

THE STOIC

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WICKETS

LAST WICKET

LAST MAN

OVER





THE STOIC

No. 197



March 1999

Editorial

Even without the additional razzmatazz of a new millennium, the advent of a new century is for all of us an exciting, once-in-a-lifetime thing. Stowe itself, of course, has seen it all before. Born in the reign of Charles II, it has already watched the dawn of three new centuries.

Each dawn has found it nursing different ambitions. In 1699 the young Stowe was full of excitement as its new owner, the future Lord Cobham, planned improvements which would make it the cynosure of all. In 1799 the Marquess of Buckingham was planning further developments, like new libraries, and, ambitious for further glory for Stowe, craved a dukedom. In 1899, three dukedoms and several bankruptcies later, the house's atmosphere was more pragmatic. After renting Stowe out to the Comte de Paris, the Baroness Kinloss had just returned to Stowe, her head full of Stowe's need for an expensive restoration programme.

In 1999 it may not be too fanciful to see something of all three of these past moments. With the recent launch of The Campaign For Stowe we may discern a similar optimism to the heady days of Cobham, share a similar desire as the Marquess for the latest in libraries and learning, and, like the doughty Baroness, similarly wish to bring to a noble building a fitting programme of conservation.

The importance to Stowe of its latest initiative cannot be overstressed. We have prefaced, therefore, traditional *Stoic* articles with a leading feature, Into The New Millennium, which outlines the ambitions of the Campaign and sets it in the context of Stowe's rich heritage.

Our next issue will come out this September and cover the academic year 1998-99. Thereafter September will be the month of the annual publication.

COVER PHOTOGRAPH:

Robert White & Adam Cottrell with their 1st XI opening partnership score against MCC.

BACK COVER PHOTOGRAPH:

The Editors (minus Emma Box)
Matthew Cumani, Laura Kaye,
Ken Yuktasevi, Sally Oliphant and Lara Bailey.

Advisory Editors: AGM and DSB
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INDEX TO CONTENTS

STOICA	
Features concerning Stowe	page 3
STOWE'S YEAR	
Reports on spring and summer, 1998	page 37
CREATIVITY	
Verse, prose, art, design, photography	page 105
OLD STOIC PAGES	
A miscellany of notable Old Stoic items	page 125

STOICA

Page 3

Into The New Millennium:

The Campaign for Stowe
The Stowe School Foundation Trust
The Stowe House Preservation Trust
George's View of the North Front
An Adventure in Education
The Genius of Stowe



Page 16 Jubilee Summer:

Foundation Day
An Arcadian Endnote
Jubilee Putter
Jubilee Speech Day
Charity Cricket



Page 23

House and Gardens:

Rotondo Under Wraps
The Magnificent Seven
Stowe's Extra Dimension



Page 28 People:

The People Page
Common Room: Valette
Obituaries: Michael Fox
Pat Neal, Brian Stephan
John Wilson





THE CAMPAIGN FOR STOWE

Parental hearts flutter? Old Stoic nerves tingle? Well-wishers' pulses race a little faster? Understandable reactions, perhaps, to the first news that a new appeal is now under way and in due course calls will be made on everyone's goodwill. But there is some reassurance to fluttering hearts and tingling nerves in the knowledge that over the years some very successful (and positively enjoyable) appeals have taken place. Wonderful things have been achieved to make this remarkable school even more remarkable.

There is a small token of this in the cover photograph of this magazine, featuring a notable opening partnership against a strong MCC XI. Though Stowe cricket has always been good, the provision of indoor nets as part of a previous Appeal has played a large part in ensuring that we have stayed competitive with some of the best cricket schools in the country. Similarly Stowe's unchanging standard of excellence in the sciences, together with a very marked enjoyment in their study, is not unconnected with a former Appeal which gave the sciences the very best of facilities. Much loyal financial support over the years has ensured that Stowe has moved forward confidently with the times.

Some schools, like some cricketers, may seem to appeal more than others. They are usually the ones least well endowed on their foundation. Stowe's founders were pioneers in the business of boarding education, aglow with the spirit of missionary zeal. They achieved great things. Stowe seemed to spring forth, like Athene from the head of Zeus, fully armed and ready at once to take her place amongst the other great ones. But Stowe, in fact, was not as fully armed as Athene. For seventy-five years indeed she has worn no aegis, for, unfortunately, when she sprang boldly forth in 1923, she was unprotected by endowment.

The consequence has been that our predecessors have had to work particularly hard to achieve the stability we enjoy today. Inevitably there have been times when attention has had to focus too much on a leaking rooftop to the detriment of other things. This situation is now being fully addressed. The Campaign For Stowe differs from all its predecessors in one important way. It seeks not only to provide improved facilities in many areas of the School's life, but also to restore and preserve the Mansion. This will be achieved by two recently-created trust funds, The Stowe School Foundation Trust and The Stowe House Preservation Trust.

THE STOWE SCHOOL FOUNDATION TRUST

Anthony Shillington, Stowe's Development Director, writes of the Campaign designed to uplift Stowe's present and re-shape its future:

THE LAUNCH OF THE TRUST

The Foundation Trust came into being on May 11th last year, the seventy-fifth anniversary of the founding of the School. A plaque to celebrate the event was unveiled that day in the North Hall by Lord Sainsbury (President of the Old Stoic Society), a symbol of the importance of The Foundation Trust in the future life of the School.

The Foundation Trust, explained Lord Sainsbury, was to "create a new and substantial endowment for the School so it is better placed than ever before to fund the necessary educational resources required in the next century to ensure the School is right in the forefront of the nation's public schools".

The Foundation Trust's first two objectives will be the building of a new academic centre to the School fitted out with the very latest technology and an endowment for new scholarships and bursaries. The Foundation Trust, moreover, will be the means in future years of implementing several further phases of the School's Centenary Plan, a blueprint of development aimed at raising Stowe, by its centenary year, to an acknowledged position of leadership in twenty-first century boarding education. "I will be ninety-five when Stowe celebrates its centenary," remarked Lord Sainsbury. "I hope very much to be around still and if I am I hope to be asked to the celebration. For those who will be there I hope they will look back to today's inauguration of The Stowe School Foundation and recognise the major contribution to Stowe's success that it has made."

PHASE ONE: THE LEARNING EXCHANGE

The rapid development of technology is revolutionising the whole business of education. For boarding schools, in particular, it offers tremendous opportunities.

The Foundation Trust's first priority, therefore, has been for a new building which can accommodate the new technology and the new style of learning which it will provoke. It is to be called The Learning Exchange, because exchange of ideas and information will be its *raison d'être*.

It was last Speech Day when the Headmaster first spoke of his ambitions regarding this building and discussed its underlying philosophy: "Not only is greater emphasis now being put on independent learning and research, but also subjects are becoming increasingly cross-curricular. The Exchange will be geographically at the heart of the School; it will bring together Information Communications Technology, the Library, independent learning, tutorial sessions and the space required for frequent staff-pupil contact. It will be a hub – at the centre of the School's activity. It will enable the frequent, easy, natural, informal contact between staff and Stoics which characterises our style as a school. This concept of ease of exchange is the most important aspect of the whole design..."

LATER PHASE ONE PLANS

Once the Learning Exchange has been funded, attention will be given to the other development requirements that the School is determined to bring to fruition over the years up to the School's centenary. Throughout this period of development, fund-raising will be taking place for an endowment for a much more generous provision of scholarships, exhibitions and bursaries than has hitherto been possible, something which should enrich the school community. The endowment will allow a larger number of scholars to enjoy the benefits of a Stowe education, pupils who will help set and reinforce the intellectual lead within their year groups. A much greater provision will also be made for helping talented all-rounders and those who offer outstanding specialist skills. The new scholarships will also compensate for the recent loss nationally of the Assisted Places Scheme.

THE TARGET

The First Phase of The Stowe School Foundation Trust's programme has an overall target of £7.5 million, to be achieved over five years. It is an ambitious programme. As the Headmaster put it last Speech Day, "Stowe is a great school. Our goal is to make it even greater."

THE CAMPAIGN APPROACH

The fundraising programme has already begun and is based on a personal approach as far as possible, rather than money being requested by letter. The purpose of this is to enable all those connected with Stowe to be approached personally regarding the plans and invited to discuss whether and how they might play their part in helping the School to achieve its goals. Some will want to come to Stowe to see for themselves what is taking place and being proposed. In the Millennium year, which is also the 75th anniversary of the Old Stoic Society, there will be a number of millennium fund-raising events and Stoics, Old Stoics, staff and parents will be asked to undertake a personal Millennium Challenge, with sponsorship backing from family and friends, to raise funds for The Stowe School Foundation Trust.



Anthony Shillington spent five years at Stowe, as a boy in Chatham under the redoubtable Alasdair Macdonald. After gaining his MA in Economics and Politics at Trinity College, Dublin, Anthony worked abroad, teaching in the Voluntary Service Overseas scheme. A career in industry (Marketing and Communications) followed, with ICI and Hoechst and Redland PLC (where he was Director of Corporate Communications), before his return to Stowe in 1996 as Development Director. In this role he is responsible for fund-raising and public relations. His two sons, Jonathan (27) and Edward (25), were at Stowe, as was his brother Colin and niece Katie.

THE STOWE HOUSE PRESERVATION TRUST

Cherry McInnes, Stowe's Development Executive, writes of the first of the six phases of conservation of the mansion and the body which now has taken it under its wing, The Stowe House Preservation Trust.

SCHOOL AND MANSION

The foundation of the School in 1923 almost certainly saved Stowe House from demolition and the landscape gardens from being lost to posterity. But the buildings taken over by the School were extremely rundown. Extensive work, funded predominantly by the School but with some help from heritage bodies and other trusts, has been carried out over the years. But the sheer scale of Stowe, with its large mansion and proliferation of important, listed garden buildings, made its maintenance and conservation a Herculean task. All the School's efforts seemed, at best, a holding operation, piecemeal repairs of ancient, vulnerable fabric continually under attack from erosion by the elements. Further substantial outside assistance was clearly essential.

Relief first came in 1989 when a large donation from an anonymous benefactor enabled the School to finance an endowment which allowed the ownership of most of the gardens, wider landscape and park surrounding Stowe House and the school buildings to be "gifted" to the National Trust. This freed the School from a responsibility towards nearly forty listed buildings for whose effective care it lacked the necessary funds. The restoration and maintenance of the House, however, remained the School's commitment.

ESTABLISHING THE TRUST

During the past decade it became increasingly clear that the full costs of the major programme of conservation which the House really needed was beyond the School's resources. A period of seventy years between restorations is the normal time-span for a country house. No major restoration work on the structure, roofs and elevation of Stowe House has been undertaken since the 1860s. (This was formally recognised when the Grade I listed building was put on the Buildings At Risk Register in 1998.) Substantial work could no longer be put off as the building had started to deteriorate at a fast rate. But the School's priority had to be the development of its educational programme. So an alternative source of funding for the restoration of the House clearly needed to be found.

On the initiative of the School The Stowe House Preservation Trust (SHPT) was established on June 30th, 1997 with a stated objective "to protect and preserve the House for the benefit of the public and the nation". The Company Secretary, Rupert Litherland (the School's Financial Director), and the Project Manager, Bob Sharp (the School's Estate Bursar), produced a six-phase programme of restoration, The Stowe House Preservation Plan (SHPP), scheduled to take between twelve and fourteen years for completion. A detailed application was made by the SHPT to the Heritage Lottery Fund for funding for Phase 1 of the SHPP: the restoration of the North Front and Colonnades. This is the largest part of the plan.

THE HERITAGE LOTTERY GRANT

The exciting news of the award of a grant of £4.9 million to The Stowe House Preservation Trust was announced on September 17th, 1998. The grant represented 75% of the cost of Phase 1 and was one of the largest grants ever made to an historic house. It became the SHPT's responsibility to raise the remaining 25% of the costs – approximately £1.6 million. Over £1 million of this sum has been raised already with the generous support of English Heritage and the Getty Grant Program.

SUBSEQUENT PHASES

Phases 2-6 of the SHPT include the Central Pavilion and South Portico (Phase 2), the South Front (Phase 3), Nugent and Power House Yard (Phase 4), Stables (Cobham) Court (Phase 5) and the State Rooms (Phase 6). Fundraising is under way and potential donors are being approached.

Substantial commitment has already been promised for Phases 2 and 3. This provides the Campaign with an excellent platform from which to raise more funds towards the restoration plans for the Central Pavilion and South Portico and for the South Front.

CHAIRMAN AND BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Lord Sainsbury's agreement to become the overall Campaign President is most welcome. It has added stature to the whole programme. Sir Nigel Mobbs has become Chairman of The Stowe House Preservation Trust and the first meeting of the Board of Trustees took place in January 1999. The SHPT Trustees take on the responsibility of the restoration of Stowe House with assistance initially provided by the School. A condition of the HLF grant requires the School to enter into an agreement whereby it will lease Stowe House for 99 years to the Stowe House Preservation Trust.

PUBLIC ACCESS

Increased public access to House and Landscape gardens is an integral part of the scheme. The conditions of grants already received from English Heritage require the House to be open to the public for twenty-eight days a year. Under the new arrangements the House will be open for at least one hundred days a year. This increased public access will be handled sensitively and in a manner which will not adversely affect the use of the House by the School. It will be monitored carefully at all times.

THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE

There is still much to do before the works actually commence. The money involved in all aspects of the project requires tendering through the European Procurement System. This will take time. It is likely that the scaffolding will be erected – the first visible signs of Phase One – in early Spring 2000. The work will be undertaken in discrete sections to minimise disturbance to the School.



"We've often thought, my nag and I,

King George's

view of the

North Front



what a fine sight the North Front is



especially when the sun is shining



on mansion, colonnades and screen wall.



And even when it's not.



But if we look more closely,



our hearts sink at the



obvious signs



of dilapidation.



Great news therefore about



the Stowe House Preservation Trust



which is already winning



big support



in its bid to



improve the quality of



our life-style."

As The Campaign For Stowe seeks to put school and mansion on the best of footings for the next century, the Headmaster writes on the virtue of looking back as well as forwards.

AN ADVENTURE IN EDUCATION

Stowe began, as it meant to continue, with panache. Whereas most new public schools have been conformist and purpose-built, Stowe's founders broke the mould and opted for the purchase and adaptation of an eighteenth-century country house. It was a highly innovative idea at the time, something of an educational adventure, even if in 1923 the cultural significance of the house and grounds was only partly appreciated. Today, with Stowe recognised as a heritage site of international importance, the working relationship between modern boarding school and historic country house is even more significant. The educational adventure marches on, its potential for enriching young lives greater than ever.

In the Jubilee Year of 1998 we celebrated seventy-five years of adventure. There have naturally been different emphases in different periods and, as in all adventure stories, some chapters have had happier endings than others. As The Campaign For Stowe suggests, we are still searching for where the rainbow ends. But if, as is possibly the case, the treasure at the end of the rainbow exists mostly in the pleasures of the search, then it is unsurprising that so much of real value has been gained already. Brian Stephan's recent history of Stowe, *Hearsay and Memory*, exemplifies this. It is a chronicle of remarkable achievements and a vindication of the bold, pioneering ideas of Stowe's founders.

But *tempora mutantur*, as Brian was known to observe; times change. Those gloriously leisured days of the School's early years are long gone. So too the old jest of our rivals that we were but a glorious country club. The pressures of modern life have been with Stowe awhile. And whilst we try hard to avoid that contagious public school malady, League-table-itis, nonetheless there is need for rigorous academic strategies if each and everyone's full potential is to be realised. Further intensity is added to our life by the School's strong determination to play a leading part in the technological revolution which is now sweeping education briskly forwards. The projected Learning Exchange is a key expression of this desire to stay ahead of the field, to be amongst the front-runners rather than the also-rans.

In the midst of all this intensity and zeal Stowe's special setting has a crucial role to play. It helps us to keep things in perspective; to hold on to what we believe to be most of value in a boarding education; to interpret "qualifications for life" in the fullest, richest of ways; to look for the fruits of the spirit as well as the intellect; and to assimilate, perhaps, a little of the sophisticated approach to living which that great entrepreneur, the first Baron Cobham, bequeathed to his descendants. Stowe's eighteenth-century intellectual and cultural prowess can be inspirational three hundred years on. We can learn much from the vigour with which Stowe played its part in the nation's development at some key stages in its history; from its independence of thought, its enjoyment of life and its love of beauty.

The Campaign For Stowe naturally directs our thoughts forwards. But it is also a good occasion for us, as heirs of a remarkable school in a unique setting, to indulge in some retrospection; to make sure we fully appreciate the worth of our inheritance; and to identify the special qualities in both the School and Mansion which we now seek to enhance and protect for the benefit of present and future generations.



THE "GENIUS" OF THE PLACE

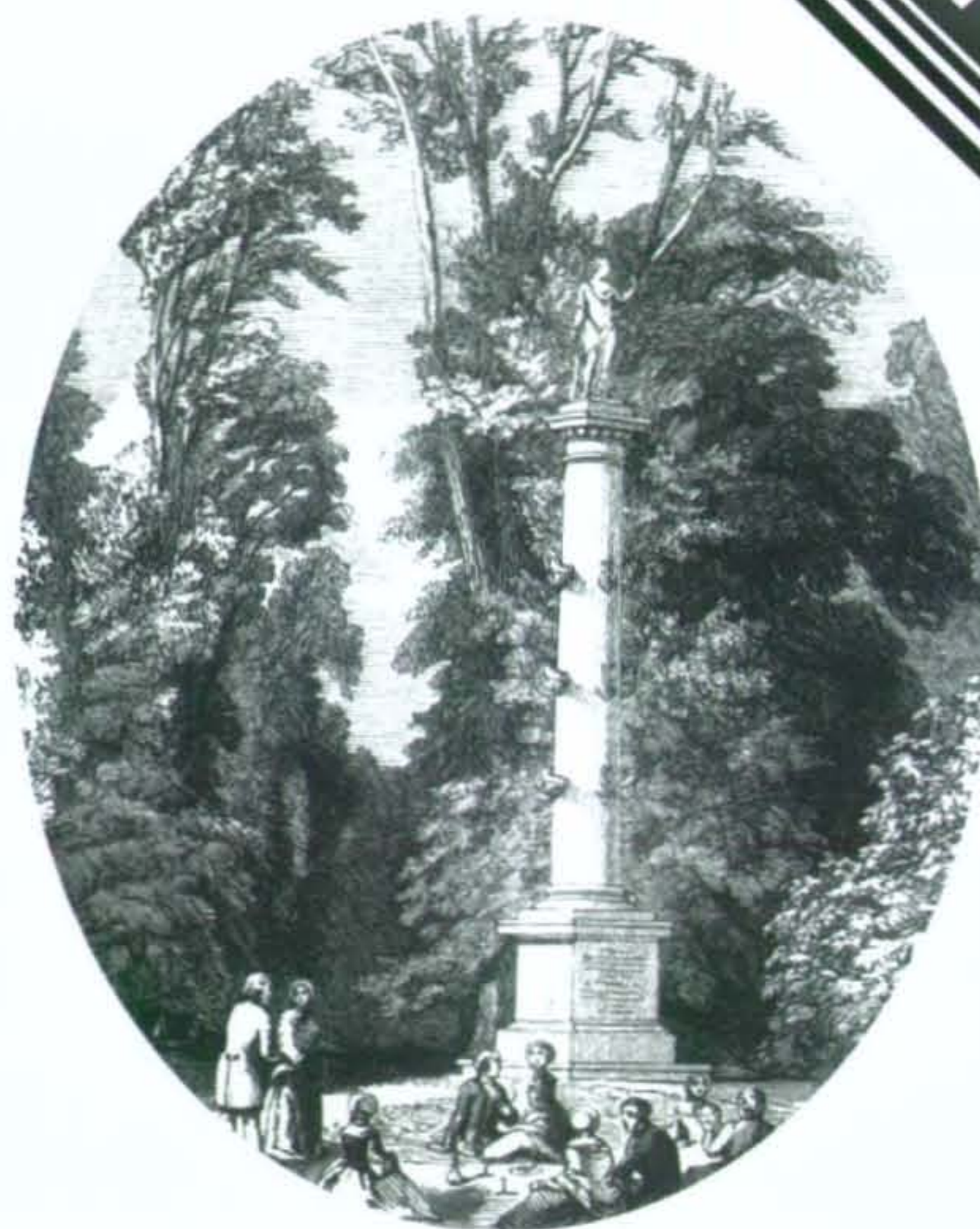
Tony Meredith takes a subjective look at the School's unique heritage

A WORK OF ART

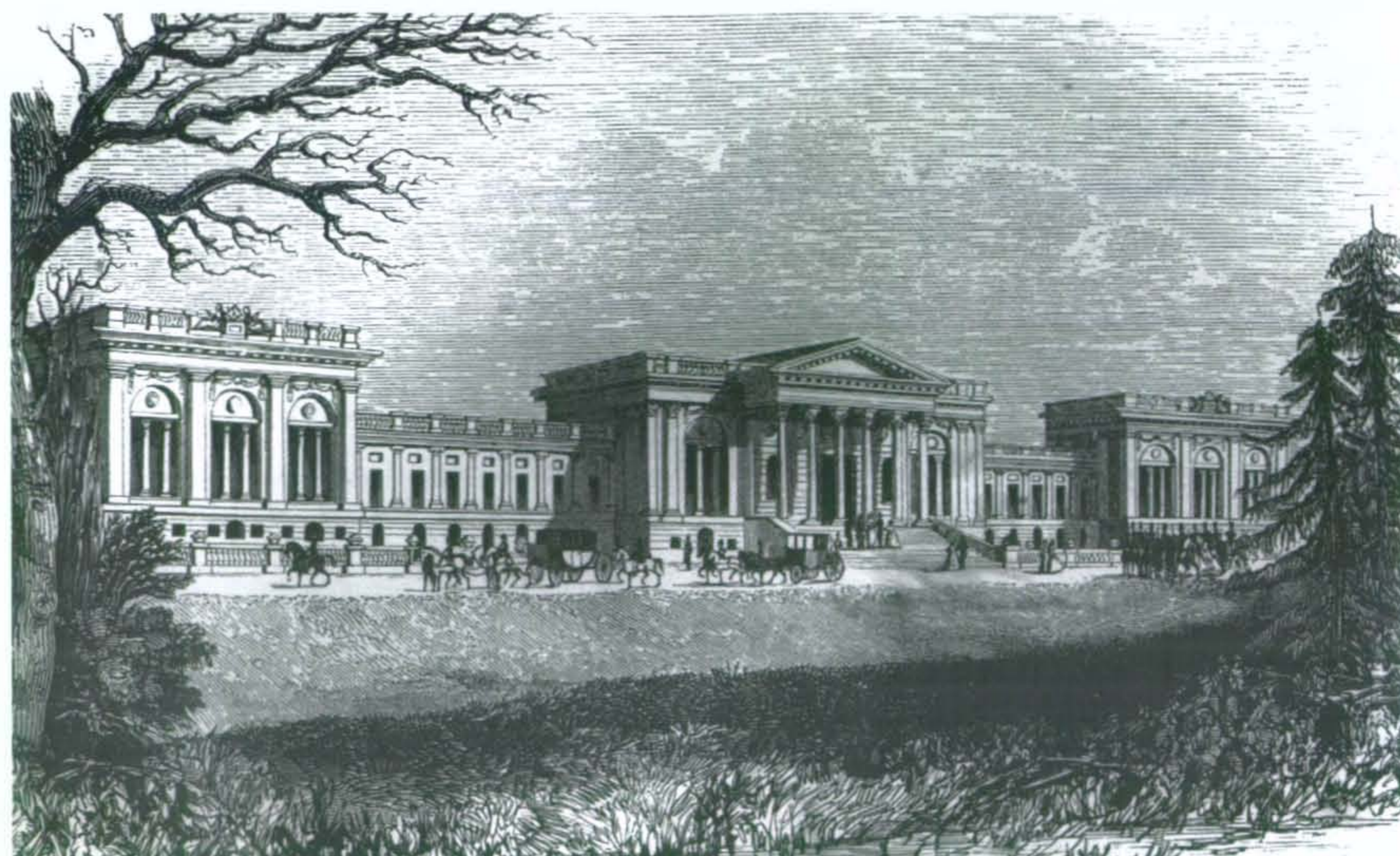
In places like Stowe, declared Henry Fielding in *Tom Jones*, the days were too short for the ravished imagination. Perhaps not every third-former in class on a dark, wintry Friday evening might necessarily agree. But we can all see what Fielding was getting at. Stowe is a very special place. In a multitude of ways it excites the imagination.

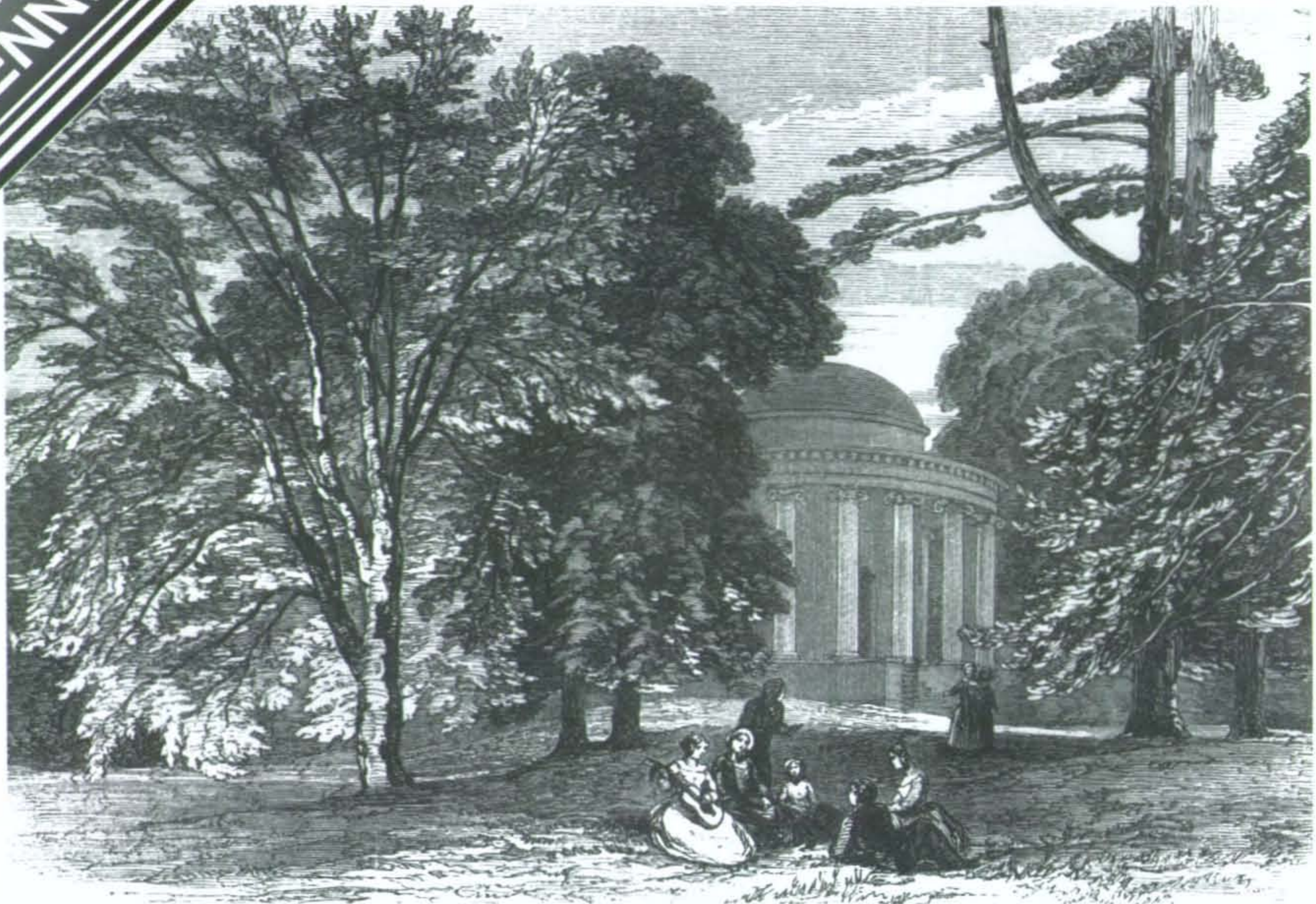
Earlier this century, however, it enjoyed distinctly fluctuating fortunes. In the 1920s the atmosphere was not particularly reverential towards country houses and only the advent of the School saved Stowe from demolition. One of its saviours was the architect Clough Williams-Ellis. "Stowe is a unique historical document," he wrote in *The Spectator*, "which we cannot afford to lose." Fortunately the philistines were defeated and by the mid-century, with the School firmly established, it was time to take stock of where it might be going. One of the most ambitious for its future was the Shakespearean scholar G. Wilson Knight, who saw that the combination of school and setting had unique possibilities. "Stowe is a window in the opaque surface of contemporary Britain," he wrote, "through which one might sink shafts and see visions." Today, with heritage issues so important and Stowe's value widely acknowledged, such messianic statements no longer seem over-ambitious. "Stowe is a work of art," wrote architectural historian John Martin Robinson recently, "the supreme creation of Georgian England." A school in such a setting has good reason for ambition.

But historical documents and works of art are fragile things. It also costs money to sink the shafts to produce the educational visions. So The Campaign For Stowe, with its twin Trusts for School and Mansion, is a timely arrival.



Although the two Trusts might at first sight seem quite separate entities, they are very firmly inter-related. The modern school is nourished by its ancient setting. Stoics cannot but be aware of the vanished world of Lord Cobham and Earl Temple, the heyday of Alexander Pope and John Vanbrugh, Horace Walpole and William Pitt, "Capability" Brown and William Kent. As Wilson Knight saw so clearly, this fusion of modern school with historic house gives Stowe its unique character. But the unique can be elusive. Most feel it; many are inspired by it; few articulate it in words.





A SCHOLAR'S VIEW

Wilson Knight was an exception. He had come to Stowe early in the last war to teach junior geography – the story is told in the 1997 issue of *The Stoic* – and ended up writing a book of his experiences, *The Dynasty of Stowe*. Knight was a man of many parts – scholar, poet, dramatist and mystic – and he expounded his Stowe of the 1940s with great sensitivity. Sometimes it was purely the beauty of the place which moved him:

“October reveals new beauties, new miracles of design. The trees of the main avenue, elms, beeches, and oaks and many others, as you look from the Corinthian Arch towards Buckingham, melt their tints of russet, dark green and brown into an evening mist, till the long switchback road with its grass borders looks like a green-carpeted corridor flanked by walls curtained with old tapestry.”

On many occasions, however, the man-made beauties of Stowe inspired deeper thoughts. Knight's description of the view from Chatham is typical. And it splendidly illustrates the effect which Stowe can have on all of those who live within its inspiring compass:

“As the weeks pass, the tints change, as though delicately fingered by the brush of some unseen artist; every day creates new harmonies of tone. From Chatham you look down on the black waters of the lake just visible within the panorama of soft colours in every stage of transition, the dark unchanging firs mixing with misty browns, pale greens tinting to yellow, and dark coppery reds... You see the Rotundo at evening, through a framework of copper leafage, a pale lemon sunset cut by the straight bars of its stone pillars, like the ghostly ship in Coleridge's poem, its lines in the October mist melting into the dun shades of darkening trunk and sky till all is one wraithly piece of autumnal creation, a golden-grey and mist-enwreathed marvel. Its canopy covers

now no statue, it is a shell only; but no statue could increase its charm. Perhaps the crumbling stone of these old shrines would seem less appropriate in the sudden flush of summer's rebirth; but now, when a sharp earthy smell of sodden leaves reminds you of the turning year, when the floors of the Chestnut Avenue are paved with brown and gold, ...p you feel into the meaning of autumnal existence, the ripeness of nation or building, dynasty or tree; the cycle of life and death, mysteries of the past and of the future; the mystery of Stowe, now a school, a palatial death more richly living than ever in its history.”

The mansion elicited from Knight an equally strong reaction. For him a sense of the past and of mystery was one of the essentials for the growing mind. He believed therefore that there could be no finer setting for a school:

“At Stowe, too, you move among buildings that have been many times altered and expanded, among state-rooms where great families have lived and entertained their friends, about grounds peopled by ghosts of house-parties long-forgotten. There seemed to be a speechless tradition over-brooding the place, and yet neither the boys nor the masters appeared to give much conscious thought to these Cobhams and Grenvilles. I heard rumours of the Dukes of Buckingham and Chandos, but who they were remained mysterious... They had, it seemed, left no impress on the school regime, no observances or ritual, no tradition, beyond the names of houses and the silent presences of woodland shrine and mural decoration. This living past was one with that unremembered mystery born of events and personages long since obliterated that makes of certain spots in this world a harp-string vibrating to some just perceptible, but non-sensuous and indefinable, music.”

AN OLD STOIC'S RECOLLECTION

For most of us the inspiration of the place, though equally real, is more likely to stay buried deep within ourselves. For others it may lie dormant for many years only to find later, vivid expression. Such was the case with Richard Ward, whose autobiographical *A Gallery of Mirrors* was published some thirty years after his time at Stowe. Ward, one of the very earliest Stoics, recreated in this book an important, formative experience from his schooldays. It began from the routine occasion of a walk through the School whilst it was quietly getting on with prep:

"At one point in my journey I passed through the main doors of the building and emerged under the immense portico of its southern front. The floor of the portico was high up; many broad stone steps led from it to the ground and from the elevation I should by daylight have been looking over a wide expanse of playing-field and lakes bounded by woods. At night, however, what I saw as I passed from the lighted building to the portico and closed the heavy doors behind me, was the infinite reach of the starry sky, vertically barred by the huge stone pillars of the portico which seemed to rise to an invisible height, their capitals lost in the gloom of the roof.

It was not the first time I had seen this majestic and beautiful composition of soaring stone and the sky "inlaced with patines of bright gold", but this evening when I was already made self-aware by my solitary journey what suddenly met my eyes shocked me still further out of ordinary consciousness. For one of those mysterious and indescribable moments which occasionally visit us, I was both more or less than my normal self. The remoteness of the stars, the grandeur and the magnitude of the universe they proclaimed, the immensity of the stone pillars, the infinite smallness of myself beneath them, who yet bore some infinitesimal part in the totality of universal being, these realisations produced in one a sense of awe and wonder, of gratitude towards that "love which moves the sun and all the stars"... Possessed by this strange sensation of my own nothingness beneath the hand of God, I lingered in the portico for a moment. I was steeped in the beauty that I saw, and the wonder at it which is most truly 'the beginning of religion'. But I was under orders to visit Mr Conningham and almost at once descended the steps and went on towards his rooms, still shaken, still awake to a new sense of reality and myself in relation to it..."

THE "GENIUS LOCI"

Stowe's ability to inspire in this way would have been attributed by the Romans to what they called the "genius loci" – the place's inner spirit. A "genius" to the Romans was something special, a spirit presiding over the destiny of a person or a place. Every human being, they thought, had his or her own "genius". So too places of particular interest. It is an idea which in different ways has survived the centuries. Alexander Pope, for example, in writing his Epistle to Lord Burlington (where Stowe is his criterion for good taste), declares that in the undertaking of improvement schemes the Genius of the Place is of crucial importance:

Consult the Genius of the Place in all;
That tells the Waters or to rise, or fall,
Or helps th' ambitious Hill the heav'ns to scale,
Or scoops in circling theatres the Vale...

Another, different view of the Genius can be seen in a playful poem published in *The Stoic* at the time of the School's 25th anniversary. In "Genius Loci" the Genius is a person, a relation perhaps of the genie in *Aladdin*. Though the references to personalities of fifty years ago may now only mystify where once they amused, the idea of Stowe's "genius" still comes over very strongly:

That's the Old Stoic that I mean,
The one we saw by George's statue,
Who looked no more than seventeen
And waved a greeting at you.
Do you remember how we sat
And listened to his idle chat,
And wondered who he was, and when
He left, and what the school was then?

His memory was most profound,
His knowledge ripe but never musty;
Comparing Archer's latest hound
With Huggins' earliest Rusty;
Recalling Hamer's winter coat,
Ephemeris, and Heckstall's boat,
The bombs that damaged Capel's trees,
Ratters' first term, and Moss' teas.

In vain your memory called for aid:
His youth, his very sameness mocked you.
You saw him last – on King's Parade?
Or was it at the OCTU?
Some name like Allen, Wood or Lloyd?
Initials? House? The mind's a void.
The boy who wore the purple suit?
The boy who played the second flute?

He might be A---, of classic bent,
Who wrote Greek verses for his pleasure;
Or B---, to whom the classics meant
The Derby and the Leger;
Or C---, who had a tandem bike;
Or D---, who caught the monstrous pike;
Or – Why go on? You cannot say.
He's someone older far than they.

He saw the Roman scouts go past
Exploring where the trackway pointed:
He saw the Roundhead spurring fast
Against the Lord's Anointed:
He worked for squires and dukes and comtes,
Knew Pope's and Horace Walpole's haunts,
Put on the Bucks Militia tunic
For Waterloo, and dug for Munich.

He is the one who brings you luck,
The Household God, the *genius ipse*,
A friendly troll, a modern Puck,
A local Scholar-Gypsy;
As fresh and ancient as the moon,
Deathless as grass. This afternoon
I saw him walking into school
Still dewy from the bathing-pool.



Fifty years on, Stowe's "Genius" no doubt takes an active interest in the National Trust's presence, is seldom out of the Art School and rarely misses a concert in the Music Room. He is proud of his achievements and is always encouraging us to step back in time with him. In fact, at this very moment, he is calling us back to the world of Sir Richard Temple, better known as Lord Cobham. He wants to give us an example of Stowe's rich cultural heritage. And he is very persuasive.

COBHAM'S STOWE

When Pope was suggesting the Genius Loci be consulted in all things, it was Lord Cobham's Stowe to which he was referring. Cobham, a fascinatingly mysterious figure, was master of Stowe for the first half of the eighteenth century. In the portrait by Van Loo hanging in the Blue Room, he does not give much away. If we stare at him long enough we may perhaps see a hint of cruelty around the mouth. There were certainly stories of his ruthlessness. But if we stare a little longer, he may be simply on the point of making some amusing aside to the painter. He was known to be a great wit. So we can't be sure about him.

We can find him more successfully in house and grounds. A good starting-point is the North Hall ceiling. There he sits, painted by William Kent, watching all our comings and goings, kitted out like a Roman hero and receiving a sword of command from a bearded god of war, whilst, from a nearby medallion, King William III looks on approvingly. The ceiling is Cobham's way of letting everyone know that he was a devoted adherent of William's Glorious Revolution and that his own illustrious military career owed much to the

Duke of Marlborough. Unintentionally he also tells us that modesty was not his forte.

In the grounds we meet him most tellingly in the Elysian Fields, the supreme example of the eighteenth century landscape garden. Here William Kent was painting pictures, idealised classical landscapes. Monuments, trees, water and grassy slopes all combine to present a series of romantic views. But there is another strand of meaning to the Elysian Fields. They were created just after Cobham's big break with Sir Robert Walpole. This imagined paradise for the virtuous and brave (i.e. Cobham's own adherents) supposes a hell existing somewhere else for the corrupt and feeble (i.e. Walpole and his cronies in government). It is all splendidly sardonic and one can almost hear the raucous laughter and cheers as Cobham elegantly leads his guests up and down the slopes, expounding the political statements in the temples of Ancient Virtue, Modern Virtue and British Worthies.

Other areas nearby also reveal Cobham's Genius. The Gothic Temple, the Palladian Bridge and the Temple of Friendship were similarly political point-scorers as well as pleasing eye-catchers. From the latter we can look across the lake to Cobham's own Pillar. The statue of Cobham, shattered by lightning in 1957, may shortly be replaced (the Genius is applying pressure) and soon perhaps Cobham may again be able to look down paternalistically at the Grecian Valley, created by the most famous of his head gardeners, Lancelot "Capability" Brown.

VANBRUGH'S STOWE

Cobham made great use of his friend Sir John Vanbrugh, the dramatist and architect. Of Vanbrugh's surviving garden buildings the most notable are the Lake Pavilions and the Rotondo. In their classical simplicity and harmony maybe these buildings, most of all of Cobham's time, best represent the inspiration of the Genius. These restful pavilions might have been in Vanbrugh's mind when he commented: "I have every day of my life Since twenty years old, grown more and more of the opinion, that the less one has to do with what is called the World, the more Quiet of mind; and the more quiet of mind, the more Happyness..."

Vanbrugh was eleven years older than Cobham, but his ebullient high spirits appealed to the racier side of the latter's character. They were fellow members of the Kit Cat club, a meeting-place for aristocrats and writers of Whig persuasion which was much criticised for its alleged subversion, drunkenness, blasphemy, dark political intrigue and atheism. The theatre-loving Cobham no doubt delighted in Vanbrugh's comedies which had done much to provoke a Church attack on "the Profaneness and Immorality of the English stage". They had much else in common. Both had enjoyed the patronage of the Duke of Marlborough, suffered at his fall and recovered on the accession of George I. Their love of architecture was complemented by advanced views on the virtues of landscape gardening. When Vanbrugh was looking for trees with which to landscape Blenheim he naturally turned to his young friend at Stowe for help.

Several of Vanbrugh's visits to Stowe are documented. On one occasion, he brought his new bride, thirty years younger than himself, to Stowe, so she could gaze in awe at all he had created. Much of his work on the mansion survives; he is thought responsible for what is now Nugent, the Carpenter's Block in Power House Yard and the Orangery (Classics block) and several parts of Cobham and Chandos. The portico of the North Front could well be his. He always enjoyed his stays at Stowe. "A place now so Agreeable," he wrote of it in 1725, "that I had much ado to leave it at all".

This was a common view. As word spread, Stowe became the fashionable place to visit. "I must confess that in going to Lord Cobham's," wrote the Earl of Peterborough to Alexander Pope, "I was not led by curiosity. I went thither to see what I had seen, and what I was sure to like. I had the idea of these gardens so fixed in my imagination by many descriptions that nothing surprised me; immensity and Van Brugh appear in the whole and in every part." Vanbrugh's work had added much to Stowe's growing popularity and after his death there was considerable interest in the huge obelisk, designed by himself and erected in his memory by Cobham. There is talk of its restoration. Laurence Whistler has suggested a most interesting North Front site (*The Stoic*, May 1993).

POPE AT STOWE

Cobham meanwhile paid Alexander Pope an even greater honour. His bust was included in the Temple of British Worthies while he was still alive, alongside Shakespeare and Milton. The tiny, hunchbacked Pope seems an odd companion to upstanding national heroes like Drake and Raleigh. But when the temple was built Pope was tormenting Walpole's party with waspish satire much to Cobham's delight. Pope took an active interest in the Elysian Fields, encouraging the satire in stone. "By the late 1730s," wrote Pope's biographer Maynard Mack, "a perambulation about Stowe must have had for Pope some of the flavor of a tour of his own mind."

Pope shared Cobham's interest in landscape gardening. Though thirteen years younger, he may even have been the first of them to experiment in the new craze. "All gardening," declared the young Pope, "is landscape painting. Just like a landscape hung up." Later he toured relentlessly the finest landscape gardens in southern England, often staying at Stowe. He seldom missed a summer there for nearly twenty years. "I have been a month strolling about in Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire from garden to garden," he wrote in 1723, "but still returning to Lord Cobham's with fresh satisfaction." Eight years later, he wrote from Stowe to a friend "... if anything under Paradise could set me beyond all earthly cogitation, Stowe might do it. It is much more beautiful this year than when I saw it before and much enlarged, and with variety." In 1739, not long after his bust had been



included amongst the Worthies, he took time from a visit to describe how excited the Elysian Fields made him: "This garden is beyond all description in the new part of it. I am every hour in it, but dinner and night, and every hour envying myself the delight of it..." In this letter he gave some details of his house-party's lifestyle: "All the mornings we breakfast and dispute; after dinner, and at night, music and harmony; in the garden, fishing; no politics and no cards, nor much reading. This exactly agrees with me for want of cards sends us early to bed."

As befitted a friend, Pope was supportive of Cobham in the latter's greatest hour of need. In 1733 Cobham had helped stir up a national outcry against Walpole's government, had only been partially successful and subsequently retired to Stowe and private life, stripped of his army command by the hostile Walpole. Within months Pope was showing Cobham for approval the manuscript of a new poem, an Epistle to Cobham himself. Much of the poem is about the difficulty of reading human character correctly. We must search, says Pope, for a person's "Ruling Passion". Pope then gives some witty examples of how people's ruling passions can best be seen at the very end of their lives. He shows a lecherous priest, for example, meeting death as he totters on his knees to his latest wench. Pope ends the poem with two final examples, first a grasping miser called Euclio, then, by total contrast, Cobham, who had so patriotically fought against Walpole:

"I give and I devise (old Euclio said
And sigh'd) my lands and tenements to Ned."
Your money, sir? "My money, sir! What all?
Why – if I must (then wept) I give it Paul."
The mannor, sir? – "The mannor! Hold," he cry'd,
"Not that – I cannot part with that" – and dy'd.
And you! brave COBHAM, to the latest breath
Shall feel your ruling passion strong in death:
Such in those moments as in all the past,
"Oh, save my Country, Heav'n!" shall be your last.

Cobham was understandably delighted with this tribute. "Tho' I have not modesty enough not to be pleased with your extraordinary compliment," he wrote to Pope from Stowe, on receipt of the draft manuscript, "I have wit enough to know how little I deserve it. You know all mankind are putting themselves upon the world for more than they are worth and their friends are daily helping the deceit, but I am afraid I shall not pass for an absolute Patriot. However I have the honour of having received a public testimony of your esteem and friendship and am as proud of it as I could be of any advantage which could happen to me..." Pope had discussed the poem's possible content with him earlier and even now, when it was written, Cobham could not resist a schoolmasterly suggestion or two:

"Don't you think you have bestowed too many lines on the old Letcher. The instance itself is but ordinary and I think it should be shorten'd or chang'd..."

Pope made some changes and a week later Cobham wrote to him: "I like your leachour [sic] better now 'tis shorter" He went on to make a number of suggestions for further characters in the poem:

"What do you think of an old lady dressing her locks with pink and directing her coffin to be lin'd with white quilted Satten trim'd with gold fringe...?"

Pope seems to have accepted the basic idea and then brilliantly embellished it:

"Odious in woollen! 'twoud a saint provoke"
(were the last words Narcissa spoke),
"No, let a charming chintz and Brussels lace
Wrap my cold limbs and shade my lifeless face.
One would not, sure, be frightful when one's dead.
And Betty! Give this cheek a little red."

Cobham's friendship with Pope is fittingly commemorated today with nearby memorials. Pope's bust at the British Worthies faces reflectively up the hill towards Cobham's Pillar. And at the latter's base are quotations from Pope's epistles.

THE SPIRIT OF THE PLACE

The Genius is keen to show us much more. He delights in the eras of Earl Temple and the Marquess of Buckingham, under whom Stowe continued to develop and flourish. He picks his way more cautiously through the twilight, nineteenth-century world of the Dukes of Buckingham and Chandos when Stowe over-reached itself. He prefers best of all to expatiate on the twentieth-century renaissance, when the creation of the School gave Stowe a new purpose and spirit.

Few can doubt his belief that the School has embellished the setting. For all the fine words of Stowe's "Genius", the place remained, until 1923, essentially just a pleasure house and a pleasure garden, searching, like the lion and tin man in *The Wizard of Oz*, for one vital missing thing.

It was Christopher Turner, on his final Speech Day as Headmaster, who touched on the missing ingredient which the School has brought its surroundings:

"Stowe's beauty is unchallenged, and never more ravishing than in this lovely May 1989. Choose your favourite moment: the cool early morning, or the slowly fading colours of evening, midday gazing out from the South Front over the shimmering vision, or midnight in some secret place, sharing the companionship of the hushed trees under the moonlight. But I'm not sure I could convince Wordsworth of its numinosity. He wrote most movingly of the Wye Valley near Tintern:

"These beauteous forms,
Through a long absence, have not been to me
As in a landscape to a blind man's eye:
But oft, in lonely rooms, and 'mid the din
Of towns and cities, I have owed to them,
In hours of weariness, sensations sweet...
– feelings, too,
Of unremembered pleasure: such, perhaps,
As have no slight or trivial influence
On that best portion of a good man's life,
His little, nameless, unremembered acts
Of kindness and of love."

“He wrote thus of nature’s untamed beauty. Would he have found these gardens too contrived? Too civilised? Is Stowe’s beauty more than a call to self-indulgence? Or does it, after all, have a spiritual dimension? Its eighteenth-century patrons were themselves very unspiritual people. But we live in an age which is above all one of intense spiritual conflict, and Stowe is no stranger to that conflict. We need spiritual refreshment to play our part in it. My experience has been that against all probability that refreshment is abundant at Stowe. The secret lies partly in the genius of “Capability” Brown, who let nature speak for herself. However cynically man may mock his Creator, grass still grows, the trees grope upwards, and the grebes call, and eighteenth-century man had not learnt the twentieth-century art of mass incineration of nature.

“But there is another, much greater secret. Those whose fortune it is to live here owe to Stowe School a spirit which has mysteriously taken root here. A spirit unknown to the rationalists who planned the park, and not acknowledged by all even now. A spirit which has grown through “little, nameless, unremembered acts of kindness and of love”. A spirit fostered by the devotion and prayers of generations of Stoics, their parents and Governors. A Christian spirit of service and sacrifice, which is alive in the School and has made our family so warmly welcome all these years. Yes, I acknowledge the beauty, but without the School, which has made this a people-place, I would want no part of it.”

The powerful numinosity of Stowe, linked as it is to the concept of service and sacrifice, is most obviously seen today in the bust of Leonard Cheshire outside Chapel. And it was this same numinosity, albeit of a somewhat less orthodox variety, which inspired Wilson Knight fifty years ago to take his readers into Chapel at the end of his book, to share with him a vision of the future:

“The Chapel is full. My stall is at the back. The boys are singing an old Irish chant called *St. Patrick’s Breastplate*... A great wave of sound rises, like blood to the head, towards the chancel; and I half hear, half see, as through a golden mist, the distant generations, in ghostly companies as yet unborn, at some new ritual earthed in many such emblazoned halls as this, whose song sweeps up as a tongue of fire, rose-incensed, beyond my understanding.”

Knight’s vision was nothing less than Stowe leading the educational world. The Headmaster of his day, J.F.Roxburgh, pioneer though he was in many ways, seems to have been taken aback by the audacity of the claim and nervously distanced himself a little from it. Today we recognise the need to be ambitious. Indeed it is one of the justifications for the existence of independent schools. And with the advent of The Campaign For Stowe with its twin Trusts and the Centenary Plan of development the strategy is at last in place for the realisation of Knight’s ambitious hope for Stowe. It is an exciting prospect!

Illustrations from Forster’s Catalogue of the 1848 sale.





JUBILEE SUMMER

A retrospective look at highlights in the School's seventy-fifth year.

Photographs by Jane Baker (OS)

The Jubilee was celebrated in a wide variety of ways. There were a series of Jubilee lectures, a Jubilee ball, a Foundation Day Thanksgiving Service and Dinner, a concert in the Roxburgh Hall, a Charity Day, a production of Sir Tom Stoppard's *Arcadia* and a royal visit to the Stowe Putter.

The Jubilee lectures were highly successful. P.D. James discussed the writing of crime fiction with thoughtful and engaging modesty. Barrie Humphries talked with great wit, eloquence and learning about his varied stage career. Baroness Cox spoke movingly and with a mastery of detail about persecution in the world today. Sir Peter Hall and George Monbiot (OS) are to come. The School has been privileged to have such an array of distinguished speakers from such a wide variety of fields.

The centrepiece of the Jubilee was undoubtedly Foundation Day, May 11th. It began appropriately with a nostalgic lunch party for a number of the Ninety-nine, those who joined the School as it began in 1923. Stowe's first girls, albeit of a somewhat later, 1970s vintage, were also invited.

The lunch was followed by a most moving service in Chapel. Two Old Stoics contributed readings. Lord Annan read the challenging words spoken by J.F. Roxburgh to the School in 1945, in which he mourned the loss of so many former pupils in the World War. David Shepherd read a section from T.H. White's *Mistress Masham's Repose*, White's description conjuring up Stowe's mysterious beauty (and reminding everyone of the privilege of working and living in such a place). Another Old Stoic, the composer and TV personality Howard Goodall, had composed an anthem, *Ring out, ye crystal spheres*, specially for the occasion. Having sung the piece already at St Paul's Cathedral earlier in the term, the choir was well rehearsed and gave a stirring performance. Scored for choir, brass and organ, its harmonic and rhythmic complexities meant that it was by no means an easy work.

Lord Runcie, the former Archbishop of Canterbury, gave the sermon. Having visited the School several times in the past, he put into words the characteristics which he felt made

Stoics what they were. "Laid back" was the term he employed to begin with, although he hastened to explain that he meant that in the sense of "unruffled" or "cool". He then used the lives of various Old Boys to illustrate the four major qualities of companionship, loyalty, vision and excellence that formed the structure of his address. He singled out the life of Leonard Cheshire as one which should inspire all Stoics, past and present, to show compassion for the underprivileged. Extracts from Leonard Cheshire's *The Hidden World* had earlier been read by the Chaplain.

After the Service Lord Sainsbury (OS) unveiled a plaque in the North Hall to mark the launch of The Stowe School Foundation Trust. In the evening there was a Commemoration Dinner in the Garter Room. The meal was announced by a fanfare specially composed by Paul Harris. The Loyal Toast was proposed by the Chairman of the Governors, Sir Peter Leslie (OS). Lord Quinton then proposed the toast of "Stowe Seventy-five Years On" in his usual inimitable style. Anna Kenyon, one of the senior prefects, then gave a polished and assured speech about "Stowe Today". The Chairman of the Governors afterwards spoke about The Campaign For Stowe before the Headmaster proposed the toast "Stowe – the Future". It was a splendid end to a remarkable day.

The Jubilee Ball was enjoyed by some four hundred people. It included a freefall display, the Band of the Irish Guards, a wonderful dinner, a marvellous firework display, a casino and fairground and the distinctive music of the Chance Band. It was a hugely enjoyable evening with people dancing on into the early hours before sitting out on the South Front or by the lakes to watch the sunrise. The auction and raffle held during the evening raised no less than £24,000.

At the Jubilee Ball:
Mr & Mrs Gary Lineker.

Lady Getty and Lord Archer
on the North Front.

Guests enjoying music from
the Band of the Irish Guards.





Foundation Day

Lord Sainsbury unveils the plaque in the North Hall commemorating the launch of The Stowe School Foundation Trust.



Foundation Day lunch in the Blue Room

Lord Runcie preaching in Chapel and with Mrs Nichols in the Marble Hall.



Right: JCG conducting the Chapel Choir

Below: Guests at the Foundation Day Dinner





Arvind David, the Old Stoic Director
of the Jubilee Play *Arcadia* contributes

AN ARCADIAN ENDNOTE



For a month in the summer of 1998, a strange thing was happening in Stowe School. A group of long-haired, grubbily attired, high-spirited individuals was seen wandering about as if they owned the place.

I was one such in this intrigue. One of the 'Arcadians', a group of assorted theatre folk – professional and amateur, Stoics and others – who had come to contribute a footnote to theatrical history: to take a great play home to the architecture and gardens which inspired it, and in which it is set, and to see what would happen.

The play was Tom Stoppard's *Arcadia*: a complex, coruscating, time-hopping, epigram-spinning masterwork which just happens to be set in an English stately home with a premier Landscape garden and which just happened to have been written whilst Stoppard's sons were pupils at Stowe. Stoppard describes the relationship rather better (something he has a habit of doing):

"Stowe... was naturally much in my mind during the writing of *Arcadia*... as a sublime expression of Englishness which I discovered when I was eight years old and... fell in love with at first sight... Fifty years on, Stowe stirs the same emotion, and it is a plangent circumstance for me that *Arcadia* should be performed, as it were, within itself, where the prospect from the house, and of the house from the park, seem to enclose not merely the play but a lost world already lost when I was first moved by it."

The project had been three years in the making. Conceived when I first saw the play in the West End in 1995 where I was convinced by the similarities owed to my old school, I determined to organise pay back. In the way of all such projects, it enjoyed a number of false starts and strange turns, before the Jubilee Celebrations and Steve Hirst came round and gave the project the impetus it needed to get off the ground.

And so eight months of planning (witnessed by several thousand e-mails hurtling through the ether between Buckinghamshire and London) and a month of rehearsal led to a week of performance in late July. They also led to a very odd return to school accommodation and school food for those of the troop who had been here before.

It wasn't all smooth sailing. The South Front portico is many things, but it isn't a theatre. There were times when faced by the thousandth rehearsal-interrupting tourist, the looming enormity of the Grand Prix marquee, or the worst July weather ever, it seemed that the thing was just not going to happen. Even when all was going logistically smoothly, we were faced constantly by the tightly wound complexity of the play – which has not one but two casts, who live 180 years apart, speak in different registers, wear different clothes and never meet; but who live in the same house and talk about the same bewildering array of subjects. We kept finding new things we didn't understand – what hope was the audience going to have?

Martin Amis puts his finger on what we were experiencing by the second week of rehearsals:

"the mid-project doldrums that all artists experience, in the windless solitude halfway between outset and completion. The thing is there now, and you know you can get to the end of it. It is more or less what you wanted (or what you felt you'd finish up with); but you start to wish that the powers that be, the talent powers, had thrown you a little further or higher."

By the end though, it was perfect.

Not a perfect production, not the paradigm platonic *Arcadia*; that was not what we had set out to achieve, nor had any chance in the circumstances of doing. What had been the aim was to allow this incredibly complex and endlessly rewarding piece of theatre to inform and be informed by the incredibly complex and endlessly rewarding buildings which inspired it. And by the last night it was clear that that had happened.

By far the most commonly overheard audience comment was "At last, I understand it, didn't when I saw/read it before". For whatever else *Arcadia* is – and it is so much – it is a play that demands an awful lot of understanding.

So, if Stowe, by providing the perfect backdrop off which ideas could bounce – or by replacing the abstract ideals of landscape gardening with a reality in stone and water – helped the audience to focus their imagination and attention on the mathematics of the improbable and the relative values of artistic and scientific inquiry, and by so doing made the whole more approachable and enjoyable, then that's part of what we set out to do, done.

Equally, though, *Arcadia* makes sense of Stowe. And this reciprocity was not something I had expected, and which needs explicating.

Watching, over the week, more than a thousand people sitting amidst temples and colonnades, animatedly discussing the finer points of a finer play; all the whilst appreciating a view like no other. Feeling, even if only for a few hours, like the intelligent lords of all creation; you come inescapably to a conclusion about Stowe: that this is what it is for.

A setting that provides a chance for people to forget the passer-by mundanity of our day-to-dayness, to transcend the small banality of traffic tickets and school reports, to look with new eyes on the goodly canopy of our world and to apprehend like gods.

This is why, for this satisfied punter's money, Stowe has the potential to instil a yearning for learning, for beauty and for life in all that have the expensive privilege to grow up here. This is why it is not just a collection of foolish follies, an over-expensive, extravagantly elitist, under-utilised eighteenth century Disneyland.

(There was another realisation which struck when, on the dodgems at the Jubilee Ball I witnessed my former Head of



School round mercilessly on Sir Nicholas Lyell with the impassioned – though out-of-date – cry of ‘Get the Attorney General!’ and again in the cinema, weeks later, watching a moustachioed Sean Connery carry a leather-clad Uma Thurman out of the Music Room into an Escheresque computer generated staircase where the Marble Hall should have been – that Stowe is a place where anything can happen.)

Today the idea of erecting extravagant buildings for no other reason other than to improve the view or make a political joke seems absurd and wasteful. Yet the end result provides a powerful, everlasting reminder of what it is to be fully human – the senses, the intellect, our history, our culture, our joy in and need for beauty are given space and place to be fulfilled.

With apologies to Evelyn Waugh, his description of another set of (less real) gardens can be well bent to our purposes: For Stoics, there has been no fall of man. Theirs the original Garden of Eden from which we are all exiled.

Many thanks to all: cast, crew, sponsors, school staff and audience who brought *Arcadia* to the Garden. Your generosity in giving freely of your time and money also allowed us to give £2000 to charity – partly to help restore the buildings in which we performed, and partly for WarChild, of which Tom Stoppard is a patron.

Main photo: The South Front Portico as the stage.

Inset photos, top left and clockwise:

Jonathan Crawford (OS), FAB, Roy Chambers (OS), Daniel Gabriele and Thomasina Coverly, BJD and MW, Stewart Wickham and Fenella Hunt (OS).





Jubilee Stowe Putter

This year's Prep School competition was won by James Turner from The Perse. Prizes were presented by HRH Prince Andrew.

Photographs by John Credland



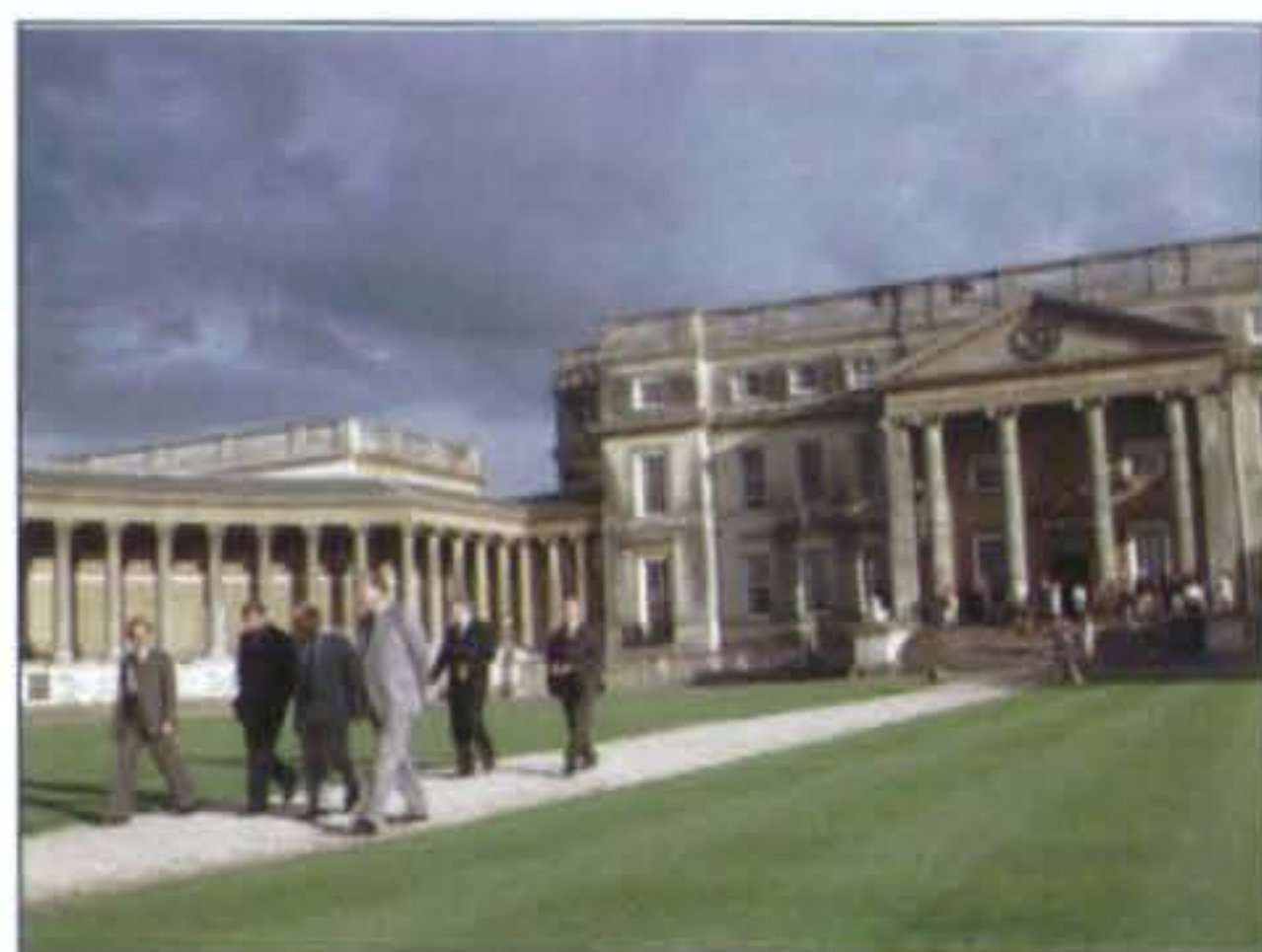
Chris Atkinson and TFK escorting HRH Prince Andrew



Royal view



Competitors around the course



Prize-giving and the royal departure by helicopter



A gathering in the Colonnades



The Headmaster

Jubilee Speech Day

Prizes, speeches, tea parties and exhibitions, all as usual; but the news of The Campaign For Stowe made this Speech Day a particularly memorable one.

Photographs by DSB



Senior Tutor GMH



Speeches in Chapel Court

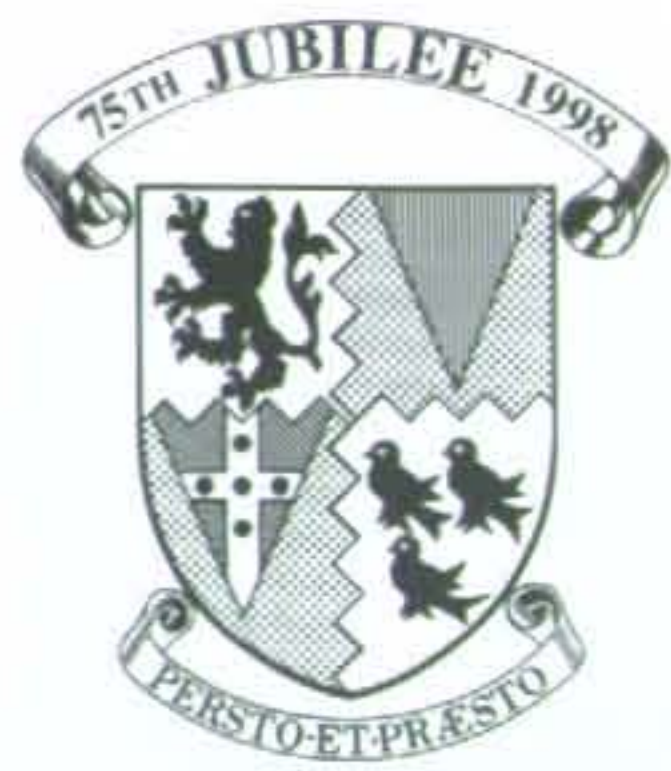


Sir Peter Leslie



Jerome Starkey distributing The Voice (above)
Mrs Nichols at the South Front Tea Party (right)





CHARITY CRICKET

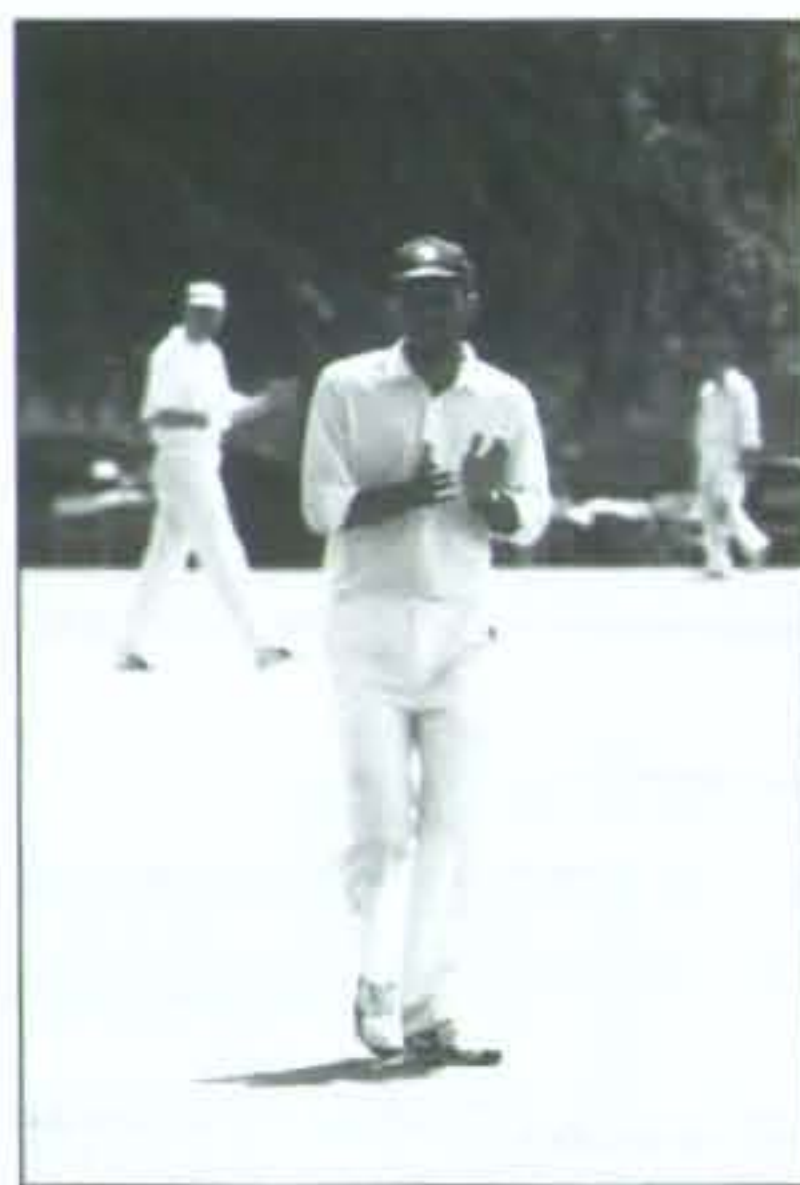
On a beautiful summer's day a Templars Invitation XI played host to a South African Cavaliers XI on the North Front at Stowe. The occasion was to raise money for the Brian Johnston Memorial Trust (for under-privileged children who wish to play cricket).

We were entertained to a high standard of cricket and the game was enjoyed by those present. The visitors, who included three members of the South African Test touring party, Elworthy, Hayward and Ntini, made a total of 255 for 7 from their 50 overs. Some robust batting by Conrad was a feature of the South African innings. The Templars, who included West Indian Test player, Jimmy Adams, were immediately up against some accurate hostile bowling from the South African Test players and consequently only made 192 for 8 from their 50 overs. Some £1500 was raised for the Trust and I would like to thank particularly Aylesbury Vale District Council for their kind help, our sponsors and all those who helped make it a truly memorable day.

HJR



Go Naito, 1st XI scorer



Jimmy Adams

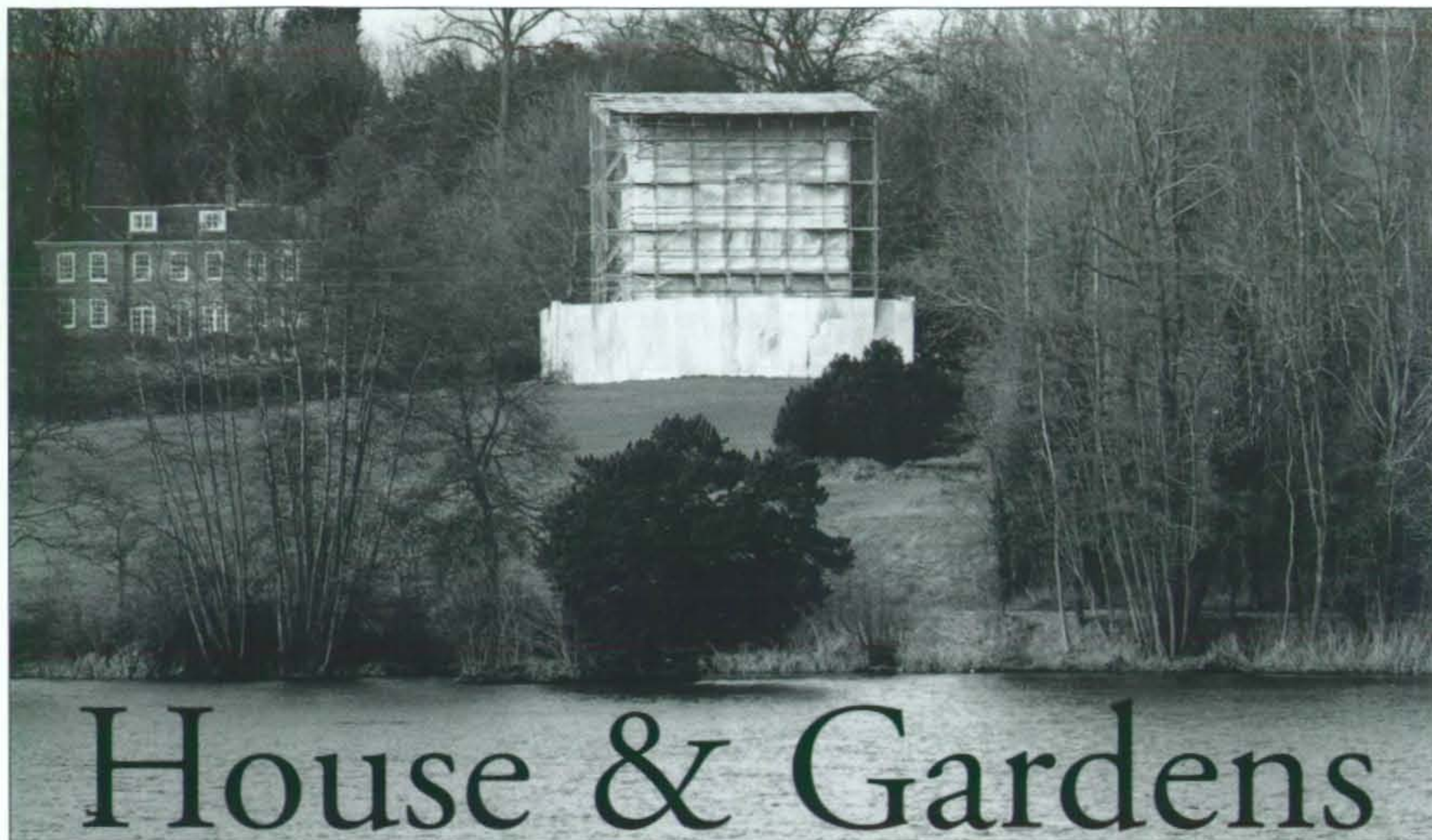


Chris and Philippa Atkinson on the Brian Johnston Memorial Trust stand.

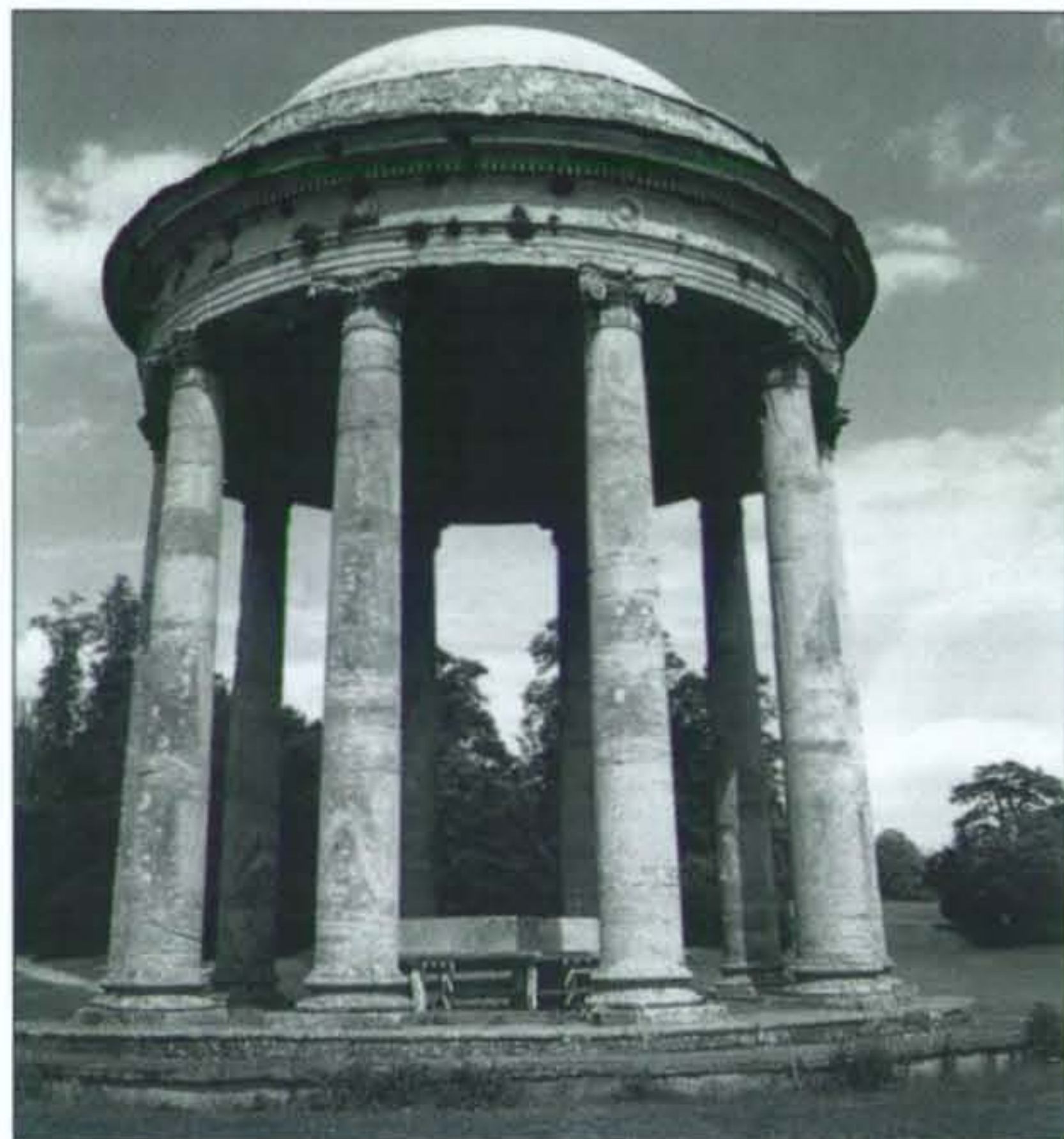


Below: Richard Harris bowling for the Stowe Templars





House & Gardens



ROTONDO UNDER WRAPS

The National Trust's programme of restoration continues impressively. In 1998 attention was turned to the Rotondo and nearby Dido's Cave. At the time of writing work is still in progress.

Both buildings were in much need of restoration. As the photographs on this page (taken in 1997) show, the Rotondo had weathered badly. Much consolidation of stonework was needed. New timbers were to be spliced into the existing rafters and new lead sheeting put on the exterior of the dome.

The most arresting thing, when the wraps come off, will be none of this, however, but the return of the gilded statue of Venus, based on the much-copied original of Praxiteles. The Rotondo, designed by Sir John Vanbrugh, was built around 1720 but the statue of Venus only survived there about seventy years. She was removed some time shortly after 1791 and replaced by a statue of Bacchus. Bacchus lasted even less time, being sold off in the great sale of 1848. So for one hundred and fifty years, over half its life, the structure has stood alone without a central figure.

The Rotondo is not quite as originally designed by Vanbrugh. Thirty years on some alterations were made to it by Borra at the suggestion of Earl Temple. The setting in which it stood was much altered and at the same time the dome was rebuilt with a shallower curve. The original dome can still be seen in prints of the 1730s, looking somewhat heavy. The Borra alteration would seem to have made the proportions just about perfect.

We await the return of the Rotondo with keen anticipation. For many it is the epitome of eighteenth-century Stowe.

D. HYSLOP



THUNR (Thursday)



WODN (Wednesday)

TIW (Tuesday)



THE MAGNIFICENT SEVEN

THE RETURN OF THREE SAXON DEITIES

SE ATR (Saturday)

Returned
SE SUNNA (Sunday)



SE MONA (Monday)
Returned

FRIG (Friday)
Returned



(Thunr by courtesy of the Board of Trustees of the Victoria and Albert Museum; other photographs by MJB)

1998 saw the return to Stowe of three (new) Saxon Deities. Michael Bevington explains.

THE MAGNIFICENT SEVEN

If you go down to the woods today, just beyond the Queen's Temple, you will be surprised by three superb sculptures surrounding a grassy glade. Completing the setting are the plinths awaiting the return of their four fellow gods. Together they symbolise the Saxon Deities after which our seven days of the week are named.



Thomas Rowlandson captures the woodland setting (if not the Deities themselves)

The original seven started life in the 1720s near the present Sanatorium, surrounding a curious circular centrepiece with seven recessed seats. They were carved in Portland stone by John Michael Rysbrack (1694-1770), one of the leading sculptors of the day, and are "full of the movement and vitality characteristic of Rysbrack's hand", in Mr John Davis' words. By 1744 they migrated to the Gothic Temple, a fitting home to such northern deities, in a semi-circle on Blinchdon's Bastion around the east turret. In 1771 they moved for the third time, to their present site in what has become known as Wick's (Week's) Quarter. The circular stone seat had been left behind, but in the 1840s the third Duke added to the centre of the grassy sylvan temple some remains from the Iron Age and Roman burial mounds in Thornborough which he had just been excavating. These have been left covered.

Before the foundation of the School the statues were all sold, in 1921, at prices ranging from 9 to 24 guineas. Frig, however, was not removed and was sold again the following year with a reserve of £10 to Clough Williams-Ellis, the School's first architect. He had to ask the boys to track the statue down before taking it off to his new landscape at Portmeirion. All the statues except Tiw and Se Atr have been sold again in the last 15 years, the most expensive at £68,300. Thunr is now in the Victoria and Albert Museum, Se Mona and Frig are in the Buckinghamshire County Museum, Tiw is at Anglesey Abbey, Cambridgeshire, and Se Sunna, Wodn and Se Atr are in private collections.

Like much of the rest of Stowe's garden, this group asserted the political liberties held so dearly by Lord Cobham. His nephew, Gilbert West, addressed them at length in his poem published in 1732, emphasising their symbolic role:

"Hail, Gods of our renown'd Fore-Father, hail!
Ador'd Protectors once of England's Weal.
Gods, of a Nation, valiant, wise and free,
Who conquer'd to establish Liberty!"

Wodn was claimed as the ancestor of Brunswick's line, in support of the Hanoverian succession, like Thanet Walk and

the Gothic Temple elsewhere. Nevertheless West's longest description is reserved for Se Atr, the only one who was not a true Saxon god, but seems to be linked with Aether and Saturn by his symbols for sky, earth and sea. West, however, identified him with Chronos, the Greek god of time, and reminds young people "to improve The transitory Minutes made for Love" before the "inexorable Hand of Time Robs of its bloomy Sweets your lively Prime".

Rysbrack's sculptures were close copies of the engravings by Verstegan of 1605, as can be seen in the three casts put in position at Stowe in June 1998. Se Sunna (The Sun, Sunday) is limited to Verstegan's top half and shown with blazing hair and a burning wheel to represent his daily orbit, but, as yet, lacks his inscription or Verstegan's pedestal. Se Mona (The Moon, Monday) is shown perhaps as a woman in a man's eared hood and curling shoes, holding a disc with the moon's face. Frig (Friday), financed by a legacy from Eric Reynolds, Stowe's second Headmaster, is the tallest of the statues but appears as an uninspiring hermaphrodite holding a sword in the right hand and a bow in the left (yet to be fully restored).

Originally the Saxon Deities were surrounded by dense yew trees, now mainly replanted. The foundations of the plinths remained visible into the 1980s, allowing the sequence of the statues to be plotted accurately with the help of Gough's photograph. They were so arranged that, through the sole entrance from the Gothic Walk on the east, only a glimpse of the imposing statue of Thunr or Thor (Thursday), the king of the gods seated in authority on the western side, would have enticed visitors into this Sylvan Temple. The rest proceed in an anti-clockwise direction. Rysbrack, in his main change from Verstegan, made them as pairs looking towards each other: only luckless Frig lacks a pair. All had their names in runic script on their plinths.

In the early nineteenth century this sombre yet evocative setting was ideally suited, we are told, to picnics with prolonged contemplation for those of fertile imagination. Thanks to the National Trust's splendid efforts, it will soon be so again.

Stowe's Extra Dimension

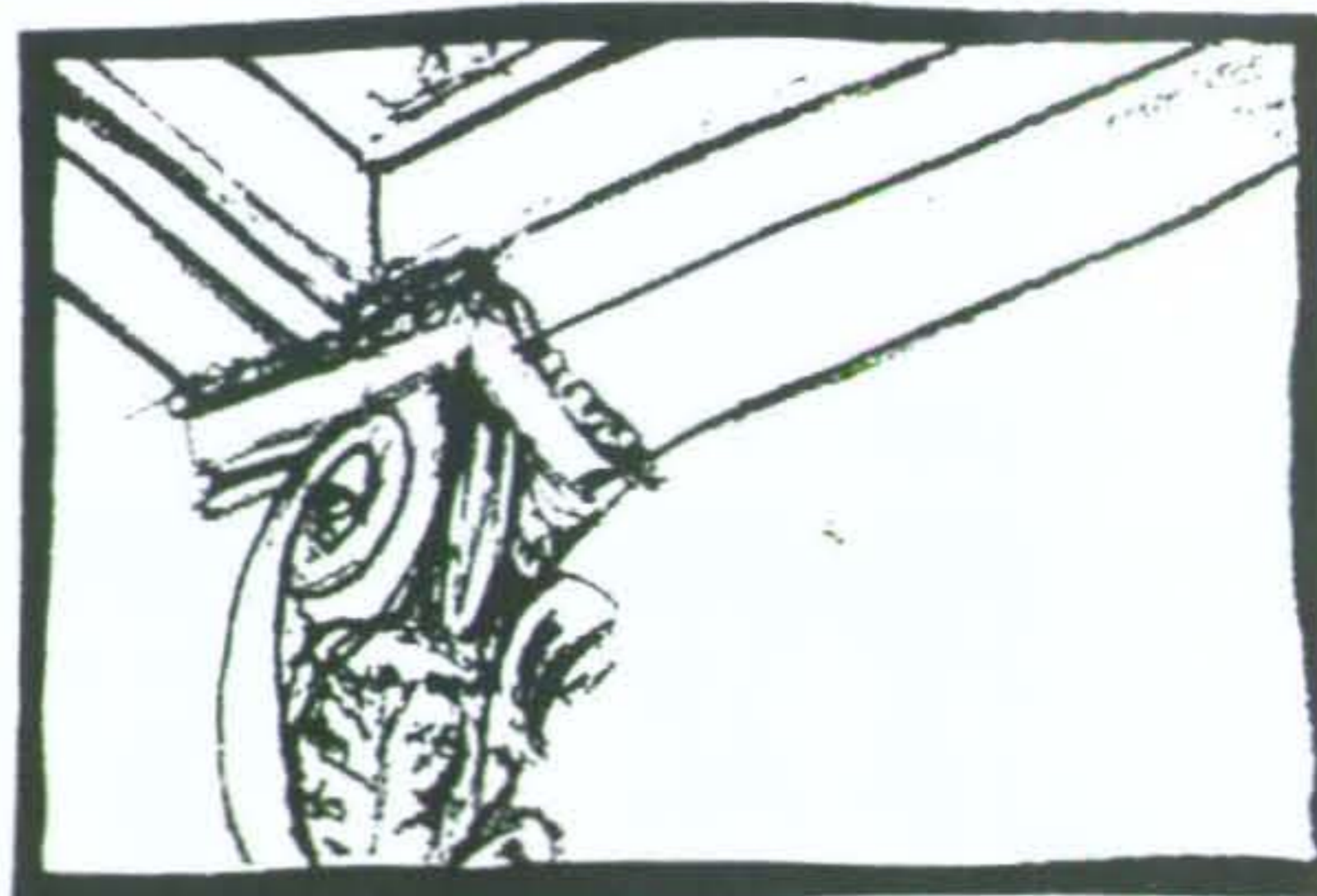
Visual Education

THREE YEARS ON

Two issues ago *The Stoic* ran a feature on Visual Education, thereby marking its introduction into the Stowe curriculum. It explained that the buildings and landscape gardens of Stowe were to become much more a part of every Stoic's education than had previously been the case. Stowe, moreover, was just to be the starting point on what was planned to be a much wider voyage of exploration, through exciting though uncharted educational waters, to the brave new world of the study of the built environment.

The one-year course for all third-formers, *Stowe At First Sight*, is now in its third year. It has undergone many changes since the first, heady days of September 1996. It is very firmly Stowe-based, but, though turning inward to the buildings and landscapes around us, it seeks by these means to prepare us for a greater outward awareness, to develop an ability to respond more sensitively and shrewdly to what we meet in the outside world by the assimilation of all that Stowe has to offer. In architecture this means not just neo-classicism but a variety of other styles, like Gothic, Egyptian and Chinese, as well as an interesting collection of twentieth-century structures. Outdoors our starting point is the development of the English landscape garden. In learning to appreciate the beauties of idealised settings like Kent's Elysian Fields, we may also arrive at a better general understanding of the rich interplay possible between buildings and nature. As *The Stoic* pointed out two issues ago, the house and gardens offer us an educational resource of enormous scope.

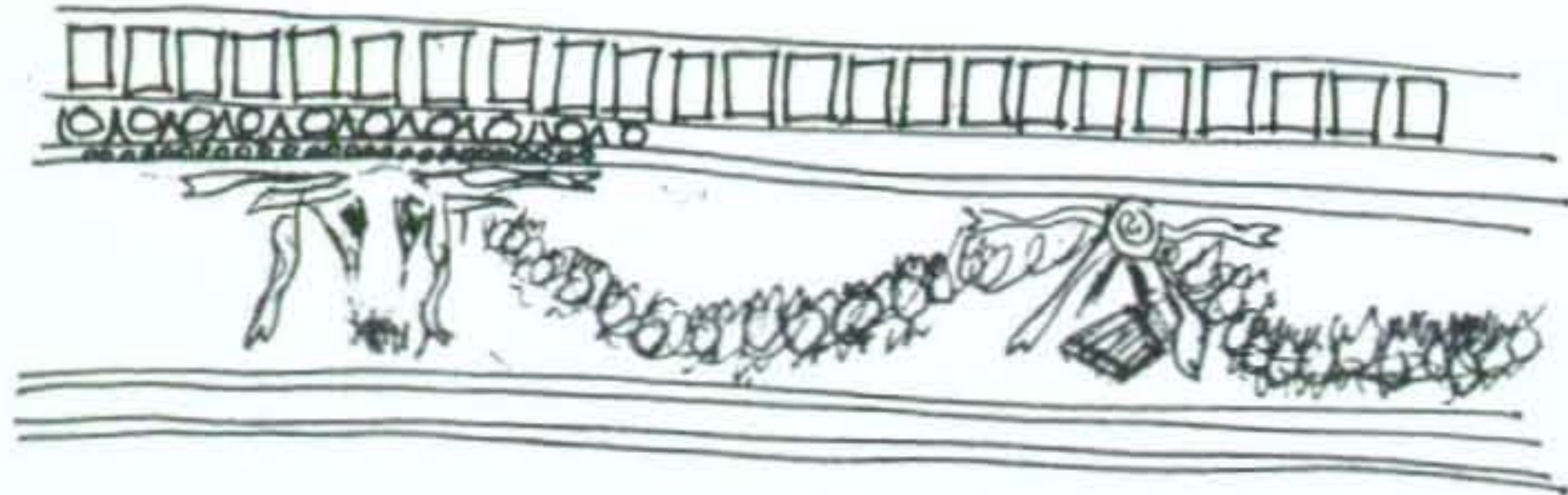
A Lower Sixth course is planned. This will include a focus on the conservation of the mansion and the work of the National Trust. As the plans of The Stowe House Preservation Trust come into action, we will be able to study in some depth the various problems being faced and answered. The conservation of Stowe, moreover, should be able to teach much that can be put to good practical use in the future in the world outside.



Andrew Davis

Jeremy Walker

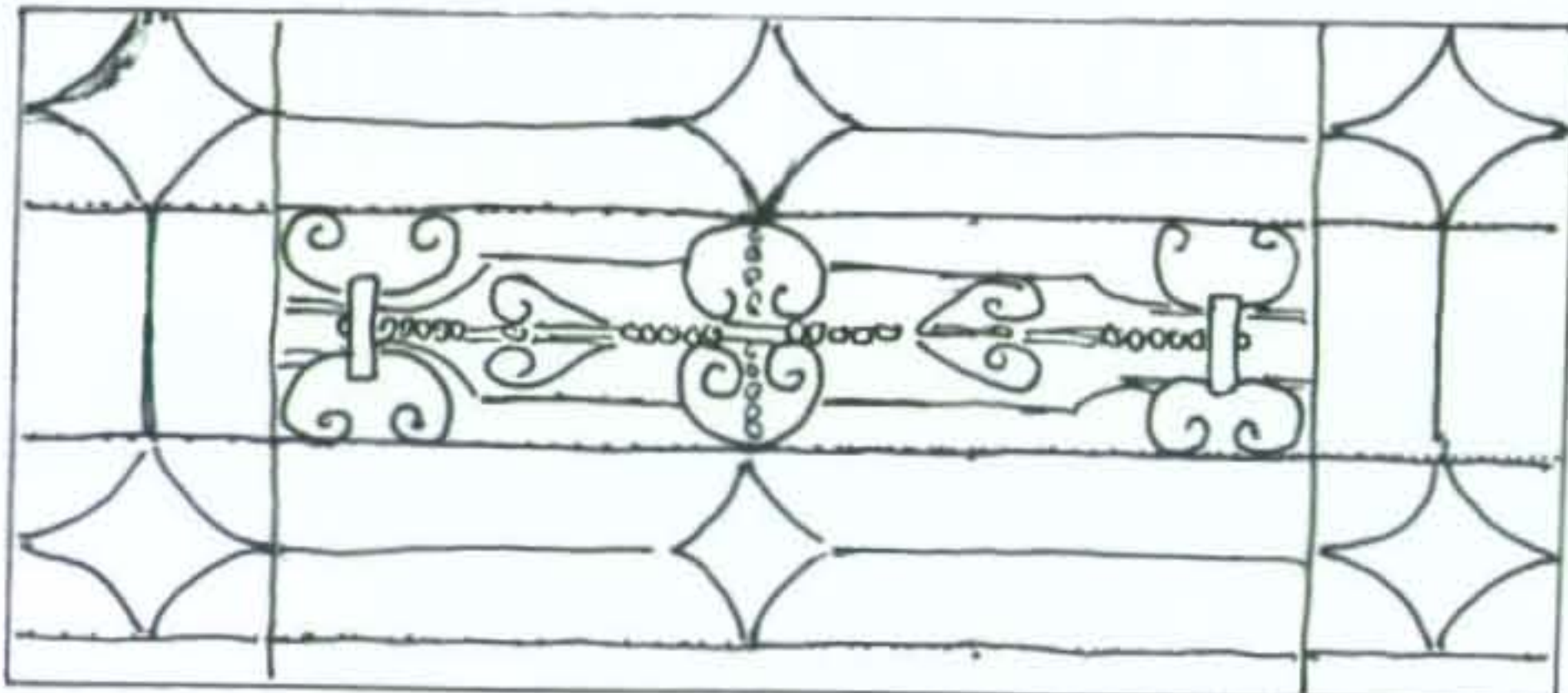




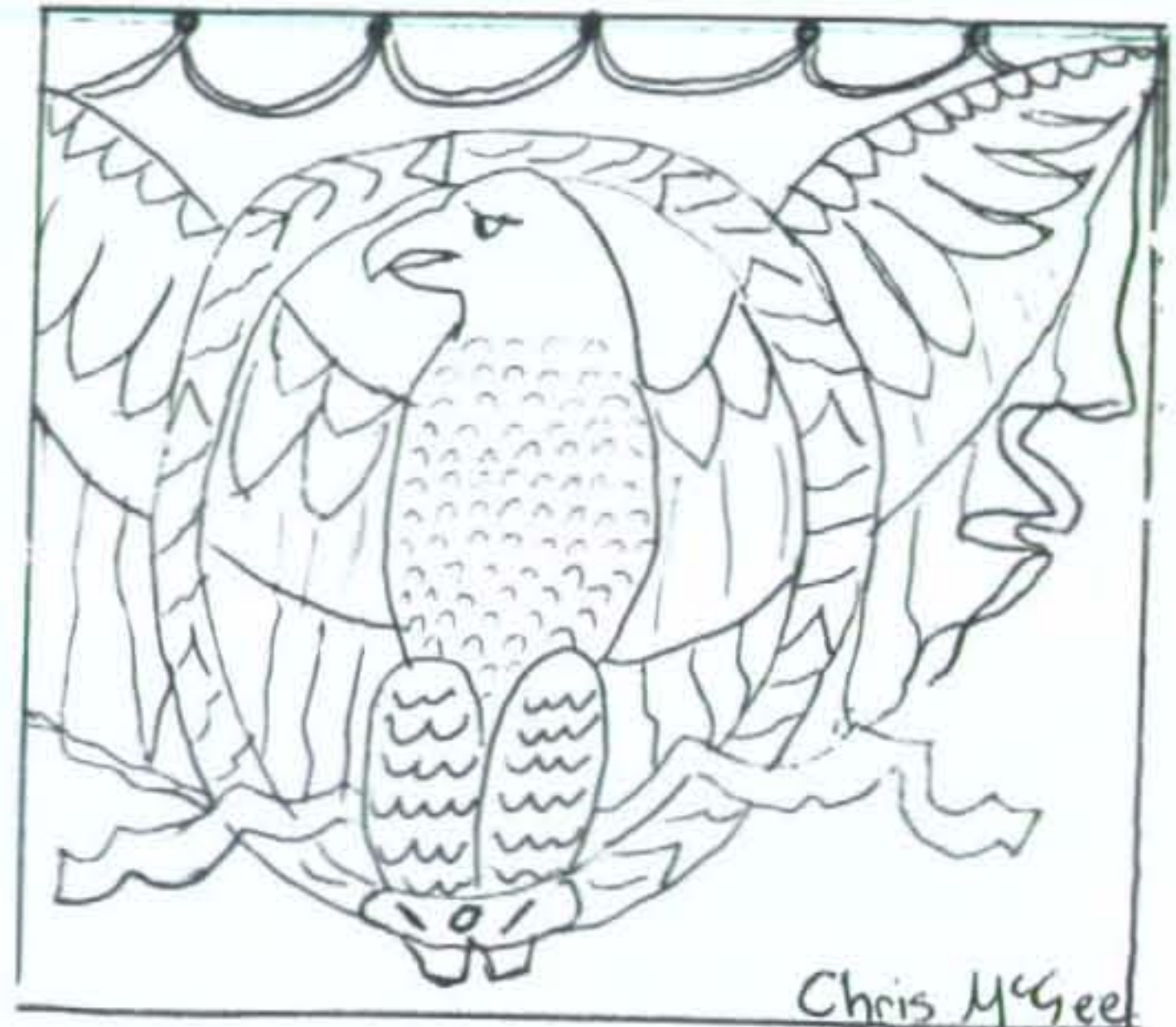
Tobias Lotz



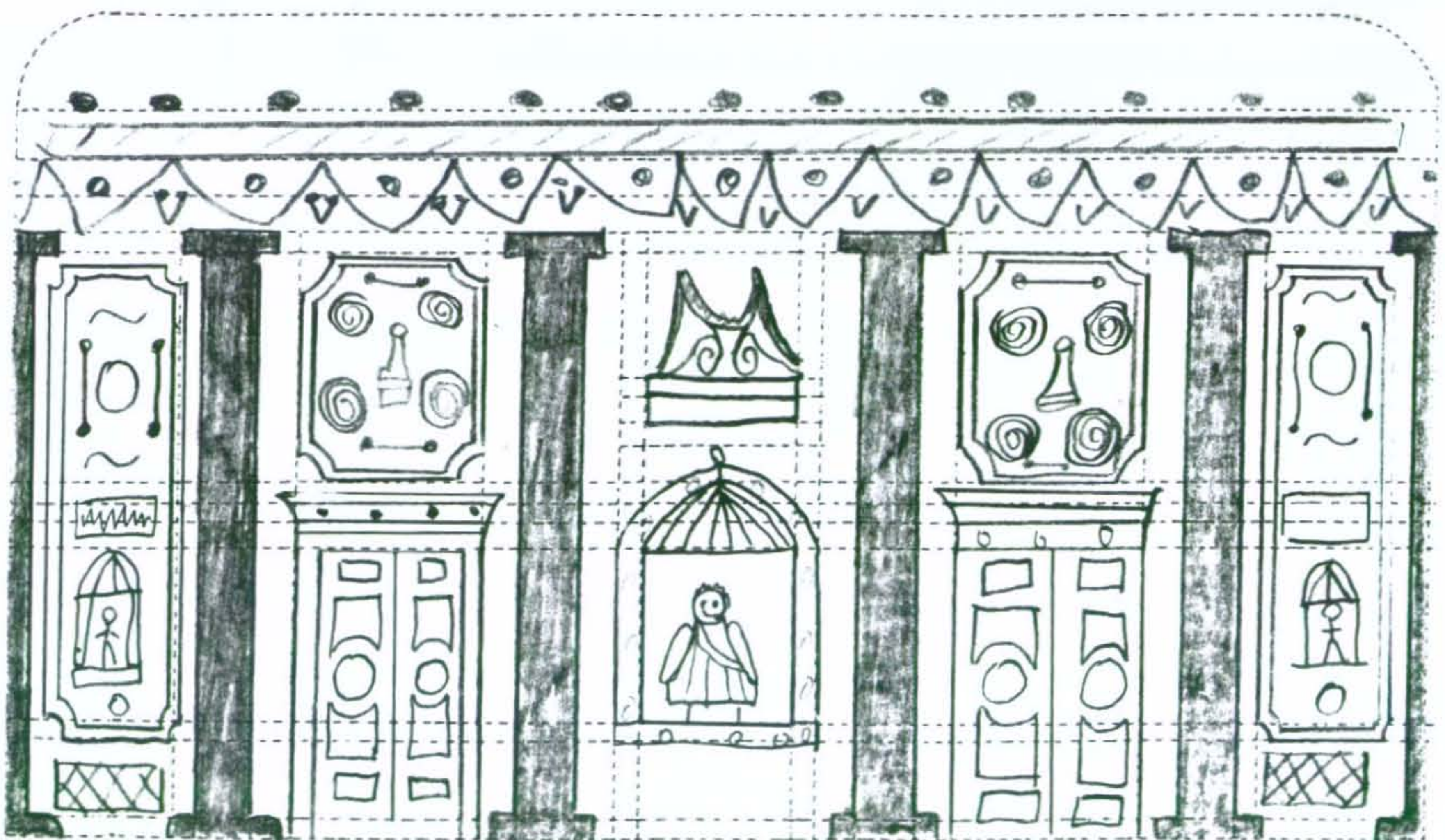
Jeremy Walker



Tom Ward



Chris McGee



Miles Kaye

It is encouraging that even our early efforts have received a very friendly reception outside the School. Professor George Henderson, for example, the Chairman of the RIBA General Education Group, has written in enthusiastic support: "Your school is addressing a cultural problem, namely the general indifference to this country's architecture which can only have negative repercussions for Britain's cultural development. Young people need to learn about the built environment if they are to participate in a democratic process of respecting and preserving our built heritage and influencing architectural design in the future." The way forward, Professor Henderson believes, is the promotion of architectural studies in schools. "It is therefore particularly heartening when schools take the initiative, as Stowe has done, to redress the educational imbalance of their own volition."

AGM

The People Page

(a new feature incorporating "Common Room Matters", "Stoica", "Around and About" and sundry other attempts to gather various, unrelated items of Stowe news together)

SALVE PSR

Peter Ruben came to Stowe last summer as Head of Economics. He had previously held the same position at St Dunstan's College in London. He was educated at Alleyn's, Bristol University (where he gained a First Class degree in Politics) and then Glasgow University (where he obtained a Master's degree in Economics). Peter has worked for the Labour think-tank, The Institute For Public Policy Research, and his current projects include studying for an MBA and writing a series of textbooks. He is married to Mel, a Prep School teacher who is completing a Ph.D on the ballet Giselle. They have a year-old daughter, Alice, who likes cats.



FRANKIE CARPENTER

The School deeply grieved last October at the death of Frankie Carpenter, who has been so much a part of all that her husband Michael has achieved during the past fourteen years at Stowe. The extremely large Stoic representation at her funeral was a token of how much she was the friend of all who had the privilege of knowing her.

UNUSUAL ACHIEVEMENTS

Not all individual achievements find their way into the pages of this magazine, sometimes falling outside the usual headings. Rowland Plyer, for example, competed in the British Jet Sport Championships last April and came 3rd overall in the first round of the Ski Division and 1st overall in the sport class. Tariq Alatas came 5th in the U19 Skateboarding Championships. Jaime Zaldua is now a judo Black Belt and Malcolm Riley was selected for the East Anglian U14 soccer team.

BUCKS TO BUCKS WALK

Five Stoics set out last June to walk from Buckingham Palace to Stowe in order to raise money for the Helen House Hospice in Oxford which provides support for terminally ill children and their families. They were Evgeny Demchenko,



Robin Jones and Alex Prideaux of Grenville and James Jones and Charlie Robinson of Walpole.

They left Buckingham Palace at 11.00am on a Saturday morning to wind their way through the streets of London. Despite bad weather they made steady progress and were saying goodbye to the outskirts of London within five hours and out into open countryside. After twenty-two miles the boys were soaking wet but there was then a welcome stop and a meeting with LEW who provided clothes and refreshments. The walk continued beside dual carriageway well into the night. Stops became more frequent as the weather and tiredness made completion a battle against the odds. It was with enormous relief when, next day, they eventually sighted the Corinthian Arch. Better still, they were in good time to meet Sister Frances Dominica of Helen House who was the preacher at Chapel that morning. Bravo!

MORE COMMON ROOM MATTERS

Rupert Demery was with us for two years as Chaplain's Assistant. In this capacity he was a huge support to TMH-S, his work embracing confirmation classes, preaching, leading services and Bible studies. But there was so much more to Rupert: expert musicianship (as exemplified in the musical Sweet Charity); coaching of tennis and hockey; tutoring in Grenville and of course the teaching of Theology; all this (and much more) was accompanied by that RERD trade-mark of infectious laughter and merriment.

Stowe/Harvard Fellows are always very special people who contribute greatly to our community. This year we were blessed with one of the very best in Joshua Bloodworth. Inside and outside the classroom Joshua's contribution was truly magnificent.



The School benefits enormously too from its Modern Languages Assistants, not just because of all their hard work linguistically but also for the rich experience they bring of other lands. In the past year we were grateful to Almudena Cardona, from Almeria in the south of Spain, Marianne de Manheuille from Paris and Melanie Frank from Germany.

Valete

TIM HASTIE-SMITH

Tim Hastie-Smith came to Stowe as Chaplain in 1991 – and what a Chaplain he has been! Not long ago, I was asked by a colleague Head who was seeking a new Chaplain in her school to indicate the qualities and characteristics required. I said Chaplains should pre-eminently fit a description of our Chaplain at Stowe and, quite naturally, in the spirit of RPD, asked him for a self-evaluation. Amongst his list, which was nearly exhaustive, Tim Hastie-Smith listed the following: he needs to be pro-active and central to school activity; to place Christ at the centre of the school, which is more than an advertising slogan: it is about teaching a sense of wonder; Chaplains are more than parish priests, they are missionaries and need a missionary zeal; a Chaplain needs to be able to teach about death, about failure, about life, about hope, about truth, about love; he must have the trust of all and have integrity; he should be radical and, in full co-operation with the Head, be subversive; he should be normal. Tim has all of this.

Tim quickly earned the confidence of all; he managed the day-to-day 'business' of the Chapel, initiated some very important group activities and further invigorated the School's religious life, (very happily, being a Christian and owning and living a spiritual life at Stowe is not seen to be eccentric or 'pi' or extraordinary); an avid and voracious reader himself, he made issues challenging and compelling and made people, Stoics and staff alike, think. Along with the Director of Music, John Cooper Green, the School's life in Chapel grew and grew and the services were moving and enjoyable (no-one, for



instance, has ever left the annual Carol Service without having been touched by, and felt part of, a real act of living worship).

Known from the start as 'Tasty Hasty' by the Stoics, his ministry has been magnetic and dynamic – we have had the Ascension Day Communion Services and breakfasts; Crossfire, Bible Study and Prayer Groups have flourished – God lives at Stowe. The lists of preachers we have had in Chapel in Tim's time read like pages from *Who's Who!* In addition he has coached rugby, produced musicals, starred in Staff productions (who can forget him as the dressy showman,

Daddy Brubeck, in *Sweet Charity?*) and, until this summer, he was Chairman of the Leavers' Ball Committee and made that event the enormous success that it is; he has master-minded several charity events encouraging Stoics to value others. He always says that he believes intrinsically and completely in what Stowe does and says: 'We get many more things right than any other school I know'; 'Chaplains should be an antidote to League Tables. They should have values that show the criteria of the *Daily Telegraph* for judging success to be a nonsense.' Stowe is infinitely the richer for his ministry.

Added to all this he has been a very successful Stowe Director of Admissions since 1994. In this, as in all, he has been ably supported by Joanne to whom, along with Emily and Edward, we extend our warmest thanks, deepest gratitude and very best wishes for their exciting new life as Tim becomes Headmaster at Dean Close, Cheltenham.

His most important job, he said to me early on, was to be the Chaplain to the Headmaster: I thank him warmly for that. We shall all miss him but he leaves a lasting legacy and, who knows, he might return ?!

JGLN

BELINDA MCCREA

Belinda holds two records at Stowe. The first dates to September 1991 when, as Belinda Evison, she became the first female Old Stoic to join the full-time teaching staff. The previous summer term she decided to stop working abroad



and try teaching, beginning with some time at Stowe. We were fortunate to be able to persuade her to stay on full-time and she was one of the first part-time students to take an Open University P.G.C.E. while on the job.

Belinda quickly became known as a very competent, enthusiastic and energetic teacher who was determined to draw the best from each individual she taught, most significantly within the Classics Department, but also in English. In addition she initiated visits to Roman Bath and Hadrian's Wall and accompanied trips to Greece and Italy. She helped with a wide range of other activities, including hockey coaching, tennis, fencing, Junior Congreve and the Duke of Edinburgh scheme. As middle school tutor she masterminded the A-level fair and within the last year took over Careers. During her time at Stowe she helped in Stanhope, Lyttelton and then Cobham houses.

Her second record is being the first Old Stoic to marry a master at the School. After Colin's departure for Tettenhall College last summer and a year's peripatetic existence, she is now wrenching herself away from Stowe and moving to join him. We wish them both every happiness, especially as they look forward to the birth of their second child.

MJB

STEPHEN McCABE

It seems entirely fitting that Steve McCabe, who was born and brought up on some rocks in the Atlantic, the Scilly Isles, should choose a similar location for his second job. He leaves us to take up the position of Maths Adviser on the island of St. Helena.

As a mathematician who has always talked of returning to the Scilly Isles and Cornwall, who has dreamed of pottering about by the sea repairing boats rather than having to suffer the incessant marking that goes with A-level Maths, his decision to give the next two years of his life the maritime flavour of St. Helena was not as unexpected as it might at first have appeared.

After Exeter College, Oxford, and PGCE at Bristol, Steve joined Stowe as a Maths teacher and Under-housemaster in Walpole in 1986. His initial motivation to enter the teaching profession was not so much to do with the idea of relishing the cut and thrust of the classroom but more that he could "do a lot of sport". Of course, he enjoyed the former, but "wanting to do a lot of sport" at Stowe means exactly that. As a very fine soccer player, he was soon involved in the complexities of rugby – a game he had never played before; he became master-in-charge of cross-country running and carried on the Stowe tradition of producing very successful teams. He became involved in the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme, and in the summer terms his expertise in athletics and cricket was called upon, week after week.



On David Lennard's retirement, Steve was appointed as Head of Mathematics, and was responsible for the introduction of the first modular A-level exams in the Stowe curriculum. As a teacher, head of department and sportsman, he was unflappable. No tantrums or outbursts from him, no blaming of others, and a shrug of the shoulders was enough to tell you that he had a problem well under control. He was noted for his calm efficiency and total professionalism as a senior member of staff.

His logical way of working and calm, orderly approach meant that he quickly acquired the top professional qualifications as a scuba diver. As a sportsman, he was equally unflappable and calm and, unlike most soccer players, he stayed relatively silent about injustices on the sports field.

When he eventually took up playing rugby as a winger or full back for Buckingham Bishops, his prodigious ability to kick a ball for miles would frighten the opposition. He kicked penalties from his own half, and would petrify his opponents by running at them like some speeding, out-of-control juggernaut.

Steve will be renowned and remembered alike for his loyalty to Stowe, his passionate loyalty to his family and to those who worked with him and played in the same sports teams with him, and of course his love of Arsenal. We wish him and Catherine, together with James and Hannah, as much enjoyment on the island of St. Helena as they have had in their life here at Stowe. They will be very much missed by all of their many friends.

KM

PATRICIA SMITH

Patricia Smith retired in the Summer term after 12 years' service to the School as matron of what must be a record number of houses. Originally she came to Stowe in 1986 as matron of Bruce, not long after the house had transferred from its old quarters in the mansion. As a former Chief Stewardess with British Airways (BEA / BOAC) and the widow of a doctor, she was eminently well-qualified to take on the challenge of sixty-odd adolescent boys, not to mention Mike Waldman! Her organisational talents proved to be of great value to the house, and she was widely respected for her judgement and practical good sense.

Having sorted Bruce boys out fairly quickly, she was asked to turn her attention to the newly-established girls' house, Nugent, then in the care of Ian and Alison Small. It is typical of Tricia that she was able to combine her duties in both houses effortlessly, whilst still maintaining her high standards.

With changes in the girls' houses and the rearrangement of Stanhope from day to boarding, Tricia was needed to assist Fiona Lockton in the running of that house and so spent the next few years doing a double duty in Stanhope and Bruce.

Although she enjoyed her time in Bruce very much, there is no doubt that the strength of her empathy with the girls



carried the day, and eventually in 1991 she became Matron of both Stanhope and Nugent. She thereby acquired considerable skill in dealing with the particular problems of Sixth Form girls, and an encyclopaedic knowledge of the individual girls who passed through her hands during those busy years. When the girls of Stanhope moved to Lyttelton, the School recognised the need for a full-time matron for each house and Nugent was lucky enough to retain Tricia's services from then until her retirement.

Tricia's interests at Stowe were many, including great expertise in arranging wonderful displays of flowers in Chapel, notably for such events as the Carol Service and Confirmation, and helping with Confirmation classes. She had, of course, travelled widely in her time with BA, and much enjoyed continuing this interest by accompanying the school expeditions to such cities as Paris, Venice, Florence and St. Petersburg, where her organisational capabilities were greatly appreciated. Not surprisingly, she showed considerable concern for those girls who came to Stowe from overseas, and Garden Lodge was always open to any who wanted that extra touch of kindness – not to mention extra biscuits!

We wish her a relaxing and peaceful retirement in her delightful cottage not too far distant from Stowe.

REM/MW

SISTER SYLVIA KENNEDY

When Sister Sylvia Kennedy first came to Stowe in January 1983, Margaret Thatcher was Prime Minister, the Falklands War had just been won the previous year and Christopher Turner was Headmaster. Now, two Prime Ministers, one Headmaster and even one Medical Officer later, Sylvia has finally hung up her bedpan and inserted her last suppository. Retirement beckons, in the New Forest, close to her devoted family, although for one who is used to living life in the fast lane it will be far removed from flower-arranging and whist drives!

In Shakespeare's comedy *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* the intriguing question is posed "Who is Sylvia, what is she, that all our swains commend her?" Well, who is Sylvia? She is someone who for over fifteen years has administered to countless thousands of Stoics, staff, parents and visitors; a plaster, an arm around the shoulder of a homesick new boy or a chat over a cup of tea. In an increasingly busy and frantic world, Sylvia had the unique ability to put people at their ease and listen to their problems, quietly and sympathetically. Many will be grateful that she seemed to have the knack of being able to give them all the time that they needed.

For some school nurses there is the real risk of their making the school the focus of their lives, where they eat, sleep, work and relax. In contrast, Sylvia made sure that she forged a life outside school, relishing her off-duty as a time that she could spend with friends and family. Despite her undoubted devotion and commitment to Stowe, she was careful to ensure that it did not dominate her life. She even developed miraculous powers of weather manipulation and we used to joke that it was always sunny on her days off! In the middle of a wet June this year she managed to arrange



sunshine for her farewell Sunday lunchtime drinks party with Tricia Smith and Rosemary Shahani!

Sylvia began her training in Manchester and qualified in paediatric nursing in 1959. She then moved to London for general nurse training at King's College Hospital, and became a State Registered Nurse in 1961. Marriage to a geologist followed in 1962 and her husband's job

took them to Africa where she gained considerable experience working in bush hospitals in Kenya and Mozambique. The arrival of her two children, Sue and Rob, was followed by the family moving to Scotland where she worked in a maternity hospital in St. Andrews. In 1974 she had her first experience of schools nursing when she worked in the community in Harrogate as a school nurse and health visitor. Tragedy struck five years later, in 1979, when her husband died suddenly and she was left as a young widow to bring up her two children. Her resilience and fortitude, together with the support of her family, helped her to build a new life and three years later, in September 1982, Rob started at Stowe as a new boy. His acceptance by Christopher Turner was highly significant as Sylvia took up her post as Senior Sanatorium Sister four months later, and as they say, 'the rest is history'.

There is no doubt that Stowe will be a poorer place without her, although for Sylvia herself the prospect of retirement held little dread – in fact she had been positively looking forward to it! She will leave us with many memories, of a professional, caring and devoted nurse, a sincere, warm and loyal colleague but, above all, a true friend – to everyone.

RWEH

ROSEMARY SHAHANI

Rosemary Shahani came to Stowe in 1983 as matron of Lyttelton House in the days when it was still a boys' house and Charlie Macdonald was the Housemaster. It is a position she has continued to hold through the many changes that Lyttelton has seen in the intervening years. From 1988 she was a great support to Guy Scott, after he took over the house. She stayed on after Lyttelton became a girls' house in 1993 under Emma Taylor and later Jane Hamblett-Jahn, the present incumbent. With all of them she has worked closely and very successfully.

She has always had a particular empathy for students, often those from overseas, who have felt homesick or who have taken time to settle down at Stowe. Her flat on the top floor was a place where many Lytteltonians found a ready listener and a fund of sound advice. Friendships built up in this way have not ended when students have moved on from Stowe. Rosemary is an expert at maintaining friendships, inviting Old Stoics back to stay with her during the holidays, dropping in for a cup of tea if she is in their vicinity and in



some cases visiting them in far-flung places when she is on her travels. She has, over the years, built up a network of friends.

Rosemary has contributed to the life of the school in many other, invaluable ways. For years she taught the First Aid course for Duke of Edinburgh candidates and to staff, with very high success rates. She looked after the catering for the Duke of Edinburgh summer expeditions in Scotland, where she presided at the school's remote bothy in the Highlands. A large number of Stoics past and present owe their keyboard skills to Rosemary's popular weekly

typing classes, which we are delighted to hear she will continue part-time in the future.

To all she has done she has brought her inimitable enthusiasm and good humour. An immensely positive, courageous and enterprising person herself, she has inspired generations of Stoics to similar commitment and achievement.

She retires not to 'slipper ease' but to continue her many interests and activities, cooking, cycling, boating, riding and travelling.

DBS

GREG ROBERTS

Greg joined a stable Physics department with experienced staff four years ago. At the beginning of his second year, he found himself the most experienced member with a new Head of Department, two new technicians, a chemist teaching physics and Dr Fred Armitage over on exchange from Australia. He embraced the new environment with enthusiasm adapting to the new syllabus and utilising technology to good effect in the classroom. After classroom observation, during inspection, the inspector praised his methodical and clear approach to lessons.

Greg contributed in a large number of areas within the Stowe community. He has run the fives team, taken shooting on the range and supervised badminton teams. He helps with the sixth form club and administers the staff bar accounts. He is a key member of the D of E and has organised and run a highly successful school trip to Nepal.

It is no surprise that Greg is now to take over a Physics Department – at Dame Alice Harpur School in nearby Bedford. We wish him well in his new position and hope his new staff responds enthusiastically to the exciting input he will make to this department.

SHM

RAY DEXTER

Ray Dexter had the unenviable task of following Charlie Macdonald on his retirement from the Chemistry Department two years ago. He arrived as a newly-qualified teacher, having spent some time in personnel management before deciding on a teaching career. In that short time he has established himself as a great personality in the Common Room and developed a following amongst the pupils as much for his enthusiasm for Chemistry in the classroom as for his guitar playing in the Stowe staff/pupil group, 'Stoasis'.

In the Chemistry Department he has fitted in well and contributed positively to the friendly working atmosphere that we value so much. As a popular resident under-housemaster in Temple, Ray has been a great and valued support to JECH. The close proximity of his flat to the Sixth Form Centre led to Ray being asked to take on supervision of the Centre this year – a task he has handled with sensitivity and initiative.

Staff in charge of games and activities all use the same adjectives when asked about his contribution: stalwart, reliable, efficient and good-humoured. Thus as basketball coach and referee, as a member of the D. of E. team and as one of the athletics staff, 'Dex' will leave many gaps.

Ray has also been Secretary to the Common Room Committee where his reputation was further enhanced by his ability to produce the minutes – almost within minutes!

His move to Budapest to take up the post of Head of Science in the newly-established British School has a little to do also with the return of the Nugent Housemistress's au pair to her native country! We all wish 'Dex' great success in this challenging new venture, and happiness in the future.

BHO

LEAH HAMBLETT

Leah Hamblett joined the staff as a new part-time teacher in the autumn of 1995 to teach Theology and Theatre Studies. She spent much of her time in that first year observing lessons, teaching with other members of staff and, gradually, taking classes on her own. She quickly made herself indispensable not only as an increasingly effective teacher in her two departments but also as an under-housemistress in Nugent, and an approachable and caring sixth form tutor.

In 1996 her appointment was made full-time and she was asked to take up residence in and responsibility for the Nugent Annex, a demanding job which she tackled with her customary vigour and efficiency.

In the 1997-98 academic year she took over co-ordination of PSHE teaching. She has provided invaluable help with the Junior Congreve productions, house plays and inspired numerous Theatre Studies and Theology classes.

In addition to all of this, she has spent much of the last two years studying for her MA at Royal Holloway College.

She leaves us to head the Drama Department at Queen's Gate School for Girls in London. We wish her all the best for the future.

DSB

STEPHEN SCOTT

SMBS, Old Canfordian, graduated from Loughborough University with a joint honours degree in Geography and Sports Science. After considering a job in the City, he turned towards teaching and, having completed a PGCE, arrived in Stowe in September 1996 to become an assistant teacher of Geography and the under-housemaster of Grenville.

He has been an extremely enthusiastic geographer and, despite his many responsibilities elsewhere, made the department his priority. His unfailing energy and dynamism in the classroom and on field-trips were a real asset to the department and he was very much part of the spirit and camaraderie that makes up the geography "team".

In the House, Steve was very loyal and wholly supportive of all Grenvillians, particularly his third year tutor group who benefited greatly from his genuine concern for their academic and social welfare. He is also a talented sportsman and coach in all the major sports, but will be remembered best for his successes as 1st XI hockey coach and his inspirational pre-season training. He was a lively member of the Common Room and a great supporter of social and sporting occasions. Much friendly rivalry was apparent during a two year long golf "tournament" and fiercely contested pool matches but he was, above all, very supportive to his colleagues around him.

Designer clothing, GTi, "grunge" star (vocalist for a staff/pupil band calling themselves Stoasis) and public school boy charm were part of the image, like it or not, which were part of what SMBS stood for, but which could not mask the fact that he was, first and foremost, a fully committed and well-respected schoolmaster. He leaves Stowe in search of a new venture in the London business world but I suspect and hope that his loss to the teaching profession is only a temporary one.

SLA

OBITUARIES

MICHAEL FOX

Michael Fox arrived at Stowe in 1948 to take up his appointment as a Maths master in the final year of J.F. Roxburgh's Headmastership. As a boy Michael had been a pupil in the City of London School, where he was a contemporary of Kingsley Amis. After he left school, following a year in Cambridge, he joined the RAF and did his aircrew training in Canada, where he won his wings and obtained a Pilot's certificate. On demobilisation he returned to Pembroke, Cambridge. There he rowed in the College eight and sang in University concerts, and in due course he took his degree.

Michael settled in quickly and happily at Stowe, and served first as under-housemaster in Temple under Mr. Capel Cure, to whom he was very attached. Indeed there was a side of Michael's character, I think, which led him to venerate some (though by no means all) of his seniors – pre-eminently J.F. himself, Humphrey Playford, Peter Dams, Bill McElwee, Brian Gibson; perhaps seeing them as exemplars and guardians of the Stowe tradition. He liked old-fashioned ways, and could be intolerant of attitudes or standards that fell short of them. He belonged to that generation before masters came to be known as teachers.

He was, of course, very effective in the classroom, particularly with boys in the lower and middle school. Conscientious, meticulous and hard-working, Michael communicated his own personal enthusiasms, exacting high standards from his pupils.

His wartime service in the Air Force naturally equipped him to run the RAF section in the Corps. Later he took over as Commanding Officer of the whole contingent, becoming apparently happily immersed in the ways of all three services. It speaks volumes for Michael that in the changed school culture of the seventies, he quickly recognised the need for the Corps to become a voluntary activity, with the result that those who opted in found under his leadership a much greater satisfaction and enjoyment in its activities.

Michael was a keen singer, with a great love for the music



of Bach. He performed both in the Queen's Temple Singers and in the Choral Society. Though rumour has it that he could be disconcerting in Chapel. Offering a strong lead in the bass line, thereby giving courage to his neighbour to follow, Michael would then switch to alto, leaving his fellow worshippers literally dumb-founded.

Among Michael's other activities, he was assiduous in attendance at School and House matches; as a starter at athletics meetings, and his involvement in the running of the School Shop. But chiefly we recall him as a character. Genial and out-going, generous to a fault, upholding the Pauline virtue of 'being given to hospitality'. "Number

two locker is open – help yourself", he would say. Further afield he had his own tankard in the Green Man.

He had many friends in the wider school community – among the House matrons, the secretarial, the library and domestic staff. He also befriended those who lived locally and worked in the grounds.

Michael was loyal to his colleagues, indulgent to those he approved of. Opinionated, he was tenacious in argument. On occasion from his big frame there would burst a volcanic eruption which could unnerve the unwary; but soon the lava would disperse, the dust settle, and the sun shine on everyone once more as he regained his composure.

Michael had his due share of eccentricities – among them a curious dislike of celery, an intense aversion to Gilbert and Sullivan, and loyal Anglican though he was, it was disconcerting that his adherence to the Via Media should extend to driving rather fast along country lanes in the middle of the road.

Michael was on the staff here for thirty-five years. A School, like a Diocese, needs its quota of long stayers; men who express the corporate memory and traditions of the community. This is particularly true of Michael, who had the gift of recognising names and faces. He kept in touch with many Stoics, charting their careers. And when Stoics returned he was alert and ready to greet them by name. He became the Local Secretary of the Old Stoic Society and was involved in the production of the School Register. Stowe indeed was his life.

THE RT. REVD. COLIN JAMES
(from his address at Michael's funeral in Stowe Church)

PAT NEAL

Pat Neal died on 10th May 1998. A formidable ex-WAAF and WRAF officer, widow of an Air Marshal, she first became involved in life at Stowe in 1976. She served as a most devoted Registrar of the Old Stoic Society for eleven years until her retirement in 1985. Even in retirement, she kept the sharpest eyes on Old Stoic hatches, matches and despatches, and was an (occasionally mildly explosive) mine of information on the Stowe community, present and past. Her knowledge of the Society was truly encyclopaedic and this was an immense asset to



those compiling the Old Stoic Register in 1990.

Pat had a fair amount of bark but only the mildest of bites and kept a succession of OS Local Secretaries in thrall and awe. She was a very well-known character (and voice) at Stowe and was much loved and respected. A stickler for accuracy, she always referred to one of my sons as "the sear gent" since this was the way he described his final CCF rank when writing up his school record.

The School and the Old Stoic Society owe her an immense debt of gratitude for

Photographs: Michael Fox and Pat Neal at the launch of the 1990 Old Stoic Register.

BRIAN STEPHAN

As all who knew him would expect, Brian Stephan did his obituarist no favours. An 'intensely private person' – how he would have hated the phrase! – he was, during his professional life, surrounded by myths which, if he did nothing to encourage, he did little to dispel. He had, as all his old friends will remember, a genius for under-statement and a horror of display. With this caveat, here are the ascertainable facts:

He was born on 12th July 1914 and died on 31st March 1998, holding a record unique among masters at Stowe School: he was the only one to have served under all six of its Headmasters. There can be few Stoics of the past fifty four years who do not remember him with gratitude and affection.

Appointed by J.F. Roxburgh in 1944, he would, in normal circumstances, have retired in 1974. Such were his qualities as a teacher, however, that retirement was deemed to be out of the question and he remained as a full member of staff until 1989 and then for a further five years as Librarian.

Brian was born in the village of Paradise, Coalbrookdale, the son of an artist for Coalport china – a talented artist and engraver of Huguenot stock. He attended the Priory Grammar School for Boys in Shrewsbury and entered Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge in 1933 with a Rhondda Scholarship (a Major Scholarship in Classics). He read Classics in preference to Music, at which he also excelled, and gained a First in both parts of the Tripos, having also found time to play the organ and to row in the College 1st Boat.

On going down from Cambridge he was awarded a Cholmeley Scholarship at Lincoln's Inn, where he was admitted in July 1937, and where he was called to the Bar in June 1940. He was accepted into Chambers but, because of wartime arrangements in 1940, this did not take place.

He was also engaged on a study of the Latin poet Statius; and travelled extensively in Europe; in lighter moments he seems to have studied the music of Carroll Gibbons and others at the Savoy. It was even commonly thought at Stowe that he had been involved in some capacity with the Intelligence Services: be that as it may, if they failed to recruit him, it was certainly their loss. Part of the myth, perhaps? As were his reputed exploits as a night-time climber on the Cambridge roof-tops – this latter based on school-boy mis-readings of some crucial texts!

In 1940 he volunteered for military service, but was rejected on medical grounds. He thereupon decided on a teaching career and took up an appointment at Rishworth School near Halifax, where he is still remembered, not only for his fine teaching, but for his participation in concerts as a pianist and duettist and for editing the School magazine; and also for his involvement with the Cadet Corps, and for his organisation of that famous old wartime chore of digging up games pitches for planting potatoes.

In 1944 he moved to Stowe where he served first as Under-Housemaster to the redoubtable Major Howarth, whom he was soon to succeed as Housemaster of Chandos. At first he encountered some resistance to his efforts to create a more liberal and informal atmosphere after the somewhat military régime of his predecessor, but Chandosians soon warmed to his kindly and humane understanding. Behind the apparently austere reserve of the scholar they found a man of wide interests and sympathies who was always ready to listen and to guide rather than instruct.



Though Roxburgh had promised (or warned) him that he would be taking on the House for life, Brian left Chandos in 1963 and, having been Tutor in Classics and English, became Senior Tutor in 1966 and Second Master shortly thereafter, being the last to hold these posts simultaneously. In Spring 1974, when Bob Drayson took a sabbatical term, he acted as Headmaster, earning the gratitude of the staff for conducting the briefest of Masters' Meetings, and of the Headmaster for 'running a trouble-free ship'. He occupied all these positions with distinction and authority, but also with self-effacement. This was characteristic: he never paraded his vast scholarship; none of his pupils was ever made to feel small. As one of them said: "He paid us the compliment of not for a moment imagining that we were unable to keep up with him; so of course we did". He endeared himself also by the unexpected variety of his interests. Thus, long after duty had ceased to call, he was to be seen rigger coaching in shorts so unfashionably long as not to escape remark.

As is the way with great teachers, what his old pupils remember most about him seems to be not just his learning, which was extensive; nor his love of languages and literatures ancient and modern – including Russian, self-taught – though this was profound; nor even his (to his pupils totally unexpected) ability to play Jazz or Bach or Debussy with the touch of a maestro; but it was the uniqueness of a personality whose tastes were not determined by the whims of fashion, and whose qualities were not on casual display. He wasn't a person to be taken lightly – his silences could be devastating to colleagues and pupils alike – but he expected, and usually got, high standards. He was a fine producer of plays; but he was also a most generous and fair-minded critic of the efforts of others. Like many often melancholy men, he had an excellent and infectious sense of humour.

In 1968 Brian's life took a new turn when he married Biddy, the widow of Raymond Walker, his predecessor as Senior Tutor. He was to have thirty supremely happy years in their house in Chackmore. Here, in marked contrast to his spartan bachelor quarters, was a home where he could enjoy books, pictures, garden, dogs and the company of family and friends, who came for abundant hospitality, stimulating company and conversation and, above all, wise counsel.

In 1995 the Governors commissioned David Wynne, Old Stoic, to sculpt Brian's head. This now stands, very appropriately, in the School Library, where he can still keep a benignly quizzical and Socratic eye on a congenial scene with which, for half a century, few if any have been more familiar.

JOE BAIN AND MUIR TEMPLE

Muir Temple, former Second Master and Housemaster of Grafton,
reviews Brian Stephan's recently published volume of reminiscences

STOWE – HEARSAY AND MEMORY

In 1974 two apparently immutable laws were broken: the first, that Stowe masters shall retire at sixty; the second, that no man is indispensable. So it was that Brian Stephan was prevailed upon to remain for two further decades and so it is that we reap the benefit of his first-hand observation during more than half a century of Stowe life. Everyone who has any interest in Stowe will want to possess a copy of *Stowe – Hearsay and Memory* but, should there be any waverers, I would urge them to read Sir Nicholas Lyell's superbly perceptive foreword which has effectively done the reviewer out of a job. His closing words, that the book "will surely become the standard work of reference... for decades to come" remind us that the definitive history of Stowe has yet to be published. Had he been asked a few years earlier, Brian might have undertaken that task. Instead we are indeed fortunate to have these memoirs though sad to know that he was robbed of the pleasure of seeing them in print.

The throwaway title, suggesting as it might to the uninitiated a collection of anecdotes, belies the serious purpose of the book: to trace the development and expansion of Stowe under its first six very different headmasters. To have managed this in so small a compass (a mere hundred pages if one excludes the fascinating photographs) is a triumph of keen observation, shrewd understanding and concise expression. And, of course, wit, though much of this is, typically, muted and much more lies between the lines to remind us of that crinkly smile, those quizzical eyebrows and, to borrow Joe Bain's phrase, "the most expressive back in the business".

Nowhere are balance and clarity more evident than in the account of Crichton-Miller's downfall, the hottest potato for the Stowe historian. No one, not even those most central in the affair, can know all the facts but, this being so, here is as fair a statement as we are likely to read. Equally telling are the appraisals of the personalities and achievements of Stowe's first five Headmasters. A future historian may increase and expand the details of their regimes. He will hardly now increase our knowledge of these men and of the changes which took place under (and occasionally in spite of) their guidance. If I may single one out, I was particularly moved by his sympathetic portrait of Eric Reynolds which will go far to rehabilitate that much misunderstood man.

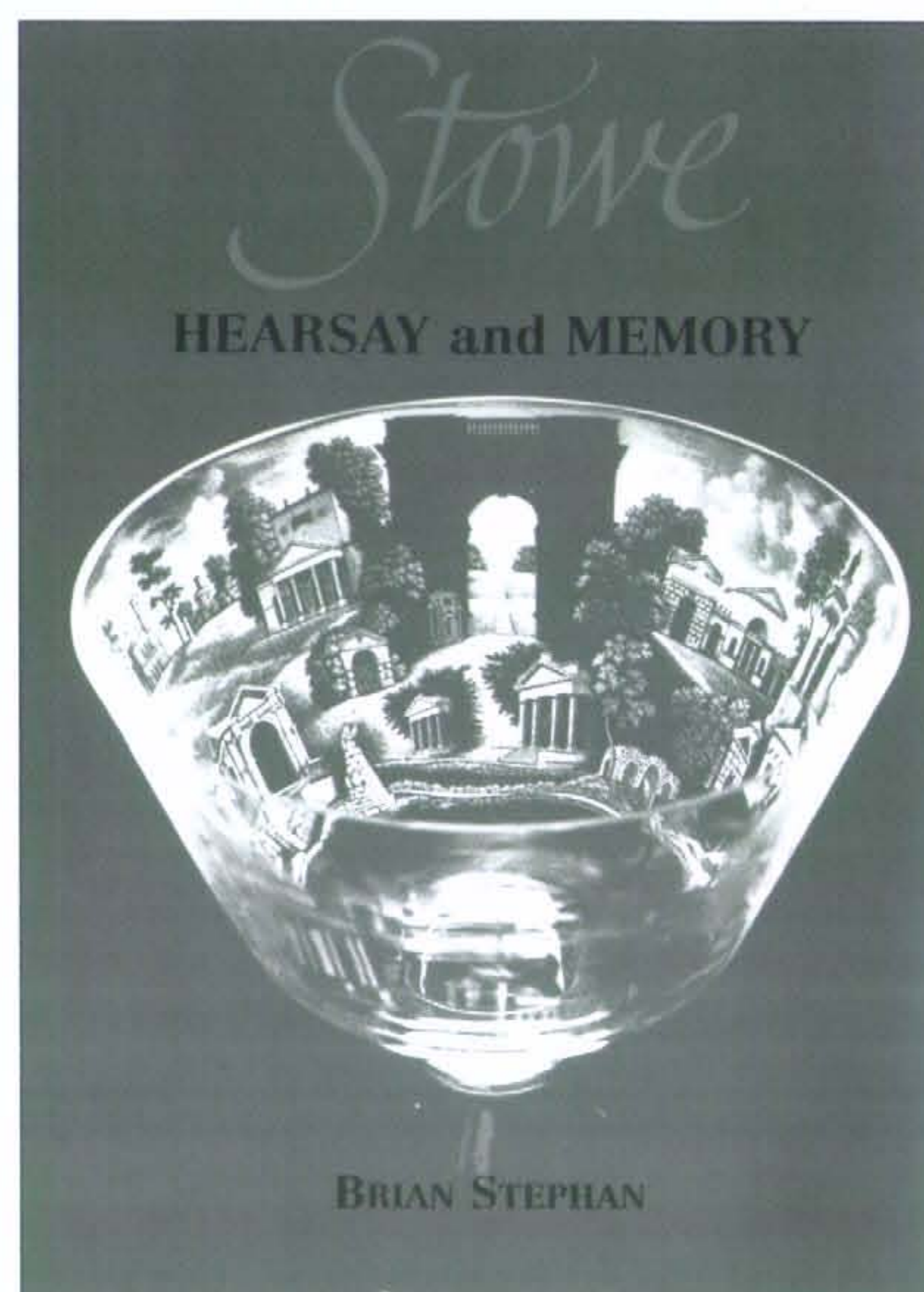
If the Headmasters come to life in these pages so, too, do the multitudes of lesser beings, some described at length, some in a few revealing words, but all contributing to the kaleidoscopic picture of the times. Those who knew them will admire and delight in the accuracy with which they are conjured up. Those who didn't will be amused, amazed, sometimes impressed and sometimes, possibly, appalled. Who would now venture to say to an incoming Headmaster "You leave me alone and I'll cause you no trouble."? There is proleptic irony here, as cited elsewhere in the book, for the speaker was dead within weeks.

A memoir, as opposed to a history, allows the writer to pick and choose his material, to select his cast, to take liberties with chronology and sometimes (as I know to my slight embarrassment) to refuse to permit strict truth to spoil a good story. So there are minor inaccuracies (possibly deliberate?), the time-scale is now and then confusing and there are omis-

sions of events and policies and people, some surprising, some, considering Brian's opinions, not so strange. Rather more seriously it has to be admitted that in the later sections Brian relies more on report than on his memory and these are to my mind the less interesting for that. He was by this time less involved in school policies and politics and more remote from the give and take of the common room. His outlook, besides, was increasingly more benign though no less acute for that. So the emphasis shifts to accounts of the increasingly multifarious activities of Stoics and Old Stoics.

The most serious omission which a future historian will have to redress, however, is the result of Brian's modesty and self-effacement. He has striven to be fair to others but he has done himself less than justice. To cite but a few examples, he mentions his production of *The River Line* but does not add that for years it was the yardstick by which other plays were judged. He speaks of his 3rd XV but omits to say that years later the familiar knee-length shorts were to be seen in all weathers on the Bourbon when other ex-Housemasters were snug at home. He underplays his service as Senior Tutor and Second Master which, far from being surpassed as he claims, set the standard for his successors. Finally he does not say how frequent and how many were the times when his opinion, his advice and his friendship were sought in his "retirement".

Copies of *Stowe – Hearsay and Memory* are available for £15 (inc. postage and packing) from: The Old Stoic Office, Stowe School, Buckingham, MK18 5EH.



JOHN WILSON

John Wilson died in a tragic, freak riding accident last summer holidays, aged fourteen. He had been at Stowe, in Grafton, just one year. John's wide talents and engagingly ebullient personality had already made a big impression in the Stowe community. He seemed destined for a most successful career. In this tribute some of his contemporaries write of him as they remember him best, going about the daily business of being a busy third-former. John's father writes of his talent on horseback and finally extracts are included from the Address given in Stowe Chapel by Paul McNamara, one of John's Godparents.

The Third-former

"I remember his cheeky grin, his funny jokes. He was good at school, always willing to join in. I remember his voice; his laugh; his interest in cricket; his red cheeks; how he loved rugby; his checked shirt, his tight tie; being scruffy; his clarinet and piano books; the disgusting saucepan he never seemed to clean; being good at drawings; a teletubbies lover..."

"Since at Stowe his sport really improved, especially rugby. He was always far better at the piano than me, he was really good. His files and books were always left in the wrong place; he was always using someone else's laptop; his big grin, and freckles."

"His friendliness to others. Whenever I was down he was a good man to talk to. He always cheered me up. I sat next to him in the third form studies and I always wondered how he found everything on his desk. A good rugby player. John and I were the only two from Grafton in the A's rugby. He always used to encourage me. He was good at art..."

"He always smiled and his laugh was the wildest laugh I have ever heard. He always made jokes and always laughed at them as much as anyone. He always wanted to play with a computer and if you were playing he would sit beside you and tell you what to do."

"Helping him with Dressage Tests was fun. He made me laugh. His bad jokes were really good. He exaggerated everything. I remember his smile, his love of sport, love of the teletubbies and singing their song..."

"He was always scruffy, messy hair and tight tie; good at sports; and soap-resistant."

"Big smile; good at tennis; short trousers; bad jokes; good at cricket; always happy; good at hockey..."

"Cheerful with a big smile; musical – good on his clarinet; always wore checked shirts; could be noisy!"

"He was always the sort of guy you could go to if you wanted a lift or laugh. He was always generous."

"He was clever, good at sport and also a musician; an all-rounder. Always had scruffy hair, with clothes often too small. Always a bit messy; his desk, his saucepan, everything. He was my best friend."

The Competitive Rider

"An illustration of the many facets of John relates to his performance as one of a team of three representing Stowe at the Inter-schools U18 Cross Country championship at Gawcott. John, jumping near the end of the competition, was ordered by the team manager and his mother not to jump the bonus fences as they were too big and too difficult for a boy of his age. John set off on his horse, appropriately named Champagne, and deliberately jumped all 15 bonus fences and went clear in a very fast time. His explanation, accompanied by that familiar grin, was that 'Stowe could not have got into the prizes if I hadn't.' Stowe finished third out of 60 schools thanks to John's 3rd place out of nearly 200 contestants. One never knew whether to be exasperated by his lack of discipline or full of admiration for his self-confidence, talent and sense of team spirit. On balance, those who knew him tended (against their better judgement!) to go for the latter."

The Character

"Sporting, academic and musical achievement are, of course, for nothing if they are not inside the right character. John was an outstandingly mature young man. His impish cheekiness was combined with a generous spirit and an ability to communicate easily with his peers as well as adults. Shy is not a word that comes to mind. He was loved by old and young alike"

"Each one of you will feel pain differently and will have different memories. To all of you, may I say on behalf of everybody assembled, you must know that we, like you, will remember John for his enthusiasm, his brotherly love, mischievousness and above all that smiling, freckly face."



THE JOHN WILSON MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP FUND

With the agreement of John's parents, Guy and Sue Wilson, his Godparents have set up a fund in his memory. The fund is to endow in perpetuity a scholarship which will reflect John's talents as an all-rounder, a person who threw himself into school life in a wonderfully whole-hearted manner. The recipients of the scholarship will therefore be current Stoics of similar mould to John, whose parents may find themselves in need of some financial help. The fund has already been magnificently supported. Full details of the Scholarship will be announced in due course. It is being administered from the School's Development Office, where any further donations to the fund will always be welcomed.

STOWE'S YEAR

Page 37 The Academic Year:

Library
Luffield Group
Spodne Exchange
An ESU viewpoint
Neighbourhood
Engineers

**Page 45****Drama & Music:**

Julius Caesar
Electra
Junior Congreve
Drama Festival
Jazz
Mozart Trio Prize
Composers
The Orchestra
Clarinet Quartet
Chapel Choir
Concerts
Wind and Brass
Licensed to Play

**Page 56****Sport:**

Athletics
Basketball
Cricket
Cross Country
Golf, Hockey
Netball, Polo
Rugby, Sailing
Sculling, Swimming
Tennis, Water Polo

**Page 83****Societies
& Activities:**

Chess
Colloquium
Creative Writing
Debating
HM's Essay Society
CCF
D of E

**Page 89****Stoics Abroad:**

Art History: Florence
Classics: Rome
MEP: Stockholm



Director of Studies, Stephen Hirst, writes of

THE PAST ACADEMIC YEAR

Third and fourth year boys in particular had a different experience this year when we ran a special timetable for three days so that they could do some investigative work in their house groups. This meant that mixed-ability but socially integrated house tutor groups of about twelve boys in each had three two-hour lessons a day for a while, and it was fascinating seeing the diverse ways in which different departments used the opportunity: there were investigations, court hearings, magazines and newspapers productions, displays and presentations - thankfully no two-hour lectures! There were also PE, Drama and IT sessions that would not necessarily have appeared on everyone's timetable otherwise. Some Stoics commented that it had been more fun than usual, but also more hard work, which sounds like the best of both worlds, and it also raised several interesting and useful issues and experiences for further developing tomorrow's curriculum.

Other developments this year were targetted specifically at supporting the external examination candidates to give them every chance to achieve the very best grades they could. BTF has been giving weekly précis lessons to about thirty-five A-level candidates who have difficulty expressing themselves and their knowledge to best effect in the exam room, and visiting the studies of 10 or so who have found it difficult to organise their own efforts outside the classroom: this has been in addition to the normal skills development tuition provided by LEW's team at all levels within the school. A serious review of prospects following the trial examinations has also helped candidates to focus themselves better on their realistic expectations, sometimes by dropping a subject, even at such a late stage, and sometimes simply by being brought face to face with how much remains to be done! Finally, we brought back from University four recently successful Old Stoics to help out during the exam period itself. Ed Morgan, Nick Barrington-Wells, Sam Emery and Tom Smith-Walker gave the benefit of their recent experience, exhortation and general encouragement in the houses, as well as providing a good deal of support to the teaching staff in a number of ways, thus helping tutors and teachers to stay in touch with their exam candidates throughout the long examination period.

The Jubilee Year has also brought with it some fascinating lectures, with more planned next term, and was also the catalyst for the unmistakably academic but tremendously good fun production of *Arcadia*, which provided a spectacular and appropriate finish to this academic year. It was wonderful to see a group of Stoics, Old Stoics, Stowe staff and visiting professional actors all working together on such an intelligent and demanding piece of theatre for the sheer love of it, and pulling off such a remarkable success despite the difficulties presented by the weather, Oxford University's exam timetable, various television companies stealing our actors, a busy summer programme including the Grand Prix and Jubilee Balls, and all the usual things with which theatre productions have to contend. *Arcadia* is an education in itself, Stowe the perfect location and Stowe enthusiasts the perfect cast. A remarkable marketing operation ensured full houses every night, and two decent charity donations - to The Stowe House Preservation Trust and to WarChild - at the end. Maybe the whole process of the House and Gardens inspiring literature was simultaneously beginning again, as the Luffield Group of local schools had its creative writing day for almost fifty 13 and 14 year-olds in the state rooms, practically in the midst of one of the rehearsals.

THE LIBRARY

The new librarian, Kensa Broadhurst, joined us in April from Lancaster University. She here reflects on the library she has inherited and changes which are in progress.

A visitor entering the Georgian splendours of Stowe library might be forgiven for thinking that it would be the last place to be prepared for the twenty-first century, yet the gracious bookcases hide a wealth of up-to-date information and technology behind their grilles. As well as all the "old books" on the gallery and the south wall and the archival section with its documents on the history of the house and school, the library contains books on every school subject from Latin to Computing, via Maths, Spanish and of course English. Indeed lack of space is one of the major problems as the stock is ever increasing.

There are over one hundred new fiction titles in the library, ranging from the Discworld series by Terry Pratchett to novels dealing with contemporary issues such as the troubles in Northern Ireland and homelessness. There are also some of the best-sellers of recent years including 'Enigma' by Robert Harris, based on events in nearby Bletchley Park. Of course there are old favourites too such as Dick Francis and P.G. Wodehouse. Hopefully there is something for everyone!

As well as developing the fiction in the library it is equally important that we can cater for curriculum needs. By the end of the next academic year (1998-99) all the departmental libraries will have been catalogued as well as the books currently held in stock, so that if a pupil or a member of staff requires a book which is not on the library shelves, but is in the school, it will be possible to get it to him within a couple of days. Stowe remains a member of the Buckinghamshire Schools' Library Service, so we have immediate access to any item in the entire county stock, an invaluable source of books, CD-ROMS and audio-visual tapes for those areas not covered by the school library.



Currently the Art History, Geography and P.E. sections in the library are being tailored to next year's curriculum. We have books concentrating on particular countries which can be used for geographical case studies, as well as for planning gap year travel. There is also a range of books intended to back up the theoretical side of P.E. courses, and more general books on specific sports such as rugby, football and motor racing.

A library in the twenty-first century does not merely contain books, however. Our new CD-ROMS include one containing the Driving Test theory questions and the Highway Code, another allows access to specific verses of the Bible according to themes or words.

This year will also witness the development of an audio section of the library, with cassettes and CDs not only of music, but also the spoken word, including some of the English set texts.

With the development of these various strands, the use of the library has been increasing steadily. As successive third forms on their arrival at Stowe are introduced to the wealth of resources, more and more Stoics are making good use of what is available. I hope that the introduction of our new Windows-based catalogue, making it possible to tell which novels, non-fiction and other media are most popular, will continue this trend.



Stephen Hirst explains the background to, and potential of, a recent concordat between local schools, The

Luffield Group

The Luffield Group was formed in July 1997 to promote co-operation between the thirteen secondary and preparatory schools of the small towns and villages lying between Bicester, Northampton and Milton Keynes on cross-curricular matters and events where mixing students from different schools is valuable. There is a long history of co-operation between some of these schools, starting with BASIL (Buckingham Area Schools Industry Liaison) in the early 1980s, which grew into the North Bucks Education Business Partnership. These fostered many useful initiatives but co-operation was unnaturally limited by the county boundary and by only being concerned with business-related matters.

The first event under the Luffield umbrella was the Enterprise Challenge on 23rd and 24th June, 1998 when all Lower Sixth students from Akeley Wood, Buckingham, Sponne and Stowe Schools joined in a programme of management games and business simulations. They worked in 26 mixed groups of 11, each advised by a manager from the world of work. As well as guiding the group through the activities, the adviser also provides feedback on how students worked in the group, suggests ways in which they could develop their skills, and summarises their performance on a certificate for their Records of Achievement.

Half the groups worked at Sponne and half at Stowe, with some activities linked by fax and mobile phone, and everyone came together for a final plenary session at Sponne during which teams presented their business plans for new products or services to the assembled students and a panel of judges. The winners' product was wallpaper that acted as sound-proofing. Another hectic and popular game involves teams designing, manufacturing and selling goods made from unpromising materials like paper cups and silver foil.

The aims of the event include:

- providing a focus for sixth formers' awareness of Wealth Creation and other economic and industrial themes
- helping career choice by working alongside those involved in business and industry
- developing skills in presenting ideas and arguments
- encouraging teamwork between young people who have not previously met and who come from a wide variety of backgrounds.

Stowe has run Challenge events in unbroken sequence since 1980. Starting as 'Challenge of Industry', they became the 'Industry Conference', the 'Challenge of Enterprise' and finally 'Enterprise Challenge'. The Royal Latin School participated from 1982 and it gradually became a jointly organised event for the whole of both sixth forms. By 1993 Buckingham School had a sixth form and it too joined the Challenge, causing the event to be held on two sites thereafter. Last year Sponne School replaced the Royal Latin School and this year Akeley Wood School's participation made it the first four-school event.

The next Luffield event followed almost immediately, with four thirteen-year olds from ten Luffield schools coming to Stowe for a creative writing day on 30th June. They worked in small, mixed groups creating original poetry and prose under the guidance of the contemporary poet, Duncan Forbes. Stowe girls word-processed the work so that the writers could take

home a printed copy of their creations and all the work will be bound into a booklet for display in school and public libraries. Mr. Forbes, whose publications include *August Autumn*, was formerly Head of English at Cheltenham College.

Possible future activities include a linguists' club where language teachers, assistants and students can meet to extend their linguistic skills and a jointly-funded writer-in-residence. A Luffield web-site has been started and the Stowe Gardens Resource Centre will be run as a Luffield facility.



Matthew Cumani gives a pupil's perspective on a recent

STOWE/SPONNE EXCHANGE

From the 21st to the 29th June, Stowe participated in an exchange with Sponne, a comprehensive in nearby Towcester. Essentially, it was a life swap. Seven people from Stowe swapped with six people from Sponne. Those from Stowe were Laura Kaye, Ambra Medda, Jerome Starkey, Wambaa Mathu, Hugo Chance, Hugo Douglass and myself, all members of the L6th.

At 5.00 I arrived at the house of the Stafford family with whom I was to stay. They live in the village of Blakesley which is a ten minute bus journey from Towcester. After supper and the football Mr. Stafford and I went down to the Bartholomew Arms to see Chris their son who worked at the pub. Bedtime: 11.00.

I woke with the help of a sharp rap at the door at 7.15 and went down to breakfast and then said goodbye to Mrs. Stafford who was going on a biology field trip. I was given my lunch money and waited for Ambra and Laura, who were staying a mile away and passed "my" house on the way to the school bus.

After being given a quick tour of the sixth form area and their common room we were allocated to Sponne students to shadow. The first problem was that the school did not teach History of Art nor Italian which are two of my main subjects. In the end I shadowed Lucy who, for her A-levels, was doing Biology, Chemistry and Maths. She did, however, have lots of "free periods" during which she took it upon herself to show me around Towcester. After buying myself a large bap for my early morning snack, we made our way back to the school library where Lucy did the Chemistry she was meant to have been doing.

Then came break and every one gathered in the common room where the appearance of our new faces didn't seem to bother anyone. There we waited until the fire bell signalled the start of lessons. I then went and played a game of rounders which was a new experience. Lunch break was spent in Towcester together with the week's lunch money. At 2:15 we were summoned to go and meet the headmaster of Sponne who seemed to be quite relaxed about our presence in his school. One Biology lesson was then attended before we caught the bus "home" where I ate, and watched the England match.

Even on the first day we all, I'm sure, learnt a lot about the difference between Public and State school: for me the overwhelming difference was that Stowe has its facilities spread over a large area and yet has only around six hundred pupils. Sponne on the other hand has relatively small buildings and a thousand pupils coursing through its corridors. So many in fact that it has to employ a one way system to make classroom to classroom movement more fluent. The teaching style was more relaxed, but the biggest difference was the amount of free time we had between and after lessons. This free time was a novelty to us Stoics who are used to going on to some activity. There was time to explore Towcester in depth and then perhaps ring up our parents to complain about the lack of pocket money.



This was the routine that we were to employ for the rest of the week, except for the Enterprise Challenge days which were strategically placed in the middle of our week. So Tuesday and Wednesday were taken up by days full of challenges. Fifty pupils from the Stowe L6th came over to Sponne and fifty pupils from Sponne went to Stowe. (Akeley Wood and Buckingham School were also involved in the two days). At each school every one was put into groups of about eleven and were given challenges to complete with the help, or rather encouragement, of a well-known or not so well-known company director.

The challenges were all to do with inventing, designing, buying, manufacturing, advertising and then selling. For example the challenge entitled 'ENTREPRENEUR' was as follows: Each team started with 2 paper cups, 1 felt-tip pen and £100 cash. On top of that teams could buy objects at a rip-off rate: Paper cup £10, Aluminium foil £5 per piece, String £5 per 0.5m, Card £10 per piece, Sellotape £5 per 0.5m.

Then teams could also hire equipment such as scissors and paper glue. Out of this each team had to make something useful, get it approved by buyers (teachers) and then produce the amount demanded by the buyer for an agreed sum. Real life was simulated as much as possible. For example people could borrow money from the bank and the interest rates would fluctuate, so there were several factors to be taken into account. The objective was to finish with as much money as possible.

I went into the Challenge thinking that maybe it was just a school-organised 'do' so that we had something to put into our Record of Achievements. But I actually found it very interesting. The challenges needed careful thought and the ability to listen to other people. We learnt different techniques of handling difficult situations and the best way in which to organise a group of people with mixed abilities into smaller groups (for example, a designing team, a public relations team, a manufacturing team and a financial team). Personally I found the two days useful; I learnt a great deal and got as close to the real business world as possible. It was just slightly sad that it meant that we had to miss two days of our exchange.

Wednesday night Laura's and Ambra's 'parents' took us all to the cinema to watch *The Wedding Singer*.

Thursday (the last day) was like Monday in that we followed our shadows around to all their lessons, except this time I had virtually a full day of Chemistry and Biology! The lessons went well and the lunch even better. The bus came to pick us up at 3.30 as usual, we said our good-byes to all the friends we had made during our swap, and our thank-yous to the members of staff. We went "home" and packed, said our good-byes and thank-yous, took a few photographs and then were driven back to school where we briefly met the people we swapped with before their return.

To me the whole exchange was slightly rushed. I'm sure our "parents" wanted their real offspring back, but really, I could have quite happily stayed at Sponne for another week!

Drew Clark, who spent a year at Stowe as an English Speaking Union exchange student, writes of his experiences.

LIFE IN AN ENGLISH CASTLE

To be quite honest, when I left home – after much sobbing from my mom and much delayed sobbing from my dad – my interest in Stowe lay in the fact that to come here and see Europe was much cheaper than staying at home and attending an American university. The Culver Academies, English Speaking Union and Stowe School gave me the opportunity to skip university for a year without any sort of catch. For that opportunity I am eternally grateful to all three institutions.

All of the American ESU Scholars met in New York before making the great jump across “the pond”. This gave the ESU the chance to scare the pants off of thirty naïve Yanks. We were taught the correct slang (i.e. bird=chick, crisps=chips, bloke=guy, etc.), given the ‘homesickness talk’ and warned to expect a fair amount of Yankee bashing. I cannot say that I have experienced any serious Yankee bashing but I have occasionally been baited.

Unlike the experiences of my predecessor, the family with whom I stayed for my first three days of English life were not at all anti-public school. The Herschels led me to believe that I was going to have the time of my life, even though they had never actually seen Stowe. After three days of grilling their daughter Sian with questions about English schools, and about her experiences as an ESU scholar in America, I felt more than ready to face the perils of Stowe School.

My first impression, upon arriving through the intricate system of country lanes, hump-back bridges and cattle grids, was that I was going to be living in a castle. I had seen the brochures, but boarding school brochures have a funny way of casting a rosy glow on things. Places can lose their novelty in the first few weeks of being there. Not at Stowe. How can a person be homesick in a place where a simple Sunday walk can catapult him into childhood’s fairytale land of unbridled imagination. I am not embarrassed to admit that I have slain many dragons in these grounds.

In the summer of 1997 I graduated from the Culver Military Academy. (It is silly but I still get a kick out of telling people that I went to military school). It was an experience that taught me a great deal. Marching at 6.15am, drilling at 7.15am, spending Sundays on the parade field, these are not normalities to which I ever intend to return, but the structure and discipline that Culver taught me, I will always be thankful for. So my second impression of Stowe was how relaxed and civilised everything is. I remember being up at 11.30pm talking in a friend’s study on my second day at Stowe, when Mr. Weston opened the door. I thought I was done for. I figured there would be some terrible punishment awaiting my disobedient self. No, he just asked me to return to my room and go to sleep. Now that exams are over,



I simply ask and I am allowed to go out to the pub at night. I don’t think that anyone here realises the amount of paperwork that would require at an American military school barring the fact that drinking would be unheard of.

I do not feel compelled to look myself over every time a member of staff passes me by, out of fear that I might not have something straight, or something else tarnished. My room can be untidy for a morning when I oversleep; no notification of punishment will be scotch-taped to my door when I return. Here I can stretch out, walk bare-foot in the park and be just unrestricted me. I can also be an

unabashed leftist without people out to convert me every step of the way. If I have good reason, I can hand a paper in a day late without losing a mark. Fights do not erupt here, when exams become too stressful for everyone. People here do not resort to violence. They know themselves well enough to know when pulling an all-nighter will improve their grade, and when it is better to get a good night’s sleep. The trust accorded to sixth formers at Stowe, the opportunity to learn to take responsibility for yourself, is just my style. There is staff guidance and control but also the space within that to find your own limits and strengths.

My final impression of Stowe was how much this school appreciates all angles of its students. Not only do the most academic Stoics receive recognition, but so do the most musical, the most athletic, artistic, creative and dramatic. We support each other on the playing field and in the theatre as well as in the music room and art school. I remember being completely taken aback when the headmaster personally congratulated me on my performance in the Senior Congreve *Guys and Dolls*; even more so when he recognised a Counting Crowes song I had performed at an informal student concert. My housemaster has been to every one of my performances, so have a small group of my friends. We all support each other, and the school supports us. I have never been to a place that will give a promising horn student a grant for a better instrument. Here, a person can be seen for their talents whatever they may be. Those talents will be recognised and nurtured.

After one year of legal drinking, the novelty has worn off, but the sheer poetry of this place will stay with me always. I never pulled a Stowe girl (written before Leavers’ Ball), but I think I’ve pulled a little piece out of Stowe School, and put a piece of myself in its place. I think all of the leavers have given to and taken from Stowe. This explains the collage of attitudes, colours and impressions that make this place more than just a nice bunch of buildings. I will remember them but even more I will remember all the students and staff who made my year such a rewarding one. Thank you.

Science

Simon Collins, Head of Science, pays tribute to the Neighbourhood Engineers Group at Stowe, which has now been running for ten years, with an insight into their latest enterprise, a Fourth Form Power Challenge.



NEIGHBOURHOOD ENGINEERS INNOVATE AGAIN!

Of over 100 original Neighbourhood Engineers groups established over ten years ago in Buckinghamshire, the Stowe team is one of only a handful to survive. The latest in their long line of contributions is to offer a day with cross-curricular, career awareness, team-building and problem solving themes, based on a Power Challenge. The exercise, run with the IVth form, investigated the complexities of the industrial production of electricity, the technology, economics, and environmental siting issues. It involved the whole year group working in teams of 8/9 under the guidance of a Neighbourhood Engineer.

We were very appreciative of prizes, some fine Casio FX 7400G graphic calculators, sponsored by our own fuel suppliers: Dixon's Oils, Fina Oils and Calor Gas. Research materials were also kindly donated by Dominion Oils, BP Oils and Understanding Electricity. The two winning teams also visited the Didcot A Power Station as part of their prize. To all of them, and the Stowe Neighbourhood Engineers Group, we are most grateful.

The aims of the Challenge were:

- to offer personal contact with adults from the world of work
- to enhance awareness of technological and economic aspects of working in a small team and solving a power supply planning and design problem
- to give an opportunity for team participation
- to encourage thought about economics and planning and environmental issues
- to show how engineering and technology can meet society's needs
- to raise awareness of science, mathematics and technology as creative and exciting problem-solving activities through quantitative reasoning
- to contribute to the cross-curricular themes – environmental, citizenship and careers education

and it included these activities:

- solving power generation and supply and siting problems
- simulation involving planning and costing
- presenting their findings at a competitive tender
- simulated public enquiry



Top: SOC with Don Robinson on one of his many visits to help Stoics appreciate the ingenious nature of engineering.

Left: Neighbourhood Engineer and Physics Laboratory Technician Terry Simons presents two members of the winning team, Henry Leon and Ed Burchett (who proposed a coal-fired power station), with their graphic calculator prizes.

Right: Nicholas Morgan (Mech.Eng.) organiser of the Easter Conference 'Computers Engineering Tomorrow's World' explaining measuring procedures before inputting data to a virtual reality graphics package.

Donald A. Robinson (C.Eng.) one of the founder members of the group explains the background to what has been a most profitable initiative.

THE NEIGHBOURHOOD ENGINEERS' VIEW

I realise that our name conjures up all sorts of impressions, so I hasten to clarify initially that we are not the chaps down the road with an exotic tool kit that you call on when you are in trouble. I therefore commence with rather a grand commercial as an initial introduction to us.

The Neighbourhood Engineers scheme operates in schools throughout the UK under the auspices of the Engineering Council. This body maintains the UK register of professional engineers in all disciplines, and seeks to maintain the highest standards of engineering expertise for the benefit of the community. It also has a mission to enhance the standing and contribution of the engineering profession in the national interest and to the benefit of society.

Having disposed of the commercial, I can tell you what the Neighbourhood Engineers are trying to achieve at Stowe and how we try to meet our objectives. We provide friendly, informal, practical and committed support to the daily life of the School. This is achieved by working closely with teachers to see how best we can assist the School within its development plan. We hope that our achievements and activities improve the image of engineers, the profession in general and create an interest in engineering. Stowe believes that pupils benefit from extensive contact with the world outside and desires to bring the outside world in.

Our small group of professional engineers from a wide range of disciplines meet regularly outside school hours with Simon Collins, the Head of Science. We also liaise with David James, the Head of International Development and Enterprise in the Careers Department, and serve on the School's Enterprise Committee. The meetings plan forthcoming events, review activities and also explore new ideas.

We have arranged external school visits to companies and major exhibitions and external speakers are brought in for 'Opening Windows', a scheme which gives engineering presentations on a wide variety of topics. More complex talks are planned for the Sixth Form and we also contribute to their programme of career lectures. Our group also organised an Easter residential training conference for pupils and teachers drawn from various UK schools on "How computers are engineering tomorrow's world".

We run a Challenge Conference competition annually for the Third Form where teams spend a day under our supervision carrying out a set of exercises which encourage them to express their creativity. It also makes them aware of the technological and economic aspects of engineering and planning, has extensive problem-solving and experience of working as a team.

This year we have added a similar competition for the Fourth Form, called Power Challenge. In this event teams covered in depth aspects of power generation from either coal, gas, nuclear energy, oil or wind. They were required to make calculations and plan a presentation on how their specific resource could meet a prescribed government power generation output, justify their choice of available sites and be mindful of environmental and sociological issues. They also faced intensive and challenging questions at their presentations from the engineers and the other competing teams.

After some of my initial work with the group, I found the School's attitude was so positive that I was convinced that Neighbourhood Engineers could widen our traditional role of promoting engineering, by utilising the often neglected experience of engineers as professional managers. This led to the development with the Careers Department of the training programme in interviewing, the scheme for the interviewing of pupils by outside visitors and my writing the booklet *Your interview – the Stowe Guide*. This I later extended for the use of all Stowe personnel to *Interviewing – the Stowe Guide*. Another booklet guide to complement the interview training was written: *Decision Making – the Stowe Guide*.

At the last Enterprise Committee we proposed that a data base should be set up of tutors' specialised subjects, interests and hobbies, personal knowledge of universities, knowledge of other countries and other specialised knowledge. This could assist helpful referral to other tutors with special knowledge, and provide an introductory data base to new tutors and new staff induction. This method is widely used in industry for induction and general information.

I believe that there are still many areas where we can offer our professional experience to assist the School. We can only respond to opportunities created. What better way is there to improve the image of engineers and the profession in general than to offer an engineer's management experience in order to assist in improving the performance and achievements of the School?





Drama

JULIUS CAESAR



If you had been passing the Temples of Ancient Virtue or Concord and Victory on the penultimate evening of last summer term you might have been surprised to see what appeared to be a group of Roman senators resplendent in togas and sandals, one of them with a laurel wreath on his head, declaiming the immortal lines of the Bard and re-enacting the murder of Julius Caesar. They were in fact members of the third form who had decided with the help of their English master, DSB, to perform scenes from their Shakespeare text for this year Julius Caesar.

Benjamin Morgan composed and delivered a succinct introduction and performed the job of guiding the audience from the north side of the Temple of Ancient Virtue, which represented the house of Brutus, to the south side, which was Caesar's house and finally behind Walpole to Concord and Victory which was the Senate House on the Capitol where a large number of third formers portrayed the rowdy throng of plebeians. If at times they seemed rather unsure of how to respond to the speeches of Brutus and Antony, they made up for it by a very convincing portrayal of the riot at the end of Act Three where this abridged version of the play concluded.

For the murder scene the audience was invited to ascend the steps of the Capitol where Louis Buckworth as Caesar died a memorable death, made all the more powerful by the imperious and



confident way in which the role had been played.

Harry Vere Nicoll played a sophisticated Brutus, showing not only the character's commanding and authoritative side but also the naïvity and innocence which leads to the undoing of the conspirators.

Harry Beamish was an impressive Antony. In his first meeting with the conspirators he conveyed a cold sense of menace and when alone with the body of his former friend his fierce devotion to Caesar and determination to avenge his death were strongly communicated. His great speech to the plebeians on the steps of the Capitol was a masterpiece of controlled passion, intense feeling bridled by all the skills of a great orator.

We are grateful to Nicholas Austin for taking on the role of Cassius with only twenty-four hours' notice. He played with such conviction and understanding of the role that the audience sometimes forgot the fact that he was reading the lines from a script concealed in the folds of his toga.

DSB

From top:

Brutus (Harry Vere Nicoll) addresses the plebeians

Mark Antony (Harry Beamish) brings the body of Caesar (Louis Buckworth) before the plebeians.

Last minute line learning, Oliver Cullingworth and Ben Morgan

The conspirators at the home of Brutus



DRAMA FESTIVAL 1998

The excitement surrounding the Annual Drama Festival was intensified this year by the inauguration of Stowe Academy Awards to give recognition to the talents and achievements of the many Stoics who contributed to the Festival and, it is hoped, "pour encourager les autres". Our adjudicators were Zillah Eagles and Rachel Nicholls, both professional actresses invited back after their astute and detailed adjudication of last year's Festival to comment upon what they saw as the strengths and weaknesses of this year's dramatic offerings. In a busy two-evening schedule they each saw four plays and each had in their gift five awards: best direction; best actor, best supporting actor, best actress and one unspecified prize to be awarded at the judges' discretion.

Bruce performed a hilarious and original pair of plays by their housemaster, *Incident at Springfield High* and *An Inspector Calls II*, directed by Damian Darkko and Roy Chambers. Louis Buckworth (who won best supporting actor) and Tom Sowerby enlivened the stage as alcoholic headmaster and female secretary respectively. Each took himself completely seriously despite the ludicrous roles and brought uproarious laughter from the audience. Malcolm Riley, Charles Obieniu, Anthony Offley, Dominic Gordon, John Rice and Tom Legge gave such realistic performances as drunken pupils that one wondered where they had trained for their roles. Despite the array of acting talent in display in the second play, the show was stolen by a guest appearance of Sarah Parker as a French coquette and by Adam Cottrell as the idiotic caretaker.

Chandos' *Accidental Death of an Anarchist*, directed by Jerome Starkey, was a *tour de force* for its leading actor Oscar Humphries who gave a virtuoso performance that was exhausting just to watch. He won a best actor award. The decision to move the setting from Italy to present Northern Ireland brought the chilling tension of the play much closer to home. Chuck Stanton, Chris Johnstone and the director himself gave memorable performances while Ben Smith, Ed Lake and Buster Drummond ensured that the technical side of the production equalled the acting and direction.

Cobham was ambitious in choosing a play which has been performed definitively on television, *Fawlty Towers*. Especially with John Cleese's portrayal of the eccentric hotel owner, it was almost impossible to equal the original but James Lyon who was also the director made a very good job of it and was rewarded with near hysterical laughter from packed houses. For that he picked up the other best actor award. He was ably supported by Henry Salt as Manuel the waiter who with his faultless Spanish accent picked up an award as best supporting actor. Hugh Arbuthnott was uncannily natural as the maid and one unwitting boy in the audience was heard to mutter, "Nice legs!" The costumes were well chosen apart from the worrying moustache which the colonel sported. It was so large that at one stage it threatened to suffocate him.

Chatham's *Twelve Angry Men*, directed by Kingsley Ford and James Sleater, addressed the serious issues of racial and religious prejudice. The actors sought to bring out the inner questioning and complexities of their characters and eschewed the temptation to present caricatures. David Widdick, William Pudney, Tom Rundall, Kingsley Ford, Alex Wilson and Dan McCarey all set their sights high and we saw some competent acting but equally there were times when the

cast seemed to have overstretched themselves and they did not manage to pick up any of the awards.

Grafton took on the demanding script which turned out to be a play within a play, *The Real Inspector Hound*. It is a great tribute to the skill of the directors, Ken Yuktasevi and Mugabe Kaijuka, that the convolutions of the plot were clearly unravelled for the audience with great comic effect. Henry Cavill and Alistair Burchett were brilliantly ironic in their roles as Felicity Cunningham and the lascivious Lady Cynthia respectively. Hugo Chance was a frighteningly manic major and Mugabe gave the play a novel twist by appearing as the inspector in full African tribal dress complete with spear. James Johnstone won an award as best actor for his portrayal of the butler and the production was deemed by the judges to have the greatest audience appeal.

Walpole presented *Unman, Wittering & Zigo*, directed by Andrew Clark, Gideon Ashworth and Stuart Healey. Although the play has its dark elements, the directors presented it as an inspirational comedy. Strong performances from Matt Whitaker as the new teacher and Charles Robinson as the art teacher held the play together. The class of disruptive pupils around which the play revolves was convincingly played by members of the house and made good use of the large stage space in the Roxburgh Hall and was one aspect of the production that the judges were impressed by, though it was probably the unexpected opening dance to "Foxy Lady" that most impressed the audience.

Nugent chose the popular Victoria Wood play, *Mens Sana In Thingumy Doodah*. Set in a health club it was brought to vibrant and very amusing life by a pair of gifted directors, Bella Lloyd-Owen and Camilla Stopford-Sackville, and an energetic and colourful ensemble of players each of whom represented a female stereotype: Nicola Mullinger, the fluffy pink-slippered manager; Amy Stephens and Briony Lamping, the well-to-do health club groupies who sneered at other customers; Daisy Shann, the bimbo; Lara Bailey and Sophia Kakabadse as the bulging protagonists and Kim Taylor the alcoholic night club habituée. The judge was unable to pick out a single best actress and awarded that prize to the whole cast.

Lyttelton continued the theme of trying to lose extra pounds in *The Flesh Game*, directed by Olivia Armitage and Louise Macdonald. The small cast of seven had evidently rehearsed their parts carefully and presented a clearly delineated set of dysfunctional women on stage. Gemma Coles was the frazzled and failed actress, Louisa Jones was the perfect stuck-up girl trying to squeeze into her wedding dress, Olivia Armitage the shell-suited scouser and Miranda Campbell-Bowling the butch woman who downed beers in the pub and adopted a protective role towards her partner, Amy Gillam. The judge decided with some difficulty that the award for the best actress should go to Alexa Alexander for her role as the super-efficient nurse.

It was a Festival with the emphasis on comedy but with some serious plays and a range of issues of contemporary interest being explored. Without exception the performances were very well received by the largely Stoic audiences who crowded the Dobinson Theatre, the Roxburgh Hall, the Temple Room and the Chandos Houseroom on three successive evenings. The adjudication was again very instructive, giving both credit where it was due and specific advice on how to improve directing and acting skills for next year.

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Electra

Above: Alex Janson (Messenger)

Left: Patrick Pearce with Nicola Mullinger (Orestes and Electra)

Below: Alex McMicking (Agamemnon's Tutor), Chorus with the Mask of Tragedy and in the Festival of Hera

Photographs by DSB



The Classical Society

EURIPIDES' ELECTRA

Ably led and directed by their teacher AGM, the L6th Classics groups set out to bring one of their A-level texts, Euripides' *Electra*, to a wider Stowe audience who, surfeiting on the rich Congreve diet of contemporary drama, musicals and Shakespeare, were in need of some exposure to the rigours of classical Greek tragedy. In preliminary discussions, it was generally agreed that, whatever might happen, the production should not be "boring" which, given the long passages of lament and discursive choral songs, seemed a tall order. AGM's skilfully translated version of the play and the decision to set the production in a military dictatorship of the present day provided a solid basis on which to proceed.

The story is one of revenge: King Agamemnon has been murdered by his wife Clytemnestra and her lover Aegisthus who now rule in his place. The play opens with the return of Agamemnon's exiled son, long awaited by his sister Electra who has been forced to marry beneath her. Urged on by his sister, Orestes first murders Aegisthus and then his mother, Clytemnestra, so avenging his father's death. The Furies, the ancient Greek spirits of vengeance, now demand Orestes' death but the intervention of the gods secures his forgiveness and the Furies are changed to the kindly ones, the Eumenides.

Nicola Mullinger gave an impelling performance as the dispossessed eponymous heroine, forcibly married to a peasant by her stepfather. She managed to communicate both the weariness and the anger of a woman unjustly deprived of her status and power and condemned to a life of hard, repetitive labour. She longs for her brother to return and avenge their father's murder. When Orestes, masterfully played by Patrick Pearce, does arrive there is an immediate sense of fraternal affection for his long-suffering sister and a tense stillness between them as they contemplate the killing of their mother and stepfather. It is Electra who conveys the greater sense of loathing and determination. In the tense scene before the queen's death, as brother and sister prepare themselves for the task ahead, Orestes falters. Patrick Pearce's playing of the role made clear that it was not cowardice but humanity which stayed his hand. Electra, hardened by years of servitude, is implacable. She gives her brother the final encouragement that he needs and with a steely calm goes to persuade her mother to enter the house where Orestes awaits her.

Amy Gillam, resplendent in an Imelda Marcos style outfit, gave a memorable performance as Clytemnestra. Corrupt and pampered, her scene takes place on a sun-drenched terrace where she is attended by silent lackeys. Her imminent death was given real poignancy by Amy's powerful delivery of the speech in which she justifies her murder of Agamemnon in terms of his cruelty in sacrificing their other daughter and his infidelity with the Trojan Cassandra.

Alex Janson took on what must be one of the most difficult roles in Greek drama, the faceless messenger who reports the bloody events which occur offstage. His animated and obviously deeply-felt account of the death of Aegisthus brought vividly to life the first of the play's two deaths and held the audience gripped.

The loutish soldiers, played by James Defty, Daniel Hayes, Ben Scholfield, Matthew Williams, Robert Mills and Charlotte Lowe, all in contemporary combat gear, who periodically pushed their way across the stage demanding identity cards, established from the outset an atmosphere which was at once grittily realistic and threatening. The chorus made up of friends of Electra and played by Bella Lloyd-Owen, Layinka Howes, Iona Graham and Katie Connell in their carefully choreographed scenes in the early part of the play and backed by often spine-chilling music, created a powerful sense of tension and foreboding and throughout guided the audience's sympathies in support of Orestes and Electra.

The final scene in which the Furies call for Orestes' death was played on a darkened stage with the Furies circling Orestes with menacing gestures enhanced by hand-held torches with which they dazzled their intended victim. The voice of the unseen director, booming the closing words of benediction on a public address system, made an arresting and unusual *deus ex machina* and gave authority to the final message of the play.

The choice of the Dobinson Theatre as venue and the decision to perform in the round greatly enhanced the audience's sense of involvement. The actors made full use of the space, sometimes moving through the audience and speaking from behind them. In the spirit of reconciliation and amity with which the play concludes, the cast drifted out into the audience greeting them and offering cups of wine. It was an ending that Dionysus, in whose honour the play was first performed, would have enjoyed.

DSB



Behind scenes after the performance. Left to right: Leo Fenwick, James Haselwood, Daniel Hayes, Alex Janson and Charlie Lowe

OH WHAT A LOVELY WAR

Junior Congreve

For the 1998 Junior Congreve production, FAB chose what was a ground-breaking piece of musical theatre, Joan Littlewood's masterpiece *Oh What a Lovely War*. True to its author's original aims this production sought less to draw the audience into the world of the play through suspension of disbelief than to present ideas through the demonstration of scenes, to convey a political point of view and to send us away determined to avoid the errors of our predecessors. It is one of the clearest examples of the type of theatre pioneered by the German director and playwright, Bertold Brecht, whose approach to drama has had such an impact on English theatre since the 1950s.

The set of FAB's production made no attempt to create illusion: a stark, raked stage backed by black curtains was alleviated only by a large white screen on which images and slogans of the Great War were projected. The proscenium was edged with red and white lights reminiscent of variety theatre at the beginning of this century.

The production itself made its impact chiefly through striking contrasts: the contrast of Edwardian music hall style with the horrors of the trenches and the contrast between the often comical sketches enacted on stage and the horrific facts or photographs of death and destruction being projected above the actors' heads.

The ironic tone was set by the rousing and lighthearted opening of the musical. A master of ceremonies, played by Ricky White, and lively chorus entered through the audience singing "Row Row Row", a popular song of the period, in which the amorous activities of young Johnny and his sweetheart on a Sunday afternoon boat trip are comically recounted. The innocence of a bygone age was quickly evoked but as their voices fade the M.C. announces the "ever popular War Game" and the banner headlines appearing on the screen detail the ominous events of August 1914.

Similar techniques were employed even more poignantly towards the end of the play as four factory girls led the audience in a cheerful version of "Sister Susie's Sewing Shirts for Soldiers". Daisy Shann, Lara Bailey, Sophia Kakabadse and

Frances Morley-Fletcher played the roles with much Cockney gusto and humour and soon had the audience clapping in time to their tongue-twisting lyrics. Meanwhile, headlines flashed on the upstage screen: "Oct 12..Passchendale....British lose 13,000 men in three hours. 800,000 Germans starve to death through British blockade".

The horrors of life in the trenches were realistically presented in a series of scenes which ran throughout the play. Tom O'Halloran, Henry Bartlett, Sarry Jouzy, Ed Heard, Harry Trelawny and Ricky White were the good-natured and long suffering soldiers who bore the brunt of the fighting. We saw them on the first Christmas of the war in a bizarre and friendly exchange with their German counterparts, then repeatedly shelled and shot at and finally killed. Their bullying and desensitised sergeant was very strongly played by Henry Cavill while Jonathan Boyman was their arrogant commanding officer oblivious to the agonies his men were forced to undergo.

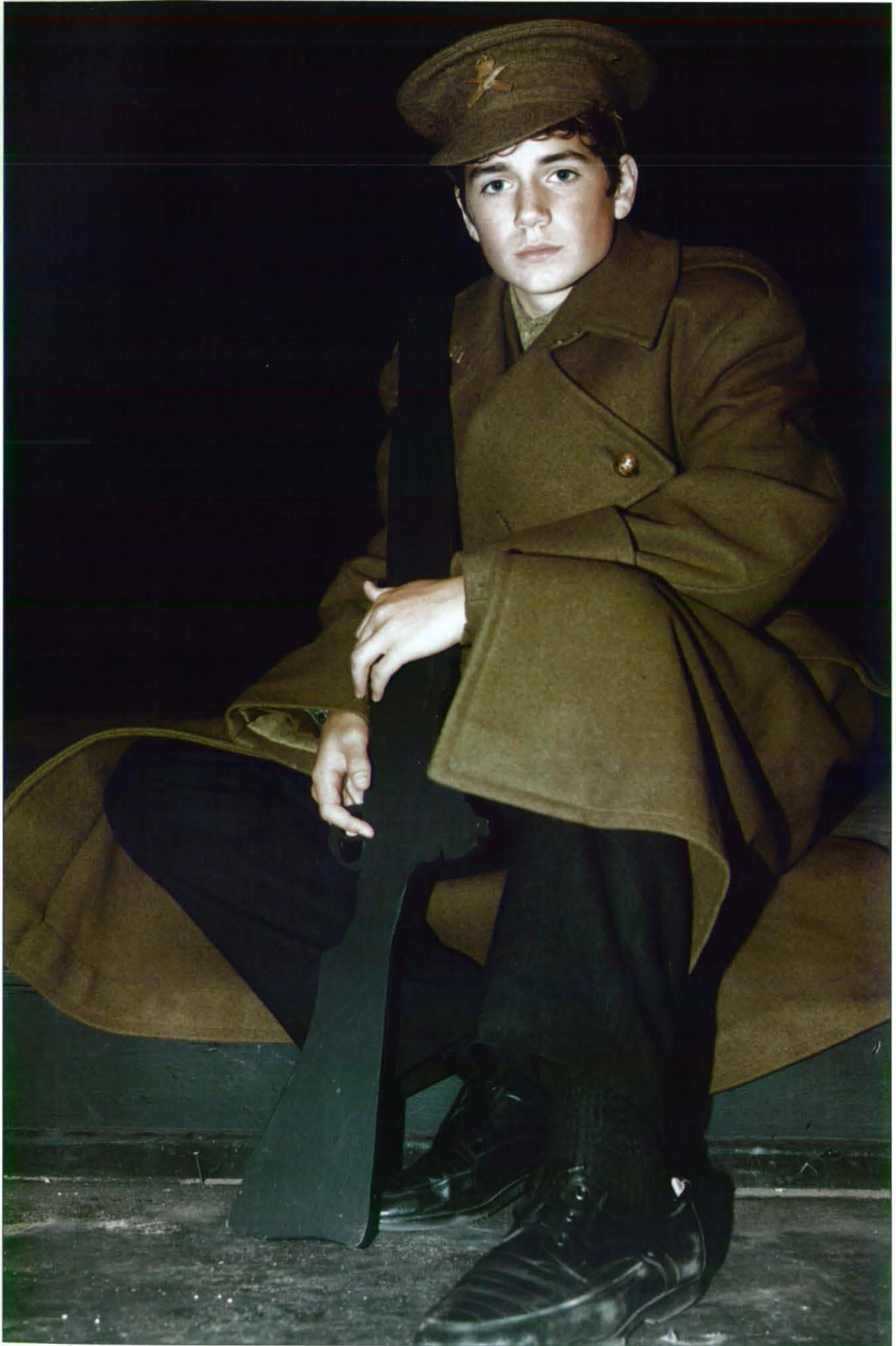
The portrayal of all of the officers and soldiers was excellent. The former with impeccable military bearing and old-fashioned upper-class accents were a paradigm of stupidity and overweening confidence. The latter conveyed vividly the uncomplaining suffering and warm camaraderie of unexceptional men in face of violent death. The directing and acting in these scenes increasingly drew the audience to deplore the high-handed actions of the one group and sympathise with the apparently pointless slaughter of the other.

There were individual "star turns": Alexa Alexander as Mrs Pankhurst made a strident anti-war speech against a barrage of "patriotic" hecklers; Henrietta Askew, lit by a single spotlight, sang a fragile and moving rendition of "Keep the Home Fires Burning" and the director herself appeared in an early recruiting scene complete with slinky evening dress and feather boa and sang "I'll Make a Man of Any One Of You".

The Director of Music and his excellent band, Tom Sowerby, Tuck-May Loke, Rupert Burchett, Peter Rossiter, Gene Kindell, Alex Lyell, Philip Bailey and Simon, were the backbone of the production. They accompanied from behind the projection screen which in true Brechtian style was removed at the end of the production for the musicians to receive well deserved applause.

DSB





Above: Henry Cavill
Left : Ricky White, Harry Trelawny, Henry Cavill, Tom O'Halloran, Sarry Jouzy.
In front: Edward Heard

Music



MUSIC FOR A SUMMER'S EVENING AND JAZZ AT THE TEMPLE OF VENUS

Despite the atrocious weather in June we actually managed to stage both these events outside and although the temperatures could not be described as balmy, the British character of fortitude stuck it out and very enjoyable the evenings proved to be. The Headmaster's garden with its raised patio and sheltered lawn is the perfect setting for an outdoor concert. Guests are able to walk around the garden with a glass of wine and a light supper whilst the music wafts around giving the whole evening something of past elegance. The performers were on very good form and the music chosen by the Chamber Orchestra, Chamber Choir and Clarinet Quartet was perfect.

This was the third time that we have staged Summer Jazz but this is the first year we have been able to hold it outside.

The setting, which must be one of the most perfect in the world, the good company and wonderful music must have made us all feel fortunate to be at Stowe to enjoy all these things. The Jazz Band and Jazz Combo are to be congratulated on playing a two and a half hour programme with only a short interlude provided by IJM and SHM with Drew Clark on vocals. This was a great triumph of musicianship, stamina and versatility and the performers received many plaudits. At the end of the evening JCG especially paid tribute to Simon Post and William Skidmore, who are leaving, for their contribution not only to the Jazz Band but to many areas of musical life at Stowe.

JCG



MOZART TRIO PRIZE

It is still confusing to those from outside that our most prestigious solo music prize is called the 'Mozart Trio Prize' but in calling it that we honour its benefactor Mr. John Yard who was a member of the group of opera singers known as the "Mozart Trio". Twenty three senior musicians of Grade 8 standard and above competed for the overall prize and a prize was given in each section for Piano, Woodwind, Brass, Strings and Percussion. This year there were four pianists, ten woodwind, three brass, four string players and one percussionist.

The adjudicator was Ruth Harte FRAM who is no stranger to Stowe as she judged the Piano Competition a year ago and has accompanied recitals here. Being an experienced accompanist she has a vast knowledge of not only the piano repertoire but also the repertoire of other instruments and has a great understanding of the difficulties of performing on each instrument. After each performance she gave each player her comments and useful suggestions. These were also interspersed with relevant musical anecdotes which were fascinating.

Because of the high standard of all the performances it took Miss Harte over twenty minutes to come out with a decision as to who the winners were. It would be tedious of me to go through all the performances but I shall mention those who won their group and those who were commended. The winner of the piano section was Alexander Winter who gave a marvellous recital of three works by Bach, Beethoven and Brahms. Miss Harte commented upon Alexander's feeling for the piano and how he evoked such musical colour from the instrument. Also mentioned was Simon Creek who performed his own three movement Sonata. The two outstanding performances in the woodwind section were by Ambrose Dudley on the Oboe and Rupert Burchett on Clarinet. On the day it was Ambrose who won with his performances of the first movement of Hindemith's Sonata and Poulenc's Sonata. I have personally never heard Ambrose play better and the adjudicator commended him for his "imaginative, sensitive performances". In the last few years the standard of brass playing has risen dramatically and our two fifth formers Alexander Lyell and Michael Jones were on very good form. Alexander, playing Gordon Jacob's "Concertino" for Trombone took the prize for a "performance of musical enthusiasm and commitment" which was "authoritative" and full of vitality. It was not surprising that Alexander should go on the next day to be awarded his ATCL diploma with a very high mark. The strings were won by Gene Kindell whose tone and sensitivity for the music were quite special. Although there was only one competitor in the percussion section there was little doubt that Simon Post would have beaten any competition with his brilliant playing of "Burlesque" by Ian Wright on the Timpani and a sparkling Waltz by George Green on the Xylophone.

Ruth Harte was left with a choice for overall winner between three outstanding performances from Ambrose Dudley, Alexander Lyell and Simon Post – after much heartache she chose Simon. Music competitions can be awful things but Miss Harte, in her final summary, commented upon the marvellous atmosphere at Stowe in which every competitor encouraged each other. The Director of Music has said that this day should be a celebration of our gifted solo performers, it truly was and those who listened on that day really had a feast of wonderful music making.

JCG



Simon Post, winner of the Mozart Trio Prize

STOWE COMPOSERS

I've written before about composing at GCSE. You will remember what a veritable cornucopia of talent it has released nationwide! This year had seen yet more remarkable works from our own musicians. Indeed I found the whole process of preparing (and marking) the final portfolios of this year's GCSE composers a dizzying experience! There were four concertos! Full length three-movement works – for piano by Simon Creek, for clarinet by Rupert Burchett, for trombone by Alex Lyell and for oboe by Ben McCarey. They were all performed (by their respective composers) at a unique concert early in the Summer Term. These were works of sophistication, subtlety and a real sense of structure, colour and drama. To pick out favourite moments would be unfair – nevertheless I feel I must mention the extraordinary maturity of Simon's piano writing in his concerto; the vivacity and colour of Rupert's 5/8 final movement and the rhythmic intensity of the main idea in Alex Lyell's single movement trombone concerto. Alex Winter produced some delicious piano pieces – I think I may have detected a little influence from certain composers of the former Soviet Union – but this was not unexpected knowing Alex's great fascination for all music with a Slavic flavour. He also produced an opera! Unfortunately owing to its complexity we were not able to perform it, but I hope it achieves some recognition in his lifetime. Michael Jones has a great affection for the works of Rachmaninoff and his followers so Michael's Preludes were not without a little tang of the Russian steppes! It was no surprise that the above mentioned all achieved A*s.

Of the 'new generation' we still must wait for their magna opera, but Nicholas Verney has written a splendid organ work that has already received a public performance at the Christmas Carol service. "To compose and hear one's own music performed is as exciting as a roller-coaster ride..." so said the contemporary Australian composer Carl Matthews recently. Here!Here! I say – but it's actually much more exciting!

PDH



The Orchestra in rehearsal

Top left and clockwise:

1st and 2nd Violins
Alex Medwell-Bates
and Oliver Cullingworth
with Gene Kendall
and Simon Creek

Michael Jones, French Horn

Tom Sowerby, 'Cello

Alex Lyell, Trombone

Ben McCarey,
Robert Mackinnon,
Tom Kimble, Al Gaston
with Alex Lyell listening.

Rupert Burchett, Clarinet

Ed Hackett-Jones, Tuba

Edward Burchett, Drums



THE STOWE CLARINET QUARTET

We've had a very full year...as usual ! Many miles travelled, many notes played, many reeds broken and chocolate biscuits eaten (among other things). As well as our 'core' repertoire we have taken quite a number of new pieces on board. Of particular interest is the Quartet in C by a certain R. Burchett and a Christmas Fantasia (by the same composer!) We've also given many performances of Echappée during the year – a piece especially written for us by Robert Tucker (who is Director of Music at the local Royal Latin School). Robert composed it for us for the Hungarian trip and it's become a real Quartet favourite. Apart from the Hungarian Tour (which I wrote about in the last issue) our highlights must also include our prep school tour, which this year took us into the depths of Berkshire and Hertfordshire. We much enjoyed visits to Cothill, Papplewick, Sunningdale and Edgegrove. Our

overnight stay at Sunningdale was made all the more fun by having access to a very early pirate video of Titanic, just shortly after its release at the cinema. But we earned this treat – earlier in the evening we hosted a 'workshop' session and all members of the quartet had some teaching to do as we worked hard with some of the school's young musicians. Two out of three performances at the Royal Institution this year included a fleeting visit by the Duke of Kent (who had the courtesy to wait until we finished playing a piece before speaking to me!) and we played for the opening of a new Antiques Centre near Milton Keynes. Perhaps the most exciting performance (for our team leader and mini-bus driver anyway – an incurable Inspector Morse fan) was the Prep School headmasters' dinner last term where the guest list included the great Colin Dexter!

RUPERT BURNELL NUGENT

The Quartet on the road



At the Lansdowne Club, 1994. Sam Edenborough, Nick Smith, Katie Burke and Jeremy Dale.



Tom Mulroy, Rupert Burnell-Nugent and Rupert Burchett, 1996.



Touring the Sussex Prep schools, 1995. Jeremy Dale, Esther Jackson, Alex Bingham and Terezia Coxe.



Rupert Burchett with Contra-bass clarinet and Elstree pupils, 1998.



Performing at the Royal Institute, 1998. Rupert Burchett, Lorien Pilling, Alex Laing and Rupert Burnell-Nugent .



At Elstree School, 1997. Rupert Burnell-Nugent, Rupert Burchett, Lorien Pilling and Tom Mulroy.

CHAPEL CHOIR AT ST. PAUL'S

Though St. Paul's must have some of the largest Cathedral Choir Stalls in the country, it always comes as a surprise to the vergers when they are sent scurrying around the Cathedral to find more benches to accommodate our 95 Choristers of the Stowe Chapel Choir. Singing Evensong in such glorious architectural splendour is both a pleasure and an enormous privilege and one is almost overwhelmed by the thought that we are in a building which is so important in our nation's history.

Because of the resonance of the building, choosing the music is never easy; a complicated, fast, rhythmical piece would be lost in the resonant acoustic. The evening canticles of Stanford in A were perfect for the building; the glorious choral "Gloria" with its pauses allowed the sound of the choir to ring around the building and the suspended top F# of the first soprano note in the Nunc Dimittis floated almost timelessly.

Although it is always special to sing in St. Paul's this service last April was made even more so because it included the first performance of Howard Goodall's anthem "Ring out ye Crystal Spheres" written for the 75th anniversary of the School. As well as Organ accompaniment, there are also parts for brass and it was good to have our own team of players. We are reliably informed that brass instruments are rarely used at Evensong in St. Paul's, but three weeks after Stowe had been there, their own choir used brass at the Evensong on Ascension Day. It would be good to think that Stowe's performance had inspired them to do so.

Performing at St. Paul's is a great occasion, it requires hard work, discipline and considerable effort. The choir should be proud of what it achieved, leading the worship in the Parish Church of this nation. It was wonderful to see so many parents, former Stoics and friends in the Cathedral. One former Housemaster of Lyttelton had travelled all the way from Cornwall to be with us.

JCG

Alexander Winter in the Music Room

CHORAL SOCIETY CONCERT

Any thoughts of the gloomy Spring Term with its dark nights and cold days were wiped away with this sparkling concert which heralded the start of the Jubilee Festivities.

It was very much a concert where the brass were to the fore and gave us all that feeling of great celebration. John Rutter's "Te Deum" began the concert and the syncopated opening brass fanfare immediately set the tone for the evening and aroused the attention of the audience. Setting a "Te Deum" is a challenge as it demands so many changes of moods but at the same time must have a feeling of musical structure and form. The chorus responded well and amply matched the vigour of the brass.

After Handel's oratorio "The Messiah", Vivaldi's "Gloria" must be one of the most well-known and well-loved choral works. It is music full of vitality and sparkle and the choir gave an assured and confident performance. There were also some delightful arias and duets by our two soloists, Angela Kazimiercuk (soprano) and Elizabeth Stirling (contralto). Especially beautiful was the oboe obligato aria "Domine Deus".

After the Vivaldi "Gloria" the chorus was given a rest as we heard Vivaldi's Concerto for Two Trumpet in C performed by our trumpet teachers, Debbie and Philip Bailey. This was superb playing and sounded absolutely glorious as it rang around the Chapel. The music moved with such pace and life as to lift all our spirits.

The final work of the evening was Rutter's setting of the "Gloria" and, as the programme notes told us, it was interesting to compare two composers' settings of the same words written almost three hundred years apart. Rutter's "Gloria" is in three extended movements and is accompanied by Brass, Organ and Percussion only. Its constantly changing metre and rhythmic exuberance make it a thrilling work both to perform and listen to. All the performers are to be congratulated on bringing this music alive to the audience. The huge eight part "Amen" tore through the building and no one could have left the concert without some feeling of being uplifted at the end of this marvellous evening.

JCG



SPEECH DAY CONCERT

The Speech Day programme takes considerable planning in order that it achieves all its aims. It must of course be enjoyable for the audience but also enjoyable and challenging for the performers. There should be a good balance of choice of music and variety of groups and, as the Headmaster would say, must not be longer than an hour. Thus for the Director of Music and his team it is a juggling act.

This year's concert fulfilled all the criteria and, yes, it lasted 60 minutes exactly. After Paul Harris's fanfare "Perstet et Praestet" written for the Jubilee, the Orchestra launched into Kenneth Leighton's "Dance Suite No.2". This work, written for Tiffin's Boys School, demonstrated how a first rank composer can write a work which shows off a School Orchestra by capitalising on all its strong points. The outer movements display considerable energy whilst the "Ragtime" showed off considerable dexterity on the part of the instrumentalists, in particular the wind section.

The two offerings of the Chamber Choir were beautifully contrasted. Howard Goodall's "The Lord's my Shepherd" is better known as the theme tune for the television comedy "The Vicar of Dibley". Ali Sennet's relaxed vocal introduction gave the performance a beautiful spiritual quality and this was followed by "You're getting to be a habit with me" with Ben Scholfield singing the solo.

The Jazz Band provided us with their usual vigorous contribution to the event in which they displayed incredible versatility and precision. Their programme included the "Woodchopper's Ball" by Woody Herman, "The boys are back in town" and "A whole new world" with Ali Sennet and Drew Clark singing a duet.

Saint-Saens' "Danse Macabre" was suggested by some members of the Orchestra and it was a wonderful choice because it enabled us to feature Dominique Dumaesq on solo violin. As JCG said, Dominique has done a considerable amount for Stowe Music and we will all miss him greatly – comments which received a rapturous applause from the audience. The other two items from the orchestra were Eric Coates' "By the Sleepy Lagoon", better known as the signature music for "Desert Island Discs" and the concert was brought to a rousing end with Holst's "March" from the Suite in E flat.

JCG

WIND AND BRASS PRIZES

I was very excited when George Caird agreed to come and judge the Wind and Brass Prizes this year. George is Principal of the Birmingham Conservatoire and maintains a very distinguished career as a performer. He is also a man of great empathy with young musicians and a mine of useful thoughts and advice.

Music competitions (like music exams) are very much means to an end – never ends in themselves. A single performance can never be a reliable representation of someone's ability – so it is the preparation and the excitement of the performance that are important – it's essential that music adjudicators understand this – and there was no doubt that George did.

As usual everyone had worked very hard and we were able to produce a full day of wonderful music-making. Though we reproduce the list of 'winners' below it must be realised that everyone who took part was a 'winner' – each and every performance added something special to a memorable day.

PDH

LICENSED TO PLAY!

I had to wait until my second year at the Royal Academy of Music before I passed my first diploma. I well remember the delight I felt when the first envelope with my new extended name dropped through the letter box. So what an outstanding achievement it has been for both Rupert Burchett and Alex Lyell to become lettered men whilst still fifth formers!

Rupert and Alex are now both Associates of Trinity College of Music (and thus have the right to use the letters ATCL after their names). Diplomas are not easy to come by and require a level of playing and general musicianship of a high standard. But, as Rupert and Alex have proved, these standards are not unobtainable by today's busy young students. And indeed it is salutary to know that there is now a considerable body of evidence (emanating from our leading educational psychologists) to convince even the most stubborn doubting Thomas, that those of us who study music to a reasonable level, will benefit in a whole host of ways. Music is the one 'subject' that requires the combined efforts of almost all of our various intelligences (as identified by the great Howard Gardner); physical, intellectual and emotional input are all carefully balanced and controlled and thus the ability to multi-task and parallel-think is developed more than in any other subject. But enough of this party political stuff! Let's hope that Rupert Burchett ATCL and Alex Lyell ATCL inspire many others to follow their lead!

PDH

WIND AND BRASS PRIZE RESULTS

Beginners Brass

1st Alex de Rivaz & Dominic Sullivan
Commended Adam Daines

Intermediate Brass

1st Alasdair Gaston
Commended Edward Hackett-Jones

Senior Brass

1st Alex Lyell (Bram Wiggins Cup)
2nd Tom Kemble

Junior Woodwind

1st Charlie Carter & Alastair Burchett

Junior Intermediate Woodwind

1st Tom Butcher

Intermediate Woodwind

1st Peter Rossiter
Highly commended Robert McKinnon and Richard Clapham

Senior Intermediate Woodwind

1st Gene Kindell
Highly Commended Ben McCarey and Jaime Zaldua

Senior Woodwind (Giles Underwood Tankard)

1st Rupert Burchett
Highly Commended Ambrose Dudley and James Vane-Tempest

Concerto Class

1st Alex Lyell
Highly Commended Michael Jones

Boosey and Hawkes Cup (Best Performance)

Alex Lyell

Khurody Cup (For potential)

Gene Kindell



Robert Bell, Chris Knowles, Hugo Pile, Wambaa Mathu, Will Keeler and Tom Oliver



Cobham's Taro Koka, Edward Gambarini and James Nettleton



Louisa Jones, Lucy Keenan, Laura Humber, Gemma Coles and Louise Macdonald



John Legge, Gideon Ashworth and Kingsley Ford



Grenville's Hussein Safa, John Rainton, Matthew MacLeod and David Hervey



IM in control



AMcD with Nigel Rice (OS) and Dan Pinna



Nigel Rice (OS) congratulates Jamie Zaldua

Sport

SPORTS DAY

Photographs by DSB

This year Sports Day kicked off with a bang. Not only was the weather excellent, but the track was in its best condition of the season.

The day commenced with the 1500m finals, which were won by Dan Pinna, Charles Tull and Laura Humber who retained their titles, whilst Alex Rogers won the junior boys' race.

There was also some excellent sprinting to be seen, both in the 100m and 200m races. In the 100m finals the winners were Kaunda Kavindele, William Keeler and Lucy Keenan, who obtained a new record of 13.6, and Ben Morgan. The 200m races were won by Luke Brewin, Charles Duffin, Kaunda Kavindele and Lucy Keenan.

The high jump competitions were very entertaining, particularly the intermediate boys' competition which culminated in a final between Babafunso Alakija and Jaime Zaldua. In the end this was won by Jaime Zaldua who jumped 1m 65.

The senior boys' competition was won by Nicholas Mullineux, the junior boys' competition was won by Thomas Sowerby, whilst Laura Humber obtained a new record in the girls' competition in order to retain her title.

Whilst on the serious side of things, the fathers' race was won by Mr Taylor, who outran Mr Keenan in order to win his victory laurels.

The day finished with the interhouse relays. They were possibly the most exciting events of the day, where the difference between coming first or second could influence the final results. The junior boys' relay was won by Grenville, the intermediate by Cobham, the senior by Grafton and Nugent scraped the girls' relay cup by only a fraction of a second.

The final trophies were presented by Mr Nigel Rice, an Old Stoic who still holds the track records for the 100m and 200m races. The winners of the competition were Walpole and Lyttelton.



Charles Howard brings Grafton home in the relays



Fathers' race, won by Mr Taylor (right)



Can I build my castle now?



Verity Scott and Laura Humber



The under 10 race



Trusty time-keepers

ATHLETICS

The season began with much potential and for the second successive season with a very strong junior team.

Six school records were broken and four by two very talented girls: Lucy Keenan broke the 100m record by a tenth of a second, clocking 13.6 seconds at the county championships in third place; Gemma Coles broke the triple jump record and held it until Lucy tried her hop, step and a jump and broke Gemma's record. With both girls here for another season both records will hopefully be bettered again.

Laura Humber broke Jenny Taylor's two-year-old 800m record and also went on to better her own high jump record by 1cm. The second oldest school record also fell: Malcolm Riley broke the junior 800m record by 5 seconds, and also the junior and inter U16 1500m record, the junior by 13.5 seconds and the U16 by 2.7 seconds. His time of 4:20.0 qualified him for the national championships where he finished 10th in the final. His lack of stamina, due to missing six weeks in March and April with a broken arm, undoubtedly affected his performance after running 4:20.4 in the first round.

Jaime Zaldua came within 1cm of breaking a second high jump record, jumping 1.81 at the Cholmely Shield. Luke Brewin sprinted excellently over 100m and 200m winning many school matches. Alex Rogers was beaten only once over 800m, winning the county championship in a personal best and qualifying for the national championships, where he came 6th in the 1st round. Other country champions were Dan Pinna (3000m), Malcolm Riley (1500m) and Laura Humber (800m). Dan Pinna came 14th in the Nationals over 3000m.

The real stars of the season were the girls' 100m team, Laura, Lucy, Gemma and Antonia, who, under the supreme coaching of Mr Davies, all won gold medals at the AA championships, and drew strong support at school matches, in a very entertaining way!

Special thanks to all the staff involved with the team over the season, to Dan and Laura for captaining the team, and to Mr McDaid for taking so much of both his School time and his own time to coach Alex and Malcolm.

Well done to all the team.



Inter-schools match at Cophthall Stadium, London.

Top left and clockwise: Alex Rogers leads. PStJD watches Roddy McLauchlan.
Ben Morgan. AMcD with Dan Webster and Jaime Zaldua.

BASKETBALL

Basketball continues to increase in popularity and is played at all age groups, catering for all levels. Stoics are often seen on their way to or coming from the outdoor courts with their basketball tucked under their arm. The four outdoor courts are in regular use and these are a big favourite in the Summer Term after Athletics training. The House Competitions always 'wet the appetites' for the School fixtures ahead.

This year I have had the luxury of having three master-assisting me with the coaching of basketball. They have all done a superb job; American Coach Joshua Bloodworth was very expressive and vociferous as he coached the girls to an impressive record; Ray Dexter was the calmer version of JB and Cameron Meagher looked after a very exciting 3rd Form team.

The U19 Boys had a very young side consisting mainly of Fifth and Lower Sixth Formers. They were led by Dominique Dumaresq who was in his third season with the 'big boys'. He top scored, owing much of this success to the team's successful fast break. The only other player to make an impression with outside shooting was Japanese Guard, Taro Koka. He got better and better as the season progressed and on several occasions kept his team in contention with his 3-point shooting. Poor finishing and some sloppy defence led to defeats in the first two games at the hands of Winchester (47-55) and Harrow (44-49). Most of the early coaching sessions were devoted to defence as it was vital that all the team understood their role in the 1:3:1 zone and man-to-man defence. Kaunda Kavindele was particularly effective at the base of the zone and his reading of the situation was excellent. When he was absent it left a huge hole to fill. In the next match Rugby were reduced to only 13 points all game. In reply Stowe scored 51 points.

Stowe were now enjoying having 'home' advantage and were always a bit too good for Eton as the team cruised to a 65-34 win. The players must have been dreaming about the glorious win against Eton because Bedford were 20 points up in no time in the next encounter. Whether it was the excitement of being in the lead or increased intensity in Stowe's defence, Bedford's attacking threat simply seized up and they stopped scoring. It was a match that Bedford did not deserve to lose and Stowe certainly did not deserve to win 43-38. Stowe took on Rugby in a return match which proved to be riddled with errors but we won it 27-17. We must have reached a patch of poor form and unfortunately we took it to Radley. They used their height advantage to great effect as it was obvious from the early exchanges that once we missed a shot Radley were going to get the rebound. Radley deserved their 36-50 win. We expected more from Wambaa Mathu and James Jones this season especially as post players. They came good in the Uppingham game in a resounding 70-33 win which saw Nop Riensavapak play against his brother. As usual the Bradfield game was close. We had the chances to wrap the game up but did not take them and Bradfield did. Score 46-51. So to the final game of the season against Bloxham who were very much a surprise package. In fact the game was evenly matched up until the closing moments when we pulled away to win 69-57 and register yet another 'winning' season.

The U16 team had a quiet start due to mock GCSE exams. They did not really get going until after the 2nd Exeat

weekend when they took on Radley. Lekan Akinjide was rightly made captain. He led by example playing some impressive defence. It finished 57-33 in Stowe's favour. In the last match of the season Akeley Wood brought over a side which was big and competitive. Although Stowe was not at full strength Laurence Herbert did play and pulled the game round with some breathtaking shooting.

PREP. SCHOOL TOURNAMENT

On Sunday 8th March six Prep. Schools descended on Stowe to take part in the annual Invitational Tournament. Aldwickbury and Millbrook House eased through the semi-finals stage. The final could not have been closer with just two points in it. Aldwickbury just managed to hold on to secure their third triumph in successive years.

IM

U15 BASKETBALL

They started off their season with a good win over Winchester, and then suffered their only loss of the season the following week to Harrow. From then on it was victories all the way with the highlight being a fine victory over Akeley Wood by a clear eighty points.

Although basketball is a team game it is right to mention individual contributions. William Hook is a strong, dynamic player, whose determination to win has pulled us out of difficult patches too many times to mention. He capped off an excellent season by representing the Senior Team towards the end of term. Piers Gambarini and Edward Heard are two excellent guards who hate being off the court for less than a second. Their enthusiasm to play made the coach's life very easy this season. Harry Trelawny has been an excellent captain and his powerful lay-up shooting and leadership meant we were rarely seriously challenged. Jaime Zaldua had an excellent season considering his musical commitments and I look forward to seeing him consolidate this season's effort next year. Finally the bench players should also be mentioned: Eldar Ismailov, who improved with every game; Ilya Temnianski, for his excellent distant shooting and shrewd tactical eye; Jackson Kaphuka, the dribble king; Hugo Rebbeck, for coming off the bench at a crucial point in a tight game and scoring with his first touch of the ball; and Nico Heath, for his ability to combine the qualities of an all-round sportsman with a natural ability to know what the best passing option is.

RGD

U14 BASKETBALL

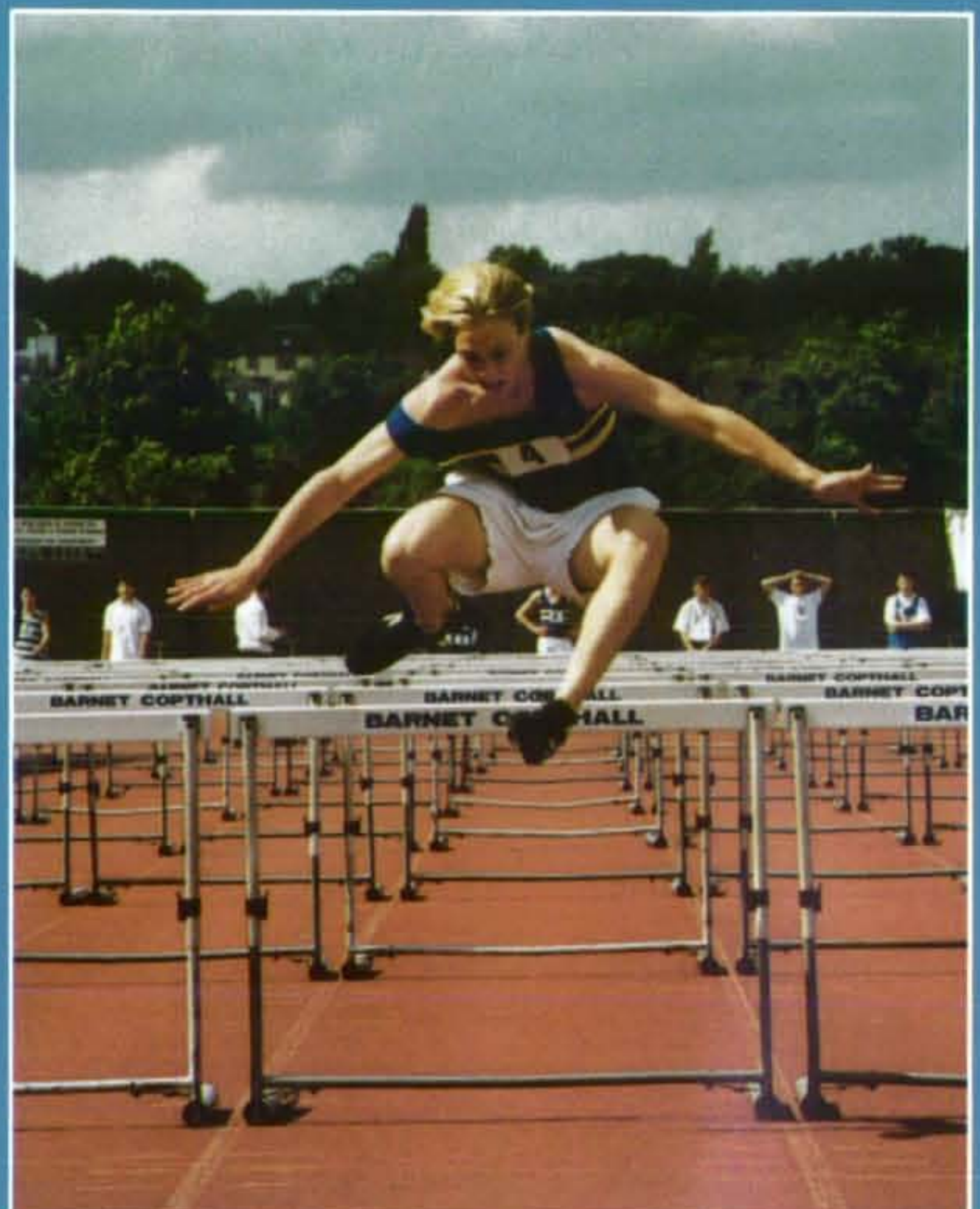
I was fortunate this term by being able to take the U14 basketball team. It was their first time together as a team and I could not have asked for more. They had a lot of determination and hated losing. In our first game we had a narrow defeat against Eton (34-43). Our next two games were wins against Akeley Wood (63-30) and Buckingham (56-52).

Top scorer in each game was Indoo Sella, closely followed by two quick and talented players, John Rainton and Vadim Pak. Our most consistent players were Matthew Johnson and Ben Sua Kay. The most improved players were Rupert Davies and Ben Morgan. Overall, they are a very spirited team who have a lot of promise for the future.



Athletics

Top left and clockwise:
Dan Pinna,
Alex Rogers,
Malcolm Riley,
Tariq Alatas,
Will Monk and
Hugo Wilson





U19 Basketball

Back row: Denis Redzepagic, Will Hook, Tim Hook, Ton Choomduang.
Front row: Nop Riensavapak, Wambaa Mathu, Dominique Dumaresq, James Jones.

U14 Basketball

Back row: Thomas Legge, Rupert Davies, Ben Morgan, Guy Barbier.
Front row: Matthew Johnson, Vadim Pak, Indoo Sella, John Rainton, Christopher Hamilton.



CRICKET

1ST XI

After a very frustrating start to the season due to weather, we eventually got underway against Bradfield at Stowe, dismissing our opponents for 164. Stowe reached their target for the loss of only three wickets, Tim Pearce scoring a very attractive 72 not out. The next day we entertained the MCC, who included Roger Knight, Secretary of MCC and former county player and David Capel of Northants and England. MCC scored 232 for 4, Clarke making 124. Stowe replying with an opening stand of 203 (a record for the School against MCC), captain Robert White and Adam Cottrell showing remarkable skill and maturity against quality bowling. Eventually in a thrilling final the game was drawn, both sides scoring 232. Henry Coram James being given out LBW off the last ball with one to win. Our one disappointing performance was against Radley who made a very fair declaration, 238 for 5, on a beautiful batting wicket, leaving plenty of time to get the runs. Against, with respect, a moderate bowling side we were dismissed for 152. We had the best of the game against Oratory making 219 for 6; it was good to see Charles Saunders return to form with a splendid 82. Unfortunately, we couldn't take the last two wickets for a win, Oratory finishing 125 for 8. The Oundle and Rugby matches were interfered with by rain, only part of the match being possible at Oundle. At Rugby, Robert White made a courageous 104 and continued in great form with 54 against Scotch College, an Australian school touring Europe. The Australians were bowled out for 171. Some excellent leg spin bowling by

Mark Bowman made this possible. Stowe reached the target in 35 overs for the loss of 5 wickets.

The festival in Guernsey was highly successful with three wins from three matches. Robert White was again in great form with a masterly 81 not out against Wrekin and 58 against Wellington; he also bowled well. Mark Bowman again showed the value of leg spin with figures of 5 for 36 against Wellington. Because of injury towards the end of term, Charles Saunders opened the bowling and turned in some creditable performances.

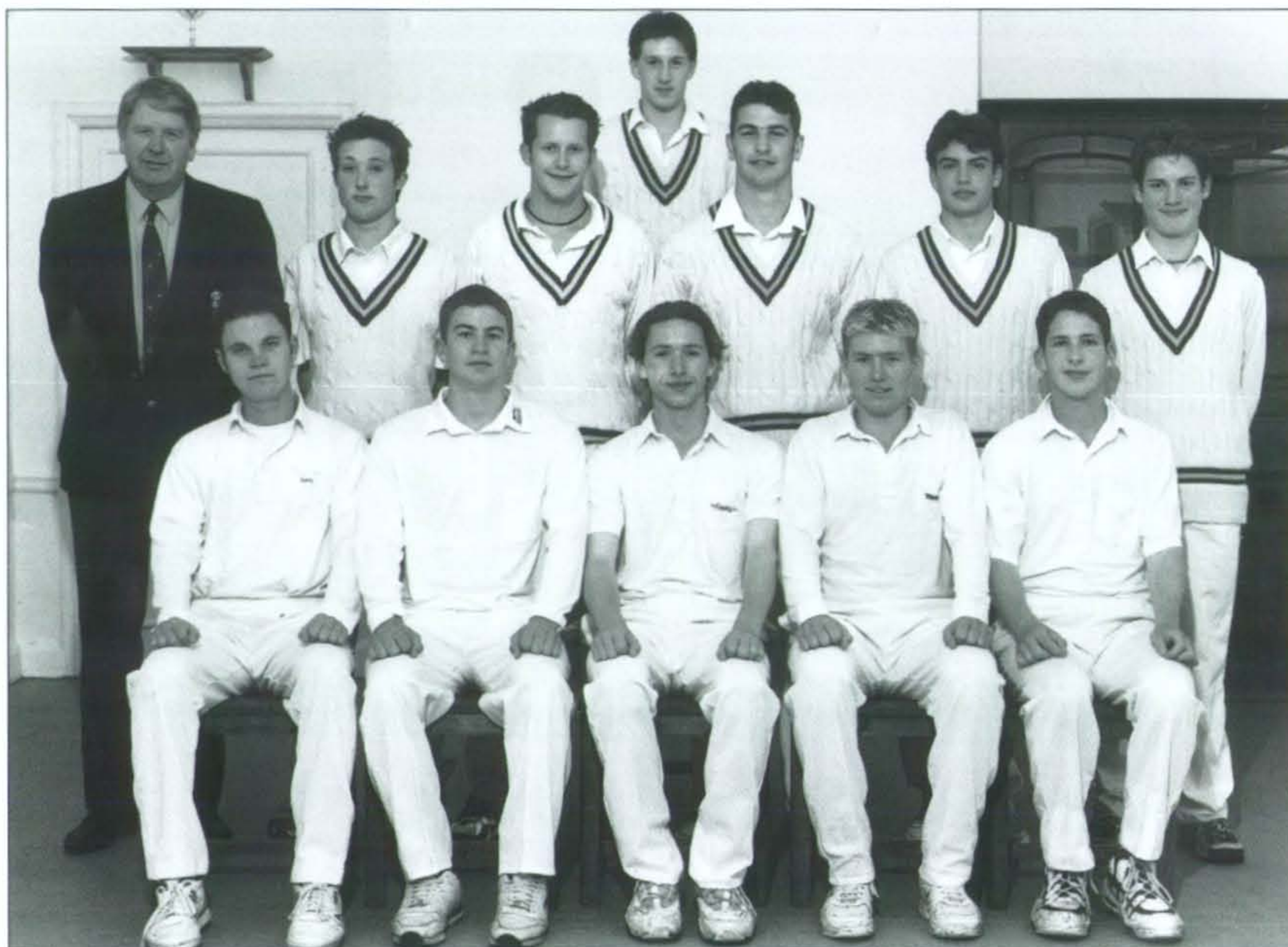
Apart from the Radley game the side enjoyed a good season. They were very well led by Robert White, who had an outstanding personal season scoring 677 runs, averaging well over 50 and taking 20 wickets. He created a wonderful team spirit which showed throughout the season. Tom Sleater showed sight of what a fine allrounder he could be, Tim Pearce showed quality and class at times, a real player in the making, and Nicholas Oldridge at 15 showed great promise behind the stumps and with the bat. His 35 not out against Elizabeth College, Guernsey showed what we have to look forward to in the season to come.

My thanks to Steve Curley for producing excellent facilities, both in the middle and in the nets, to the catering staff for their excellent service and fine food, to the parents who supported us and to Isaac Michael for his help throughout the season, particularly in Guernsey.

HJR

Cricket 1st XI

Back row: Nick Oldridge. Middle row: HJR, Charlie Anderson, Adam Cottrell, Tim Pearce, James Defty, William Browning.
Front row: Tom Sleater, Charles Saunders, Robert White, Gareth MacIntosh, Mark Bowman.





Cricket 2nd XI

Back row: Charles Robinson, William Browning, James Feilden, Harry Singh Riar.
 Middle row: Charles Chute, Kingsley Ford, Roy Chambers, Tim Hook, Charles Bailey, Nicholas Austin.
 Front row: Rory Scott, William Watson, Kristjan Byfield, Henry Gillingham, Alex Garbe.

2ND XI

"The rain it raineth every day." Well, not quite, but certainly at the beginning of the season the rain it raineth for much of the time. Indeed, only two matches were played before Exeat. In the first we lost at Bradfield, who batted first and scored 183-9 despite Will Keeler's 5-25. Will Watson led our reply with a fine 69 but we were still 40 runs adrift when our last wicket fell. St Edward's, in a limited overs match, scored 149-8 in their 35 overs. Will Keeler scored a speedy 65 in reply, but we were bowled out for 119.

First of a succession of away matches after Exeat was that at Radley. The sun shone and the Radley batting prospered to the tune of 188-6, Will Keeler being the best of the bowlers with 4 wickets and James Feilden also bowling well. Despite Kristjan Byfield setting a good captain's example in the field, we nonetheless allowed our opponents about 40 runs more than we should. We then gave away too many wickets without a proper fight and comprehensively lost a match we could have drawn. All out 54 and not a forward-defensive stroke in sight! When our first 2 wickets fell cheaply at The Oratory the next week, another anxious afternoon seemed a possibility. Quite the reverse, however! With Will Watson (64) smiting 6s in all directions and Alex Garbe striking a good 44, we took a cheerful tea at 206-8 declared. The Oratory put up some late resistance but just before stumps Will Watson took the final 2 wickets and we had won by 113 runs. Our next port of call was Oundle. At least, when the rain it raineth after 14 overs ending play for the day, we had scored 108-1 and were well placed in what was to have been a 30-overs game. Will Browning drove and pulled his way to

a splendid 71 not out and had good support from Tom Arkwright and Jamie Peel. So after this moral victory (the team's unanimous claim!) it was a shock the next week at Rugby for us to bat without conviction and score only 108. Despite a sustained spell of hostile bowling from Tom Arkwright, we could not defend that modest total and lost by 7 wickets.

So overall the statistics of the season were disappointing and did not really reflect the natural talent which was in the side. The bad weather could not have helped, for one felt that the team needed more competitive play in the middle between matches, to assimilate the subtleties of field positioning. The running between the wickets too was unambitious throughout.

This was a pleasant, good-humoured team, full of players who could become good club cricketers. But no amount of verbal gamesmanship (and there was quite a lot of it!) could disguise a certain naïvete on the field of play. And, above all, where were the missing spinners to support Harry Girardot?

The following represented the team: Kristjan Byfield (capt), Charles Anderson, Tom Arkwright, Will Browning, Mark Denning, Will Dudley, Charles Fenwick, James Feilden, Kingsley Ford, Alex Garbe, Henry Gillingham, Harry Girardot, Tim Hook, Kaunda Kavindele (well, he gallantly travelled to Oundle), Will Keeler, Jamie Peel, Harry Riar, Rory Scott, Will Watson (vice-capt) and Matthew Williams.

AGM/IM



1st XI in Guernsey

Above: Robert White's last innings for Stowe

Right: Harold Rhodes, (Derbyshire and England) 1st XI coach. Mark Bowman after taking five wickets against Wellington

Below: Tom Sleater and Charles Saunders after scoring the winning runs against Wellington

Below right: Tim Pearce, William Browning, Charles Saunders, Mark Denning, James Defty, Adam Cottrell, Gareth McIntosh and Mark Bowman

Bottom: Fielding against Wrekin College



JUNIOR COLTS A

There are some very talented cricketers in this year group, who developed extremely well during the season, as they led the team to some very encouraging results.

Ed Clark saved the first match, batting for 20 overs against a good Bradfield side, to earn a pleasing draw. After this the team went through a rather rough patch as we lost, unsurprisingly, to Bucks Under 15s and rather more disappointingly to St. Edward's.

Unfortunately for the parents and staff, the team were in no mood to pity their slightly older opponents on Speech Day as they thrashed us, with Clark scoring 75 (retired), and Nico Heath 67 (retired).

This did, however, give the boys some much needed self-belief and they did not lose again. We drew away to Radley and then took on The Oratory at their home ground. This match was dominated by two very classy performances from

the real backbone of the team, with Ed (Shane Warne) Clark taking 7 wickets with a superb display of controlled leg spin bowling and Ashley Pearson scoring an unbeaten century. These two then set about destroying the Rugby team, with 5 wickets each and Pearson scoring 64 with the bat.

There were many other performances, which also deserve a mention. These include Jamieson Hodgson – 33 not out against St. Edward's; John Witt – 35 not out and an excellent job supporting Ashley at the Oratory; Piers Gambarini – 25 against Radley. On the bowling front, Hector Ross and Will Hook have worked very hard all season and with continued improvement can look forward to real success in the near future.

This was a very enjoyable season and with players like Alan Bowman (injured) and Nick Oldridge (1st XI) also in this year group, the full strength team will be solid in the senior years.

RCS



Junior Colts A

Back row: Jeremy Bodian. Middle row: RCS, Jamieson Hodgson, Will Hook, Hector Ross, Nico Heath, John Witt.
Front row: Piers Gambarini, Ashley Pearson, Edward Clark, Hugo Rebbeck, Alan Bowman.

PRIZE PHOTOGRAPH COMPETITION

The Stoic invites you to participate in its competition for the best sporting photograph of the year. Get your entries in by the end of June 1999.

JUNIOR COLTS B

This was not a very successful season for the B team, as they came up against some tough opposition. They played five matches without a win, but there were some definite highlights. John Harris took a rare hat trick against St. Edward's; Elliot Keane scored 47 not out against Oundle (a match which was abandoned due to rain) and Alex Spencer-Churchill captained the side enthusiastically. Edward Pitcher, Alex Stables, Hugo Pearson and Henry Cavill all gave commendable efforts throughout the season and progressed rapidly.

RCS



Yearlings A. Back row: Oliver Dannatt, Tom Campbell, Vadim Pak, Rory Cheyne.
Middle row: Mr N. Francis, Malcolm Riley, Benjamin Morgan, Matthew Johnson, Louis Powell, Tom Legge.
Front row: James Leggett, Gareth Sharp, Oliver Cullingworth, Anthony Offley, Luke Worrall.

Yearlings B. Back row: Matthew MacLeod.
Middle row: Gregory Cushing, John Rainton, Michael Laing, Christopher Lyon, George Norton, Hicky Bacon.
Front row: Michael Pattison, Jonathan Sayle, Luke Brewin, Henry Warhurst, John Wilson.





1st VII Netball. Back row: Shelly Wisner, Caroline Sabberton, Kate Rankin, Susannah Galsworthy.
Front row: Gemma Coles, Vanessa Larsen, Sarah Parker.

2nd VII Netball. Back row: Georgina Lee, Olivia Armitage, Louisa Jones, Lucy Keenan, Sarah Dalby.
Front row: Kimberly Taylor, Charlotte Peevers, Emily Wills.



YEARLINGS A

During the term a total of 20 different players represented the Yearlings A team. Only once in the term were all the better players available for selection. Thus the results look far less impressive than they would have otherwise been.

The batting of the side was a concern. Apart from Oliver Cullingworth's outstanding form (356 runs at an average of 39.0 including 59 v Bradfield, 64 v Borlase and 97 v Ardingly) only Jamie Leggett was able consistently to support him with numerous twenties and thirties.

Luke Worrall (18 wickets, including five against The Oratory) was a most reliable and accurate bowler who was well supported by Gareth Sharp (15 wickets), Matthew Johnson (11 wickets) and Anthony Offley (10 wickets). Ground fielding and catching improved dramatically over the term.

Highlights were great team efforts against The Oratory and Rugby, the achievement of reaching the Country Cup Final and a successful festival at Ardingly.

Overall a pleasing season where individuals improved their skills but more importantly a great team spirit was developed. The character, attitude and commitment displayed by the team particularly in the second half of the term was to be admired.

Good luck to all Yearlings Cricketers for the future.

N R FRANCIS

YEARLINGS B

A season that promised much was spoiled by the classic impediments to 'B' team success: promotion to the A's, injury and the British weather.

The first match against Bradfield saw us at our best. With a full year group to select from (and an amount of uncertainty as to player potential) we put in a first-rate account of ourselves with bat and ball. Electing to bat, we made 169 with Warhurst (49) and Johnson (45) scoring freely. Only the astounding five run-outs took the shine off the innings. After tea we bowled Bradfield out for 80 and with 9 bowled and 1 LBW demonstrated the value of bowling straight. Tate, who took 4 wickets, would be denied to us for the rest of the season through illness, which was

truly a blow to the team, and Johnson (3) and Offley (1) would bowl for the A team for the rest of the season.

St. Edward's provided sterner opposition and our 86 (Campbell 29) was never going to be sufficient. The runs were knocked off quickly by Teddies, only Rainton's double wicket maiden providing excitement for the Stowe supporters.

Radley were strong as ever, and declaring at 197 for 6 (Norton 3 wickets) left us a big challenge which we always struggled to attack. Losing early wickets and with only Dannatt's 19 runs to speak of, we battled for the draw. A lengthy and eminently sensible partnership between Laing and Pattison gave us a chance of holding out, but we eventually succumbed at 6.57, just 3 minutes before stumps.

Oratory provided us with our other win of the season and again it was convincing. Wilson (18), Cushing (15), Sayle (38), Warhurst (22) and Pattison (22*) provided the most rounded batting performance of the term and declaring at 151 for 7 we left Oratory plenty of time to try for the runs. Our bowlers were in unforgiving mood, however, and Rainton took 6 wickets in a fine spell of left-arm medium pace. Pak proved a point with 3 and MacLeod tidied up the last man in short time. A win by 82 runs, thoroughly deserved.

What a shame it was that the season went on just the one more match! Rugby put us firmly back in our place and it is probably sufficient to say that with the runs from the bat failing to exceed extras, and seven boys scoring a duck, we did not post the most challenging of targets. Even here, however, the boys did a fine job for themselves and for the School by fighting the cause to the death and taking 6 wickets (Rainton 4, Pak 2) before yielding.

This tenacity and will to do the very best sums up the positive approach of the boys this season. I hope that they stick with the game for it holds much enjoyment for them in the years to come.

Those who played: Hicky Bacon, Luke Brewin, Louis Buckworth, Thomas Campbell, Rory Cheyne, Gregory Cushing, Oliver Dannatt, Matthew Johnson, Tom Kirk, Michael Laing, Chris Lyon, Matthew MacLeod, George Norton, Anthony Offley, Vadim Pak, Oleg Papazov, Michael Pattison, John Rainton, Jonathan Sayle, Alex Tate, John Wilson, Henry Warhurst

TFK

CROSS COUNTRY

Once again Stowe's Cross Country team has excelled. The Senior Team was unbeaten in school matches for the second season in a row. Dan Pinna had an excellent season again but mention should also be made of Evgeni Demchenko, Kingsley Ford, Oliver Harrison, Peter Gomme and Alasdair Rykens who all ran well in competitions this season.

The Intermediates had a good season as well with Charles Tull leading the way. William Gaze was also excellent.

In the juniors there are signs that the success will continue. Malcolm Riley and Alex Rogers have both been outstanding and have been ably supported by David Hervey, Hugh Maclean and Rory Cheyne.

Dan Pinna won the senior inter-house title, Charles Tull took the intermediates, Laura Humber led from gun to tape in the girls and Malcolm Riley took nearly a minute off the junior record running an incredible 17 minutes 19 seconds.

There was also success in the Buckinghamshire Schools

Championships held this year at Stowe. Lifted by the home support, Dan Pinna won the Senior Race, Charles Tull came third in the Intermediates and Laura Humber and Antonia Girschkowski both finished in the top ten. As a result all were picked for the county to run in the National Championships.

Stowe also did very well in the South-East schools championships held at Winchester. Dan Pinna came second in the race and the Stowe team of Pinna, Tull, Rykens, Gaze, Harrison and Demchenko came second to all-conquering Winchester in the team competition. The whole cross-country squad was delighted with this performance.

Finally credit must be given to SMcC, who was master i/c Cross Country for the last few years, for making Cross-Country one of Stowe's most successful sports. We will miss him.

RGD

GOLF

The two finalists of this year's Micklem Trophy were Eton and Harrow with Eton the winners on a technical knock-out! The Stowe Golf Team beat both these schools either side of the Easter Holidays on the long Buckingham Golf Club course and they have also beaten Rugby, St. Edward's, Ellesborough Golf Club, Buckingham Golf Club and Stowe Golf Club to regain the Bell Tower Trophy.

So, in spite of the disappointment of not winning the Micklem, it has been a very successful year, especially as all the Micklem Trophy Team are eligible next year. In addition we have a number of very good juniors who have already represented the School and these include Nikhil Chauhan, Johnathan Harris, Christoph Simon and Matthew Roche. The team has been particularly well led by Stuart Healey (playing off 3) and Willie Watson (off 7); regular players (all around 12) have been Rupert Corbishley, David Parker, Henry Watson and Ricky White. Hopefully Angus Elphinstone will play more and gain a regular place and we look forward to welcoming two very good new boys into the Lower Sixth in the Autumn. There have been no girl players with handicaps this year and hopefully this will change with the September intake.

This strong squad has been a pleasure to look after and with the examination schedules getting wider and wider, with modules and orals, we have found we have needed this number of players to meet all our school fixture commitments.

A word of praise to Rupert Corbishley who offered to play at the last minute on two occasions when we were struggling for numbers, although he had very valid reasons not to play. This team spirit was much appreciated and he gains a special golf team award.

One of the highlights of this term was a quite unique fixture against Canford, present and past pupils, plus staff, to celebrate our joint Jubilees. This took place at Frilford Heath Golf Club near Oxford, at the end of May and although we just came second overall, a wonderful day of golf and mutual friendship was had by all, culminating in a splendid formal dinner in the evening. Our thanks to their Master i/c Golf whose initial idea it was.

So we had a good year with even better prospects for the future and with this aim in mind we hope to organise a number of junior fixtures next year and more formal lessons with the Golf Professional in the winter weeks when we can't get onto the course for team practices.

My particular thanks to GAC for his support throughout the year, to RCS and Cameron Meagher for playing in the Old Stoic match and a retrospective thanks to Chris Atkinson, "master mind" of the Stowe Putter and a major influence on Stowe golf over the years.

GStJS

GStJS with the Stowe golf team. Back row: Matthew Roche, Rupert Corbishley, Ricky White, Johnathan Harris, GStJS.
Front row: Christoph Simon, Nikhil Chauhan, Henry Watson and Will Watson





Hockey 1st XI

Back row: E.J.G. Peel, R.S. Scott, H.J. Gillingham, J.D. Lyon, T.P. Barker, C.E.D. Saunders, SMBS.
Front row: G.E. Hayward, F.A. Polonius, R.C. Hayward, T.C. Sleater, M.W. Denning.

Hockey 2nd XI

Back row: R.S. Scott, W.R. Browning, G.P. Ashworth, P.G. Mann, R.J.H. Bell, A.D. Garbe, GAC.
Front row: C.W. Fenwick, T.A.M. Arkwright, M. Bowman, R.A. White, S.W. Healey





Hockey 3rd XI. Back row: H.S. Riar, J.W.G. Feilden, W.R. Browning, H.C.C. Girardot.
 Middle row: J.L. Neary, H.H.A. Pile, J.A.J.N. Ogle, A.J. Prideaux, M.A. Wittgenstein, H.I.H. Douglass.
 Front row: A.A. Medwell-Bates, R.A. Chambers, K.D.R. Byfield, H.C. Gordon-Lennox, A.J.J. Bagge

Hockey Colts 1st XI

Back row: W.F.W. Dudley. Middle row: E.W. Webb, S.C.L. Barratt, C.J. Hustler, H.J.A. Wilson, J.W. Mann, S.R. Creek.
 Front row: H.R.H. Pilcher, A.J. Elphinstone, K. Kavindele, R.C. Kelton, P.N. Winton



HOCKEY

AUTUMN TERM: GIRLS

The hockey season started way back in September 1997 with the Girls and the Yearlings playing their hockey. Charlotte Oliver was to lead the girls 1st XI team who continued to play well and won more games than they lost, the 2nd XI only being beaten three times out of the eight games they played. The 1st XI came a creditable third overall in the county round of the U19 National Tournament. Both the 1st XI and the 2nd XI convincingly beat Bloxham and Haileybury and both drew 2-2 with Cheltenham which is one of our strongest fixtures. In the girls inter-house competition in November the Lyttelton team were too strong for Nugent and won 7-1.

Colours were awarded to: Olivia Armitage, Claudia Bodikian, Sarah Dalby, Nia Goodyer, Louisa Jones, Lucy Keenan, Anna Kenyon, Sarah Parker, Charlotte Wainright-Lee and Shelley Wisner.

YEARLINGS

The Yearlings in the same term had a successful season, the best in recent years. They were unbeaten in 17 out of a possible 30 games, scoring a total of 63 goals between them, the B XI scoring the most with 22 goals.

The A XI were the 'team of the season' only losing one game to Uppingham at the beginning of the season. Even the staff only managed a 2-2 draw. The A XI drew twice 2-2 with Oundle home and away and almost beat Uppingham on the return match drawing 1-1. All four teams won their matches against Loughborough GS and RGS High Wycombe.

The inter-house 7s were played over two days all on Astroturf this time, with Bruce overall winners beating Cobham 3-0 in the final. The success of the Yearlings teams was particularly due to all the staff commitment and the additional help of Fabian Polonius, James Haselwood, Max Wittgenstein and Rory Scott in enthusing and coaching regularly.

Fabian was selected to play for Buckinghamshire U19s and eventually gained selection to the U21s. Many thanks must go to TFK and PD who helped in getting Fabian to his matches.

None of the performances would be possible without the exceptional hard work and commitment of all the hockey staff – TLH, GAC, TFK, PSJD, SMBS, MJB, SJBA, SGAH, DF, BLM, PVC, MDGW, DKOG, A Kleinberg and G Terrett.

Results

Yearlings	P	W	D	L	GF	GA
AXI	8	4	3	1	16	9
BXI	8	3	0	5	22	23
CXI	8	2	2	4	12	20
DXI	6	2	1	3	13	7

Girls	P	W	D	L	GF	GA
1st XI	9	4	1	4	17	23
2nd XI	9	4	1	3	15	19

SPRING TERM

The weather was very kind to us for the Spring Term and apart from waterlogged pitches in January and losing four out of the eight matches against Oundle the season progressed satisfactorily. All ten teams were out most weekends and some of the results were superb, particularly the 1st XI's 5-2 win over St Edward's and the 3rd XI's 1-0 on the same day; the 2nd XI's wins over Radley 2-0 and Pangbourne 6-2; also the Colts 1st XI's 6-0 over Mr Knight's old school Berkhamsted and both the 1st XI and 2nd XI beating Pangbourne 2-0 and 6-1 respectively. This is an exciting time for hockey at Stowe for on many Saturdays we could have fielded five senior teams.

Of the 27 matches the senior teams played 18 were wins and 4 draws with only 10 games lost. The team of the season alongside the 1st XI was the Senior 2nd XI who played 8 and only lost 2. However, the goal scoring ability of the 1st XI with 34 goals for and 20 against must be recognised.

The inter-house matches were very exciting and notably of a very high standard of hockey. All were played on Astroturf into the late evenings in the first rounds. The junior competition was won by Grafton with a convincing 4-0 over Grenville in the final. In the senior competition the holders, Cobham, maintained their domination with a 5-1 victory over Chatham in the final.

Results

Senior	P	W	D	L	GF	GA
1st XI	10	4	2	4	34	20
2nd XI	8	4	2	2	19	9
3rd XI	7	3	0	4	15	16
4th XI	2	2	0	0	9	2

Colts	P	W	D	L	GF	GA
C.1st XI	7	2	0	5	10	19
C.2nd XI	6	2	0	4	12	29
C.3rd XI	1	0	0	1	0	1

J Colts	P	W	D	L	GF	GA
JC.1st XI	8	0	0	8	4	25
JC.2nd XI	4	1	1	2	6	8
JC.3rd XI	1	0	0	1	0	3

Thanks once again to all the staff who give so much of their time and effort to hockey, also to Steve Curley and his staff, Geoff Higgins and his team and all in the laundry. We much look forward to enjoying the help and expertise of England's Duncan Woods next year.

DSB

1ST XI

Hockey for the prospective 1st and 2nd XIs began after half term in the Autumn Term with training once a week for 90 minutes, non-attendance jeopardising possible final selection for the squad. Personal fitness plans went home with each hockey player in the Christmas holidays and an invitation to join the pre-season training on 4th January. 24 boys attended pre-season and the scene was set to play the best hockey for several seasons under the strict guidance of SMBS.

An opening match away against Oundle was not to be one of the best ideas but at half-time the score was 0-0 and

we had Oundle a little worried. We conceded two goals in the second half without reply and although it was a good game we did not play to our best ability.

Shiplake followed with Stowe proving to be too strong and goals came fast and furious, including a hat-trick from vice-captain Fabian Polonius. After the fixed weekend the opposition was Magdalen College School and the break took its toll with the team being 0-3 down with only twenty minutes left – the second half was so much better and we recovered to make it 2-3, the final result. The following Saturday saw a 7-1 win over Loughborough GS and this led onto the 'game of the season' against St Edward's. The 2nd XI played first and drew 2-2. The 1st XI scored first with a goal from Jamie Peel, St Edward's equalised, Toby Adams answered 2-1 and then came a hat-trick from Fabian Polonius, the second of the season. The final result, the best in recent years, of 5-2 was complimented by St Edward's long time coach Charlie Baggs.

The game on the following Tuesday against Berkhamsted gave Fabian yet another hat-trick and the School a 3-0 win. With only three more School matches left, Abingdon and Radley were draws 2-2 and 1-1 respectively. Our last match against Pangbourne was expected to be the icing on the cake but carrying several injuries, we missed the Hayward brothers and lost 1-3.

The Old Stoic match on the previous Sunday was an excellent game, real end to end play with the School opening the scoring. The eventual result was a very commendable 6-4 to the Old Stoics but everyone agreed that it was the most talented and mature side the School had fielded for a long time. The Old Stoics had managed to make sure that Fabian's two elder brothers were in their team and the competition was quite apparent with Fabian playing some of his best hockey with the whole family there to watch. Stowe hockey will miss the Polonius impact.

The season was particularly satisfying with so much commitment and energy given to the hockey. The team played some exciting and inspiring hockey, the flair of some of the goals, especially at short corners, was unbelievable. The squad benefited greatly from the talent of James Lyon in goal and the skills of 'the most improved player' Mark Denning. Rupert Hayward as captain kept the show on the road but sadly missed the last two games due to injury. It was the first year for many that a fifth former played regularly for the 1st XI and that is what Jamie Peel did exceedingly well, showing great maturity on many occasions. I know the team would like to speak of their appreciation to SMBS who gave his all to the boys, and we are very sad that he will not be here to see the first team continue on their upward spiral.

1st XI Squad 1998

J D Lyon *, M W Denning *, R C Hayward (Capt), R S Scott, T C Sleater *, G E Hayward, H J Gillingham, J G Peel, T P Barker *, F A Polonius, J W Defty, C E D Saunders.

* Denotes Colours.

DCB

4TH XI

Oundle cancelled what was due to be a particularly brisk start to the season on the first Saturday of term: we were ready(ish)! So we started with Shiplake instead, on the second Saturday. They were into the game much more quickly than we were, in fact, and the North Front looked to be the venue for quite a struggle at first, but we didn't panic and

weathered the early flurry until it had spent itself a little, then began to put together our game. Still tight at half time, we took control in the second half, and were still running as Shiplake legs seemed to get heavier: 4-1 at full time. By the end of January we had defeated Magdalen College School 5-1 on the same North Front "show pitch", and were looking forward to seeing if we could emulate last year's glorious victories and unbeaten season.

Yes and no, or rather no and yes. St Edward's couldn't raise a team brave enough to face us, nor could Pangbourne, and the Radley fixture was washed out. At the risk of dabbling in oxymorons, it was another disappointingly unbeaten season. Perhaps we should build two more astroturfs and offer to those schools who struggle to raise a 4th team a special package whereby we play soccer instead in the second half. Or we could lend our 5th team a different strip each Saturday and just play them again...

SGAH

COLTS 1ST XI

Whilst the Colts possessed players of some promise and potential, the team struggled to maintain both the fitness and concentration necessary to compete over an entire game with our stronger opponents. The lesson that 'as you train so you play' is a lesson that will need to be learnt if players are to develop as team players next season.

Captaining the side from midfield, Kaunda Kavindele was strong in the tackle and had pace and endurance. Many like Henry Coram James, Hugo Pilcher and Rupert Kelton had skilful touches but need to use them at the right times. Others like Simon Creek, Angus Elphinstone, Charles Hustler and Thomas Oliver had their moments. In goal, Benjamin McCarey grew in confidence.

There were certainly times when the Colts played with great composure, not least the first half of the opening match of the season against a strong Oundle side. Having shaded the first half, however, possession was squandered far too cheaply in the second half and the opposition took full advantage. Later in the season there were good wins against Pangbourne (2-0) and Berkhamsted (6-0). In spite of these, perhaps the best team performance was against a particularly impressive St Edward's side. Although finally being narrowly beaten, the team tried to pass the ball early, retained possession and competed. It is these three qualities, underpinned with fitness and self-discipline, that will bring success in the future.

DF

JUNIOR COLTS C

Weather and a shortage of suitable opposition meant that only one match was played, against St Edward's. The score was not in our favour and did not fully reflect the enthusiasm and determination of our midfield and defence.

Team

H Cavill, A Comber, P Craven, P Gambarini (Capt), R Griffin, E Keane, E Oldham, M Rogers, H Ross, A Spencer Churchill, E Warr, O Weston

MJB



Colts 2nd XI Hockey. Back row: R.C. Corbishey.
Middle row: K. Sakdicumduang, H.W.D.S. La Terriere, R.C. Worrall, J.M. Kayll, R.J.S. Prentice, B.I.E. McCarey.
Front row: D.C. Parker, H.N. Coram James, S.M. Robertson, A.H. Trotter, T.W. Radmall.

Junior Colts 1st XI Hockey.
Back row: H.J.C. Warhurst, A.R. Bowman.
Middle row: N.J. Keyser, S.P.W. Izatt, J.J. Witt, T.R.A. McLauchlan, D.J.S. Hyslop, A.G. Pearson.
Front row: J.D.M. Bodian, N.C.E. Heath, H.J. Trelawny, E.G.W. Heard, R.J. White.





Junior Colts 3rd XI Hockey 1998. Back row: E.P. Warr.
 Middle row: O.A. Weston, E.R. Oldham, H.W.J. Ross, A.D. Spencer-Churchill, P.O. Craven, A.J.P. Comber.
 Front row: R.M. Griffin, M.A. Rogers, P.N. Gambarini, E.G. Keane, H.W.D. Cavill.

Junior Colts 2nd XI Hockey 1998. Back row: R.H. Kazandjian, M.J. Mackay-Lewis.
 Middle row: C.H.R. Pearson, E.J. Clark, C.D.F. Clark, M.K.A. Lawrence, M.T. Roche, N.A. Oldridge.
 Front row: N.A.H.R. Morris, S.E. Churchill, J.E.S. Harris, H.A. Rebbeck, H.W.D. Cavill.



RUGBY

SENIOR VIIs

The season was our most successful for many years. It was clear in training that there was real potential, with plenty of pace, power and importantly strength in depth in the senior squad. The first tournament was at Douai School, where there were 20 schools, including most of the recognised top sevens schools in the South of England. Stowe drew Downside, Tasker Millward (a touring side from Wales) and Douai. After a tight 12-12 draw against Downside we went on to surprise the home side by beating them comfortably. We had now added confidence to our team profile and put 45 points against the Welsh team. This meant we won our group and also managed to score the second highest number of times of all teams in the competition.

The quarter-finals drew us a strong Wellington College side. Unfortunately we showed a lack of real self-belief and ended with a 27-0 defeat. It was an enjoyable tournament and one which showed us that we really could live with any team. Leading try scorers were Keeler (Capt), Kavindele, Howard and Fenwick.

The major tournament in the schools' sevens calendar is the national event at Rosslyn Park. 120 teams started the competition on the first Monday of the Easter holidays, with each team in a group with four other schools.

After our confidence-building run at Douai and some hard training we were determined to play rugby on our terms. Our first opposition was Woodbridge who found our all-round pace far too much to handle and we scored 10 tries with all 10 being converted by Mark Denning. 70-0 in 14 minutes was the highest score in the tournament and a real boost for morale. Oakham were next. However, it was a totally different proposition as we were matched for power, eventually coming through 21-17 winners. On to the third match where we met Sevenoaks, who had done well in this tournament in the past. Again it was a close game. Charles Duffin eventually got a couple of yards of space and used his impressive pace to score and put us seven points up with a couple of minutes to go. Unfortunately they scored and put a touchline drop goal over to equalise, so we ended with a 26-26 draw.

We finally had to beat Haberdasher Aske's to win our group. If we lost we were out. The boys showed commendable passion and determination to pull off a tight 31-24 victory. This meant we would return the following day where the final 16 teams play the knockout phase of the tournament at the Rosslyn Park 1st team pitch.

We were drawn against Whitgift. The match swung one way and then the other, with us leading 7-5 at half time. Both teams scored again to make it 12-12 with one minute to go. Unfortunately they clinched the match in the final seconds.

This was a tremendous achievement by the squad as this is the first time we have reached the last 16. With this experience behind us and five players in the senior squad still in the fifth form, prospects for the future look very good.

Special mention should go to Bill Keeler, Mark Denning, Charlie Howard and James Jones for outstanding efforts this season. Other players who represented the 1st VII were: Jamie Peel, Stuart Boyd, Charlie Fenwick, Charles Duffin, Rob Bell, Kaunda Kavindele, Robin Jones, Tim Pearce, Tom Oliver, Laurence Herbert and Edouard Lake.

RCS

YEARLINGS

This year's Yearlings have been magnificent (from the Yearlings A team right through to the Yearlings E team). They have all displayed a very positive attitude to training and have competed well in matches. Behind the scenes we have had a group of dedicated coaches and these have been supported well by senior pupils and Mr Steve Taylor (one of our parents). The season was rounded off with an Inter-House 7-a-side competition. Unfortunately one or two Houses were without key players but I doubt whether that would have significantly affected the outcome. The pupils were extremely thorough in their preparation and warm up, showing the kind of team spirit and co-operation which had been in evidence all season. Bruce won all three of their group matches with Walpole as runners-up and the other group was topped by Grenville with three wins followed by Chatham.

In the semi-finals Bruce beat Chatham and Grenville beat Walpole. The teams which failed to reach the semi-final stage had their own 'plate' competition which was eventually won by Temple. In the main competition final a very tired Grenville were out-gunned by a powerful Bruce side that fielded several A XV players.

IM

YEARLINGS A

The Stowe pack at full strength had a lot of size. This was particularly helpful in line-outs thanks to the no lifting laws brought in for the U15 age group. As we are a running team line-outs were few and far between so we had to rely on other sources to gain possession.

We won very little scrummage ball in our opening game against Northampton Boys School; all the more reason for the disappointed look on the opposition faces as we ran in 6 tries to win 30-0. Not for the first time in the season we had to rely on the flair, pace and opportunism of the backs to conjure up scoring opportunities. In fact it was three-quarters of the way through the season before we had a try scored by a forward.

Much emphasis was put on scrummaging and rucking in the opening weeks of training and although the players could not be faulted for effort, the improvement in these areas was slower than the coaches would have liked. In the second game against Stamford the visitors were unlucky not to score, but sheer grit and determination and superb tackling denied Stamford the chance to get on the score sheet. The backs did the business again and we won 36-0. How would this team cope when they came up against sides who are better organised defensively and who have even bigger forwards than we do? Well we certainly found out where we were wanting in the next three matches. Defensively, we were not at all bad but we needed better ball retention and more punching drives. Although our rucking, scrummaging and general body positions were improving they were not developed enough to overcome the strength and power of Queen Elizabeth School, Barnet (0-12), Uppingham (7-19) and Oundle (0-39). The previous three defeats certainly helped to focus the concentration of the team and the boys were even more determined to work hard during training and improve

in every aspect of the game. Going into the final three matches fitness levels were up, players were mentally and physically tougher and the collective desire to win was massive. After a long coach journey to The Leys and a sluggish start, the boys put in a terrific performance to power home 49-17. It was more of the same against a big and powerful Mill Hill side who were devastated to go down as heavily as 46-5. The last game was away to Wellingborough who never gave up. However, the pressure exerted in the first half from the forwards finally took its toll and the tries were coming from all directions in the second half. It was great to finish the season on such a high and with such a convincing win of 55-0. The boys have been outstanding in their whole approach to the game; in training, during the matches and when entertaining the opposition after matches. Malcolm Riley, their captain, has led by example and has been inspirational. We all look forward to next season with great anticipation and hope that the pre-season tour will set us up nicely.

At the end of the season four players received awards:-
Matthew Johnson (Best Forward), Luke Brewin (Best Back)
Malcolm Riley (Best Tackler), Dominic Gordon (Most Improved Player).

Yearlings A team squad was as follows:-

Dominic Gordon, Tom Legge, Jamie Leggett, Anthony Offley, Malcolm Riley, Thomas Sowerby, Luke Brewin, Chris Hamilton, Alex Tate, David Hervey, John Rainton, Rory Cheyne, Charles Percy, Vadim Pak, William Barker, Tom Campbell, Alex Dietz, Ben Morgan, Guy Barbier, John Wilson, Jonathan Boyman, Matthew Johnson, Rory McIntyre.

IM/RTD

YEARLINGS B

The Yearlings B team were not a big group physically, but they did have big hearts. The early matches were disappointing. We let a mediocre Stamford team beat us and the first half of the match against QES Barnet was very weak. It was at this point that the season took a turn for the better. The team showed real character to match a big, rough side in the second half. This combative nature saw them through to a victory against Uppingham and a reasonable performance against a good quality side at Oundle.

The boys trained very well all season and with SHM's help we moulded a very solid forward unit, with some lively runners in the backs. The next three matches were a delight to watch as we put 45 points on The Leys, 33 points on Mill Hill and beat Wellington 12-10 to finish with a winning season. The team was a joy to coach and can look forward to further successes if they continue with their current attitude.

Special mention must go to:

Player of the season – Tom Campbell; best forward – Ben Sanchez; most improved player – George Percy; best tackler – unquestionably, Alex Dietz; also George Norton, the leading try scorer, Olly Cullingworth and Captain Tom Kirk for excellent contributions all season. Finally, I would like to thank SHM for all his valuable input.

RCS

YEARLINGS C

A good season for the C XV, although no matches were won. The entire squad was prepared to work hard in preparation for each game and a great improvement in performance was noted by the end of the term. However, more effort will be needed in the future if successes are to be achieved in later age groups, particularly with the tackling. The most efficient and brave exponent of these skills was Hugh Maclean, needless to say one of the slightest members of the squad. As scrum-half and captain he led the team by example and was most impressive in his overall effort.

One or two individuals played very bravely too. Tariq Al-Buhaisi was a tower of strength in the pack, Edward West and Oleg Papazov also never stopped trying. In the backs Jonathan Sayle, Nikhil Chauhan and Hussein Safa played with skill and determination and will be pushing for places in higher teams in the future.

All in all, a most enjoyable season, a learning process for all and a base on which to build for the future.

LEW

YEARLINGS D

The Yearlings Ds fared reasonably well in this, their first season of rugby at Stowe, winning two out of four fixtures. Considering that many of them had not played rugby before, they deserve some congratulations.

The forwards were marginally better than the backs throughout the season, and often won both scrums and line-outs. James Gordon was a key player at blindside flanker and our initial prop, Tarik Al-Buhaisi and lock Harry Vere-Nicoll, were particular pillars of strength. In the backs, Christopher Lyon at scrum-half and Oli Dannatt at full-back deserve special mention for the exemplary tackling. Christopher gave a brave single-handed defence against QES Barnet in our first match, being taken off in mid-action due to a head injury. Thereafter, he and some other key players were poached by both C and B teams once their talent had been spotted!

Overall, the boys all showed a great improvement in ability over the term, and, when motivated, proved themselves to be a formidable team. A defeat against Oundle did little to overshadow what was otherwise a good term of rugby: lost to Oundle and QES Barnet, won against Uppingham and Mill Hill.

THE BEST SPORTS PHOTOGRAPH 1999

The Stoic invites you to submit entries for
the best sports photograph of 1999.

Prizes for the top three entries.

Closing date: end of summer term.

POLO



The team in South Africa:

Jack Mann, Tom Irvine, Sam Tylor, Jamie Peel, Hugh Arbuthnott, Shela Sheike (from Guildford College) and Milli Skene.

This year has been a busy one for Stowe polo. During the winter we had lessons and practice sessions three times a week at West Wycombe. Five Stoics and two other young people were trying to get practice in readiness for a trip to South Africa at Easter, while several others were just trying to learn the basics so that they would be ready to enjoy the Summer season.

The School team; Tom Irvine (-1), Jamie Peel (0), Sam Tylor (0), and Jack Mann (-1), with Hugh Arbuthnott (-1), Milli Skene (-2) and Shela Sheike (-2) set off on a trip to South Africa on 26th March. Milli does not go to Stowe yet but will join the school in September while Shela is a pupil at Guildford College. Richard Brittain-Long had arranged sponsorship for us through Laird. They had supplied a new set of polo shirts for both teams and a large numbers of special baseball caps for the trip.

We were to be the guests of Julian and Jenny Gordon. They live close to the Noodsburg Polo Club, near Pietermaritzburg. They had accommodation for us in guest houses in a beautiful 19th century garden on their sugar cane farm. Julian had worked out a busy schedule for us including six matches against South African school teams, some time at his large beach house in Margate some miles south of Durban, a visit to a game park and to a Zulu village. We also were to do one and a half hours study a day because so many of them were preparing for public exams in the Summer Term.

The one thing that Julian could not arrange was the weather. It rained. It continued to rain long after the rainy season should have finished. We could not play polo. The Stoics were despondent.

They were fascinated by their visit to the Zulus. They had been shown around the beautiful village which stood half on an escarpment and half in the valley below. They could see the obvious beauty of the place and also the problems for the people living in such a remote place with little water supply and no road to the people down in the

valley. They were welcomed into the chief's hut to drink zulu beer in the traditional manner. With the men and boys sitting on chairs to the right of the doorway and the women and girls and small children sitting on the floor to the left. We were all impressed by the open generous hospitality of these people, although our communication was limited because we could not speak each other's language.

Rupert Crowe whom we had met at a 'braai-vlais' at Julian's house offered to let us have some practice chukkas on his small ground. At last some polo. This was what we had travelled across the world for. Stephen Erskine, Rupert and Julian provided horses for some three-a-side chukkas. We were impressed by the quality of the ponies and the hospitality of the South Africans.

Julian spent hours working on our behalf on the telephone to arrange things for us. On the weekend before we were to return home, we went up to Richmond to stay with Peter Gower and play in the club chukkas. On the Saturday the polo team from Pietermaritzburg College – Nick Reitz (-1), John Gower (0) and Dereck Bratley (0) Bradley McGibbon (-1) – played a three chukka match and beat us 4-2. Byron Erskine (1) joined with our three members of our second team to play against the first. The result a 3-2 win to the first team. This time horses were generously provided by Stephen Erskine, Stuart Campbell, Peter Gower and Julian for us. We were delighted by the quality of the ponies we were lent. One South African watching the match with me remarked 'Your youngsters do ride well. They really are lucky in the UK with the Pony Club set-up you have.'

That evening the Pietermaritzburg lads took the Stoics out on the town in Richmond. They had a good time. The next morning in a temperature of 35°C, when Sam Tylor dropped out with heat exhaustion and Jamie Peel fell off and uncharacteristically said he was not up to playing any more, I wondered if the night out had been quite such a good thing. Both our teams played again against the

College. Byron Erskine and Alan Briscoe stood in for Sam and Jamie. The College came out winners again 3:2 in both matches. The Stoics had played well on strange horses in a temperature they found difficult. The South Africans had been marvellous hosts.

Back in the UK at the start of term rain was again stopping play and all the School's best polo players were in an examination term either for GCSE or A levels. It was difficult to get the A team together for practices let alone matches and the B team was just unable to do either. This was a great pity because Hugh Arbuthnott and James Neary (-1) would have made the core of a good second team. We entered the Kirtlington Park 'Chukka Tournament' that coincided with the school half term holiday. First we played Durios Ippos: Miss R Bartels (-1), Locklan Mackinon (1), German Llorens (3) and A Damaskos (-1). This was an adult +2 team against our -2 team. Lokkie and German had been instructors to many Stoics. We knew we had little chance. However the boys played spiritedly and tried hard right to the end. They lost 13:2½. Next they played Bear Foot, a 0 goal team. The thrashing that the Stoics had had before brought out the best in them: they won 7½:7 playing well and together as a team. They finished the tournament against Quicksilver another +2 goal team: R. Marchant (0), C. Lousada (-1), C. Matthews (3), and P. Ferrari (0). This again was too good a team for them but they played the best polo I had ever seen them manage. They lost 10:2.

Despite exams and poor weather we did manage two matches against other schools during the term. We played Harrow with a -4 team: Phil Kaye (-1), Luke Hartley (-1), Clark Betz (-1), and Charlie Budget (-1). We won 4:2½ although we did have to admit Harrow had been very unlucky hitting the goal post twice.

The next week Andrew Wynn from Eton brought his second team to play us. Again a -4 goal team. Henry Emson (-1), Hugo Grimston (-1), Henry Brooks (-1) and Robin Hamilton (-1). Our headmaster Jeremy Nichols arrived to watch the match about half way through when we were losing. It was an exciting match. As the game progressed we improved and came out winners at 7:4½. I don't know if it was the Headmaster's presence that

inspired the boys to improve; it might have been. Mr Nichols had come to Stowe after many years teaching at Eton and I was delighted that he was there to see his old school beaten by Stowe.

The Schools Championships were held at Kenny Jones' beautiful Hurtwood Park this year. We started by meeting Eton's first team. Perhaps I was glad that the Headmaster was not there for that match. It did not start well. Tom Irvine's ponies had been delayed on the road and only just arrived on time, Sam Tylor the only 6th-former in the team was leaving Stowe this term and had been to the Leavers' Ball all through the night before. The Stoics did not play well and lost, 1½:6. I stood watching the match remembering all the trials of the season. The rain in South Africa and then the heat that they found difficult, then returning to England to more rain and being unable to arrange team practices because of all the other demands on the boys from school activities and exams, my doubts when I saw that I had put them into the Kirtlington Tournament only to have them thrashed in the first match by a far superior adult team. I did wonder if it had all been worth it. Then later in the day they played Radley, a 0 goal team, and although they lost 1½:4 they played well and were all together again. It was an exciting match. John Tylor, not a man to dish out undue praise, came over and told them they had played 'seriously well'. I saw the boys look pleased and proud. All my doubts disappeared. I remembered that they were a young team 3 of whom would be at Stowe for two more years. We would be back at the Championships next year to demonstrate how much we had improved.

I rushed away before the Championships were over. There was a party of 11 learners and beginners to take to Ireland to Major Hugh Dawnay's polo school. We had taken boys there two years ago. Then Tom Irvine, who now plays for the school team, had been one of the beginners. As before Hugh looked after us very well. His teaching or riding, hitting and tactics are inspirational. The Stoics thoroughly enjoyed themselves. Four of the party were 1st Year 6th Form girls who might make an all-girls team next season. Two were boys in their first year at Stowe. I watched them learning and improving so quickly

under Hugh's brilliant instruction and hoped they might be tomorrow's players for Stowe teams. I noticed that the better and more experienced of the party gained most from the instruction and decided that to bring Hugh over to England to coach the team next Spring might be a good thing.

For Stowe the season is now finished until I start the new school year by taking groups to West Wycombe to play arena polo and be instructed by Marcus Hancock and David Heaton-Ellis. They will spend the summer playing in Pony Club matches. I shall go and watch them at Cowdray if I can. I often wonder if they realise how lucky they are.

MAC

The Stowe party with Julian and Jenny Gordon



SAILING

Strong winds and a young team have characterised the sailing this term. When combined they have not always made life on or in the water easy, but the team has kept up its morale and scored several impressive victories.

At first we had the help of Hugo Gordon-Lennox, the commodore, and two others taking public examinations. This led to convincing wins against Bloxham and Rugby. In fact, in the first school match and in his first school race, Michael Pattison came first – a high standard to set so early! Heavy weather meant a light team lost to Monmouth at Farmoor but in the British Schools Dinghy Racing Association regional finals Stowe came top of the Bronze Fleet, defeating Monmouth, Magdalen College School and Sedbergh. After half term the team was weakened without the experience of senior sailors, and lost to St Edward's and Aldenham. Magdalen College School and Uppingham, however, were unable to raise a team.

Hugo Gordon-Lennox won the Helmsman's Tankard from Michael Hyslop and similarly took the Housematch competition for Chatham from Bruce. The Junior Pennant was keenly contested and won, in Toppers, by Edward West, with Oliver Weston and Roderick McLauchlan close behind. Other team members have included Daniel Ferris, Nicholas Mullineux, Harry Heneage, Michael Pattison, Alexander Medwell-Bates and George Percy.

I am again grateful to DWJ and SGAH for their help during the term. The staff match against the team towards the end of term produced a result acceptable to the former.

MJB

SCULLING

Sculling has proved a popular activity again this term and as ever I am grateful to the staff and senior boys who help it all to happen. In particular JECH and TMHS as well as Jerome Starkey (Captain), James Sleater (Vice-Captain) and Alex McMicking (Secretary). Fortunately all of these Stoics still have one more season before they leave.

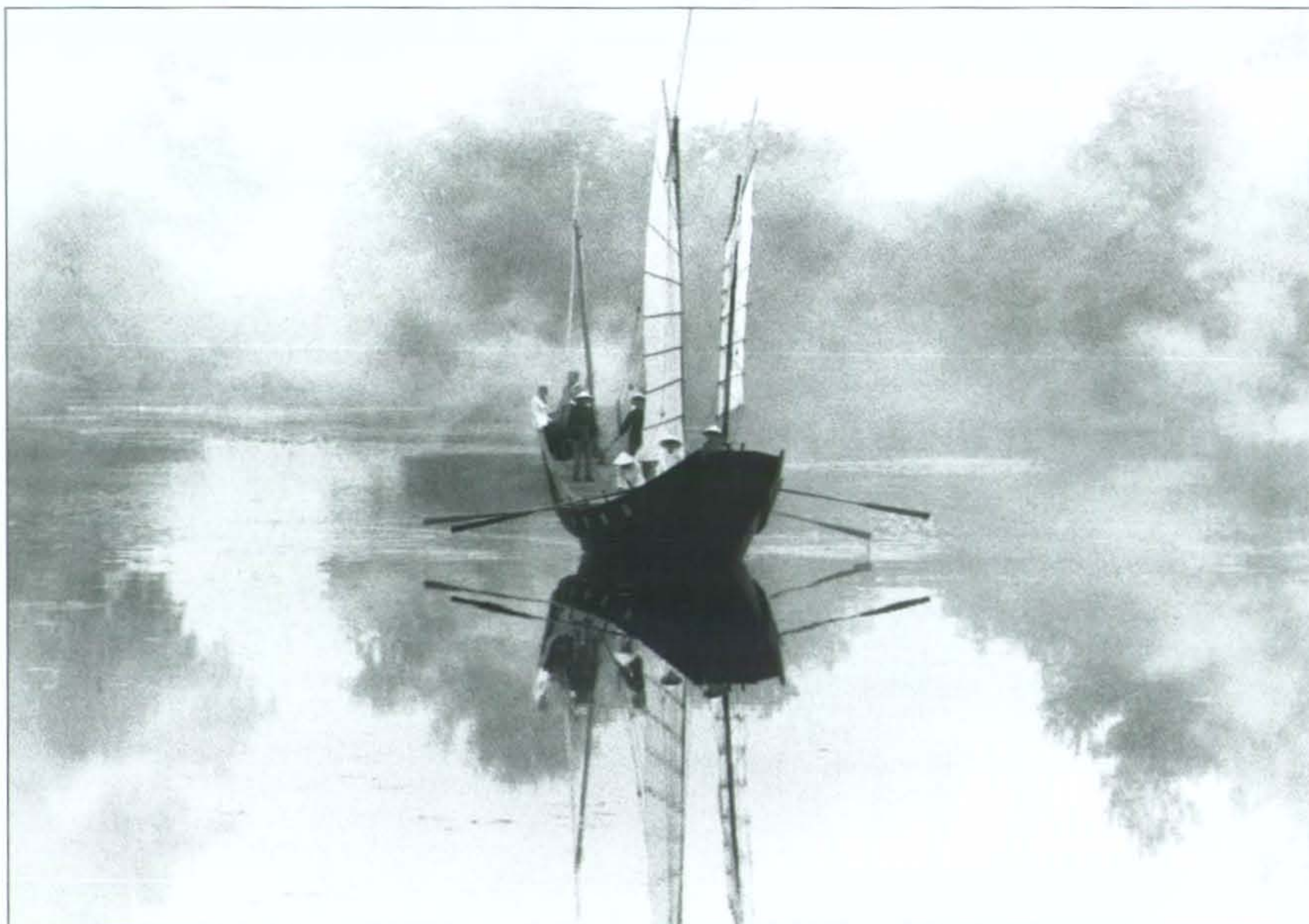
The two highlights of the term have been the School regatta and our part in the celebrations marking the return of the Chinese House to the Japanese Gardens. The regatta was able to be rowed over the full length of the Eleven Acre thanks to the generous gift of some five hundred white water lilies to the lake at Althorp House in memory of Diana, Princess of Wales. In some closely contested races, Jerome Starkey won the Shell class, James Sleater the Toothpicks, Alex McMicking the Senior Clinkers, Oliver Webb the Junior Clinkers and Harry Heneage the Red Boats. Chatham won the overall House Cup, pipping Chandos by a single point. Grenville, long time holders of the cup, were placed third.

As to the Chinese House celebrations, four Stoics (the committee plus Peter Mann) suitably dressed, somehow propelled the 25 foot replica Chinese junk, built in the sheds by the kennels, around the Octagon. It had been useful to have had a quick practice on the Friday afternoon as it soon became apparent that the railway sleepers used to stabilise the boat on the trailer were still attached and causing excessive drag!

We didn't manage to compete in any of the local regattas this term, partly due to the miserable weather but largely due to all those other things that call upon staff time at weekends. Maybe next year!

WEHV

The Sculling Club propel a newly-built Chinese junk down the Octagon as part of the National Trust's celebrations marking the return of the Chinese House



SWIMMING

The inter-house competition on Sunday 8th February saw the all-exciting opening of the swimming season. There were six house cups and eight individual cups at stake. Many of the races were closely contested especially in the senior events. Giles Hayward of Grafton won the 50m freestyle cup with Charles Howard, also of Grafton, winning the 100m freestyle cup. Alexei Sorokin of Walpole won the 50m butterfly and Jonny Hyam of Temple won the individual medley cup.

In the intermediates, Puck Pundarick of Grafton won the individual medley cup and the Geh-Spencer trophy for individual achievement.

John Rainton of Grenville shone through as the junior swimmer of the gala, winning the individual medley junior cup. The most outstanding swimmer from the girls' competition was Weibke Althoff of Nugent, who was awarded the Thomas Hobbes cup for winning the girls' individual medley.

The house competition was totally flooded by Grafton boys, who were winners in the junior, intermediate and senior competitions and they also won the inter-house relay cup and were obvious overall winners with Walpole a gallant second. Nugent out-swam Lyttelton this year winning easily, but it was encouraging to see how many girl swimmers there were.

It is becoming more and more difficult to arrange fixtures for swimming. Several schools are not able to field a team because the swimming is not getting the backing it does at Stowe. Fixtures were arranged against a total of 14 boys' teams and 12 girls' teams over the season. We lost three of these, however, by holding four matches at home. It helps to encourage other schools to sample our excellent facilities.

At this point, I would like to mention our matrons and thank them for always supporting our galas and helping with the timekeeping. It gives our matches a very professional appearance. They are always accurate and often more reliable than other schools' electric systems.

Our first fixture was against Loughborough GS and we were thrilled to welcome Dr Challoners' girls to our school for the first time, though they were too strong for our girls. The junior boys were the only team to win against Loughborough this year.

At Harrow on the first Saturday we took a very strong team and challenged the attending schools with confidence. The junior boys were second, probably the best result for several years, beating Harrow, Merchant Taylor's and Felsted. The girls were a commendable second beating Haileybury. The combined team were overall third. It is still difficult to compete with your best swimmers on a Saturday.

On Tuesday 28th April we competed at Haileybury's newly-opened pool. Unfortunately we were short of several swimmers. The junior boys again performed the best, coming third out of five schools, beating The Leys and Haileybury.

On Friday 8th May we set off early with 12 swimmers to the Public Schools Bath and Otter Cups at Crystal Palace. This occasion was especially notable as the team were presented with special hooded tops provided by Mr and Mrs Hyam, the parents of our swimming captain Jonny Hyam. We were very grateful and the team looked splendid.

This competition is a very exciting day in our swimming calendar with more than seventy schools represented from all over Great Britain. The girls found the 50m pool very daunting and although they were seventh in the freestyle and medley

heats they did not perform as well as they are able. The boys, however, improved their overall position in the Aldenham cup by one place by swimming the 4 x 100m freestyle four seconds faster than the team last year, Will Skidmore and Vlad Raimov both achieving personal bests.

The annual triangular match with Rugby and Oakham was held at Stowe this year and we performed very well, the seniors winning their age-group and the juniors coming second beating Rugby. It is always a good fixture and very competitive. Long may it continue!

Our finale (and a brilliant result) came against St Edward's at home on Tuesday 19th May. All age-groups won easily in the boys but the girls struggled; we had six first places winning 211-142.

An overall pleasing season with the senior and intermediate teams winning matches against five schools apiece. The seniors beat Rugby, Oakham and St Edward's convincingly. The junior team had the best results of the season, beating six schools and being placed third at the Harrow schools, beating Harrow, Felsted and Merchant Taylor's.

Colours were awarded to: Weibke Althoff (next year's captain), Amy Gillam, Charles Howard, Samuel Musker, Pokpong Pundarick, Sami Robertson and Alexei Sorokin (next year's captain).

I would like to thank Jonny Hyam and Shelley Wisner for all their hard work as captains this year. They together have built a very strong team spirit within the swimming club and I hope it will continue into the future. A big thank you to all the staff who have helped this year, EJH, KFD, JH-J, Mr K Oakley, ARG and, of course, CHJ.

The Teams:

Senior: J Hyam, W Skidmore, M Pearson, V Raimov, C Borradaile, A Sorokin, C Howard, M Cumani

Girls: S Wisner, K Bruce, A Gillam, W Althoff, S Dalby, L Howes, T Sloane, L Kaye

Intermediates: P Pundarick, S Robertson, S Musker, D Pearce, O Bernadotte, H Rebbeck

Junior: A Tate, J Rainton, R Lamb, G Barbier, H Bartlett, T Sowerby, R Pitcher, H Warhurst.

DCB

WATERPOLO

The inter-house waterpolo competition began on Friday 5th June with many teams practising beforehand and some houses managing a practice in the evening. Some of the first round matches were a little one-sided but into the next round the competition was tougher with extra time having to be played.

Preparing for the second half



In Pool A the winners were Temple with Chandos as runners-up and in Pool B the winners were Walpole with Grafton as runners-up. The final was particularly exciting with the standard of play being very high. Temple with Sami Robertson (possibly one of the best players we have had at Stowe for many years) scoring a hat-trick in the first three quarters were 3-0 up. However, not to be beaten quite so easily, Walpole rallied and Will Skidmore scored two goals in the last minutes of the game; the overall waterpolo champions for 1998 were Temple.

A little moment of history took place on Wednesday 17th June when the staff played an inaugural waterpolo match against the School. The School won 4-2. Well done the school team! Efforts will continue to achieve fixtures against other schools.

Waterpolo Colours were awarded to Will Skidmore and Jonny Hyam for all their gallant efforts and their constant enthusiasm towards the sport and their determination to play matches one day against other schools.

DCB



Team building: PRS, KFD, CJAT, CM, DCB, LJG.

TENNIS

Being the first year of fixtures on a Tuesday, matches were unfortunately limited and with rain ruling the season, training was constantly interrupted. Despite this there were some excellent results and some pleasing performances which shows strong potential for the future. Matches did take place against St. Edward's, Bloxham, Rugby and Uppingham, with Stowe taking overall victory in 3 out of 4 of these, only Uppingham proving too strong this year.

The U14 VI made an excellent start to their tennis at Stowe, narrowly losing just one of their matches following a number of intense tie-breaks. The team was impressively led by Legge and Dannatt as first pair who have had an outstanding season and their considerable talent bodes well for the future of tennis at Stowe. We look forward to a good performance at the National School Tennis Tournament at Eton this year.

At the other end of the school the Seniors fielded perhaps one of their strongest sides in recent years and yet never quite realised their full potential until late on in the term. A strong Lower Sixth year again promises much for the coming year with strength in depth being a true asset. It is hoped that next year will see 1st VI matches returning to their traditional and preferred venue of the Shop Courts. We have been privileged to benefit from the antipodean expertise of Cameron Meagher, a presence that will be greatly missed next year and which was truly appreciated in the Old Stoic tennis match, which this year proved to be an enjoyable and more competitive occasion.

Colours are awarded to: Charlie Bingham, Gareth MacIntosh, William Keeler, Henry Wood, Ben Scholfield, Stuart Boyd

TLH



Back row: RERD, Charles Bingham, Stewart Boyd, Will Keeler, Cameron Meagher.
Front row: Ben Scholfield, Gareth McIntosh, Henry Wood.

Societies

CHESS CLUB

Since the last report, the events of late have been the UK Chess Challenge tournament and the Inter-House Chess match.

The winners of the Stowe stage of the UK Chess Challenge were Alexei Sorokin (absolute winner), Ross Griffin and Jonathan Boyman (one of a new batch of eager 3rd years), all of whom amassed at least 17 points and went through to the Megafinal at Aylesbury. Unfortunately, for the second year in succession the Sunday designated for this event clashed with the Stowe exeat weekend, so the School could not take the pupils to the tournament. It was left up to them; and it is to Jonathan's credit that he played his six 30-minute games over a long – but exciting – day, scoring 50% in his first event of this type. Well done, Jonathan.

In the Inter-House match on 14th June, Cobham had to surrender the very fine trophy they won last year. The final was a very exciting match between Chatham and Walpole, with fortunes oscillating violently in every game from minute to minute. Eventually Walpole emerged winners 3 – 2. All participating houses played with commitment.

EST



Inter-house Chess

Above: Roy Chambers and Kingsley Ford (behind).

Left: Fabian Polonius ponders

Below: James Vane-Tempest and Alexei Sorokin in front of Dominic Sullivan and Jonathan Boyman.



To kick off the year, PVC introduced the title "The death of the family?" which raised heated debate ranging from the definition of what a family is to its role. The international members lent their experience of what significance the family plays in other cultures. There was some concern that the importance of the family in western culture is diminishing. Some members of the group, however, were still baffled at the end as to what a family was.

Following this talk, KM, with the aid of numerous transparencies, introduced Modern Art to us, a topic that most people knew nothing about, but which prompted strong feelings in almost all. KM called upon his History of Art students to aid his brilliant support of Modern Art (viz. Jackson Pollock) after taking us through several hundred years of Art History. Much argument and brilliant polemic by both fans and opponents of the styles of Modern Art from Cubism to Pollock's 'Action Painting' left most feeling uncertain.

SGAH gave the next talk, entitled "There is no such thing as objective truth, only beauty". One idea was that the belief of artists, scientists and theologians took the form of patterns which were felt as beautiful. This could be the compelling reality for many. This talk confused many of us as we dealt with the reality of our existence and our perception of the universe. Those in the group with religious inclinations were combating the argument that belief in an absolute and objective creator was blind faith, and consequently the debate at this meeting was particularly heated. The meaning of "objective", "truth", "beauty" and even "thing" caused some confusion.

The next talk, by PASF, asserted the importance of literature in our society. It seemed that there was universal agreement that literature played a vital role in all cultures and communities until one member of the group questioned the necessity of creative language, ringing up the high words to event ratio seen in novels by authors such as Jane Austen. Heated discussion again ensued concerning the importance and beauty of language.

SHM next introduced a talk on the subject of political bandwagons, citing the problem of the greenhouse effect as a major political force. From aliens and Area 51 to the increase in global temperature, the government's motivation for magnifying problems beyond the actual evidence was unclear and questioned repeatedly. Fox Mulder put in a brief appearance, as the truth appeared to be out there...

REM gave the final talk of the year, raising the issue of Feminism. It seemed in the ensuing discussion that the idea and definition of feminism had changed considerably since the early suffragette days. Perhaps to be expected, the male members of the group seemed uncertain as to the point of the whole thing, given the changes taking place in society anyway, owing to the trends of political correctness. The issue of equal representation, not by allocation or positive discrimination, but as a natural process in a society where men and women exist in approximately equal numbers was also raised. The discussion was so absorbing that it continued after the close of the meeting.

Thanks must be given where due to all six speakers for introducing some extremely enjoyable discussions, to EST for organising such a successful society, and to the Stoics for unfailingly making it happen on the night.

ARMAND DAVID

CREATIVE WRITING CIRCLE/ LITERARY SOCIETY

Several Stoics presented their own reading of poems and short stories to an invited audience in the Library. EST arranged the evening, together with the Literary Society Secretaries, Richard Clapham and Dan McCarey; the latter produced a fine illustrated programme (see page 101). Stoics showed great courage in reading out their work and the standard was extremely high.

In Tom Kemble's poem, *Caged*, the theme of freedom was introduced but expressed through tightly disciplined verse. The same theme was continued in Edward Spurr's *The Olive Tree* where abstract truths were represented through the use of image and colour. Vivid suggestiveness through imagery was also a feature of Ben Smith's poem, *The Intruders*, with its sense of mystery about the identity of the intruders in an urban jungle. Mordantly sharp ironic images were effectively present in *Freedom Fighters* by Emma Box. In Simon Creek's *A Closing Statement*, the dramatic power of the verse was significantly increased by its tightly controlled discipline. Menace was achieved through understatement and a message of cynicism and sadness, simultaneously comic and painful, was enhanced by the direct address of the narrator/poet to the audience.

Precise detail, unexpected humour, carefully controlled suspense and the impression that every moment in a crisis is so sharp were features of Alex Tate's fine short story, *In the Headmaster's Study*. This was followed by Harry Trelawny's individualistic dead-pan humour and amusing originality in *Are you waiting for anything?* In *Witness*, George Bertram presented a tight, subtle and well constructed story illustrating a child's vulnerability in the face of gradual but unwelcome revelation.

Shaun Gardiner provided a good dramatic rendering of his poem *A Paranoid Fights Freedom*. He connected humour and disaster, contrasting the fragile line of normality with the intense cataclysm of malformed misery, culminating in a marvellously clever and disturbing climax. Sardonic humour was effectively controlled in Frances Morley-Fletcher's *Supermarket Rendez-vous*. Can we ever go to Tesco's safely again? The writer's likeable mischief was well sustained by the laconic tone.

Simon Creek then presented us with a difficult and profound story, *Habit*. Language, school and the obligations exacted by the world as a whole were shown to stand between an individual and his own personal fulfilment. The choice was starkly presented between the call of opting out and the consequences in this dramatically rendered study of alienation. *Habit* is unavoidable if one is to connect with society. In the following poem, Alexei Sorokin showed that freedom could only be achieved through compromise and struggle. As so often, the well controlled rhyme and rhythm informed rather than withdrew from the statement.

Finally, William Ritchie's *Waiting for the Man*, (read by James Lyon) presented us with some magnificent writing. The work was characterised by fresh descriptive power and brilliant wit. We heard of the 'malicious intensity of the heat' on a New York street and of 'life like a broken hour-glass leaking into this room'.

The audience thoroughly enjoyed an evening which revealed a diversity of creative achievement and our thanks must go to EST and to all involved.

PASF

JUNIOR DEBATING SOCIETY

This year has seen the introduction of new speakers and some good debating and public speaking going on. The year started at the end of summer term 1997 when fourth form speakers were invited to debate. A balloon debate took place which involved Ben McCarey as Ginger Spice, David Widdick as Saddam Hussein, James Pegrum as Bill Gates, Rupert Corbishley as a Football Supporter, Harry Heneage as Tony Blair and Edward Pitcher as a farmer. Voting split into two main camps, pro-Arab and pro-agrarian, with the agrarian winning by 13 votes.

In September Alasdair Gaston had been made Chairman and Robert Prentice, Secretary. Debates this year have been wide and varied, including 'Diana and the Media', 'Feminists are out to Rule the World (!)' and the subject of Stowe going co-educational. Many good speakers have emerged from the lower years, most notably: Henry Cavill, Tom Kemble, Bolu Akindoyin, Sarry Jouzy, Piers Craven, Harry Trelawny, Louis Buckworth and Jonathan Boyman. They hold exciting promise for next year's debating.

The School's Junior Public Speaking Team entered two competitions. The first competition we won and qualified for the second round. Sadly we went out in the second round. The second competition confused the team owing to an unfamiliar format and an unexpected problem – the public speaking power of girls! Stowe came a respectable fourth against some very good speakers. The Stowe Team consisted of Alasdair Gaston, David Widdick, Ben McCarey and Robert Prentice.

Finally, the Junior Debating Society would like to extend their warmest thanks to Miss Baddeley and Mrs Fox for all their help, support and encouragement in the past year.

DAVID WIDDICK

Junior Debate: Thursday, 17th June, 1998.

We had all seen the rather odd publicity on the Urgent Board and around the dining room. Eventually the motion was revealed: 'This house believes that Stowe School should become fully co-educational'. It was surprisingly a motion that had never been put before the Junior Debating Society before.

The Music Room was crowded and everyone was waiting patiently. Then the speakers came on. Chairman David Widdick, Secretary Alasdair Gaston and Proposer of Thanks Ben McCarey represented the outgoing committee.

The first speaker was Tom Kemble who put forward the argument that the school female population needs increasing, that the Choir and Junior Congreve would benefit from the presence of more girls. He ended with a question: "Is Stowe a traditionalist school that fears change or a school that accepts it?"

Bolu Akindoyin of the opposition argued that the tradition of Stowe having boys only until the Sixth Form should not be broken and that girls would be a distraction to boys' work, meaning that Stowe would go down in the league tables. The opposition's second speaker disagreed and said that girls would boost the school's funds and increase its position in the league tables. He gave us an example of a school that had gone co-educational – The Dragon – and he explained that girls had done it no harm. Harry Trelawny concluded that if Stowe went fully "co-ed" then it would offer a fully rounded education.

The proposition's second speaker, Henry Cavill, began his speech with a joke which he said would have offended

some younger girls and he said that the 3rd – 5th years were the last years that we get to be ourselves and not have to worry about being sexist or insulting and so Stowe should not go co-educational right through.

After questions from the floor it was time for the final speeches beginning with the opposition's Piers Craven who summed up. Firstly by saying that girls would be distracted and therefore not work so hard. Secondly he asked where they would be accommodated and how the school would pay for a new boarding house; and finally he said that Stowe should carry its tradition of boys only in the 3rd, 4th and 5th forms into the twenty-first century.

The final speech of the evening was given by Sarry Jouzy who said that it was only natural that boys and girls should be together and that the younger boys would have a false view of women by the time they got to the Sixth Form. He ended by saying "Why segregate ourselves from reality?"

After a vote of thanks from Ben McCarey, the vote was taken: against the motion, 3; for the motion, 33; Abstentions, 5.

The debate was very successful and well fought and on behalf of the Debating Society I would like to thank Miss Baddeley and Mrs. Fox and the outgoing, successful 5th form committee and I hope the new committee will have as many successes as this year.

NICHOLAS VERNEY

HEADMASTER'S ESSAY SOCIETY

The Headmaster's Essay society is a forum for the airing of opinions in a constructive manner. The Headmaster hosts each meeting in his home. The first seven meetings of this academic year were recorded in the last *Stoic*.

Charlie Peevers, William Austen and Mark Bowman gave the final three talks of this academic year. Charlie spoke on the subject of Poverty, and the role of the government in attempting to deal with it. She took the stance that Poverty is something that will always exist in our society (by definition!) and thus the government should not spend any more money than they currently do in attempting to deal with the issue. The conflicting view was society cares for the individual as much as the whole, the opposite of the Vulcan philosophy that the needs of the many outweigh the needs of the few.

"Science & God: Unnatural enemies" was the title of William Austen's speech, about the relationship between belief in an absolute creator and our understanding of the universe. Such concepts as the sausage roll of time and the watchmaker were raised in an attempt to convey the implausibility of our universe existing without a God. Atheists in the group felt that belief in God was a cop-out to fill in the gaps that we don't understand about the universe, but the defence countered that even things of which we do supposedly have "perfect" understanding make more sense with a creator.

The final talk was given by Mark Bowman, on the subject "New Labour, New Danger?" Mark attacked the Labour party, citing such amusing examples as the attempt by the government to put 250,000 under 25s to work when only 110,000 under 25s are unemployed! Discussion was very enjoyable, even for those of us less well-informed on political matters.

The mantle of leadership was passed in this meeting from Armand David and Sarah Parker, this year's secretaries, to Shaun Gardiner and Sally Oliphant. Thanks must go out to all who made the society a success, all the speakers and all who participated, but particularly to JGLN and GMH for their support of the society as a whole.

ARMAND DAVID

CCF ROYAL NAVY SECTION

Adventurous training this Easter in Cumbria went very well although the terrible weather meant that the Stoics really did have to be pretty stoical about the whole thing. We climbed Skiddaw on one of the brighter days and were rewarded with superb views of the Lake District – unfortunately we saw little more of the mountains that week as they were under cloud most of the time. The fourth form proved to be an impressive bunch and Nicholas Oldridge and Patrick Bingham were promoted as a result of the excellent leadership qualities which both displayed.

Training has continued during the summer term, mostly on the water, although inclement weather has frequently put a stop to this. Almost all the fourth form have been up in the helicopter and had a bird's eye view of Stowe and many cadets have also managed an introductory gliding flight. Our summer field day was spent locally and we were joined by CPO Moore for sailing training and 16 CTT for canoeing. Once again, thanks to the catering staff for a great barbecue!

Many of the section are now looking forward to another visit to HMS Bristol in dock in Portsmouth for the Royal Navy's annual cadet camp where we join schools from around the country for a week of activities including sailing, canoeing, sports and an overnight expedition in the New Forest.

KFD



Easter Camp





CCF: The winning team at the Stowe Patrol Competition



DUKE OF EDINBURGH'S AWARD SCHEME

It was with reduced numbers that the Bronzes of last year became the Silvers of this year with a total of 11 carrying on in the Award Scheme. These were formed into two groups who intrepidly walked around the Brecon Beacons of Wales, the hills and muddy fields of Shropshire, the peat bogs of the Peak District and that heaven for the hillwalkers – the Cairngorms. In Wales we experienced almost vertical climbing to peaks inhabited by tame sheep. Shropshire gave us walking in the snow and the Peak District showed us walking that is unlikely to be forgotten by anybody due to its harshness on the ankles.

That leaves us with Scotland. One week is spent camping in the middle of nowhere, where the only running water is inhabited by fish and nothing grows above knee height, with only Mrs Shahani's excellent cooking for comfort. However, this is not all that D of E is all about, although it is easily the most recognisable aspect of the scheme; there are other areas

in which candidates must show ability. At all levels members must choose: a skill (e.g. playing a musical instrument), a physical recreation (e.g. football), a service (e.g. community service) to do alongside their expedition. Should one continue to Gold then another area must be completed – the Residential. This is where a week is spent in different surroundings and volunteer work is done.

The Duke of Edinburgh's Award opens so many doors to those who participate it is worth the time that is put into it.

On a final note, Stoics would like to express their most profound thanks to AKM who has led D of E for the past umpteen years and we hope he will continue to play an active part in the expeditions and particularly the football. At the same time, we would like to welcome MDGW who will be taking over from AKM and who has a hard act to follow(!).

DAVID WIDDICK, SIMON CREEK,
ALEC LAING, JAMES NETTLETON AND ALEX POOLEY



Stoics Abroad

ART HISTORIANS IN FLORENCE

6.15am on Sunday 19th October saw the gathering of fifteen bleary-eyed but excited Stoics accompanied by Mr. Farquhar (a.k.a. Firestarter), and the Headmistress of Tudor Hall with some of her staff and pupils at the North Front, ready to board the coach that would take them to Gatwick. In all we were a party of some 34 people, headed, of course, by Mr. Robinson (a.k.a. Robbo) who seemed as thrilled as many of the more lively art historians who were already raising their spirits at the rear of the coach.

The Gatwick waiting lounge saw three incidents: the first was that Mr. Robinson lost his passport while everyone else hung onto theirs; the second was the public unveiling of our 'Florence 97' T shirts. The third and oft repeated episode was the inaugural performance of Robbo's Boys, singing in their harmonised trio, the theme song of the trip.

On arriving in Italy Mr. Farquhar became a new man. Rejuvenated by the fresh Florentine air, he could occasionally be heard bursting expressively into Italian verse. Initially, Alasdair Rykens could not comprehend the meaning of such rapture but was "catered to shortly" through continued exposure to Italian art and language.

Our hotel was situated not far from the frantic hustle of central Florence and we embarked on our first sight-seeing tour of the city in order to get our bearings. We had our first view of the Duomo which was even more impressive than expected. We passed by the Palazzo Vecchio, crossed the Ponte Vecchio (ice-cream stop) and laboured up the hill to the Piazzale Michelangelo for the famous view over the city. Mixing with the locals was not a problem, with our dark glasses and carefully chosen Italian designer clothes, we were just another set of faces in the crowd. As the warm weather and romantic atmosphere gradually made their different impacts upon us, we returned to the hotel and our 'Rooms with a view', a map of the city imprinted on our minds.

Next day we started with the church of San Lorenzo designed by Brunelleschi with pulpits and chapel decoration by Donatello. The simple grey stonework (*pietra serena*) and the fluent rhythm of classical architecture are characteristic of Brunelleschi's work and the white walls offset the stone beautifully. In smaller groups we entered the Old Sacristy to admire the restored architecture and stucco roundels, their complex images powerfully visible after their recent cleaning. Passing through the Martelli chapel, chief allies to the Medici, our group learnt in front of Filippo Lippi's magical 'Annunciation' how the later, Dominican preacher, Savonarola criticised those images of the Virgin where the painter's model could be recognised in the market buying cabbages. Later in the main square we stood on the place where the Dominican friar was burnt just 500 years ago for criticising the papacy of Alexander VI (Borgia).

Outside Santa Maria Novella we saw a typical everyday mugging by a gypsy. The incident shocked all of us, particularly the weak-hearted female contingent as the victim beat the mugger, though Tom Johnson still managed to nap on a bench impervious to the drama around him.

Through the impressive façade, designed by Alberti for Giovanni Rucellai (the only renaissance façade on any church in Florence), we marvelled at the first great three-dimensional painting in art – Masaccio's 'Trinity'. Though faded, the image is much more impressive in reality than in textbook illustrations.

Behind the high altar, Ghirlandaio's Tornabuoni Chapel, also recently restored, revealed the splendour of late fifteenth century chapel decoration as well as the lengths patrons were prepared to go to save their souls from Hell or Purgatory. There the patrons had themselves painted in their finest costumes actually taking part in sacred scenes so that their dynasty could also be remembered and talked about in history.

Next door we visited the cloisters where Uccello's frescoes had been damaged by the famous floods of 1996, the most famous of which was, ironically, The Deluge, where we saw for ourselves his pre-occupation with perspective and geometric form.

Over the river, the proportions of the Brancacci Chapel in the Carmine church were the biggest shock of the day as the whole group could barely fit into this chapel. This we felt was disappointingly small compared to our expectations, fed by enlarged illustrations and slides. Still, the experience of the actual work of art means that we now know how intimate and yet still impressive Masaccio's and Masolino's fresco cycle really is, with its impressive realism and vivid, strong colours.

By contrast, and our minds and feet aching, the Franciscan church of Santa Croce was very simple, hence its wooden roof and simple architecture. There we admired Donatello's Annunciation, characterised by soft and flowing drapery. Mr Robinson explained how the first art historian, Vasari, ripped out the medieval monuments and altars (except for the frescoes on the walls) to improve the church's appearance during the Counter-Reformation. We were still able to admire the Bardi and Peruzzi Chapels with their dramatic frescos by Giotto.

Our final visit of the day was to the Duomo museum where we saw the very impressive singing galleries sculpted by Donatello and Luca della Robbia. Most memorable of all, the wooden Mary Magdalene by Donatello displayed the harsh realities of her life as a penitent in the desert, having renounced her previous life as a prostitute. One tourist expressed shock at Mr Robinson's explanation of her previous existence and stomped off muttering. Unperturbed, Robbo continued to point out her toothless and ragged state, carved deeply in wood. On the way out we stopped in front of Michelangelo's late Pieta, the face of Nicodemus perhaps a self-portrait, and we admired the chisel marks that the sculptor left on this, an unfinished work.

Most of the party was then invited to climb the Duomo for an evening view from the top. 428 steps later, many of us regretted the invitation though the adults comforted themselves with a planned drink on the way back to the hotel. Charlie Peevers and Tom Sleater stopped for a breather

though it was not until the top that it was discovered that it was the highest she had ever been. Recently cleaned are the marvellous and terrifying frescos of Heaven and Hell on the inside of the dome by Vasari and Taddeo Zuccaro which were rewarding for those who stopped to admire them on the way up and down.

Monday evening, we ventured out into the much-talked about night. Waiting around for an hour, passing the Duomo at least five times where we made friends with the locals who, for strange reasons of their own, knew little English except that they exclaimed 'eagle claw' whilst grappling with our heads. We, observing the local custom, behaved sociably and politely. Entertainment was finally located in a bar/disco called Scorpione, the epitome of scuzziness and we loved it.

Tuesday was dedicated to the sites connected with the Medici family with our first stop at San Marco, the Fra Angelico Museum. At the top of the stairs we wondered at the friar's 'Annunciation', painted to inspire the early-rising friars for the first office of the day. Characteristic of his Order's training and thinking, the painter-friar focused on meaning not narrative, as his Chapter House Crucifixion clearly displays. What a contrast we found, with the sumptuous display of rich pigments and anecdotal detail in the Gozzoli frescoes of the Adoration of the Magi in the chapel of the Medici Palace. Even the marble of the floor was breathtaking, the detail and colour of these newly-cleaned frescoes incredible.

From life to death and we next visited the Medici Tombs in San Lorenzo. On the walls of the New Sacristy we laughed at sketches by Michelangelo because they seemed as if a child of five had done them, but when we looked at the detail of his monuments to the Medici, the figures of Night and Day, Dawn and Dusk, we realised in silent admiration how much of a genius he truly was. Via Orsanmichele we admired the originals (or copies) of renaissance sculptures, particularly Verrocchio's St. Thomas and Christ now cleaned and restored to its chocolate colour patina.

Ben Bloomfield, Al Rykens, Tom Sleater and Nanette Godfrey, Headmistress of Tudor Hall at the Bargello, Florence with Donatello's Amore

Our final call, though, was to the Uffizi. Armed with pre-booked tickets we sauntered past the queue and staggered up the stairs for our long haul through the galleries. We paid our first respects to the patron saint of MVI History of Art, Cimabue. We had always known and talked of his greatness and here we could experience it for ourselves. His fabulous altarpiece was difficult to take our eyes from, shining as if a ray of light sent by God. Two hours later as we staggered out of the galleries this was the one that remained most imprinted on our mental slide libraries despite the rooms of Gothic works and paintings by Masaccio, Fra Angelico, Filippo Lippi, Botticelli, Michelangelo and Caravaggio.

The third day we drove through the country to Siena where the different and fantastic design of this wonderful city contrasted greatly with the noisy turmoil of Florence. Most of the streets are on a slope and we trekked to the main square, admired the Tuscan hills from the cathedral walls and gawped at the shimmering glitter of Duccio's 'Maesta' in its darkened room. This magnificent altarpiece is covered in gold leaf and rich colours as it was the high altarpiece of the cathedral.

Back in Florence at the Bargello, we saw most of the original renaissance sculptures we had studied from Ghiberti, Donatello, Verrocchio and Michelangelo whose David most of us made a pilgrimage to see in another gallery. There it was in the flesh. At least we had seen it as well as some of his other unfinished works, and we could return to Stowe satiated.

Via Pisa where we saw the Leaning Tower and fought off the sellers of tourist tat - plastic Davids and mini Leaning Towers - we bade farewell to Mr. Robinson at the airport. A final Rhapsody (in blue, Robbo's Boys' t-shirts) to our leader as he returned to Florence for a few final (and strangely silent) days without us. This marked the end of a fascinating, stimulating, and hugely enjoyable trip. Our thanks to CCR.

BEN BLOOMFIELD, ALASDAIR RYKENS, TOM SLEATER, ED BOWRING,
TOM JOHNSON, LUCA SAVELLI, GEORGIE GILBERT-DENHAM,
CHARLIE PEEVERS, KATHRYN ALLSOPP, BELLA JUPP,
BELLA ARBUTHNOTT, KATIE BRUCE, ROSE HICKIE,
CLAUDIA BODIKIAN, VERITY SCOTT.



A party of classicists visited Rome and Sorrento last Easter.
An account is given below of the holiday's busy start.

ROAMING IN ROME

Peach Airlines were not popular. We had left Stowe in the middle of the night to catch their flight to Naples. Now we were at Gatwick and, alas, no Peach Aircraft to be spotted anywhere in Sussex. The party, of course, bore an eight-hour wait with Stoic fortitude and eventually we boarded a Caledonian Airways plane (which brought a smile of pride to Roddy McLauchlan) and off we flew to Napoli, the erstwhile home of Virgil, Caruso and Diego Maradona. From Naples to Rome we travelled in a Mercedes coach so modern and luxurious we might have been travelling by Persian Carpet. By the time we reached the Hotel Eton, not far from the Stazione Termini, we were therefore in good spirits, despite the lateness of supper and its odd nature (not at all what Pizza Hut and Pizzaland had led us to expect).

Next day we had a bus, all to ourselves, but no guide. Just a driver who spoke no English. This was not quite how we had envisaged our pre-booked "day tour of the city", but at least it was a challenge. We could take our coach anywhere in Rome we liked, our only barrier that of language.

First stop the Ara Pacis, the "altar of peace", that splendid monument of Augustus, restored and housed by Mussolini in the 1930s. It exudes the aura of power politics. There they are, the emperor's whole family, just as alive now as they were in 9BC, looking proudly down on you from the sides of this great public religious monument. "Your emperor Augustus is the son of a god, you know," they cry from the cold stone. "He's brought you peace and don't you forget it!" There too, nearby on the bank of the Tiber, stands in awesome bulk the great man's mausoleum, another chilling symbol of fascist power. "Virgil would have been standing right where we are!" we declared (somewhat ambitiously), "when the emperor buried his nephew Marcellus. Remember that passage in Aeneid Bk 6, the pageant of heroes?"

It was a good prelude to a quick walk to the Pantheon, the temple built by Augustus' right-hand man and son-in-law, Agrippa. The Pantheon never ceases to take you by surprise, inside and out. It has withstood the centuries remarkably. For Stoics too there is extra interest in the Pantheon's coffered dome with its light-giving oculus the inspiration for the Marble Hall. The enormity of the Pantheon again reminded us that the Romans were in the business of Marketing and PR long before those terms were coined. Standing under the portico, with the massive grey and red granite columns towering above, you suddenly come close to imperialist Rome and those relentless military campaigns which make the *Pax Augusta*, the "peace of Augustus", a contradiction in terms. The proud words of Virgil resonate around those impassive columns: "Remember, Roman, to subdue the proud and spare the conquered!" Beggars and pickpockets haunt the Pantheon, much as they must have done in Augustus' day. Bored stall-keepers meanwhile will sell you anything from plastic gondolas to Inter-Milan football shirts. McDonald's now have a foothold in the Piazza della Rotonda. But essentially the atmosphere is still that of ancient Rome, with the one vast imperial monument dominating a bustling, ant-like humanity.

We continued on foot through the *centro storico* and, by the Tiber at the Ponte Garibaldi, were successfully reunited

with the coach. So to the heart of the ancient city, the forum, now a huge, sprawling archaeological site. We stopped first at the remains of the temple which Augustus had had the temerity to erect, in the forum's very centre, to his adopted father, *divus Julius Caesar*, now after assassination a god. In all directions from where we sat rose columns, arches and solid Roman brick, a perplexing kaleidoscope of remains bordering the Via Sacra, the sacred road which winds its way through the market-place. Some buildings are still easily identifiable. The curia, or senate house, for example, is roofed over and still has the green and maroon flooring, on which toga-clad senators held forth. The house of the Vestal Virgins still has its garden with the statues of famous Vestals surrounding an ornamental pond. But much is unclear, in need of explanation. And explanations were not easy for suddenly, there he was, a Roman thug, with as many rings hanging from his body as the most fashion-conscious pig can have through its nose. Was he thirsting for knowledge that he attached himself to our party leader, as if his shadow? The words of explanation faltered, then evaporated. We walked the forum in silence, the leech holding on, an expressionless, threatening presence. If there was going to be a fight, we seemed to have superior numbers, though how many helpers might he have? As we progressed down the Via Sacra with our unwelcome guest still inches behind the poor party leader, Ali Sennett with a whoop of delight raced past to capture the drama of the occasion with a photograph. In seconds the leech had disappeared. If he was planning to steal our lire, to abduct our party leader or to purloin our A-level notes, he had suddenly changed his mind. "You looked scared! It will be a great photo!" chortled Ali with a grin. (But she never produced it next term. Perhaps, in the excitement, she had clicked the wrong button? One can but hope...)

Packed lunches followed by the Arch of Titus, the former as unsubstantial as the latter solid. The Romans, amidst all the uncertainties of life, believed in making reassuring architectural statements. Political messages too. And sometimes, as in the case of the Arch of Titus, a work of art emerges. Its elegant proportions and smooth Pentelic marble, however, speak little of the horrors of the sack of Jerusalem which it seeks to commemorate. A short walk thence via the Colosseum to the Circus Maximus. Although the outline of the stadium is still very clear, the gentle grassy slopes, frequented by families on casual afternoon strolls, hint little of Ben Hur or the 385,000 spectators the guidebook assured us it had once accommodated. Back in the coach, we returned to the Piazza Venezia. Despite the fascination of the many pavement stalls, we eventually crossed the road to Trajan's Forum.

Under Trajan, at the beginning of the 2nd century, the Empire had reached its greatest extent thanks to his conquests of what are now Romania and the Gulf. *Optimus Princeps Trajan* was called, the best of emperors, and so he was, if the new forum he gave to Rome is any indication. We looked down on it from the height of the shopping centre he also built for his people; 150 individual shops, no less. Can Buckingham boast as many? Trajan's famous column, of course, dominates the area. Newly restored, it sparkles in the

Roman sun. Round it a spiral frieze with some 2,500 figures, carved in relief, tells of his Dacian Wars, his triumphs in Romania. For Stoics the military imagery of Trajan is familiar. Both Marble Hall and North Hall with their martial themes have a Trajanic flavour.

Back in the coach, our driver accepted our new request - the Forum Boarium - with a polite smile. We had passed it several times already and no doubt he quietly mused on the unpredictability of the Anglo-Saxon temperament. The *Foro Boario*, the old cattle market, is off the main tourist routes, though central and close to the Tiber. A nearby harbour increased its importance in ancient times. For us the main interest was the circular temple of Hercules and its associations with Book 8 of the *Aeneid*. There is quite a lot to see there, but by now the day was drawing on, after a largely sleepless night, and we were understandably beginning to flag.

Supper revived us. One group ventured afterwards by local bus to the Piazza Venezia and thence by foot to the Campidoglio, the Capitoline Hill, with its equestrian statue of Marcus Aurelius. We found Michelangelo's seventeenth-century Piazza lit quite superbly, the elegant palace facades more beautiful than even Michelangelo conceived. One could almost forgive his action in changing the alignment of the Capitol by some 180 degrees, so that it now turns its back on, and severs all connections with, the ancient forum. It is still possible, however, to skirt the central palazzo and come upon a hilltop view of the whole forum, sensitively floodlit, stretching out far into the distance, silent, still, brooding with the knowledge of years. Inspired by this, we began our return to the hotel on foot, saluting Marcus Aurelius' column in the Piazza Colonna before ending up, as nearly all Rome's visitors seemed to have done, at the Trevi Fountain. Here, under lights, huge tritons were leaping around cascading waters in front of a vast, theatrical back-drop. And though the spectacle was essentially eighteenth-century, even here ancient Rome was not far away. For the fountain's water comes gush-

ing out of an Augustan aqueduct, the *Acqua Vergine*, the very one which Agrippa built to bring water to Rome for his baths back in 19BC. And this was the time when Virgil was putting finishing touches to the *Aeneid*.

Thus finished the first of seven days. Later in our stay the emphasis shifted to Greek art as we visited various museums in Rome: the Vatican, the Capitoline and the highly impressive Museo Nazionale, resited in the refurbished Palazzo Massimo. The Romans were great collectors and copiers of Greek statues; so many illustrations of the Greek Art A-level topic are to be found here.

After three nights in Rome we boarded our magic carpet for a journey (not without its excitements) south to Sorrento. There everyone voted the Hotel Leone, at the back of the town amongst orange and lemon groves, a distinct hit. The food was plentiful and the reception cheerful. Sorrento itself proved a popular centre. Highlights of our four-night stay included a climb to the top of Vesuvius, a visit to the Museo Nazionale in Naples, a day in Pompeii itself and an afternoon in Capri (where the most dedicated of us made the steep climb to Tiberius' villa). And so to Naples Airport, where a small and elderly aeroplane with a peach on its side was waiting to carry us back to England.

The party proved a very cheerful group, intent to get the most out of things. Even when three-quarters of us got off a crowded bus, in which we had travelled across Rome, to discover that we were missing the other quarter, we kept smiling.

The party consisted of Bolu Akindoyin, Adam Cooke, Nina Elliott, Amy Gillam, Richard Going, Iona Graham, Layinka Howes, Saxon Izatt, Alex Janson, Antonia Jones, Roddy McClaughlan, Will Morley, Hugo Mortimer, Alex Papadopoulos, Patrick Pearce, Robert Prentice, Ali Sennett, Dominic Spencer-Churchill and Nadine Talalla. It was marvellous too to have the enthusiastic support of Belinda McCrae and Karen Dore.

AGM

Before the Arch of Constantine and the Colosseum



Richard Briggs writes of his participation in

THE MODEL EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AT STOCKHOLM

The Model European Parliament has been another great success. This time two Stoics attended the Parliament, Jerome Starkey and myself. We had been selected in a process that had started with an essay on a European topic. I wrote on external economic relations between the EU and Central European countries. The second stage was an interview to see whether we were the right material to represent the UK.

On Saturday 5th March the UK delegation met at Stowe for a team building exercise. The delegation was split into two groups and looked at two different topics. As in the Model European Parliament, we had to agree on proposed clauses. This was very helpful in making the delegation understand what was in store for us and to help us to work together.

Thursday 26th March came, and the delegation met at Heathrow Airport. When we arrived at Stockholm, a six hour coach journey awaited us. The coach took us up to a skiing resort where we were placed in groups and worked on various team building activities. The most memorable was the cross-country skiing. This was the first time for many of us as was obvious from the number of times we fell over! On Sunday afternoon these exercises came to an end and we went to our host families for a much-needed good night's sleep.

The Model Parliament was opened in Stockholm by a member of the Swedish Royal Family. After this, we started our committee work. My area was agriculture. This was a difficult topic upon which to reach common agreement. The Swedish delegate and I wanted drastically to cut the levels of

UK delegation at Riksdagen (Swedish parliamentary building)

subsidies, in order to lower taxes and food prices and to make the sector more efficient. The southern countries wanted to maintain the subsidies. In the end the resolutions that were passed were not as harsh as Agenda 2000, the European solutions for the next ten years.

Wednesday started with a film at the Cosmonova Planetarium. The planetarium was so realistic and so large that when they showed fast-moving pictures of the Grand Canyon, most people felt sick! After the film, we were split into mixed groups to visit tourist sites. I saw the Royal Palace, which was not as grand as Buckingham Palace, but a very interesting trip. In the evening, the UK delegation dined at the British Embassy with the Ambassador and many of his staff.

Thursday was divided in two: the morning was spent playing sport at Tensta Gymnasium, and the afternoon was spent scrutinising the resolutions the committees had proposed. I proposed four amendments, two of which were chosen to be considered in the General Assembly.

On Friday the real excitement came after the opening, at which Mr. Nichols gave a speech as President. The first committee to be scrutinised was agriculture. I presented my first amendment to reduce CAP spending to 10% of EU spending in 20 years to the whole Assembly. My argument was that 50% of the EU budget was currently being spent on less than 10% of the EU population, and many of the proposed projects in the Model European Parliament should be partly funded from the reductions in CAP spending. My amendment was, however, too radical to pass.



The main Resolution mirrored real politics by focusing on short term proposals. My Swedish colleague on the committee addressed the Assembly and was successful in persuading it to reject the resolution by two votes. The rest of the day I spent listening to the speeches and asking questions of the other committees.

Saturday was a day which I will remember for the rest of my life. We wanted to save our questions for the committee on immigration, so we played a minor role in the discussion until one of my amendments on the Environment was presented to the Parliament. Rather unprepared, I told the delegates that this Proposal was unworkable and made Europe less competitive. One delegate asked me whether I would rather have a job and a polluted environment, or be unemployed and have a cleaner environment. My response was blunt: "In England I'd rather have a job and some money." This had a mixed reaction. My amendment failed.

As I sat down the President asked the delegates would anyone like to speak out against the Resolution. As it was clear no one else was going to, I put myself forward. Stowe teaches you to think for yourself so, even though it was against the mood of

the Parliament, I had another go at introducing practicality and reason. This was no more successful than the first attempt. Student idealism triumphed, and the Resolution was passed. One of my Swedish friends passed me a note saying 'Too bad you became the witch.' No-one witnessing this would have guessed that it was my diplomacy and mediation efforts that broke the deadlock in the Agriculture Committee and enabled us to agree the wording of Resolutions to put before the plenary session of the Parliament. Even though I had gone against the majority, the delegates afterwards were just as nice. This highlights the wonderful atmosphere and co-operation between the delegates.

The farewell party was great fun and I have many pen pals and places to stay around Europe.

Sunday was spent flying home and reflecting on a wonderful time. It was well worthwhile missing 11 days of the school holidays! I would like to thank all the people at Stowe and the Model European Parliament who made this experience such a brilliant one. When I look back over my time at Stowe, this will be the most memorable time and I encourage any Stoic to enter and try and be selected to go to Madrid in September.

Team-building in Stoten



The General Assembly at Riksdagen



Viktor Rydbergs Gymnasium, our host school



CREATIVITY

Page 96

Verse:

- Alexei Sorokin
- Simon Creek
- Edward Spurr
- Tom Kemble
- Shaun Gardiner
- Emma Box
- Will Ritchie
- Jonathan Sayle
- Ben Smith
- Jaime Zaldua
- Dru Clark
- MW



Page 103

Prose:

- Roy Chambers
- Simon Creek
- Frances Morley-Fletcher
- Harry Trelawny
- George Bertram
- Jerome Starkey
- Tom Furse-Roberts



Page 111 Art:

- GStJS's Review
- Shiho Ichinose
- Anna Warburton
- Henrietta Askew
- Tom Kemble
- Rowena Burkett-Jones
- Verity Scott
- Emma Nicholas
- Dominique Dumaresq
- Dominic Taylor
- Victoria Keegan
- Vanessa Larsen
- Charlie Bingham
- Margherita zu Huhelohe
- Antonia Stocker



Page 117

Design:

- Tom Furse-Roberts
- Bertie Marsh
- Jack Mann
- Mark Ollard
- Dominic Taylor
- Dominique Dumaresq
- Harry Granville
- Will Morley
- Mike Hyslop
- Hamish Gordon-Lennox
- Richard Prentice
- Will Keeler
- Tim Pearce
- Jonathan Legge
- Tom Buxton
- Charlie Bingham
- Kristjan Byfield
- Verity Scott



Page 121

GStJS's Letter From China



The Roxburgh Prize for Verse

The Roxburgh Prize for Verse competition invited contributions on the idea or experience of "Freedom". The range of response was as wide as one could have hoped or expected. To look just at the poems of Alexei Sorokin and Ed Spurr would sufficiently indicate that. The imaginative and verbal resourcefulness continues to be a source of modest pride. But, of course, we can only hope that future generations will also continue to pick up their pens and furrow their brows. EST

LUST FOR FREEDOM *forgive me my pretentious words*

*Oh, burning beautiful desire
To speak big words and sound clever:
Big words, big names – they all inspire:
To fight, to die, to live forever...*

*Inspire?... Fight... and die... – whatever...
Untroubled snob, pretentious liar:
My care for freedom – trashy fashion;
How can I claim that I admire
And care for those who fought with passion?*

*The promised land I'll never need,
The barricades I won't defend...
I'll never fight, I'll never bleed...
Why ostentatiously pretend
To understand what freedom meant
For those who never had it?*

*And yet I lust for freedom...
Pretentious claim – some might say
I know myself and yet – I lust
To find the key, to run away,
To clean the dirt, the dust, the rust,
Escape this feeling of disgust,
To leave my stuffy social cage
In which among the mob,
As on a scenic stage,
I'm told which role to play.*

*Oh, tasteless stupid script
I have to know and follow,
I want it torn and ripped:
So sickening and hollow,
It constantly oppresses,
It tortures and depresses
With its imposing rules.*

*Identity is lost,
To social values bound:
To understand the cost
Of everything around,
To struggle and achieve,
To please and be accepted...
How can I love, believe,
If feelings are rejected?*

*Don't care about success
Don't want to over-strain
Don't want to over-dress
Don't want to live in vain.*

*Don't want to be unseen,
Nor noticed standing out.
Don't want to be unclean,
Well-mannered or a lout.*

*No longer chaste or kind:
I hate my love of money,
I hate my cynic mind,
I find tears funny.*

*I don't know where I'm going,
I'm doing what I'm told.
They comfort me not knowing
That I feel lost and cold.*

*I'm spiritless and numb:
No joy, no gloom, no senses.
My efforts are but dumb –
To counteract expenses.*

*I am tired of confusion,
Can someone help me out?
Without rude intrusion,
With no commanding clout?*

*The social expectations –
They suck my freedom dry,
Their foul contamination
Dries out the tears I cry.*

*I want to feel naïve and free.
I would be glad to be dependent:
I would believe, obey, agree
If only feelings weren't offended.*

*Forgive me my pretentious claim,
Distorted lines, dumb oration;
Disturbed myself – I take the blame,
And yet I hope I'll find salvation.*

ALEXEI SOROKIN (LVI)
SENIOR WINNER

PHOTO: MARGHERITA ZU HOHENLOHE

A CLOSING STATEMENT

*"I've just gone away for the weekend,
I'll be back before you know that I'm gone."
His life – a succession of battles he fought in
A war that was soon to be done.
Forty-eight hours of freedom;
A scene change – the fresh country life
This political man's closing statement began
Free from job, free from kids, free from wife.*

*By day the cool air of the country
Filled his nose with that "farm-yard brew" scent,
And the scream of his phone brought the news to his ears
"Off-shore trusts are down sixteen per cent."
Evening was spent with the hostess,
The barmaid from the "Old Blue Boar",
But by night he considered the aesthetic effect of
Her dress on his hotel room floor.*

*On Sunday a rude awakening –
The host to exact what was "due".
It became too apparent that last night was not
The first time she had said "Oh, I do."
Money was felt inappropriate
A price for the previous night's charms.
He had time to construct an excuse for his wife
As they plastered up both of his arms.*

*His wife had received a tip-off,
So found ways to prepare for the shock.
He arrived to a welcome divorce suit and a handful of
Keys that no longer fit locks.
Her lawyers planned the attack,
A fierce legal battle to ensure
The custodial rights of two kids and still keep
The "benefits" that accrue to point four.*

*He paid dear for abusing his freedom,
Murdoch's whim made him front page news.
His family, his job, now his circle of friends,
What else was there left he could lose?
"MY WIFE AND THE GOVERNMENT MINISTER"
Preceded mounting pains in the chest
With his dying breath he whispered, "Which bastard
Gave freedom of speech to the press?"*

SIMON CREEK (V)

JUNIOR WINNER

THE OLIVE TREE

*The Olive Tree
The symbol of freedom.
All crooked, twisted and split
Half dead, broken and weathered.
Why is freedom so difficult?*

*But with sprouts of new life
Appearing from the old
There are new tender sprigs
With their green-silvery leaves.
Peace is so delicate, so hopeful.*

*The olives are the fruit of freedom.
Green or black
Colour does not matter.
Hard work to harvest them
Then to cure them in salt water
Freeing them from bitterness.*

*The ancient olive tree
The sign to Noah of new life
In the beak of a white dove.
And yet Jesus was betrayed
In the Garden of Olives –
With a kiss.*

ED SPURR (III)

CAGED

*Squashed, in an iron cage,
Suppressed, as never before,
I lie there, caged.
Crushed against the rusted cage,
Bruised against the iron bars
I lie there, caged.
Voices I do not hear,
Except the wailing trees.
I lie there, caged.*

*Footsteps closer and closer come,
Breath of an old man surrounds me.
I lie there, caged.
Sounds of mumbling approach,
Slowly, he opens the corroding cage...*

*Air encompasses me as never before,
Wind revolves around me,
Spreading my cramped wings,
Leaving the old cage behind me
I look to the skies,
For I am free.*

TOM KEMBLE (IV)



JAMES LYON

A PARANOID FIGHTS FREEDOM

*Starlings gather on the high telephone poles outside my dirty window.
They wear their feathers like plastic trench coats, huddling behind them,
Watching me, recording me, reporting me.
They pretend to look at their watches, and read their newspapers, but I know
I know
They're watching me.
They see me fill in my tax returns, so I don't add any numbers
Or take away.*

*Every thirty seconds the television picture changes, and flashes a message,
Telling me what sort of milk to buy and who to vote for,
And so every thirty seconds I shut my eyes.
They haven't got me now.
The quiz masters and comedians stare angrily at me
Only at me,
Annoyed that I haven't fallen for their televised trap.*

*My telephone is tapped, and my words are fed into a big room far away
Where men smoke, and listen to what I say, and they think about my name.
Another one of them delivers my mail,
And he always reads it before putting it through the door,
And stands there until I get it, to see if I'm still alive.
But I don't open the mail, because I know they're all bombs anyway.*

*Every day I look in the obituary pages to see if I am dead and if they have got me.
And every day I think I have died but I haven't, and I have won that day.
They put chemicals in my food, and bombard me with rays through the light fittings.
So I eat at restaurants, where the waitresses watch me over their pads,
And scribble down everything I think.
I don't leave a tip.
And when I come home I sit in the dark, and watch the blinking television.*

*I watch the starlings gather
And I hear the men on the porch whisper and smoke their Marlboros.
And the stars are not stars, they are cameras watching me, recording me.
The television flashes and I forget to close my eyes,
and I hear the men at the door
Laugh and mutter and wink their cigarettes.*

They've got me.

*What's that?
What's that?*

SHAUN GARDINER (LVI)

FREEDOM FIGHTERS

*The banner of their lives is
torn and shredded,
a ghostly apparition to
the war-weary.*

*The dead lie inhumanly still
grotesquely rigid;
silence reigns over the field
of shattered bodies.*

*The fight – a desperate mêlée –
the point changed
from a fight for freedom
to a fight for survival.*

*The banner falls, to be
trampled in the mud
under the wrecked bodies
of freedom fighters.*

EMMA BOX (LVI)

SEARCH FOR SELF

*I am shrouded in the mist of presence, in a cage observed by those in
adjourning manacles*

*Our lives collide in the forum of society; through the bars we search for
some one with the key*

*The key that unlocks our identity, allows us to bare vulnerability and
become strong through weakness*

*Some one who cares, some one who does not see the changing tides of
circumstance but the ocean beneath it*

*We yearn to discover that someone who can let us be naked among worldly
restraints, talk to us in tongues that need no lips but a heart to speak*

*Like a beacon advancing through the darkness they approach, we haste to
the guiding flare unaware that it too is searching for a light*

*As we probe meeting eyes that shine like suns, no answers revealed, no
secrets exposed, but a twin dawn as the glow of two reflect*

*Shadows of doubt are shed in the new morn, the dusky chains that
constrain wane in the blinding light of the revelation:*

*That the key to freedom lies not in the hand of a stranger nor snatched by
providence again to be bestowed*

*But deep within the self, it can sink in a river of tears or singe in a fire of
passion, rust with neglect*

*Yet still it lies unbroken waiting again to be clasped, for the moment
when abstraction surrenders to purpose*

*For the moment when the mirror of my life is no longer fractured and I
look in to see myself,
the freedom to be myself*

WILL RITCHIE (LVI)

A SONG OF FREEDOM

*To choose your thoughts then speak your mind,
freedom to live, to be called Mankind.
It's in our dreams that freedom reigns,
no need to cheat, no hidden games.*

*There is no end and no beginning,
there is no losing and no winning.
Where the foolish will know their mind
And all the lost the road will find.*

*Healing for the sick, feeding of the poor,
when no-one has to worry about a closed door.
The sound of a prisoner removing all his chains,
the words of a priest removing all his pains.
The sight of an astronaut landing safely on the moon,
The story of the dish running off with the spoon.*

*Riding in the desert on miles and miles of sand,
Sailing out to sea, losing sight of land,
The face of a Muslim lifting up her veil:*

*book to the blind when it's written in braille,
Music to the deaf when the rhythm is clear,
Speech to the dumb when others can hear.*

*Where black is white and weak are strong,
And those who sin can do no wrong.
The rush through your mind when you jump from a plane:
the feel of a pill removing your pain.*

*Freedom is given,
Freedom is sold;
Freedom to die,
To breathe and grow old.*

*King wanted freedom to work as a team,
the words that he preached were
"I HAD A DREAM".*

JONATHAN SAYLE (III)

THE INTRUDERS

*Clear blue water shivers in the breeze,
Spiky green giants whisper with their limbs,
Sun-baked dust runs to hide in granite crannies
Rocky skyscrapers stand as kings over all.*

*The water snake basks on the sunny rocks.
A small rodent scavenges for food.
Above, a circling hawk spies two hunched shapes
Strangers have come to visit.*

*Down the nature-laden slopes they plod
Their species grown unaccustomed to peace
Every sunburnt second they come closer
Packs heavy with human pleasantries.*

*Far from the concrete chaos of their world
They have come, from meaningless responsibility,
The aching hand of calculated expense.
A breath of instinct and gentle stimulation.*

*At last they come upon their spot.
Every year they find it, like nesting birds
They have travelled for a taste of a past world.
Here they are, filled with new life and freedom.*

BEN SMITH (IV)



JAIME ZALDUA (IV)

THE EAGLE

*She is the orphan of the vast horizons and the looming forest
She is the orphan of the breezes and the winds
She is the orphan of the rocks where once she made her nest,
Of the blue skies with clouds that pour down into rushing streams.*

*For there is a constant sadness in her gaze,
she winces to onlookers, to their lamenting praise,
Her wings are folded as she bows her head.
No more surveying sharp points where seldom saw the mighty oak trees,
being severed by the storm across the opening glade.*

*She yearns for sunsets that spread gold mantles and silver droplets on the sea.
And if only she could fly again, away from man towards celestial heights,
closer to God, to the melodious sounds that hissed, caressed, and rustled in her ears,
She would spread her massive wings far wide, upswing, descend,
Glide and cut the earthly sphere: she would be free,
Captive no longer, but respected, even feared.*

*By now the noble eagle's eyes perceive sympathetic feelings that pervade
As feebly I wave "adios", a better understanding in my mind
of the thoughtlessness, the ruthlessness and cruelty of mankind
to all our fellow creatures inhabiting the earth.
In this nameless zoo I missed the tigers, lions, rhinos and the rest,
I may freely return one day, unlike the imperial eagle denied her nest.*

JAIME ZALDUA (IV)

BIRDSONG

*She is bound
still shackled in her
mind's eye
to randomly rocking wooden panelling;
leaking,
dripping with foul-smelling
remnants of what she knew of
humanity.*

*She can place her fingers in a scar
wrung round her neck...
cold, unforgiving Iron
heated
from weeks as a
mock piece of fine jewellery.
In its place a silver chain glistens
though the collar remains
forged into her maiden mind.*

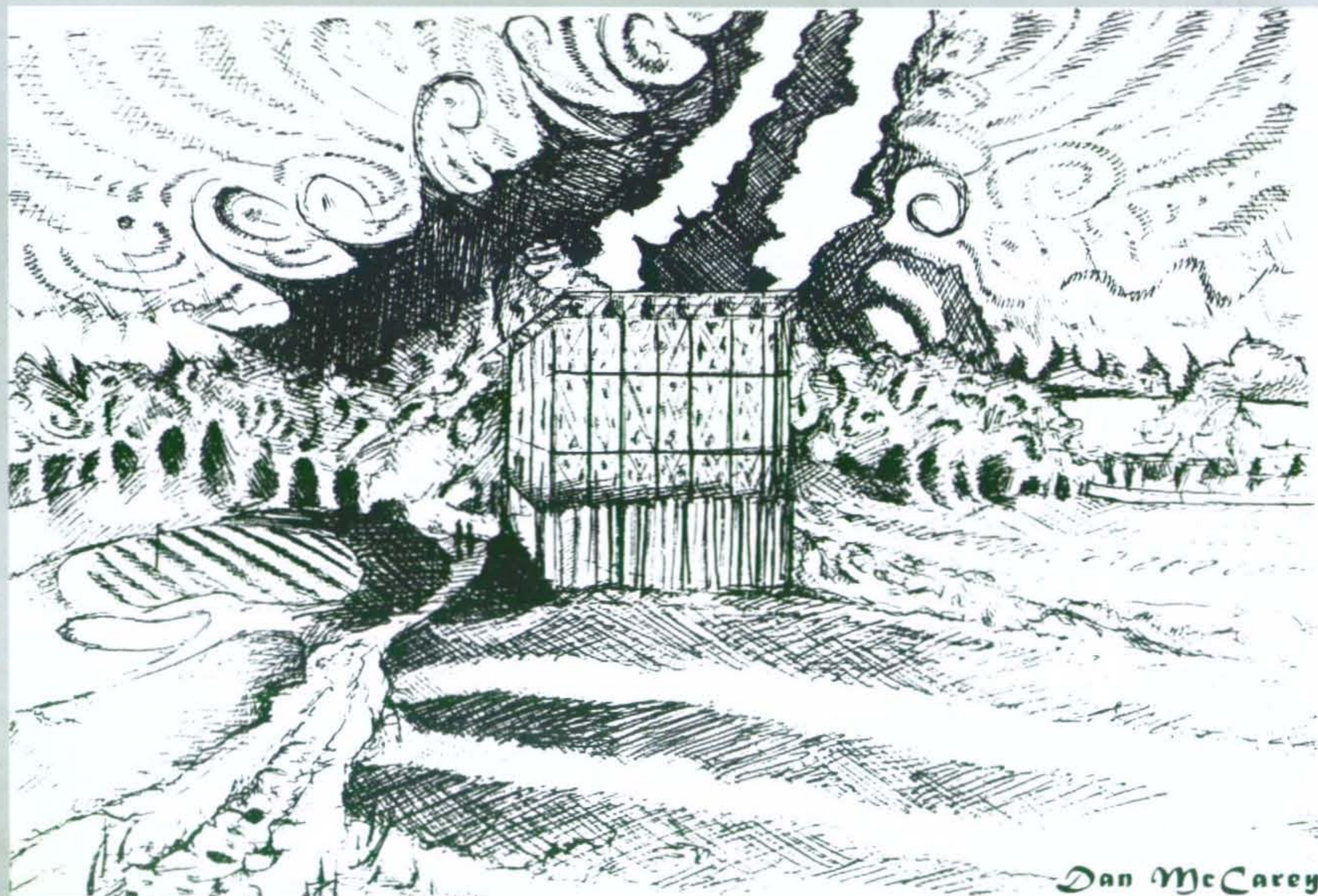
*Within her,
womanhood has been rushed.
Her belly is round;
full,
but she is still hungry.*

*Endurance is the only virtue
she clings to,
because she thinks she can hear
a great-winged bird
singing
within her womb.*

*Tears fill her
cup of suffering
a cup which she will not offer
to a child.*

*She thinks upon these things
in a pair of blue-jeans,
feeling the searing glare
of an encouraging overseer,
who feels
she has made "the right decision";
and turns her daughter's key
with her own signature,
in black ink
on white paper.*

DRU CLARK (UVI)

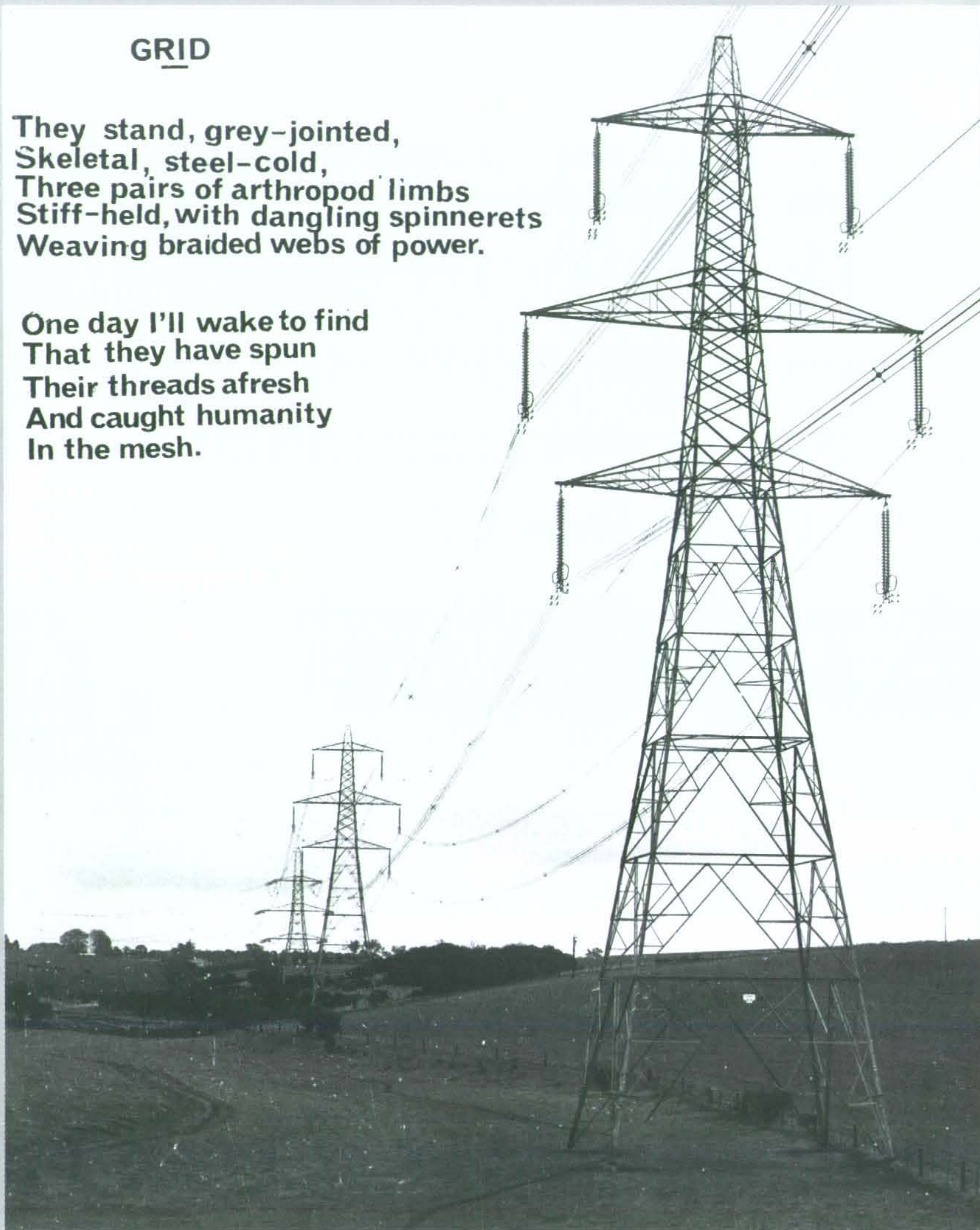


Dan McCarey

GRID

They stand, grey-jointed,
Skeletal, steel-cold,
Three pairs of arthropod limbs
Stiff-held, with dangling spinnerets
Weaving braided webs of power.

One day I'll wake to find
That they have spun
Their threads afresh
And caught humanity
In the mesh.



This little verse, if it may so be graced, entitled 'Grid', originally appeared in the 1978-79 edition of *The Grebe* (Journal of the Stowe School Natural History Society), together with the photograph, which, if memory serves me correctly, was by Alexander Guthrie (Bruce 84).

It was written in the pre-dawn chill of an iron-hard winter's morning in the late 70s. I awoke in the small hours, disturbed by an eerie nightmare in which I had dreamt of a world completely enmeshed in a giant, spherical, robotic spider's-web of silvery threads which trapped humankind on the planet. A premonition, perhaps? – for the World Wide Web/Internet was then many years in the future, and I wait with fascination to see whether it (I.T.?!) and its descendants remain our servants, or become the world-dominating masters of my fantasy.

MW

The Gavin Maxwell Essay Prize

Essays on this year's theme of "Waiting"

DINNER FOR TWO

A bold candle shimmered excitedly in the centre of the table. Light dashed across the margins of the front room and its quickness splashed shadows on the clean tablecloth, borrowed from next door. A pair of crimson napkins sat opposite each other, flanking the precise rows of cutlery lined up for the arrival. A bottle of Burgundy '96 (£7.99 Tesco's, Friday) breathed in the corner, building up to room temperature. Mozart – ever at his best – was beginning his third movement some way before the strawberries, having been carefully quietened for the sound of the doorbell.

Slight, dull strikes. Grandpa's clock, still monopolising a mantelpiece – now eight years gone, this month, I think – resumes timeless ticking after its brief cathartic chimes. The chairs, originally facing other, then across, were currently adjusted, as a compromise, to a less provocative ten-to-two position. The lighting, avoiding brash overheads or likewise appearing too dim and sordid, was now at two, lateral, 60 watts, dimmer switch at hand. The carrots: washed, dried, chopped; potatoes: scrubbed to radiance; cauliflower – or was it broccoli? – now coming to the boil for the third time. And those guinea fowl – now in danger of turning something past a crisp into next winter's firewood.

Tables; chairs; glasses and spares.

Saturday night continued. Flashes and screeches heralded the comings and goings of evening traffic. Headlights promised, and shone onwards; a torch prowled with a policeman; the corner shop propped up beggar, patiently watching. A door slammed, a siren wailed, a child bemoaned a premature bedtime. Figures hurried onwards into the falling night as winter still hung around the edges of buildings, and leaves and birds anxiously prepared for the tumble into spring. The outside world beyond the window, callously unconcerned, persisted inexorably into the future.

The dwindling flame pulled flirting moths into its cold blaze and wax began to drip onto the tablecloth from number fourteen. Mozart, finished for now, handed over to Debussy somewhat in advance of the coffee and mints. A waxy fiery scent mixed defiantly with the charred aromas wafting out of the kitchen. Those fowl were past saving now, and unlikely to break my fast from the boiled egg at breakfast. The smell became familiar with my insides as primed fluttering excitements gave way to more primal pangs of hunger. My stomach felt hollow in contrast to father's jacket, a worthy if generously good fit. He did fill out in his latter years, I remember – or was my belt tightening?

A tentative glance at the mirror showed Dad's best suit with a thirty year (hardly noticeable) head-start on its current owner. Almost excessively distinguished from the

M&S shirt to the finest old school tie (Badminton Bs, '89). Perhaps I was thinning out on top – and from behind? Yet I'm sure these black hairs I still find on the jacket aren't mine – past masters', no doubt. A quick combing ought to do the trick.

The cupboard. Junk everywhere: files, piles, photos, books, looks awful. I'm not that incontinent. And the bedroom: those walls, curtains, the bed – and what if? Oh don't be stupid!

Collapsing onto the sofa I considered an evening falling apart. Flickers and smells added to, yet only muddied my vain thoughts. An inner world which had so potently supported the rest of ongoing life throughout the week was now falling in on itself and the future was getting away. Innumerable identical tunnels appeared to lead off into the future from a present so casually crucial. The perfunctory weekend pleasures of a world outside became more and more apparent and predictable at the gradual realisation that this Saturday had also typically encroached on any possible break from reality. And thoughts replaced thoughts as time stealthily crept past the situation's stubborn inertia. Eventually I resorted to a beer from the fridge, a slice of cold pizza and a game of football.

Colour; noise; violence; people! Sounds and scenes through the television and window soon became intolerable in their mundane repetition and a raving passion sent my constricting senses reeling.

Flash! The window, next door – bastards down the local. Stew in *their* alcohol again for all I... Grandpa's '79 with dessert – still delicious, last of five, but what if she didn't? And what if she *did*?

Scrap the starter – but then the other's gone! Start with wine, room temperature – in an inferno! A drink by the fire – given ten minutes, perhaps still... The fog was up earlier, and on a Saturday night... but reason had little chance of standing on this occasion.

Burning! Fucking ducks burning; beer and pizza for all the world and burning, that wretched table cloth! A wax soaked shrine it looks like! Mrs Small's wretched white tablecloth and soot staining its unnatural cleanliness.

With a fitful boot a table and its cursed molten mess flew into an expensive bottle of wine and began sympathetic dripping on the HiFi system. A candle, relieved to be released from the vertical, smouldered nonchalantly on the carpet. Grandpa's suit lay in a disconsolate heap on the floor, his clock, firm on the mantelpiece, kept on.

It was 8:37pm, on Saturday, the ninth of April, and Roy was in the front room, waiting.

ROY CHAMBERS (UVI)
SENIOR WINNER
PHOTO: HOLLY ANSTEY

HABIT

He entered the room and was immediately aware of how cold and sterile it looked, and how bright the lights were. There was certainly no going back to his old place of residence, so he decided to make the best of a bad job. That was until he discovered that screaming got the desired effect of a more comfortable place to lie, wrapped in a blanket on his mother's lap. Testing his new-found authority he began to scream again, to see what other effects it might have, but this time he never truly stopped, it was just that people forgot how to listen.

He was peaceful for a while. Unrestricted by a need to communicate anything but the most basic physical requirement, his desires were clear and deep and total. He knew all there was to be known and felt whole. But as he grew, in what to him seemed barely enough time to turn and blink, these people – "parents" they called themselves – forced his thoughts from his head and in exchange planted the stifling idea of language. He tried to resist (autism was surmised at first), but he was fighting 100,000 years of human development, of tradition, of habit. An immediate distaste of habit grew, but was then suffocated as it transformed him into a walking, empty, now resonating vessel. But this vessel was not entirely void. It contained one thing that is common to all children of his age. He was enthusiastic.

Habit is not easily beaten, so it had him institutionalised by the age of four. "Education" it was called, and contained a mighty irony that amused those few who knew, those who were in charge. "Efficient Democracy. Unofficial Campaign Absolving The Intelligence from Our Nation". It "educated", bombarding the people with round after round of "fact" and sweeping generalisation until "thinking" became an effort, then a remote possibility, and finally the word for some foreign food that nobody eats. Enthusiasm was crushed by 14 years of "repeat after me" and "What do you mean you don't see how this is relevant to the 'real' world?". All education was relevant to the world as it conditioned you to fit your niche and be content.

He refused to fit. Throughout his school years he screamed. Somehow, left over from his knowledge as a child, a question had remained. Does the dead man's head bustle with the knowledge of everything, or does it lie empty to decay? He considered this question when he should have been "absorbing the facts" and as a result was labelled as "Future Prospects – nil". He dropped out to become whatever society would let him and for a while the square peg forced itself upon the round hole. But futile was an understatement, so again he dropped out, this time just to become. Aged 17, the time on his hands was extraordinary, so he busied himself with his question. Language and school and the world all stood between him and the answer, so once frustration had overcome the effort to either climb or move these barriers, he decided that the next logical step was to go round. If when you die you know everything, then what is the point of learning it now? A more efficient use of time would be spent in pleasure. But if the dead man knows nothing then the tragedy is immense – that all his life he had the opportunity to know everything, but died having barely noticed it at all. He knew the answer would come.

It was a matter of time, a matter of waiting. There seemed only one safe, logical solution to an impossible question. Learning as much as possible now ensured that his life would not be wasted. The question had rekindled his enthusiasm, and his quest had begun.

It started as an interest and direction in his life. He sought knowledge of all things. Not facts and generalisations created by man, but real knowledge. It was fortunate he did not know that his new aim was to undo all that had been done to him by people in his life so far, and return to the peace he knew in early childhood. The force of that injustice would have torn the corners from his peg. He learnt more, and the more he learnt, the faster he learnt it, but apart from his purpose he found it became increasingly difficult to exist apart from the all-inclusive society. Society was the only way he could support himself, and it was less than forgiving about caring for someone who didn't contribute, no matter how loud they screamed. Without employment, money and food was hard to come by. He didn't notice at first because he was too interested in what knowledge had to offer. He neglected his physical hunger and soon the signs became visible.

Not being a part of society meant that there was no one to notice him wasting. Maybe he could have done something to prevent what happened had he known a little sooner? Maybe he wouldn't have wanted to? He noticed something was wrong when he caught himself twitching his foot out of habit. Something was definitely wrong. He never did anything out of habit. He hated habit with a passion, but did not quite know why. Routine he could handle as it showed some signs of being intelligence-ruled, but habit was annoying, instinctive, animal. By that time it was far too late – serious illness had already begun. He could see where it was leading. His wait would soon be over. His question would be answered for better or for worse. This made him nervous and increasingly certain that worse was the way life ended. It had been like that so far, why should it not hold true to form? His passion for knowledge was a vicious animal that had chewed him and was now about to swallow. He hated himself for being so intent and focused as to lead to his early destruction. He hated society for not allowing him to be an accessory. He hated time for being in such a hurry. He hated life for not being forgiving and extending his ticket. But most of all he hated habit for a reason he still did not know. He was so bitter when he found his answer that he almost didn't notice. He was nervous until the very end. Had he wasted his entire life or was he now infinitely superior to the rest? As his last breath faded he felt the pressure of being human lift from his chest and the answer he had waited for since the earliest days of childhood pulled at his soul. He felt happy the answer was his. He felt sad that he was unable to pass it on. He still felt bitter that others would have to suffer, like him, while searching. He felt angry as the familiar realisation of his hatred for habit re-emerged. Habit drove the whole wretched process. It locked all but the fortunate people who could never be suited to society into its own vicious circle. But finally he felt reassured by hope in the knowledge that everyone learns of the answer eventually – no matter how long they must wait.

SIMON CREEK (V)
JUNIOR WINNER

SUPERMARKET RENDEZVOUS

Time: 12.20pm

Mission: meet ex-husband. Hand over goods: –

1 son – Arthur, 9.

2 daughters – Morgan, 6. Guinevere, 4.

Code name: 00Fresh

Location: Frozen food section, Tesco's, Buckingham.

Ouch, some little brat has just stepped on my left foot...

There is no need to waste time wondering why my ex-husband chose to collect the children from this particular spot. The answer is simple: my dreaded ex is, without a doubt, the spawn of Satan (mother-in-law), the bosom friend of Beelzebub and Lucifer's left hand man. Not only that, but he is also v. arrogant, v. rude, v. pig-headed (extremely good looking), vindictive and horribly intelligent. As a result, the bastard has made evil use of the fact that I am very much aware of cold, detest supermarkets and condemn frozen food.

However, I am coping. He should be here soon.

Ooops. I appear to have knocked that lovely little boy (see above) into one of those delightful freezers. I also seem to have lost my children to the chocolate section.

Ooh, have just spied a box of meatballs. No, No, NO – I condemn frozen food.

How embarrassing, another irritating infant has just announced to everybody present (1 man with large, bushy beard, 2 pregnant – or v. fat – women, 1 person of questionable gender and 3 children complete with Adidas shell-suits and pixie boots) that my bra-strap is hanging off my right shoulder and looks like it needs a scrub.

Am now hiding, red-face in nearest freezer and planning revenge on self-same sprog.

Time: 12.33pm

Mission: as before

Oh, and insist ex-husband purchases a box of Kellogg's Cornflakes as am now hungry.

Code name: 00Fresh

Location: am now migrating to pet-food section. Guinevere has craving for Bonios and Pedigree Chum.

Incidentally, where is that beastly man? He demanded most pedantically that meeting-time be 12.15pm exactly. Now 12.34pm. Am pissed off.

I wonder how many calories there are in a tin of Pedigree Chum? Have just seen a trolley containing my three children shoot past the pet-food aisle.

Oh, and a Security Guard running behind.

No, he's fallen over.

Quite good-looking, actually.

Told Trevor (Security Guard) how irresponsible I felt it was of parents to allow children to behave in such a manner. Was then invited into Trevor's "Little Love-nest" for coffee and the lecherous beast stuck his hand up my skirt when I bent over to retrieve a skittle. Therefore punched "Please call me Trev" in jaw, stole his keys and locked him in "Little Love-nest".

Have returned to pet-food aisle.

Time: 12.44pm

Mission: as before, except want ex to join Trev in

"Little Love-nest"

Code name: 00 beginning to go off.

Location: Next to CD selection.

Am disgusted. No. 1 in Tesco's top chart albums is none other than Chesney Hawke's "Tunes of Summer Love", closely followed by "Themes while you fondle" compiled and selected by Norbert Stringer.

I think the ex-husband might benefit from purchasing the latter (he needs some inspiration). Might suggest it.

A crusty old gent is now placing "Themes while you fondle" compiled and selected by Norbert Stringer into his shopping trolley.

There is a small girl eyeing me strangely.

A young mother is eyeing me strangely.

The crusty old gent is eyeing me strangely.

Oh God, what have I done now? Oh no, oh no, I can't take this; my beige pregnancy support tights (all I could find in my drawer) have descended from their official position over my legs and bottom and are now nestling around my ankles; so that all can see my stubbly, white legs.

The time is 12.49pm and my ex-husband is now over half an hour late.

I am so angry. Have a hot date and the ex has left me in a supermarket with tights around my ankles, chronic chilblains and no baby-sitter for the children. (Chantal, the usual, is also out on "hot date" with Gavin, son of the local ex-con.)

On the other hand, have no money and definitely remember the ex-husband's most attractive feature: the credit card. My relationship with ex's credit card was far more intimate than that with ex.

Time: 12.54pm

Mission: kill ex-husband and steal credit card. (and huge, stacked stereo system, because I like it)

Code name: Definitely stale.

Location: on the way to the exit (avoiding the Security Guard who has escaped from "Little Love-nest")

Uh oh, been spotted.

Have found children entertaining themselves by kicking the Budgie the Helicopter Ride, stationed outside main entrance.

Mother will have to baby sit. Or perhaps not.

Am now witnessing the most enjoyable scene of my entire career as a divorcee. My ex-husband, standing in the middle of Tesco's car park, naked except for a hat, my hat, in the appropriate place, shouting abuse at a fast-retreating sports car, containing 1 semi-blonde, semi-silicon bimbo and a pair of fluffy dice.

There is only one path for my life to take now.

Time: 1.00pm

Mission: Completed.

Description of Mission: advanced towards the ex (whose name, by the way, is irrelevant – but it's Piers anyway).

Retrieved hat which have missed for a long time.

Deposited children and wished Piers a good day.

Stole his credit card.

FRANCES MORLEY-FLETCHER (LVI)

ARE YOU WAITING FOR ANYTHING?

Parents, are you waiting for that little cherub to bless your nice clean house? Well, I think you may need a bit of a warm up before he or she comes to put stains on your walls and stick biscuits in your video machine.

To begin with I think the mother should spend a bit of time with a big cushion down her front and, after nine months, replace it with something half the size. Then the father should go to the local shop and organise all of his pay to be sent straight to the shop, as this is where money will go anyway. He can then start reading the last book he will ever be able to read.

To prepare for the nights to come, I think you should get a wet cushion and carry it around until about eight o'clock and then put it down and set your alarm for midnight. When you wake up, pick up the cushion and walk around the living room with it for about an hour. Then put the cushion down and go back to bed, get up an hour later and make a drink, as you can't get back to sleep. Then set your alarm for five o'clock, wake up and make breakfast, get used to it.

Will you be able to stand the mess your new child will leave you? To put that to the test you should dip your fingers in marmite and jam and smear them all over the sofa, then go into the garden and get your hands all grubby; then wipe them on the wall, then try to cover it up by drawing on it. Now all that is left is to get something like a sausage roll and leave it under the sofa until this time next year.

Buy yourself a new family-sized car and do the following to it:

Get an ice cream and put it in the pouch at the back of the driver's seat, then get some fruit pastilles, chew them for a bit and then spit them out on the floor and shove some down the back of the seat. Then stick something in the tape player so that it is not operational. If you really wanted it to look authentic you could then find the best thing possible for scratching your car, like a brick wall or something and scratch the paintwork on both sides of the car. Your car is now ready for use.

Another thing to do while you wait for the child to arrive is to wait outside the toilet for a quarter of an hour just before you go out, then when you do set off, walk out of the door then back in again to simulate that you forgot something. Do this a couple of times so it starts annoying you. Then while you are walking, stop at every insect, bit of rubbish or cigarette butt that you see and examine it. Shout as though you are fed up with the child and when people start giving you weird looks turn around and go back home.

Just as a minor point I think you should get into the habit of repeating what you say at least three times every time you tell anybody anything.

Then go to your supermarket with the nearest thing you can find to a young child. A goat would be perfect. Buy all your weekly groceries and pay for everything else the goat destroyed. Remember, you weren't supposed to let the goat out of your sight!!

To see how successful you will be at feeding your child, take a pumpkin, hollow it out, cut a hole in it and suspend it from the ceiling. Then swing it from side to side and try to feed it with baby food by making noises of an aeroplane and swooping the spoon from side to side. Once you have fed half the food to the pumpkin, then pour the rest of it on your lap and do your best to make as much mess as possible.

Last of all, you should learn the names of all the characters of the favourite programmes like Postman Pat and Thomas the Tank Engine, then the theme tunes, and once you know them the time you have waited will have flown by and it will almost be time to have the real thing and put all the things you have been doing into practice. If, however, you have failed to carry out any of these tasks with success, I wish you the best of luck in bringing up your child peacefully and well.

HARRY TRELAWNY (IV)

WITNESS

"I was waitin'," cried the little boy.

"Waitin' for what?" cried his mother, sharply pulling his hair. The boy's head jerked back in an attempt to stop the pain. The boy was silent and did not attempt to fight back as he had often been treated in this way.

"I dunno..." he faltered. The boy was very young and still learning to speak properly. He was blonde with red rosy cheeks, well fed, though not fat.

The policemen stood about the room waiting, wishing they could go home. The sun shone in through the window. It was an ugly room, small and poorly furnished. A dull green sofa lay along a wall facing a television, its cover stained with spilled drinks. On the floor lay a blue carpet that was turning black with filth. It was made of cheap nylon and fluffy drifts existed everywhere on its dirty, unhoovered surface.

"My bird..." sobbed the boy.

"Your bird? What bird?" said his mother, her face pinched with concentration.

"My bird, it's gone!"

The policemen looked up. "Where was your bird?" asked one of them kindly. "In the Rough?"

"Yes ... and he's not eaten, 'as he now?"

"So you didn't go into the Rough then? You stayed outside the gate? Did you?"

"Yes," voiced the boy, "I told you, I was waiting!" Now they understood. The boy did not know why the policemen were there, waiting in his front room. How could he? All he had done was go, as usual, to feed his injured pigeon. He had found it lying in a gutter a few days ago. The boy had put it into a cardboard box, and had wrapped it in old rags so it would be safe and warm. He had hidden the box in the long grass in the Rough and he had come everyday with bread and water to bring the pigeon back to full strength.

The Rough was a small area of land with trees and bushes, tall grass and ditches. It was really just waste ground that was too small to build on. It was encircled by a broken down fence and a padlocked rusty old gate. He had climbed the gate every day and gone to his secret box in the scrubby undergrowth. On one side tall ugly brick tower blocks towered above the wasteland, the occupants of which could see directly into it. On either side existed hideous modern houses with the brown wooden walls of the back yards facing this wilderness within the urban estate.

"You didn't ...er... see anyone in there then?" the policeman asked carefully.

"He told me to wait, so I did," replied the boy. The policemen looked at each other and after a moment said: "Who did? Who told you to wait?"

"The man!" exclaimed the boy, who seemed to feel more at ease and chattered on. "He told me to wait by the gate till he came out; so I did but he let my pigeon go...I saw it fly into the sky. When I tries to climb onto the gate I couldn't reach it cos it flied so high..I tried to climb the bush but I still couldn't reach, so I just waited, but the man...he...never came back."

The policemen spoke softly to the mother. "Don't worry madam, it's just as he says, we found him just waiting there. Don't you worry, he didn't see nothing... he's not been touched.

"Well, I should bloody well hope not," she said sulkily. One of the policemen bent down to the boy again. "You be glad mate! That bird has flown away. He's OK and he's well and on the mend. He's free now, isn't he? A free spirit, as you might say."

"Which is more than can be said for the other one," he murmured under his breath as he stood up again.

They all went to the door and stood talking. Some neighbours, who had been waiting around, came up and the sound of hushed voices drifted from the porch. The boy, left alone, wandered over to the television and pressed a button. A voice announced the six o'clock evening news from the BBC. "Police today discovered the body of a man hanging from a tree in the undergrowth on the Glym Estate in Enfield. Later it was identified as the body of Frederick Clough, a convicted paedophile, who had recently been released from Wandsworth prison. Information revealed that Mr. Clough had been recently hounded out of his previous home on the Rydale Estate, when a number of neighbours had discovered his true identity, and had then moved to the Glym Estate. He had only been living at Glym for a week. Foul play was not suspected.

The boy stared. A faded photo of a man had filled the screen; he pointed with his little fingers at it with a smile on his face. He turned around towards his mother:

"I was waiting!" he exclaimed, still pointing to the screen.

GEORGE BERTRAM (LVI)

LOCKED OUT IN ST PETERSBURG (a true story)

The advent of the New Year is probably one of the most widely acknowledged and accepted excuses to 'party' throughout the world. Although the cultural details may vary slightly from nation to nation, essentially the celebration involves staying up on New Year's eve to see the clock strike midnight, before either bedding down or continuing to enjoy and indulge oneself. New Year's day is normally quite quiet. My tale begins after one such celebration.

It was six am, New Year's day, and I was in St Petersburg. The 'party' was nothing exceptional, at least not for any of the reasons that a party should be exceptional, and despite our best efforts to leave, we had been remanded there until six o'clock, when, at last, we were escorted back to our hostess' apartment. Our hostess, bless her soul, had not actually been with us at the party, she had instead been at the Ministry of Sound, which had visited St Petersburg for one night as a part of their world tour. Our escort, fairly sure that she had left us at the right place, soon departed, leaving the three of us locked out of a flat, waiting for our hostess to return.

We sat, all of us very tired, outside the door to the apartment, on the stone stairwell that serviced the building, attempting to fall asleep, whilst conjecturing exactly how long it would be until our hostess returned; twenty minutes, half an hour perhaps, after all, she was coming from the other side of town. Those steps must have been the most uncomfortable steps I have ever known. They were too narrow to sit across, they were not steep enough sit back on, and they were too hard to stay in one position for any length of time. Realising that it was going to be impossible to fall asleep, we began to recount tales from the night gone by, as at this stage we were still in reasonably high spirits considering our predicament, and we were just happy for being that much closer to home. After perhaps half an hour, we ran out of stories to tell, and we began to notice our environment. It was cold, very cold. This was January in St Petersburg – it was snowing and the stairwell, although it offered some degree of shelter, was not actually heated. We had body warmth and a few overcoats between us – oh, how we longed for a radiator. Discussing the cold did not make it any warmer, and in fact, it only served to depress us, so after establishing our agreement, we were silent. It was six thirty.

The next half an hour was spent in silence, only interrupted by the occasional yawn, or the rustle of clothes as one glanced at a wrist watch, hoping that the last ten minutes had passed a little faster than before. I forget exactly what it was that I thought about – your mind wanders under such circumstances, and more often than not, your thoughts are of no relevance or consequence to your situation. I did, however, begin to wonder exactly how long our hostess was going to be returning from her night on the town.

It was still dark outside, but the stairwell was lit by a solitary bulb hanging, rather precariously, from an uncovered fitting on the ceiling. The electricians of this building were not particularly inspiring; there was what

appeared to be a fuse box in one corner, decorated with only a few bare-ended copper wires, poised in the air as though awaiting an electrician to come and finish the job. The cobwebs were a testimony to the length of his absence. The walls had been painted, once, but it was now impossible to determine what colour they were supposed to be because what little paint remained had been camouflaged by a thick layer of grey dirt. The only aesthetic advantage of this was that it was now nearly impossible to identify the difference between what was still painted, and what was not. The ceiling, apart from the bulb, and a few more cobwebs was bare. It was now seven o'clock.

On the landing where we waited there were two more apartment entrances other than the one that we wanted. All three of them had heavy metal doors that would have been better suited to a bank vault and the four reinforced key holes ruled out the possibility of breaking in. We sat, and we waited. Having been waiting for an hour, agitation set in, like hypothermia does if you are out in the cold for too long, and at the same time we became rather annoyed, after all, this was not a particularly enjoyable way to spend the early hours of your New Year's day. The conversation began again, all of us expressing our selfish concern for the welfare of our hostess, and our desire to get into a bed. All we wanted was to be warm and to be asleep; it didn't seem like too much to ask for, but as I thought that, I began to realise what it must be like to be homeless, without even the stairwell for protection. All said, this was little consolation, and I continued to long for the hostess' return.

Our conversation began to once again deteriorate, this time not for lack of ideas, but for lack of energy, and after failing to understand a few incoherent grunts, I decided it was better to keep my thoughts to myself. I tried to think of England, I tried to think of summer and saunas, I even tried to think of Stowe, but it just wouldn't work; I could not escape the very cold reality that was a St Petersburg stairwell. It was seven thirty. At seven thirty, something happened. We heard movement, and the sound of voices, and for a moment we thought the ordeal might be at an end. We were wrong. Out of the neighbouring apartment emerged two men and a woman, all approximately thirty-five years old (it was difficult to tell as they were enshrouded trench coats, scarves and furry hats, obviously prepared to face the blizzard outside). Thinking that they might have a key for their neighbour's apartment we attempted to ask them. Between us we spoke four languages, but unfortunately not Russian. They on the other hand only spoke Russian. They had also just emerged from a party even more drawn out than our own, and hence were unable to understand our incredibly imaginative miming. They left, and we still waited. The episode, despite raising and then dashing our hopes, had offered us some entertainment, it had woken us, and we now had something new to talk about. About five minutes later the door opened again, but this time, two identical old ladies, who appeared to share one set of teeth between them, came out, screaming away in their

mother tongue. At first we thought that they might be talking to us, as they didn't seem to be talking to each other, and we were a little nervous as they seemed decidedly angry. When suddenly they hurled a cat out of the door we understood; we understood the reason for their temper, and we understood the reason for the stench. This cat, which soon scurried off out of site, was using the stairwell as a 'garden', a garden which never experienced the cleansing action of the rain, and our noses were abruptly awakened with the nauseating realisation of what was going on. We talked, we waited, and we tried to ignore the smell.

When the group that we had seen depart a little earlier returned, we realised that they had not been going home, instead the 'six-packs' that they carried told us that they had merely popped out to stock up on beer. This made us laugh, and such short-lived moments of levity offered a much-appreciated relief from the grim reality of our predicament. By eight thirty we had all become quite worried, and the realisation hit us of exactly just how helpless we were. We didn't know where in the city we were, we didn't have access to a telephone, and even if we did, we didn't have any telephone numbers, it seemed that nobody in St Petersburg spoke English (or any language other than Russian), and the only point of reference that we had was a youth centre that was shut because it was New Year's day. We were totally isolated. Had we been able to do anything to improve our situation we would have, but as hard as we tried there seemed nothing that we could do. Occasionally we would hear the main door of the apartment block opening, and each time we would hope that this time it was our hostess arriving, and each time we were disappointed. Resigned to a fate of indefinite waiting, we desperately tried to suppress our distress, and proceeded to amuse ourselves.

Nine o'clock came and went, slowly, and still our hostess had not appeared. Opposed to the idea of helplessness, we continued trying to think of a way out of our situation. We considered trying to retrace our steps back to where the party had taken place, in the hope that perhaps there would be someone there who could help us, but we soon decided that the risk of getting lost was far too great. The only other option seemed to try and get access to a telephone. Praying for a random gesture of goodwill, we began knocking on people's doors, miming a telephone with one hand, and offering them the roubles we had with the other. Inevitably there was a delay between ringing the doorbell and seeing a face, as all the latches, locks, and time switches had to be painstakingly released before the doors could be opened. After all that effort, our performances were usually met with a sharply spoken "Niet!" and the doors were closed considerably faster than they had been opened. This routine was repeated six times, until, much to our surprise we were allowed in by a solitary old lady who took us straight to her telephone. We had decided to ring England from where we would pick up the Russian telephone numbers that we should have had on us in the first place. In England, one takes for granted how easy it is to make a telephone call; we needed the international dialling codes. We managed to explain to this kind-hearted old lady that we needed a Yellow Pages, which she duly pro-

duced, but on eventually discovering the code, we then discovered that the lines were engaged. Our situation was now becoming increasingly desperate; only one thing for it – call the Consulate. The number for the British Consulate was far easier to find, but all we got was a recorded message. Not despairing, we decided to ring the Embassy in Moscow – surely that would stay open? The Embassy too was shut and would not be opening for a few days. Suppressing the sudden rush of patriotism that one inevitably feels on discovering that your Foreign Service simply shuts on public holidays, we thanked the old lady, and resumed our positions on the stairwell. Not only were we now feeling totally isolated, but abandoned as well; all of a sudden the word nadir began to assume new connotations.

Although unsuccessful, our attempts at telephoning had much helped time pass, and it was now ten o'clock – we had been waiting on the steps for four hours! Feeling hungry and thirsty we decided, as it had recently become light and the snowing had stopped, to go in search of provisions. Carefully noting any turns we took we made our way to a newsagent, where we bought what we thought would suffice, if correctly rationed, until the nightfall. On leaving the shop we met the only English speaking Russian we had seen for what seemed like days. We asked him how we could call England. It wasn't good; first we had to buy a phonecard, but there weren't any shops nearby that sold phonecards, so we would need to take a taxi, then we would need to take another taxi to an international phonebooth from which we might be able to get through. It all seemed too much, and despite our desire to make things better, our complete ignorance of the Russian language convinced us that it would be better to resume our positions on the steps, and wait.

As we walked through the courtyard to the apartment block we were mentally preparing ourselves for the psychological ordeal of indefinite waiting, a formidable task at the best of times, nearly unbearable under our circumstances. We trudged through the snow, eyes turned downward, surveying the slush all around us, and we only looked up at the building out of curiosity; never for one moment did I imagine that we would see evidence of our hostess' return. A light was on, and it did look as though it could have been her apartment, but by now we were too used to disappointment to even dare hope that it was true. As we stepped back into the apartment building once more, the stench hit us like a Baltic wind, only this time it seemed much worse than before. We made our way back up to the appropriate landing, and out of habit as much as anything else, rang the doorbell. Silence. I wanted to cry. Then, a faint rustle, and the sound of a girl laughing – I couldn't believe it, in a matter of seconds the waiting was going to be over. The clock had been stopped after four and a half long hours! When she opened the door, all the anger that I had thought I would feel disappeared, all the responses that I had rehearsed seemed useless; I was just so happy to be inside at last. I didn't care what she had to say; she didn't seem very apologetic anyway, and as I was introduced to the third boyfriend I had met in four days, I just smiled because I knew it was over.

JEROME STARKEY (LVI)

WAITING

My stomach tightens, I feel fretful and uneasy but quickly the business side of my brain takes over and I'm thrust back into the cold harsh reality that must confront me. I face up to the inevitable, and try to steady my raging nerves. Taking a deep breath I stride forward and open the door of the oppressive post-war building that will always hold repellent memories.

As the door glides forward in front of me my nostrils are pounded by that all too familiar smell that plagues such institutions – a noxious cross between detergent and air freshener bringing to my mind the abhorrent and confused memories of childhood, when a trip to the doctors represented a Pandora's box of displeasure and pain, where silver-haired old gentlemen thrust circles of cold steel against my chest and then tricked me with a sugar cube whilst they inflicted their necessary pain. I look up and the receptionist mutters some greeting, but my mind is preoccupied with the unpleasant thoughts of my youth and my only reply is an anxious half grin.

I walk through the jungle of half-dead and synthetic house plants to the waiting room. Here another familiar sight greets me, the rows of chairs. They stand fast as always, as if some sort of army, although instead of an army's monotonously high standard of dress, the chairs are more like a catalogue of furniture failures from every era. A history of chintz and beige seating. And like an army fresh from the scene of war each chair in turn bares its scars and wounds. It makes me think that they're almost a caricature of the people who sit in them. I survey them once more and decide to choose the one in the corner as it bares the least scars.

Bored and on edge I decide to wallow in my self-pity like a hurt dog cowering in the corner of its kennel. I stare up at the dust-covered wall clock, there's ten minutes until my appointment. My heart sinks as if I have been sentenced to a life-time of penal servitude. Looking down, I check my watch, prompted by a mind that is busy creating wild fantasies that maybe, hopefully, the wall clock is slow. But of course it is not. I can't stand to be here any longer. I feel the waiting is going to kill me. My hands are moving restlessly about my body as if they have no place to go and my heart is pounding at what seems to be an ever-increasing rate. When will it stop? Maybe it won't; maybe it will stop altogether. Oh my god, what's happening! Yet again that business side of my mind takes over and I breathe deeply that noxious, intoxicating air into my lungs and stare yet again at that familiar wall clock. Finally I have become a little more relaxed and almost feel like this might not be as horrific as I first thought. It's then I hear it – an incredible intense wailing. Fire! I think to myself. It's the perfect excuse that my mind has been searching for. What better to stop the dreaded meeting with the men in the white coats than a fire? But no. From my left hand side I see the silhouette of a demented five year old breaking out from behind the foliage of the fake house plants, clutching a toy fire engine. My intense disappointment turns to an even more intense anger and I have to restrain myself from sharply rebuking him. Once more I'm anxious and it's getting worse. I look around in the pursuit of something to occupy my mind.

In front of me there is a large coffee table. On it lies a library of magazines, a veritable cornucopia of back issues and pictorials. Randomly I grasp one of the less thumbed editions prompted by some deep sub-conscious act of snobbery, not wanting to read one of the more enjoyed copies. However, I get no further than the front page as the headlines concerning women's health and pasta dishes that can be 'made in minutes' fail to inspire. I sigh. Time for a time check I decide, and again I stare at that stark, cold wall clock. Little time has passed and I idly gaze around the room at the chairs and the people who occupy them. Opposite me sits an elderly lady. She's almost motionless and stares blankly at the ground in front of her through a pair of thick-rimmed national health spectacles. Her face is wrinkled and gnarled like the bark of a century's old tree. I think of what scenes she must have seen and what hardships she must have endured, born into a different era and now, body failing, she struggles on into the next, alone. Next to her there is a heavily pregnant young woman who is fresh with the glow of motherhood, and inside the huge bulge that she encompasses, a life not yet launched. How strange this place is, a place that is filled with the two extremities of human life that sit together and wait for the same inevitable end.

"Mr. Jones, doctor is ready for you now"

TOM FURSE-ROBERTS (V)

Moods
by Anna Warburton

*Shadows,
Water Droplets and
Henry Leon*
by Tom Kemble



GUY SCOTT'S ART REVIEW

At the Speech Day Exhibition we saw some of the most successful AEB 'Still Life' paintings for a number of years, as the subject of "reflective metallic surfaces" allowed all the candidates to excel. In the other studios the Cambridge board students, who tend to be going on to Art School or University to read Art or Architecture, exhibited some very individual work and this board certainly allows them to be more experimental.

Both types of examination have their place in the Art School and it is a pity that the AEB (Art plus Art History) will be axed in the "post-Dearing" changes to our exam system. These changes at national level have also created problems in Art History where they are constantly trying to dilute the strong academic and research elements of this wonderful subject.

This year has seen very successful Art History trips to Florence, Venice, St. Petersburg and Paris, led by KM and CCR, and we are delighted that the latter joined the staff full-time in September. He will establish a new department of Art History, but with still very strong links to the Art School and the History Department.

It was very encouraging for us to be named in a national newspaper survey as a 'centre of excellence' and one of the top Art Schools in the country. Possibly one criterion of suc-

cess is the number of students who gain admission to the top art schools in the country at tertiary education level. This year we have been very successful in gaining places in higher education, with the addition of two students applying for architecture degrees after a gap year of travel.

As stated elsewhere, I was invited at the end of term to travel to China to talk to teachers and students about our methods in art, design and creative work generally. Their curriculum requirements do not allow the same levels of excellence, as they have to study nine subjects throughout their time at school. But they were very excited and impressed by the work we showed them and hopefully, in the future, Chinese students and teachers will come to Stowe. There is no doubt that they are very keen to develop this area of the curriculum as they can see it as a major influence in the future on product design and architecture.

I retire at the end of this year, so I hope my final year will be the best so far. As I mentioned in a previous issue of *The Stoic*, I am planning to write an article on all the previous art masters at Stowe since 1923, so if any Old Stoics have interesting memories, photographs etc. I would be delighted to receive them.

One of the elements of the Duke of Edinburgh's Award is the development of skills. One of the skills areas in which Stoics have been producing some exceptional work is in Creative Textiles. Stoics have learnt and used many intricate skills including: tie dying, silk painting, transfer printing, photocopy image, weaving, appliqué and machining techniques. Some of the work produced formed part of a display held at the County Award Ceremony. The products included cushions, punchbags, drapes and waistcoats. The photograph gives some idea of the variety of work produced.





Vanessa Larsen



Charlie Bingham



Dominique Dumaresq

Dominique Dumaresq





Verity Scott



Verity Scott



Speech Day Exhibition

Emma Nicholas



Dominic Taylor

Charlie Bingham





Antonia Stocker

Margherita zu Hohenlohe





Victoria Keegan



SIMON ALPER
AWARD

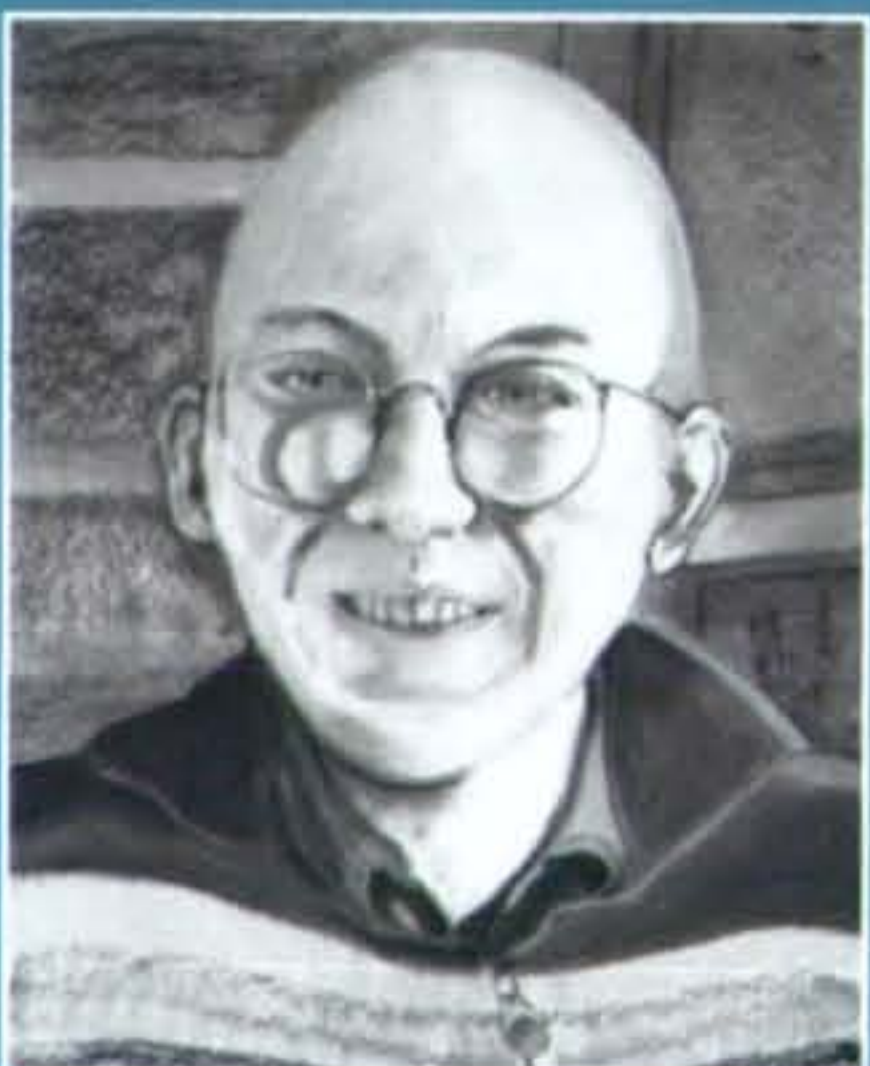
Simon Alper
Print Award
Winners
Top left:
Rowena
Birkett-Jones
Bottom left
Verity Scott



Rowena Birkett-Jones



SIMON ALPER
AWARD

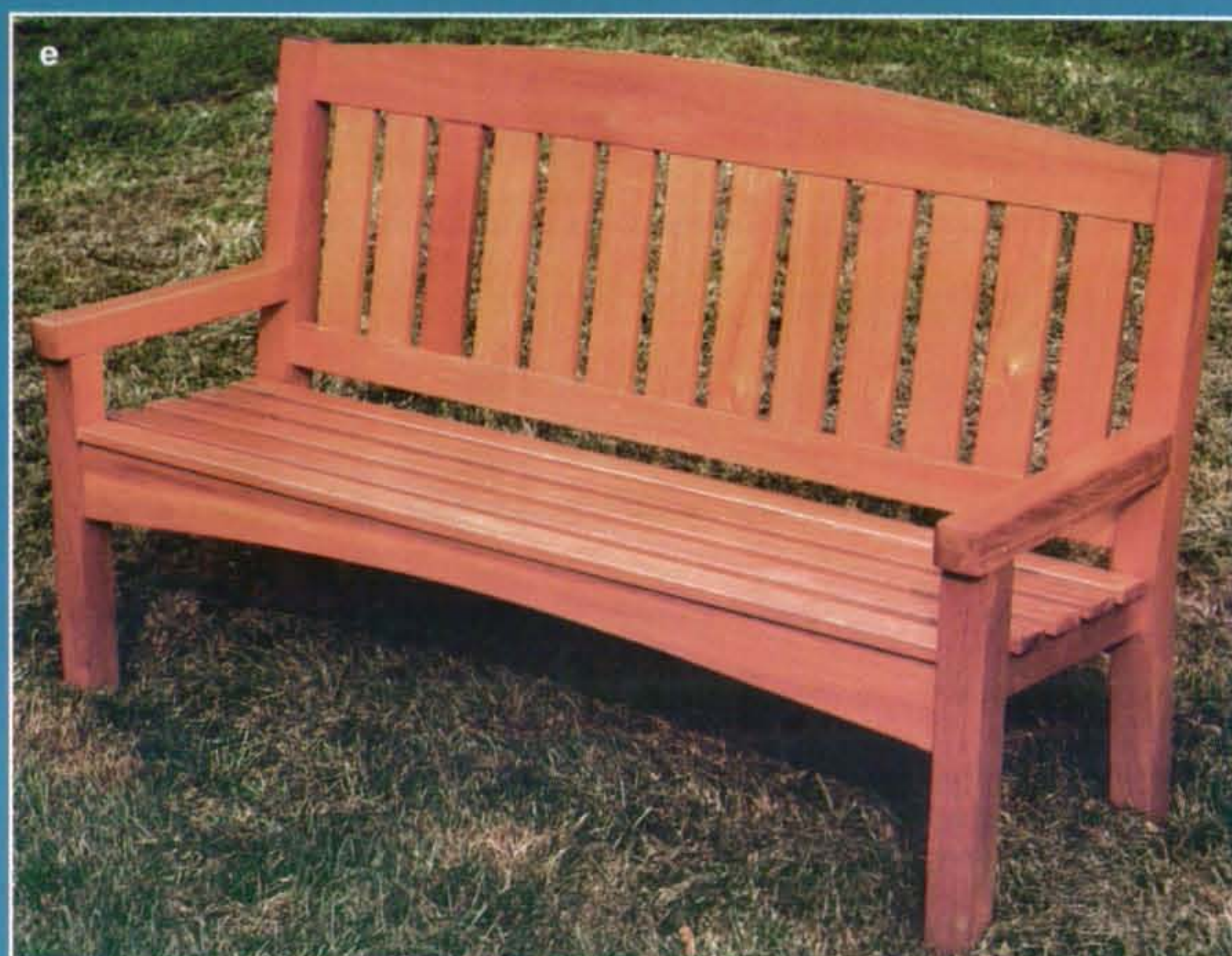
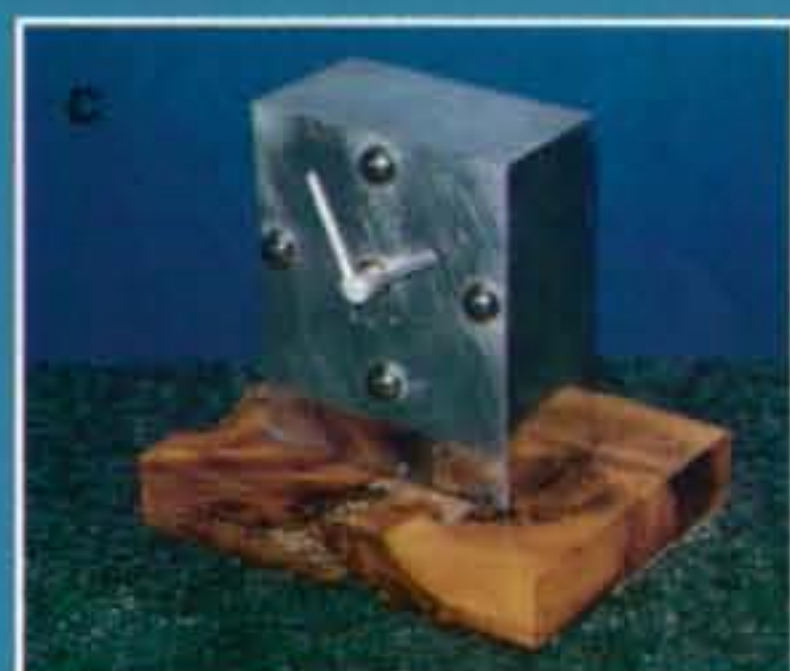


Mark Wellington on the Year's DESIGN PROJECTS

The Speech Day exhibition provided an excellent opportunity to appreciate the results of a great deal of hard work; much of it needed a considerable amount of patience and expertise over a two year period. Throughout the exhibition there was evidence of commendable results.

The Worsley Prize was awarded to Charles Bingham. He tackled quite a popular problem and came up with a true design solution. He produced a 'Flat Packed' hifi stand to be sold by mail order companies, which was also ergonomically designed for ease of use. The Friends of Stowe Prize for Design in Wood was presented to Dominic Taylor for his double bed that neatly folds away into the floor and incorporates many varied constructional aspects. The Andrew McAlpine Prize for Technical Graphics was awarded to Dominique Dumaresq for the drawings he produced when designing his indoor fountain. This was to provide a centre piece for a modern room. Kristjan Byfield was awarded the John Holland Prize for Design in Metal. His project was to design and make a conversion kit to transform a two-wheel scooter into a three-wheel beach buggy. The Lower School Design Prize was awarded to James Pegrum for his computer work-station. Bertie Marsh was also highly commended for his garden bench.

All of the exhibits showed a galaxy of talent. The quality of the objects was very high indeed and they had obviously been produced with skill and care. It was a great pleasure to see so many well-made things which Stoics had produced for themselves.



GCSE Coursework

- a. Thomas Furse-Roberts – CONFERENCE CHAIR
- b. Jack Mann – GUN CASE
- c. Thomas Furse-Roberts – ALUMINIUM AND YEW CLOCK
- d. Mark Ollard – CANDLE CENTREPIECE
- e. Bertie Marsh – GARDEN BENCH



A-level Coursework
 a. Dominic Taylor – DOUBLE BED THAT FOLDS AWAY BENEATH THE FLOOR
 b. Dominique Dumaresq – INDOOR FOUNTAIN
 c. Harry Granville – NON-FREEZING HORSE TROUGH
 d. William Morley – PINE SOFA-BED
 e. Mike Hyslop – FLAT-PACK CARDBOARD SOFA FOR STUDENTS
 f. Hamish Gordon-Lennox – HI-TECH COMPUTER WORKDESK
 g. Richard Prentice – WORKING WELL (Brick surround in garden)





A-level Coursework

- h. William Keeler – EXTENDING BACK BOX FOR TRACTOR
- i. Tim Pearce – MAHOGANY TABLE TO SUPPORT A SIX FOOT SNOOKER TABLE
- j. Jonathan Legge – GARDEN BRIDGE
- k. Thomas Buxton – ARTICULATED OARS FOR A FLOAT TUBE
- l. Charles Bingham – FLAT-PACK HI-FI STAND
- m. Kristjan Byfield – 3 WHEEL CONVERSION KIT FOR SCOOTER





A-level Theatre Studies Set Design for *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, by Verity Scott.



Guy Scott, Director of Art, writes of his recent experiences of a visit to Suzhou

LETTER FROM CHINA

Imagine a montage made up of a Milton Keynes Building site, the backstreets from the most recent James Bond movie (the one with the motorbike) and figures bent double working with a water buffalo in the flooded rice fields - all within a ten minute taxi ride, and you have China.

Into this amazing contradiction of images try to put Suzhou International Foreign Language School. Started on a green field site three years ago, it now has one thousand children from six to eighteen, all boarders, living in an extraordinary Chinese Disney-style campus, which is being developed rapidly to accommodate two thousand children by the millennium.

This vast school is the brain child of Dr. Steve Liang, Chinese architect, educator and businessman, who has already forged links with schools in Australia, Canada, Japan and England through Buckingham University, Stowe and the Dragon School.

My first contact with Steve Liang was when DWJ came into the Art School and introduced a very pleasant, articulate Chinese gentleman to me and, as usual, we gave him the



The 'Union Jack' to welcome me on my arrival



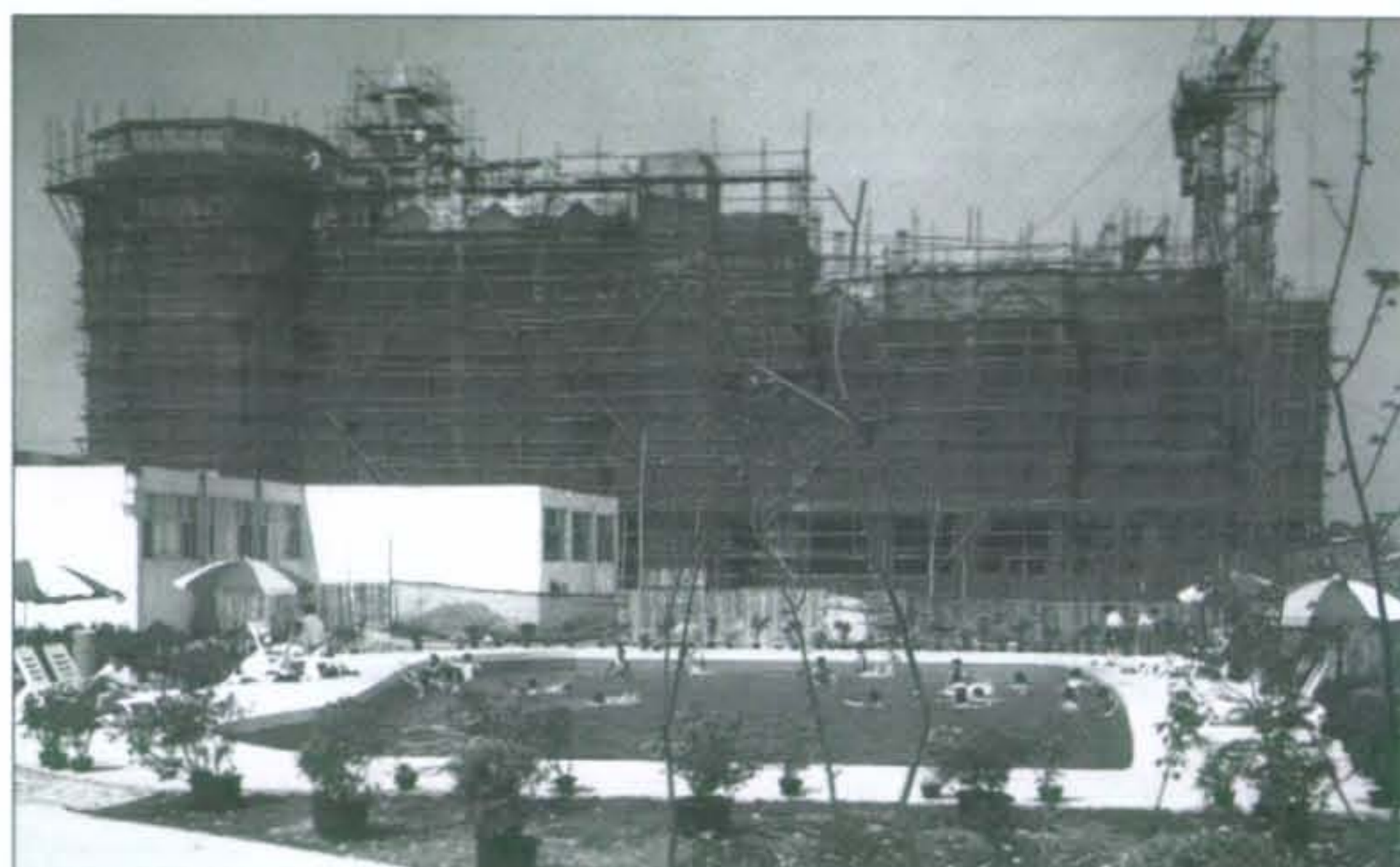
Prospective parents coming to The Suzhou International Foreign Language School on a Saturday morning



The gardens and lakes surrounding the school



The half-completed new junior school at SIFLS which will accommodate another 800 children. Swimming pool in foreground.



grand tour, emphasising the breadth and creativity of the work done at school. I thought no more of it until DWJ said that Dr. Liang was very keen to establish a link with Stowe, especially in the Creative Arts, and that I might be asked to go to his school, together with DSB, who had established some 'pen pal' contacts with the children at Suzhou.

I still thought, as we entered the busy examination term, that everything was in the future. I had the injections, got the visa, bought some US dollars and suddenly found myself walking up the very impressive entrance to SIFLS to be met by the Union Jack flown in my honour and 30° C humidity!

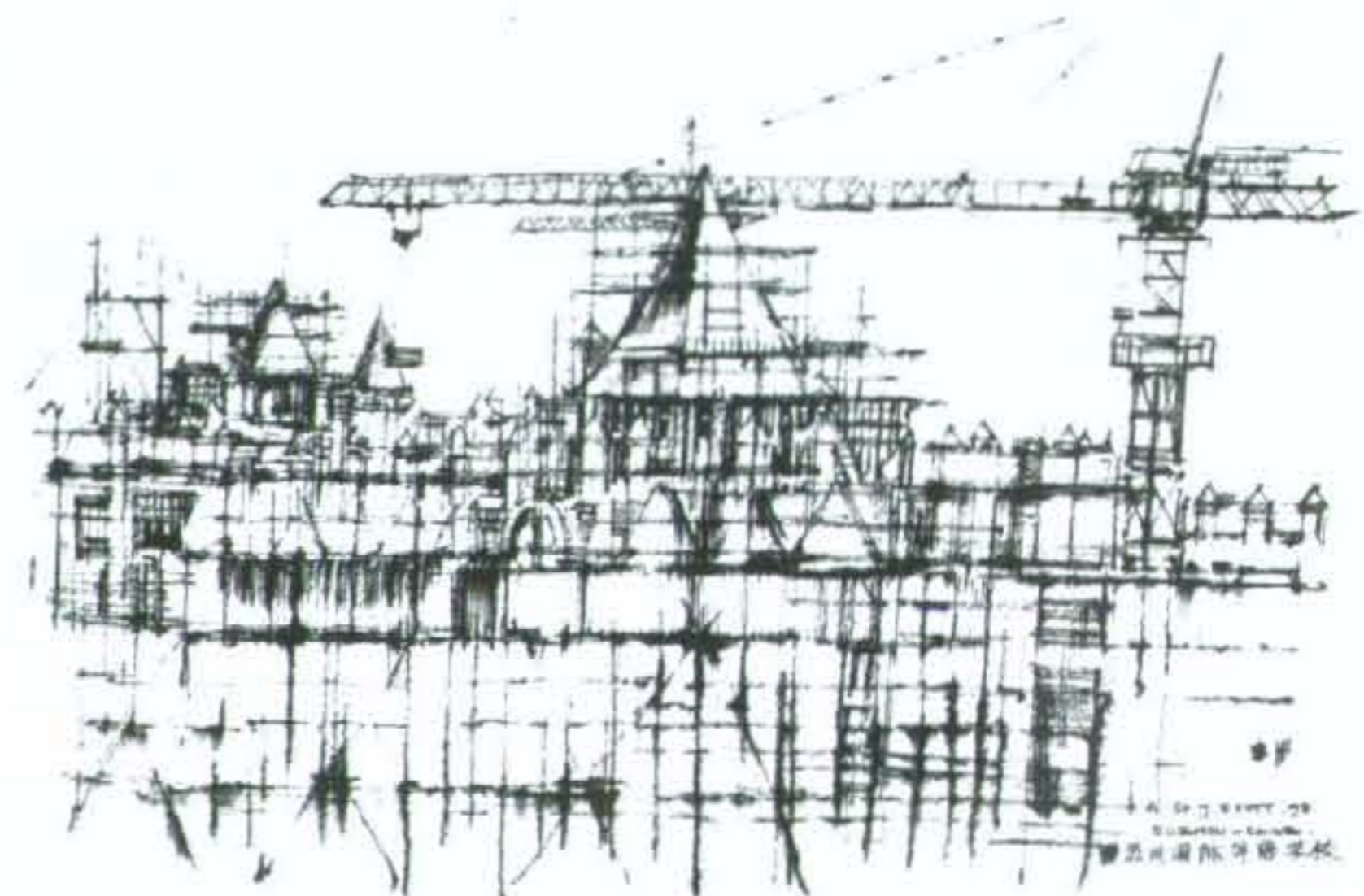
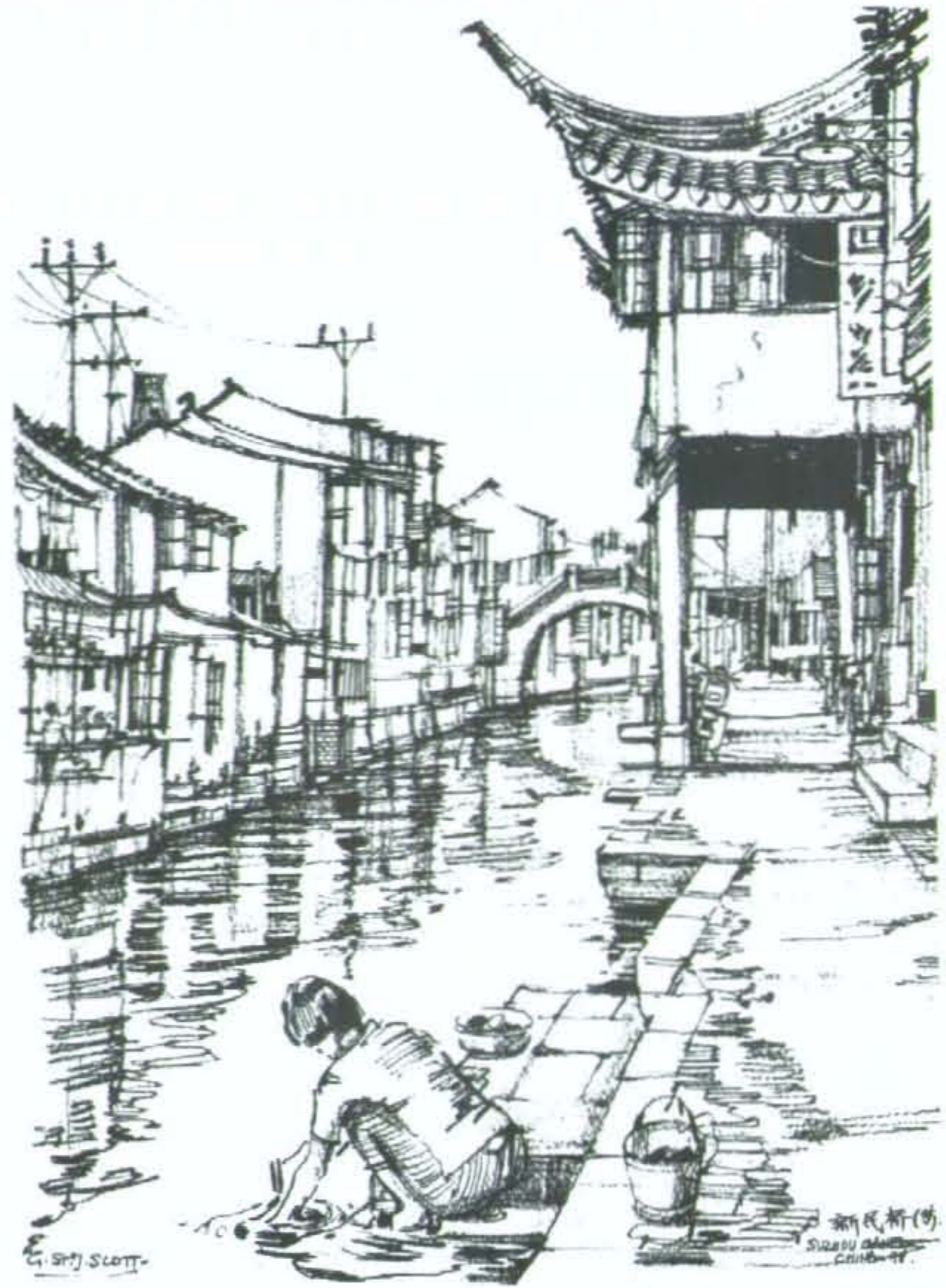
It is difficult to know where to start describing SIFLS as the physical campus is vast, just like China (1.2bn people). All the children are dressed in the same yellow T shirts with logo, shorts or tracksuit bottoms. They are bright, lively, happy, well fed and because this is a fee paying school, come from the wealthy side of the track. On Saturday morning, one only has to see the line of BMWs and Japanese limos and the clothes of the prospective parents to know that you have to be wealthy to send your only child to SIFLS. The new market economy in China is certainly generating a very rapid expansion and its wake is generating wealth.

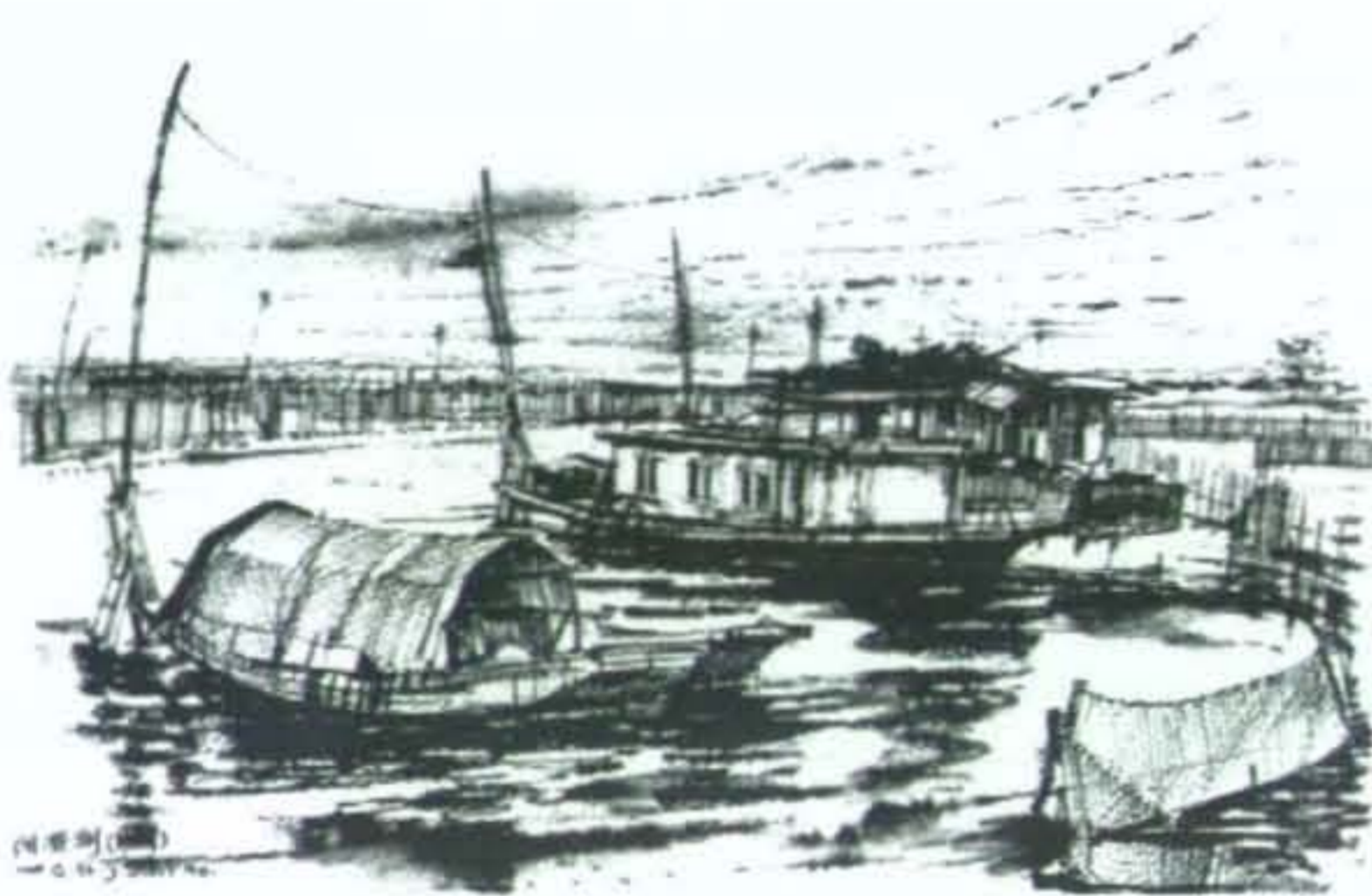
But I must not give the impression of being cynical because I am not. When one sees the brand new dance studio, a Music School with twelve practice rooms and an Art Department that boasts a large ceramic area, drawing and painting studios, new rooms for woodwork, electronics, dressmaking and photography, you know they have done their homework and are on the brink of a very exciting educational development.

I was fortunate enough to be invited to stay at Steve Liang's impressive house on the edge of the campus, next to a large, natural lake which is a major feature of the site, as are instant gardens, streams, bridges and play areas. I say 'instant' as the school bought a complete nursery plantation and transferred 250,000 mature trees and shrubs onto the site and these are already becoming well established. Alas, the mosquitoes see the lake and the ornamental ponds as Heaven and I got severely eaten until the rains began a few days into my visit.

My main objective was to advise and practically teach their art teachers and the children what we do in the Art School at Stowe. With this aim in mind, I took slides and actual work to Suzhou and they were very impressed. But I almost felt that I had come too early, as our methods and philosophy have been developed over many years and our ever changing visual environment created at Stowe was difficult to suggest to their teachers when all their rooms were clean and empty and the only work completed in felt pen. Hopefully they will see the value of bringing in old carts, bamboo baskets, amazing local fruit, classical paper dragons and beautifully decorated masks, as their own local environment was so rich in visual and cultural images. I hope they will have the confidence to collect these things to draw and paint and develop their own style of working. Possibly in the future we will welcome a Chinese art teacher to Stowe and imagine the conversation between him or her and KM (we would need an interpreter for both of them!)

I was fortunate to have a student as my interpreter, who had given up the first part of her holidays to improve her English, such is the commitment of many of these students. She wished to be a lawyer and I am sure she will be successful as they have a very strong work ethic, getting up at





6.30am, working a full day as well as completing prep in the evening. All the pupils from 6 to 18 have end-of-year exams which they all take very seriously.

But enough of the work side of the trip, as I also had the opportunity to do some sightseeing and some drawing. On my first day I visited one of the very famous gardens in Suzhou, called the Garden of the Humble Administrator, created in 1700. It had so many parallels with the philosophy of the Stowe Gardens.

Of all the images I saw, three places come to mind as they were so different. On the first Sunday (it didn't really matter that it was a Sunday as they work 11 days and then have 4 days off) I was taken to Tai Lake which is vast, to draw boats. The journey took about one and a half hours and the whole art department, plus one of the PE staff who was born near the lake, came with me. At the edge of the village, we were met by two of the village elders, as I was deemed to be an Honoured English Boat Painter, visiting their humble village. They first took me out for lunch, which lasted two hours with endless dishes, including eels and complete frogs (minus heads) which I managed to avoid without offence, the final dish being a large fish just caught in the lake. When I was eventually taken to the harbour, it was a painter's dream, full of old Chinese fishing boats and large pirate-like junks moored in the bay. I took hundreds of photographs and was then expected to produce a drawing, watched by half the village.

Another memorable day occurred a few days later when I was taken by the pottery teacher to his home town, three hours away, which is famous throughout China for its ceramics of all types, from exquisite tea-pots to vast garden urns. The highlight of this day was a visit to the pottery museum, which had examples 2,500 years old, through the Ming Dynasty to the present day. It wasn't until I saw these examples, some completed by my companion, that I realised what a famous and brilliant potter he was. He had even been asked to design a ceramic dragon as the basis for all the street lamps in this extraordinary town.

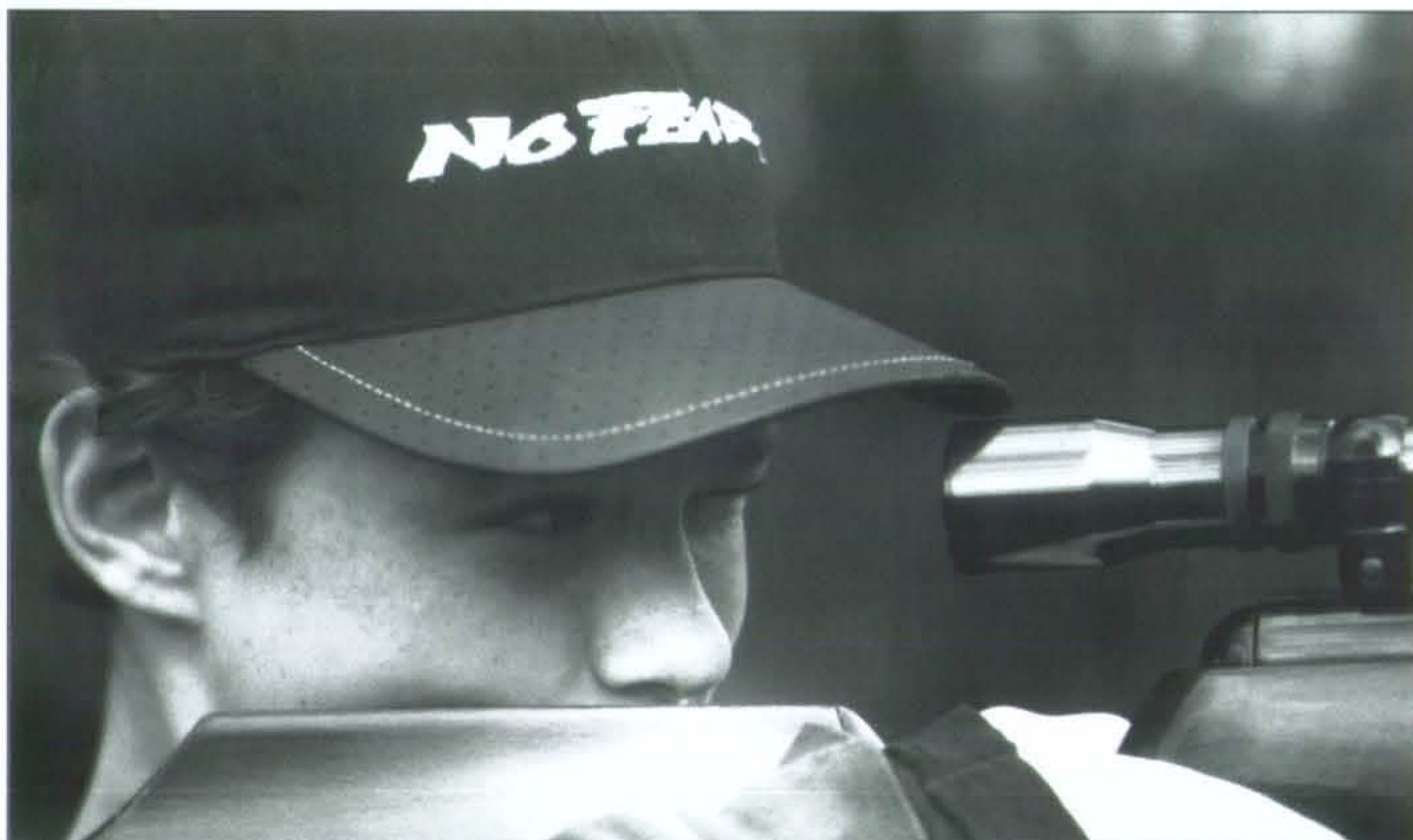
As an aside, the next town had a population the size of Australia, which is quite beyond my comprehension.

Finally, my last impression is of a visit to Suzhou Embroidery and Silk workshop. Suzhou is the centre of silk manufacture in China and here I saw work in progress that will take five ladies 3 years to complete, and some of the examples on show had taken the artists 5 years to embroider. This is the contradiction of China today, timeless patience to decorate a vast ceramic urn with countless multi-glazed dragons, or to complete an embroidery using threads so fine one could hardly see them with the naked eye; but just across the road, next to the 1,700 year old temple, frenetic building, as if they had to rebuild completely the whole of Suzhou in one week, but still using bamboo scaffolding.

I left China bemused but very glad to have experienced the amazing country with its smiling, friendly, polite people, who love children and old men with white hair and beards, so I was immediately on a winner.

Ancient Chinese proverb: In the sky one has heaven, on earth one has Suzhou. I wasn't quite so convinced when the temperature was 30° C, with solid rain plus mosquitoes.

I now look forward to David Barr's impressions when he returns from Suzhou at the end of July after attending a Summer School of Culture there.



Damian
by Henrietta Askew

*Spring Blossoms,
Temple and Tree*
by Shiho Ichinose

Oliver Shooting
by Anna Warburton

OLD STOICS

Page 125 Chairman's Report

John Fingleton



Page 129 R.R. Timberlake: Stowe's Early Years

Reminiscences of the 1920s
and early 1930s



Page 134 Hannah James: Seeing Chile

Spending a Gap Year with
Operation Raleigh



Page 136 The Dodie Watt Mystery Drawings

Can you recognise the portraits?



Page 139 Obituaries:

Laddie Lucas
Lord Boyd Carpenter
Andrew Croft



John Fingleton (*Chatham 66*) writes

THE CHAIRMAN'S END-OF-TERM REPORT

One of the principal 'tools' in any school's curriculum is the 'End of Term Report', and so it does not seem inappropriate for the Old Stoic Society Chairman to prepare his own report as his term approaches its conclusion. I am particularly grateful to the editorial team of *The Stoic* for restoring the Old Stoic section to the magazine after its absence – on no more than space grounds, I am sure – in the 1998 Jubilee edition.

As the editorial of 1997 so rightly stressed, 'being a Stoic is not for five years or two, but for life'. This maxim has, during my two and three quarter years in office, come home to me time and time again... whether it was in attending the various Jubilee festivities and ceremonies, meeting such a wide cross-section of Old Stoics – by longevity, activity, gender, enthusiasm, or whatever; attending, as sadly it had to be, the thanksgiving services for two remarkable representatives of the 'First 99' (that exclusive club of May 1923 Stowe entrants), Colonel Andrew Croft and Lord Boyd-Carpenter; the funeral and thanksgiving service for one of Stowe's greatest teachers and mentors, Brian Stephan; the memorial service for one former Headmaster, Donald Crichton-Miller and a service of dedication of a pair of magnificent glass doors, incorporating Stowe's crest, at St Peter's Church, St Albans, in memory of Eric Reynolds, another; helping to select Old Stoic Gap Year scholars from amongst 6th Form applicants (and then, nearly two years later, attending their post-scholarship presentations to the School, now as Old Stoics themselves); watching 13-year old 'new boys' – OSs of tomorrow – play soccer on the South Front on the first Sunday of their first term at Stowe; seeing and hearing breathtaking performances on the Roxburgh Hall stage, or in St. Paul's Cathedral, Stowe Chapel (Alexander Winter's Shostakovich 2nd Piano Concerto – wow!) or the Music Room, by Stoics young and old, male and female (where, oh where, were the girls in my day?!); attending OS sporting events including, inter alia, the annual Spring Sports Days up at Stowe, the pre-Christmas public schools old boys X-Country competition on Wimbledon Common; the Royal Wimbledon public schools old boys 'Putter' competition (once, by default, even as a participant!); cricket matches during Templars' Week and hockey on the Bourbon; doing what could be done to encourage the resurrection of the noble game of Fives at Stowe (not least as a result of intensive lobbying by an Old Stoic representation); participating in the deliberations of the School's Governors four times a year as the ex officio representative of the Society; identifying and then inveigling, inducing or otherwise coercing particularly distinguished Old Stoics to take up the honorary Presidency of the Society for the year, so far represented by the Lords Rees (*Temple 44*) and Sainsbury of Preston Candover (*Grenville 45*), currently Sir Michael Craig-Cooper (*Temple 53*), and next year Air Marshal Sir Reginald Harland (*Chatham 38*) and then expecting them to 'sing for their supper' both at the OS Dinner and at other times during the year... the list just goes on and on.

After an unusually brief indoctrination as a member of the OS committee, my term as Chairman started in May 1996 and is due to conclude at the Society's 1999 AGM, minutes before the Old Stoic Dinner on 13th May, (itself reverting this year to time-hallowed surroundings at the Royal Automobile Club in London's Pall Mall, after a spectacular Jubilee year foray into the City, at Drapers' Hall). When I came aboard, if anyone had told me that Committee agendas regularly comprised around 17-20 items for discussion – more than any commercial organisation's board with which I have been associated – I would have told them a) not to be ridiculous and b) that there was plenty of scope for efficiency and streamlining. But that's what it was – and, I have to report (unashamedly), still is. But we are not just a 'talking shop'. In fulfilling the stated objects of the Society – viz. 'to promote and support the interests of all Old Stoics...' and 'to promote and support the interests ... of Stowe School' – there is an awful lot to consider and discuss.

Just looking through a recent Committee meeting agenda, for example, throws up such diverse headings as Finance, coupled with the Hon. Treasurer's report and funding requests from the School (which we try to respond to positively and within our means, but are not always able to do); organisation of OS Dinners – including, we hope Regional Dinners, in the north (possibly Manchester) and in Wiltshire in 1999, (the first away from London for many years and a direct response to demand) as well as early plans for a 'special' dinner in 2000, to mark the 75th Jubilee this time of the Society itself, rather than the School; liaising with sports sub-committees and agreeing suitable funding for their activities; liaising with the Stowe Club – 'The Pineapple' – itself such an important part of the School's cultural and

social heritage – and where we have strengthened the association by appointing mutual committee members: helping the School and our tireless and wonderfully efficient Registrar, Alison Ewens, in her work in preparing the twice-yearly *Stowe Bulletin*, as well as the huge undertaking of preparing an updated *OS Register*, last published nearly 10 years ago, now substantially out-of-date but, we hope, to see the light of day next year as part of our own jubilee activity, and the work for which includes tracing many hundreds of apparently 'lost' Old Stoics; liaising with the Headmaster and his office on numerous matters, as with the Bursar and his team and other departmental heads; supporting the funding appeal for the 'Stowe/Harvard Fellowship', such an important part of the School's international and cross-cultural teaching/learning programme, and to which I shall return in greater detail later; identifying and 'persuading' new Committee members, men and women, and agreeing appropriate roles for them; co-ordinating, this past year or so in particular, the Society's liaison with the School during its splendid and unforgettable 75th Jubilee celebrations... another endless catalogue.

And one particularly important activity that I have deliberately left until later... under our responsibility for 'supporting the School' nothing could be more important, at this particular juncture in Stowe's distinguished history, than The Campaign For Stowe, which is in the course of being launched. It is particularly satisfying, therefore, that the School's Development Office and the Old Stoic Office now work alongside each other, and indeed share accommodation. At one time, in Chris Atkinson (*Chatham 59*), they were one and the same person, but since the Development Office was established in its own right, they had become separate entities and separated geographically by almost the entire length

The Chairman sizing up the Dodgems at the Jubilee Ball





The Chairman (left) on Foundation Day 1998 with The Marquis de Amodio (Grenville 26), Lord Runcie and the Headmaster

of 'Plug Street'. The confluence of the appointment of Anthony Shillington (*Chatham 61*) as Development Director and his own major contribution to OS affairs, as a past long-standing committee member and Chairman of the Society, combined with Chris Atkinson's departure to run the Brian Johnston Memorial Trust – after living, breathing and personifying Stowe for so many decades, inter alia as boy, master, housemaster, sports coach, chief marketer and public relater, OS Society Deputy Chairman and Honorary Secretary (which latter role, to our very good fortune, he continues to undertake) – provided the impetus to co-ordinate these functions.

The prime activity of the Development Office is fund-raising, and there are pages elsewhere in this edition of *The Stoic* detailing The Campaign For Stowe. In brief, though, this comprises, on the one hand, the restoration of Stowe House and, on the other, the setting up of The Stowe School Foundation, inaugurated on the School's 75th Jubilee Foundation Day (11th May) by our then President, Lord Sainsbury of Preston Candover, for the development of the School's educational facilities and an endowment for scholarships and bursaries. Be assured, though, that there is no intention of the Society becoming merely a fund-raising machine – its prime objective continues to be its traditional support for its members, set out in some detail above, but with the ready acknowledgement that the alumni of any organisation have to be the single most important source of funding for an appeal, and it is entirely right that the Old Stoic Society should play an active role in this process.

During the past couple of years there has been one particular fund-raising campaign for which the OS Society has been able to provide very direct support – towards the endowment (we hope, in perpetuity) of the annual Stowe/Harvard Fellow, a recent graduate from Harvard University who contributes enormously each year to the life of the School and the international dimension that it is thereby able to add to its educational 'offer'. Thanks to a

most generous bequest from an Old Stoic, Edouard Bonvalot (*Grafton 37*), who was also a Harvard graduate, the Society has been able to provide very real support to this appeal. As part of the liaison between school and alumni, the Society's Chairman sits on both the Campaign Steering Group and the Stowe/Harvard Fellowship Appeal Steering Group.

An important part of the Development Office's function is also to look after the School's public relations, and this is another area where the Society has been able to provide considerable support, partly by my own day-to-day contact but also, even more important, by the establishment of an informal 'PR Working Group', comprising experienced OS PR and communications' practitioners, led by David McDonough (*Cobham 71*) and aided by Christopher Tate (*Walpole 71*) (also a member of the OS Committee and the link between the two), Donough O'Brien (*Chandos 57*) and Johnny Cunningham-Reid (*Cobham 63*). They meet regularly and liaise with the School's PR committee (which includes student representation) and its external PR consultants. The minutes of their most recent meeting brought home to me both just how crucial this function is to the bolstering of the School's good name and public perception, as well as just how much press coverage (mostly, I am delighted to be able to report, positive in nature!) it gains – perhaps just recently more than a little bit aided and abetted by fevered world-wide press speculation on the possible future admission of the offspring of one or two 'megastars' from the world of entertainment...!

In the space available to me here, it has been impossible to give more than a superficial overview of all that the Old Stoic Society stands for and tries to achieve. If I had to identify one action that has taken place during my incumbency, however, that has given me particular satisfaction, it could well be the fact that the Society now grants three annual Gap Year Scholarships, each to the value of £1,000, to deserving Stoics about to set out on the path towards the rest of their respective lives, as against two of £750 each just three years



The Chairman enjoying Jazz at the Temple of Venus

ago. This does, I hope, typify how the Society works to help the School in supporting its own, who are about to become alumni ambassadors in their own right. The nature of the projects submitted for consideration by the selection panel (itself made up of two members of the OS Committee and faculty representatives from the School) serves to underline the continuing imagination and preparedness for taking on a challenge, indeed the sheer individualism that has been endemic to, and the hallmark of, every Stoic since the School's foundation almost 76 years ago.

When I was honoured to be invited to become the Society's Chairman, I made it clear that I hoped to be able to devote as much time as was necessary to undertake the role effectively. But in my wildest dreams it never occurred to me that, as my diary confirms, in the 33 months since then I would make no fewer than 32 visits to Stowe, as well as attending countless meetings of committees, steering groups, selection panels or whatever and, in the 'ambassadorial' role, funerals and thanksgiving services for distinguished Old Stoics, former faculty and, in one or two particularly tragic and poignant cases, for contemporary Stoics as well. After around 5100 miles (can it really be?), countless dinners, working lunches, Common Room breakfasts, sandwiches grabbed in the car en route, probably late again for another meeting, Jubilee Balls, Lesson-reading at the Old Stoic Spring Chapel service, wreath-laying on behalf of Old Stoics on Remembrance Sundays ... I wouldn't have missed it for the world.

If I have three abiding memories (apart from the support, dedication – and, not infrequently, tolerance – of my fellow Committee members) they have to be: first, the magnificence of Stowe 'en fete' on a beautiful spring 75th Jubilee Day, starting with a wonderful luncheon for the First 99 and the First Girls, followed by the grandeur and dignity of the Commemoration Chapel Service, when Lord Runcie preached so movingly, leading on to Lord Sainsbury's inauguration of the Foundation and culminating in the splendour of the Jubilee Dinner, when so many illustrious Old Stoics, along with Head Girl Anna Kenyon, rounded the day off by speaking so affectionately about the Stowe we all venerate and revere; secondly, the warmth of welcome I have always received from the irrepressibly good humoured Rae and Caroline in North Hall Reception; and, thirdly, to have been told by the School Proctor when I chanced to be at Stowe on American Thanksgiving Day that Mary, without whom the catering function at Stowe would doubtless collapse like a failed soufflé, had expressed the fervent 'hope that Mr Fingleton would be coming to the Common Room Thanksgiving Dinner tonight, as I always enjoy feeding him!' Perhaps this gained or lost something in the translation but, whatever, I did, she did, it was delicious (as ever) and my thanks to her, Geoff, Duggie, Rae, Caroline, Frances, Alison, Shirley, Cherry – another list that just goes on and on – and to all the 'backroom' crews as well as the 'front of house' teams, for making the experience so stimulating and rewarding.

I just hope that whoever my colleagues select to succeed me, he – or she – has as much pleasure and satisfaction as it been my privilege to experience.

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R.R. TIMBERLAKE: STOWE'S EARLY YEARS

One of Stowe's early members of staff was the classicist R.R. Timberlake, known to his colleagues as "Timbers", who arrived in 1924. He was Underhousemaster in both Cobham and Grafton and briefly took over in Grafton as Housemaster. Unfortunately at the time there was no married accommodation and so he left in 1932. His later career took him to Rugby and a long, distinguished appointment as Headmaster of the Royal Grammar School, Lancaster.

His previous recollections of Stowe's early years were published in the magazines of May and December, 1988. Shortly before he died in October 1998, he wrote this further, anecdotal account of his contemporaries in the 1920s.

It is good of you to send me a copy of the latest *Stoic*. At the age of ninety-six I must be the oldest of the surviving former members of the staff. I joined it in September of 1924 and had eight very happy years there. The staff which I found on my arrival was by no means conventional, but obviously well chosen to establish the new school.

The four original Houses occupied the four main reception rooms. Bruce was in the charge of the Revd. E.R. "Pop" Earle, who had been headmaster of a Prep School, Bilton Grange near Rugby. He was the Second Master and much respected. The Housemaster of Chandos was Major Richard Howarth, formerly of the Lancashire Fusiliers. He taught



T.W.G. "Charlie" Acland, Housemaster of Cobham and Robert Timberlake, his deputy, in 1926

Geography and naturally commanded the OTC. He presided as a kind of Mess President at the staff dining table and it was customary to apologise to him if one was late for dinner. The Matrons had a similar "mess" next door to the kitchens. They all came from cultured backgrounds. They had no nursing or other training and anyone with more than a trifling ailment went to the Sanatorium to be cared for by Netta Bultanshaw, known affectionately as "Buttons".

With his study next door to Howarth's was Ian Clarke, Housemaster of Grenville. As a Blue, he was naturally in charge of the Rugger and used to insist on the grass being left long enough to provide a useful cushion.

The Cobham Players in "Evening Dress Indispensable", Christmas 1926. (The first House play at Stowe)
L-R: D.A.G. Keith, A.R.H. Ward, R.W. Hole, D.B. Skeffington-Smyth, C.W. Tyrrell, F.H.F. Banbury.





Graftonians with their trunks, summer 1931 L-R: G.F. Panton, A.C. Clarke, the Hon H.D.G. Prittie, C.A.LaT. Latham, S.J.L. Olver, S.J.R. Macoun, C.L.H. Darley, A.W. Torrance

Views of Grafton in 1931, before the building of the Housemaster's house (l) and Walpole House (r)





R.R. Timberlake on holiday in Spain, Easter 1927.
Companion and fellow pipe-smoker, Edward Hart Dyke (r)

Hugh Heckstall-Smith, master i/c swimming, (6th from left) with a group of life-savers, in the open pool in Power House Yard.
Left to right: A.F .Kerr, P.M. Falconer, G.D. Watson, D.A. Dunsford, T.H. Howarth, Heckstall-Smith, M.E.J. Croker, L.H.A. Thompson, F.H. Turton and A.E. Cheshire.



T.W.G. Acland supervises Cobham swimming heats at the Eleven Acre, 1927
L-R: A.B.B. Moore, J.A. Brown, J.W. Charters, J.W. Evans, A.D. Henderson, Acland, R.A.F .Hanbury-Tracy, C. Smith and Hugh Heckstall-Smith.

Robert Timberlake's class, Shell B, performing Euripides' Electra at the Rotonda, 1929. Left picture: 5th from left: J.G. Lilley. 6th from left (old man) H.S. Griffiths. Right hand picture: Playing Electra, 3rd from left: H.M. Balfour.



The fourth of the original Houses was Temple, which was in the charge of Ivor Cross, who had come from Lancing with J.F. [Ivor Cross was educated at Lancing when J.F. was a young master there and later was invited by J.F. to teach at Stowe]. He was a great admirer of J.F., although he was critical of the accommodation provided for the cleaning staff. This consisted of young men from Birmingham who were housed in rather sordid dormitories. They were very well organised by a man named Garrett, who had worked for the previous regime.

The fifth House was Cobham, located in what must have been the servants' quarters. The Housemaster was T.W.G. (Charlie) Acland, a very efficient Chemist and also a man of strong religious convictions. I was very glad when he asked me to be his House Tutor. He ended up in Holy Orders and was Headmaster of King Edward VI School, Norwich.

There were several remarkable characters on the staff. The first that comes to mind is Alfred Fremantle, who taught French. He was a gifted linguist and I well remember his brilliant translation of the popular song, "It ain't gonna rain no more".

Il ne pleuvra plus. Il ne pleuvra plus.
 Il ne pourra plus pleuvoir.
 Comment savent-ils ça, nos vieux,
 Qu'il ne pourra plus pleuvoir.

He had a passion for fresh air and used to sleep in the portico of one of the temples. We used to see him and a companion, the chemist J.E.F. Whitaker, as they sallied forth at ten o'clock in the middle of winter swathed in rugs.

The most original of all was Hugh Heckstall-Smith, a physicist. He had strong religious convictions and I believe ended in the Society of Friends. He was in charge of the swimming and supervised the construction of an enclosure for bathing in one of the lakes. He built a dinghy in his study,

where he also had popular collections of boys, when they discussed all kinds of subjects and listened to gramophone records of Wagner. The more staid members of staff thought it all rather heady stuff. He became Headmaster of schools at Ludlow and Chippenham where the locals found him difficult to understand. He then took up farming and ended up at all places on the staff at Gordonstoun. His book, *Doubtful Schoolmaster*, is well worth reading.

M.C. MacClaughlin was a brilliant teacher of History and the Classical Side used to grumble that he robbed them of their best boys. He was good at getting them places at Oxford achieved by "jollyng the dons". A former Classic once revealed to me one of the tricks of the trade. He was encouraged to introduce into every essay the quotation from Pericles' Funeral Oration, "KTEM ES AEI", "a possession for ever".

P.A. Browne was an Oxford Doctor of Music and also no mean Classic. He used to make me feel very slow-witted in his presence. He ended as Director of Secondary Education at the Ministry. One of his closest friends was Francis Arnold who was very proud of his relationship to distinguished men named Arnold and had been in the Sixth Form with me at Berkhamsted. He too ended in the Inspectorate. So also did D.M. Simmonds, a Classical Scholar of Christ Church, Oxford. He co-operated with me in producing a school edition of the *Cyclops* of Euripides.

A slightly older man was C.M.G. Ratcliffe, who had the unusual distinction of a degree at Trinity College, Dublin, where one could combine Mathematics and Latin. Edward Hart Dyke once went out with me for a holiday in Spain. The Chaplain, the Revd. E.F. Habershon was much respected. I believe he was asked at his interview by the Revd. Percy Warrington, the Evangelical Governor, who could claim to have been the founder of Stowe, whether he believed in the literal interpretation of the book of Jonah. I believe J.F. cleverly changed the subject.

Robert Timberlake with Classics Set 1, July 1929

Back row: K.S. Toms, P.M. Beech, R.A. Atthill, M.G. Sills. Front Row: G.L.S. Griffith-Jones, RRT, R.S. Williams.





The view from Chatham as Queen Mary lays the Foundation Stone of the Chapel, June 13th 1927

It was not easy to marry at Stowe, as I was to find out. There were only two married men, H.W. Neville, who taught Art, but outside the curriculum, and N. Wragg, an independent character who taught Mathematics. I used to share a tent with him at OTC Camps. I might make a reference to the other five men who joined the staff with me in September 1924. W.E. Capel Cure was an Old Boy of Lancing and a good cricketer. He was the only one who stood the course and he ended as Housemaster of Temple. George Renwick was an Oxford Athletics Blue and moved to his own old school, Charterhouse, ending as Headmaster of Dover College and the proprietor of a coaching establishment. Clifford Harper ended as an HMI and J.A. Robertson as lecturer in Biology at Birmingham University. G.W. Phillips was an enigmatic figure who left when it became known that he had been a Roman Catholic. Sidney Watson was a fine musician who ended with a fine career in Oxford.

The stalwarts "Fritz" Clifford, P.G. Hunter and A.G. Archer did not join the staff till 1925. I must, however, mention the Head of School, N.A.C. Croft, who established the Prefectorial system. He was to have a distinguished career in the Army and in polar exploration.

That autumn term there were no bedrooms available for us at Stowe and we were housed in a large private house in Buckingham. We drove down at ten o'clock at night and back again for breakfast at 8.00. After a bit the chauffeur got tired of having to wait for us and we were allowed to drive ourselves. We used to educate the citizens of Buckingham as we drove through by singing the Red Flag. This trifling incident illustrates the fact that we were at heart still undergraduates, having nearly all only just come down from Oxford or Cambridge. However, we did make up in enthusiasm what we lacked in experience and we learnt from J.F. what I hope still holds good at Stowe the rule that it is the welfare of the individual boy which matters.



A Grafton Cricket team at Gawcott, summer 1931. Back row: P.M. Beech, M.J. Macoun, E.W. Sconce, E. Cadogan. Front row: AB "Fritz" Clifford, H.D.G. Prittie, F.O.S. Dobell, Robert Timberlake, J.H. Greenwood

Members of Robert Timberlake's Grafton, playing French Cricket, summer 1931.

L-R: A.L.R. Albery, J.D. McKean, S.J.L. Olver, R.S. Steavenson, C.L.H. Darley





San Rafael



A closer encounter



A rare and beautiful pussy cat (the Kodkod)



La Bajada – a feat of engineering

Our Medic at play



SEEING CHILE

Those at Raleigh International Headquarters in Parsons Green, London, would have us believe that their cause aims principally to be pre-eminent at developing young people through demanding environmental and community projects world-wide. That only touches the surface. This is the inside story.

After an intimidating start to the expedition where 140 over-excited venturers (as we were henceforth to be known) squashed into a Heathrow conference room, we were split into groups for the journey to Coyhaique, southern Chile. Four days later, three spent on a bus, we were met by a visibly nervous staff of forty who had spent the previous ten days preparing themselves and Region XI for our arrival - the biggest expedition ever staged by Raleigh.

The next few days were taken up with training in everything from radio protocol to the importance of personal hygiene. Initially tasks occupied nineteen hours a day, a frightening shock to the system so soon after the Christmas holiday. However, I doubt whether any of us remember this time of our lives as a series of events. I seem really to recall a random set of indescribable events that all took place during these ten weeks. I will, however, attempt to condense it into something intelligible.

My first real memory is of being woken at 6.00am to the sound of Pulp Fiction's Misirlou at 200 decibels, our deputy expedition leader's idea of a friendly welcome to the field base! We quickly discovered that the learning curve on Raleigh is very steep and the most important thing I found out in the first five minutes was to take advice from those who know better (something I was not renowned for!). As a result of discovering this one hike-up-a-hill-in-the-pouring-rain-with-no-dry-bags too late, I suffered for two days without a sleeping bag as it dripped dry in a barn. Another skill it is essential to acquire fast is tolerance. I was in a truly bizarre group of people (I know they won't mind me saying that with hindsight as we're all very good friends now!) and this was the first personal challenge I encountered. We were: Daley, the heavily pierced and slightly peculiar Geordie; Josephy of the Hong Kong Police Force (self explanatory!); Andy the relatively elderly bearded one; Victor the ex-Singapore Army gadget man; Tara an accounts clerk from London and me. They say that variety is the spice of life! So, despite what could only be described as a slightly dubious start, the following nine weeks were undoubtedly the best (and sometimes worst) of my life.

Three weeks camping at the snout of the second fastest moving glacier in the world, San Rafael, is enough to inspire the most blasé of people. Couple that with the fact that we were helping to preserve a delicate ecosystem to ensure the survival of a very rare species of wild cat, the Kodkod, and you have a phenomenal experience. Between us we were tracking cats twenty-four hours a day and the information we were obtaining was continually being processed on site by our scientists, Ian and Gerado (a Chilean vet). The most exciting aspect of this project was that it was an opportunity



to live and work in one of the world's few remaining wildernesses. The continuous groans and creaks from the glacier, followed by the approach of yet another tidal wave reminded us constantly that we were in one of the most remote places in the world.

The next phase began with a seventeen hour boat journey along the awe-inspiring fjords which run through seemingly endless hostile craggy peaks. Traveling on a cattle shipper, this journey took us north, back to the field base. The rush to get clean was followed almost immediately by cries of anguish as we discovered that the first shower in three weeks was to be semi-glacial. However, with a brave attempt at enthusiasm several of us jumped in only to be disappointed again as we watched what we thought was our carefully acquired rugged tan trickle pathetically down the drain! Lago Los Torres was a beautiful Andean area which really didn't look painful from the approach road! How wrong could I be. Two weeks of walking straight up resulted in seventeen solid-legged low alpine experts. What we were actually doing was scouting the area for evidence of the exceedingly shy and endangered Huemul deer, Chile's national symbol, using scientific surveying methods. This particularly elusive creature was many times cursed as we followed transect lines along steep rugged terrain, which was beautiful to the point that we were frequently left speechless. Our quiet return to field base was evidence in itself of the emotional attachment we had all developed for this place.

The last phase proved to be an entirely different experience. The task was to complete the building of a meeting house for a small farming community who lived within a ten kilometre radius of the site. The house was to be used as a market centre, as previously they had no place to meet to engage in business. As with all the community projects the last phase was the most hectic. This is because all the minor delays which had come about in the previous seven weeks had escalated somewhat and we were faced with the prospect of having to work in shifts for the second time, in order to finish the building. This was not a prospect any of us relished, but we surprised everyone with our progress and the likelihood of us leaving La Bajada with a completed building seemed less remote each day. Commendations were given all round on the 23rd March when the farmers and their friends and families put on an incredible festival in honour of our work, to which the other teams who had worked on the building also came. We have since heard that due to the completion of the building, the community has secured government funding to build pens for livestock on the site.

Less than forty-eight hours later, with ten weeks under canvas behind us, we were facing the prospect of jumping on a bus back to Santiago where the expedition would finally end, a prospect everyone was truly dreading. We were surprised at the reaction we received in Santiago at the Lonely Planet haunts, where they had clearly experienced Raleigh Expedition hangers-on before. We were joyously welcomed as they contemplated a long night ahead!

THE DODIE WATT MYSTERY DRAWINGS IN SEARCH OF A NAME

The Art School over the years has been one of the jewels in the Stowe crown. In our next issue, indeed, we hope that GStJS may be chronicling the Art School's fascinating history. In the meantime in this issue we can celebrate one epoch in that history and one half of the husband and wife team which made such an impact in the 1930s and 1940s, the much-loved Dodie and Robin Watt.

The opportunity to remember Dodie Watt came unexpectedly, when a package of her drawings arrived from Canada, bequeathed to the School by a friend of her family. The package contained, amongst other things, the pencil portraits reproduced in this article. They would seem to be mostly of Stoics, but tantalisingly are unnamed. We are hoping, therefore, that some lynx-eyed Old Stoics will help solve the Dodie Watt mystery and write in to us with some identifications. Each portrait has been given a number. We would also welcome any reminiscences of Dodie and Robin which we could use in this autumn's issue when we hope to publish the drawings' identifications.

Dodie and Robin Watt were both Canadians, in their thirties, when they arrived at Stowe. The Art School was in the process of construction on their arrival and it was not long before they had established it as one of the happiest and most productive hubs of the School. Dodie herself was as accomplished an artist as her husband and became the first female full-time member of staff when the ever-increasing numbers taking the activity enforced help. It was typical of that male-dominated age, however, that it was Robin Watt's salary which was enlarged when Dodie started teaching... The effect of Dodie's trail-blazing efforts can perhaps be seen best from the reference Roxburgh wrote her when she and her husband returned to Canada in 1948:

"Mrs H.R. Watt has been in joint control with her husband of the Art Department here since 1934. She has done brilliant work both as an artist and as a teacher, but, what is almost more important, she has been an inspiration to the whole community. I know of no-one better able to instil a love of beauty into the mind of youth or to teach appreciation of the methods and achievements of the great artists. In addition we owe her a debt of gratitude for the practical help she has given in the production of plays, the creation and working of a puppet theatre and a dozen other enterprises requiring power of organisation as well as a craftsman's skill. It is not too much to say that the whole life of the School will be impoverished by her departure."

If you can help us with some identifications, please contact The Old Stoic Registrar, Stowe, Buckingham, MK18 5EH, Telephone: 01280 813164, Fax: 01280 817818.



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OBITUARIES

WING COMMANDER "LADDIE" LUCAS

P.B. ("Laddie") Lucas, CBE, DSO and Bar, DFC fighter pilot, amateur golfer and former Conservative MP, died on March 20 aged 82. He was born on September 2, 1915.

Although his abundant energies and talents found expression in many spheres, "Laddie" Lucas will be remembered principally for his legendary exploits during the valiant air defence of Malta in the crucial summer of 1942. As a fighter pilot he demonstrated that relentless desire to be at handgrips with the enemy which is the hallmark of the best fighting men. As a commander both in Malta and in his later leadership of the Coltishall Wing, he inspired his men by leading from the front and infusing them with his own fiery spirit.

On either side of the war he showed himself the best left-hander in amateur golf, and for nine years from 1950 he was Conservative MP for Brentford and Chiswick. He was later head of the Greyhound Racing Association, chairman of the Sports Council and, finally, a prolific author on golf and on subjects associated with the history of British military aviation.

Percy Belgrave Lucas was born at Sandwich Bay, Kent, and much of his life before going to J.F. Roxburgh's Stowe was centred on Prince's Golf Club, of which fashionable links his father was manager. In 1937 he joined a group of talented writers on *The Sunday Express*, and was making his mark in journalism when in 1940 the call came from the Royal Air Force, for which he had volunteered in the previous year.

Arriving in Malta in February 1942 he flew some of the first Spitfires to arrive on the island: these had been loaded onto the American aircraft carrier *Wasp* in the Clyde, and then sailed to a point in the Western Mediterranean from which they were launched to make the 600-mile flight to Malta.

Lucas graduated to command 249 Squadron, a mixed bunch of Commonwealth flying talents who soon began to wreak havoc among the attackers. For his leadership and his personal performance in shooting down enemy fighters and bombers, Lucas was awarded the DFC and, a year later, the DSO.

After the crisis had passed, with victory in the Western Desert, he returned to England to command 616 Squadron, and then took over the Wing at Coltishall, formerly the headquarters of Douglas Bader, whose sister-in-law he was to marry in 1946. Here again his leadership and his ability to mix without losing authority made a great impact. On one occasion, while escorting a bombing sortie, his squadron was assailed by three Staffeln (squadrons) of Focke-Wulf 190s of the "Dora" mark, far superior to the Spitfire. Without hesitation, Lucas wheeled his formation into the attack, and soon five of these formidable opponents were plunging from the skies.

Although he could well have seen out the war in a staff



"Laddie" Lucas in 1934

appointment, Lucas pressed for a third operational tour, stepping down in rank to command a squadron of Mosquito fighter-bombers in support of the Allied advance into Germany. From this came a Bar to his DSO.

His first sortie into politics, in 1945, met with an understandable rebuff at West Fulham, where his opponent was the formidable Dr Edith Summerskill. But at Brentford and Chiswick five years later, he won his place in the Commons in the Conservative interest, taking the seat in a close finish. (He increased his majority at the two subsequent elections.)

Before entering Parliament he had found time to pick up his hobby, playing golf. He was a natural left-hander who had won everything that came his way in his youth. His performance in the 1935 Open Championship, when at the age of 19 he had only seven players ahead of him after three rounds and finished as the leading amateur, had secured him a place in the following year's Walker Cup team against the United States.

Thirteen years later, with his best golfing years behind him, he returned to America as captain of the British team. Thus, his appearance in the 1937 match provided him with his first and only match in this event.

His time with the Greyhound Racing Association after leaving Parliament was not altogether untroubled. Greyhound racing had made a lot of money in Britain during the 1930s, but by the time Lucas joined the company, the sport had been singled out for a discriminatory gambling tax. Later, the legalising of the betting shop and the growth of television added to the difficulties of a sport which has never lacked enemies.

Through those difficult years Lucas rose to become managing director (in 1957) and chairman (from 1965 until his resignation in 1976). He could look back with some satisfaction on the decade after the war, when he had contributed much to the White City as an alternative centre for several athletic and show jumping events.

He retained a lively interest in sport, serving on numerous committees, including the Golf Foundation, of which he became president, the Sports Council and the Central Council of Physical Recreation. He also gave strong support to his old school, Stowe, of which he was a governor, and to which his sons followed him. He was appointed CBE in 1981.

Lastly, he turned to writing, to chronicling the achievements of his fellow pilots during the war, intent on deepening and broadening the story of those years in the air - not only the heroism, of which much had already been written, but the humour and the comradeship. On two of his subjects, Douglas Bader and the siege of Malta, he was uniquely qualified to write.

Lucas married in 1946 Jill Doreen, daughter of Lieutenant Colonel A.M. Addison. She survives him along with two sons. A third has predeceased him.

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LORD BOYD-CARPENTER

Lord Boyd-Carpenter, former Conservative MP for Kingston-upon-Thames and Chief Secretary to the Treasury 1962-63, died on July 11 aged 90. He was born on January 2, 1908.

In an unusual way, John Boyd-Carpenter's life covered the range of political and social eras from the 19th century to the present. Elected at the age of 31 to the House of Commons in 1945 he represented Kingston-upon-Thames for 27 years until created a life peer in 1972. He then became chairman of the newly created Civil Aviation Authority. For more than 25 years he was one of the most consistent attenders and vigorous debaters in the House of Lords. If he felt he had a contribution to make, he made it - and made it well. Although the calling had not been consistently kind to him, he loved politics.

Churchill gave Boyd-Carpenter his first job in politics, as Financial Secretary to the Treasury in 1951. In 1954 he promoted him to be Minister of Transport and Civil Aviation, a post then not in the Cabinet. (From this vantage point he set in motion the building of something everyone claimed to want at the time, the first motorway, the M1.) He had come to Churchill's notice in the 1945-50 Parliament as a debater with skill and punch and one who cheerfully and effectively took on the tiers of Labour MPs on the Government benches in late-night sittings. To many Tory Members, some in the House since 1935, this pugnacious type of attack was new, even alien, but there was a handful of those who had survived the 1945 landslide who excelled at it - and Boyd-Carpenter was one of them.

Anthony Eden made him Minister of Pensions and National Insurance, another job outside the Cabinet but one in which he fought some notable duels with his Oxford contemporary Dick Crossman, the Opposition spokesman on pensions. (Their paths had first crossed when each did a broadcast for the BBC in a 1935 series called Youth Looks Ahead).

Boyd-Carpenter served a long apprenticeship before finally being admitted to the Cabinet as Chief Secretary to the Treasury under Reggie Maudling as Chancellor in 1962.

As Chief Secretary, Boyd-Carpenter was at least partially responsible for the ill-fated launch of the supersonic aircraft Concorde. The first official costings in 1962 went straight to his desk. Even the original £180 million estimate was a shock. Boyd-Carpenter himself thought spending that sort of money merely developing one aeroplane was "quite unsound" but Macmillan made it look like a triviality. The construction of Concorde was approved. For Boyd-Carpenter it was the beginning of an association with the aircraft that was to continue for 14 years.

With the Tories out of office after their narrow defeat in 1964, he found himself chairman of the Public Accounts Committee, the Commons' most powerful watchdog. Harold Wilson, a previous chairman, told him that he had the best job available to the Opposition because it gave access to the Treasury and to all the permanent secretaries. It was almost inevitable that Concorde would come up. It did. After the firm agreement to build it had been signed with the French, it was discovered that its range was 500 miles short of the dis-



tance it was to fly: London to New York and Paris to New York. A total redesign had to be carried out so that it could carry the extra fuel and accommodate more passengers to pay for it. Boyd-Carpenter's worst fears were realised: the original costs as sent to Cabinet had been proved worthless.

In 1972 having suffered the major disappointment of his parliamentary career (his failure to become Speaker, despite the backing of the Government front bench; the Opposition preferred Selwyn Lloyd), Boyd-Carpenter left the Commons in order to become the salaried chairman of the new and powerful Civil Aviation Authority (CAA). Here, once again, he was reunited with Concorde. The plane, which even Michael Heseltine as Minister for Aerospace had conspicuously failed to sell around the world, had become something of a white elephant. To Boyd-Carpenter fell the melancholy task of awarding it its certificate of air-worthiness - which he formally did after flying in its prototype to the Bay of Biscay and back.

John Archibald Boyd-Carpenter was a very fit man of medium build, always with a pronounced spring in his step. This resulted in his nickname, Spring-heeled Jack, first given to him as a young man. As a measure of the political world's inability to take him wholly seriously, it stuck all his life. There was a boyish enthusiasm about him that lasted well into old age - provoking Rab Butler on one occasion to say of Boyd-Carpenter's election to the chairmanship of the Carlton Club in 1979; "You know, talking to him about it you'd think he had at least been elected President of the United States." Yet he remained a kindly person who always gave generously of his time when asked for assistance or advice.

The young Boyd-Carpenter's early years were spent in Yorkshire. His father, the ninth child of the Bishop of Ripon's round dozen, married a Miss Dugdale, a member of one of the county's best-known industrial families. As his father's work took him to the Far East a great deal, it seemed appropriate to set up house in Harrogate near to the Dugdales. The children lived in a big, plain house on the outskirts of the town and their mother would drive into Harrogate to take part

in the spa's social activities in a smart coach-and-pair.

John Boyd-Carpenter was educated at Stowe and Balliol College, Oxford, Stowe was at the time a new public school and commended itself to his father, who was by now a Tory MP, because it put less emphasis on games and more on the "cultivation of practical intelligence". At Oxford he followed in his father's footsteps by becoming President of the Union. Later, he would say that the great benefit of Oxford was good conversation.

After he came down, his father took him on his first visit to see the former Emperor of Germany, the Kaiser, Queen Victoria's grandson. The former Wilhelm II was then living in exile (and in virtual disgrace) in a small house in the Netherlands. It was to be the first of a number of visits that Boyd-Carpenter was to make, ultimately on his own. On this, the first visit (since his father had not visited the Kaiser since his glory days in Potsdam before the First World War), they did not know what to wear and settled for morning dress and top hats. The Kaiser met them in tweeds and a shooting hat. They felt a bit sheepish but the former Emperor redeemed the situation quickly, complimenting them on their formal attire, which he obviously found very flattering.

The impressionable young Boyd-Carpenter found it almost mesmerising to sit down to lunch and, on subsequent visits, to stay under the roof of the man who, as he put it, had "sacked Bismarck".



Early in 1939, seven or eight months before war was declared, Boyd-Carpenter, in the confident way of young men who have done well and are sure they know best, wrote to the Foreign Secretary, Lord Halifax, suggesting the possibility of eliciting from the Kaiser a public denunciation of Nazi atrocities. He himself offered to assist as a messenger. There was a curt reply from Halifax's private secretary turning down the idea and saying it would be no more effective than putting up a fence in front of a charge of elephants.

Despite this vein of romantic naivety, politics was always Boyd-Carpenter's chosen calling, even if the law supplied him immediate occupation after Oxford. In 1933 he won a Harmsworth Law Scholarship at the Middle Temple and the following year he won the Council of Education's constitutional prize.

Called to the Bar by the Middle Temple he began practising on the South-East Circuit, picking up briefs with comparative ease. But it all ended within a few years as the Second World War intervened. He served throughout with the Scots Guards, his main contribution being to help restore law and order and to re-establish local government in an Italy ravaged by Fascism and war.

In May 1945 word came from his ever alert wife that the Tories of Kingston-upon-Thames were looking for a parliamentary candidate. Boyd-Carpenter won the seat with an 8,500 majority. He was to hold it comfortably - before handing it over to Norman Lamont - through the next eight general elections.

In retirement he returned to the grass roots by becoming for several years chairman of the Wessex area of the Conservative Party. He was also involved in business as chairman of Rugby Portland Cement, and filled several senior posts over the years with the hotel group Forte. But politics was his life. Nevertheless, in the summer he would always try to get away from London late on Thursdays and head off to the family's country house in Hampshire to pick up his tennis racket or the garden trowel. Growing vegetables was a great hobby and, to ensure that they were mint-fresh for the table, he would bring them into the kitchen encased in a good coating of clay - never a sight welcomed by the cook.

In 1937 he married Margaret (Molly) Hall, daughter of Lieutenant-Colonel G.O. Hall, a warm, supportive woman with a lively intellect. It was a very happy marriage and in 1997 they celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary. She survives him, as do their three children. His only son, Lieutenant-General Sir Thomas Boyd-Carpenter, is chairman of the Kensington, Chelsea and Westminster Health Authority. His younger daughter, Baroness Hogg, was head of the Prime Minister's policy unit during John Major's first five years in No. 10.

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COLONEL ANDREW CROFT D.S.O. O.B.E. POLAR MEDAL

The death of Andrew Croft robs the School of one of its strongest links with its very earliest days.
Paddy Davies (Bruce 39) contributes a special tribute.

What an exceptional man – an “abundance de richesse” of qualities that manifested themselves during his long life of adventure and achievement as an explorer, business man, soldier, policeman. And inspiration to the young. It is difficult to make a balanced selection, but I am sure most of you will have read the detailed obituaries in *The Daily Telegraph* and *The Times*.

Whilst at Lancing, Andrew was one of the two boys selected to be leaders of the new Stowe School, and J.F. Roxburgh the Headmaster Elect in a letter to Mrs. Croft (Andrew’s mother) wrote as follows.

“I have a suggestion to make to you about Andrew. I hardly know how you will regard it, but I have already secured Mr Bowiby’s approval, and I submit it to you and Mr. Croft with the hope that you will tell me candidly what you think. Perhaps for the moment you will kindly regard it as confidential, and not even tell Andrew about it until we have discussed it further.

“I am starting Stowe with young boys 13 to 14 only. They will be excellent material and quite unspoilt, but they will need leaders, and I want for May two boys of about 16 to become Heads of the two houses which will be ready then, the senior to be Head of the School and the other Second Head. These boys would start at Stowe on 11th. May.

“In the search for these two boys my thoughts turned to Andrew, and one other particularly good boy in Sanderson’s House. This boy, though he would be a little senior of the

two, would depart after one year and presumably leave Andrew to be Head of the School after that.

“Does the suggestion, as far as Andrew is concerned, appeal to you at all? In some ways it would be a great chance for the boy to help in building up a completely new school, and there is no boy whom I should more absolutely trust to do this work than Andrew Croft. May I hear from you at your convenience.”

Luckily for Stowe Mrs. Croft accepted J.F.’s suggestion.

I first met Andrew as a schoolboy at Stowe when, as a young man, he came to give a lecture about his epic and difficult Trans-Greenland expedition, and there and then he became my hero. What particularly endeared him to me was when he said that, on completion of this expedition, he and his fellow men wanted to celebrate with champagne but all their bottles were frozen solid. He assured his audience that, after breaking the bottles open, eating champagne had exactly the same effect as drinking it.

Little did I know that I was to serve under him during a part of the last war, first in the Hebrides in a special commando unit and then on the island of Corsica.

Andrew was a born leader. This quality showed itself at an early age. When he applied to Oxford Roxburgh wrote:

“I can hardly speak too highly of Mr. Croft from the point of view of character and personality. He gets on admirably with men and is always liked. He has enterprise, vigour and practical ability in an unusual degree.”

Andrew Croft (standing, second from left) on the day before the School opened, 10th May 1923.
Roxburgh is seated with his two housemasters “Pop” Earle and Ivor Cross.
The other Prefects are: H.E. Robinson, D.F. Wilson, the Hon. G.C.S.P. Butler and A.G. Bowie.



After leaving Oxford he spent three years in the cotton business and a year in France and Germany before adopting a schoolmaster's career with the object of joining the staff at Stowe. At that time Martin Lindsay, the distinguished explorer, was looking for a young man with photographic experience to join him on an expedition to West Greenland.

After Greenland he prepared himself for a life of adventure and, being forward thinking, to be of use to his country in time of war. He became a pilot, gained cold weather expertise and learned Scandinavian languages, all of which stood him in good stead in Finland, Norway and Sweden in the early part of the war. He then joined up again with Sandy Glen, his old friend, to whom he had been second-in-command on the Oxford University Arctic Expedition on long-range ice reconnaissance missions using Catalina aircraft to map the Southern Limits of Arctic drift ice for the benefit of convoys to Russia.

His courage, audacity and intrepidity were amply manifested in the Arctic, Finland and Norway and particularly again in the Mediterranean. I think that Andrew must be one of the very few soldiers who visited Occupied France and Italy on a regular basis, sometimes by submarine, sometimes by MTB and rubber dinghy, sometimes by air and sometimes by parachute. Out of 52 sorties Andrew's men landed 80 agents; he personally led 24.

He was a stickler about attention to detail and Geoffrey Arnold (one of Andrew's officers) has refreshed my memory of how before each operation to land agents, he had his men up in the IoR of Villa des Pins (the house he requisitioned in Bastia, Corsica) standing on a large table (this representing the deck of the MTB) with a rubber boat on the floor practising getting off the table and into the rubber boat with the wireless and extra gear. This exercise was mainly for the benefit of the agents and lasted until Andrew was satisfied that this was perfect. And this took a very long time!. He set high standards of conduct to which his men responded so well.

After Corsica he showed not only courage but great initiative when he and a gallant team parachuted into Southern France and wrought general havoc on the retreating German Army. For all these acts of leadership and bravery he was justly awarded the D.S.O.

His post-war career was again very varied. He was Lieut.-Colonel, Assistant Director of Scientific Research., War Office when he participated in the Canadian Arctic "Exercise Musk-Ox", an experimental 3000 mile journey by snow mobile. He was Senior Observer on the North West Frontier Trials in India and also attached to the Canadian Army for Cold Weather warfare preparedness. (A specialist in Cold

Weather Warfare was needed, in view of the acute risk of war with Russia.) Later on he worked on Weapons Development, War Office and in 1950 designed winter clothing for Korea.

From 1954 he was Commanding Officer of The Infantry Junior Leader's Battalion, Plymouth and from 1960 Commandant of the Metropolitan Police Cadet Corps.

Charm came to him naturally, but when the occasion demanded it he could use it in his own clever way to get what he wanted. Courtesy figured very prominently in his life and he was always very courteous whether in the company of rich or poor, regardless of age, class, nationality or the occasion.

What a basically gentle man he was – very understanding of the problems and sufferings of his fellow men. This quality was something misinterpreted as a sign of weakness. Far from it, because his standards were always of the highest and he was a fair but strict disciplinarian, and woe betide anyone who misinterpreted his motives.

He had the quality of inspirational enthusiasm in abundance and he used it particularly well in the young in whom he always had a special interest, i.e. The Army Apprentices School which he commanded, the Infantry Junior Battalion also commanded by him, and last but by no means least, the Metropolitan Police Cadet Corps of which he was the Founder Commandant.

On the day of Andrew's funeral the police held a special service at Hendon in front of a statue of Andrew sculpted by Rosalind his wife. They supplied the pall bearers, they provided outriders for the funeral cortege and even closed a London bridge to traffic. All police stations flew their flags at half mast. What a magnificent tribute from a force to whom Andrew contributed so much and admired so much.

I accompanied Andrew to Stowe on the Jubilee Old Stoics Day, a visit he thoroughly enjoyed. Although already well into his 90s he insisted in walking around the School, three boys from Chandos House escorted him. On our return journey from Stowe Andrew remarked that if all public schools produced boys such as them, then England faced a bright future!

He loved nature, the beauty of the countryside and all animals, and I am sure that few will realise that he was responsible for introducing reindeer into the Cairngorms in Scotland.

Throughout Andrew's life he was sustained by his great faith and dedication to the Anglican Church. In all respects he was a Christian Soldier.



Right: Andrew Croft on one of his many Arctic expeditions.

Far right: Andrew Croft (left) celebrating his 90th birthday in 1996 with Paddy Davies



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