, was made famous when it bared itself for the front page of the Daily Telegraph.

After these deceptions it is hard to believe the stories of smugglers who hid their contraband three hundred feet below the tower in the labyrinth of caves left by the Romans who quarried the strata of beautiful golden stone disguised by the chalky limestone cliffs.

Only last summer taking an inland walk instead of my usual coastal route I discovered a group of student archaeologists digging in what was once a Stone Age hill camp. Later that day I decided to return; history had once again been covered, the smoothed earth looked nothing like the dig that was in progress earlier that day. As I approached the centre of the field I let history envelop me as I began my own dig. Much to my amazement within five minutes I had discovered a flint arrow head.

Yesterday was the day of "The Grizzly". Every year a couple of thousand people run a torturous eighteen mile route over the cliffs and hills around the tower. It had been a hot sunny day and it was from this spot at the top of Smuggler's Steps that I cheered the first man home.

After they had all gone, all the runners, the spectators, the walkers and the hikers, I came down to the Steps. The tower was lost in shadow and the only thing I could clearly see were the flickering stars and the shining comet, to think that perhaps four thousand years ago someone stood in this same spot, Stone age man, standing and wondering, perhaps holding the same arrow head I possess now. To this ancient being, this mass of gas, ice and rock would have been a portent of doom: for me it is a portent of good tidings: I have my whole life in front of me, a time full of questions that may never be answered. As I stood at this great height there was a sudden inspiration to jump into what has become to me, the unknown, to know at least once, the feeling of flying and falling, to relieve myself of the pressures rising in me daily, a feeling of utter freedom. Would I be completely forgotten if I were to take the plunge into the moon-lit sky? My foot slips, the result of an imaginary push, a pulse of adrenaline ripples through my body as excitement fills my mind. I turn away from the cliff edge welcoming the mist that had begun to descend, inviting it to blanket me, to shroud me from reality. If anyone had seen me I would have been a spot of insignificance, a passing thought, a slight vision, instantly forgotten. Up there alone, never had the world felt so big, or I so small.

ANNARELLA SMALL (MVI)

RIGHTEOUS PLAY

As he sat, leaning forward with elbows pressed hard onto the solid wooden table, he could not help but consider his opponent. At the far end of the table there lurked a small man, a slender creature, once tall, whose height was disguised by a long arch warped into his spine from years of heavy stooping. His long black beard flowed carelessly about his face, with what seemed the dirt of ten thousand years caught in its wiry mesh. His clothes were dark and torn until they hung limply over his distorted limbs. He was not a physically challenging opponent, but physique is irrelevant when there lies the shrewd, twisted art of cunning. This was a truly formidable competitor, a fact which was obvious by the length of time the game had continued. He thought back to the days when the game had only just begun. It seemed like – Ages.

His train of thought was interrupted by a harsh bang on the table signifying “Your move!” from the creature, now poised strenuously relieving an itch at the other end of the room. For the first time he noticed how lonely it was in here, just himself and – . But that did not matter, for on examining his opponent’s last subtle move it was apparent that the game was soon to reach its climax. His opponent was far too morally destitute.

And all the while people were moving into position in bunkers throughout the country. They knew what was coming. They anticipated. Why bother the general public with the worry? They’d only panic. Besides they were expendable.

He weighed up his options. They were few and, for the most part, fairly depressing. He tried to think back to the last time the game had looked this bleak, and what he had done to rescue the situation then. He worked at his long, white beard with his right hand and thought about how difficult it was to remember.

“But they shouted, ‘Take him away! Take him away! Crucify him!’ ‘Shall I crucify your king?’ Pilate asked.”

Jonny woke with a start to the over-enthusiastic voice of his Theology teacher, although it was not long before his thoughts began to trail off again. He had always found it difficult to concentrate in Theology lessons – the writing and beliefs of people from centuries before him seemed so distant, so dated, so irrelevant. On this occasion he began to wonder about more universal problems. If three years of Theology hadn’t taught him anything, it had at least encouraged him to think. His most recurring worries were “What happens when I die?” and “Why am I here in the first place?” He knew that many brains had struggled with these questions, from the earliest Greek philosophers to the most recent scientists, but despite himself he still thought that if he contributed to the quest, then maybe he would finally share in the ultimate goal.

“When Jesus had cried out again in a loud voice, he gave up his spirit.”

And all the while mere men held the fate of the planet in a button at their fingertips.

That was it, a clever ploy. An expensive high-risk venture which fortunately had turned out in his favour. How was his opponent to know that it would have worked

so well? It had tried very hard to spoil that plan, but fortunately, once its brain had caught up with the move, it was far too late for any real action to be taken. Rising from the dead is just too obscure. He sat up in his chair and rolled the dice.

“The tempter came to him and said, ‘if you are the son of ...’”

Maybe we are here to serve a purpose? Do we really have free will, or are our actions decided for us? Jonny’s head was starting to hurt. It always started hurting after he had been thinking and achieved nothing. He decided that maybe when he was older he wouldn’t be a thinker, maybe a banker or an estate agent and think in his spare time, but definitely not for a living. He came to this conclusion frequently but was never discouraged in the long term.

“Then the devil left him, and angels came and attended him.”

The finger was ready. At the smallest sign, the slightest fraction of a signal, it would descend with the pressure it takes to turn on a light, to heavily relieve an itch, to destroy a planet.

Surely it would not work a second time? But why not? He thought of this and eventually conceded that a second attempt would have little effect, but he was unable to quite put his finger on why. What had changed? What had changed?

A feeble attempt at stalling the inevitable was all he could muster while he reminisced about the better days, the days when victory seemed only just out of reach. He remembered the good times, the good people, the innovators and the developers. He felt it such a shame that all too soon it would be over, and there would be nothing left to show of the centuries of developing culture. Music, Politics, Art, Science, all these ideas had been unique to this game. Each game expressed different qualities which sadly, he felt, were all lost when the game finished. A deep surge of pity for what was soon to be gone overwhelmed him, forcing him to concentrate on his final move.

Again Jonny was awoken with a start, but this time due only to a power cut. All around the country lights failed and computers shut down. A solar flare or some other such “divine intervention” had been predicted for this week, so it came as no surprise. Jonny didn’t believe in “divine intervention”, or God for that matter. He could not see why there should be such suffering in the world if there was a God who could prevent it. He had thought about that for a long time and decided it was contrary to logic and science and everything he understood and believed in.

The lights went out in the bunkers and for a while everyone rested easily. While the power was out there was no threat of launch. They were safe – for the moment. That one was predictable, and the opponent had already made measures to protect itself from that one. This was too important a time for anything so trivial as power failure to disrupt its plans. It administered the final crushing blow

that it had been moving towards for the last hundred thousand years, with an enormous sense of self-satisfaction.

He realised very suddenly what had gone wrong. It was obvious, so obvious that he had been unable to see it. His position had been secured by faith. The modern age of computers and spaceships doesn't accommodate faith. How could he have allowed it to be so easily discarded? And then he realised. Saw it clearly for the first time. This had been his opponent's plan all along. He had let himself slip into the reassuring certainty that knowledge would maintain his position – that it was ignorance that was the way of the – but no, it was all too clear now. Knowledge, Logic, Science had been pursued to such extents that people ceased to believe, requiring evidence over faith. Science had destroyed faith and used the legitimate quest for understanding to exploit an illicit crusade to further the ways of destruction until, finally, it unleashed the ultimate weapon – destruction at the atomic level. The Devil read his expression and a wry smile passed briefly across its thin lips before its gaze, once more, was lost within the final move.

"This will happen when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven in blazing fire with his powerful angels. He will punish those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus."

By 2 Thessalonians Jonny was firmly established in

his quest for a purpose in life. He did not even have the time to start out from his thoughts before he was torn apart by the force of many millions of particles, smaller than he could possibly imagine, erupting simultaneously.

In a final fit of hope, God decided to use the Devil's Science to protect what little of this game it might be possible to salvage.

"You were going to lose all along," the devil proclaimed, breaking the silence that had dominated the last hundred thousand years. "After all, it was one of your very own scientists, Albert Einstein, who announced so proudly 'God doesn't play dice'."

And somewhere from a remote launching base on an island in the Pacific Ocean, the very same Science that had brought about the destruction of man, launched a tiny object into space. It was an object, no smaller than an average sized car, carrying a sample of all the highest human qualities, destined for another planet, orbiting another star, where in the future another game might be played with a very different set of pieces.

To the Devil's surprise God just laughed.

SIMON CREEK (V)

NO WAY OUT

*A denim jacket marches in front
And stiletto heels drum behind.
Sad faces tilt against the wall of the DHS
Like a line of empty milk bottles
Waiting for collection
And a re-fill,
Waiting in hopeless desperation
For their ticket to silk-sheet land,
While the men with the Midas touch
Sit in their grey lego offices
Counting their chocolate money.*

*There's a man selling the 'Big Issue'
Losing his voice to closed ears,
While they all file on the tube
Effectively using another's brain
Finding their only consolation in one
Hopeful sign – 'Way Out' – until they reach
The street and realise someone lied.*

*Returning to a 'home' that grows rising damp
Quicker than the Harvey Nick's lifts,
And round the corner they've built a new porch.
Now they're all down at Homebase
Fighting for new plastic-framed windows
And Magnolia-White chip board.*

*But to me there's nothing amusing.
There's no gold-paved streets, no welcoming arms
As inviting as a freshly-made bed
Where the crumbs under the sheets are not felt
Until settled inside and the light turned off.*

FAY DAVIES (LVI)

I AM THE RESURRECTION

*Street corner teacher preaching broken meaning
I live in fear you live in dreaming.*

*I hurl a message on to hearts that bleed,
Lies that breed, but ears that will not heed.*

*When knowledge decays, religion fades
Hope is the currency which I am paid.*

*Apocalyptic yearning, the fools are learning
What wise men forget they know.*

*Love gives, it glows,
Love overflows and then it goes.*

*Frustration, confusion, constraining illusions
Faith the solution, belief in conclusion.*

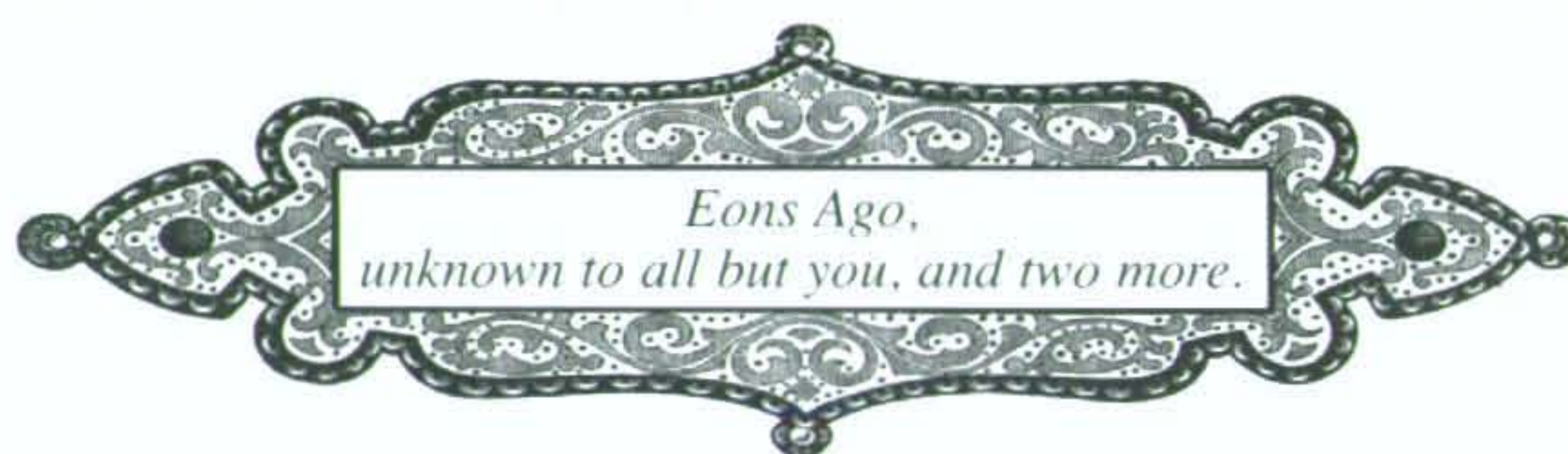
*Live to die, love that on satin wings lies
A bird trapped that will someday fly
But still we try.*

*We fight to stay sane, through unfettered pain
Minds can't be tamed, to think is to maim.*

*Beat your infection, take a lethal injection
I am the resurrection.*

WILLIAM RITCHIE (LVI)

PART I: THE FALLING OF MEN



Look.

The eternal void of space sweeps outward from your eyes. The stars, unblinking, stare coldly forever outwards into the great black depths of nothingness. Galaxies, visible only to your eyes, spurred onward by the force of creation, spin outwards on never ending journey, their great speeds unnoticeable to all but you.

This is the majesty of space.

Watch.

The planet was bare, lifeless, with no living things upon its face, though the movement of clouds and the glint of water seem to suggest that the planet itself is alive. As you watch, the world's sun moves slowly from behind the planet, spreading its gleam on the lifeless plains. Dawn is breaking.

The peace of space is broken by a noiseless explosion of intense light, on the edge of your vision. This explosion is followed by another, and another, until, gleaming in the warmth of the newly appeared sun, a fleet of metal barges appear, and move in on the world. From its sides spew countless smaller ships, appearing as children around their several gigantic parents.

The world waits, silent and dark...

Aboard the barge Messiah's Vision, once dormant machinery flickered to life, chattering to itself. By the light of the countless working machines, an observer would have seen the countless rows of cryogenic tubes, each housing a fragile human body within its metal and plastic embrace. Yet, there were no observers, and the motion and clicks of the machines went unheard and unmarked as the planet loomed closer.

Eventually, the machine seemed to reach a decision, and the vats all drained of their cryogenic fluid. The air around and inside them was filled with high oxygen percentage air, and the heaters of the ship turned on, stimulating its occupants. Soon, several of them woke, and looked about them. The lids of the vats belonging to these stirred slumberers soon slid open, and the occupants stumbled forward. The globules of fluid that clung to their skin and the lack of the slimming and shaping effects of clothes meant that the humans were a sorry sight, coupled with the shivering and lack of motor control that seemed to make them almost demonic in the half light. But once the effects of deep sleep had worn off and motor control returned, the humans gathered and began to move with purpose, adding life to the gaunt interior of the ship.

"No life at all?"

The technician shuddered under the gaze of the Salvation's Army Captain Tyrone.

"None, sir. I've sent down three probes. We may get malfunctions on one, sir, but three is unheard of."

The Salvator Captain thought on this, and nodded. "And the motion monitors?"

"They still give the same readings, sir. And those movements are too small and random to be convection currents or weather changes."

The Captain brooded and reached a decision. He again studied the screen, where the small red blips continued their apparently random motion about the planet, evenly spread across the surface, except across the oceans. That puzzled and worried him more than anything, and prompted his final choice in this strange dilemma. "Prepare my chosen retinue, Brother Chaplain," he said to the black armoured Salvator that stood by the door. This warrior bowed from the waist, and was gone. The technician shuddered. How did they move so quickly and quietly in those suits?

Behind him, on the holoscreen, the world turned...

The drop pod left the orbiting ship, and moved almost gracefully from the ship. Its explosive detachment was noiseless in the vacuum.

Inside, all was loud, close and turbulent, but the Salvators sat still as the Brother Chaplain administered the Grace of Battle. Each warrior checked his seals and HUD. They were taking no chances; helmets would remain on until they were sure the atmosphere contained oxygen.

With a thud, only slightly muted by the walls of the pod, it touched down.

The Salvators trooped out, their weapons held at the ready. Apart from them, nothing moved.

Had the technician remained at his post, he would have seen that the movement in that segment of the planet had ceased its random shifts the moment the pod touched down. Now the red blips moved with purpose.

Towards the drop pod.

The Salvators removed their helmets. The green crystals within their helmets indicated that indeed the air was breathable, and the sensors on board the drop pod were already relaying the data from the atmosphere and soil to the Barge above.

The data was incredible, and worrying at the same time. Traces of organic life had been found, though this life was long extinct, lost to some ancient disaster. The soil contained a high nutrient content, and the planet's

surface, according to the Barge, was 45% water. The air, though it had a high carbon dioxide content, was also rich in oxygen.

Ordinarily, this world should be teeming with life, mused Tyrone. Why does it not?

The technician, who had returned from the officers mess, scratched his back, and peered idly at the screen. What he saw paled his skin, and he hastily grabbed for the microphone attached to the vid desk.

All across the sensor, across the planet, the blips were moving towards the Salvators.

The comm rune lit and buzzed shrilly in the confines of Tyrone's helmet. He hastily pressed the receiver. This had better be important, or, by the Messiah, he would...

The message, though periodically interrupted by static bursts, chilled his heart.

"For the love—f Terra——, sir. —y—ot to get—t. ——re——coming."

"What?" Tyrone demanded, attracting the attention of the other warriors.

"Just ge——out, s——r. They're ——most on——op of you!" The technician's voice was shrill and hysterical within the helmet.

"Who's coming?" yelled the Captain into the comm.

Mere moments later, the question became totally and utterly moot.

High above, the first of the blips reached the drop pod...

Brother Yaas fell screaming, as the Thing tore at his unprotected throat. This scream rapidly became a gurgle, as the blood released surged into the doomed man's mouth, and then, finally, Yaas was still.

The Thing raised its head. It may have once been human. It was a skeleton, with a few mouldering bits of flesh hanging from its bones. Its skull was a fixed grin, that seemed to widen somehow as the marines watched. Its single eye stared stupidly at the shocked Marines from its left socket, the other was a festering grey puddle. As Tyrone watched, a single maggot-like creature wormed its way from the thing's nose, and lay, squirming on its jaws.

It opened its mouth, Yaas' blood dripping from its jaws, mixed with a grey liquid that, Tyrone realised, must have once been its brain.

Its mouth opened wider, almost reaching to the thing's chest, and, making a chittering sound like that of a swarm of rats, it stumbled forwards.

Tyrone raised his Screamer, and fired.

The Thing's head exploded, spraying gray slime and Yaas' blood everywhere, shredded by the intense cone of impossibly pitched noiseless sound. Even with its head gone, the creature managed to take two more steps before sinking to the ground and dying, although, Tyrone thought, perhaps it had never been alive in the first place. Even as Tyrone lowered his Screamer, the others attacked, and he was knocked flying by a charge from the side, the creature responsible falling with him, chittering fiendishly. This saved his life, for, as he and

the grotesque creature fell, twined in some hellish dance, another swung its rusty but somehow sharp sword at the place where his head once was. Instead it took the head of his fellow creature, which flew away with the force of the blow, still uttering its hideous noise. Tyrone turned and blew the other creature apart at the waist. Then he finally hit the ground.

Brother Gilgamesh fell next, shrieking wildly, and spraying screamer fire everywhere, hitting Brother Kin in the chest as he did so. Both died instantly. The other marines grouped quickly into a circle, and sprayed the surrounding area with the intense cones of sound that were the products of the Screamers. Tyrone cursed. They lacked the range that was really necessary for this type of fight. Despite this, many of the shambling things were destroyed, and a large pile of broken bodies, some still twitching, surrounded the marines.

But still the things came. Hopping on broken legs, clawing their ways towards the Salvation Warriors. Foot by foot. Inch by inch. Life by life.

Eventually, five short minutes later, Tyrone and the Brother Chaplain were the only ones left. Tyrone had long since given up any hope of surviving, and had decided to sell his soul dearly.

That is why he was surprised when the Chaplain removed his helmet, and stared around him, blissfully.

"I am home..." he whispered, in tones of shocked awe.

"Brother – Chaplain. Are you alright? Answer!" Tyrone attempted to watch his fellow even as he sprayed the area with fire.

The Chaplain turned, and Tyrone shivered at the sight of the silver skulls adorning his armour.

"We must not fight, my son," the Brother spoke, entranced. "We must herald the new order, and welcome it with open arms." He reached out to Tyrone. "Come, give me your weapon."

At that point, Tyrone felt it. Threatening to engulf his mind. He felt the red thirst well up within him. He felt the power searching from the heavens, searching for his mind, even as it had found the Chaplain's. Somewhere out there existed a great evil. It ruled this planet. And it was powerful. Oh yess, sso veery powerful. How eassy it would be, to give hisss brother the ssscreamer he held, and walk with the undying upon the planet of death.

Tyrone screamed, his hands going to his head, drowning out the scratching voices inside his head that sought to drain his will. Seconds later, when he stopped, he turned to the Chaplain blood welling from his nose. "Never," he whispered. Far away, he felt the rage from the Dark Mind, and grimaced in the face of his death.

Not so the Chaplain, who smiled grimly, and continued to do so, even as the dead warriors ripped apart the screaming Captain.

Slowly, in the east, the sun set, the last flares of its rays being caught by the atmosphere, turning the sky red.

SHAUN GARDINER (LVI)

HASTINGS REVISITED



The Normans circled like hawks around that bloodied hill, crowned by a ring of steel and topped by scarlet spears; the Saxons had stood on that knoll for hours defying the charging horse. It was now noon and the sun would gradually descend, a golden orb fading in splendour as it passed over England's western hills, a dark omen. Crows had begun to gather in the sky above the few dead that lay on the field (slain by arrows) and circled waiting for the battle to end. The English stood, shields locked and spears raised, quivering in anticipation of an attack that would never come. The only sounds were those of the crows high above and the snap of the English standard which flapped proudly above its English defenders, its soiled insignia soon to fade into history. The Normans had formed a shield wall at the base of the hill and waited, a patient confidence mingling with fear and anticipation. Jugs of ale were not distributed this day, liquid courage was not needed. Archers moved forward and shot random arrows at the English line to little effect, the arrows either bouncing off the hard willow shields or thumping into their smooth blazoned wood. The Saxons could see far from their advantageous position on the hill and saw that the chain mail clad Norman Knights had wheeled and were retreating. A few grins crossed the Saxon line, the smell of victory strong in their deceived noses.

Once the knights were away and had reformed far from the spear men an odd thing occurred. Parts of the Norman line began to turn and march slowly towards the knights and soon the whole line was retreating with heads bowed and spears dragging in the muddy grass. A mighty cheer went up from the Saxon line, men unlocked their shields and raised their spears in salute to the Gods as the cheer resounded in the heavens. Men began to beat spear hafts against their shield creating a noise not unlike that of metallic rolling thunder. The clanking ceased and the warriors regained their poise but did not lock shields – they leant forward, eager for the command that would set these dogs of war free to cut down their quarry, to sheathe their metal teeth in the bodies of their foes and soak the ground red with Norman blood.

Then the shout went up, and the ground shook as the men of England poured down the hill, a frenzied mass of shouting warriors, running for the pure, unalloyed joy of battle. The line rolled forward, its edges becoming ragged and its integrity destroyed by the thrill of the charge. The ragged clump of men rolled forward still shouting and quickly eating up the distance between them and their foes' backs, their studded war boots throwing up clumps of earth and mud.

The Normans turned, wheeling in their carefully retreating line, levelling spears and locking shields with

great proficiency. The lines were too close for the Saxons to stop and so they increased their pace, excitement overwhelming caution as they sped onto that hedge of deadly ferrous silver-thorn. The lines clashed and men screamed and roared, spear and axe clashed with shield as the deadly melee began. Men hacked down at the Norman line which had buckled in some places, whilst the Normans jabbed with their spears. Veterans died by the second, and blood soaked the ground red. Mud and blood mixed to create a horrible red quagmire in which men lay groaning, their lopped limbs laying close by. The two forces struggled, evenly matched in skill and numbers. A spear lunged forward and its leaf head bit deep into a Saxon's chest and the warrior exhaled through this new orifice as he fell, blood gurgling from his shocked mouth. A Saxon axe cleaved the air and a Norman head flew, a geyser of blood erupting from the corpse, which soon tumbled. Everywhere there was death and the sky above played host to a great throng of birds, which circled spectators to this bloody match. An archer loosed an arrow and turned to meet a Saxon blade in the face, a horrible crack sounded and the Saxon axe man recoiled as fragments of jelly splattered his face. His chest opened and a lance head reared bloody as the man fell like some rag doll, his dead face still reading shock. In the wet mud, trails of insidious red meandered. The melee wore on oblivious to a rumble of thunder. To the shock of the Saxons a horde of Norman knights charged into the fray lances levelled and shields set. Men were swept aside in a wave of blood and death. Lances snapped and swords hissed out of leather scabbards and more butchery was played out on that afternoon. The knights rode amongst the combatants, wildly hacking down as their mounts' hooves lashed out cracking men's skulls and trampling the wounded under foot.

Then a Norman archer released the fatal arrow which changed England for ever. It flew towards the melee and towards the hill; then it came down, a wooden star falling, and with a thud it found its mark. Harold reeled back, a scream erupting from his lips and his hand flew towards the eye, but he stood and bravely held his ground as two men charged him down. Their slick blades raised high and descending like butchers madly hacking, until the king moved no more and none of his body was clear of blood. Then one man reached down and twisted the arrow and like some foul skewer drew the eye out and held it aloft – the banner was lowered and the eye was waved and woven into time on a tapestry. An eye, an eye, the kingdom and an eye...

BEN MORGAN (LVI)



ABOVE
A-LEVEL EXHIBITIONS
 DURGA GOHEL & SAE HEE KIM

LEFT
A LA MORTE
 WILLIAM STANTON

BELOW
**BASKETBALL
 MATCH MOVEMENT**
 CHARLES BELL



WHY?

Why did John Lennon write "Happiness is a warm gun"?

Why did Martin Luther King have a dream then go to sleep?

Why is 'forever' just until the money is short and the days long?

Why is freedom just what comes free with the tax returns?

Why does love end at dawn and life end at dusk?

Why is the world as small as an airport yet suffering as large as the world?

Why is the question carved into every grave stone yet the answer never born?

WILLIAM RITCHIE (LVI)



TEXTILE DESIGNERS: YOLANDA MACPHERSON,
ANNA WARBUTRON & SALLY OLIPHANT



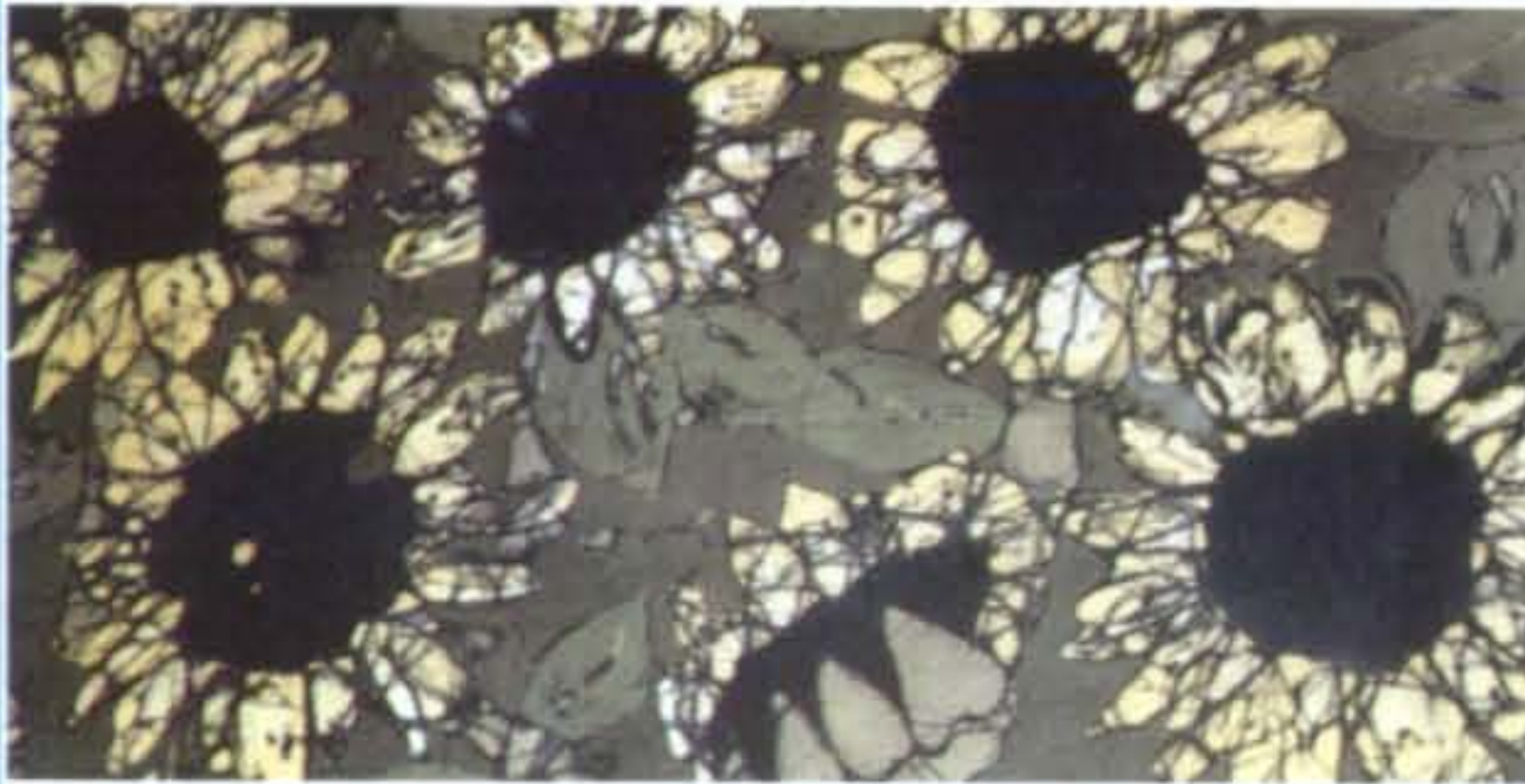
PAINTING ON SILK: CLAUDIA BODIKIAN



TRANSFER PRINT CUSHION: EMILY WILLIAMS



BATIK SUNFLOWERS: ALICE PILCHER



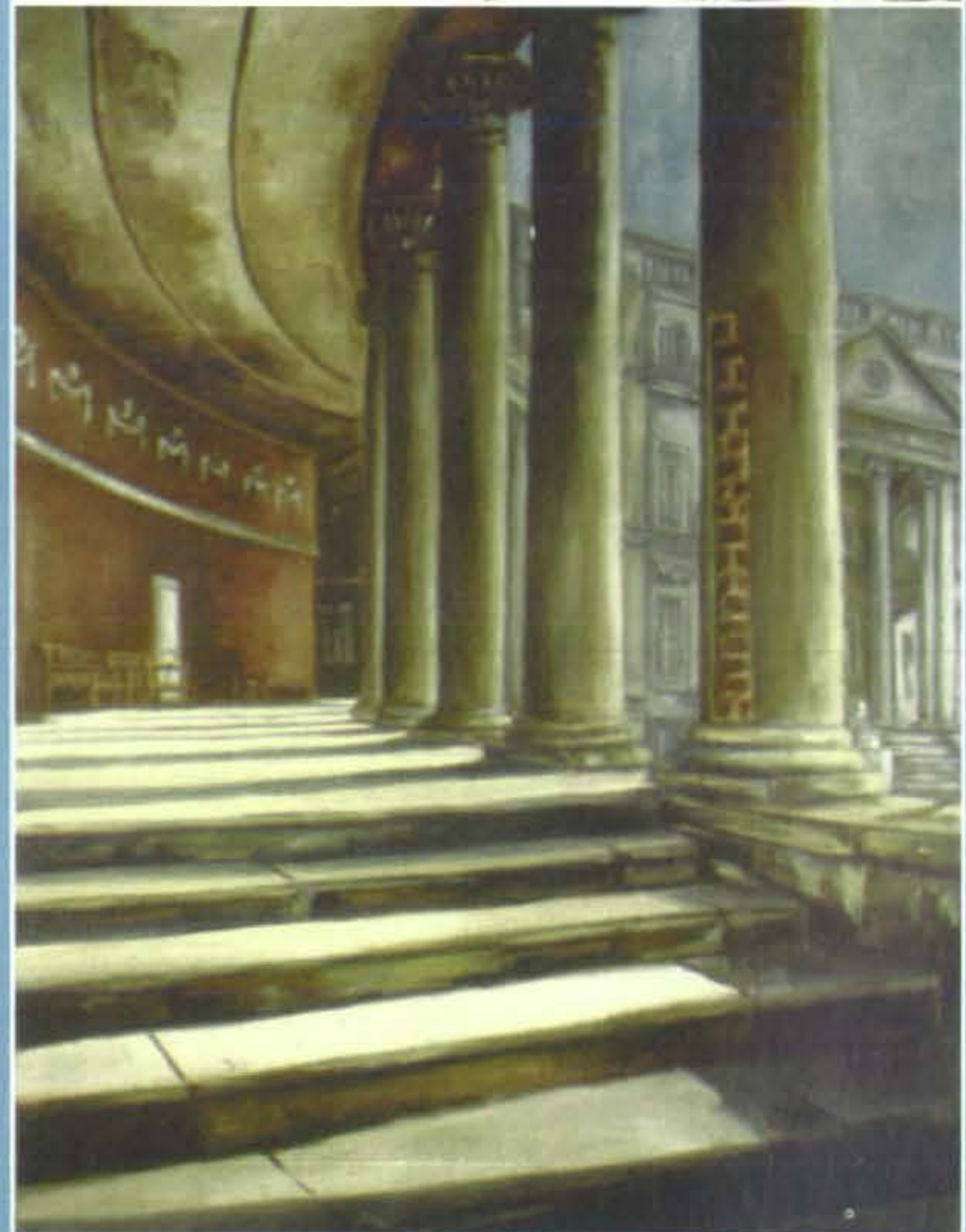
VARIOUS TIE DYE DRAPES & CUSHIONS



**AFTER SIR NORMAN FOSTER
(ARCHITECT)**

**STONES
OF
DISTINCTION**

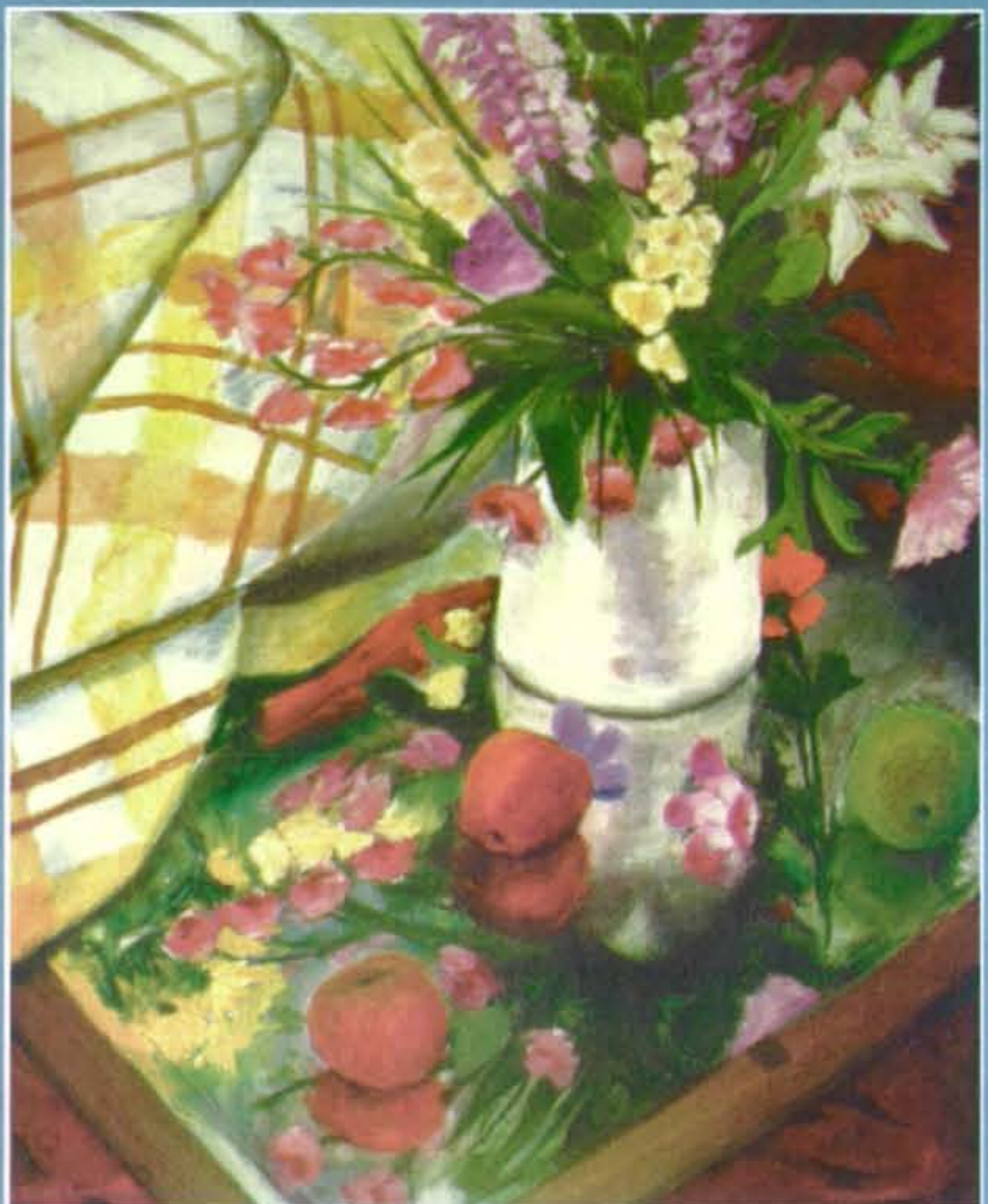
PETER
MACKAY LEWIS





PORTRAIT
TOM STABLES

A-LEVEL COURSEWORK
JOSHUA LYLE, DURGA GOHEL
AND WILLIAM STANTON



RUGBY LINEOUT
ALASTAIR BARNE



AFTER FRANCIS BACON
GEORGINA MACKAY

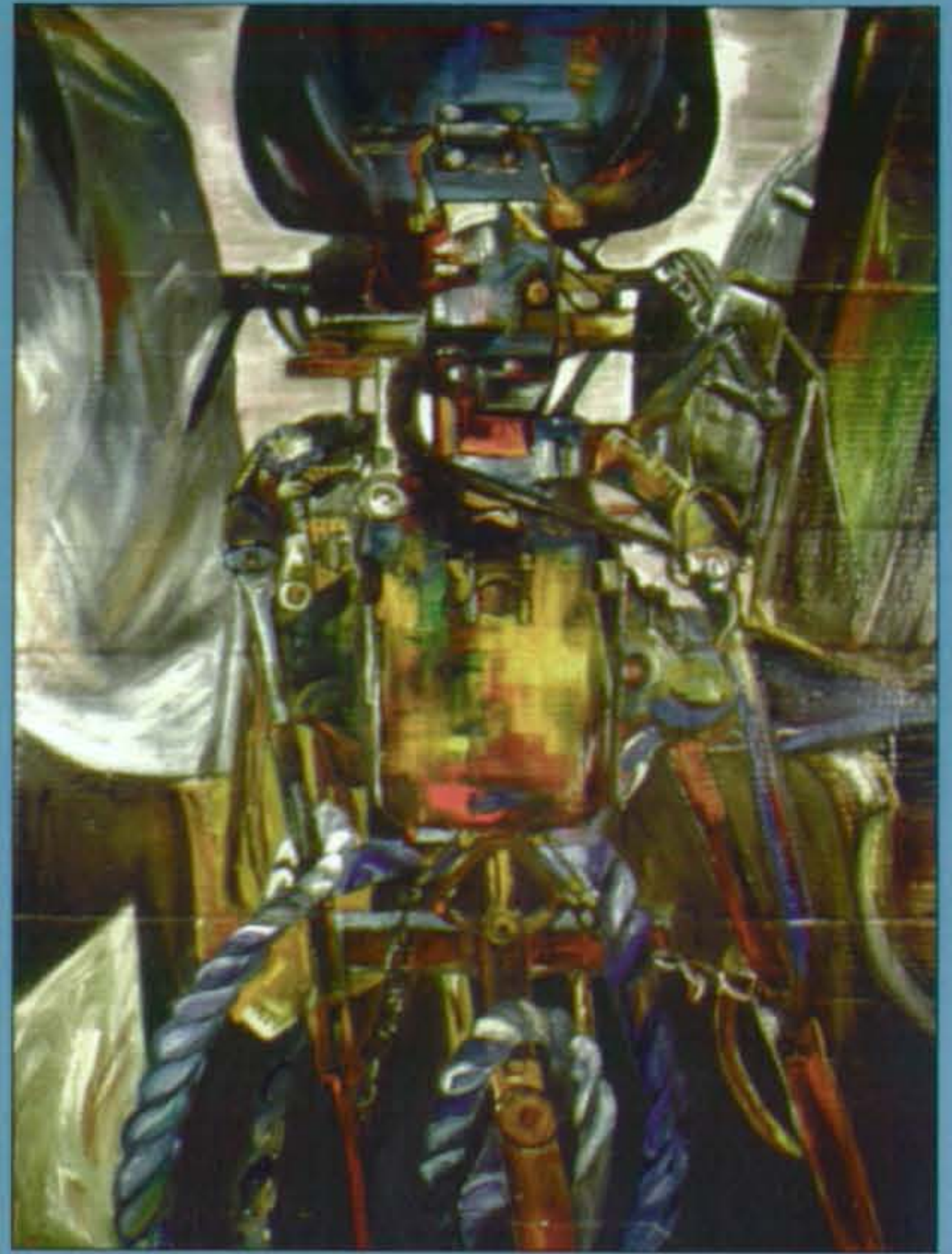


VENICE
CANAL STUDIES
LEFT: CORINNA VERE NICHOLL, SUSANNAH GALSWORTHY, FELICITY JOLLEY.
BELOW: CHARLIE ANDERSON



CHURCH FACADE
ISABELLE WITTMAN





ABOVE & CLOCKWISE
VENETIAN MASKS
 VANESSA LARSEN

AGRICULTURAL FORMS
 RACHEL ARBUTHNOTT

FISHING BOX
 CHARLES BELL

NEGATIVE SPACE
 ALASTAIR BARNE

PORTRAIT
 TOM STABLES





WASHING LINE

RACHEL ARBUTHNOTT

**SPEECH DAY
DISPLAY**

CHIEKO FURUKAWA



**BASED ON A
TYPEWRITER**

PETER MACKAY LEWIS

PORTRAIT STUDIES

GEORGINA MACKAY



GAP YEARS GROW IN POPULARITY

Ten years ago few Stoics would have taken a Gap year between school and university. For the first time last year over fifty per cent of our sixth form leavers decided to take a break before further study. There is increasing evidence to suggest that university admissions tutors appreciate the value of this experience and, indeed, accept that students are not only enriched and enlivened by it but also perform better once they arrive at university.

We are particularly grateful to parents, most of whom contribute a small sum each term to the Students Partnership Worldwide (SPW) scheme. This enables at least two worthy Stoics to join one of the teaching or environmental projects in Nepal, India or Africa. Last year Angus McCarey and Crispin Marsland Roberts travelled to Nepal where they spent eight months in a community not only transfixing the children with a new and exciting learning style but also helped to install a new water system and lent a hand on the farm. They returned to Stowe in September to give an inspiring illustrated talk and a demonstration of a traditional Nepali lesson in English.

In September last year The Old Stoic Committee decided to increase both the number and value of their Gap scholarships to three, worth £1000 each. This was in part due to the extraordinary achievements of Henrietta Bolland, Tim Pearce and William Milling, previous scholarship holders.

Henrietta, at first believing she would be helping in a Cheshire home near Addis Ababa in Ethiopia, found herself teaching street children under a tree which served as her classroom in Moshi in Tanzania. Not one for choosing easy options, Henrietta managed to captivate these incredibly deprived children and persuade them that some education might be to their benefit, despite their abject poverty and lack of realistic expectations. That nineteen year old Stoics fresh from their A-level studies can succeed in these remarkably difficult circumstances is surely a tribute to their upbringing and schooling.

Meanwhile Tim Pearce and William Milling decided upon a totally different challenge. They worked with the Ranthambore Foundation, an organisation which helps villagers displaced from the Kanthambore National Park in India. They accompanied the ambulance around the villages administering medical services, giving advice on family planning, visiting local schools and meeting children being educated on the importance of growing their own trees to reduce deforestation within the park.

These are just three examples of the diverse range of projects which our 'gappers' undertake. In each case at least three months are spent helping disadvantaged people, usually in the third world. This is frequently followed by independent travel financed by employment between September and December.

Amongst the huge benefits of the Gap year, the most obvious are the development of self-reliance, the need for financial planning and restraint and the opportunity to become absorbed in another country's culture. As this is written new Old Stoics are dispersed all over the world on projects as diverse as tracking rare wild cats in the south of Chile, to visiting Nepalese villages to encourage them to construct more efficient wood burning stoves to reduce ecological damage. A sense of adventure and a genuine desire to help others drives these young people forward, and leaves those of us entrenched in careers full of admiration and envy.

DWJ

Namsdling staff room
Class 6 – and not the largest!
Puku and Asish



'Home' for a while



An Anglo-Nepali plough



Making breakfast



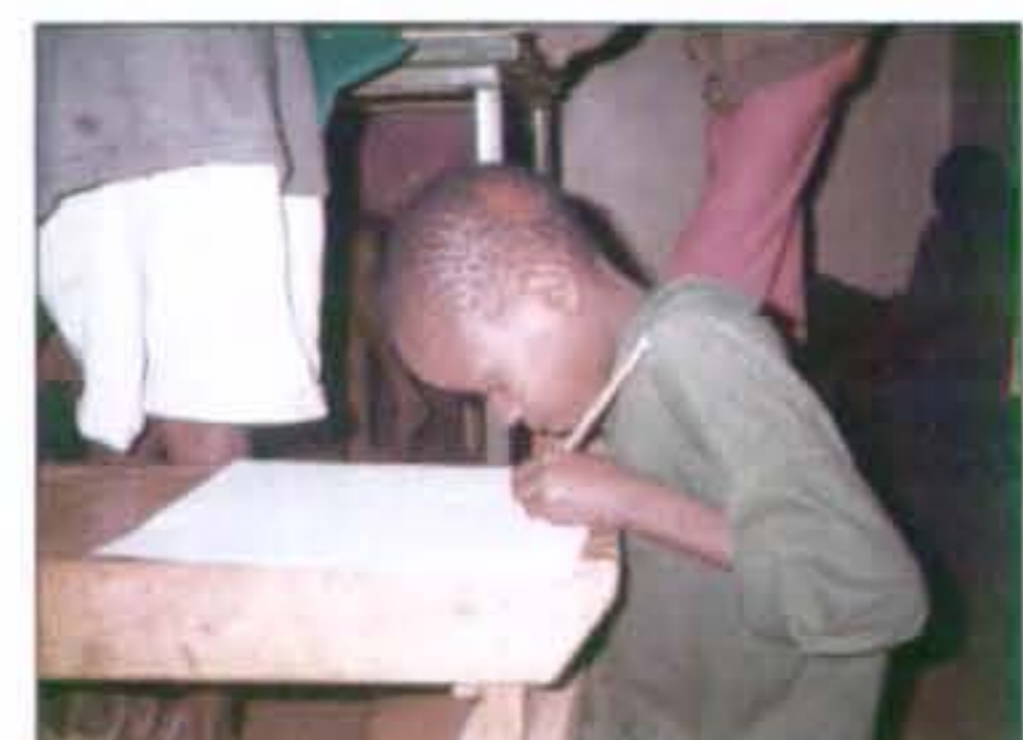
Whoops!



A successful spring protection project



Moshi, Tanzania



Thirsty for knowledge...



To the second peak and the Chinese border



The Russian Rescue helicopter

International School of Mountaineering Expedition



On top of the world



The Summit party



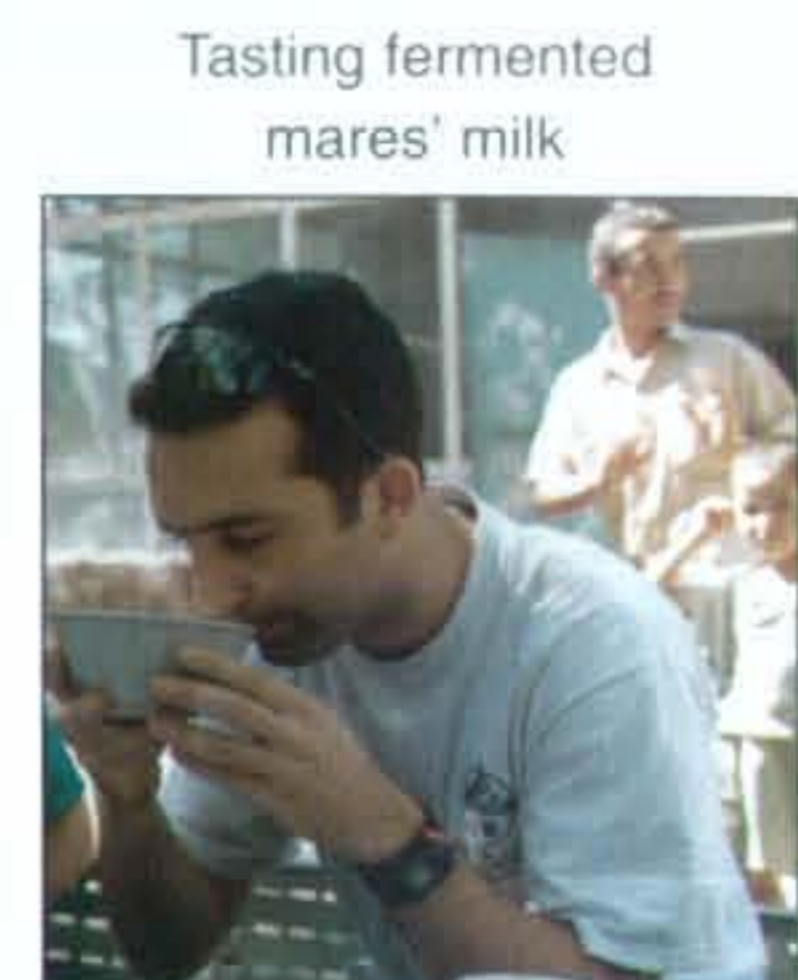
Summit of the second peak



Crossing the river



Climbing out of a crevasse



Tasting fermented mares' milk

THE TIEN SHAN

In my first year at Stowe I was mesmerised by the annual talk on Nepal, a kingdom in the heart of the Himalayas. I became obsessed with the people, the culture and the country so much that in my lower sixth year my parents gave me the opportunity to experience it in person.

Nepal was everything I had imagined and more. However it was the snowy peaks that attracted me. They possess a surreal beauty and hidden hostility. The mountains were tempting but on a trekking holiday one was little prepared to ascend into this majestic world. I made a promise to myself to return in my gap year in the hope of entering this domain.

In August 1997 I was lucky and privileged to acquire a place on an expedition to the Tien Shan, the Celestial Mountains. This largely unexplored range is in Central Asia on the border between Kyrgyzstan and the Chinese province of Dzungaria. The philosophy was to climb multi-day ascents in lightweight, Alpine style, in areas where there was still genuine exploration to be done. The thought of climbing at altitudes over 5000m in temperatures of -30°C and being in remote and virgin territory was challenge enough. However, I first had to meet and get to know my counterparts and get over the small but significant hurdle of learning how to climb in a safe manner.

These preparations began on the 31st of August at Heathrow airport. When I arrived, Pat Littlejohn the director of the expedition and a very accomplished climber was frantically rounding up the vast mounds of equipment and pleading with the airline staff for a large extra baggage allowance. To add to the excitement all our food was with the doctors Rob and Jane, who had broken down on the motorway. Ursula, an Irish surgeon, arrived from Dublin, but her luggage, which didn't have such a good sense of direction, had been temporarily misplaced. In this time of much cursing I discovered I wasn't the only Stoic on the expedition, Sinan Osman, who now works for World Challenge (the organisation responsible for taking many Stoics to Nepal) was also a part of the team.

Miraculously everybody arrived with luggage in Tashkent, the capital of Uzbekistan, one of the great cities of Central Asia. We boarded an old bus that was to be our confines for the next day. We travelled north into the Steppe land of Kazakhstan, vast open grasslands with sparsely dotted settlements, and then East into Kyrgyzstan, to the capital Bishkek. The long journey was divided into sectors, determined by people's appetites. These breaks were enriched by samples of culture. At one of the stops the driver asked a lady if there was somewhere we could get food, whereupon she pulled dumpling-like things called *Mantie* from her hand bag! At another port of call we discovered the speciality of tepid fermented mares' milk, which I recommend to no one! We also dined in the famous nomadic yurt dwelling, the traditional shelter of Central Asia.

In order to be fit and well acclimatised we started in a region called Ala Archa, a small mountain range a few miles

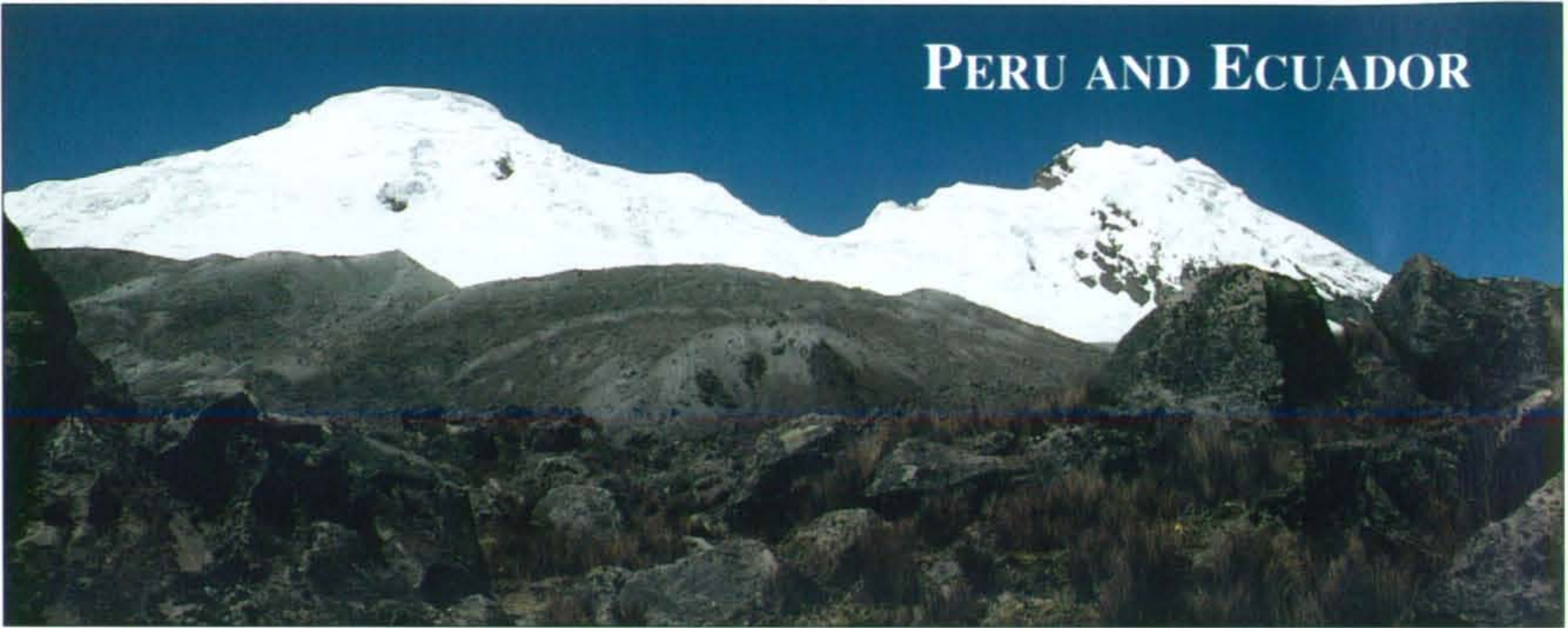
north of Bishkek. At this point we met our porters without whom we couldn't have set up base camps. After two days climbing through the foothills and over the Ak-Sai glacier we set up base camp at the foot of the relatively straightforward Korona Peak (4860m). For the other team members this was just another warm up for greater things, but for me it was a first. The thought of being the only member without a wealth of experience was very unnerving. What if I couldn't cope with the altitude or the cold or the technicalities of the climbs? It was decided that instead of hindering the rest of the team, Vladimir, a very experienced Russian climber, would spend a day showing me the ropes. I was told about crevasse rescue and how to use my technical tools properly, and began to put into practice what up until then I had only read about. The rest of the team managed to scale the mountain with relative ease in eleven painful hours. The mountain itself is not high or technical, but when you are not acclimatised and gasping for oxygen it's a very different story. Every step is a mental battle and requires a great deal of physical effort.

Sickness was a problem at the start, both Sinan and myself were ill as a result of poor diet, altitude sickness and stomach bugs. At this stage we both worried that our expeditions were over before we had started any real climbing. I was told to descend to a lower altitude as a precaution. I left base camp and went to meet the porters at their lower camp. That night was possibly the worst of my life, I was so drained I couldn't move, even for the loo. They tended to me but it was very frustrating and lonely not being able to communicate, as I speak no Russian and they speak even less English.

A few days later with the acclimatisation and sickness behind us we set off for the West Kokshaal-Too. This dramatic range in the heart of the Tien Shan has only been visited by one expedition from the west, so knowledge of the range is sketchy. Of the twenty or so valleys leading into the glacier systems and high peaks along the spine of the range, only four have ever been visited. We were hoping to gain access to one of the new valleys, but it proved impossible without a helicopter. As it was we spent two days on the Kamas, a six-wheel drive converted military vehicle with a seven hundred litre fuel tank. We travelled uncomfortably through deserts, mountains and glacial rivers in which we lost the supply truck. We finally located a suitable site for base camp sixteen kilometres from the Chinese border. This mass of tents was to be our second home for the next two weeks. From here there were a vast number of feasible objectives.

We split into small teams. For my first ascent, Sinan, Pat, two others and myself, opted for a virgin summit (c.4700m). This was to be my first real summit bid. To be attempting a virgin summit was something extremely special even for an experienced climber. We set up a Tyrolean traverse to ford a raging melt water river. We were then able to start our ascent up 600 vertical metres of scree to the snow line at 4000 metres. Perched precariously in a col, with the temperature well below freezing we wrestled to erect our tents. By this time the other team had returned to base camp due to bad weather conditions.

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PERU AND ECUADOR

Antizana volcano at sunset



The ruins at Machu Picchu



Saint's Day procession in Pisac



Above: A travelling companion. Below: A typical Andean market



Blue footed booby



Masked booby





Group photo in front of Huayna Picchu



A sad farewell to the Shuars



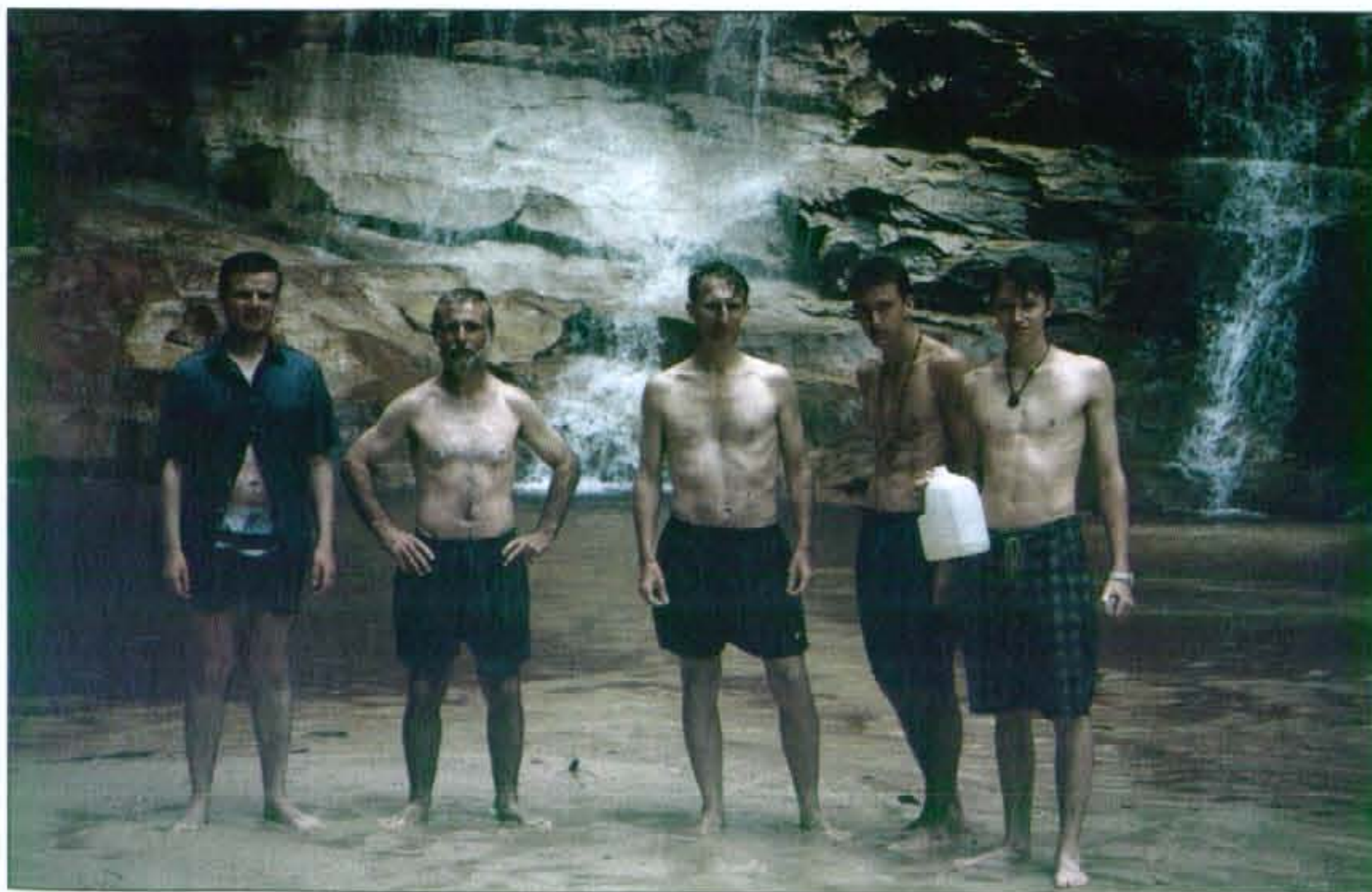
Andean beauty parlour



Living dangerously at Aguas Calientes



Siesta, rainforest style



Gringos at the sacred waterfall of the Shuar Indians



Miss Greatwood goes local – or loco?

PERU AND ECUADOR

We were taken to Peru by Ingrid Bergman – KLM like to name their planes – and a good job she made of the 17 hour flight via Amsterdam and Aruba, leaving 14 of us plus our guide, dazed and confused in Lima one evening in early August. After a short sleep, and just in case we hadn't had enough of flying, we were roused at 4.15 the following morning for the plane to Cuzco, or as the Incas called it, the navel of the world.

Our immediate task was acclimatisation, since Cuzco lies 3,300m up in the Andes. After mopping up the travel wash and the sun cream which had spilled out over our luggage with the change in air pressure, it was time for *maté de coca* – coca leaf tea – to stave off the effects of the altitude, and a tour of the shops and of course the numerous bars of this sunny, hospitable town.

In addition to David Horwell, guide extraordinaire, and David James, organiser and leader, both veterans of several previous Stowe expeditions to South America, there were three members of staff, one parent and nine Stoics in our party “Don't mention the A-level results” became the byword of the trip as we left responsibilities behind and took the altitude in our stride.

The five days we spent in Cuzco were packed with white water rafting for the foolhardy, museums and the cathedral for the cultured (Greg Roberts and me), Indian markets, Inca ruins, spectacular Andean sunsets and finally the train ride through the Urubamba Valley to the highlight of our time in Peru, the ruined Inca city of Machu Picchu.

The contradictions of this place are hard to take in. Trainloads of tourists are bussed from the valley floor up the vertiginous road to the Inca town, and a modern hotel lies just below the ruins, yet once we were in amongst the stones the feeling of space and timelessness was overwhelming. The Incas were clearly masochistic in their need to build high, but their choice of location cannot be faulted.

We spent an eventful night at Gringo Bill's hostelry in Aguas Calientes, the town in the valley below Machu Picchu. An evening bathe at the thermal baths nearly turned into a punch-up with some tourists from Spain who thought they could be rude to Stoics with impunity. Pierre Fel's grasp of Spanish insults came as a surprise to them (and to his teacher, I must add), and he spent the rest of the evening avoiding any further confrontation by lying low with the rest of us in what was unanimously voted the worst pizza restaurant in the world.

We went back to Machu Picchu (Old Mountain) the following day, when most climbed Huayna Picchu (Young Mountain), and Hannah James, Caroline Smith and I walked up to Inti Punku – the Gate of the Sun God – from where walkers along the Inca Trail catch their first sight of the ruins. It must be recorded that Jacques Bingham was the star of this particular day, making the top of Huayna Picchu in record time.

After this, and a whistle-stop tour of Lima between planes, we were ready for the big one: a flight to Quito and four days of trekking in the Ecuadorian Andes along a route which gave us views of three volcanoes: Antizana, Sincholagua and Cotopaxi. We camped at 4,000m, trekked to the snow-line of Antizana at 5,000m and walked what felt

like all day, every day. On the way we savoured the delights of wild horses, condors, freezing cold mountain streams (yes, I fell in) and Jimmy Swindells' fetching Peruvian headgear. Alex Bayley was the star here, bounding up and down the mountainside as to the manner born, closely followed by Jim Swindells (père) who maintained the honour of the older generation. There was altitude sickness – David James had to take Leo Brown down to Quito rapidly – tummy bugs and icy cold nights, but the sense of achievement at the end was as tremendous as the scenery we walked through.

There was general relief when the trek was over – surely the worst was behind us? The jungle trip that followed was indeed totally different in almost every way: we didn't freeze, we sweated; we didn't need suncream, just insect repellent (and the insects were repellent, particularly the scorpions), but the trekking continued. An all day trip to hot springs had us scrambling, wading and swimming up river, we ate – and were eaten by – ants, shared a Shuar Indian meal and even tried *chicha*, the native root beer. The exact details of its manufacture are best left unrecorded, but it did make us think longingly of Stowe suppers...

There were bonuses in the jungle, however, notably canoe rides, frogs, hammocks, fireflies, native dancers and our guide Helmut. An Austrian with an interesting past, Helmut and his wife Patricia, a Shuar Indian, entertained us in fine style in their Jungle Lodge, built by Helmut entirely out of local materials. On our final night, Patricia introduced us to her excellent *guayusa* which we drank during an evening of song and dance when the old set out to embarrass the young and emerged triumphant. We were ferried out of the jungle by light aircraft the next day, and back to civilisation in Quito via a nine hour bus ride.

Another day, another flight – this time to Manta on the balmy Pacific coast of Ecuador, where we saw Panama hats being made, swam, snorkelled, sunbathed, visited Treasure Island (Isla de la Plata) and met the local fauna. This included humpbacked whales, blue-footed and masked boobies, frigate birds and an albatross. We stayed in a hotel which prided itself on its ecological awareness and which was heavily into recycling, to the extent that a notice on the bathroom door thanked visitors for contributing to the compost-making process! A beach bonfire and an interesting evening with tequila rounded off this stage of our trip, before we boarded the tenth of our thirteen flights in total, this time back to Quito before setting off on the final leg home.

Quito meant serious shopping as everyone tried to spend their last sucres, and our rucksacks bulged with rainsticks, Indian spears, Andean pan pipes and almost anything made of alpaca or balsa wood. We brought home a mixed bag of memories too – the long jungle air-strip kept trim with a tiny flymo, cinnamon-flavoured chewing gum (not recommended), fabulous butterflies, llamas, Peruvian plumbing and last but by no means least, great times with excellent travelling companions. South America left its mark on all of us – quite literally as far as insect bites were concerned – and I don't think I was alone in promising to myself, as I left this fabulous continent: “*Volvere*” – I will return.

REM

THE HIDDEN WONDERS OF THE HIGH ATLAS MOUNTAINS

After four days of non-stop train travel from London to Marrakech we finally arrived at the beautiful La Roserie, a unique property tucked away in the foothills of the Atlas mountains. It is set in 50 acres of rose garden and farmland. We found ourselves in the heart of Berber countryside where pathways lead to picturesque villages and hamlets. La Roserie has a well established riding centre with Arab horses which you can ride for days on end through the surrounding countryside, spending each night in Berber huts. Ben and I had come to the High Atlas to investigate and appreciate the colourful Berber tribe.

The Arab horses whinnied happily from inside their spick and span stables as we tacked them up preparing for our trek. This was the starting point of a ten day, 200km ride, from the Ouirgane valley up and over the surrounding hills steeper into the 'High Atlas'. There we were, in a dramatic landscape of burnt sienna and rust red rocks, slashed by ochre dust and sandstone stripes. The Atlas mountains offer a landscape of vividly coloured rock formations and magical green valleys, above which nestle mud brick Berber villages, all of which sound like great ingredients for a challenging fresh air holiday. The reality can be the exact opposite to those who do not have the stomach or time to acclimatize to some seriously rough going. We walked for miles through deserted countryside, clambering through great canyons of boulders where lizards provided rare signs of life. Just when we thought we had sweated it out well beyond reach of civilization, lunch came trotting past on the back of a mule. Lunch would be laid out neatly on a rug, with the mule man brewing mint tea on the side. Afterwards we normally collapsed into a heap and slept through the heat of the afternoon.

On we trekked the last leg to the village where we would be staying the night. I had so much respect for my horse who had been able to walk so cautiously and carefully in such tough terrain. There were times when if either the horse or I had lost concentration and hooves had been badly placed, we could have stumbled badly over rocks, doing both of us serious damage – in the middle of nowhere. By this stage we were wondering how our legs were going to hold us up when we dismounted. Having ridden since I could barely walk, these were definitely the longest days I can remember in the saddle. For the last few kilometres we followed a trickle of running water and, as it got broader we wound our way down into a sudden miracle of greenery – a valley bursting with fig trees and tiny fields of maize. We were accompanied by a constant gurgle from a clever combination of irrigation ditches bringing life to such a barren place.

As we entered the village we were greeted by brightly clothed children running along side us crying 'bonjour' and

MYLES HENRY AWARD

Myles John Henry was head of Chatham house and left Stowe in 1939. He was killed at Arnhem in 1944 whilst working as an intelligence Officer of the 10th Battalion of the Parachute Regiment. He was 22 years old.

After his death a trust was set up by his mother and it is this trust which funds the Myles Henry Award. The aim of this is to give Stoics the opportunity to travel abroad and experience other countries and cultures. Travel really can be a great source of enjoyment and adventure as well as greatly broadening our horizons. Winning the award can give you a great opportunity in life and I do encourage people in the L6 to apply. It really could be you going off on an adventure next year. The focus is not so much on a physically demanding jolly but more on seeing great places in this world and experiencing the culture of the people who live there or investigating something special to that region.

The annual award is in the region of £1500 and it is not normally divided to fund different trips. I hope that plenty of you will be inspired to go for it.

offering an outstretched hand in hope of a friendly high five in return. The more elderly men just raised an eyebrow at our scruffiness, watching us very closely as we toppled unsteadily off our still frisky horses. Before we even had time to grasp our senses, endless amounts of mint tea and their traditional hobs bread were forced into our mouths. To our delight some of the villages had a healthy flow of fresh water where they had built small dams, which formed a pool for washing and swimming in. In the villages we had wonderful sights of farmers tilling the land, donkeys being led down to the river to collect water in huge jug containers and old women bent double under the weight of crops strapped to their backs. The Berber children have nothing in the way of possessions, but they have far more: a useful role in life. They were involved with every farming activity possible.

Finally, after dark, the unmistakable smell of Berber dishes filled the air in the small courtyard where we would lie for hours on end gazing up at the extraordinary sight of stars. Steaming conical pots of *couscous* and *tagine* (lamb) were placed in front of us. This is when the most embarrassing part of the day began. Our stomachs were definitely unfamiliar with local food and, as the evening proceeded we looked more and more like gerbils storing food in our mouths. Afterwards we collapsed into a haze of physical exhaustion on a padded bench lining the wall of a room off the courtyard.



Above and clockwise:
A Berber villager

Jack Hazell & Ben Hales
on their trusty steeds

Daily gathering at the
washing pool

The spectacular scenery
of the Atlas Mountains

A typical Berber village

The Ouzoud Falls



On every succeeding morning we would be promptly back in the saddle so we could cover a good distance before it became too hot. Each time we departed from a village the local Berbers always had an expression on their faces as though they thought we were nutty clomping off, walking through the heat of the day to arid, empty places. Nevertheless, many a time as we rode, shepherds would appear like a tribe of red Indians and remind us that even in the middle of nowhere, you are never alone.

JACK HAZELL



CLASSICS VISIT TO GREECE

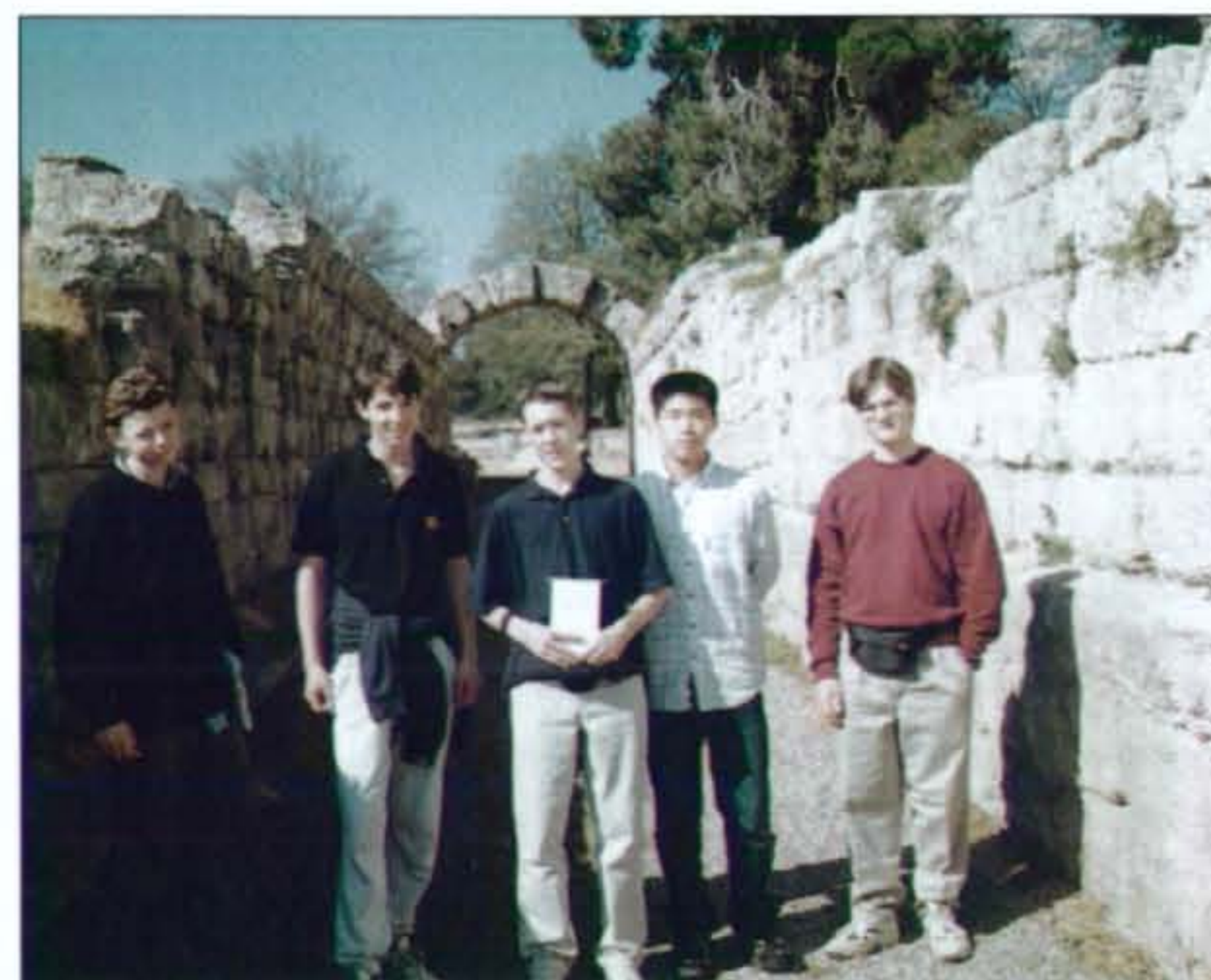
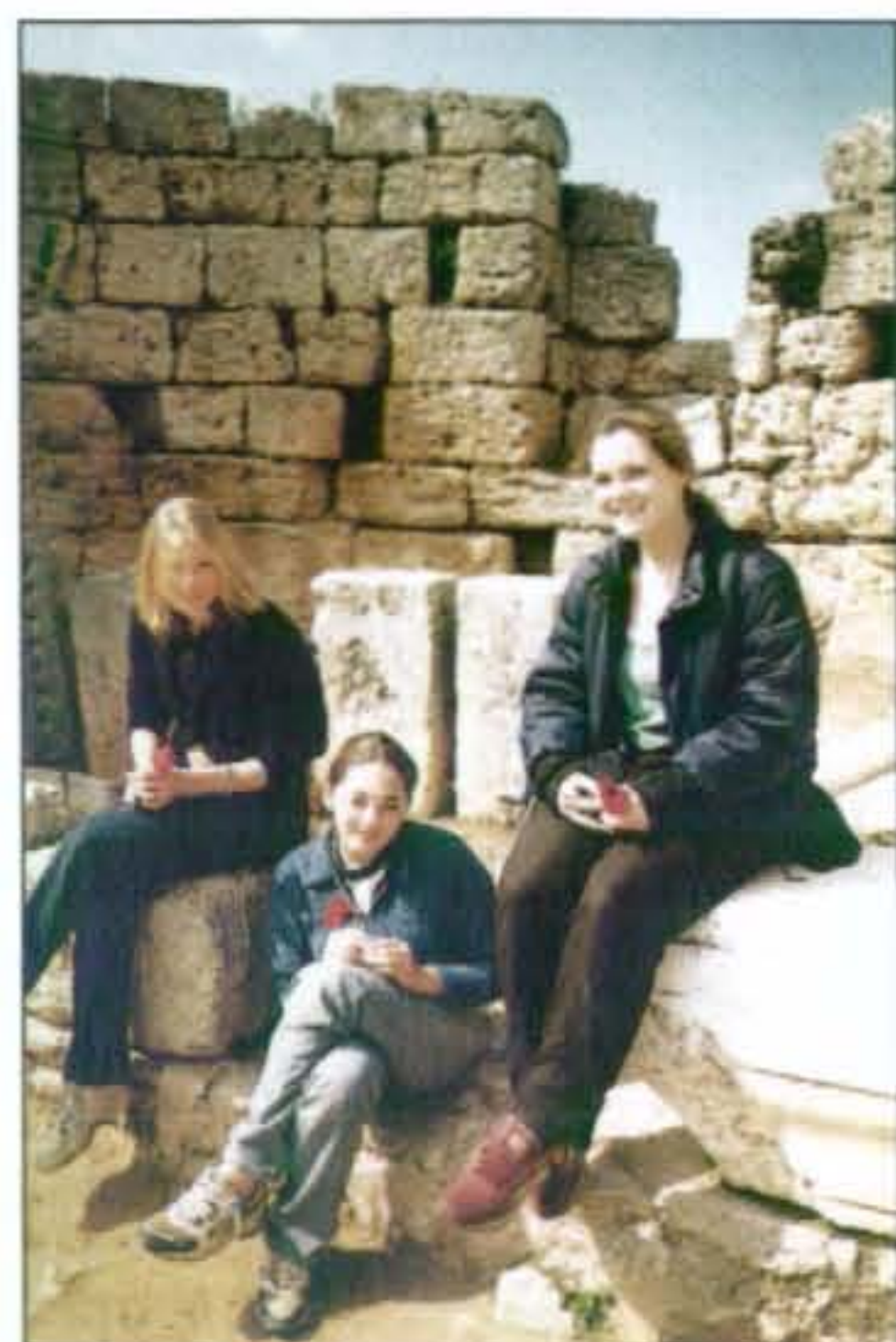
We landed early morning. There were thirty-one of us making the eight-day odyssey. Half the time was to be spent in Athens, the rest on a coach tour of important classical sites.

The ancient world is never far from its modern successor in Athens. Drive the short distance from Athens airport into the city shortly before dawn and there will be Athene's rock, the Acropolis, floodlit, welcoming, reminding one of Pericles and the Fifth Century BC, when one small city-state developed a revolutionary concept called democracy and proceeded to explore ideas which subsequently became the basis for western civilisation.

Later that day we duly climbed the Acropolis and admired its temples with many hundreds of other tourists. We renewed this pilgrimage the next day too, meeting in the Acropolis Museum many of the statues which feature in the Greek Art and Architecture textbook. But this time it was a personal encounter, a One To One as in Ian Wright's TV commercial. Who would you most like to have a one to one with? A Caryatid? Peplos Kore? As exciting in their way as Elvis and Martin Luther King. So many korai there, statues of young girls dedicated to Athene. Young men too, like Kritios Boy, who had glinted briefly in the Greek sunshine until the Persians came and sacked the city. And marbles from the Parthenon itself, which had eluded Lord Elgin, to remind us that the defeat of the Persians led to the golden age.



Top and clockwise:
 Mount Lycabettos, Athens
 Epidaurus
 Olympia
 On the Acropolis, Athens, the Parthenon in the background
 Corinth
 Delphi
 Photos:
 H. Irving and Andreas Gross



Down in the agora, the old Athenian market-place, we were constantly aware of the Acropolis towering above us, just as Pericles' Athenians must have been, when Pheidias' gigantic open-air statue of the goddess glittered brightly above them. But above all it must have been the Parthenon, in all its pentelic marble glory, which told the Athenians that they were special, children of an all-powerful city. It told them that the bully boys of Persia had been defeated, that Athens now was the champion of freedom and that this very freedom had liberated intellectual and cultural energies in a way the world had never seen. But it also hinted of aggressive imperialism, that the freedom fighters of today were to be the bullies of tomorrow.

We discovered modern Athens being bored and drilled. Excavations in countless public squares in the cause of the city's first underground railway. It has produced a wealth of new archaeological finds. Not far from one such dig lies the famous Theatre of Dionysus, where the plays of Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides were first performed and drama, as we know it, was born. Equidistant is the choregic monument of Lysicrates, a wonderfully preserved memorial of graceful columns, put up to celebrate a theatrical triumph. Meanwhile the modern drama of Athens goes on, day by day. Tragedy and comedy side by side, as in Dionysus' Theatre.

Take a bus round central Athens and you will swing past glimpses of imperial Rome, not Greece. One moment, towering temple columns, the next, a formal gateway, both reminders of the Emperor Hadrian who embellished the city which his Roman ancestors had long ago won by force of arms. "Captive Greece took Rome captive," wrote one poet. It is a warning to us to value and protect our cultural heritage. The Arch of Hadrian and Temple of Zeus speak volumes. One highlight was unexpected, off the beaten track. We had read that the railway excavations had uncovered part of Aristotle's old Lyceum. But it was hard to find. Eventually we stared, uncomprehendingly, at a building site.

Here, perhaps, Aristotle once had taught. An old man approached, a flower-seller, smiling but with not many teeth. "We are looking for Aristotle's school," we explained. "We think it's here." The smile widened in the cracked face.

"We share a common culture," he replied, nodding meanwhile assent to the successful end of our search. Clearly delighted at our pilgrimage, he gave us a flower and would accept no reward. "Welcome to Athens," he added with simple dignity. We were sad to leave the living echoes of Athenian history, though glad to be relieved of the noisy, choked streets, as we began our coach tour, with the red-headed Smara as our guide. We were her first English party, and it sometimes showed. But if she was sad to be leaving her boy friend behind, we were excited to be out of the city and into the countryside. Past Thebes we drove, city of seven gates, vainly searching the rock-strewn countryside for the body of Polynices or a sighting of the sphinx. Up we went into the foothills of mountains like Parnassos, snow-capped and sunlit. Our first night's stay was at Apollo's sanctuary, Delphi, high in the mountains, once visited by those seeking the god's oracular response, now by coaches like our own. The little village's disco would not have excited the sibyl. But she would surely have approved of the museum. It held important statues for us. The sanctuary itself left everyone awestruck.

Next day we descended to the gulf of Corinth through many a precipitous olive grove, a drive of spectacular views.

We crossed the gulf in a ferry called The Argonaut. A cold wind blew, the seas rolled, but no harpies attacked. Ashore on the Peloponnese, we drove south to Olympia, the second night's stop. We explored the sanctuary and stadium of Olympia early the next morning. It was rain-fresh and sunny, wonderfully empty too of fellow tourists. There was much talk of 776 BC and the first official Olympic games. Inside the fine museum we paid homage to Hercules, splendid metopes of whose labours once adorned the nearby Temple of Zeus. Equally impressive were the statues from the temple's pediment, illustrating the story of Oenomaus and Pelops, a tale of murder and dirty tricks.

We later crossed the central mountains of the Peloponnese, passing through Arcadia before approaching, from on high, the gulf of Argos. Past Argos and Tiryns we stopped at Epidaurus to look at the finely preserved theatre and the sanctuary of the healing god, Asclepius. The night was spent at Tolo, a small and pleasant seaside resort, but the wind was up and dancing in the disco preferable to bathing. From the hotel's dining room was a haunting view of the gulf of Argos, its waters lapping at the hotel's foundations.

On the journey back to Athens we stopped at Corinth, with its Greek and Roman remains. Here St Paul had lived for eighteen months and we saw the platform from which he is said to have spoken to the Corinthians. Above us was the high mountain of Acro-Corinth, with its once famous temple of Aphrodite, but there were no volunteers to scale its heights. We stopped too at the Corinth Canal, a late nineteenth-century construction, four miles long. Several times in the classical world attempts had been made to dig a canal here, obviating the need to push ships along a road on rollers. Nero had inaugurated work with a golden pickaxe and brought up 6,000 slaves to do the job, only to fall from power at the critical moment.

Past Eleusis, Megara and the island of Salamis we travelled before our return to the Stanley Hotel in Odysseus Street. We had one final day in Athens, in which we scaled Mt Lycabettos and visited Sounion with its famous Temple of Poseidon. It was time to start for home with Monarch Airlines. It was time too for the final entries in our diaries: "Athens is a city with environmental problems," one concluded, "but blessed with its citizen body, past and present. Materially it may be less well off than most of Europe's capitals. But spiritually it seems stronger. Its people possess (or, rather, inherit) genuine concern for others. This reminds us that to the ancient Greeks the word "xenos" remarkably meant both "stranger" and "friend". It is a reminder too of Athene, up there on her hill. Wisdom, culture and a deep humanity are hers, just as much as the spear and the helmet. Her temple on the Acropolis is no empty symbol. She lives on in the hearts of her people."

Visiting Athene's city were Belinda McCrea (co-leader), Paula Bello, James Pile, Andreas Gross, Al Barne, Charles Bell, Jacques Bingham, Jane Collingwood, Davina Combes, Kate Copper, Toby Dixon, Nina Elliott, Simon Forster, Will Gambarini, Tom Gamble, Alex Janson, Taro Koka, Alistair Lockhart Smith, Alex McMicking, Will Morley, Patrick Pearce, Lorien Pilling, Emily Pritchard-Gordon, Matt Rader, Dominic Spencer-Churchill, Emma Thomson, Nadine Talalla, James Vane-Tempest, Ed Wainright-Lee and James Wilsey.

AGM

THE MCELWEE TRAVEL SCHOLARSHIP

The McElwee Travelling Scholarship celebrates the memory of Bill McElwee and his wife Patience. Bill was an outstandingly gifted teacher, a historian and author of distinction, whose enthusiasm and energy extended far beyond the classroom. Except for the period of the war, in which he served with distinction and was awarded the Military Cross, he was History Tutor at the School from 1932 to 1962. The Scholarship was set up after his death in 1978 with money subscribed by many former pupils and friends in gratitude for the understanding, support and encouragement received while at Stowe and often long afterwards. It was the special memory of the school trips he arranged to Europe that provided the inspiration for the Travelling Scholarship.

Under the dedicated and careful hand of the Trustees - David Part, Colin Anson and now John Wates (all Old Stoics) and Harriet Hall (the daughter of Bill and Patience) - the Scholarship has provided a wonderful opportunity for Stoics to plan, then carry out a cultural trip to somewhere in Europe. It is a well established tradition that, on their return, the travellers report back to the Trustees by means of a school lecture in the Music Room. Since the first scholarships were awarded in 1980, when Christopher Krabbe and Simon Roberts travelled to Florence and Rome in search of Michelangelo, some 73 Stoics have benefited and between them have received nearly £33,000. This represents a remarkable tribute to the esteem and affection in which Bill and Patience were held.

The Scholarship has supported a wide variety of trips and has allowed the definition of what constitutes Europe to be flexible when there is a suitably exciting plan. The aim throughout has been to encourage and support as many Stoics as possible to undertake a cultural journey. The variety of expeditions undertaken is clear evidence of the success of this policy: Minoan Crete, the Loire Chateaux, Renaissance Italy (Rome, Florence, Venice), the castles of Mad Ludwig of Bavaria, Alexander the Great in Turkey, Xerxes in Greece, the Pilgrimage route to Santiago di Compostella, Cezanne's life in Provence, First World War battlefields, the Baroque cities of Munich, Prague and Vienna, in the footsteps of Jesus in the Holy land, the campaigns of Garibaldi in Italy, landmarks of revolution in St Petersburg and Moscow, Roman remains in Tunisia, the Holocaust sites in Eastern Europe, the Inca Trail, nomadic culture in Mongolia and in the footsteps of Livingstone in Zimbabwe.

This year has been no exception in terms of the variety and quality of the travels undertaken. William Bloomfield and Georgina Levinson followed the trail of William Kent on his Grand Tour in Italy. They came back with a wealth of beautiful slides drawn from Rome, Florence, Sienna and Venice. All seemed to be taken on days with deep blue skies, brilliant sunshine and sharp summer light. They were able to illustrate the clear influence of Italy on Kent's work at Stowe. Richard Prentice and Max Rader travelled to the Eastern European cities of Prague, Budapest and Warsaw. Their story told of endless bus journeys, of sore feet from much walking, of the artistic and architectural richness of these ancient European cities and of the impact of change since the collapse of communism. Chesney Clark and Simon Part had planned an investigation of Christianity in Iceland. Sadly, their journey was seriously disrupted by the failure of British Airways to fly their bicycles to Iceland on time. Such is the lot of the traveller. However, they showed good humour and fortitude and adjusted their plan to what was achievable under the circumstances. The strangeness of the 'white nights' and the fun of bathing in hot springs will be memories they will not soon forget. The last pair were Armand David and Roy Chambers. They went in search of the Holocaust in Poland and returned with a most moving collection of slides and a talk that successfully balanced the humour of some of their travelling experiences with awe at the immensity of the horror they were describing. The slide that will always remain in my memory was of Treblinka where there are 17,000 standing stones, each stone representing a life taken, each and every day of the existence of the camp. It was bleak, so very bleak. Yet, in their variety of shape and colour, and even in their very silence, the stones provided a fitting memorial to the richness and dignity of the culture that was destroyed in this terrible place.

The Scholarship is a wonderful institution. It provides Stoics with a chance to organise and create a cultural adventure of their own. In this age of the pre-packaged tour and even the pre-packaged adventure, it is all the more important that there remain opportunities for Stoics to do something a little different, to have to use their own initiative, to experience the excitement of sorting out problems on their own and, above all, to be able to meet other cultures and other societies face to face.

PVC



Left: Armand David in beautiful Krakow
Below: Roy Chambers in downtown Warsaw



NEW YEAR IN ST PETERSBURG



The comfortable Lufthansa 737 was brought to a cautiously gentle halt on an icy runway in the blackness of a midwinter Russian night. Then two dollars to use an airport trolley and very nearly a great deal more to re-possess Mrs. Smith's expensive perfume from the customs guards and their dogs. But our Russian hosts gave us a warm welcome and we were quickly driven away from the drab airport through the snow to our various hosts.

Each morning we met up at the elegant House of Friendship just where the Nevsky Prospekt (St. Petersburg's magnificent main thoroughfare) crosses the Fontanka River by means of the graciously spectacular Anickov Bridge. There were twelve in our party: 6 staff (3 ladies and 3 gentlemen) and 6 Stoics (again, 3 ladies and 3 gentlemen). Major Philip Cottam led our party with intrepid *sang froid* and a military precision matched only by the superb organisation of our Russian guides, Frieda, Nina and Pasha, all of whom



Top and clockwise:
 The Winter Palace
 Palace Square during the festive season
 Cathedral of the Sacred Blood
 Birthday celebrations: the Stowe party in St Petersburg



were highly knowledgeable, spoke wonderful English and could not do enough to help us. Occasionally their help was needed, as when Miss Greatwood repeatedly introduced herself to the surface of the Petersburg pavements with forceful intimacy as she discovered the unfriendly phenomenon of black ice (you would have thought that being a teacher of science...), or when a policeman mistakenly attributed William Ritchie's inimitable expression of abstract intensity to the consumption of illegal substances, or when Chris Davis and the same Will Ritchie made the unpleasant discovery that their clothes had been taken hostage during a domestic dispute in the apartment of their hostess.

The temperature varied from an appropriate -5°C during the early part of the visit to an unseasonal thaw which astonished the natives.

Our first full day was New Year's Eve which is taken very seriously indeed in Russia. Various Grandfather Frosts said nice things to Russian children and bequeathed friendly and, surely, innocent smiles to Polly Viccars and Isobel Wield (even when the latter threw snowballs at passing residents; who, one wonders, was her intended target?) There were fir trees and decorations and festive lights and banners in the street wishing us all 'С НОВЫМ ГОДОМ'.

On that morning, we visited Vasilyevsky Island and enjoyed a commanding view across the frozen Neva to the Winter Palace and the entire panorama of splendidly restored 18th Century palaces along the south bank of the river. After visiting Palace Square and seeing the Winter Palace in its peppermint green and white proportioned immensity, we saw a New Year production of Tchaikovsky's 'Nutcracker Suite' in the well appointed Maly Theatre.

We all spent New Year itself with our host families. Mr. Cottam and Mr. Farquhar were particularly fortunate in being taken to the Serov family's Dacha out in the countryside where the New Year was brought in in friendly and civilised company with vodka, caviar, smoked salmon and spectacular fireworks in the snow. Uncontrollable hilarity was occasioned when Boris Yeltsin came on to the television to wish us 'С НОВЫМ ГОДОМ' from the Kremlin in Moscow. New Year's morning provided the opportunity for a breathtakingly beautiful walk among the fir trees and the snow of the Russian countryside before a delicious lunch.

Other members of the party had different experiences. Mrs. Smith and Mr. Roberts were spared the all-night rave-up with which they thought they had been threatened ('dancing till the dawn', which in St. Petersburg in the winter, is after 9.30 am!). Jerome Starkey had his hat appropriated by a policeman (what is it with Stoic boys and St. Petersburg policemen?) and was forced at gunpoint by a 'New Russian' psychopath to choose roses for the psychopath's girl friend who was possibly Jerome's hostess. Will Ritchie spaced out his way to a real all night party with Chris there to keep an eye on him, and the girls seemed to spend part of New Year's morning, at least, waiting for Mr. Right on the Dostoyevskian staircase of a tenement (Will Ritchie would have made a good Raskolnikov).

The next day we set off for the nearby town of Pushkin, distinguished by the fabulous Summer Palace of Catherine the Great: Eighteenth Century Baroque, blue and white, with stunning interiors of gold and corresponding inlaid marquetry: gold domes and white balconies overlooking the snow-bound park with its sledges and horses.

We were next taken by coach to the St. Peter and St. Paul fortress and cathedral, built on an island in the Neva, surrounded by massive fortifications, and providing a commanding view of the Winter Palace across the river. Here, prisoners were held in solitary confinement during Tsarist autocracy. The cells were surprisingly large but the separating walls were thick. It was terribly cold as we stepped on to the quays and promontories projecting into the frozen Neva, with a biting wind sweeping in from the Baltic. Lunch was welcome in our Palace: Borsch and salmon, preceded in my case by a large Ruski vodka!

We then met various charming people from the St. Petersburg Association for International Co-operation, all of whom were extremely interesting and spoke excellent English.

It is impossible here to begin to do justice to our all too fleeting visit to the Hermitage. The rooms, the furniture and the paintings are all collectively breath-taking, as is the exterior of the building, green, white and gold, fronting the frozen Neva, with the vast and beautiful Palace Square behind. There are 3 million precious items in the Hermitage.

Afterwards, the Stowe party and our two young Russian guides surprised Mr. Farquhar with a sudden and wholly delightful Birthday party in the House of Friendship.

We then went to the beautiful and famous St. Petersburg Philharmonic Hall with its crystal chandeliers and fine interior. A little disappointingly, it chanced to be an organ concert with Bach and Cesar Franck played somewhat mechanically. One was left to imagine hearing Tchaikovsky's Sixth Symphony or some such in such a venue.

The first treat of the next day took us to the wonderful palace housing the Museum of Russian Art: treasures of Eighteenth Century portraiture and Nineteenth Century Impressionism which rival those of Britain and France respectively but which we have never before had an opportunity to see.

On our final day, we visited St. Isaac's Cathedral, the wonderfully opulent Baroque edifice of Peter the Great, with malachite pillars of deepest green, arches of deep dark blue lapis lazuli, gold and marble and stupendous mosaics: the work of 50,000 serfs to the glory of the Tsar and Russia, with, however, as so often in such buildings, little sense of God.

We saw Lenin's statue, still politely preserved outside the Finlandski Railway station, and then we visited the magnificent memorial to the 900 day siege of Leningrad between 1941 and 1944. It is deeply moving in its dignity. One passes black iron statues of the defending heroes and then descends to a large subterranean chamber with a record of the victims' names. Beautiful mosaics depicting the struggle and the heroism extend along the entire wall at each end. One million people died: the longest siege with the greatest number of fatalities in history.

We had a happy and uneventful journey back and can only thank Mr. Cottam for arranging such a remarkable and enjoyable visit to St. Petersburg.

PASF

THE TIEN SHAN

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We however decided to stay put, hoping for a window in the weather, which would allow us to get to the summit the next morning. That night we didn't get much sleep because of the high winds and cheap Russian vodka – but by the morning the skies were clear. That morning we left the tent at about five o'clock with only the bare essentials, and proceeded along the ridge to the base of the final summit slope. After 130 metres of 50° technical ice climbing, I reached the summit, relieved but satisfied – I was the first to the summit. I was given the privilege of naming it, and decided upon "Sububa".

After a day of recuperation at base camp, we managed to obtain a ride on a helicopter that was dropping in supplies and rescuing a climber from another expedition with pulmonary oedema (a fluid build up in the lungs), a form of acute mountain sickness. From the helicopter we were able to do a reconnaissance of possible objectives.

For my second ascent, Sinan, Dawn, Vladimir and myself proceeded up the glacier, aiming for a spectacular pyramidal peak on the Chinese border and began our ascent with the usual alpine start. At the foot of the mountain we were already as high as our previous peak. To begin our ascent we first had to cross a crevasse field. During our tra-

verse both Sinan and I found the ground giving way beneath us and found our feet dangling in a dark and uninviting void. There were several unnerving moments on the climb but eventually we reached the summit at 3.00 p.m. This was a little late, making our descent rather more dangerous due to the melting snow. The summit (c.5200m) was spectacular, with only enough room for one person at a time to position themselves precariously with one foot in China and the other in Kyrgyzstan. As the peak had never been climbed Vladimir left an offering before we descended to our high camp.

Our final objective was a peak in China. The approach however became increasingly problematic, culminating in a rock fall. Seeing a large boulder coming towards me I managed to dart out of its path. Dawn on the other hand was not so fortunate. The boulder struck her leg knocking her over, and, as I was roped to her, I followed suit. This incident terminated the day's fun, forcing us back to camp.

We descended to base camp for a departing feast of fresh lamb (complete with eyeballs – another delicacy) which we had acquired live from a nomadic herder in the plains. This was accompanied by vodka, as every meal was, even breakfast on some occasions. Then began the long, hair-raising journey home that I feel was more risky than the climbing itself.

TOM BELL

EUROPEAN STUDIES TRIP TO PARIS 98

From Thursday 22nd to Sunday 25th of January the lower sixth European Studies group attended a conference in Paris held by the European Study Tours group and the European Movement UK.

There were a range of speakers addressing various issues. First the director of the European Movement UK, Peter Luff, spoke to us about the history and background of the EU. The second speaker, Lord Cobbold, is the Managing Director of Lyttonn Enterprises, a company which arranges concerts all over Europe. He stressed the value of the single currency. This was the most interesting speech of all, in my opinion, since he looked at both sides of the argument. Even as a Euro-sceptic I found his views very persuasive. The third presentation was given by two speakers from the University of London. Anne-Marie Martin is the Director of the Careers Advisory Service. She informed the audience about the possibilities of studying and working in the EU. This opened my eyes to a new avenue of possibilities in two years time. Her co-speaker, a modern linguist undergraduate, gave a witty and informative address about the six months he spent living in Spain and gave some insight into tribulations and pleasures of the Englishman abroad.

A balance to the right wing speakers was provided by the General Secretary of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions. He argued strongly that the Social Chapter should be accepted by the British government to boost the power of trade unions here.

The Power of Creativity and business in Europe was the topic of the final presentation by Guy Browning. The audience was involved in a number of tasks to make them solve various problems. This was the most enjoyable part of the conference and his jokes made everybody smile. The audience were allowed to ask a panel of guests questions about Europe. There was an MP from each of the three main parties plus Peter Luff and Bill Jordan. The questions ranged from the single currency to the whole European question. This was very useful to understanding the AS-level course in European Studies that we are studying and we also managed to see some of the sights of Europe, as well as sampling the local cuisine and culture – and all in French, of course.

RICHARD BRIGG

THE MEP IN ITALY

When approached to be in the Model European Parliament (MEP), I was curious as to what it involved but felt that I may not know enough about Europe to qualify. I knew it contained fifteen countries and I knew that it was advantageous, in most aspects, to these countries; even to us. However, being one of the majority of mild Eurosceptics in England, I later discovered that this dubiousness was due to a lack of knowledge, not a superiority over all other countries and cultures.

Having been chosen, Lucy Francis and I decided that we must put all our efforts whole-heartedly into the project if it was going to be a success, which we did and which it was. We arrived at the airport where we met Miss James and Mr Delaney, who were to be in charge of our delegation, full of excitement and curiosity towards what the next week would hold. Once we met our delegation our minds were set at ease as we realised that the eight other people from various public schools shared our feelings of nervousness and excitement.

We spent the night in Fanano sat round a camp fire with the other fourteen countries, singing traditional songs from each country. So when the UK were asked to sing, we chose the obvious tune: 'Wonderwall' by Oasis, which went down rather well with the others. We went to bed in our hotel after a long day's travelling and a long night's bonding.

The next day was one of the most enjoyable and beneficial days and we hadn't even started talking about European issues yet. It was a beautiful, sunny day in the mountains and we rose early to catch the fresh mountain air at its best, because we had to for team-building exercises and in order to meet our committees. We were split into our respective committees, containing one member from each country's delegation. Thus there were ten committees containing fifteen people each. Mine was a very interesting group; it had to be with a title like "Youth, Culture, Education and the Media". I was amazed by the fluent English of the other members, embarrassed, as an amateur linguist, by the generally true accusations that the British are lazy, regarding getting to know other languages and cultures, and shocked when a Danish girl corrected one of my grammatically inaccurate statements!

At the end of the day we were shipped off to Carpi and individually placed with host families. This was a tense evening at first, as none of us could speak Italian, but we found that with a mixture of French, Spanish, English and a lot of



At the MEP in Italy. Particular thanks must go to Miss James, Mr Delaney, Mrs Andrew, the Headmaster and, of course, Anna van Sminia and the MEP foundation.

sign language and strange noises, we got on very well. The families were extremely hospitable and helped to make the week run smoothly.

Monday: 'The Official opening of the MEP Italy'

It started off with speeches from Mrs van Sminia, secretary general of the MEP, the Heads of the MEP and each of the Heads of the delegations. The idea of the speeches was to inform and educate the countries about each other. Our head of delegation gave a very clear and not unsceptical speech which did not help us with our 'Euro-bonding'. Later our sceptical ideas wore off when we separated for our committee meetings.

Our committee discussions became quite heated, which made them very interesting as we were forced to create resolutions on our topics.

Tuesday: 'Committee Meetings, a break for lunch, more Committee Meetings'

This was our last chance to get it right. After a long day of discussion, resolution-making and rejoicing, as the British delegate, I was called upon to check every resolution for errors and type them out.

Wednesday: 'Middle of the Week, time to relax'

We left for Rome with our UK delegation, sharing a bus with the Swedes and the Portuguese. We all got on extremely well and started to see a Euro-bond forming. After a tour of the capital, including the Vatican, we had dinner in our Embassy: Shepherd's pie and peas - a good ol' British meal. We were made to feel very welcome and offered political advice from the head of the Embassy on our separate issues. We stayed the night in a convent which was a cultural eye-opener for all of us: I am positive that there was fizzy water coming out of the taps.

Thursday: 'A slice of the good life'

We had breakfast and went to see His Excellency, the President of the Italian Republic, which was a great privilege and the experience of a life time, which also could be said for our following evening in Rome where we checked out the local delicacy: Pizza!

Friday: 'General Assembly'

We departed for the General Assembly in Modena, where each committee put forward its resolution to the other committees, who then discussed and voted on them. A small-scale battle, albeit good-humoured, broke out between the British and Irish on the subject of violence during sporting events, which woke everyone up and gave the day a long-lasting memory.

Saturday: 'General Assembly; part deux; le fin'

Another General Assembly for the remaining committees, this time in Bologna, and my moment of glory. I was delegated to make the speech for my committee's resolution, which ended up being passed by a significant majority. (Nothing to do with my fluency in the language, I'm sure.) This was followed by closing speeches, one of which was given by our very own Headmaster, who is president of the MEP this year.

A fantastic time was had by all and I certainly feel closer to Europe after my experiences. I honestly recommend that anyone considering joining the MEP next year does so. You will learn so much, have an unforgettable week and be involved in a scheme which you will never have the opportunity to be in again. The next MEP is in Stockholm - don't miss it.

ALEX KEMBLE.

In the first edition of *The Stoic* a pupil wrote the following letter dated 15 years ahead, imagining the changes that might have taken place by 1938.

FROM A CORRESPONDENT

Mr. Charles Collyer has communicated to us the following extracts from a letter he received a few weeks ago: it had been delayed fifteen years in the post, as will be noticed from the date.

THE ALBANY,
PICCADILLY.
July 4th, 1938.

MY DEAR COLLYER,

I am just back from a week-end at Stowe School, which you remember we visited together in the first Term of its existence, some fifteen years ago. I must admit I was amazed at the difference that these few years have wrought. You probably recollect the dismal wait at Bletchley and the slow train on to Buckingham: these are now things of the remote past, and the new L.M. & S. line takes one direct to Stowe station in seventy minutes from Euston with only two stops, at Leighton Buzzard Junction and Buckingham. Buckingham, by the way, is nowadays a thriving centre, a live place, very different from the sleepy country town we remember: it already boasts a branch of Barker's, a theatre and a fair picture-gallery. I am not saying, mind you, that these changes are all improvements. Although the railway line is well concealed and one hardly hears the noise of the trains from the immediate neighbourhood of the school buildings, it seemed to me queer to find the Gothic temple converted into railway station buildings. However, if I deplore its strangeness, I cannot deny its convenience.

On the Saturday I spent some time watching a cricket match between the School and Old Stoics: two or three of the Old Stoics I recognised as having been in the School in 1923—do you remember a right-hand medium bowler who had Rockley Wilson's action and kept a length? He was taking wickets. And there was that man whom we saw as a very small batsman make an irreproachable 0 in one of the first School matches: he made a most exhilarating forty-three with beautiful strokes all round the wicket. In the end the School won by two wickets. Incidentally I expect you saw that they beat both Harrow and Eton within ten days last month. The cricket ground is very much as it was: the turf has been extended right up to the steps of the house, leaving only a carriage-drive breadth of gravel: King George has been removed. There is an excellent pavilion on the west side of the ground with an up-to-date score-board.

On Sunday evening I went to a service in the new chapel: there is a fine organ and the singing was hearty; the music is still principally congregational, though just at the moment they have a first-rate solo boy who was let loose in a verse of a Bach Chorale tune. The chapel still looks a bit new, but time will tone it down. Later in the evening there was a combined practice of the Choral Society and the orchestra (they already have, thanks, largely, to the O.T.C., a complete band except for one trumpet and one bassoon: one of the mathematical masters plays the trombone and the Bursar's secretary takes the second clarinet). They were rehearsing Parry's 'Blest Pair of Sirens' and that new work of Brent-Smith's, and were not bad at all: the tenors were, of course, too weak and the basses too strong, but that is inevitable in a school. They rehearsed for just over an hour, and seemed to enjoy it thoroughly. I am told they have one serious concert a Term and an improvised domestic sing-song every fortnight or so. Broadcasting has, of course, done wonders in these last fifteen years to encourage and spread the appreciation of music. Out of 583 boys in the School, 313 take music in some form or another. Most of them, of course, still learn the piano, but several take the organ, the violin, &c., &c., while some learn the theory of music and the elements of composition without acquiring or attempting to acquire more than a superficial working knowledge of piano technique—which I consider an eminently sensible scheme.

I must not forget to mention the aviary and the 'zoo,' of which we saw the very tentative beginnings that Summer Term. They are now situated beside the hard tennis courts just beyond the extensive laboratories, which you can imagine are 'replete with every modern convenience.' Altogether a most flourishing and attractive place.

Yours ever,
G. M. O'NEIRATA.

One of this year's editorial committee has written a similar letter as a middle aged person returning to Stowe in its centenary year, 2023.

Little Boltons
London
January 2023

Dear Emma,

I am just back from a visit to Stowe. My goddaughter is in the 3rd form now. Did you realise that it's 25 years since we started at Stowe? I would never have thought that the old school would become completely co-educational. There have been so many changes since our time there together. From what I gather, the new headmistress really has been ringing the changes. She seems to be going down very well with the parents and governors, though the pupils think she is too strict.

The number of tourists has grown enormously since our time especially since the new M400 service station and interchange were built just beyond Chackmore. The main entrance to the school is now through the Corinthian Arch so you get a wonderful view of the South Front as you approach. The burning issue of the moment is of course the construction of the new Euro Star link with Manchester. The high speed line will pass very close to the Gothic Temple so it's a good thing that the Old Stoics Pressure Group was able to persuade the Government to put it underground for five kilometres either side of the School.

At the entrance to all the classrooms there are new fingerprint scans to open the doors and the pupils now have palmtops rather than pen or paper. When you think about all those files pads and books we used to carry around! Now they have their micro disks and minicomputers in their pockets. The teachers are also known by their first names, I doubt you'd ever hear Sir or Miss now.

Virtual reality has been introduced to the school, in the Careers Centre where it simulates different universities or GAP year projects, and in the science and design departments. Another introduction of new technology is the 3-D televisions in every house.

Of course there have been no school stage plays for some time now. The old Roxy has gone and in its place is a splendid new film studio with all the latest equipment and the Congreve production every year is a full length feature film. I saw one of them in a cinema in Piccadilly the other week. It wasn't at all bad. The Stoic talent for acting is still very much in evidence. And isn't it marvellous that George who was in that musical with you in the lower sixth was nominated for an Oscar this year.

Art is flourishing. I saw some wonderful sixth form projects, sheep in formaldehyde, that kind of art is still very much in fashion. The school is holding a huge centenary exhibition of previous and present Stoics' work. It has obviously got some quite famous artists participating. I think the critics have been very favourably impressed: I read an excellent review on Telegraph's web site.

Sport continues to be a major part of school life with numerous teams doing very well. All the pitches are up at the Bourbon now and they're all astro turf. Since these long hot summers started I expect its just too expensive to maintain the grass. The National Trust seem to be the only ones who can afford the sprinklers.

The school is putting up a new statue for the centenary in front of Chatham and the King is going to do the unveiling when he attends the centenary concert in March. He's not been too mobile since his last hip replacement, I hope he is up to the journey.

I'll look out for you at the Old Stoics Ball in the summer.

Yours ever,

SALLY

PAUL HARRIS' CLARINET QUARTET TOUR TO HUNGARY SPRING 1998

Having made an extremely early start on Saturday morning (at 4 o'clock!) we were driven to Heathrow by Mr Carpenter, and arrived in plenty of time for shopping and some breakfast. After a two and a quarter hour flight to Budapest we touched down safely after a rather bumpy ride.

At the airport we were taken to our minibus by Norburt, our excellent English speaking driver and guide. We were each given a bottle of Tokaji (the Hungarian national drink) on getting into the minibus, and after a short drive, arrived at the Hotel Bara, our home for the next 5 nights. We had all made our first impressions of the city, which in my mind seemed beautiful but ruined in the last 50 years with concrete monsters, pollution and war. We all rested for a while at the Hotel, and then were taken on a very comprehensive tour by Norby.

We managed to see many of the sights, including a square with statues of all the famous Hungarian Tribesman and Kings, the Cathedral and several other amazing architectural feats. That evening we took the tram to a typical Hungarian restaurant. Waiting for the tram was absolutely freezing, but when we arrived at the restaurant we were given the largest meals I have ever seen. We all ate veal in breadcrumbs, a very popular dish, and none of us managed to finish our plates. We returned back to the hotel by tram, and headed straight for our rooms.

Day 2, Sunday, our first chance to play out there. The day started with our first Hungarian breakfast, which was of frankfurters and little excitement. We drove to the Prentice's, the First Secretary, and ate a huge English Sunday lunch. After eating we played to a tiny audience for about half an hour as a sort of warm up. We spent a lot of the afternoon playing basketball with Robert, their nine year old.

That evening we went to a concert as part of the Budapest Spring Festival, with the Hungarian radio choir singing a variety of music. The venue was the Academy of Sciences, an amazing building, with stunning interior art and frescoes.

Monday, and a long journey to Szeged, on the Croatian border in the south. We were taken around the city to see the sights, and were then to a restaurant for Lunch, which involved 3 huge troughs of food! We returned to the Music school to experience some Kodaly teaching and a clarinet lesson. We performed for about an hour with a brilliant interpreter, and then, after exchanging addresses and giving autographs, we returned to our hotel 3 hours along the flat plains of southern Hungary.

Day 4, Tuesday, and we left at 8 in the morning to get to Székesyehérvár, the venue of our next concert. We met the headmaster of the grammar school, and were briefed on the quality of the school in an incredibly formal way. We had 40 minutes with English speaking pupils, discussing the differences between our lives, and then went to Lunch in the neighbouring school. We played after lunch, with a student as our

translator and we were each given single carnation at the end! We went around the town with Amy, the English speaking student, and returned to the hotel at about 4.30. When it was dark we went up to the Statue of Liberty at the top of the Buda hills, and looked over the Danube and Budapest, an amazing sight. We went to a very elegant restaurant, with Gypsy music, and ate an amazing 3 course meal for a ridiculously small sum of money.

Wednesday was a final full day, with 3 concerts to be performed in Budapest. We first went to Rita's school, the lady who had arranged it all that end, and performed without any warm up. Afterwards we exchanged some more addresses with some girls, and headed off for the next school in St. Andrea. We were taken there by Anna-Maria, a former Stowe teacher; it was a Franciscan school. We were told we had to perform the concert twice, which we had not been warned about, but once they were over we were sad that we had no more concerts left.

That afternoon we went to the Thermal Baths, where we experienced naturally heated baths, and then went for a quick meal in the Hotel Gellert, the Dorchester of Budapest, and ate for under £10 for all of us!!! In the evening we went to the opera house to see the ballet Don Quixote. We sat in a box for only £6.50 each, and it was an extremely thrilling experience.

On Thursday we returned by Malev airlines, to meet Dr. James and parents at Heathrow. A fabulous tour of an incredible country and city, surviving after years of war and communism.

RUPERT BURNELL-NUGENT



The Clarinet Quartet:
Rupert Burchett, Peter Rossiter, Alec Laing and Rupert Burnell Nugent.







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