

# THE STOIC



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September 2000

There's nothing like a bird's eye view of the North Front restoration

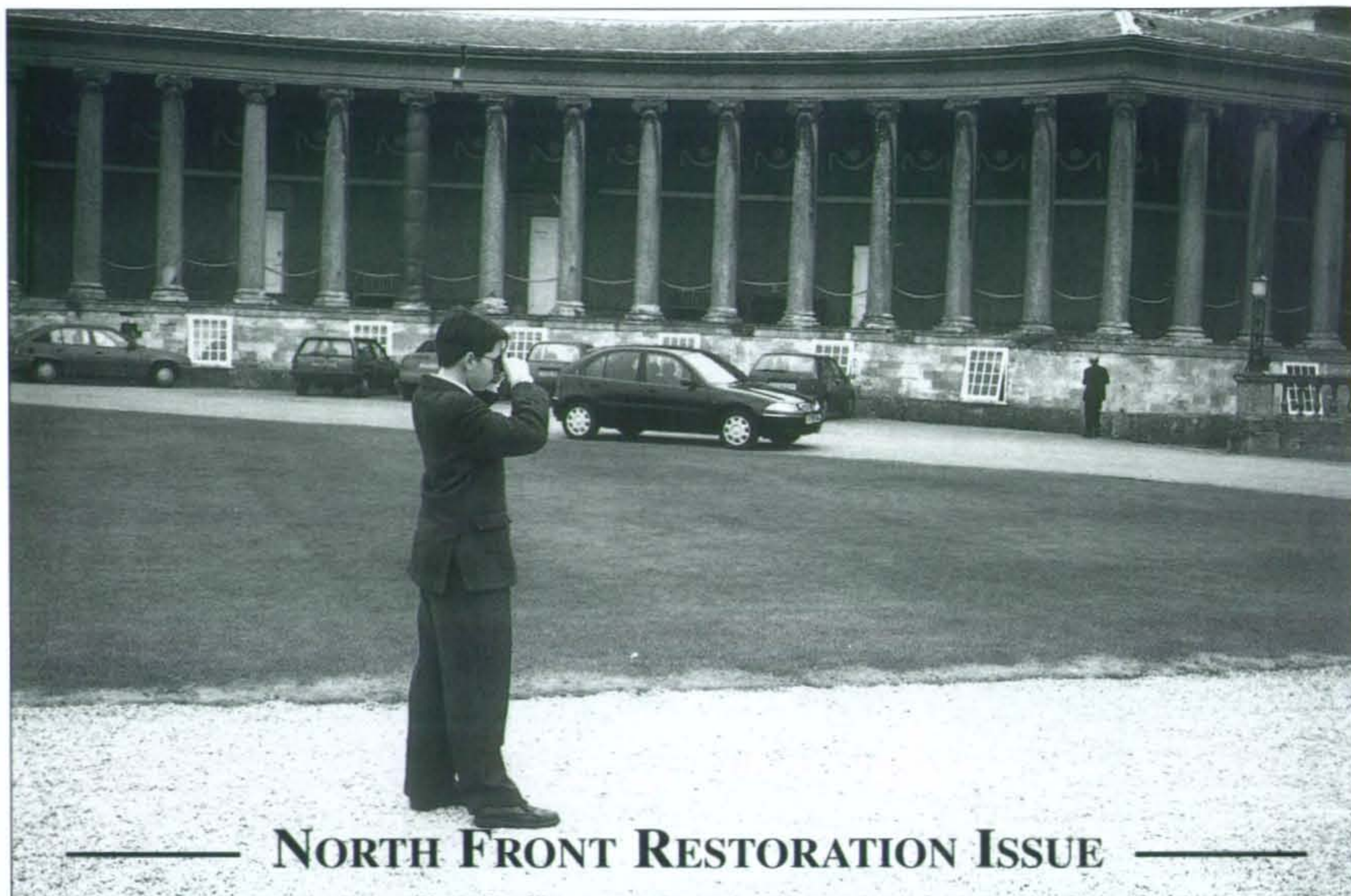


# THE STOIC

No. 199



September 2000



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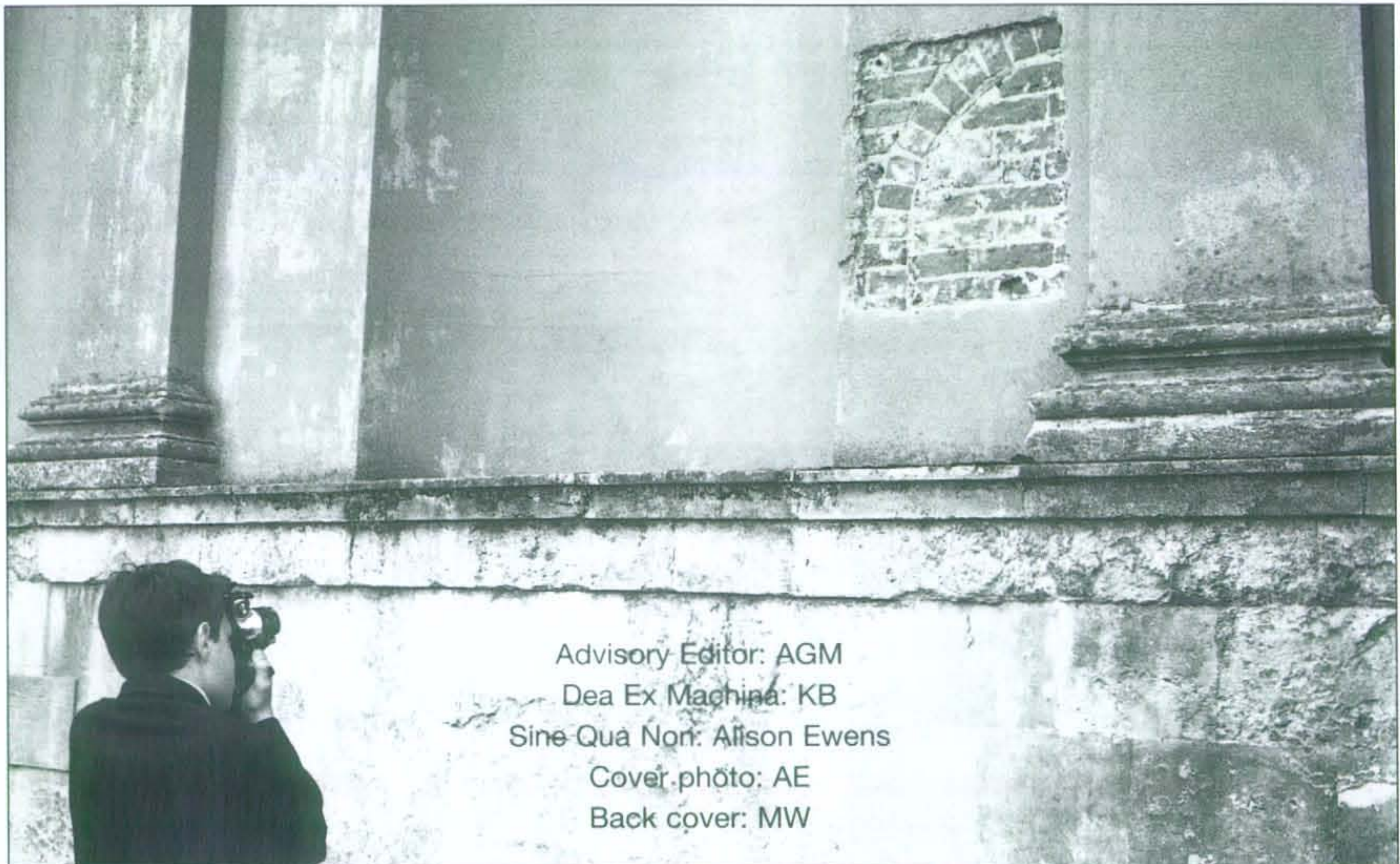
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# Editorial

Ours is the age of the soundbite. One-liners with which the marketing world woo the consumers. "Oh Lord, won't you buy me a Mercedes-Benz?" "That'll be the Daewoo." By sheer repetition these slogans become part of our lives and even, sometimes, part of our culture. The siren call of "You've never had it so good" still resonates powerfully forty years on.

Even at leafy Stowe we are not impervious to the attractions of a good soundbite. "A Stowe education," runs our current prospectus, "teaches young people to think for themselves, to think deeply and to think about others." A striking soundbite. And a challenging one.

Thinking about others, such an integral part of Christian morality, is of course an appropriate ambition for a school like ours with a Christian foundation. But "service before self" (another recent Stowe soundbite, the theme for last Spring Term) is perhaps harder to perform than to profess.

It was just such an ambition, however, which thirty years ago led to Stowe pioneering Community Service as an extra-curricular activity for boarding schools. For a time Community Service was absolutely central to Stowe life. Most Stoics contributed (not under compulsion but by choice) to some of the wide range of activities. For everyone involved it was genuinely "service before self", though of course the benefits for the participating Stoics proved even greater than for those on the receiving end.

There are plenty of more recent, personal examples of selflessness, not least in how gap years have been spent. And we should certainly highlight Sophie Watson, whose desperately sad death from cancer we were mourning last January. The magazine tells elsewhere of the wonderful charity work Sophie pioneered to help young children in hospital. If anyone had a reason to be self-preoccupied it was Sophie. Instead she enlarged all our lives by her bravery and selflessness. She would have been nineteen this October.

Personal acts of selflessness, hard though they may be to achieve in a world which materially rewards the self-seekers and the "upwardly mobile", come easier than national ones. Last Christmas and New Year, as the country celebrated the new millennium, there was little obvious communal belief that this might be an ideal time to think of others. Instead, for a few days, hedonism became a national preoccupation. It was possibly the greatest national binge of all time, with that dome in Greenwich acting as a kind of Temple of Excess and never far from our TV screens. Amidst all the razz-ma-tazz it was easy not to notice that other nations had spent their money on things less ritzy. In Italy, for example, official celebrations focussed on the restoration of old, cherished buildings.

Since then, of course, moaning about the Dome has become a pleasurable part of the British way of life. Almost as enjoyable as moaning about the railways or the weather. If we moan about the national binge, however, we quickly get cast in the role of boring kill-joys. "Surely a little bit of New Year's Eve hedonism never did anyone any harm? And, OK, if you're getting a bit pious, just remember that Jesus Christ himself enjoyed a glass of wine. He understood the need for an occasional knees-up. We can't think of others all the time."

Of course not. However alert we may be to "thinking

deeply” and applying a decent code of moral values to everything, we are all human beings and as such have an inbuilt fallibility. And anyway, the man’s right! There is an important place for celebration in a balanced life. Not for nothing did the Greeks put that wildest of all partygoers, Dionysus, on Mount Olympus along with Zeus and the others.

Nevertheless, it is gradually dawning on most of us that we, as a nation, did rather miss out on the possibility of creating something a little more worthy than an expensive pleasure dome by the Thames. Like a national crusade on Homelessness or Want. Were our political leaders more interested in their electorate and the feel-good factor than worrying about those on the fringe of the community who rarely feel good at all? Did the Church also miss a trick or two? Maybe in all those fiascos in London – the unmoving Eye, the feeble River of Fire and those interminable queues at Greenwich – somebody was trying to tell us something?

1999 hadn’t been a particularly good year internationally. War and poverty were still rampant, though conveniently at their worst some way off from our own shores. The year 2000, in its turn, has not been a total call for celebration. Natural disasters have been rife. War and poverty still thrive in the less secure parts of the world. The plight of the homeless is there before our own eyes in the streets of most of our big cities. Murder from political and religious bigotry has still intruded on the TV news, intermingling on our screens with all that make-believe murder and violence. In watching it all, the reality and the fiction, our responses easily get blurred and deadened.

Faced with a world in which such extremes of good and evil exist, if the soundbite about “a Stowe education” is to mean anything, we must feel some twinges of discomfort looking back at the British Millennium Binge. We might even regret to some degree that we went quietly with the flow instead of thinking for ourselves, holding out against it and suggesting an alternative philosophy: a nation coming together to focus all its energies on making a new era a better one for the less fortunate. In this context those who created the current Stowe prospectus could not have picked on a more appropriate and demanding soundbite. An education which encourages us to think about others. To treat each and every human being as we ourselves would wish to be treated. Now that really *is* a Millennium challenge.



Holly Middleditch ~ Old Stoics



Georgina Whitlock ~ People Pages



Alex Kirkwood ~ Features



Sally Clark ~ Arts Pages



Tom Baxendale ~ Advertisements

## BREAKING FREE

Extracts from the Headmaster's Address  
on Speech Day

"My theme this year is escaping from prison, release from confinement. I want to commemorate two former Stoics, offering them as examples of all that is best here. They are both, in their very different ways, reminders to us this Speech Day that we have good reason to be celebrating the achievements of the present, proud of the past and confident for the future.

I'd like you to imagine that it's 1941. Wartime. You are flying a bomber over the Mediterranean, off the coast of Greece. And the fuel gauge shows EMPTY. Your name is Jack Best and you are a former member of that splendid House Grafton. Being an Old Stoic, you keep your nerve, of course, and land the bomber, after a fashion, in the Aegean Sea. You survive the impact, escape from the sinking plane, swim to land, get captured by the Nazis and become a prisoner of war.

Some of you may have been watching the Channel Four series earlier this year *Escape From Colditz*. If so, you have the advantage on the others and know what's coming next. Jack Best was involved in the series, because, for over four years, he devoted all his waking hours to the concept of escape. Sometimes escape for himself. Sometimes for others. And like all troublesome escapees, he was interned in camp after camp, until he ended up in a medieval castle near Leipzig, called Colditz. Built high on a rock with sheer walls and steep banks, it was supposedly impregnable. A prison for Allied Officers who'd made a real nuisance of themselves. Jack was one of no less than five Old Stoics imprisoned there in the course of the War.

Jack was a great tunneller. His unique system was to close the tunnel up behind him as he went along. He survived in a pocket of air. In one of his early, pre-Colditz successes he tunnelled eighty feet, emerging, like a mole, beyond all the walls and barbed wire, and making off, like a hare, into the surrounding woodlands. He and his two companions, also flying officers, had somehow acquired a pilot's instruction manual on a certain kind of Junkers transport aircraft, so they walked many miles to several airfields to commandeer one and fly it to Sweden. Alas, after several days observing airfields and living off potatoes dug up nearby, they just couldn't find an aircraft of the right type. So they made for the River Oder, helped themselves to a rowing boat and headed for a distant Baltic port. But they forgot the rule of the sea, sailed up the wrong bank and attracted attention. The Nazis were alerted and discovered them one night sleeping under the boat. Back to the drawing board!

The Colditz series featured Jack's famous idea of escape by a glider, built in bits and pieces, from bits and pieces, in a hide in the roof of the castle's chapel. A friend of his made the design and Jack supervised the construction. It took nine months, using tools improvised from bedsteads, iron window bars and gramophone springs. Wingspans were made from floorboards. Parts of the fuselage from bed slats. The plan was to open up the roof of the castle chapel, which was out of sight of the guards, attach the 32 foot wings to the body, and then launch the glider by a catapult system, created by sending a bathtub filled with cement plunging down five storeys.



Liberation by the Americans, however, forestalled the maiden flight, which you might think was just as well. Yet a scale model, a third of the size, was later flown from the castle roof, and the TV programme featured the successful flight of a full-size replica. The idea worked. The skills and resourcefulness involved were awesome.

Jack enjoyed quite a few awaydays from Colditz during his two and a half years there. One night, for example, he and a friend removed the iron bars of a window and climbed down a sheer drop of eighty feet on a simple rope, their landing place a tangle of barbed wire. It later became known as the 60 Seconds Escape, this being the exact time they had to run across a large terrace, lit by searchlights, whilst the guards were looking elsewhere. They eventually walked out into the street – in Jack's own words, "as if we owned it" – and began the sixteen mile trek to the nearest railway station. Alas, the destinations of the trains weren't advertised and



unluckily they boarded one going the wrong way. So they jumped off it as it was steaming along, and hopped on one going in the opposite direction, only to find to their dismay that it was a troop train. All went miraculously well for a day until the train suddenly had to stop because Allied bombers had just made a direct hit on the track. Jack and his friend, who was later to be shot and killed on another escape, joined the queue for buses with several hundreds of Hitler's army, and bluffed their way onto a further train, eventually travelling across most of Germany. Jack's disguise was that of a Flemish peasant labourer. The only problem was that for the past six months he'd been acting as a Colditz "ghost", hiding in walls and cupboards and under floorboards, to convince the guards he'd escaped, so he could turn up at roll-calls impersonating real escapees or those tunnelling. His face, therefore, was ashen white, and in the town of Rheine by the River Ems, whilst they were hanging around waiting for a final train, an alert policeman became suspicious. Back Jack went to Colditz! It later transpired no less than 16,000 soldiers had been involved in the search for them.

It was fitting, after his long period of captivity, that Jack Best was to enjoy a long and happy period of post-war freedom. He died only last April, in fact, aged 87. And it is fitting that we should commemorate him. In the fullness of time his name, alongside those of many other Old Stoics of high achievement, will live on within the new Academic Resource Centre, plans for which progress excitingly. A Jack Best archive of books, videos and other materials relating to the Second World War will be a part of the History Section.

Jack's story is a reminder that the need to fight for freedom from things which confine or oppress us is something which comes to us all at various times in our lives.

The nature of the confinement, of course, will vary. This year we have had, with the tragic death of Sophie Watson, a moving example of how one can break out, with fighting spirit, from the bondage of terrible illness. Sophie was diagnosed with cancer at the age of fourteen and died four years later, last January. An appalling sorrow for her family and friends.

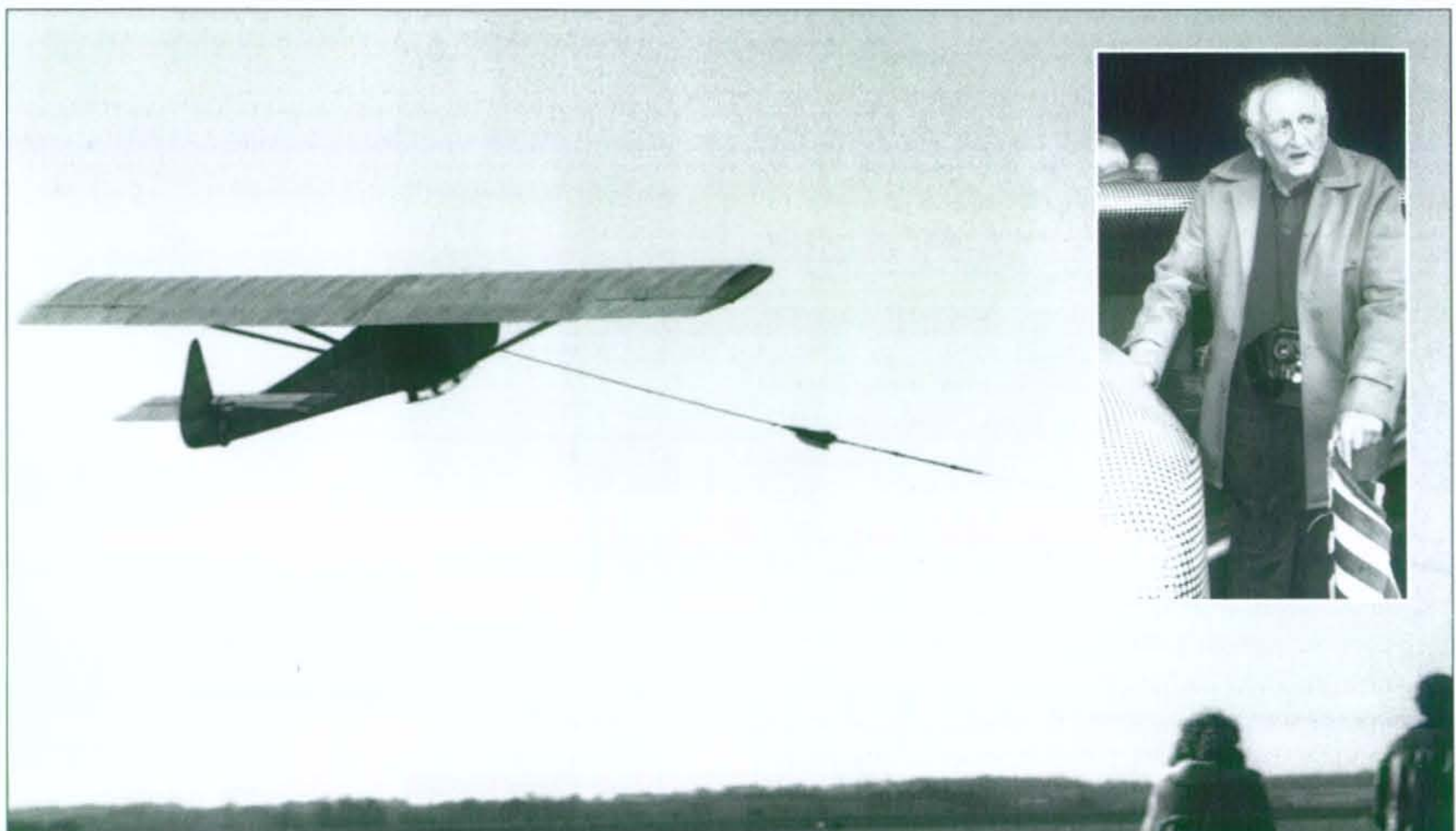
Yet the Sophie we most remember is not someone oppressed by illness but someone who vividly loved life. She was a keen horsewoman, who loved hunting, had hoards of friends and was always lots of fun. She was a passionate artist. A great giver. And, being the person she was, she used the time of her trials to think of others. In hospital she had been struck by how few toys there were for young children and so she started a charity for the children's ward of the John Radcliffe Hospital: She called it SCCWID, Sophie's Campaign For Children's Wards for Interesting things to Do. It has already raised huge sums and achieved great things. As a small example: the sponsored walk, made at the beginning of this term on the Campaign's behalf, will have raised in total a magnificent £6,000. The Website, if you want to make a note of it, is [www.sccwid.com](http://www.sccwid.com).

Escaping from confinement is not easy. It's the art of thinking the impossible possible. Making an ass of probability. Turning the odds on their heads. It needs a very great deal of character.

"He was certainly an extroverted character," wrote Jack Best's son, on the death of his father. "He loved jokes and pranks. His escapades in the war do not surprise me in the slightest. He was that sort of person. He would not take anything lying down." That kind of character can be more useful than a bucketful of paper qualifications. If Jack Best's bravery and determination was something which he developed at Stowe, we rejoice at it. If he brought these qualities with him to Stowe, we are grateful for the enrichment.

For Sophie the constraints were particularly, tragically extreme. Yet somehow she broke through them. As one of her contemporaries here has put it: "She touched Stowe with her endless talents and zest for life. Her bravery and determination are an example to us all." Endless talents, zest for life, bravery and determination. Jack Best's very qualities.

"She refused to be beaten," wrote Sophie's parents, "in either spirit or body until the very last. She thought only of others while ill."



Jack Best and the Colditz glider replica at RAF Odiham, February 2000

As a school we can't claim credit for this indomitability of spirit, for Sophie was with us for all too short a time. But we can thank her for bringing it to us. Offering us the challenge to be less easily beaten, to be more thoughtful to others, to show more steadfastness of character...

Just as Jack Best's courage is to be remembered here, so too will Sophie's. We shall in due course be naming the elevated covered walkway, which runs from the Temple Colonnades, via the Paul Dobinson Theatre, to Chapel Court, "The Sophie Watson Memorial Gallery". As you know, the colonnades are being restored this year by the Stowe House Preservation Trust, thanks largely to a National Lottery Grant. It's part of the first phase of a 6-phase programme of restoration. When the colonnades are back in pristine condition, next summer, we plan to refurbish the covered walkway, making it an exhibition gallery of Old Stoic achievements. Sophie and her Campaign For Children's Wards will provide the central example of the many, many fine things Old Stoics have achieved over the years. A gallery of inspiration, perhaps, for future generations.

It is unfashionable today to talk of education being about character. Exam results are the sole things on which schools are judged in the media. Exams of course have their place in the scheme of things, and, as another batch are upon us, it would be a perverse headmaster who denigrated them! Paper qualifications, as the passports to jobs and further education, are rightly highly prized. And we certainly take extreme pleasure in ever-improving GCSE and A-level results and the fact that ten Stoics got places at Oxbridge this year.

But Exams, unless we are careful, can impose their own tyranny. They can so easily constrict a school, hedging it in with the wrong kind of Colditz mentality. This will be even truer from next year onwards when, all across the country, the Lower Sixth year will be joining the Fiftths and Upper Sixths as examinees. When the top three years are all sitting important public examinations together, under the glare of much national media hype, there is yet more danger of schools turning into crammers. Cramming facts and figures into examinees, like so many intransigent officers into Colditz. Our job here, as ever, will be to strike the right balance. Plenty of hard work, yes, but no barbed wire and searchlights. For the rounded education – and with it the development of character – was never more needed in this high-tech, fast-changing world. Never did Stowe have a more important role to play than today in asserting the value of educational common sense, in fully utilising modern technologies but not being imprisoned by them, and in holding on to traditional virtues, however currently unfashionable.

I've always felt that, for the development of character, it would be hard to find a more appropriate setting than this historic site. It was, as you know, a hot-bed of passionate freedom fighters in the eighteenth century. Lord Cobham himself had something of the Jack Best mentality. He was a soldier who saw a lot of active combat so he might well have made a good shot at tunnelling to freedom on his hands and knees. He may or may not have made a good glider pilot, but, as one of the Duke of Marlborough's officers, he'd surely have been at home in a Blenheim Bomber.

The imagery of confinement has a conveniently wide application. The School too has had its own form of Colditz in the burden of upkeep of House and Gardens and the lack of a foundation endowment. The removal of the burden of the

gardens, when the National Trust took over the responsibility some eleven years ago, was a first step in breaking out of a crippling constraint. It was, you might say, like the fuselage of Jack's glider. The formation of the Stowe House Preservation Trust with its six phases of restoration of the mansion was the second step. Like Jack's pair of wings. And now, with the ongoing campaign of the School's Foundation Trust, we are set fair to put to right the lack of a foundation endowment. When our development plans for the revitalisation of the academic heartland are fully in place, and all is safely gathered in, it will be as if the roof of Colditz chapel has been opened, the cement-filled bath pushed down into the abyss, and the glider launched firmly and safely on its unstoppable way..."



Duncan Pearce writes about the impending  
**NORTH FRONT RESTORATION**



Duncan Pearce (right) and Charles Clark on the North Front

### The Historical Background

First, some history. We all talk about “the North Front” as if it is one single item, built in one go sometime in the eighteenth century. In fact what we see today – and what is about to be restored at a cost of £6.5 million – is the culmination of a hundred years of development.

The oldest part of the house is the central pavilion, built in the 1670s for Lord Cobham’s father. It was faced with red brick, and whilst exploratory work has been going on earlier

this year and certain sections of plastering (or stucco) have been removed, we have seen glimpses of this early red brick. The stucco was put on over it a few years later.

Initially the central part of the house had a much more modest front entrance. But the stone doorcase of the front door, with its attractive broken pediment (which once contained a bust of William III), is original. It is the oldest visible part of the house. The portico with its impressive



January 2000: Exploratory work on the screen wall between the Grafton Arch and the entrance to Cobham Court revealed three distinct levels of brickwork underneath the stucco covering



December 1999: Exploratory work has chipped away the stucco in several places to reveal the original red brick

columns was added in the early 1720s, when Lord Cobham's friend John Vanbrugh was engaged in one of his several improvement schemes.

You may have seen what the North Front looked like in the 1730s, because of the set of engravings which are now hanging at the bottom of the Temple staircase on the way to the dining room. And it's quite a hard job to recognise it as the North Front at all. The portico on the central mansion is the give-away. Everything else looks very different. The colonnades are not there. And although there are screen walls, trying to obscure the stables and kitchens, they are not very tall and so don't do their job all that well. Exploratory work earlier this year stripped the stucco away from the screen wall between the entrance to Cobham Court and the Grafton Arch. The lower screen wall of the 1730s was revealed, and so too some later rough red brick above it. This dates to the 1770s, the time of the final development of the North Front.

Lord Cobham's successor, Earl Temple, wanted a more palatial building than the one he had inherited. He spent a long time getting different architects to design him new fronts to the house. Finally, towards the end of his life, he made some decisions and work started on both the North and South Fronts. The biggest new items on the North Front, designed by Thomas Pitt, were the sweeping colonnades. These were put up in place of a lower curving screen wall which had been embellished with niches. The screen walls beyond the colonnades were also heightened considerably at this time. But the two sets of arches linked into the screen wall pre-date the 1770s. The Leoni arches, at either end of the North Front, date to about 1740. The arches by William Kent, which lead into Cobham Court and Power House Yard, are about ten years older than those of Leoni.

The North Front, therefore, has an interesting history of steady development. A lot is known about it already. But the major works now being undertaken will in all probability reveal many new secrets.

### **An assessment of what needs doing: The Central Pavilion**

The most superficial problem is the dirt on the stucco. We get used to the North Front as it is, dark and gloomy, unless the sun is out. When the restoration programme is over, there will be no more dirt. All will be bright and cheerful.

But it is not just a business of cleaning off the dirt from the stucco. All the stucco will almost certainly be taken right off. Partly because some of the brickwork underneath will need attention and partly because the rendering is not of genuinely eighteenth-century origin. Much of it is much coarser than it should be. To see it as it may soon be, go to one of the Leoni Arches. These were restored in 1994. So too were the low walls next to them which seem to have an entirely different kind of stucco from everywhere else. This, I suspect, is what the restored North Front will look like generally. The colour is particularly striking, the stucco being given a protective covering of a pinky-yellow lime wash, the substance thought to have been used in the eighteenth century. For a comparison to this, go and have a look at the stucco underneath the portico either side of the main door. See how very rough it is. This probably dates back to the big restoration the School did in the early 1930s. This did much to protect, even save, the House. But historical authenticity in those days was not considered so important. Cost may also have been a consideration.

There are other things apart from the stucco. Stone, for



The two different kinds of restoration of stone in a Leoni Arch. In one case a completely new stone has been put in. In the other the weather-worn part has been protected by some form of rendering.

example, some of which has been badly eroded by the weather. This is particularly true of the window-cases around a number of windows. If we look at the central pavilion the balustrade right at the top is of stone. Most of it, however, looks structurally sound. The stone columns of the portico look in quite reasonable condition and so too the entablature above and triangular pediment. But the balustrade on ground level needs some restoration (and the winter entrance it conceals has a lot of problems, not least its worn cobblestones).

The steps, however, are the worst part of the mansion. These should be of stone. But only the very bottom row is all right. The rest of the steps are concrete replacements. They will all have to go!

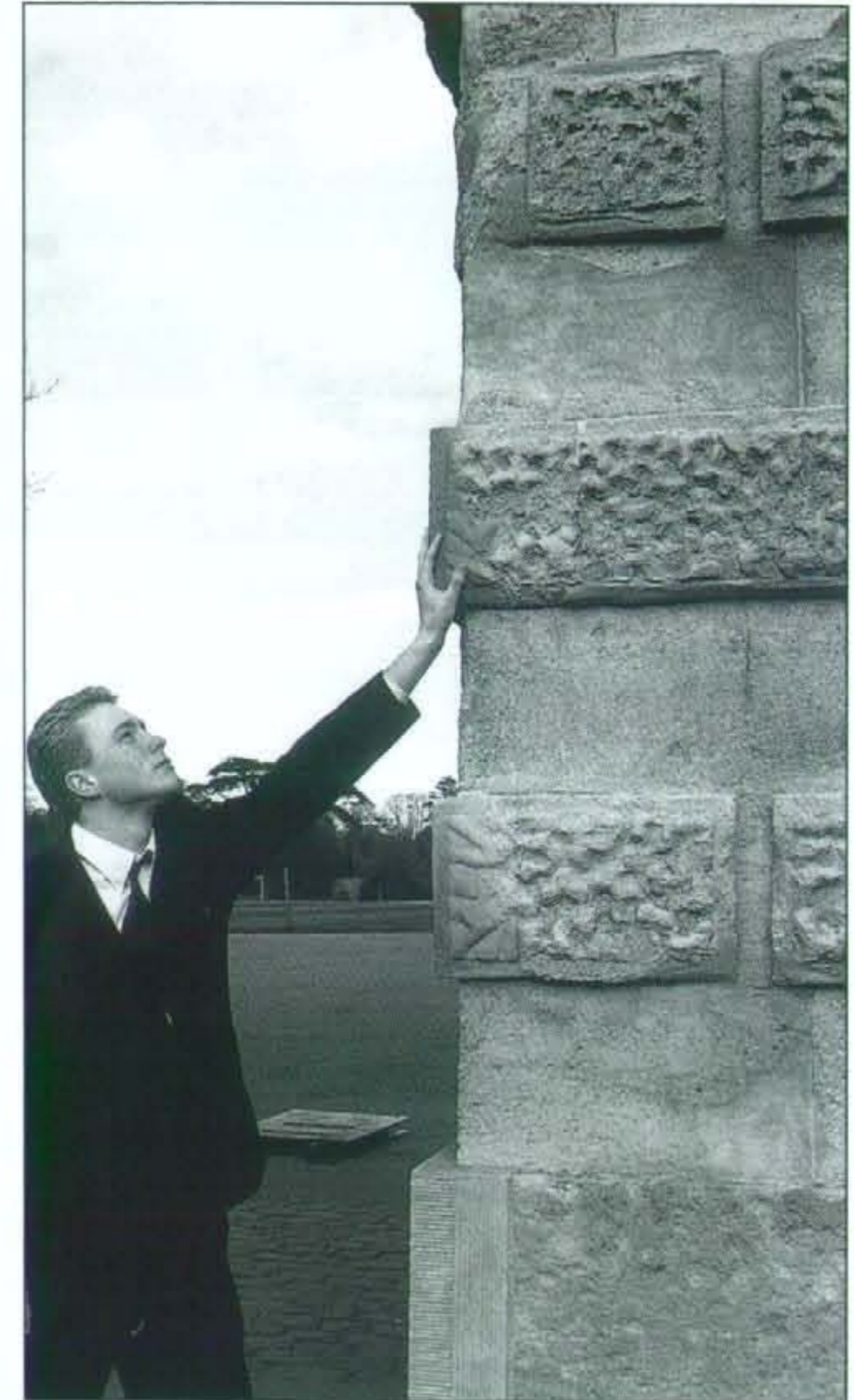
### The Colonnades

Badly weathered stone is a bigger problem in the colonnades. The podium on which the columns stand is faced with dressed stone, called ashlar. Much of the ashlar will need replacing.

The floor of the colonnades is not totally original and some of the cheaper substitutes will probably be replaced with proper flagstones. The steps are in poor condition and salt, used to stop people slipping in icy weather, has damaged parts of the stone floor nearby quite badly.

The columns in the colonnades are another area where much needs to be done. The stucco will have to be stripped off them and replaced, after the interior brick has been attended to. Their carved stone capitals are in poor condition and suffer from what might be called "volute fatigue". Several volutes have broken off already. The capitals are at present covered in nets in case further breakages occur. The stone bases of the columns are, in many cases, badly worn too.

The ceilings of the colonnades have much obvious damage. Both slate roofs are almost certainly letting in water to cause these problems. The exterior rooftops of the colonnades look anything but secure. Finally, as if all this is not enough, the back screen walls of the colonnades have some bad cracks. Yet more stripping off of stucco is indicated. The guilloche decoration on the back wall with the festoons and rosettes above will make such work on the back wall all the more tricky. But the results could be spectacular.



Duncan by a Leoni Arch, looking up at rusticated stone, which has been restored at the end nearest to him.

### The Screen Walls

The screen walls we have mentioned already. The stucco is likely to be stripped off and the brick behind repaired where necessary. As elsewhere, often the cracks in the stucco are a sign of cracks in the brick behind. The screen walls were once decorated with herms, low pillars with a human head on the top. Evidence of where they once stood can still be seen. It will be good if replacement herms are found.

The two arches by William Kent, leading into Cobham Court and Power House Yard, have very badly damaged stonework. Almost as bad are the two closed arches in the screen wall, whose stone columns have been particularly badly damaged by the weather. Exploratory work at the back of one of the Kent arches shows that it is only faced with stone at the front. At the back there is rough stucco over red brick.

William Kent was one of the big names of the eighteenth century. The present poor condition of the Kent arches is highly embarrassing for Stowe. Their restoration in the immediate future is a cause for real celebration.

So there is a vast amount to be done. If we want to get an idea of how it will all look on completion, again we get a good idea by looking at one of the Leoni arches from close up. The most badly damaged stones have been replaced by new ones. Others not quite so badly damaged have been given a protective covering. It all looks somewhat bitty from close-up but from a few steps away the whole thing blends. Purists might dislike the brand new parts, but unless such action is taken these buildings will simply collapse in the fullness of time.

There is so much more to mention, which space does not allow. But I hope enough has been said to show why the cost is so huge. The North Front has never enjoyed such a complete and careful restoration in its life before.



Where the later colonnades meet the earlier mansion: Duncan (left) points to the stuccoed base of the mansion. Charles (right) points to the ashlar of the podium of the colonnades. The rooms between the columns are nineteenth-century infill.

**The Stowe House Preservation Trust**

Ask any Stoic “Who is responsible for the North Front Restoration programme?” and the most likely answer will be “The National Trust”. Wrong! The National Trust is continuing with its huge restoration programme in the gardens but it is not involved with the House. The second answer will

probably be “The School”. Wrong again! The School was responsible for the mansion until 1997, when a new body was formed, The Stowe House Preservation Trust, its sole purpose being to preserve and safeguard the House. The North Front is just the first of six planned phases of restoration.



Preparatory work had removed the stucco from a column, revealing the brick beneath. It was later protected from the weather by the brightest of blue plastic coverings.

**The Time Scale**

If all runs according to plan, work will have started on the colonnades by the time this article is published. The official starting date for work on the colonnades is August 7th, 2000. The official completion date for the colonnades is June 30th, 2001. After that the second phase of the North Front project commences. Work on the central pavilion and the screen walls starts on July 1st 2001 with completion a year later, June 30th, 2002. A red letter day for Stowe!

**Minimising Disruption**

The contractors’ site will be located on the roadside verge to the north of the Swimming Pool, an area which should cause least disturbance. Working hours on weekdays will be from 8.00 to 5.00 and on Saturdays from 8.00 to 12.00 noon. Each area where work is in progress will be secured by a permanent hoarding of timber sheeting over 2 metres high. The hoardings will have viewing openings guarded by metal grilles, three per work area. Access to and from the site is planned to be via the National Trust Visitors’ Car Park.

Special arrangements will be put into practice to ensure that members of Temple, Grenville and Cobham Houses have quiet study areas during daytime progress of the building works. All windows directly affected by the works will be provided with opaque dust coverings. The coverings will be designed to allow ventilation and light outside contractors’ hours. Contractors’ access to internal areas of the School to install window guards, protection or dust-proofing will be limited entirely to the school holidays.



New stones are very clear in this close-up of one of the restored Leoni arches. An indication of the kind of restoration work to be carried out on other stonework on the North Front.



The dirty stucco has been taken off on one section to reveal beneath red bricks and a white decorative quoin, part of the original mansion of the 1670s.



The facing of ashlar on the podium of the Grenville colonnade. Clearly some sections of ashlar have been replaced in the past. Exploratory work shows messy rubble behind the smart dressed stone. Above are two worn stone bases of columns.



Stone slabs above ground floor windows of the central pavilion with decorative festoons and paterae. Exploratory work has revealed some brick beneath the stucco.

The holidays will be used for all the noisiest work. The removal of stucco, for example, will be done in holiday time and all the moving and fixing up of site establishment, scaffolding and hoarding works. Members of Cobham will be relieved to hear that the complete restoration work to the Kent arches and their surrounds is to be carried out during the school holidays (summer 2001).

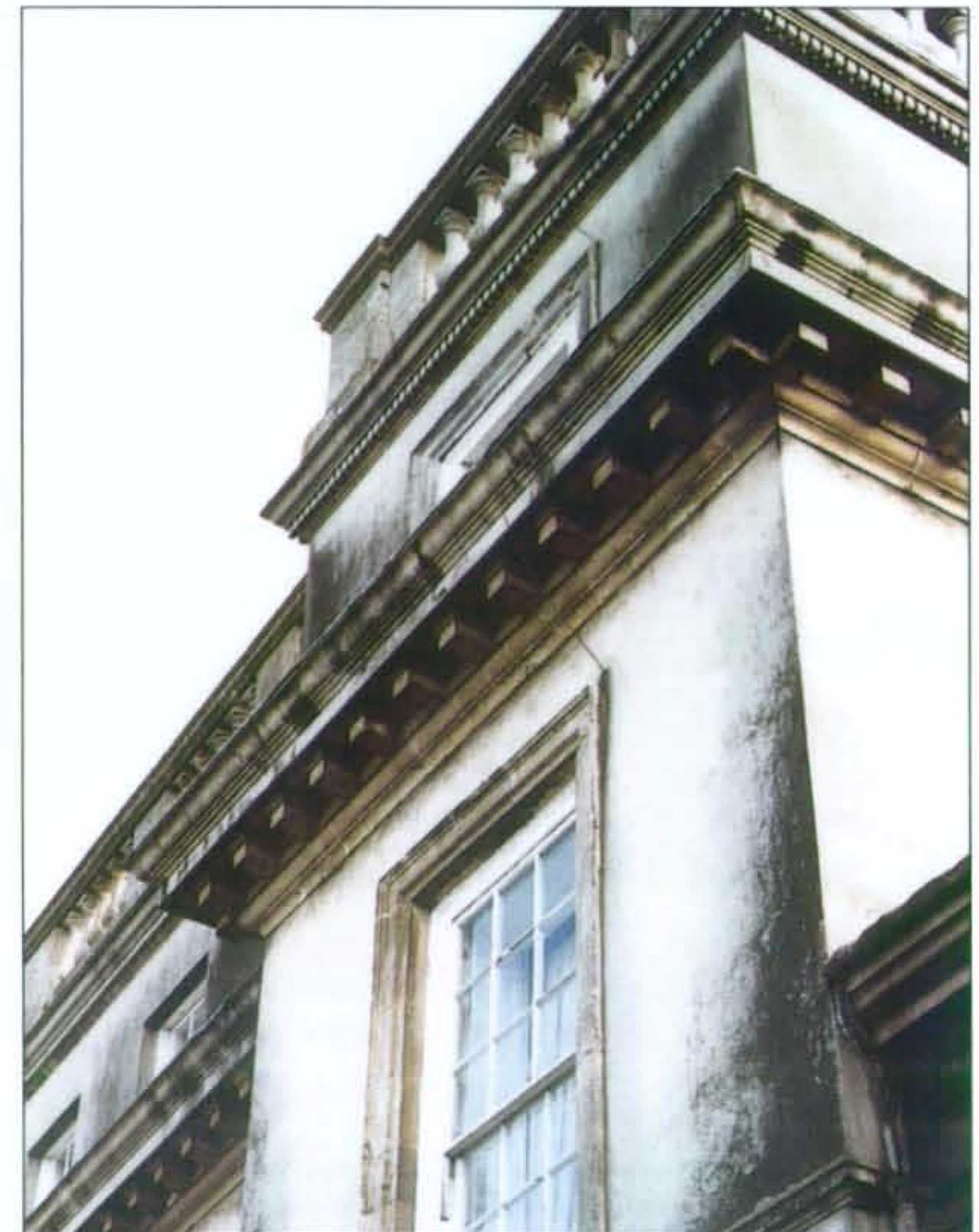
### Educational Opportunities

The Lower Sixth subsidiary course in Visual Education has included work on the North Front. Hence this article. All members of the Third Forms have done a Visual Education project on it as well. Similar projects are planned for the duration of the restoration works. A few items out of this year's Third Form projects are reproduced at the end of this article.

To help educational use of the North Front restoration programme, access has been agreed for two half-day visits to the site per term for up to 48 pupils. Photographs taken regularly during the restoration work should prove an invaluable archive for later educational use.

### Conclusion

It has been said that this is probably the most extensive restoration of an eighteenth-century mansion ever undertaken in modern times. You can well believe that as you walk along looking at it, from one Leoni arch to the other. The disruption over the course of the next two years, however much minimised by good forward planning, will nevertheless no doubt cause irritation and distress from time to time. But the sight of the North Front with its self-respect restored will be worth all the hassles. The building was officially at risk. Soon its most damaged and vulnerable part will have been saved not just for ourselves, but for many future generations.



A stone window-case decorates the window beneath the cornice. The balustrade at the top would seem to have been restored in the past. It was once decorated by flaming urns, which, being in a dangerous condition, were taken down.

## THIRD FORM INVESTIGATIONS OF THE NORTH FRONT

As part of last year's Visual Education course all third-formers did a project on the North Front and the restoration scheme

Right: Edward Pendleton examines damaged concrete steps to be replaced by ones of stone. Only the bottom row is of stone at the moment.

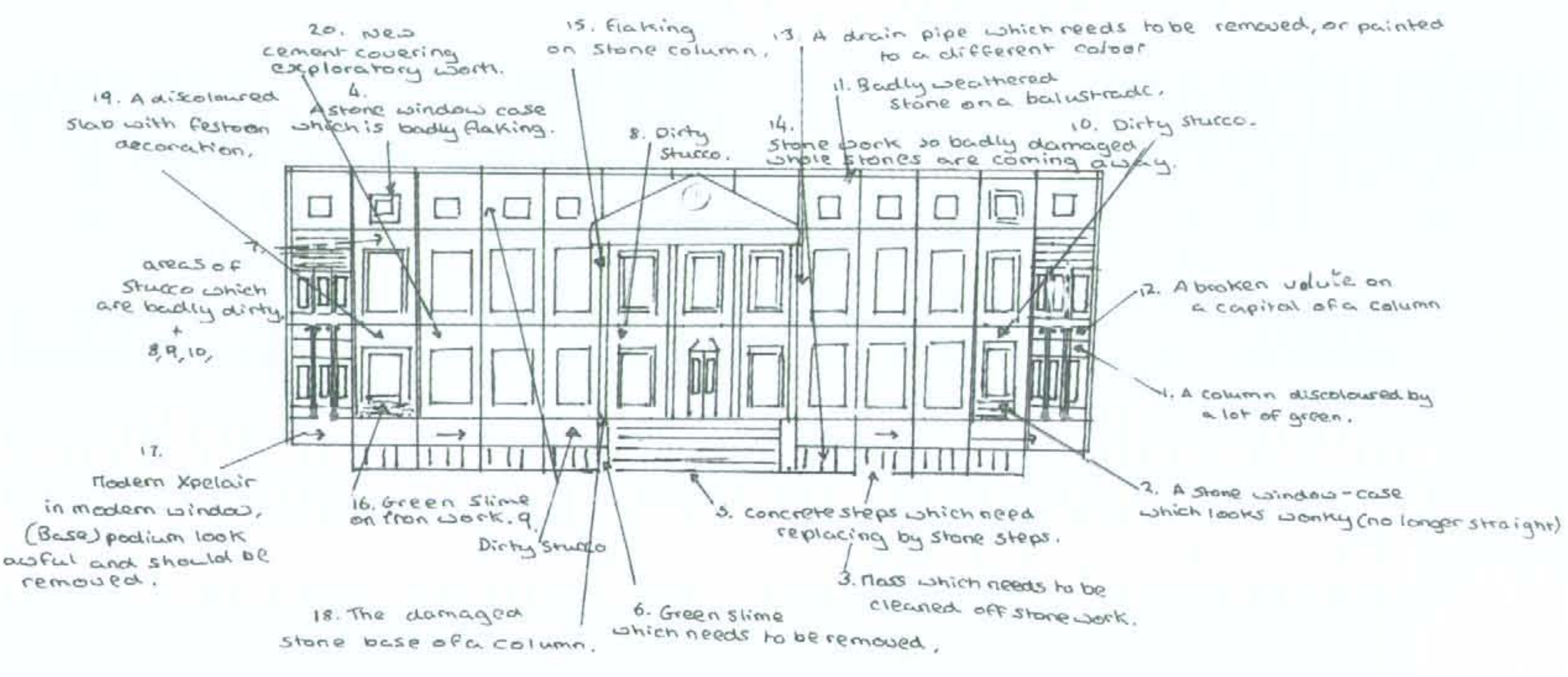


Below left: Giles Patterson where once stood a Herm. East Screen Wall

Below right: Michael French and Giles Patterson and some of the early stone screen wall by the East Kent Arch.



Ben Stevenson's sketch of the central pavilion indicating some of the problems in need of restoration.





## NORTH FRONT EXPLORATIONS: THE CENTRAL PAVILION



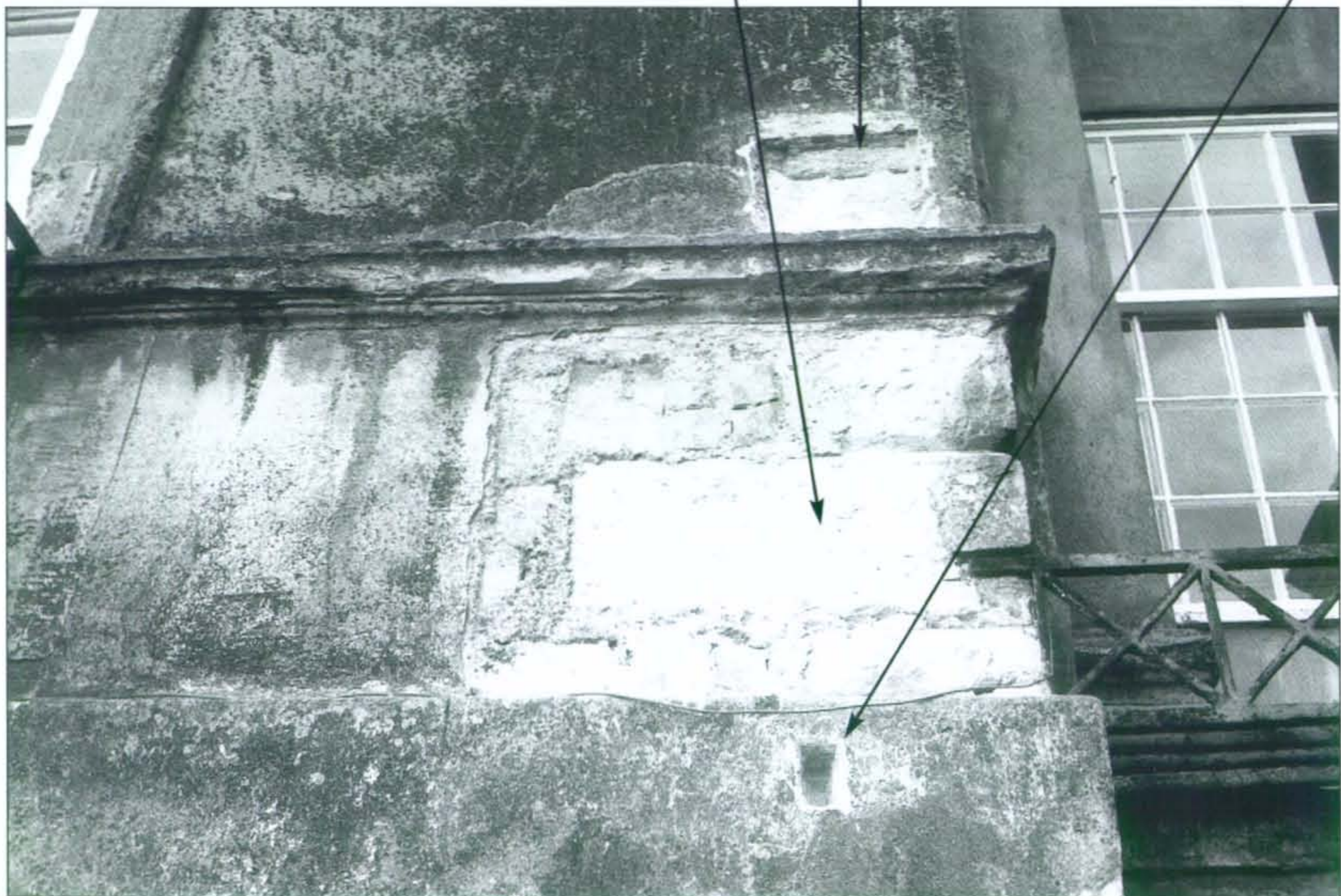
Look to the right of the ironwork and some exploratory work can be seen.

Below: The same explorations closer up.

The top rectangle shows part of a stone quoin and brickwork (part of the 1670s house).

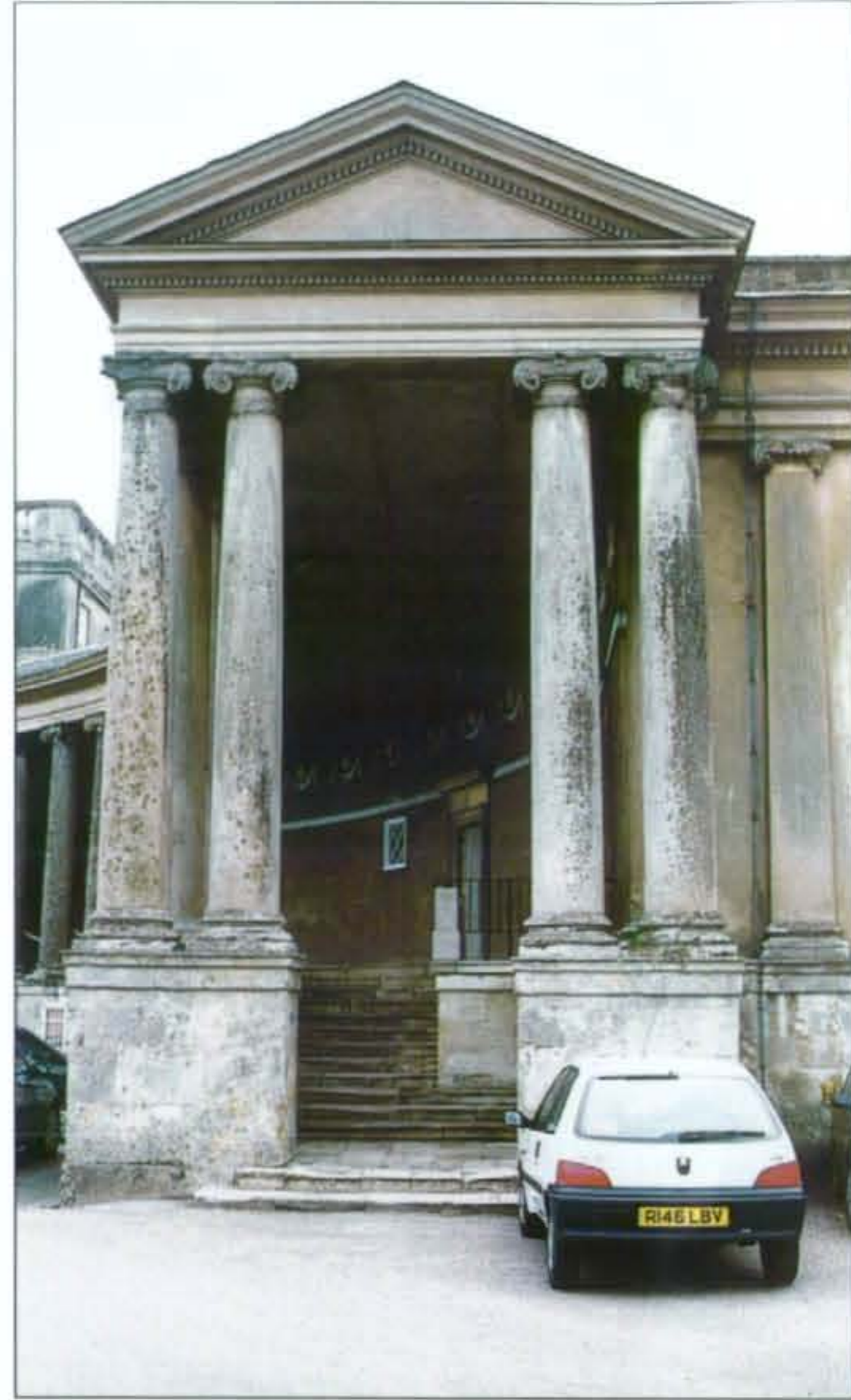
The big middle exploration has shown that this section is not stone but brick covered with a stucco simulating stone. A large decorative stone quoin also has been revealed.

The bottom rectangle shows how a hole has been cut into the stone to check its depth.



From a 3C project

## THE WEST COLONNADES



Photographs from some of the leading projects: Barney Baber, Joshua Banks, Robert Berntsson, James Elwes, Michael French, Charles Gardner, Oliver Hamilton, George Margesson, Alex Orchard-Lisle, George Prideaux and Harry Thuillier.



# THE EAST COLONNADES



## THE BOURBON AVENUE OF RED CEDARS

A Stoic Investigation

*There is so much felling of old trees and re-planting of new ones that we rarely look twice when passing a new pile of ex-trees, now turned into logs and awaiting removal. On the way to a game of hockey one Spring day, however, we happened to stop and look at some recent felling at the end of the avenue of trees leading up the slope to the Bourbon. We noticed that four trees, a sixth of the avenue, had been felled. And we wondered why.*

We all know this avenue well. In the summer it gives welcome shade as we walk back towards the Grecian Valley and the Running Track at the end of games. But only now for the first time did we spot a little cairn nearby. The monument contains an inscription which, sixty years on, is still very legible:

This avenue of Red Cedars  
was planted in 1940 to the memory of  
I.A. Clarke (1890-1939), Housemaster,  
who loved Stowe and cared  
especially for its trees.

It is too long ago for there to be anyone at Stowe who would have known I. A. Clarke, so we did some research in back numbers of this magazine. Ian Clarke, it transpired, was one of the pillars of the School in its first twenty years. He was the master who, on May 11th 1923, met the train in London which brought a large number of the first ninety-nine Stoics up to school for the first day of the first term. A much respected Scotsman, whose motto was "Be thorough!", Ian Clarke became the first Housemaster of Grenville when it opened in the Autumn of 1923 and, eleven years later, on his marriage, he moved from Grenville to become the first Housemaster of Walpole. He died after only five years in that post, aged forty-nine.

It is appropriate that he should be remembered near the Bourbon, because sport was one of his passions. He was an outstanding rugby coach (despite having been seriously wounded three times in the 1st World War). A former Oxford



Rugby blue, he coached the 1st XV for many years and was responsible for its rapid rise to success. Under his inspiration Grenville won the House Rugby Cup no less than seven consecutive years. Ian Clarke was also a keen athlete (a Half-blue at Oxford) and golfer. He played a leading role in the development of the first school golf course in the 1920s. He also played a large part in the creation of the Bourbon Field, planning and supervising the planting of both shelter belts of trees in the 1930s. Shortly before his death he was planning the avenue of trees which subsequently became his memorial.

His interest in the trees of Stowe was an expert one, for he had worked for a time with the Forestry Commission in Scotland. For many years he taught forestry to Stoics in subsidiary time.

He loved nothing more than leading groups of Stoic foresters around the grounds, doing much to rescue the landscape gardens from the wilderness they had become. "He seemed to know all the trees in the grounds," wrote J.F. Roxburgh, "and he could provide detailed information about any of them if required. Many rare or interesting trees might well have gone unnoticed if he had not been there to call attention to them. One returned from a walk with him filled with new knowledge and with a desire to acquire yet more."

Grief at his untimely death, which coincided with the outbreak of the 2nd World War, was expressed by the Headmaster in *The Stoic* of September 1939 in a four page tribute: "By doing what he did he became one of the creators of Stowe. By being what he was he helped to give it some of the qualities of which it is most proud."

Such was the man who is honoured by the avenue of red cedars. We spent time trying to establish the reason why these four have been felled. We wondered in the first instance if it was something to do with opening up the view from the Temple of Concord and Victory. Sixty years does not seem to be particularly old for a cedar. However, it seems that they have been chopped down because they had become dangerous.

The effect of their removal is serious. It has considerably damaged the integrity of the memorial. We would urge a replanting of red cedars, so that future generations may enjoy to the full this attractive memorial to a fine forester and a notable contributor to the early years of the School.

THE EDITORS



Above: The top of Ian Clarke's avenue in Summer

Below: The bottom of Ian Clarke's avenue, Spring 2000, with one of the four felled trees in the foreground



## A LION'S LAMENT

During the current restoration of Lord Cobham's Pillar by the National Trust four lions were taken down from their usual resting-place. Here, in an exclusive interview, one of the lions puts his misgivings into verse.



"As guard of this pillar (Lord Cobham's in fact)  
I ought to be treated with care and with tact..



A King of the jungle should never be found  
Like me in this photo, dumped down on the ground.

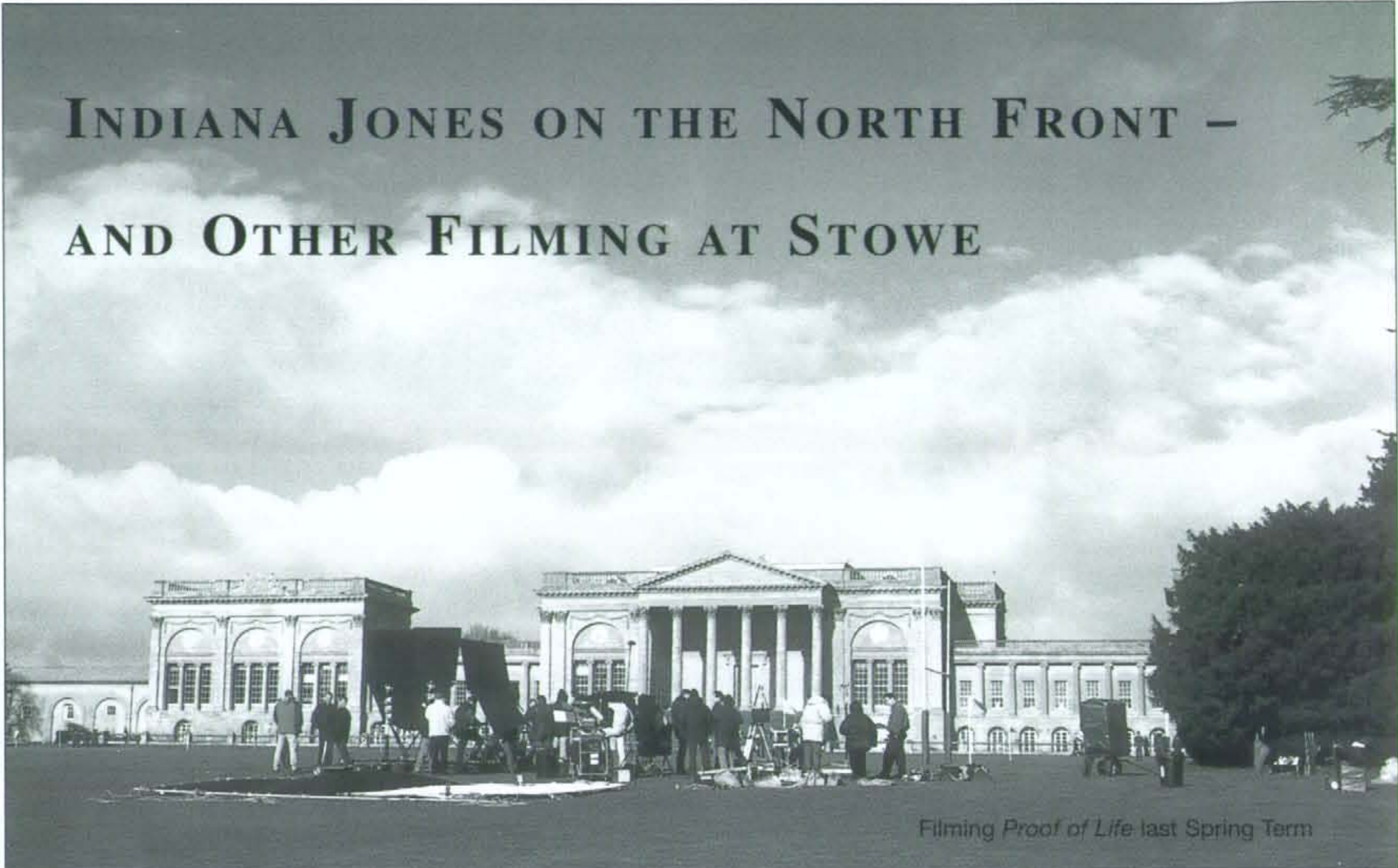


And look at these fellows, my very best mates,  
All lords of the jungle, cast down by the fates.



The view they've been given is simply the dregs.  
It's strange they have not got their tails 'twixt their legs."

## INDIANA JONES ON THE NORTH FRONT – AND OTHER FILMING AT STOWE



Filming *Proof of Life* last Spring Term

During the Spring Term a number of Stoics were involved in acting as extras in sequences being made at Stowe for a new film, *Proof Of Life*. ZENO TRAPP kept an eye on things, and here writes of all the more recent examples of filming at Stowe.

Berlin in the 1930s. In Nazi Germany's capital a bonfire of books is going up in flames as part of a night-time rally in front of a very classical looking building. Massed ranks of soldiers everywhere. Loud music. Hysteria. And crowds surge around the figure of Adolf Hitler himself.

In reality, however, we are at Stowe rather than Berlin and the time is closer to 1989 than 1939. It is the North Front which is decorated with large red Nazi banners and banks of floodlights. All the action is going on between the colonnades. The two stars of Steven Spielberg's blockbuster, *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade*, Harrison Ford and Sean Connery, who play father and son, are both present on the set.

The filming was done late one night in the summer holidays, and the crowds of grey-uniformed soldiers were all local people, including some Stoics, working as extras. Steven Spielberg directed from the top of a scaffolding tower, not far from George. The filming may have only lasted a few hours and the Berlin scene (as shown in the film) only three minutes, but the preparations beforehand took several days.

It is interesting to watch the film today and see the great detail and care which goes into filming. The Stowe sequence gives an insight into Spielberg's great art of story-telling via arresting visual images.

The first image we are given is a close-up of the flames as the pile of books burn. (Most of the books were, in fact, carefully cut up old telephone directories.) The camera pans to a group of marching soldiers. Cut to the burning books again, this time a little further away. Then cut to a third shot of the books, much further away, and pan to hordes of soldiers marching past with banners and blazing torches. This shot gives us the first idea of what is happening. There is a saluting platform at the top of the North Front steps, where the Nazi leaders are based, and the soldiers are marching past it.

So far there's been no dialogue, but great atmosphere has been created by sound effects. A military band playing a march. Mixed with crowd noise, including some "Sieg Heil"s and the crackling of flames.

The next shot is a highly complicated and long one. From the marchers in front of the Grenville colonnades it pans past a line of period limousines, parked in front of the screen walls, to Harrison Ford, dressed as a Nazi officer, adjusting his uniform as he emerges from one of the cars. The camera now pans right with him until Sean Connery, watching the parade with his back to the playing fields, comes into the picture. Connery only has one line to deliver at Stowe, but it's a good one. "My boy, we're pilgrims in an unholy land."



The North Front draped for *Indiana Jones*, 1989



This is a splendid cue for a cut to a close-up of sinister Nazi toadies on the podium, panning to Adolf Hitler himself. Cut to the burning books. Cut to close-up of heroine-turned-“baddy”, actress Alison Doody. She looks upset. She obviously likes books. Cut back to books. Cut back to Alison Doody, still looking upset. But very fetching in a black Tyrolean hat, worn at a jaunty angle, and resplendent in false eyelashes and red, red lipstick. Cut to young boys flinging more books onto the bonfire.

For the most important section of his Stowe sequence, the encounter between Harrison Ford and Alison Doody, Spielberg chose the Grenville Colonnades. It begins with a long, panning shot of the top half of Alison Doody walking away from the mansion along the Colonnades, keeping close to the columns. The rally can be seen going on behind her in a blurred kind of way. The camera, which must be mounted on rails, follows her past eight columns. Indiana Jones suddenly comes into this long-held shot, catching her up from behind. Those of us who know Stowe will realise there is no way Indiana could have appeared from this direction when we saw him only moments ago speaking to Connery close to the playing field. But it's a highly effective shot. Loads of atmosphere. And at last some dialogue.

Ford: Fraulein Doctor, where is it? [He's after his father's book on the Holy Grail.]

Doody: How did you get here? [They are still walking past columns.]

Ford: [pinning her against the 3rd last column]: Where is it? I want it!

[He unzips her black leather coat, amazingly finds the book, and rips it away from her.]

Doody: You came back for the book. Why?

[Harrison Ford starts walking away from her, past three more columns.]

Ford: My father didn't want it incinerated.

[Alison Doody moves in front of him, stopping him.]

Doody: Is that what you think of me?

[They are now between the final two columns, the marching still going on behind them and the flag-bedecked North Front very visible.]

Doody: I believe in the Grail not the Swastika.

Ford: You stood with the enemy and betrayed everything the Grail stands for. Who gives a damn what you think?

Doody: You do!

[Indiana puts his hands round her throat, to show he doesn't.]

Ford: All I have to do is squeeze.

Doody: All I have to do is scream.

Indiana disappears out of the shot. The camera lingers on Alison Doody's wistful face as she watches him go. End of a very long and tremendously effective little sequence, done in three takes, seamlessly put together.

We next see Harrison Ford emerging from the end of the Grenville Colonnades as he mutters to his father “I've got it. Let's get the hell out of here”.

Spielberg is always looking for humour in the film and he can't resist ending the scene with a good gag, though one which still has tension in it.

Indiana and his father, though trying to leave, get swept up by the crowd and pushed back into the rally. Suddenly Indiana finds himself face to face with Hitler, who's been signing a few autographs. Ford stares at Hitler, gulps and then

offers him the precious book on the holy grail. Hitler looks back at him uncomprehendingly. A dramatic pause. The two are hemmed in by the military (including several Stoics). Cut to the frontispiece of the book, and a hand signing 'Adolf Hitler'. Cut to Hitler handing back the book very seriously. Cut to Harrison Ford equally serious. We have to work out what they're both thinking. Then cut to an aerodrome and the next great sequence, that of the airship.

A week's preparation and filming for three minutes on the big screen. That's what the cinema is all about. Putting a huge investment of time, skill and money into a project in the hope of getting a huge amount of money out of it. Art sometimes comes into the equation too, but the Indiana series, though acquiring quite a cult following, is hardly art. Just good box-office high adventure.

That's the same too with a more recent offering, *The Avengers* (1998), directed by Jeremiah Chechik and starring Ralph Fiennes, Uma Thurman and Sean Connery (this time as the bad guy). For all its lavish publicity and glorified previews this turned out to be a somewhat mediocre high-budget caper, and, having been panned by the critics, it couldn't have done too well at the box office.

Stowe was used as part of the evil professor's castle, just for interior scenes. Two rooms were used. There was a one minute sequence in the Marble Hall and three different sequences in the Music Room (intercut with ones taken at Blenheim), lasting in total a minute and a half.

It is an interesting comment on film-making that these wonderfully dramatic rooms were not used just as they are. A great deal of time was put into disguising them. The white paint of the Marble Hall, for example, had too clean a feel for a place where the evil Connery was to torture the heroine. It was therefore painted beige. (The film-makers offered to repaint it as it was, but the School liked the beige so retained it.) They also added one big prop, a huge “torture device” on which Connery has Uma Thurman (Mrs Peel) laid out and captive. Heavy blue lights play throughout the scene, further disguising the room. Indeed, there are only two sequences which show the room at all. One looks up at Connery's face behind which is visible a bit of ceiling. The other is a quick shot by a camera placed on high which shows some of the columns and the room's oval shape.

The crass dialogue is spaced over no less than 12 takes:

Connery: So glad you could come.

Thurman: I thought I'd drop in.

Connery: Comfortable?

Thurman: How cosy!

Connery: Just the two of us. Like spoons in a drawer.

Thurman: Perhaps I can help you if I know what you want.

Connery: The only thing I want is you.

Thurman: How touching!

Connery: Join me, Emma. Join me in the work.

Thurman: You would have to say 'Please!'

Connery: But of course, if you insist. [He sticks needle into her.]

Thurman: Aaah!

Connery: Please! When you awake, you will remember nothing, remember nothing.

The whole scene is dominated by a revolving metal disc above Thurman, part of the torture apparatus. That and the device put over her face, with vague connotations of



Hannibal Lector, help create the necessary atmosphere of menace. The blue lighting is a huge success and Sean Connery puts over his flip lines with great panache. Uma Thurman, by contrast, struggles. In sounding scared rather than flip she loses the Mrs Peel character almost totally.

There is no dialogue in the Music Room sequences. In the first we see Connery dancing with the swooning Thurman from the Marble Hall (torture device in background) through the double doors and into the Music Room. Next he is laying the swooning Thurman on a four-poster bed, situated at the far end of the room between the windows. He bends over her, removes a scarf from her throat caressingly and is bending over to kiss her when a telephone rings outside and he



Above: The morning after the burning of the books  
Below: Zeno Trapp where Harrison Ford met Alison Doody



irritably stalks out of the room. In his absence, in the final sequence, Thurman wakes up, staggers across to the door to the Library and is seen going through it. Shots in this sequence are all blurred to suggest what she is seeing.

For this short, one and a half minutes of film a lot of things were brought into the room in addition to the bed. Lining both sides were elaborate candelabra, complete with burning candles, set on marble-topped, three-legged period tables. A fire is blazing in the fireplace, which has been given a grand clock with gilt cupids. Two more candelabra, the candles alight, have been stuck onto the mirror above. The windows are draped with heavy brocade, either side of the four-poster. The oak floor has been left uncovered, but behind the rows of candelabra are other pieces of period furniture.

There is one magnificent shot of Connery's head, close-up, flanked by candelabra. And the view of him stomping out of the room is very effective, taken from low down and giving a good view of the Apollo wall painting. There is one excellent shot of two painted double doors, with its scenes of Venus and Cupid, as Thurman tries to escape.

No specific use has been made by the director of the wall paintings. He seems more interested in obtaining a general effect of bizarre grandeur, to which the outlines of the panels contribute quite a lot. It is, however, the imported props which create the greatest atmosphere, particularly the hundreds of lit candles.

Another recent film to use Stowe was the latest James Bond, *The World Is Not Enough*. The Gothic Temple makes a suitably sinister background for the short walk Pierce Brosnan takes at a funeral early on. It is hard to equate this brief clip with the army of lorries and technicians which took up two days' residence at Stowe for the filming.

The grounds were also used for the BBC's televised serialisation of Thackeray's *Vanity Fair*, made two years ago. This brought some highly attractive early nineteenth-century coaches to Stowe. The director, Marc Munden, seems to have fallen under the spell of the gardens, for virtually each shot (of what was meant to be a park in London) featured a new folly. Rawdon Crawley met Amelia Sedley down by the lake. The Temple of Friendship, the Gothic Temple, the Palladian Bridge and the Cascades were all dwelt upon during this sequence. The odious father of George Osborne worked out his dastardly plans for his grandson whilst sitting in a smart coach somewhere near the Temple of Ancient Virtue, looking



Pierce Brosnan and the Gothic Temple  
(*The World Is Not Enough*)

across the river to the British Worthies where his grandson was playing with his friends. Finally, and most spectacularly, Becky Sharp wheeled and dealt with the awful Marquis in front of the Corinthian Arch. The Marquis' coach and pair, complete with two footmen, were carefully placed for maximum impact right in front of the arch. It was a great example of how a background of interesting and attractive buildings can enhance the atmosphere of a period film.

It is not just the place which attracts film-making. From David Niven onwards several Old Stoics have got involved in the industry. Film producer Simon Channing-Williams is a good recent example. His credits include Oscar and Golden Globe nominations and a Palme D'Or for *Secrets and Lies* at the Cannes Film Festival. His most recent production, *Topsy Turvy*, won further awards in America this year and two Oscars. A backstage account of Gilbert and Sullivan's run-up to the first performance of *The Mikado*, *Topsy Turvy* makes for superb entertainment.

When I spoke to Simon Channing-Williams at the preview of *Topsy Turvy*, he was quick to praise not only the director, Mike Leigh, but editorial skill which often goes unnoticed and unacknowledged. "It is almost frightening," he said, "how much power the Editor has over the final version of a motion picture. In most people's minds it is the Director who decides the final outcome. The reality is very different. It is the Editor who puts the different strips of raw film together and who is, in his own way, as important as the Director."

The role of the Film Producer, as opposed to the Director, is often overlooked by the public, but it is they who carry all the risks. They employ everybody involved in a film production and are responsible for the way all the various parts of the enterprise fit together. The costumes, make-up, set designs and budget are all under the Producer's control. Raising funds for a film is by no means always easy. "For *Topsy Turvy*," says Simon Channing-Williams, "we were raising funds for a film whose script was more or less having to be made up as we went along."

Matthew Vaughn is another Old Stoic in the film production business. At only 27, he produced one of the big successes of the resurgent British film industry, *Lock, Stock and Two Smoking Barrels* (1998). Matthew bought the script from Guy Ritchie and employed him as Director, although he had never done any directing before. The job of raising money for such an enterprise must have been very difficult but Matthew Vaughn achieved it. The highly watchable gangster caper won a BAFTA award and now Vaughn and Ritchie have changed from the role of outsiders in the industry to being able to negotiate deals with big fish like Columbia. Their next film, *Snatch*, will star Brad Pitt.



Matthew Vaughn (right) chats with Guy Ritchie

And so to *Proof Of Life*, the latest connection between Stowe and the film industry. It was made by the same company behind *The Avengers*, CastleRock. Last February a large number of Stoics turned out on the South Front in rugby and CCF kit as backup for the shooting of scenes for the new thriller. Fifth-former Merlin Hanbury-Tenison beat off a lot of Stoic competition to get a small speaking part. He plays the son of actor Russell Crowe (star of *The Insider* and *Gladiator*). Crowe is a mercenary hired to retrieve hostages for half the value of the ransoms. Stowe was used as the military academy of his son whom Crowe visits before every mission.

Crowe's co-star, Meg Ryan, did not come to Stowe for the filming. The director was Taylor Hackford, known for *The Devil's Advocate*. Some of the filming was to be done in Ecuador. Perhaps that is why the release date is not expected before the Autumn of next year.

Stowe, therefore, has a very strong link in several ways with the film industry. The only gap, at the moment, is the lack of Old Stoic film stars. Who will be the next David Niven? Or Lyndon Brook? Or Brook Williams? The public schools these days turn out a great number of professional actors. Several present Stoic actors have been doing well on on the stage and TV, like Christopher Villiers and Orlando Seale. So it is quite possible that in the not too distant future we shall be seeing Old Stoic stars up there on the big screen. Perhaps in films by Simon Channing-Williams or Matthew Vaughn?



Filming of *Proof of Life*, Spring Term 2000



Russell Crowe chats to Merlin Hanbury-Tenison



## THE NORTH FRONT RESTORATION

Michael Bevington  
gives the background to

### THE STOWE HERMS

Stowe has long been famous for its statues. You cannot visit the School without seeing King George astride his horse, keeping a wary eye on all arrivals at the North Front. On the South Front skyline you can make out classical deities holding their appropriate attributes, such as a sheaf of corn or a cap of liberty. Apart from the 16 British Worthies, however, most of the famous groups of statues were sold off in 1921 and 1922 before Stowe was reborn as a school. Many of them are now in national museums or major private collections. Only under recent phases of restoration, by the National Trust and the Stowe House Preservation Trust, has it proved possible to install casts of the originals.

The most curious set of statues once at Stowe must be the large group of herms, possibly 20 or more in number. These are imposing but distinctly odd stone objects. They boast comparatively normal life-sized heads set on top of squared shoulders which merge into tall quadrangular columns. These narrow towards the bottom until they fade into a small square plinth and base. They were often propped against a wall but sometimes, and more impressively, stood out on their own.

Like most statues at Stowe they had a classical origin. Herms were common in Greece and especially in Athens, where many were dedicated to Hermes (the Roman god Mercury), from whom they thus took their name. Hermes was worshipped in this way as a protector of gardens and as a male fertility god. His virile attributes were displayed in ancient times with no concessions to modesty or decency, but at Stowe the herms were emasculated with mere curls of

foliage half-way down the column, both on male and female figures. Such statues were often dedicated to other gods, and this was the case at Stowe, with clear representations of Minerva and Bacchus amongst others. Thus the correct name for a herm in the guise of Minerva, the Greek goddess Athene, is Hermathena. Many English books call these and similar statues 'terms', probably because 'term' is a known English word and appears related to the Latin *terminus*, in the sense of a head terminating a column. The term 'term', however, confuses the sophisticated and varied Greek statues with the much more crude and elementary stone pillars used as boundary marks in honour of the Roman god Terminus. It would be correct to call them 'terminal herms', as was the case elsewhere in the early 19th century, but this may confound rather than clarify the issue!

The Stowe herms include a wide variety of both male and female figures. It is not easy to identify them all with certainty, since several seem to be of a general female type. Arguments can be made for five male classical deities – Jupiter, Mercury, Sol, Bacchus (twice) and Pan – and five females – perhaps Diana, Venus, Juno, Minerva and Flora (twice). The two further bearded males may represent a philosopher and a poet.

The first record of the herms at Stowe is in the description of 1738. From the Grand Terrace, bounding the southern side of the Garden beside the Octagon and 11 Acre Lakes, "branch out several smaller Walks of Grass and Gravel enclosed with Cutt hedges at the Corners of which are placed various Busts (on Pedestals) of different forms, after the manner of the Terminus's of the Ancient." Thus at this period some of Stowe's herms were residing in the south-west corner of Home Park and near the Temple of Venus and Gibbs' Building (now the site of Queen Caroline's Statue).

Given Lord Cobham's strongly iconographical themes in this part of the garden, with classical messages painted on the Temple of Venus and many of the nearby buildings, it is tempting to see the group of herms in the same light. Firstly, herms suited the Arcadian landscape of the Eleven Acre Lake and Home Park, laid out in the new style of natural landscaping: Hermes was often known as the Cyllenian from his birth at Mount Cyllene in Arcadia. Secondly, the phallic nature of most Athenian herms would suit the Priapic associations which can be seen in the Temple of Venus. Thirdly, the very number of Stowe herms, of which at least 16 or even 20 are known, fits as a multiple of the number four which was sacred to Hermes. Fourthly, and most intriguingly, Plato records that at Athens herms were used to convey moral messages carved on their sides. The great exponent of this was Hipparchus with his "Do not deceive a friend", triply relevant to Lord Cobham's great argument with his former ally, Sir Robert Walpole, regarded as both greedy, tyrannical and profligate: Plato's account comes in his *Philokertes* or *The Greedy*; Hipparchus was famous for his part in the tyranny at Athens and he was murdered following a slight over a homosexual lovers' tiff. If all this seems rather obscure to the average garden visitor, it must be remembered that a year before this record of the herms, other relatively obscure Greeks, such as Lycurgus and Epaminondas, were chosen for full-length statues as part of the satire in the Temple of Ancient Virtue. By Roman times herms were some of the best known of Greek statues. Cicero thought them ideally suited to his gymnasium or 'academy', where he thought a Hermathena would lend an aura of wisdom and manliness.



The Hermathena by the Western Screen Wall, with part of the Stowe Fire Brigade, at the end of the 19th century

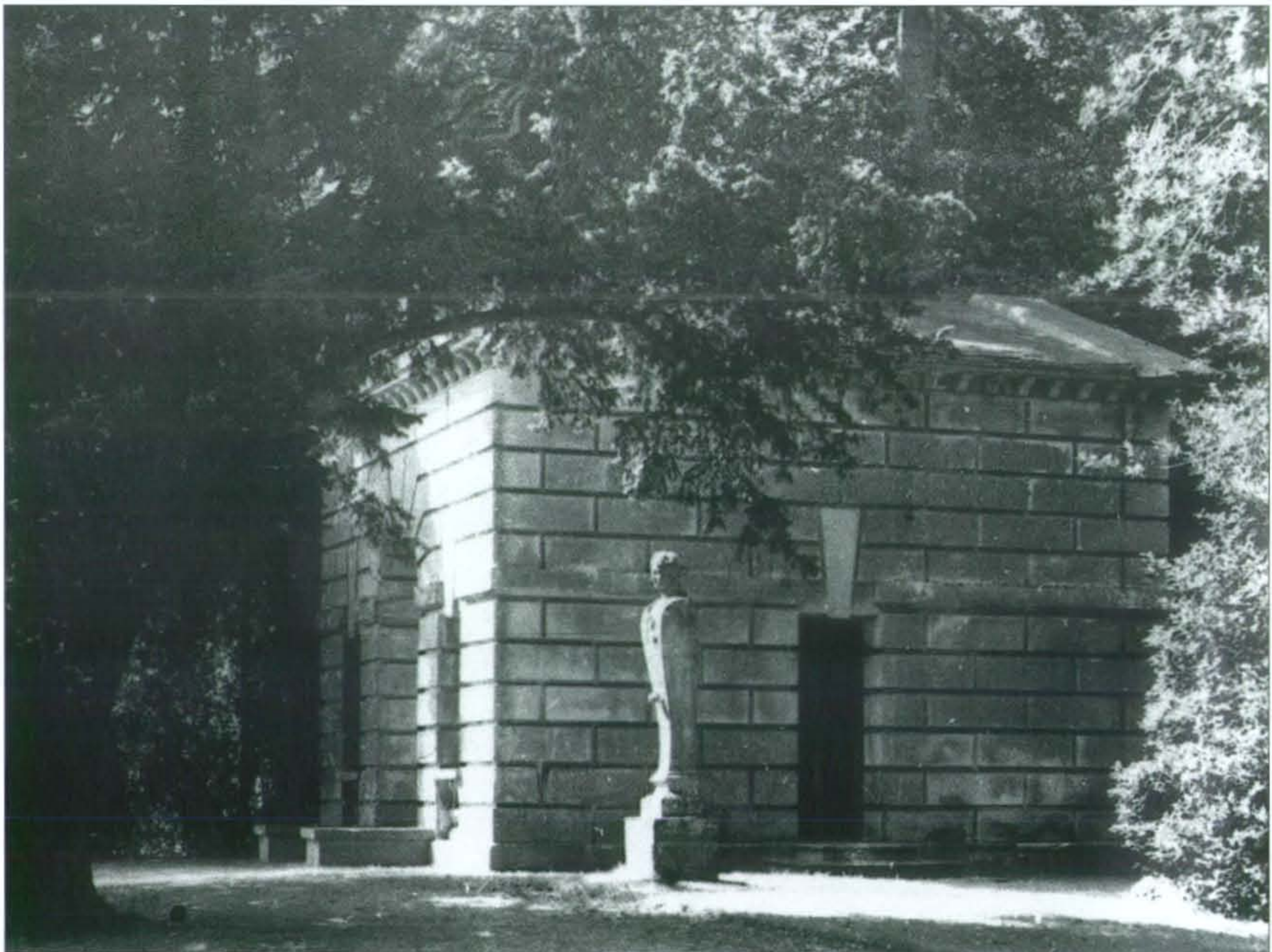
In fact, just as Cicero used herms to adorn his house, it is tempting to think that the banks of the Eleven Acre Lake were not the original location of the Stowe herms. More likely is the exterior of Stowe House, such as the two link corridors later rebuilt as the Library and State Dining Room. These are shown in Rigaud's drawing of 1733 as each having seven bays, and each bay has what appears to be a statue in its niche. If repeated on the north side, there would be room for up to 28 such herms. When the corridors were rebuilt into the galleries in the late 1730s and 1740s, the herms would have had to be re-housed. Moreover, it is just possible that before this they resided on the northern or upper part of the Great Parterre, to the south of the house. The bird's-eye view of 1719 or 1724 shows up to 32 herm-like objects here, unless they were carefully trained evergreen trees. They were certainly swept away by 1733 and thus could have found their way to the link corridors on the house, as suggested above, and/or to the surroundings of the Eleven Acre Lake when it was constructed in about 1731. Indeed, the slight naivety of many of the herms may make a date in the earlier 1720s more likely than one a decade later.

There is little evidence for the location of the herms at Stowe from 1738 until the 1760s and 1770s. As the area around Home Park was further naturalised in the 1750s, any formal arrangement of the herms would have become outdated and no doubt they were soon moved elsewhere. Bickham's engraving of the Saxon Altar of 1750 shows a single herm at the centre; this would have restored some sculpture after Rysbrack's seven deities had left the area by 1744. Rowlandson may have been inspired by this engraving much later when he depicted seven herms replacing the

original deities – probably the result of his imagination and not reality.

By 1768 there were four herms against the outside of the corner piers at the Fane of Pastoral Poetry. The Fane was moved to its present site in 1764 and it would have been easy to take with it four of the herms which used to stand relatively close, according to the 1738 account. (Rigaud's drawing of 1733 clearly shows around the Fane not herms but plinths of a different shape for the British Worthies.) The four herms around the Fane had gone by 1807, the date of Nattes' view, but they could possibly be the ones listed in 1839 as being in Stone Yard, with lead heads. This would presumably mean that Earl Temple decided he did not want a collection of random classical deities at his new fane, but herms with specific features, perhaps those of key politicians of the day, as is evident elsewhere at Stowe at this time. As a result these herms must have had their necks broken, and this is true of at least three of the four herms which by 1914 and until 1921 were outside the Menagerie, now the Stowe Shop. This group is composed of Pan, Flora and two females. The National Trust hopes to make casts of four herms for the Fane of Pastoral Poetry and, if these seem to be the right ones, it will be interesting to see whether it is thought proper to restore lead heads. Metal heads on stone plinths, of course, followed classical precedent. Cicero speaks of the "considerable delight" which such herms gave him; Earl Temple could well have been imitating this feature.

By 1773 eight of the herms were moved to the Screen Walls on the North Front, stretching in pairs either side of the two Kent Arches. At this time the Screen Walls were faced with small stone blocks and were only just over half their



A herm near the Temple of Bacchus in about 1910



The herm of Pan which was outside the Menagerie before 1914 until 1921

present height; they were raised in about 1776. If the assumptions in the rest of this article are correct, we can work out which statues were in this group, but not their exact location, except for the one which can be identified in several photographs, namely Minerva (the Hermathena), on the far left of the Western Screen Wall.

Earl Temple clearly intended that these eight herms should feature on his new North Front and it is right that the Stowe House Preservation Trust intends to install casts of them. At least two different orders could be suggested, both keeping pairs with mirror patterns of neck-bands across their chests. One arrangement would provide for pairs of male and female deities; the other, more fascinatingly, could replicate some of the order in which such gods are shown in the climax of the famous frieze on the Parthenon. Thus (from left to right) there would be, on the east: Bacchus, Mercury, Juno and Jupiter, and on the west: Minerva, Diana, Sol and Flora. In this way Earl Temple could have been boasting a comparison between Stowe and the Parthenon at Athens, each flanked at the entrance by Jupiter or Zeus, the king of the gods, and Minerva or Athene, the goddess of the arts.

Four more herms were recorded in 1848, as two pairs, one in Chapel Yard, now Grenville Court, and the other flanking the Temple of Bacchus. Although they were listed in the *Annotated Sale Catalogue* as sold, until recently it had seemed unlikely that they were actually removed from Stowe. This is because by 1914 and until 1921, two herms were still flanking the Temple of Bacchus and two had been added to the North Front, one to each bastion on the Screen Walls. West of the Temple of Bacchus was a magnificent bearded herm, perhaps a poet with a laurel wreath, while to the east was a smiling Bacchus wearing a vine-leaf fillet. The western Bastion on the Screen Walls had possibly a Roman emperor or philosopher. The recent realisation by Mr Kevin

Rogers, however, that four herms at Mottisfont Abbey near Romsey appear somewhat similar to the known Stowe herms, raises the possibility that the four were actually removed in 1848. Two of them have neck-bands with ties of equal length, perhaps suited to the central niches of the seven bays of the link corridors. They could have been the four herms once at the Fane of Pastoral Poetry before 1807, but the fact that Nattes' view of the Temple of Bacchus does not show them there two years later suggests that they were not moved directly from the Fane to their 1848 positions.

In the 1921 sale there were 16 herms at Stowe, 8 against the North Front Screen Walls, 2 against the Screen Wall Bastions, 4 against the Menagerie and 2 near the Temple of Bacchus. All were sold and are now in a single private collection elsewhere in England. It will be exciting to see casts of 12 of them at Stowe and a fine reminder of one of Stowe's most extraordinary features, hitherto mainly unrecognised in the literature on Stowe. From the above account this large set of herms can be seen as physically the biggest group within the Stowe statue collection and of significant historical importance. In addition, Stowe's herms are possibly unique in size and conception within the wider context of other English sculpture and important items in a somewhat obscure area in the history of neo-classical art.

One could speculate whether future visitors to Stowe will realise the significance of at least the Hermathena beside the entrance drive, as Cicero did of his herms in 65 B.C., when writing to Atticus, his friend in Athens who supplied them: "Your Hermathena delights me greatly, and it is placed so beautifully that the whole gymnasium looks like a votive offering." Stowe's re-installed Hermathena will similarly lend an aura of beauty and learning to the 'gymnasium' or 'academy' which has long been at the heart of Stowe House.



The herm of Mercury which was probably against the North Front Screen Walls from 1773 to 1921

## BOOK REVIEWS

## RECOLLECTIONS OF NINETEENTH-CENTURY BUCKINGHAMSHIRE

(Buckinghamshire Record Society Publications, 1998)

The Second Duke of Buckingham gets a pretty poor press these days. And rightly so. History has shown him up as an awful bounder, nothing but a spend-thrift bankrupt and a deceitful toad.

When the Second Duke inherited Stowe in 1839, the estate was in some financial difficulties but the situation was thought salvable. Yet after nine years of the Second Duke's extravagance the entire contents of Stowe had to be put up for auction in a sale which rocked and shocked the whole of British society. He never again lived at Stowe and he died in ignominy in a London hotel.

It is interesting, therefore, to read about this monster in a journal of a contemporary, Miss Elizabeth George of Dadford. Miss George's detailed account of some key moments in her life has recently been published (edited by George Clarke), one of four contributions which make up the most recent volume from the Buckinghamshire Record Society. What she has to say of Stowe in the 1840s makes fascinating reading. And not least because, although she can be highly critical in her judgements, she rather likes the Second Duke. He is not at all what one expects.

She writes in full about Queen Victoria's stay, seeing his extravagant preparations as "loyal hospitality". When it all goes down rather badly with the young Queen, Miss George takes his side: "*Every part of his noble and vast mansion had been, in part, newly furnish'd and decorated, even articles that are generally made of cheap materials, and for the commonest every day wear – were of gold or silver if intended for the Queen's use. Perhaps the Duke thought to surprise and gratify her Majesty by such delicate flattery, if so, he could hardly have been pleased when she said 'I am sure I have no such splendid apartments in either of my palaces.' – considering who was the Speaker such an observation must be regarded as a very equivocal compliment...*" When the tiny monarch presides over dinner, the Second Duke provides her with a high chair while he himself tactfully sits in a low one. Throughout her stay he is courtesy personified. "*It was remark'd how extremely solicitous his Grace appear'd to be, in every particular, to render homage and show the most profound devotion to his little Mistress, and being an adept in all the mysteries of Court Etiquette, he doubtless acquitted himself admirably...*"

His good manners are not reserved for royalty. He regularly visits the Georges' farm when on shooting forays and is entertained to lunch. He is courtesy personified. At Christmas time, when he comes down to the village to give money to the poor, he defers to Elizabeth George's judgement: "*He took two sovereigns from his purse and gave them to her saying, 'Miss George tells me you are clean and industrious – here is a little reward for you.'*"

Even when he is disgraced and his debts of £1 million are bandied around, Miss George feels more pity than outrage.



She is sympathetic at his final, ignominious nighttime flight from Stowe, his creditors at his heels. "*We were told that his black hair and beard turned quite white in 2 or 3 days after he left the Park so suddenly...*"

There is plenty of interest in other sections of this splendid book. It starts with the first chapter of George Gilbert Scott's autobiography. The great architect spent his boyhood in nearby Gawcott. He gives a vivid outsider's view of Stowe in the 1820s, the era of the First Duke:

*"To Stowe we all made an annual pilgrimage. This was the great day of our year. It took place in Early June that we might enjoy the glories of Lilac & Laburnham. The journey was somewhat grotesque – My father rode his old horse*

*"Jack" or subsequently "Tripod". The older boys walked while my Mother my eldest sister & the children performed the journey in the Bakers cart – a tilted but unsprunged vehicle furnished with chairs for the occasion and further furnished with a large basket filled with provisions which were conveyed by our serving man William to the "Temple of Concord and Victory" which was our traditional lunching place. I well recollect the gratification afforded by the hard boiled eggs etc eaten beneath the unwonted shade of a Classic Temple..."*

Even at this period Stowe's great days are clearly seen to be over. Though conceding it "a very fine place" Gilbert Scott also describes it as "gimcrack".

There is fun too in another of the book's sections, reminiscences of a member of the Buckinghamshire Volunteers, Owen Wethered. His account of an 1875 Field Day in Stowe Park which goes terribly wrong is pure *Dad's Army*. And the unwitting cause of the catastrophe was the Third Duke's generosity and good nature:

*"It was 4 o'clock before the operations were over, and we found ourselves very hot and tired, with empty stomachs and a consuming thirst, at the very large tent in which a sumptuous repast was provided. Naturally the men, almost before they had taken their seats, poured out tumblers full of the first liquid handy, and drank them off at a draught. It was not till they had emptied their tumblers that they realised they had been drinking – not light Claret, as they supposed, but neat Port..."*

The effect was devastating, as the volunteers attempted to get back to Buckingham railway station:

*"I shall never forget the march down the long Stowe Avenue, and I trust that I shall never see such a sight again. Man after man staggered to the roadside, where they lay like logs – and for these we impressed farm waggons in which they were conveyed to the station like corpses. Many others could just keep their feet, and for these we detailed men to help them along... our march through the streets of Buckingham was the reverse of 'triumphal'..."*

AB



## SOCIABILITY AND POWER IN LATE-STUART ENGLAND

The Cultural Worlds of the Verneys, 1660-1720  
Susan E. Whyman. (OUP, 1999)

This highly detailed study of a local Buckinghamshire family takes its information from a database of over 7000 letters written between certain of its members. The Verneys of East Claydon were both friends and political rivals of the Temples of Stowe. Their daily life and business matters are described in minute detail and Whyman has studied these letters to build up a picture of how landed families kept in contact with and influenced others. Great mention is made of the use of gifts to keep a circle of influence, and the growing importance of London even in country matters. The role of women is also highlighted. Even a spinster Aunt had a great deal of influence, especially in arranging suitable marriages; and widows, because of the land they controlled, were also very powerful.

Although the Temples only play a significant role in the final chapter of this study, which deals with local politics, this book is very interesting for those who wish to find out what life in this area was like during the late-seventeenth and early-eighteenth centuries.

KB

## NATIONAL BOOK WEEK

National Book Week is an annual event which takes place in the first week in October. To celebrate it at Stowe in 1999 KB and AJT asked Grenville Third Form to each write a book review. These were then typed up and displayed on the Plug Street Journal so that the whole School could read summaries of recommended books. The Third Form used the ICT skills they had developed as part of the Foundainers programme to produce these reviews which also included the front covers of the books. Not to be outdone PASF involved the English staff in the project too so we ended up with a good variety of staff and pupil recommendations.

On the Wednesday evening BRE and KB organized a literary session of the XX Club, involving a variation on the game 'Call my Bluff'. Each team was given the first line of a novel, and had to come up with plausible alternatives to trick the opposition. It sounds easy, but it's not when you are pretending to write something by Dickens!

On the Friday we looked at a second hand book sale in North Hall which was well attended. I would like to thank everyone who helped to make Book Week such a success particularly AJT, ME, BRE, the English Dept and Grenville Third Form.

KB

## THE RETURN OF PRAXITELES' VENUS TO THE ROTONDO

August 1999. Photos by courtesy of *The Buckingham Advertiser*



## MILLENNIUM CHALLENGE

Piers Gambarini and Hector Ross write about an epic bicycle ride in the Easter Holidays

We set ourselves a Millennium Challenge in which we were to cycle from Edinburgh Castle to Cardiff Castle in six days, an average of seventy miles a day. The purpose of our Challenge was to raise funds for the Stowe House Preservation Trust, the Countryside Alliance and a Meningitis Charity. So, before the actual ride, much of our time was spent in planning, seeking promises of sponsorship and training. Our road bikes were provided by a kind London bike shop which gave us a generous discount for our charity work.

We started in high spirits on the train to Edinburgh, both of us looking forward to the week to come! With our route planned and our saddle-bags packed with the bare essentials for our cross-country trek, we were finally ready! The last comfortable night was spent in Edinburgh before we set off for a ninety-seven mile, initial haul to Carlisle.

The 5.30am start was the easiest time to get out of Edinburgh. Our route along the A7 took us over the thigh-achingly high Moorfoot hills via exotic places like Galashiels and Hawick and eventually across the border and down to Carlisle. Ten hours later, soaked to the bone, we arrived in Carlisle. We stayed with some friends of Hector's whose hospitality after our first day was refreshing.

The second day turned out to be the hardest, as from Carlisle we faced the daunting Lake District in torrential rain. Although it was only fifty-five miles to Kirkby Longsdale it seemed to us to be appallingly far. The A6 seemed unending. En route there was no time to admire scenery and Wordsworth's daffodils went unnoticed in the downpour. On our eventual arrival we had a wonderful sponsored stay in the

Snooty Fox Pub where everybody was most welcoming and bought us drinks and contributed to our causes.

We left early the next morning, trying to bike as far as we could, as the weather forecast for the whole week was getting worse each time we listened. Via Preston, Lancaster and Liverpool we arrived in Chester at 5.45pm looking for B&B accommodation. By now we had got into a rhythm and were finding the cycling less taxing. The weather, however, was still the chief problem. Car drivers to our surprise and relief drove carefully around us and we were not too bothered by spray from the cars. There was plenty of that from the heavens.

After a super night's stay we felt refreshed. We ambitiously felt that Cardiff might be attainable in just two days. However, everything seemed to go down hill rapidly. Within half an hour Hector had snapped his chain, and within three hours we both managed to have punctures. We cycled through Whitchurch, Shrewsbury, along the Long Mynd and Houseman country to Ludlow. The weather was gradually improving and so we continued on to reach Leominster where we stayed. Only 83 miles were left in order to complete our trek. Perfectly possible in one day, all being well. By now, however, we were both feeling exhausted and very ill but we left early in order to complete the final day as soon as possible. Cycling through the Welsh valleys via Abergavenny, Cwmbran and Newport, we eventually arrived in Cardiff after getting caught in traffic! Our families welcomed us at the Castle with large quantities of welcome champagne!

We had done it. The weather had been appalling in the five days we cycled. The sun was only visible for a total of ten minutes. We had two punctures, one snapped chain and Hector ended up in hospital the following day in order to recover, BUT WE MADE IT and in only five days instead of the planned six! Together we raised over £8000. We would like to thank everyone who has sponsored and helped us.

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## BRUCE HOUSE FIRE

Piers Craven (Bruce) reports

On June 2nd this year, while most of the School was up at the athletics track for Sports Day, some sixth formers spotted smoke coming out of the attic of Bruce House and alerted the fire brigade at about 3pm. The alarm was raised and everybody was evacuated from the House within a couple of minutes. Owing to the smoke the assembly point had to be moved to the grass outside the Chapel. For the next three hours we were all left helpless as we watched the firemen battle with the fire, and as our House went up in smoke.

It was decided that life would continue as normal as possible for Bruce boys; we were to be in lessons the next morning, and arrangements made for long term accommodation. Overnight, however, we were put up in various houses around the School, which all looked after us very well. Matrons were taking orders for toothbrushes, shampoo and other essentials. Nearly everyone went home for the weekend. When we returned on Monday morning, suitable arrangements had been made: the third-form would have their own dorm and study area in Cobham, the fourth-form would have the Portacabin outside Stanhope, the fifth-form would be put up in the San, and around the School, the lower-sixth would take over Lyttelton annexe, and the upper-sixth

would be dispersed around the School, and in the San.

During the last three weeks of term, great efforts were made by Mr Melber to maintain a good sense of house spirit, by having house lunches and suppers at least twice a week, and by making sure that we still had a houseroom (the Portacabin – Bruce House MkII), and our own TV room, in the International Centre. Thus, we at least maintained a sense of having a House, even if only in spirit! Fortunately, much of the damage was actually not as serious as originally believed; only about five study bedrooms on the top floor had been seriously affected, and apart from the third form dorms and matron's flat, much of the damage was only from water and smoke. Fortunately, thanks to the design of the house, the fire did not spread below the top floor, and it is reassuring to know that the fire doors and fire retardant walls served their purpose.

As for the future, it is hoped that the first two floors of Bruce will be inhabitable by September, with the top floor being ready by early October. So with any luck life will be back to normal for Bruce in the Autumn Term.

Finally, I would like to take this chance to thank the School as a whole for being so accommodating and efficient about the whole affair. It has been dealt with exceptionally well, and I think that Bruce House, and the School as a whole, coped extremely well with the huge inconvenience of the whole distressing affair.

# Valete

KM

Rugby; Middlesborough Football Club; rewriting Shakespeare in Melber-speak for House plays; being on his bike; Ken Melber.

When freed from the terraces at Middlesborough, Ken taught at Gateshead Tech., then at Okeni Teachers' Training College in Nigeria. Then, after a spell back in the north-east, he went to Malawi, to help set up the brand new school of Kamuzo Academy, where he was Head of Art and a Housemaster. After a brief period at Framlingham, he came to Stowe, became Head of Art and then Housemaster of Bruce House.

As Head of the Art Department, Ken's success and example were equally amazing and, working always in harmony with Guy Scott, his enthusiasm carried that mighty department along to levels of national fame, bringing Stowe enormous credit.

Bruce House has been run by Ken in a very special way. Adjectives like 'unorthodox' or even 'unique' have been used not inappropriately. It has been seat-of-the-pants stuff sometimes, to be sure, but, behind the façade of the northern wide boy, there has in fact been shrewd and meticulous planning. Bruce House excelled in sport under Ken, even if it also distinguished itself by regularly coming last in the House singing competition. And what about those home-spun House plays, all blondes and lavatories? The boys respect Ken the way they respect all gifted schoolmasters. They are grateful for his genial tolerance. At the same time, structures are set up and lines are drawn. They are generous ones but they must never be crossed. The boys are given reasons for their existence and this, of course, encourages respect and obedience. More importantly, their loyalty comes from their appreciation of Ken's instinctive kindness, his spontaneous awareness of another person's unease or need; this has also earned him the friendship of a number of grateful colleagues.

Ken is technically an excellent artist, with a breadth of range, being a sculptor as well as a painter. It is to his credit that he has had the self-discipline to continue painting, even after he became a Housemaster. Alongside his strong sense of draughtsmanship in drawing, he is inventive and experimental in painting, bringing this combination of discipline and imagination together in the final realisation of his work. The fact that he is a real practitioner, of course, makes him such an inspirational teacher.

This connects with Ken's understanding of the pictures of the great artists: his ability to see their unique and extraordinary strengths and to explain this to others. In the Art/Art History excursions to Venice, Florence and Paris, organized by Ken with Crispin Robinson, many of Ken's strengths were brought together. He communicated his enthusiasm for his subject, not only in his obvious joy in seeing the works of the Great Masters, but also in finding a quiet couple of hours to



go sketching by himself, thus, in both ways, setting an example to his pupils. These trips are among the highlights of some Stoics' careers at school. They are meticulously structured and the pupils work extremely hard. They will be remembered for their breath-taking cultural richness and also for their sense of fun and freedom. This is the magic of the Ken Melber balance. To achieve this, one must be an accomplished administrator, a fine teacher and a good companion; Ken is all of these.

Rugby is important in Ken's life. He played internationally for Malawi and, here, was much involved in the Buckingham Rugby Club. He helped with a number of different school teams at various levels, getting the most out of the boys with a mixture of enthusiasm, encouragement and sheer terror. As a referee, he never stopped talking and, when 'supporting' his own team on the touch-line, remarks would be heard such as 'This team has more soft centres than a box of chocolates'.

Behind all this is the figure of 'Our lass'. Ken and Annie support and complement each other wonderfully. And what Annie has sometimes had to put up with! When we were in Florence on one occasion, Ken thought that it would be a nice present to take her back a box of chocolates, each one wrapped in a picture of a different naked lady. When he gave a party for the Upper Sixth in 1999, all the boys (and we masters) were instructed to turn up wearing the vilest ties and shirts that we could find. The only person not let into the secret was our hostess, whose astonishment, after slaving away in preparation all day, might be imagined. Annie helps to keep Ken's feet on the ground and her disapproval strikes more anguish into his being than an entire opposing Rugby Fifteen could begin to do. In some ways, Ken and Annie are a very private couple and it is a privilege therefore to come to know them as friends.

Ken Melber's strength of administration, temperament, judgment, compassion and humour came together on the day of the Bruce House fire. These qualities will assist him in his new post as Second Master at Wycliffe College in Gloucestershire, a post which he will combine with being Head of Art. We send Ken and Annie on, together with their two delightful (grown-up) children, Kate and Steve, with our love and best wishes, confident in their continuing success in pastures new.

PASF

**BE**

In 1998 Brian Elfick graduated from Exeter College, Oxford and joined Stowe as Assistant to the Chaplain. From the outset he threw himself into the life and work of the School, always ready to meet the challenges of the job. He has spent countless hours with individuals, encouraging them, helping them and answering their questions. Many have found their Christian faith blossom in his Bible Study groups and Confirmation classes. Whether in Grafton (where he was Underhousemaster), on the games field or in Chapel, Brian has never failed to give his all to Stowe. He has challenged us and made us think. We wish him all the best as he moves to America to pioneer a new ministry among young people.



SNA

**AJJ**

Alison James joined us as a part-time teacher of German in the Summer Term of 1997 and soon proved a permanent fixture. Always ready to organise and be involved in exchanges and trips, not only did Alison look after the challenges of GCSE and A-level German, but also (at different times and in different ways)



those German students who wanted to study their own language at A-level. Her involvement in the School has been widespread. She was, for example, a 6th-form Tutor in Nugent and for a while Head of the Careers Department. Alison has devoted a great deal of time and effort to all her many Stowe commitments, often making considerable sacrifices at home, and leaves us to restore the balance somewhat. I am extremely grateful for all she has done and glad that we will not be losing her completely, as she continues to work with our Upper Sixth Germanists next year.

SJBA

**EGM**

Since joining us in 1996 as Emma James, EGJ went from strength to strength in her teaching of Spanish and French to GCSE and A-level. And there was great rejoicing when EGJ became EGM after her wedding to the wonderful Tom Morton!

She has been an excellent Deputy Head of Modern Languages, getting things done when all around her were losing their respective marbles! A gifted organiser, Emma ran most, if not all, of the Eurolingua evenings for French and Spanish, put together internal exams and organised external oral examiners. She has been heavily involved in activities around the School. At first a Nugent



House Tutor, Emma later ran the Annexe as the House overflowed into Wisteria Cottage. She took responsibility for international students at Stowe, putting on social evenings and cultural get-togethers. Most notably, she was an intrepid Duke of Edinburgh worker with Bronze, Silver and Gold award hopefuls, always at her happiest amongst mountains and in her beloved Scotland.

We wish her every success as she and Tom set up new jobs and home, wherever that may be.

SJBA

**BOS**

As this year's Stowe/Harvard Fellow, Ben Shuldiner has shown himself to be a supremely talented and dedicated teacher. I sat enthralled as he introduced a group of fourth-formers to the political and social complexities of pre-revolutionary Russia. The lesson was shot through with good humour and his enthusiasm to impart major historical themes in a memorable way. In addition to GCSE twentieth-century European History Ben has taught A/S American History (where he could indulge his passion for the growth of the Equal Rights movement and early American trade unionism) as well as A-level English (most notably Sylvia Plath and poetry appreciation).

Ben has also been a highly dedicated and popular Tutor to Grafton third-formers and an incomparable school basketball coach (in a year of great success). Ben is a fine product of his *alma mater* with his overwhelming spirit of curiosity and his certainty that things must be challenged in order to be improved. We wish him all the best in what we are sure will be a very successful career.

CHJ

**ARGT**

What every Modern Languages Department needs is a native speaker and in ARGT we were doubly blessed as we got two for the price of one! Alice joined us in September 1997 and immediately set about things in a highly organised and efficient manner.



It was clear that Alice cared for and encouraged her groups enormously. Right from the start Alice was very willing to travel with study groups and exchanges (and not only with the ones going to Paris!). She also provided great input into the various Eurolingua evenings hosted by the Department and was often the first port of call for our Language Assistants.

Alice was a significant contributor to the extra-curricular life of the School, most notably as a caring, cajoling and conscientious Tutor, first to Chatham and later to Bruce. Her all-round contribution will be dearly missed. Fortunately, in her role of Mrs James Tearle, she will not be far away. She will always be most welcome back!

SJBA

We also said farewell last summer to England hockey international, Duncan Woods, Cindy Slator (Maths Dept.), Sarah O'Gorman (from the Australian College of Physical Education) and our three Language Assistants, Alexandra Camargo, Christine Mohr and Emmanuelle Rouillé.

Andrew Scott's Reflections on  
**A YEAR'S EXCHANGE**

Andrew Scott won golden opinions during his year at Stowe on leave of absence from Knox Grammar School, New South Wales, an exchange organised with DSB. Here he writes of his impressions.

I had promised myself not to begin this account of my experiences at Stowe with mention of the grounds, as the School is so much more than its setting, but how could I not? The grounds are certainly imposing and picture-perfect. Yet despite this it took two months to find the time to walk the landscape gardens. Impressed, I vowed to take that walk every week – not an easy thing to do considering the busyness of the School (and sadly something I could not keep to).

Despite the hectic pace of life at Stowe (with staff and pupils rarely having any time to relax) I found everyone, of all ages, to be most warm and accommodating – one of the main strengths of Stowe, I believe. Having not been exposed to a full boarding environment previously, it struck home how essential the role of pastoral care is in a school such as Stowe. In observing the system in place and the people involved, I have been most impressed.

I have thoroughly enjoyed the year. The students are open, engendering in the classroom an environment which offers a positive and industrious atmosphere. The individual is catered for, both within the classroom and outside it. The broad nature of sports and extra-curricular activities means total involvement. The encouragement provided in every facet of life contributes much to every student working to the best of his or her potential, aiming for, and reaching, greater heights.

Head Boy Sam Barratt's departing words at Speech Day were a plea for Stowe not to change. Certainly I can, like him, see the merits of this. Yet what is even more praiseworthy is the assurance that Stowe constantly seeks to retain what is best and



strives to be progressive in making things even better.

Outside of Stowe my family have enjoyed experiencing the English countryside from "wandering lonely" in the Lake District to dancing naked at midnight at Stonehenge (only joking). So too we have taken ourselves to Europe at every opportunity.

For myself, the rewards from teaching at Stowe have been great and I will hold only the fondest of memories of the people and the institution. Indeed, if I could take Stowe with me back to Sydney, I would. I thank you all for a marvellous year and I look forward to continued correspondence and the opportunity to return again.

# Salvete

In September 1999 the School welcomed Paul Armstrong (Classics) [right], Morag MacInnes (Head of Art), Cindy Slator (Maths) and, in the Summer Term, Alan Tydeman (Maths).

## BOARDING HOUSE CHANGES

In addition to Ken Melber's departure from Bruce (page 33) two Housemasters retired from their Houses last July after long service: Lionel Weston from Walpole and Graham Cottrell from Cobham. Isaac Michael takes over Bruce this September; David James, Cobham; and John Moule, Walpole.



LEW



IM



GAC



JSM



PCA

# Obituaries

Muir Temple, former Second Master and Housemaster of Grafton, remembers Cyril Atkins, always known throughout his time at Stowe as

## CA

At his own request the news that Cyril Atkins had died peacefully on May 25th was not officially published until after his funeral. This was held in private at Thorney Abbey in Cambridgeshire on June 8th and was followed by committal of the ashes in the family grave. Despite his wishes news of his death had already reached and shocked many of his friends, for although he had suffered ill-health for years, he had in recent months given the impression that things were on the mend and that he hoped soon to visit us again. Sadly his illness must have been more serious than he cared to admit and it is sad, too, that his typically unselfish wish to go as unobtrusively as possible has deprived us of the opportunity to pay him our respects at either a funeral or a memorial service.

In the months before his retirement was due the most frequent question on everybody's lips was "What on earth shall we do without CA?" and there was universal relief when he was asked to join the elite few who have stayed on beyond their allotted span. Predictions as to how many men would be needed to replace him when he retired in 1987 might have seemed exaggerated to an outsider but were borne out in the event. For his duties and responsibilities had grown out of all proportion over the years and at least one Chairman of the Governors was amazed that he was content to remain merely Assistant Bursar. But content he was and mighty pleased we were to hear so often those reassuring words spoken in that inimitably laid-back accent "Leave it with me". Whatever it was, it would be organised quickly, efficiently and without fuss.

CA came to Stowe in 1951 as Personnel Officer primarily to organise the domestic staff. As an ex-Sergeant in the RAF police he was well qualified but that gives no clue to the humanity and compassion with which he treated men of various nationalities often with difficult backgrounds. Stowe could not function without them and their respect and affection for CA spoke volumes. Gradually his brief was extended and he became first Domestic Bursar and then in 1973 Assistant Bursar supervising not only all the domestic arrangements of the School but also the accounts, the multifarious travel requirements, the organisation needed for special events, Speech Days, Commemoration Dinners and so on. All this and much more from a small office with the help only of his loyal secretary, Mrs Sheila Sleight, at a time when the School numbered 650 or more and there were no computers!

Nothing was ever too much trouble for CA and a typical example of this was the unsolicited help



and consideration which he gave to those participating in the holiday courses. He went out of his way to ensure that their stay at Stowe was as happy and comfortable as possible. But then, it was always a matter of pride with him that Stowe should appear in its best light.

CA never attended any of the grand occasions. Once everything was in place he would vanish to the privacy of his rooms, a commodious flat overlooking Power House Yard. At least it would have been commodious had it not been crammed with his extraordinary collection of antique furniture, pictures and Victoriana of all kinds which he loved to show to those privileged to take wine with him. On such occasions a discreet cough from the dining room at a quarter to eight would indicate that his dinner was served and it was time for guests to depart. At some stage a Caterer had suggested that he take all his meals there. So those visitors who, on encountering his elegantly distinguished figure returning from Church, say, on a Sunday morning, took him for at least the Headmaster or more likely for some member of the ducal family, would have had this second guess apparently confirmed had they seen him thus living like a lord...

A man of unflinching courtesy and good humour, he was always at pains to put people, however humble, at their ease. He loved conversation and good company, loved to talk with and of others and talked little of himself. He was always, I think, glad to close his door and to read – mainly biography and above all biographies of the aristocracy and royalty. He revealed little or nothing about his own early life, his



CA [right] with Margaret Temple, Bidy and Brian Stephan at a Music Room reception in 1995

upbringing and education. If he did not encourage rumour he did nothing to dispel it. He spent most of his holidays in Spain, where, so it was erroneously believed, he possessed if not a castle at least a villa, and in Spain, as in England, he had his favourite taxi-drivers. He never drove after a tragically fatal motor accident in his twenties. He either played down or played up his private income ("Dear old Kenneth seems to think I have substantial means" – "My Bank Manager tells me I must spend more"). He was of course something of a poseur but he knew it and enjoyed having his leg pulled on that score, one of his many endearing characteristics.

When he left, first for Wendover and then for Whittlesey and his beloved fen country, Stowe lost a great and generous character and we were all the poorer. His many friends both in and outside the School felt that keenly then and feel it even

more keenly now. We all felt, too, that, however well we knew him, there was a limit to that knowledge for he was a very private person. I hope that this very inadequate memoir is not too great an intrusion into that privacy.

I can't, however, resist adding the following. When I met his train at a small country station he alighted with a grand gesture, raising both arms as if in benediction and saying "How wonderful to be in Yorkshire" and "British Rail has done me proud" and then "You'll find that suitcase rather heavy, I'm afraid. When I go away I never know what to do with my sovereigns, so I take them with me." We never saw the sovereigns but the suitcase certainly felt like a load of bullion. There in a nutshell you have CA's genial love of life, with a touch of the enigmatic and, of course, with more than a touch of style.

## ELEANOR RYCROFT

Stowe has lost a very distinctive character in the death earlier this year of Eleanor Rycroft, one of Chatham's long-serving matrons. She joined Chatham in 1968, towards the end of Walter Bradshaw's time, was matron for the whole of the 1970s, the Roger Rawcliffe decade, and did not retire until 1982, by which time she had in her own inimitable way put her third housemaster through his paces.



On arrival in Chatham I had been struck by the loyalty of Eleanor and her whole domestic team. This loyalty extended automatically to a new housemaster, even a brash young upstart who immediately wanted most things done differently. Eleanor's somewhat fierce exterior concealed – as so often is the case – a very warm heart. Roger Rawcliffe would always say how lucky he was that throughout his time in Chatham Eleanor was there to mastermind all things domestic. In the 1970s Eleanor must have been in her prime and pomp. Problems with painful hips had made her less mobile when Heather and I got to know her, in the early 1980s, but undeterred by considerable discomfort she quite uncomplainingly got on with the job in hand. Later on, when greatly incapacitated, she would still achieve miracles of organisation by standing outside her flat and giving out orders and potions to all and sundry, like an admiral on his bridge. (She came from a most distinguished naval family). And of course, in emergency, there was always that formidable brass bell nearby. Her spirit was indomitable. On one House theatre trip to Stratford we arrived very late and were faced with a long climb up innumerable steps to reach the Upper Circle. Eleanor must have seen the look on my face. "Don't worry about me," she said grimly, bracing herself, and then skipped up the stairs faster than you could say "Richard the Second".

Eleanor's retirement from Chatham coincided with two hip operations. Happily the success of these allowed Eleanor to be active for a while in a number of good causes, her brusque driving skills even being offered for a time to the Car

Ambulance Service. Throughout the 1980s she was a regular visitor to Chatham tea parties on Speech Days, even after her move to Gloucestershire. She loved catching up with everyone. Despite ill-health which dogged her later years and which she bravely discounted as a minor irritation, she retained a great interest in the School and loyalty towards it.

Dear Eleanor, you set high standards to us all. You had a deep, genuine sympathy for everyone, complementing that quick eye for the malingerer. I just hope St. Peter had his shoes properly polished, as you passed him by...

AGM

## DR RODNEY BINGHAM

Rodney Bingham, who taught Chemistry at Stowe between January 1976 and July 1977 died last May, seven years after being severely and painfully disabled by a rare disease of the spine. He was not only a brilliant scientist, with an Oxford doctorate in a difficult and controversial area of metallurgy, but also a first-class pianist, who had played Beethoven's Emperor Concerto with the Liverpool Youth Orchestra at the age of fifteen. In July 1978 he returned to take part in a concert given by members of staff to the School in the Roxburgh Hall and gave a thrilling performance of Chopin's Polonaise in A flat. Rodney was a committed and conscientious teacher and hoped throughout his long years of illness that he might recover sufficiently to return to the classroom.

STEPHEN SUTTLE (STOWE CLASSICS DEPT. 1973-78)

## PHILIP JONES

News of the untimely death of Philip Jones, who served in the English Department from 1978 to 1985, has saddened all those who remember him. Philip was not just an admirable scholar but a man of many parts, always busy and smilingly self-deprecating, whether running Community Service, looking after a celebrity speaker for his Political Society, organising faintly subversive newspapers or just lending a sympathetic ear in quarters where sympathy might have evaporated. He was very much the champion of the underdog. Only in his forays on stage in staff plays did success sometimes elude him. Philip is the only known jurymen in *Trial By Jury* ever to have fallen out of the jury box.

AGM

## SOPHIE WATSON

20th September 1981 to 5th January 2000

Some people are bound to die young. By dying young, a person stays young in people's memory. If she burns brightly before she dies, her light shines for all time.

Galloping across an open field, the distance between me and the downhill jump quickly disappeared. Unfortunately the rain and wind did not. As I slid down the steep slope towards the extensive jump I was blinded by the descending rain. The hazy mist that had risen as the rain had fallen was now covering the ground all around and was making my job increasingly hard. I was closing in on the obstacle now and I extended my impulsion to get over the pheasant feeder (a v-shaped jump turned upside down). As my steed's legs hit the front of the creosoted wood my whole body was jolted forward by the force. My beautiful wet horse looked down in surprise at me lying in the thick mud on a windswept hill, asleep. People seemed to arrive from nowhere and I was up again on my bruised, wet, jodhpured legs.

It was only after I got home and had a hot scented bath, (much to my relief), that I started to ache all over but particularly in my left leg. After a few days of constant complaining, my weary mother took me to the local Doctor, for a check up. Apparently I had sprained it in my fall, and was to rest it for about a week. No sport – a relief for me. Changing in and out of sweaty sports clothes, and not having time to shower before the school lunch bell goes has never been that appealing to me. After about two weeks we returned to the Doctor. He was curious about what the cause of my discomfort was so sent us to Cheltenham for a MRI scan. I was to be put into a giant tube that made a horrific noise, similar to an aeroplane taking off.

After that we went to see a Doctor in a hospital in Cheltenham. After a lot of quiet discussion between my mother and father and several doctors, while I was sitting reading the *Readers' Digest* dating back to the stone ages, I was summoned into a series of small rooms to be examined. I was then told by a doctor that I had a tumour in my left knee, and that it was thanks to a very observant doctor that it had been found. (For all I knew a Tumour was a musical instrument, not a form of Cancer). I was told I would have to spend some time in hospital having treatment to get rid of it, but that everything was going to be fine and that I was lucky that they had caught it in the early stages. By this time I was tired of sitting in a stuffy hospital while unknown people in intimidating white coats talked about me, and I was getting hungry and fidgety..."

BY SOPHIE (AGED 14)

## COURAGE

*You can shed tears because she has gone  
Or you can smile because she has lived.*

*You can close your eyes and pray that she'll come back  
Or you can open your eyes and see that she's left.*

*Your heart can be empty because you can't see her  
Or you can be full of the love you shared.*

*You can turn your back on tomorrow and live yesterday  
Or you can be happy for tomorrow because of yesterday.*

*You can remember her and only that she's gone  
Or you can cherish her memory and let it live on.*

*You can cry and close your mind, be empty and turn your  
back*

*Or you can do what she'd want: smile, open your eyes,  
love and go on.*

ANON

Having grown up with Soph and been through so much with her, it is hard to imagine what life will be without her. It is only now that I have realised how precious my memories are. As said by her brother, Harry, she fought "hard and long, tough and strong" and her bravery was an inspiration to all who knew her. She always made the best of life by having as much fun as possible and brightened up so many lives with her somewhat crazy hairstyle and clothes. Even at the hardest of times her beaming smile and enthusiasm for life never faded. She was an amazing friend whom you could always trust and who will be missed by so many.

ALEXA CLARK





To have known and lived with such an incredibly special person is something that will remain with us forever. Sophie touched our community and lives with her immense vitality and enjoyment of all she did.

To achieve so much in such a short period of time is something that only those with such courage, determination and overwhelming spirit can accomplish. It, therefore, came as no surprise to those of us who knew her so well that Sophie managed to found such a successful and worthwhile charity, SCCWID, in which she put so much energy and effort.

The smile on Sophie's face when she walked into a room lifted the hearts of those around her. Everyone was Sophie's friend and she always had time to stop and talk, share a joke or listen to one's problems. It is this gift of friendliness that can never be forgotten: after all, everyone who met her experienced her smile and incredible warmth.

All of us who knew Sophie will have many memories, some shared and some individual. The ones that will remain prominent in my mind are those such as the nights where she was the first on the dance floor and the last to leave.

Sophie fought relentlessly against cancer and we believed that if anyone could beat such a horrific disease it would be her. She had so much treatment and several operations, all of which she bore with such a positive attitude and determination to recover.

She touched Stowe with her endless talents and zest for life. It is so rare to encounter such a genuine and kind person. Her bravery and general attitude to life are an example to us all. We will miss her greatly.

FLORA SOAMES

## SCCWID

Sophie's campaign for Children's Wards for  
Interesting things to Do

At the age of 14, Sophie Watson was diagnosed with having cancer in her left knee. She had to undergo intense chemotherapy, and then have an operation to remove her knee joint plus part of her upper and lower leg bone. This was followed by a lot of hard physiotherapy, along with some more chemotherapy. Just before Christmas 1997, at the age of 16, Sophie discovered that she had Cancer in her right lung and she had to have another operation to remove part of her lung. Four months later she was told that she had more cancer in her lung and she had to go through more chemotherapy to try and get rid of it.

"It gets so boring in hospital, especially if you're in for a long time. I wanted children to be able to have special treats and to improve the quality of their lives while in hospital, so for a while their worries could be forgotten. My aim was to provide anything the children asked for and to make the ward more cosy, fun and brighter."

When Sophie founded SCCWID, she did a sponsored head shave, which sparked a lot of media interest and the money just poured in. Many friends got their schools involved in raising money through dances, plays, sales and concerts. The most prominent fundraiser though must be her SCCWID merchandise. The spaghetti strap tops, t-shirts and hoodies all have SCCWID logos printed on them. Sophie's charity has so far raised over £90,000.

SCCWID practically re-equipped Ward 4B of the John Radcliffe Hospital with everything they could wish for, and



**sophie's campaign for  
the children's ward for  
interesting things to do**

other wards benefited too. Sophie's next aim was to re-vamp the playroom for Ward 4B in order to make it more cosy, jolly, friendly and generally more enticing. Having produced all the plans for the playroom, Sophie died on 5th January 2000. Alice and Harry, Sophie's sister and brother, will be carrying on the good work.

Sophie aimed to make children's stay in hospital less traumatic and as comfortable as possible. She was always grateful for any donations, so please support her cause.

**LET'S MAKE SQUILLIONS FOR SCCWID!!!**

<http://www.sccwid.com>

E-mail: [enquiries@sccwid.com](mailto:enquiries@sccwid.com)



Stephen Hirst, Director of Studies, writes of

## THE ACADEMIC YEAR

Who's going to be the first to make a move? This year was dominated by the Government's wonderful game of blind man's bluff: it insisted that all the A-level syllabuses should be called specifications instead and be re-written with a half-way point to be called AS-level and be a qualification in itself, and to be done in such a way that students would take up to five subjects at AS-level, although the three they took all the way to A-level would be just as hard as ever. Pause while everyone checked on their fingers that none of the figures added up. Then suddenly we were all in darkness and the game had begun.

It made sense to stay still and listen for the Exam Boards making a move, but they could afford to wait, so it was the schools that were first to crack. They tried to find out if the Universities were really going to insist on 5AS and 3A, as the government wanted them but hadn't required them to do, but the Universities responded by asking if that was really what the schools would be offering. The schools said that that was partly dependent on what the Boards would be requiring, but when the Boards finally made a move it was a provisional one subject to government approval and didn't help. Time ticked on. Parents and 5th form students entered the game, wanting to know what their options were, then bursars and Governors came in, wanting to know if the new curriculum would need extra teachers and extra facilities and bigger budgets. 'YES!' came the first definite decision of the game, though admittedly without much factual basis at that stage...

Blindfolds off, the eventual deal seems to be 4AS and 3A, with a 5th AS hovering off-screen as, for the present, a purely voluntary opportunity to show off. It may become a bit more mainstream in the future, but probably not until after the Key skills package (did I mention that?) has been sorted out. Meanwhile, a nod in the direction of breadth has been

given by the largely tacit agreement that students will look more impressive if at least one of their 4 AS subjects is obviously different from the speciality implied by the others: it would be good to see Arts/Humanities 'types' keeping a science going, and to see scientists doing a language, perhaps, as a dessert to the conventional laboratory main course.

Elsewhere in the sixth form we have been participating further in the Critical Thinking AS-level pilot, playing a major role in evolving the new Physics AS, and developing Current Affairs and Skills Development teaching. The Lower Sixth have also been encouraged to analyse more actively their communication and leadership skills by putting themselves in a position of responsibility and reporting fairly formally on their progress: it has been particularly satisfactory to see so many of the girls, who have fewer opportunities for this kind of thing in House (no third-formers to organise!), helping to teach Maths, improve reading skills and generally run the School – everyone benefits.

In the younger parts of the school, the third and fourth form scholars' group, formerly the XX Club, has evolved into Symposium – the change of name reflecting its transition from occasional brain-stretching to a weekly commitment to a coherent course on the History of Thought, taught through discussion – and some third formers have been mildly surprised to find themselves treated as university students – being asked to define their field of study and write their own question before embarking on their own thesis – when presented with some project work. We hope to develop these and other skills development work further next year to try and make Stoics not only better equipped to learn, but also more likely to want to do so. This is always the most important item on the academic agenda, but rarely the only one: we are promised GCSE reform next!

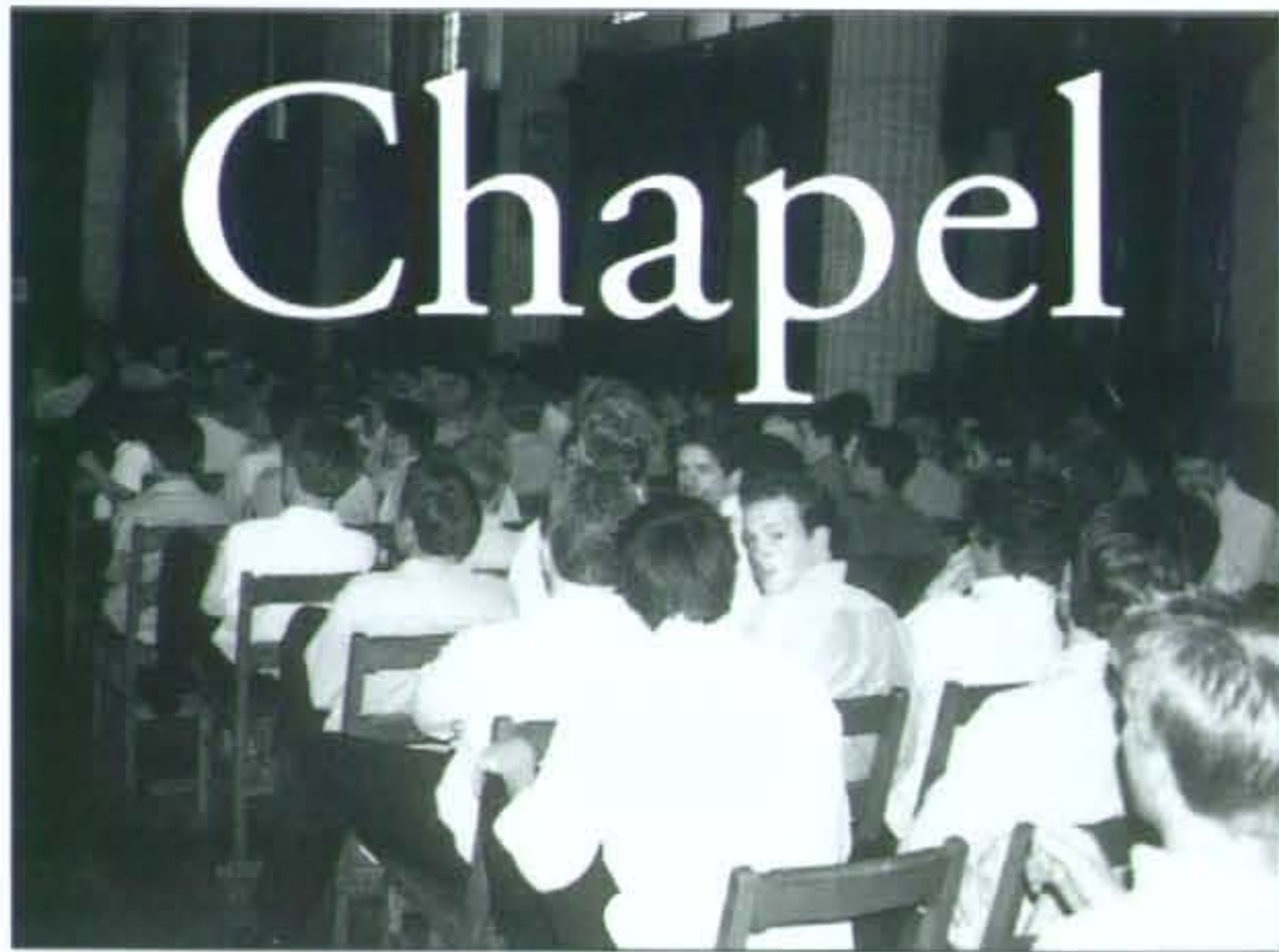
## PRIZES, SUMMER 2000

On Speech Day the following prizes were distributed by Sir Jeremy Greenstock, KCMG, the United Kingdom Permanent Representative to the United Nations

Basil Williamson Memorial: Sammy Barratt; R.Q. Drayson Prize: Philippa Newman; J.F. Roxburgh Prize for Classics: Giovanna Pauro; Quentin Bertram Prize for Latin: David Hervey; Charles Loudon Prize for Greek: Edward Comber; Anthony Pearce Prize for Latin Oration: Benjamin Morgan; Peter Bone Prize for English: Benedict McCarey; Gavin Maxwell Prizes for English: Benjamin Smith (senior) & Benjamin Morgan (junior); J.F. Roxburgh Prizes for English Verse: Antonia Ford (senior) & Peter Tromans (junior); Hayward Prize for Reading: Alexander Lyell; Harding Prize for Reading: Alasdair Gaston; Bryan Henshaw Prizes for English Speech: Benedict McCarey (senior) & Louis Buckworth (junior); Euan Dawson Prize for English: Piers Craven; Basil Aimers Prize for Reading: David Widdick; John Webster Prize for French: Alexander Lyell; J.G. Riess Prize for German: Rupert Burchett; Telford-Wardley Prize for Spanish: Hugh Arbuthnott; Capel Cure Prize for French: Dominic Sullivan; Scott-Gall Prize for History: Alexander Lyell; Syrett Prize for History: Harry Vere Nicoll; Robert Barbour Prize for Divinity: Gregory Filsell; Burroughs Prize for Divinity: Harry Vere Nicoll; Wallace Prize for Geography: Rupert Corbishley; Peter Bates Prize for Geography: Alice Girardot; Robert Montagu Prize for Geology: Jamie Douglas-Hamilton; Humphrey Foster Prize for Physics: Elizabeth Weston; Friends of Stowe Prizes for Natural History: Natalie Garthwaite (senior) & Ramsay Fanous (junior); Stewart Prize for Mathematics: Simon Creek; Pearman-Smith Prize for Mathematics: Oleg Papazov; James Mayne Prize for Economics: Rupert Burnell-Nugent; James Mayne Prize for Politics: Victoria Bell; McDonough Lower Sixth Prizes: Benjamin Smith (Economics) & Rebecca Cheetham (History); Barrus Prizes for Computer Technology: Alastair Clutton (senior) & Zhenya Semikhodski (junior); William Dady Prize for Art History: Francesca Hayward; J.F. Roxburgh Prize for Architecture: Catherine Knott; J.F. Aimers Prize for Art: Latifah Al-Said; Anthony Howard Prizes: Nichola Eddery (senior painting),

Thomas Furse-Roberts (sculpture), Soo-Ah Paik (pottery) & Duncan Wai (junior art); Richard McDougall Prizes for Watercolour: Hugo Wilson (senior) & Louis Buckworth (junior); Gilling-Lax Prizes: Gene Kindell (senior strings), Oliver Thomas (junior strings), Rupert Burchett (senior woodwind), Jonathan Howse (junior woodwind), Alexander Lyell (senior brass), Harry Darby (junior brass), Alexander Winter (senior piano) & Edward Pendleton (junior piano); Ian McCarey Prize: Elizabeth Weston; Coxe Music Prize: Chirag Keswani; Burchett Music Prize: Alasdair Gaston; Worsley Prize for Design: Ben Hart; Friends of Stowe Prize for Design: Bertie Marsh; John Holland Prize for Design: Alec Laing; Andrew McAlpine Prizes: Lucy Hodge (photography) & Nichola Eddery (technical graphics); Lower School Prize for Design: Nicholas Wills; Louis Strauss Prize: Elizabeth Weston; Friends of Stowe Fifth Form Prizes: Ramsay Fanous & Benjamin Morgan; David Sandhurst Prize: Lester Smart; Headmaster's Special Prizes: Olivia Burwood-Taylor, Sally Clark, Charlotte Devonshire, Angus Elphinstone, Thomas Furse-Roberts, Edward Gambarini, Michael Jones, James Pegrum, Robert Prentice, Sami Robertson, Roman Strecker, Richard Ward & Hugo Wilson; Harvard Book Prize: Antonia Ford; Dudley Baker Prize: Bertie Marsh; Old Stoic Goblet: Alexander Spencer-Churchill; Brian Stephan Prize for Visual Education: Barney Baber & Alexander Orchard-Lisle; Friends of Stowe Prize for General Knowledge: David Widdick; White-Smith Prize for Aviation: Robert Prentice; Andrew Croft Prize for Drama: Holly Middleditch; Aikman Cup for Drama: Camilla Skene; Bell Quaiach Prize for Technical Theatre: Edward Pitcher; Fraser Cup for Public Speaking: Freddie von Schroder; Bene Prizes: Edward Comber (3), Piers Craven, Simon Creek (2), Andrew Davis, Antonia Ford, Alice Girardot, Mark Harper, Francesca Hayward, Soo-Ah Paik, Edward Pendleton, Flora Soames, Benjamin Smith, Anthony Stormont, Emily Townsend, Peter Tromans, Freddie von Schroder, Nicholas Verney & Elizabeth Weston (2).





I often wonder what Stoics will remember when they leave school. The conversations I have had with Old Boys suggest that memories are often associated with fellow Stoics – those in House, or in teams, or plays. But a surprising number are associated with chapel. It is not uncommon for those returning to the School to head to the chapel in order to reminisce. Chapel is in so many ways central to school life. It is a place of meeting. It is a place of community. But, above all, in our post-Christian country, it is a place of learning.

In a school like ours, with its clear Christian foundation, and in a country like ours, with its Christian heritage, it becomes incumbent upon us to present the Christian faith – a faith centred on Christ and the revelation of Him in scripture. Only then can we give one another the opportunity to “learn Christ” and to express our faith in him. My hope is that head and heart will be touched and lives will be changed. But even for those who do not make any personal response, the opportunity to understand world and church has been provided.

I admire those in the School who have the courage to stand up with faith and I respect those who have the courage to question the faith. Such is our community. Part of our strength is the recognition of our differences and the willingness to think and to interact with those who think differently.

Stowe provides many opportunities for thinking through and expressing the Christian faith. In Sunday Chapel a variety of speakers have opened the Bible and led us through series such as ‘How should I live?’ ‘Jesus, meek and mild?’ and, most recently, ‘A lost world’. Many of the staff have contributed to the weekday services as they have prepared talks on ‘Isms of the twentieth century’, ‘Two thousand years of what?’ and ‘Security and Significance’. It has been tremendous to have had their support and input.

Outside the more formal atmosphere of chapel, the Christian life of Stowe is fit and well. Crossfire continues to go from strength to strength, with healthy numbers attending week by week. Each year group has one or two Bible study groups which meet each week and the fifth form has a regular ‘agnostics’ group which has provoked stimulating discussion. I am very grateful to PASF, LJG, AJW and BRE for their help in leading these Bible studies. In March we welcomed The Revd. Ken Moulder from Newcastle to speak at the Lenten Addresses along with a team of assistants. Many Stoics attended the various lunches and teas and were winsomely challenged as the Christian faith was explained each evening. The Summer Term brought with it the Confirmation service, the culmination of a sixteen week preparation course during which many Stoics wrestled with the implications of a public declaration of faith.

My hope for those who come to Stowe and for those who leave is that Chapel is more than a magnificent building, but a place in which they hear the Christian faith explained. Chapel is only part of a wider work which should provide the Stoic with the information and security to explore this vital message and express it with confidence.

SNA

## CHRISTIANITY AT STOWE

Over this last year my Christian life at Stowe has been very rewarding and extremely enjoyable. However, there have been problems and difficult situations as a result of some friends’ antagonism towards my faith, which some see as weakness.

The discussion groups and Crossfire have been very informative and the people there, both staff and pupils, have been tremendously supportive and encouraging. The most fantastic thing about the Christian life here, which completely outweighs the opposition, is the atmosphere and support. At Stowe the pupils and teachers by and large get on well anyway, but at these meetings and around the School the fellowship across the year groups and between the staff and boys and girls is great.

I find it sad when people disregard or reject the Christian side of life on the grounds that it is socially unacceptable or through fear that they will lose something of themselves. Being a Christian has been the hardest year of my life but the best. I hope that no-one will throw away the opportunity that is provided here at Stowe because it is the most exciting and rewarding life.

HARRY VERE NICOLL

## CHRISTIANITY AMONG THE GIRLS

Being a female Christian at Stowe is never going to be easy – you are in a double minority. Most girls come to Stowe with firmly formed ideas about religion which make sharing one’s faith both demoralising and difficult. However, the support and encouragement given by Christian friends and teachers ensures that you keep going.

Attending Crossfire every Friday night, St. Ebbe’s in Oxford and the Lenten Addresses have all helped us to grow spiritually, but by far the most useful meeting for us has been the weekly Bible study held in LJG’s flat. The Bible readings really sort out any problems you might have and they allow you to explore parts of the Bible in depth, as well as being a good source of pizza and Twix ice creams!

It is hard being a Christian at Stowe, whether male or female, but we believe that it is ultimately worth all the struggle.

LIZ WESTON AND SALLY CLARK



Crossfire: Alex Winter and Alex Lyell

## CONFIRMATION

The Confirmation Service took place on Sunday 7th May. It was conducted by The Right Reverend Keith Arnold, an honorary Assistant Bishop in the Diocese of Oxford and former Bishop of Warwick. The following Stoics were confirmed:

Gevork Anderyassian, David Ashby, Edward Black, Charles Cavill, Melissa Clark, William Consett, George Crosbie-Dawson, James Cumming, Charles Driver, Harry Egerton, James Finch-Knightley, Dominic Gordon, Matthew Gracie, Thomas Greenaway, Harry Hay, Oliver Hogg, Christopher Janson, Miles Kaye, George Mackay-Lewis, Christopher McGee, Jessica Maisey, Charles Obienu, Alexander Pike, Frederick Raikes, Henry Reid, Harry Sheppard, Henry Snagge, Oliver Thomas and Peter Tromans.

From a candidate...

This year's Confirmation classes were well worked and well done. Turning up half way through prep on a wet October evening might cause one to feel miles away from the hot desert climate in which Jesus worked, washing people's feet and riding donkeys. However, this was not the case. The series of short talks and studies were very well planned and because of this our understanding and awareness of the Christian message grew to a level where we could all make up our own minds and decide for ourselves its relevance and worth for today.

The weekend away in late March was the most useful part of the course. It was informal and informative, allowing us the necessary time and opportunity to think for ourselves about following Christ. We were able to ask questions which previously we may have felt unable to ask.

On the whole, the course was very well planned and broken down without a forced message – but an available one.

MATTHEW GRACIE



Crossfire:  
"tremendously supportive and encouraging"



## LENTEN ADDRESSES

The Lenten Addresses are an annual set of four Christian talks, taking place on consecutive days during Lent, and given by an outside speaker. At a first glance they appear to be simply four more chapel services shoved in for good measure by your typical Public School religious system. But there is one distinct and very important difference between chapel services and the Lenten Addresses – attendance at the Lenten Addresses is completely optional. This is why the Lenten Addresses are so important. They provide Stoics with a unique opportunity to come on their own terms, to listen to God's word and to ask questions they had never felt comfortable asking during the rest of the year.

In addition to the various year group events, around 120 students turned up every day to listen to the guest speaker, The Revd. Ken Moulder. His talks were filled with content and real food for thought. They challenged the listeners to question the way they lived their lives and enabled those who came to hear a clear and straightforward presentation of the Christian faith. Throughout the time he was here, Ken was helped by a five person support team who encouraged people to attend and answered questions when asked. Their attachment to Houses made it easy for pupils to talk about Christian issues at any time.

The Lenten Addresses were a real success this year and I hope they continue at this calibre for years to come.

TOM DRAPER





Senior Congreve, Roxburgh Hall, November 1999

## GREASE

Senior Congreve's production of *Grease* continued the annual alternation of serious drama with musicals. Song and dance are to the fore; large ensembles showcase pupils' talents; the audience works less hard for its entertainment; directors and backstage crew possibly work harder to achieve the necessary physical performances, synchronising and coordinating the many voices and bodies.

*Grease's* period is well known: the late 50s and the arrival of the teenager, whose drives, dreams and frustrations matter and are expressed and mythologised in the pop/rock music of the day. School is where this restless – largely working class – youth meet, only incidentally testifying to their academic failure and a future as factory-fodder; primarily they flaunt their embryo adulthood, their cool, their sexual allure and romantic ambitions. Rivalries and a whiff of violence make the atmosphere crackle.

The Stowe production caught and projected the mood very effectively. On this basis entertainment was assured. Boys and girls occupied opposite ends of the stage, counterpointing circles of movement as they sauntered, gossiped and clashed, every so often crossing the neutral area to flirt, mock or make out. Miss Lynch, coolly played by Mrs Morton, embodied age and institutional propriety in contrast to youth and all its fevers. The production and cast crucially communicated this energy – otherwise the perspective-less self-consciousness of youth can appear merely silly, rather than stylish or poignant. As it was, ensemble and individual performances were dynamic enough to rivet the audience's attention.

At the core of the spectacle were the splendid all-in song and dance numbers, whose climaxes were the crests of dramatic waves of motion and emotion. Many thanks to Dr Melanie Ruben for choreographing the dancing and congratulations to the Stoics for the concentrated fizz.

At the core of the story are Danny and Sandy. Their romantic ups and downs were played with sensitiveness. Emily Dent's performance conveyed the necessary charm, while also portraying a range of feeling from romantic intensity through uncertainty to an adolescent struggle with identity – which finally emerges as capitulation to the sexy image of the hard-boiled vamp. Only in this way can Danny be brought to his knees.

It is Danny's lack of self-awareness which Nathan Witts projected authoritatively, as he swaggered Danny's boyish confidence convincingly across the stage. His acting skilfully showed Danny's losing his cool when surprised feeling thrusts through his brittle surface. He moved well on stage,

gesture and mannerisms creating a central performance and hinting at the hidden hand of the director.

Danny's gang provided excellent support – Alex Wilson's Kenickie a twitching parody of sub-Brando moodiness – and the production scored a hit with the boys' sensual adoration of the 50s USA sedan. There it was on stage: the mythic metallic god, celebrated in a thousand pop songs. And in this way the imagery piled up, so that dream and reality became indistinguishable. Background lighting provided appropriate pastels and shadows; bright spots and silhouettes portrayed the emotions; "Mooning all over you" had its inevitable big spot moon; the ghosts of Troy Donahue, Sandra Dee, James Dean, Bobby Darin and Connie Stevens walked again (bringing it all back – horribly? – for some in the audience); and when the schmaltzy became too humid, rousing song and dance routines would blow it gustily away.

Salting the sweetness was the method; two girls in counterpointing pop dreams would give way to wisecracking (as at the School Hop), usually timed to convey the freshness and snap of youth, and that might metamorphose into a rousing number, like the Hand-Jive rocker.

For many in the audience the biggest kick would have been seeing and hearing "Beauty School Drop-Out". This might have been one of Mr McKillop's finest moments on stage (rather than behind it) as the dream-like MC who croons to Frenchy that she can't cut it. His intensely polished suit, smile, coiffure and smoothly executed moves, while surrounded by silver laméd dancers, was a superb embodiment of teenage tinsel dreams, superbly tasteless perfection in a wonderfully ironised confection. Plaudits too to Miss Baddeley's direction for the theatrical realization of the theme. This was in your face with style.

This is not to overlook too many entertaining pupil features to mention more than a few: Milly Skene's Frenchy – her eloquent tics of behaviour in her vacant gum-fiddling and exaggerated strut; Holly Middleditch's hard-boiled Rizzo, whose pregnancy provides an injection of reality and prompts her forlorn song of self-knowledge; Ricky White's and Clemency Carlisle's melodious and heartfelt duet as Roger and Jan.

Backstage sound and lighting crew give a production like this its essential projection. All must be congratulated for giving the show its roller-coaster momentum. Special praise must be given to the Band, a combination of staff and pupils, who provided the groove, licks and general sonic colouring to superb effect.

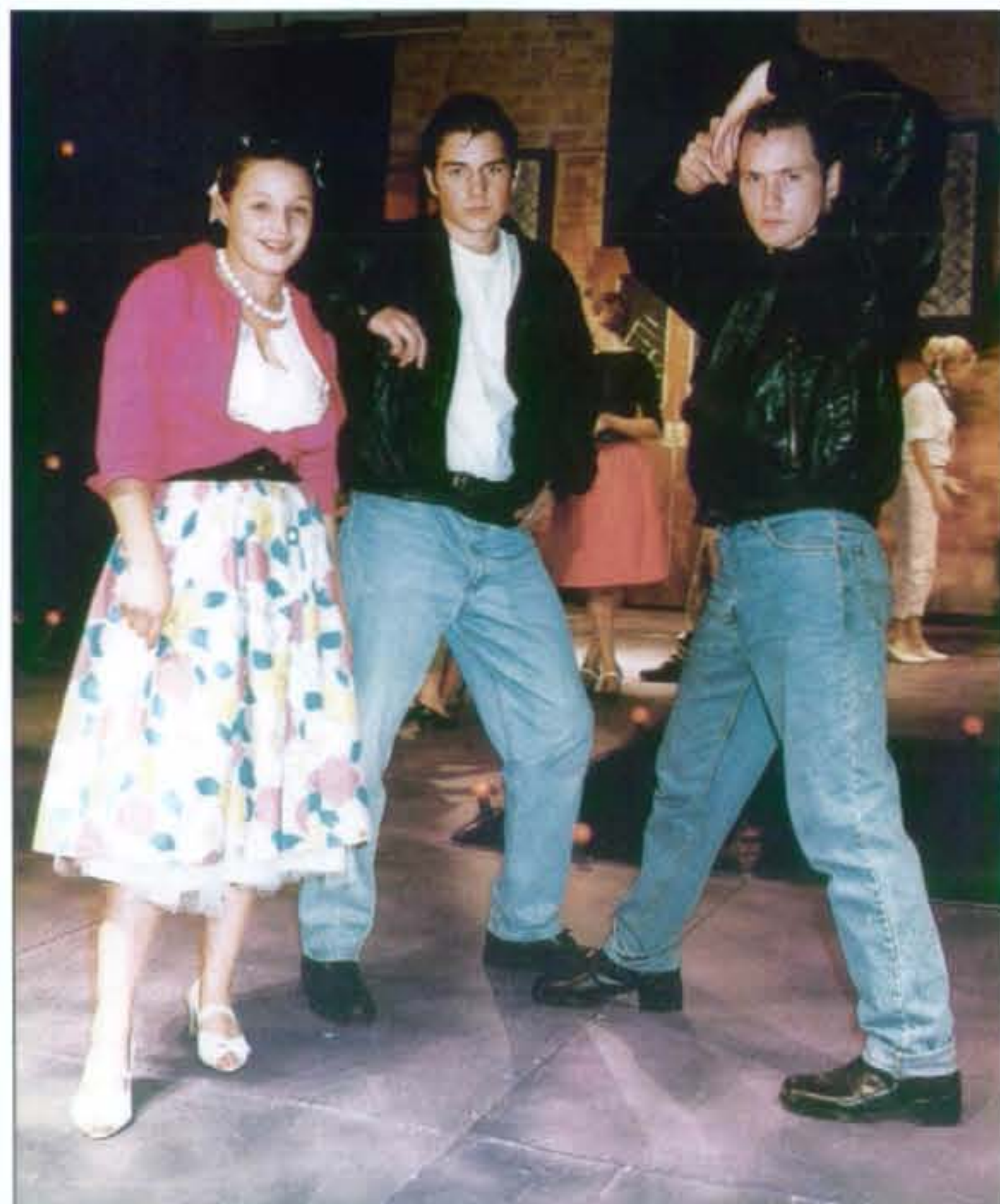
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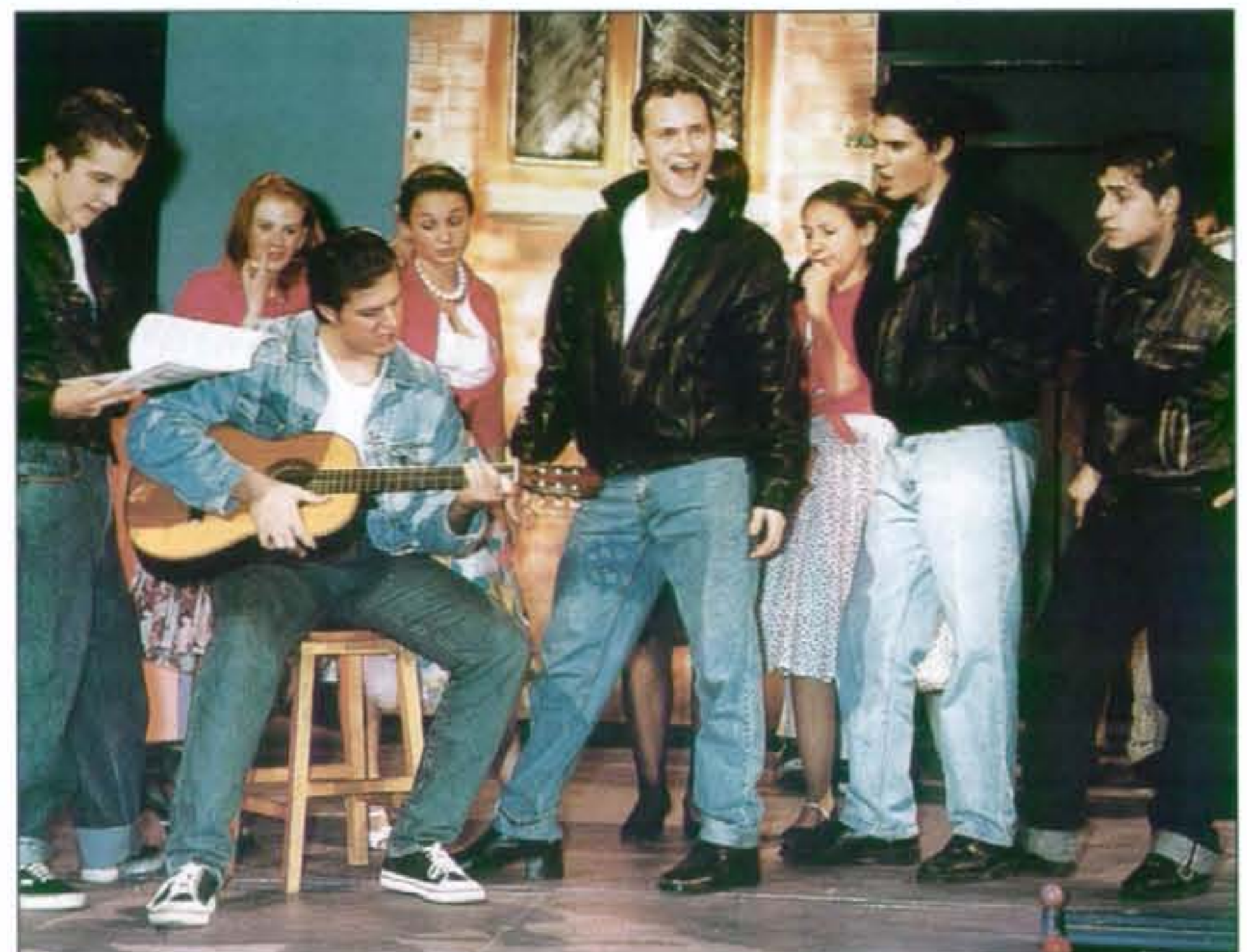
Darcy Terry, Milly Skene, Alex Wilson & Clemency Carlisle



Natasha Sinclair, Milly Skene, Tania Alexander, Emily Dent, Holly Middleditch and Clemency Carlisle



Tania Alexander, Henry Cavill and Nathan Witts



Nathan Witts sings (centre), surrounded by his gang: Ricky White, Darcy Terry, Henry Cavill and Alex Wilson



## MINUS THE *GREASE* PAINT

Some extracts from a Rehearsal Diary of this year's Senior Congreve,  
kept by Chris Garner (before Exeat) and Ivor Penne

September 28th:

Went down to the Roxy to see my first rehearsal. No-one there! "They have been and gone," said stage-hand Jeremy Walker, the only person in an otherwise deserted theatre. "There were people missing, playing sport, so the rehearsal was cancelled."

"What are you painting?" I asked him. "I don't know," he replied, trying to put me off. Suddenly a cheery voice called out from the back of the hall. It was IJM. His set was already looking good. Four flats were suspended on tracks on the empty, raked stage, with windows already painted on them. "They're suspended so that we can rotate for a different scene," explained IJM. The flats with windows form part of a cafeteria. IJM showed how grills (already built) were to be put over the windows when the cafeteria was to be quickly converted into a gym. And how the flats were to be rotated to become a burger bar. To the right of the proscenium arch Sandra's bedroom was already painted. And in the wings were lots of pink seats already built and painted for the burger bar. Clearly a lot of thinking has already gone into the technical side of the production. "About six months," IJM told me. He was very excited about producing a car which has to change from a flash car to a junk car in one scene. "The main part of the car has been ordered from a Bicester junkyard." At the back of the raked stage was a new-looking white cyclorama. IJM's pride and joy: "It took eight days to stretch, because it was all creased when it came. It was bought for this summer's Stowe Opera." Stretched out along the back of the stage it looked really good.

So far, then, it seems that backstage things are quite advanced already. The play itself has been in rehearsal since the beginning of term. But there's anxiety about being able to get enough rehearsals into the busy school week. Watch this space!

October 5th:

On the Community Service bus I asked one of the girls in the cast how it was going. "People are getting better," she said, "but we never have time to rehearse; people are so busy they are all available at different times."

But I found a rehearsal in full swing in the Roxy later in the afternoon. The scene with the Sandra. It was going well, though they were still using books. Good American accents.

More progress had been made with the set. Brickwork has been painted on the flats creating a very real atmosphere.

October 21st:

Ten-day break for half-term about to begin. I secured an exclusive interview with the director, Miss Baddeley, who despite struggling to get the cast together often enough was still smiling:

*Stoic:* Why *Grease*?

FAB: Because I knew the pupils would be enthusiastic and keen to be involved. Also I liked the idea of a family show and trying to do something slightly different with it.

*Stoic:* Don't you think people will compare your production with the film?

FAB: Yes, people will inevitably make comparisons. What I have tried to do is avoid presenting a poor version of the film. The score for the stage musical is very different. Many of the songs that are in the musical are not in the film and vice versa. The choreography for the film is very reflective of the 70s style disco dancing and I felt that it was important to get back to the 50s dance styles. I also



Burger bar seats, doubling up as limousines,  
two months before the production





wanted a harder edge to the characterisations. John Travolta's hero was a far cry from role models like James Dean and Marlon Brando, the icons for 50s teenagers. The first thing I did in rehearsal was to get the cast to watch clips from *Rebel Without A Cause* and *Lone Rider* so they would gain a sense of how "tuff" the male roles had to be and how harsh and unforgiving the relationship between the sexes could be.

*Stoic:* What is *Grease* about?

*FAB:* Never before had teenagers had so much money and so much influence. To satisfy the new teenage consumer, drive-ins and burger palaces were created. Here would-be James Deans and Marilyn Monroes could emulate their screen idols. To be accepted, however, you had to look "tuff" and "stay cool". There is no room for innocence and public displays of sentimentality. *Grease* is about teenage culture in the 1950s.

*Stoic:* Do you think an audience will understand all that?

*FAB:* Hopefully, everyone will enjoy the songs, dancing and the comedy, but for those people who remember the 1950s there should also be an element of nostalgia involved. You have to remember that *Grease* was set in 1959. By the end of that year Buddy Holly would be dead. Marilyn Monroe had only two years left to live and JFK just three. American teenagers at that time would grow up to witness Woodstock, Vietnam and Watergate and would no doubt wonder what had happened to the America of their youth. For the older generation *Grease* is a celebration of lost youth and idealism.

*Stoic:* When did you start working on it?

*FAB:* Planning started last March. Securing performance rights, reading the script and watching as many 50s films as I could. By the Summer Term the set was being planned and I began auditions. In the latter part of last term Dr Ruben had begun to work on the choreography, Mr Davey on the singing and Mr McKillop on the set.

*Stoic:* Would I be right in thinking your biggest difficulty has been getting the cast together to rehearse?

*FAB:* Yes. This proves almost impossible. I have only had

five rehearsals where everyone has been there. The resulting problems and stress are considerable! The cast is giving up two days of half-term to compensate, which is hard on them.

*Stoic:* How's it all going to pan out?

*FAB:* Ask me in five weeks' time! Pre-production week is always stressful, but very exciting. That's when sound, lighting, set, costumes and props are gradually put into place and really make the show come to life. The actors have to remember that they are only one part of the jigsaw puzzle and that the unsung heroes of the technical department have worked just as hard as they!

*Stoic:* Miss Baddeley, thank you and good luck. Enjoy your exeat!

### November 9th

Scene of great activity. Rehearsal with most of cast going on, minus music. FAB concentrating on getting more emotion from the dialogue. Little bits being picked on and gone over again and again. E.g. Hugo Wilson urged to be more repellent.

Not many books in sight. Words seem mostly learnt. American accents sound good. Atmosphere buoyant and noisy. Actors cheerful and confident. Backstage and on stage IJM and his crew getting on with set. It's come on a lot.

Most notably there's a great hole in the centre of the stage. Probably an orchestra pit. Light bulbs all around it. The burger bar is set up, all pinks, yellows and blues. Great three-dimensional effect from the pink struts on the roof. The raked stage, now royal blue, dips right down into the auditorium. An extra lower part must have been added after the House Music Competition. As actors rehearse, a Burger Bar sign comes down from above and hovers impressively over people's heads. The staging looks as if it's going to be really good. Though rumour has it that the scripted Cadillac is a tarted-up Reliant Robin...

FAB moves on to an intimate scene with hero and heroine. "I really like you, Sandy. Am I supposed to kiss her now, Miss Baddeley?" Discussion follows. And then some kisses. Later Natasha Sinclair is urged to find more emphasis for "Danny, I want to talk to you. It's very important, Danny." Whilst from some other corner of the Roxy comes the far-away sound of a singing rehearsal...

### November 16th

Another Tuesday afternoon in the Roxy. The show's getting close. Back row of stalls is now taken up with a huge Sound Desk. "24 channels," IJM explains, "for twelve radio mikes, six for the orchestra and six for the stage." It's Act 1 scene 2 on stage, though without any music or songs. And it's looking ready for performance. The girls on one side of the cafeteria, the boys on the other. Meanwhile the tech crew are zooming around fitting up lighting. "Move it upstage. Take it off the wall!" The whole place reverberates with actors and technicians.

### November 18th

The evening before everyone departs for the weekend exeat. The stage is bathed in moody green lights with trees projected in silhouette on the cyclorama at the back. The technicians are at it again, with FAB in the lighting box. Actors have been given the evening off, to give the highly complex technical side of things a clear berth.

## November 21st

4.00pm Sunday. They've been rehearsing since the morning. It's the last Sunday before the performance and they've all come back early from Exeat weekend. Cast in costume. It's a stop-start rehearsal. Going through the play but stopping where necessary. Dialogue and songs now coming through speakers. The amplified songs sound good. And so too the conclusion to Act 1 with the show-stopping "We go together"... Choreography to this looks really good. Tea-break at 4.30. Up in the gallery Helen Mashuda and Miss T take a break from their long follow-spot vigil. A technician's voice crackles out from Miss T's abandoned headphones. For some the show never stops...

9.00pm and the rehearsal is still going on. Burger-Palace Bar on stage. It looks good. A Nathan Witts solo sounds good. Cast is back in 1999 dress but under lights (still being adjusted) show looks magical. Final number. Curtain. BJD, the musical director, emerges from his piano in the hole in the stage. He wants a repeat of the Doo Doo Wa song. "The last three bars weren't there. And there was a general feeling of Let's-join-in-when-someone-else-has-started." Doo Doo Wa gets sung for the next 20 mins.



Tom Furse-Roberts, sound designer, at the back of the Roxburgh Hall, a week before the production

FAB sends them away at 9.15 with pat on the head. But for her things are by no means over for the night. "I feel I'm doing a juggling act and half the balls are dropping all the time."

## 22nd November

Run-through before supper, up to Drive-In Movie scene. Three days before 1st performance pressures mount. 1st Act goes well but there are big pauses between scenes. Amplified words are no longer clear when there is competition from the band. The cast needs laughter and applause to take away the anxiety from the faces. One solo song collapses. Tension mounts. Even "We Go Together" suddenly looks care-worn and under-rehearsed (which it isn't). Directing team gather cast around at end of Act 1 for a few quick words.

FAB wants more movement from the cast in the picnic scene. "You're too statuesque. Please respond to each other. Create your own situation and act it."

BJD is worried about 'We Go Together.' "Several lines are getting lost because not all of you know the words. It's after the Chang Chang."

Act 2 goes well, though there are still technicalities to get everything gelling. Milly Skene as Frenchy quite outstanding. Roll on Thursday. And an audience. They'll love it!



Ricky White, alias Roger, sings to an empty hall





In celebration of National Poetry Day a group of LVI Theatre Studies put on a performance of Edward Lear's "Jabberwocky" and Vernon Scannell's "Hide and Seek". The Marble Hall provided an excellent performance space and the idiosyncratic acoustics enhanced the sound effects.

The final performance was the result of two weeks' work and exploration. The pupils' task was to bring the poems to life through physical, emotional and intellectual involvement. In groups of four they were encouraged to take a section of a poem and interpret it through body language, voice and facial expression. Because pupils engaged with the poems on so many different levels they found themselves involved with the words for a far greater length of time than if they had simply been responding intellectually. The task also gave them the opportunity to produce their own unique interpretation of the poem and to have their interpretation appreciated by an audience.

While working towards the final performance they inevitably discussed the phrasing, stress pattern, tone, intonation and mood. They also became aware that there is no one right interpretation and that there are levels of meaning of a poem that cannot be analysed and explained. This method of approaching poetry made it seem less remote and linked it to its roots in oral tradition.

The final performance involved a range of physical and vocal techniques, among them the use of choral speaking, sound collage and tableaux. The presentation was energetic and focused. Lear's nonsense words were brought energetically to life and the sinister undertones of "Hide and Seek" were brought to the fore through the echoing of words and a menacing chorus representing the character's conscience. Most importantly, audience and actors for a few minutes in the middle of a hectic school day experienced poetry coming to life.

FAB

## HOUSE PLAYS, 1999-2000

The House Drama Festival had just four entries this year. Chandos again created a splendid theatre out of their Houseroom, this time for an ambitious production of Alan Bennett's *Forty Years On*, with James Elwes and Christopher Turner in leading parts and also directing. Necessarily cut quite hard, the play still projected much of the sardonic Bennett humour. Nugent had sole occupation of the Paul Dobinson Theatre, where they successfully presented Victoria Wood's frothy comedy *Mens Sana in Thingummy Doodahh*. Camilla Ruggles-Brise was a star. Meanwhile, down in the Roxburgh Hall, Grafton produced *Dogg's Hamlet*, Tom Stoppard's hilarious version of Shakespeare's tragedy. Henry Cavill was a strong lead in a well directed, energetic production. Finally, in the Temple Room, the pretensions of the art world were exposed by Bruce, script by KM, notable performances from Edward Ruggles-Brise and James Jagger.

In the Summer Term Temple produced *Moon Over Buffalo* in the Dobinson Theatre, the direction by Zeno Trapp and strong performances coming from Henry Bartlett, Paul Hinds and Howard Thomson. Walpole's *The Scarlet Pimpernel* was an LEW special involving the entire House. The State Room setting was just right for this revival of a play from Baroness Orczy's novel made famous by Fred Terry and Julia Neilson. Piers Winton was notable as a foppish monarch and Jacquetta Robertson brought excellent emotion to her role in this ambitious and worthwhile undertaking.

BT

# PETER USTINOV'S ROMANOFF AND JULIET

The Junior Congreve, Roxburgh Hall, June 2000



In this post-glasnost age, when the Cold War is fast becoming a part of the dim and distant past, Peter Ustinov's *Romanoff and Juliet* has become very much a period piece. Nor is this witty and intelligent play easy for a young and inexperienced cast to master; the combination of parody and sardonic humour and the subtle changes of tone are a challenging mixture, but thanks to the imagination and skill of the directors, Tony Meredith and David Stephenson, the cast gave remarkably mature and intelligent performances and provided their audience with a rich and memorable evening's entertainment.

This was a production which achieved the maximum effect with the minimum of fuss. The anachronistic cavalier costumes of the soldiers and the general's pompous uniform helped to establish the setting as a place beyond space and time – the Capital city of a mythical country in Europe, defended by an army of two. The set itself, a backdrop of neutral grey pillars supporting the two opposing balconies of the Russian and American embassy, was effective by virtue of its simplicity, while the deft mixture of musical styles – polka, music hall ballads, French romantic – swiftly established the changes of mood throughout the piece. Emphasis was on the understanding of the text and the intelligent delivery of the lines. The blocking was carefully controlled and there were some wonderful moments of stage business.

From this well-crafted piece of theatre a number of incidents linger in the memory: the deftly handled opening with the masked dance of the young couple, subtly undercut by the mock ballet of the soldiers, perfectly established the tone of the piece before even a word had been spoken; the wonderfully comic mime of the General to the aptly chosen "Douce France" captured the imagination long after the play had finished; the well sustained contrast in accent and attitude of the two blocks; the simultaneously camp and manic archbishop; and the genuinely moving conclusion. All these combined to produce delightfully varied entertainment.

A number of performances deserve particular mention. Alex Perry had the difficult task of playing the General and 'puppet-master', controlling and shaping the events of the play to ensure their ultimately happy conclusion. This was a

versatile and energetic performance that responded sensitively and with intelligence to the subtle changes of tone, sustaining the play's momentum throughout. The two soldiers played by Edward Ruggles-Brise and Freddie Barrie conveyed the boredom and tedium of the long-suffering veterans admirably.

Meanwhile back at the embassies the dour Russians, weighed down by weighty ideology and intellectual questioning, were given due *gravitas* by Tom Ward and Catherine Thorogood. John Dawson's Spy, 'the most distinguished of secret agents', proved that even the most ardent supporters of Marxist ideology couldn't live up to its ideals. In the opposing camp Alice Kent aged to become a remarkably convincing diplomat's wife and delivered her lines with excellent comic timing. The ranting, belligerent, but ultimately ineffectual Hooper Moulsworth was played with force and energy by Edward Comber.

Our 'not so star-crossed lovers' were played by George Kent and Sophie Price. George sustained his accent with remarkable accuracy and managed to capture the inner angst of the self-reflective, intellectual young Russian who is forced to come to terms with the ideologically unsound nature of his own emotions. Sophie captured the emotional vulnerability of the love-struck Juliet, caught in the eternal trap between loving and liking.

Harry Soames, the jilted Freddie, had a natural ease on stage and was eminently watchable. Mariam Abu-Hejleh who played Marfa, the severe representative of the Russian government sent to report on the state of the embassy, gave an arresting performance and managed the transition to love-struck young woman with aplomb. Peter Tromans stole the show in the penultimate scene. His wonderfully bizarre characterisation of the ancient archbishop reduced the audience to fits of laughter. Tearing around the stage with studied frailty, he resembled a cross between Kenneth Williams and Rowan Atkinson on speed.





It is a credit to the directors that this young cast managed to capture the subtle humour and irony of the piece. Even greater credit must be given to them for triumphing over an impossible rehearsal schedule and a host of difficulties, both practical and human.

All in all this was a delightful evening's entertainment, which was superbly supported and managed by the technical crew, under the aegis of IJM. We came away convinced that true love is indeed more powerful than ideology and that the passion of youth has the power to transform the rigidity that can come with age. As I sit writing this, weeks after the performance is over, it is still possible to revisit its magic in the memory. In the words of the General:

'All you need to do is shut your eyes...you will find us here...the realm of sense, of gentleness and love...the dream which every tortured modern man may carry in his sleep...'  
FAB



Clockwise from the top:  
Peter Ustinov on a visit to Stowe last Autumn Term; George Kent, Alex Perry, Freddie Barrie and Edward Ruggles-Brise; George Kent and Sophie Price; Freddie Barrie, George Kent, Sophie Price and Edward Ruggles-Brise; Alex Perry; Catherine Thorogood, Tom Ward, Freddie Barrie, John Dawson, Peter Tromans, Edward Comber and Alice Kent.





# Music

## 1999-2000: AN OVERVIEW

This has been a remarkable year for music at Stowe both home and abroad. Most of the highlights and special achievements are mentioned in succeeding articles and it would be invidious of me to mention individual names here as so many have contributed to the success of this year. It has given me enormous pleasure to hear the instrumental progress being made by third-formers thanks to the inspiration of not only good teaching but the example and dedication of the Sixth Form. Both the Roxburgh Hall and Queen's Temple have been buzzing with musical activity. Stoics have been eager to perform at concerts and recitals.

The introduction this year of Recital Concerts has enabled the Stoic to present a fifteen or twenty minute programme or play a complete Concerto or Sonata. This has been well received and has given us another valuable opportunity for performance. It has not only been the scheduled musical events where we have witnessed our musical talent and enormous enthusiasm but many demands are put upon the musicians to perform for other events. The Chapel Choir is not just rehearsing for the big occasions such as the Carol Service or singing at St. Paul's but every week they sing a large-scale anthem and lead the singing in Chapel. There are many requests for the Clarinet Quartet to play both in and outside the school and the Jazz Combo is also in

demand. The Chamber Choir, instrumental groups and soloists are asked to perform for the various social functions at Stowe.

It seems that after every major musical event and some not so major, I have been asked 'Was it recorded and will you make a CD?'. We already have the splendid Clarinet Quartet and Walpole House CDs and soon we will have the Valedictory Concert 2000 CD and possibly a Carol Service CD available next term.

There would be little performing if we didn't have an audience, and attendance at all musical events has been excellent with many full to capacity. To all those who have attended concerts a special thanks for all your support which has done so much to help raise standards. Sadly in January we heard of the death of Mr John Yard, our American benefactor, who gave us his wonderful vocal library and the money to set up our most prestigious musical prize. It is typical of his generosity that he bequeathed us a further large sum and requested that those who wished to give money in his memory should give it to music at Stowe.

So this very special musical year comes to a close and leaves a considerable number of us with some very special memories of solo and group performances. To all those who have performed this year, at whatever level, our thanks.

JCG

## MOZART TRIO PRIZE

With so many instrumentalists in the School it was clear that this year the Mozart Trio Prize for individual performance was going to be something quite special. Angus Watson, a former Director of Music at Stowe, came to adjudicate. What a wonderful adjudicator he was, giving lots of encouragement and at the same time making many helpful suggestions on how to improve a performance. Our talented musicians learned much during the day.

As well as a day of high standard it was also a programme with much variety of instruments. In all there were twenty-five recitals all lasting between fifteen and twenty minutes and the minimum standard was Grade 7 distinction.

Every performance had something special about it, but I will confine myself to those performances which won a prize and Angus Watson mentioned in his final summary. The winner of the Vocal Prize was Howard Thomson (Tenor). I was personally spellbound by Howard's singing. It was not just that the quality of his voice was so good but his performance manner and interpretation of the songs were outstanding. Rupert Burchett's performance of Copland's Clarinet Concerto won him the Woodwind Prize. Mention was made of Rupert's mastery of all the technical and musical problems of this complex work and that it was an outstanding performance by any criteria. Gene Kindell has made huge progress on the violin this year thanks to his dedication and commitment to practising at least five hours each day. He chose two difficult works for his programme; the first movement of Mozart's Violin Concerto in D major and the passionate FAE Scherzo by Brahms. His strong playing of both works made Gene the convincing winner of the String Class, though Angus Watson also mentioned Oliver Thomas's promising playing on the Double Bass.

We were all thrilled when Michael Jones won the Piano

Prize with his awe-inspiring playing of Rachmaninoff's Etude Tableaux, which the adjudicator believed to get very close to the composer's intentions.

It was very difficult for Angus Watson to choose one performance from so many excellent performances. In fact it proved so difficult that he awarded two outstanding Performance Prizes. Sally Clark performed two pieces on the flute, Martinu's first Sonata and Gaubert's Nocturne et Allegro Scherzando. Angus Watson commented upon Sally's excellent musicianship and superb technique and found the performances impressive. Alexander Winter brought things to a close with a compelling performance of Liszt's Ballade in B minor. This was a very fine performance of this monumental work which had such poise and depth of feeling and because Alexander has such a good technique the music flowed effortlessly.

All of us present will remember this day for many years to come. It could not have happened without the marvellous work of BJD as accompanist.

JCG



Rupert Burchett on clarinet accompanied by BJD on piano



### MUSIC MAKERS

Above: The Jazz Band with JCG

Left: Lauren Small

Below: Ben McCarey







### MUSIC MAKERS

Members of the Upper Sixth after the Valedictory Concert (see page 59)  
Standing: Benedict McCarey, Rupert Burnell-Nugent, Alec Laing, Chirag Keswani, Rupert Burchett  
Seated: Alexander Lyell, Alexander Winter, Simon Creek, Sally Clark, Michael Jones.  
(See page 57 for details of the Leavers' CD.)

Below: The Chamber Choir (or part of it) with JECH (or part of him)



## WIND AND BRASS PRIZES

I was delighted when Hilary du Pré agreed to adjudicate our Prizes this year. She is presently spending much time globe trotting, attending premières of the film *Hilary and Jackie* (the story of her relationship with her sister Jacqueline du Pré) – the next one is in China! But as luck would have it she was about on June 11th and thus was able to give us the benefit of her great wisdom and experience. It was a marvellous day. Over fifty performances, each one well-prepared and musically worthy, and Hilary's perceptive, kind and constructive comments were just the job. As usual I don't like mentioning certain performances above others, nevertheless...

Jeremy Walker won the Junior Intermediate Brass again – and what a lot of improvement he's made during the course of the year. A worthy successor to Alex Lyell, who played the Gordon Jacob Trombone Concerto in his inimitable style - with great power and conviction. Harry Darby won the Intermediate Brass with a sensitive and musical performance of a melody from the opera *Hansel and Gretel*. Gevork Anderyassian played two movements from the Corelli Concerto with a sumptuous sound, to come first in the Junior Intermediate Wind, and Jonathan Howse gave a moving and musically committed performance to win the Senior Intermediate Wind. Rupert Burchett took away the Giles Underwood Tankard for the third year running, but Rupert Burnell-Nugent, Gene Kindell and Matthew MacLeod all distinguished themselves with their wonderful playing.

A lot of hard work went into this long and tiring day – but it was worth it. It was really a continuous concert for virtually seven hours, with a high standard throughout much enjoyed by a very loyal and encouraging audience.

PDH



Above: Hilary du Pré with the Prizewinners: Matthew MacLeod, Rupert Burchett, Gene Kindell and Alex Lyell

Below: Hilary du Pré and Terezia Coxé (OS) adjudicating



## RESULTS

### Junior Brass:

1st Robert Berntsson

### Junior Intermediate Brass:

1st Jeremy Walker

### The Bram Wiggins Cup for Intermediate Brass:

1st Harry Darby

### The Bram Wiggins Cup for Senior Brass:

1st Alex Lyell

### Junior Woodwind:

1st Freddie Wynne

### Junior Intermediate Woodwind:

1st Gevork Anderyassian

2nd Harry Hirsch

### Intermediate Woodwind:

1st Jack Hawkes

2nd Ailsa Cole & Mark Leech

### Senior Intermediate Woodwind:

1st Jonathan Howse

2nd Chris Dalton & Matthew Johnson

### Senior Woodwind:

1st Rupert Burchett (Giles Underwood Tankard)

2nd Gene Kindell & Matthew MacLeod

### Concerto Class:

1st Rupert Burchett (MacLeod Cup)

2nd Rupert Burnell-Nugent

### Boosey and Hawkes Cup

(Best Performance): Rupert Burchett

### Khurody Cup:

Matthew Macleod

### The Lockers Park Cup

for outstanding playing: Alex Lyell

### The Marlborough House Cup

for outstanding playing: Gene Kindell



Robert McKinnon tuning up

## PIANO COMPETITION 2000

On the 4th June the pianists of Stowe turned out in force. This was the largest Piano Competition in recent years and, given the feast of endeavour on offer, it was fitting that we were able to have an adjudicator as distinguished as the pianist Philip Fowke.

The day commenced with the Novice Class, dedicated to those who had started the piano since the beginning of the year, and was won by Harry Darby with a demonstration of some decisively characterised playing. Hugh Wilson confidently won the Elementary Class and the Lower Intermediate Class was won by Freddie Laing, who showed himself to be a promising and natural pianist. The Intermediate Class began with an intimate performance of a Handel Minuet given by Gene Kindell and was concluded with some rollicking boogie-woogie by Jonathan Witt. The adjudicator's favourite was, however, Robert McKinnon's poetic Mazurka by Glière. This year saw the introduction of an Open Jazz Class in which entrants were expected to include some improvisation. Though there were only two participants, it proved to be a worthwhile enterprise and was won by Harry Thuillier. Edward Pendleton's commanding and very promising performance of a Study by Burgmüller was deemed to be the most successful in the Higher Intermediate Class, though mention must also be made of Maïke Schwind's captivating Chopin Waltz.

The advanced Class has almost become an event in itself and this year strained under its weight of pianistic and musical riches. Seven programmes were presented, with highlights from each being Chirag Keswani's maturely introspective Brahms, Michael Jones's austere Rachmaninoff, Vicky Burrett's thoughtful Beethoven, Alexander Winter's intense Schoenberg, Sally Clark's exquisitely beautiful Grieg and Alex Steinmetz's tender yet passionate Chopin. Simon Creek concluded the class with a triumphant performance of Gershwin's Rhapsody in Blue. In the end the prize was awarded to Alex Winter, though there had been many prize-worthy performances throughout the class.

Of the seven pianists that played in this last class, six will be leaving at the end of the year. We are grateful to them for all the beauty and excitement they have conjured at the keyboard while at Stowe and look forward to the next generation filling their places.

BJD

## LEAVERS' CD, 2000

A tribute to some of  
Stowe's finest musicians

At the end of the Summer Term we said farewell to a truly vintage year of musicians. Their contribution to the musical life at Stowe has been immeasurable and, to celebrate this and the sheer excellence of their music making, ten solo performances have been recorded and are now available on compact disc. To order your copy and for further details please contact the Director of Music.

## CHAPEL CHOIR

The choir has been in excellent voice this year with a very strong and loyal Upper Sixth, led by three excellent heads of choir – Tania Alexander, Ben McCarey and Elizabeth Weston. The repertoire of anthems has been increased and has included many of the major works of the Cathedral Repertoire.

As well as the Carol Concert and Carol Service, the choir also gave a concert in chapel, which was well attended by Stoics and parents. The introit "Sing We Merrily" by John Marsh with its incisive rhythms and punchy vocal lines made an impressive start to the concert. One of the major works performed was Purcell's extensive anthem "O Sing Unto The Lord", which is particularly difficult for the Bass Soloist. Ben McCarey was impressive in the virtuosic way that he tackled the very quick melodic passages and in his musical handling of the solo. Maurice Greene's anthem "Lord Let Me Know Mine End" also makes demands on soloists, this time two sopranos. We are fortunate in having two so well matched Lower Sixth soloists in Holly Middleditch and Theodora von Schroder. Their interweaving voices suffused the chapel with a great beauty of sound. The concert came to an end with three pieces in which we remembered Sophie Watson, who was once a member of the choir. Two pieces sung at her funeral, "Ave Verum Corpus" by Edward Elgar and Michael Tippett's "Steal Away to Jesus", were heard in absolute stillness as we remembered that wonderful friend to us all. Finally the choir sang Stainer's "Lord Now Lettest Thou Thy Servant Depart In Peace".

There were more than the usual nerves about singing in St. Paul's this year on May 1st, as we happened to have gone up to London on the day of the riots in Parliament Square. As always the choir acquitted themselves really well. We chose as the setting the Evening Service in B flat by Sir John Stainer. As Stainer was an organist of St. Paul's in the nineteenth century and wrote this work to be performed in that building, we knew it would work well and it did. The anthem was Bairstow's "Blessed City Heavenly Salem". In a dead acoustic, this anthem – because of its fragmented nature – seems very disjointed but St Paul's with its twenty second echo is ideal, and the whole piece sounded glorious.

As always my thanks go to the whole choir for doing so much for the worship in this School. We shall miss all those who are leaving and hope that they will continue with their singing in the future.

JCG



Sally Clark and Jaime Zaldua at the Bach Concert

## CHRISTMAS CONCERT IN AID OF "SCCWID"

It has always been difficult to find a solution to the problem that there are three times as many parents who would like to attend the Carol Service than the Chapel can accommodate. The different format of a Carol Concert went some way to overcoming the problem.

A concert for Sophie Watson's charity was bound to be very special, but this proved to be an extra special occasion. An audience of nearly 600 packed into the beautifully decorated Chapel to hear the Chapel Choir, Chamber Choir, Jazz Band, Brass Ensemble and the Chamber Orchestra give a concert of Christmas music. Interspersed between the music were readings recited exquisitely by Mr and Mrs Fletcher, who also introduced the whole event.

The first part of the concert took us through the prophecy of Jesus' birth with carols such as Vaughan Williams' "This Is The Truth Sent From Above" and Pierre Villette's carol "Hymne à la Vierge". Rutter's "Mary's Lullaby" told of the Mother of Jesus and the first part ended with the "Joy Of Christmas". In all, the Chapel Choir performed sixteen carols, unaccompanied and accompanied, with exemplary precision and beauty of tone.

There was a more secular feel to the second half with "Here Comes Santa Claus" sung by the Chamber Choir and "Let It Snow" and "Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas", all ending with the singing of "Hark The Herald Angels Sing". The one sad note was that Sophie was not well enough to attend, but she was very much with us in spirit and was truly the inspiration and motivating force behind it all.

Thanks to the ticket sales and the generous donations of parents who attended the Carol Service, we were able to send a cheque for £6,500 to Sophie's charity.

SALLY CLARK

## CONCERT OF ORCHESTRAL MUSIC BY J.S. BACH

The 250th anniversary of the death of J.S. Bach gave us the opportunity to present a concert dedicated solely to music by this great Baroque composer. Bach's music is technically and musically demanding on the performer with its seemingly never-ending flowing contrapuntal lines, which give no point of repose. The works chosen were some of the most difficult in the Baroque Concerti repertoire and one was left amazed at the end of the evening by the musical accomplishment of the four Stoic soloists.

The D minor Concerto for Two Violins got the concert off to a vibrant start with a strong attack from the whole Orchestra with the rushing semiquaver scale passages. The two soloists, David Hrankovic and Gene Kindell, played with great energy and precision in the outer movements whilst the beautiful slow movement's cantabile lines soared through the Music Room. The balance between the two soloists and Orchestra was excellent and these two sixteen-year-olds listened and responded to each other with enormous musicality.

The first half of the concert ended with the E flat Flute Sonata played by Sally Clark, accompanied by BJD. Sally's beautiful easy tone was just right for this music and the fast movements were executed with every detail heard from the flute and harpsichord. The central Siciliano is one of Bach's

best known works and Sally chose just the right tempo to keep the flow of the melodic line without it feeling rushed or too slow.

There were two Concertos in the second half of the programme: The A minor Violin Concerto and the fourth Brandenburg Concerto. The Soloist in the Violin Concerto was David Hrankovic. David comes from Germany and we expected a special performance of a work by his fellow countryman. David allowed the violin to sing through the central slow movement and made sure that every detail was present in the fast movements. This was a highly accomplished performance, which showed great maturity of interpretation.

The concert was brought to an end with a sparkling performance of the fourth Brandenburg Concerto with Soloists: Gene Kindell – Violin, Sally Clark and Jaime Zaldua – Flutes. The demands on the soloists are enormous and, possibly particularly so, on the violinist whose part needs virtuosic playing. The first movement is a relentless Allegro of nearly twelve minutes where all the soloists maintain a momentum with some very difficult rhythmic passages and no room for error. The slow movement provides a brief respite to an energetic fast quasi-fugal, always contrapuntal, finale. This made a brilliant end to what was surely one of the highlights of this year's music.

The String Orchestra gave the soloists wonderful support and paid great attention to detail, which can often be lacking in music of this period. Many hours of practising and rehearsing must have gone into this very special event.

ALEXANDER WINTER

## SPEECH DAY CONCERT

The concert opened with Tchaikovsky's Polonaise from *Eugene Onegin*. The opening trumpet calls, answered by the title chords from the orchestra, immediately captured the audience's attention. The whole piece was played with gaiety and exactitude.

Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue* is a fragmentary work which alters speed seemingly every few bars. The soloist was Simon Creek, whose playing was well up to the technical and musical demands of this very difficult work. Simon had a real feeling for the style of this work and there were some beautifully phrased quiet moments as well as some brilliantly executed bravura passages. Special mention should also be made of Rupert Burchett's clarinet playing and Tom Kemble on trumpet – their solos were expertly performed with exquisite control and feeling of style. The whole performance was a great success.

Khachaturian's *Masquerade Suite* is less well known than his *Spartacus Suite* but it proved to be a wonderful choice to end the concert. The first movement is a broad waltz that sweeps one along with its energy and passion. Following that comes a very tranquil second movement. The solo violin was played by the leader, Gene Kindell, who brought considerable warmth to the long solo line. The penultimate movement is a buoyant mazurka which moves along with tremendous rhythmic energy and allows each section of the orchestra to come into its own. Then comes the blazing gallop which moved along at such speed, energy and dynamism that one almost felt breathless at the end. The brass were magnificent and the very fast double tonguing was brilliant.

In between the orchestral items the Chamber Choir sang two pieces, 'Deep Purple' and 'Begin the Beguine'. The Jazz band played 'Build Me Up Buttercup' and 'Orange Coloured Sky' with Holly Middleditch as a sensational vocal soloist and the Chapel Choir sang 'Insanae et Vanae Curae' by F.J. Haydn.

All performers and conductor received a well deserved standing ovation, led by the Headmaster, at the end.

RJSS

## HOUSE SINGING FESTIVAL

The House Singing Festival must be one of the most entertaining evenings in the School Calendar when the whole School attends and everyone contributes to the event. Over the past few years there have been many high points and one or two low. This year it was all good and every House is to be congratulated on achieving such a high standard. Particularly noteworthy was the overall excellent quality of the part songs: Nugent's 'American Pie', with CJE making his Stowe debut on the acoustic guitar, had enormous strength and vigour whilst Temple's 'Go Down Moses' had all the hallmarks of JECH's attention to detail in a very polished performance.

The unison songs were also of a good musical quality. Although marks are only awarded for musical and not dramatic presentation, Walpole's 'Father And Son' and 'Luck Be A Lady' were beautifully staged by LEW. At this point may I thank LEW for all the hard work that he has done with Walpole in the House Singing Festival over the years. They have not always won, but the standard has always been high.

The difficult decision as to which House won was given to our adjudicator Mr Vincent Shaw, Director of Music at Lockers Park School. He gave an excellent adjudication and made many points for Houses to consider in future years. The Tustian Cup for the Part Song was won by Temple, who also won the Fanshawe Cup for the highest overall standard. Nugent won the Strathspey Unison Cup. My thanks to all those who trained, conducted and accompanied the songs for their great support.

### PART SONGS

Cobham:	Unchained Melody	Alex North
Grenville:	The only living boy	Paul Simon
Walpole:	Luck be a lady	Frank Loesser
Lyttelton:	Autumn Leaves	Joseph Kosma
Grafton:	Go tell it on the mountains	Spiritual
Chatham:	A wond'rous place	Bill Giant and Jeff Lewis
Chandos:	Joshua fit de Battle ob Jericho	Henry Burleigh
Nugent:	American Pie	Don MacLean
Temple:	Go down Moses	Spiritual

### UNISON SONGS

Cobham:	When I'm Sixty-Four	Lennon & McCartney
Grenville:	Cecilia	Simon & Garfunkel
Walpole:	Father and Son	Cat Stevens
Lyttelton:	The rhythm of life	Cy Coleman
Grafton:	Super Trooper	Abba
Chatham:	Ain't Misbehaving	Fats Waller & Harry Brooks
Chandos:	Gee Officer Krupke	Leonard Bernstein
Nugent:	Build me up buttercup	The Foundations
Temple:	Chatanooga Choo-Choo	Harry Watson

## VALEDICTORY CONCERT

A large audience gathered to hear, for the last time at Stowe, an astonishing group of musicians who sadly came to say farewell. The Headmaster spoke briefly of the exceptional work they had done and of what fine ambassadors they had all been for Stowe. We then listened to performances from Rupert Burchett (Clarinet), Rupert Burnell-Nugent (Clarinet), Sally Clark (Flute), Simon Creek (Piano), Michael Jones (Piano), Chirag Keswani (Piano), Alec Laing (Clarinet), Alexander Lyell (Trombone), Ben McCarey (Baritone), Lauren Small (Harp), Alexander Steinmetz (Piano) and Alexander Winter (Piano). It is amazing to look back and remember that none of the boys who entered the Third Form were beyond Grade 6 but now they are very accomplished musicians with diplomas, places at music colleges and prizes of national and international standing. The concert ended with a performance of a new piece written for the occasion by Rupert Burchett and included all the players from the concert. There was an immediate response from the audience as everyone present rose to give a standing ovation to this tremendous group of young musicians.

Mention should be made of those who could not be present; the many Upper Sixth from the Chapel Choir who have been so committed; a special mention should be made of Elizabeth Weston, who has been an excellent Head of Choir; Alasdair Gaston, playing Trumpet in Jazz Band and Orchestra; Hugo Harrison and Charles Sargeant from the Jazz Combo. To all of them go our sincerest thanks for all they have done for the musical life of this school.

The good news is that these splendid young musicians spent a day recording a CD which will be available from September 2000 and these may be purchased from the School Shop.

JCG

## PIANO RECITAL BY ALEXANDER WINTER

Alexander Winter has emerged during his years at Stowe as a musician of serious intent. The programme for his very successful recital in April reflected this in its uncompromising choice of pieces and their performance that not only caught the listener's attention but also demanded it. Without apology in the form of an appetiser, Alexander launched straight into one of Beethoven's most powerful middle period Sonatas, 'The Tempest'. Having revelled in the powerful passion of its outer movements and the serenity of its heart he went on to assault the audience's capacity for concentration with the Six Little Pieces by Schoenberg. With these intensely expressive pieces containing so few notes – each and every one is entrusted with an essential part of their meaning – Alexander was in his element. The first half concluded with a Prelude by Gorecki. Equally demanding to an unfamiliar ear, it was sold with some dextrous playing centred around a stunningly played climax.

The second half began with a convincing and exciting performance of the well-known Rachmaninoff Prelude in G minor followed by the song-like Schubert Impromptu in G flat in which Alexander's sensitivity and lyricism at times reached the sublime. The weight of the Beethoven at the start of the programme was balanced at the end with Liszt's Second Ballade. This is an extended work in which the composer journeys through the demonic and the

transcendent. Much poetry and virtuosity is called for and Alexander displayed both in abundance.

During the concert the pianist recounted the words of Shostakovich to his son Maxim: "An artist on stage is a soldier in combat. No matter how hard it is, he can't retreat." Not only did Alexander not retreat, he was victorious.

BJD

## MILTON KEYNES THEATRE CONCERT

As part of the celebrations in March for the opening of the Milton Keynes Theatre, PDH conducted a performance of his Buckingham Concerto No. 5 for Piano 4 Hands with the Milton Keynes Festival Orchestra. We were performing as the soloists with Vicky Burrett in the percussion section. The programme was designed to explore the works of local composers and PDH also conducted Thomas Armstrong's Sinfonietta. Despite nerves we all enjoyed the experience of performing on stage in a concert hall seating thousands.

It was a fantastic and memorable occasion, not least because of the privilege of having our own dressing room equipped with TV, shower, fridge and lights around the mirror. Many thanks are offered to PDH for creating the opportunity and to BJD for his patience with the performers and invaluable input.

ALEXANDER WINTER & SIMON CREEK



Above: Alex and Simon at the piano in the new Milton Keynes Theatre

Below: The Clarinet Quartet with their reception party at Grendon and Springhill Prison



## FLUTE RECITAL BY SALLY CLARK

A flute recital by Sally Clark is a musical event not to be missed and none of us who attended were disappointed in what we heard. She chose to give the recital the title 'A celebration of Flute Music' and this well-chosen programme seemed to demonstrate not only a wide range of flute repertoire but also Sally's amazing technical ability and excellent musicianship.

The recital began with Franz Benda's three movement Sonata in F. This eighteenth-century work was delicately played and Sally's controlled playing suited the piece admirably. We then moved on to the first of four works by French composers. The Romance by Saint-Saens requires a beautiful lyrical quality as it is a true 'song without words'.

Poulenc's Flute Sonata is one of the most famous works for the flute. Sally's was a very convincing interpretation and I particularly enjoyed the first movement, which was played with utmost precision. John Rutter's Suite Antique owes much to the influence of the Baroque period and the original score is for strings and harpsichord accompaniment. 'Un Oiseau En Mai' by Jean Sichel, as its title suggests, is ideal for the flute and the crystal clear sound of Sally's playing ascended through the Music Room.

The final work of the evening was Henri Busser's 'Prelude & Scherzo'. The technical demands on the player are phenomenal and a virtuoso technique is required. Sally appeared entirely untroubled by its requirements. This exciting work brought a very enjoyable evening to an end. Throughout she was supported by the brilliant accompaniment of BJD. We are all very grateful to Sally and wish her well for her studies at the Royal College of Music.

JCG

## THE CLARINET QUARTET GOES TO PRISON!

Although I was assured a thousand times of the safety of the Grendon and Springhill Prison and the fact that it was only for tax evaders and other such people, thoughts of strait-jackets, machine guns and Hannibal Lector flew through my mind as we approached the gates. We were only venturing into a low security, Grade D prison, but it wasn't very comforting to know that there was another, high-security prison about 100 metres up the road...

We were welcomed by an inmate and the Prison Governor and were treated to coffee and biscuits in the concert room – the so-called 'board-room'. Soon our audience began to arrive, men of all ages and nationalities. There must have been about 40 people in the room. This was not as expected – they all seemed completely normal people. No blood thirsty criminals around here!

Our programme consisted mainly of jazz by composers like Gershwin and Scott Joplin, and lasted about 40 minutes. Judging by the applause they all enjoyed it, and many came and shook our hands at the end. It seemed more tea was in order, which we had with the prisoners. One of them thought we were so good that he suggested we hire out Wembley Stadium for our next concert!

PETER ROSSITER

## THE FINZI CONNECTION: A SENSE OF HISTORY

I've always considered a sense of history to be very important – certainly those I admire most have one.

There was much history in the air last Saturday (March 11th) when Rupert Burchett performed Gerald Finzi's great Clarinet Concerto in a wonderful rambling old house in Ashmansworth, near Newbury. In fact this house was designed and lived in by the composer himself and is now the property of his son, the conductor, Christopher Finzi.

We arrived at Ashmansworth in the early evening – Rupert, Ben Davey, Alex Winter, Professor John Davies (my teacher) and myself, and after drinks (not Rupert of course) there was the performance. Ben played the accompaniment on the very piano Gerald Finzi used to compose the work. Christopher Finzi sat, rather alarmingly, with score in hand! Rupert gave his usual fluent and very musical performance. The atmosphere was tremendous.

After food we began to explore this absolute treasure trove of a house. Through a rather complicated family line, the Finzi's own a chair once belonging to George Washington. They also own Vaughan Williams' desk. Vaughan Williams spent much time with Finzi and indeed composed his Eighth Symphony whilst staying at



Rupert seated on a chair once belonging to George Washington

Ashmansworth. The house is full of wonderful paintings too. Many by Joy Finzi (the composer's wife) who was well-known in her day. There is a famous well on the terrace. 340 feet deep, it is one of the deepest in England. We were treated to an extraordinary fireworks display as a lighted newspaper was allowed to fall to the bottom. The garden also boasts one of the most comprehensive apple orchards – Gerald Finzi was a very keen apple grower and there are about fifty different varieties to be found!

This was one of those memorable events that make life just that bit more special.

PDH

BJD, Rupert Burchett and Christopher Finzi, who is holding his father's score of the concerto



## THE CLARINET QUARTET ABROAD

Bulgaria: a land of unexpected riches

As we boarded the Lufthansa Airbus A-300 at Heathrow, destination Sofia (via Frankfurt), there was more than a little sense of adventure in the air. At the start of our visit to Bulgaria my knowledge of the country and its culture was, regrettably, extremely sketchy. I knew it was adjacent to Kosovo on its western border and that, as with so many of the Eastern European states, it had been somewhat stifled under the Soviet influence for many years. However, four days later my perception and understanding of this fascinating country had grown and developed immensely.

We met Diana Bojilova, who acted as our guide, at the airport – and we were first hit by the fact that the temperature was rather warmer than we were expecting. Most people were in their light summer dress – we were still dressed up for a full British winter! We visited Plovdiv first – Bulgaria’s ‘second’ city. After some delightful sight-seeing we were taken to the music school for talented young musicians aged between 10 and 18 (similar to our specialist music schools). Four students played to us (music by Krommer, Debussy, Kozeluch and Bela Kovacs). We then gave a short concert. The audience – clarinet students, professors, staff and others – were excited by our quartet repertoire. None of it is available in Bulgaria – in fact we were surprised and dismayed to learn that there are no ‘music’ shops in Bulgaria at all.

Next we were taken to the Plovdiv Music Academy. We had tea and chocolate biscuits with the Principal and the clarinet professor. That evening we gave our next performance. We had been amused by posters all over Plovdiv with our names spelt in the Cyrillic script, but they had their effect because the concert room in the beautiful Balabanov House was full. Our programme of clarinet quartets was very varied – from Henry VIII, through Mozart and Grieg to Gershwin. It seemed to go down well. My introductions were interpreted by Diana whose passion for Bulgaria was quite infectious.

The next day we visited more classes at the Academy before moving on to Sofia, the capital city. In the evening we



Standing by a poster advertising the concert in Plovdiv



With clarinetists from the Sofia Academy



At the British Embassy  
with Ambassador, Richard Stagg, and his wife

gave a concert for the British Ambassador at the Embassy. All the most important Bulgarian dignitaries seemed to be there. It was quite an occasion. On our final morning we were taken to the National Music School in Sofia and were given a concert of Bulgarian clarinet music. Again we gave a short concert in return which resulted in my being given quite a long shopping list by our Bulgarian friends!

The warmth and friendliness of the Bulgarian musicians was truly uplifting and reminded me both of the universality and great power of music. There was much exchanging of addresses and I’m sure we will keep in touch. As with our similar trip to Hungary last year, we came back much the richer for the experience. The Eastern Europeans have a generosity of spirit that we found quite exceptional. It was a wonderful week.

PDH

### Some thoughts from the Quartet:

The one thing that struck me when we were on tour in Bulgaria, even though we were only there for three days, was the incredible generosity of the people. Perhaps at first sight they weren’t the most jolly group of people but once we did get to know them they were welcoming, kind and very interested in our music. We were treated like kings! We ate extremely well and were introduced to Bulgaria’s fascinating history. Also, not knowing much about Bulgaria I was expecting to be needing a lot of warm clothes – but it was like mid-summer – a great change from here!

ALEC LAING

On the final morning of our stay in Bulgaria we were taken to the Sofia Music School, the national music school. First we played a short recital – ‘The Teddy Bears’ Picnic’ seemed to go down extremely well! Then each of their top clarinetists played pieces to us, including works by Weber and Mozart. The pupils were the same age as us and were very enthusiastic to hear about life in England and to exchange addresses. What really struck me about Bulgaria was their zest and passion for music despite the serious lack of resources.

RUPERT BURNELL-NUGENT

I was a little taken aback by the fact that the Bulgarians seemed to stare at us a lot! I suppose being clad in western clothes and driving about in western cars (most of the cars on the road were Skodas) was probably the reason. Bulgaria is one of the most beautiful countries I have had the pleasure of visiting. It upsets me, therefore, to see the more poverty-stricken side of its wonderful culture. I also came to realise that all the musicians we met in our travels were always incredibly happy with an infectious positive attitude. Music is truly an international language.

PETER ROSSITER



## THE CLARINET QUARTET'S YORKSHIRE CONCERT TOUR

This year we set off for Yorkshire for our annual Prep School Tour with a new minibus, some new repertoire, new instruments and wonderful weather!

After one or two minor wrong turns (not the fault of our excellent map reader, Rupert Burchett, but rather the rashness of our driver, PDH), we finally arrived at Ripon Cathedral School. The enthusiasm of the pupils was infectious. Bright-



A workshop at Aysgarth

eyed and very able (and quick) to answer the numerous quick-fire questions that is part of our presentation. The audience looked a little perplexed when, at the end of our concert, PDH wished them a pleasant supper (or perhaps they do have supper mid-afternoon in the North?). We were treated to an excellent tea afterwards in the company of the Headmaster and his wife (who turned out to be the daughter of an erstwhile Chatham Housemaster).

On then to Aysgarth – situated in deepest North Yorkshire countryside. We were very warmly welcomed and much enjoyed playing. Afterwards we spent some time with various musical pupils of the school, listening and playing along with them. The Headmaster, John Hodgkinson, and his wife treated us to a splendid meal in the evening.



Relaxing at Byland Abbey near Thirsk

Up at the crack of dawn the next morning and a forty-five minute drive across to Queen Mary's, Thirsk (the home of the famous – but now deceased – vet, James Herriot). After the concert we had coffee with the Headmaster. Our final visit was to Cundall Manor where the Headmaster greeted us most enthusiastically. We had a tour of the school before the performance. The architecture of the school is most unusual – if one stands upside down (which I did) the main building is supposed to look like a ship (with a little imagination, it did!). We had some time left before making our return, so spent it enjoying a little sight-seeing: Byland Abbey, Coxwold (the home of Laurence Sterne, the writer of *Tristram Shandy*), Ampleforth College (where we sunbathed for a while!), Helmsley (where we savoured some delicious hot chocolate) and finally Rievaulx Abbey (where, as we had arrived almost at closing time, PDH had to do much persuading before we were allowed in). As usual it was a wonderful weekend.

RUPERT BURNELL-NUGENT



At Cundall Manor. Left to right: Rupert Burchett, Alec Laing, the Headmaster, Peter Rossiter and Rupert Burnell-Nugent.

The Stoasis phenomenon, the project Graham Cottrell, Stoasis's Svengali-like manager, said was 'A fine example of staff-Stoic collaboration, the kind of project that probably could only happen at Stowe', started fairly inauspiciously. New geography master Stephen Scott burst into my rooms early in September 1996 and saw my battered old black acoustic guitar.

'Excellent old boy,' he beamed, his eyes lighting up, 'Do you play?'

'No,' I said truthfully, 'I subscribe to the punk rock theory that you only need three chords and the truth.'

'Excellent,' said Scott again. 'I know three chords as well, so that makes six. We should form a staff band.'

I changed the subject rapidly; the thought of demonstrating my limited musical talent in front of real people was not even worth discussing.

Over the next few months, Scott proved at numerous soirées that he knew far more than three chords on the guitar and his enthusiastic desire to play live gradually wore down my defences. He finally won me over by informing me one day that I was in his band whether I liked it or not. Therefore, in an attempt to deflect us from actually rehearsing, I set about defining theoretical rock'n roll rules for the band.

'No more than three members, no keyboards, no beards and definitely no girlie backing singers,' I proclaimed. Alas, like all bands, as success went to our heads, we either broke or seriously considered breaking every last one of them. I wonder now, had we all stayed at Stowe, would we have gone as far as to force the Stowe orchestra to back us in our own rock opera? I suspect so.

By Christmas Scott had badgered me enough to actually rehearsing songs in the guise of a rather bad Everly Brothers-like duo called the Derby Winners (don't ask). We needed a drummer badly but none of the academic staff was able to (or willing to admit they could) play the drums. That suited me perfectly. However, after the Christmas break things got serious. In a mad moment I bought a bass guitar and then, as if to prove things were really happening, Scott bounded up to me to say, 'I've got the name – Stoasis!'

I was impressed. Oasis were at their peak. It was perfect. Apparently, a Scottish army sergeant Scott met at a CCF camp came up with the name at a debriefing session in a local



## STOASIS

A memoir by Ray Dexter

tavern over Christmas.

'We still need a drummer,' I pointed out.

'No, we have a drummer too,' beamed Scott triumphantly, playing his trump card. 'I've asked Andreas Gross, the German assistant, to bash away for us.'

'But he's never played drums in his life,' I said.

'Whereas you are Stowe's answer to Paul McCartney on bass,' snorted Scott. 'We're rehearsing tomorrow.'

So we rehearsed once or twice a week in the suitably isolated Queen's Temple, creating the kind of racket one would expect from a Boeing 747 during take-off. After a while though something weird happened: we got better. Once, after a rather rousing version of Oasis's 'Supersonic' I walked away from my companions and peered behind the curtains.

'What are you doing?' asked Scott.

'I can't believe this is us,' I said, 'I'm looking for the real Oasis.'

Word got around. Stoics loved the idea. The Common

Room was more sceptical and we got some ribbing in the Mess. Scott started banning the most boorish masters from the theoretical guest lists of our first gig until he realised that this was what they wanted.

'Right, I'll chain you to the amps then,' he grinned.

Inevitably we were offered a gig, at Cobham's annual wine and cheese party. Scott was delighted; I was terrified because we had a major problem. Although it is perfectly acceptable (almost a prerequisite) to have a bad bass player in a rock band, a good drummer is essential and much as Andreas was willing, he couldn't play at all. Our kicking, fast punk tunes were always backed by what sounded like a pink clockwork drumming rabbit gradually winding down. With days to go, Scott and I made a decision. It was tough but Andreas had to go.

Andreas was our Pete Best. Who was our Ringo Starr? It turned out to be one of the best drummers I had ever seen. Nick Kirkwood, a lower sixth student at the time playing in Stowe art house band George's Tree, agreed to sit in for the gig. Our first rehearsal (the night before) was amazing. He could do anything. He was Animal from the Muppet Show. We were ready. He was so good I feared for my own position, as I was now officially the most incompetent member of Stoasis.

The night of the gig was nerve-racking but the audience (a rather eclectic bunch of staff and Stoics) was a typical Stowe audience: warm and welcoming. We couldn't fail – or could we?

We walked on stage and Scott played a bum note in the first second, our first instrumental stopped short but the audience clapped anyway. Then the gods of music stepped in to save us. We played a Green Day number which, in rehearsals, was accompanied by yours truly jumping high in the air in ironic rock style. I had no plans to do that live but I did anyway, nearly hitting the ceiling and playing the riff at the same time. The audience exploded with applause and laughter and cheers. Scott was laughing too. We were made. The rest of the gig was a blur of excitement with Stoics 'moshing', invading the stage and yelling our names long after the songs finished.

Follow that. The Common Room sceptics, all present at the gig, now conceded to their own rock leanings: one very senior member of the Common Room confessing to sneaking in to the Isle of Wight Rock festival to see Jimi Hendrix.

The classic Stoasis line-up was complete within two days. Word got around and Tom Dent, guitarist in George's Tree decided to jump ship and join in the fun. I was appalled.

'What about the 'no more than three members' rule?' I protested.

'Forget it, this boy can play,' grinned Scott. 'So we can forget that Three Chords and the Truth nonsense too. He can play solos and everything.'

We played the Upper Sixth club a week later. I remember it being a riot of sweat and claustrophobia, Graham Cottrell introducing us in the manner of Led Zeppelin at their peak. Tom Dent made us; he could do things with guitars which made us almost professional. We could attempt Hendrix numbers and I still claim our version of 'Voodoo Child' is better than Jimi's.

'The band were competent but have some way to go to match the standards of bands such as the Beatles and Stoasis who have also played here.'

1997 quote from the Voice review of a visiting band's performance

We played one more gig that year, in the Dobinson Theatre but we had almost got too big. We believed the hype, we saw the posters ripped down in corridors and we forgot what it was all about. We planned to return in the new academic year as the house band in the Upper Sixth Club. Unfortunately Dent snapped tendons in his hand playing rugby and it was possible that he would never play guitar again, which for such a talent would have been tragic. Fortunately, after six months of healing he was fine. By then the time was right for a Stoasis comeback. Graham Cottrell was there again, offering us a return at the wine and cheese. The year away had strengthened us. I could play a bit now and our set was better as we added Blur's 'Song 2', the Clash's classic 'Should I stay' and Nirvana's 'In Bloom', which Dent sang beautifully.

The return gig was a classic. The Stoasis legend had grown; most of the audience wore painted-on sideburns and held banners. We were brilliant, Kirkwood and Dent doing the clever stuff and Scott and I doing all the stereotyped things. The only downside was that Scott had grown a goatee beard, breaking another one of our precious rules.

We only had one more chance to play as we were all leaving Stowe. Someone had the idea of a final megagig outside. It would be huge, Scott was preparing to break another rule by having Rupert Demery, assistant Chaplain at the time, join us on stage on keyboards for a few numbers. Fortunately for my 'rules' he declined. That final gig was another triumph of Stoic collaboration. The stage was built from scratch; the P.A was set up, as were the lights and video screens, all courtesy of Stoics far more talented than some members of the band (me). Our final rehearsal had to fit in with the tea interval of the 1st XI cricket match going on on the North Front – typically Stowe. The gig itself was a homage to all that was great about rock and roll. We came on as night fell, allowing Stoic DJs to play to our audience.

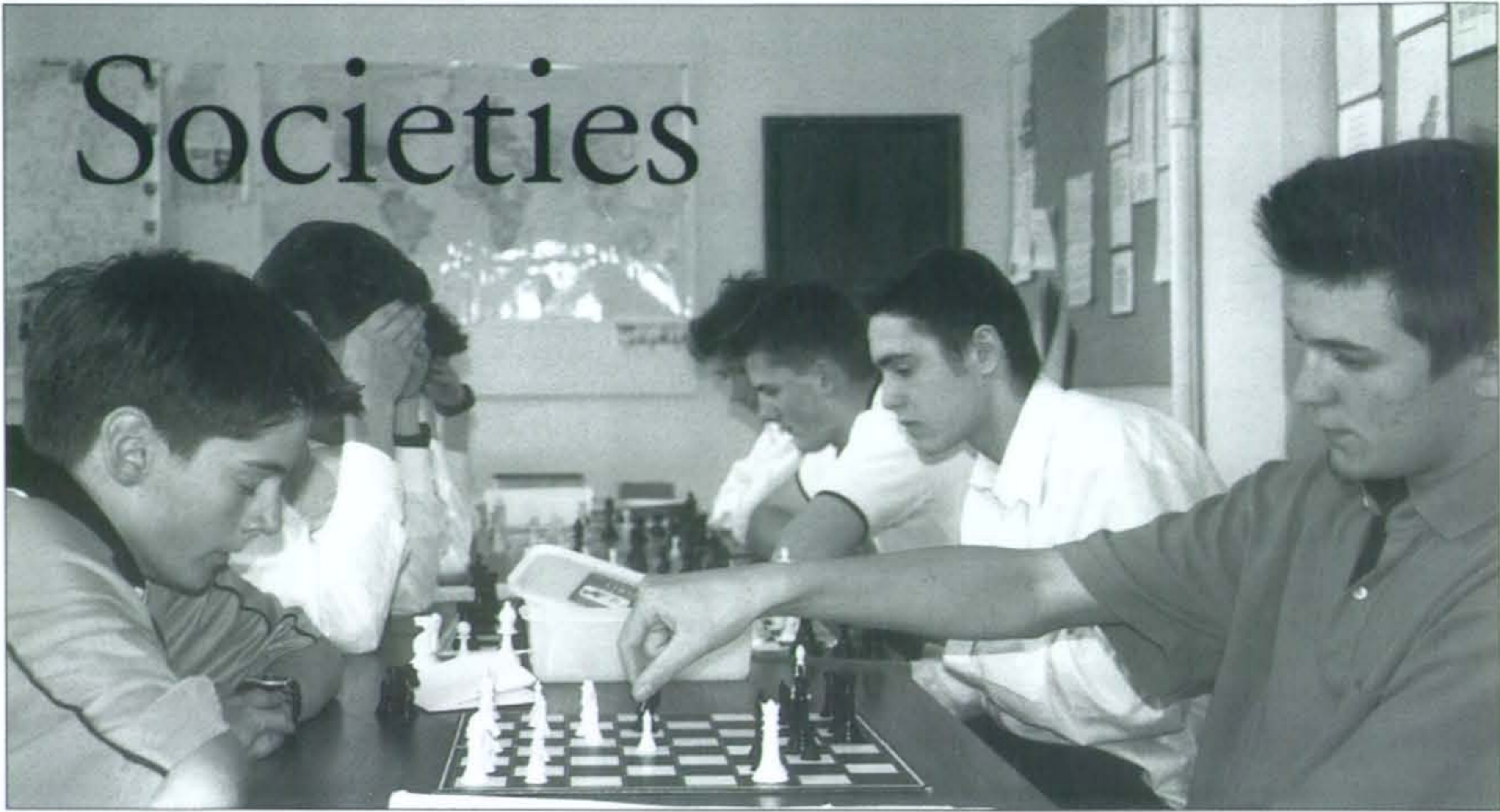
'Good evening, Planet Earth,' drawled Scott as the audience roared. I wore sunglasses but found I couldn't see the bass so quickly removed them. The kids dressed up, jumped around, the band jumped into the audience, laughed and the academic staff grooved a safe distance away. We ran out of songs so we had to stop playing.

'Ladies and Gentleman,' said Graham Cottrell to the cheering mass of Stoics, steam rising from their exhausted bodies, 'If you want Stoasis to come back for their fourth encore you girls at the front must stop hurling yourselves at the drumkit.'

So it ended and Stoasis broke up. Dent and Kirkwood should go on to careers in music. Scott went on to be something big in the city. I still teach chemistry and have kept a vow never to play bass again.

A surprised member of the academic staff said after seeing us for the first time, 'You know, they could actually make it, be famous.' No we couldn't. It was just acting out a fantasy, briefly tapping into that mysterious energy source that early Elvis, Jerry Lee Lewis, Beatles, Stones, Led Zeppelin, the Clash, Oasis and Nirvana all fed off too. But if it made one Stoic pick up a musical instrument or appreciate the joy of live music for the first time, then the whole thing was a success in my eyes.

BUDAPEST CHRISTMAS 1999



# Societies

## CHESS CLUB

Numbers have fluctuated over the year, as is usually the case, with other commitments, like sports matches or drama rehearsals taking their toll, but some sprightly third-form recruits have injected fresh blood.

The club championship was the first stage of the mammoth UK Land Chess Challenge 2000 tournament. Dominic Sullivan, Jonathan Boyman, Paul Hinds and Edward Pendleton won through to the Mega Final in Hemel Hempstead on 29th April. Six rounds were played with clocks during a long day. The Stoics were fine representatives of their school, with Jonathan Boyman deserving congratulations for proceeding to the Giga Final.

In June, Dominic led Chatham, the cupholders, to the semi-finals of the Inter-House Chess Tournament, where, however, their progress was halted by a resurgent Chandos House team. In the even more thrilling Cobham-Bruce encounter, the result of this 5 board match depended on Dimitri Pestov turning around his lost position to enable Cobham to reach the final with a 3-2 victory. Cobham then wrapped up proceedings with a 4-1 win over Chandos.

All eight boys' Houses fielded complete teams and the event was played with gusto and in good spirit.

We hope younger players will stay with the club and increase their playing strength by over-the-board encounters in their own time (as well as during club sessions) and studying appropriate literature.

EST



Chess Finalists in Chapel Court  
Edward Pendleton holds the Cup for the victorious Cobham team, won by beating Chandos

## CLASSICAL SOCIETY

We have been privileged to have two excellent talks this year. Mr Dick Mowbray, a former mentor of Mr David Stephenson, investigated aspects of warfare in Virgil's *Aeneid*, drawing illuminating comparisons with poetry from the First World War. Mr David Roques, an Old Stoic and former colleague of Mr Paul Armstrong, inspired his audience with a review of Clytemnestra's role in Aeschylus' *Agamemnon*, even resorting to notes on paper fittingly coloured red. Younger classicists augmented their studies on Roman Entertainment by attending the newly-released film *Gladiator*, and distinguishing mid-American colouring and superb visual effects from much careful accuracy in the details. In addition a large band of classicists viewed the original sites of Rome and Italy for themselves, as reported elsewhere in this issue.

MJB

## COMMUNITY SERVICE

Community Service will never be a vastly populated activity, though numbers have increased, but that fact is but a tribute to the vastness and diversity of Stowe's extra-curricular programme in general. What we do have among the vast majority of Stoics who do opt for it is an unusually high level of commitment and enthusiasm and they have (they assure me!) found it to be extremely rewarding.

Of particular note is James Pegrum who has committed himself inexorably and exhaustively to the care of the lady he has been visiting for years, dealing competently with, and helping her through, various unpleasant situations this year in particular and repeatedly requesting extra afternoons beyond his allotted ones. His contribution earned him his school colours earlier this year. Nevertheless, James is no exception and Stoics like him will surely ensure a continued rise in numbers for CS as by word of mouth its popularity increases over years to come.

The main success of Community Service this year has been to re-introduce the diversity which always traditionally characterised it. We now have placements not only in the homes of the elderly and nursing homes, but have also branched back out into primary schools, charity shops and Mencap homes. Stoics have gone further afield to places like the Oxfordshire Cheshire Home in Adderbury and I have also been delighted, without exception, with the attitudes of all the girls who have been involved in classroom assistance in primary schools. Their enthusiasm has been the key to reaffirming our links with Chackmore, Gawcott and Tingewick First Schools which were fostered many years ago and have fallen into decline. This has been made possible primarily because of how much genuine desire there is among the Stoics involved to enrich the lives of others, and hence their own.

One matter which does continue to frustrate me is the perception that Community Service is 'geeky' or a cop-out for people who do not wish to do sport. I would personally regard it as simply one of many terrific opportunities the School offers and it is worth noting that some of the Stoics who have done it this year have also been major sporting contributors. At any rate, it is by no means dominated by any particular social 'type'.

So Community Service is of value not just in terms of promoting our 'development of the individual' ethos but as an overt way in which Stowe justifies its place as a contributor to society. 'To think about others', one of Stowe's key mission statements, would seem to be directly met three afternoons per week by a committed handful giving of themselves.

DAS

## SENIOR DEBATING

1999-2000 has been another eventful year for the Stowe Debating Society, with a very high standard of speech presented by many Stoics on many fine occasions. The year began in October with the ever-contentious question, should Chapel be compulsory? Proposing the unacceptable nature of Stowe Chapel were Liz Weston, Jamie Elwes and Hugo Wilson whilst opposing were Kate Turnbull, Harry Trelawny and Alex Lyell. Despite the eventual outcome of 51 votes to 17 in favour of the proposition notice must be pointed to Alex Lyell's 'pretending' to be a steadfast puritan!

The second debate turned to an issue particularly topical at the time, 'This House Believes The House of Lords should be Abolished'. Despite the somewhat predictable outcome in favour of the opposition of Patrick Bingham, Emily Townsend and Alasdair Gaston, this was a hotly contended debate with a worthy proposition forwarded by Max Lawrence, Antonia Ford and Ben McCarey. Indeed it was a competition so hotly contended that things almost boiled over in the final speeches before stand-in Chairman David Widdick was able to restore order.

The first debate of the Easter Term saw the debut of a number of Lower 6th form speakers: for the proposition Alice Kent, Alex Wilson and Alex Rogers, and for the opposition Piers Craven who was supported by Richard Bennett and Hugh Arbuthnott from the Upper 6th, on a motion particularly close to Stoics' hearts, 'Money makes the world go round'. Following another explosive competition Alex Rogers' final emotive speech swung the balance in favour of the proposition and the motion was carried by 31 votes.

The penultimate debate of the school year saw Satan (aka Ben McCarey) exchange blows with Bill Clinton (aka Tom Draper) and Monica Lewinski (aka BOS) tussle with Ken Livingstone in the traditional Upper Sixth form balloon debate. Although PASF as 'Red Ken' eventually emerged victorious (yet another dodgy vote!) none seemed willing to take the plunge to earth, particularly Boris Yeltsin (Matt Brockbank) whose appeal to the hearts, minds and vodka bottles of Stoics very nearly won the day. This was not a debate over-represented by the left, however, with David Widdick representing Jorg Heide.

The final debate of the year returned to the more serious topic of screen violence and its negative impact on society. It was proposed by Tom Kemble, Alice Girardot and Max Lawrence and opposed by Jamie Elwes, Theodora von Schroder and Alex Rogers. The final outcome was in favour of the opposition although in this debate most tension existed between chairman and audience.

The society has been well supported as ever this year and would like to thank all those who have shown commitment to debating at Stowe.

BENEDICT MCCAREY

## JUNIOR DEBATING

The Junior Debating Society has been very well supported this year both in the quality of speakers and the numbers in the audience.

Some memorable moments included Stoics voting in favour of the motion that 'Stoics are pampered, arrogant, selfish and out of touch with the real world'. This was proposed by John Dawson, Barney Baber and CJE, opposed by Oliver Hogg, PSR and Freddie von Schroder.

The first and most heated debate proposed that 'Blood sports should be banned' and provided the most strongly attired audience (and speakers!) of the year. Matthew Gracie, Paul Hinds and Sam Duckett were opposed by Merlin Hanbury-Tenison, Alexander Pike and Oliver Hogg and faced a somewhat biased full house.

Everyone's favourite seems to have been 'This House believes that blue is faster than red' which stimulated some excellent, innovative and humorous speeches from Freddie von Schroder, James Elwes, John Dawson, Barney Baber, Charles More Nisbett and Ali Hussein.

The School hosted the English Speaking Union Public Speaking Competition and although we did not win, Louis Buckworth, Freddie von Schroder and Ben Morgan were highly commended. We also took a team to the Rotary Club competition and certificates were awarded to Louis Buckworth, Freddie von Schroder and Piers Craven.

Many thanks are due to Piers Craven who has been unstinting of his time in helping the juniors. Also to Nick Austin for acting as a most efficient chairman.

The final debate of the year will be a balloon debate where the society will be pleased to accept Freddie von Schroder as chairman and Charles More Nisbett (everyone's favourite PR man) as secretary for the 2000-2001 season.

BTF

## FOUNDATIONERS

This year's activities culminated with awards given out by the Headmaster at the end of the Summer Term. (Successful third-formers pictured below.)

## FILM SOCIETY

'Film Soc.', as it is commonly known, consists of about ten members who gather together every Wednesday in SGAH's study to watch and discuss films. The aim is for one member of the society to present a film he or she thinks is exceptional and to give a presentation on it the following week, after which it can be discussed by the rest of the group.

SGAH kicked off with the classic *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid*, which was enthusiastically received by the society, most of whom had not previously seen it. However, it is not only classic films that have been received. Max Lawrence presented *The Commitments*, a contemporary film which follows the dreams and lives of an aspiring rock 'n' roll group based in Dublin. It was met with mixed opinions, but most agreed that the soundtrack was one of the high points of the film. Alice Kent then gave an entirely different film, adding glitz and glamour to the society with *A Velvet Goldmine*. Next up was the chillingly real story of *Donnie Brasco*, slightly reminiscent of *The Godfather*, and presented with eloquence by Piers Craven. Last but not least was Toby Ford's presentation on *Clueless*. The society wondered whether we would find any real meaning in this film and were rewarded with what we expected: a mockery not only of American teenage society, but also of the watchers whom it actually influenced into taking on the habits of the clueless American teens.

The society has been particularly looking at the cinematography of films, photographic techniques and development of the characters. This has yielded some very interesting conversations and often Film Soc. has extended far past the end of prep.

Some people have questioned the very merit of having a society that watches films during a very precious work time. However, most of the members of Film Soc. feel that it is worth giving up an hour and a half of their study to gain a broader spectrum of ideas and views. All in all, Film Soc. has been a very successful society and all members have enjoyed the two terms of its existence.

HOLLY MIDDLEDITCH



## LITERARY SOCIETY

The Literary Society over the last two years has continued to have an active and diverse programme.

We were hugely privileged to hear Sir Peter Hall back in September 1998. He spoke with passion, commitment and eloquence on Shakespeare, communicating a real sense of mission and lamenting the failure of all but a handful of contemporary actors and directors to understand the dramatic implications involved in recognizing that Shakespeare wrote in Blank Verse. Sir Peter was delighted to discover that Stoics were well acquainted not just with Shakespeare but with the technicalities of his verse and the ways in which it informs the meaning of the plays.

In October 1998 and May 1999, there were two memorable evenings during which Stoics read their own short stories and verse as EST's Creative Writing Circle combined with the Literary Society before an invited audience in the Library. The standard was exceptionally high and the boys and girls showed great courage in sharing the fruits of their imaginative enterprise with others.

In October 1998 and May 1999, there were also two excellently informative talks on *Antony & Cleopatra*, the first one from Dr Colin Burrow of Caius College, Cambridge, and the second one from the Headmaster. In November 1998, Michael Crick, reporter and presenter in *Newsnight* and *Panorama*, and celebrated nemesis of Jeffrey Archer, spoke on 'Television Journalism in the Nineties'.

In January 1999, the UVI English specialists staged a Balloon Debate in the State Music Room based on Chaucer's 'The Franklin's Tale'. The question debated was the one posed by the Franklin at the end of his tale: 'Which of them, as thinketh yow, was the mooste fre?' The protagonists all dressed for the occasion. Ben Morgan was the (somewhat scantily attired) Knight, Frances Morley-Fletcher his wife, William Ritchie the Squire (who won the Debate) and Shaun Gardiner a somewhat sinister scholar/magician.

In October 1999, we were thrilled to hear Sir Peter Ustinov present an autobiographical and dramatic *tour de force*; his powers of anecdote and mimesis rivetted a Music Room filled to capacity. The English Department acted excerpts from two set texts, *Twelfth Night* and *Antony & Cleopatra* and Mr John Venning, Head of English at St Paul's School, gave a talk on *Twelfth Night*. Mr Brian Worthington, Head of English at Clifton College, gave us a memorably excellent evening on 'How to understand a poem'. PASF gave two talks during the past academic year: one on A.E. Housman in November and one on 'Hamlet: the readiness is all' in May. PASF

## MODERN LANGUAGES

A highly successful French Eurolingua Evening involved Stoics from the Fifth form upwards. We followed a different approach from previous years by basing the main part of the evening around a quiz for teams from all three year groups. A 'blind' wine and cheese tasting was followed by some geographical, cultural and historical questions all carried out in French. This was washed down with some wine and camembert and other delicacies provided by the French Assistant.

Also in October our top set from the Lower Sixth travelled with EGM and ARGV to Paris to spend a week at

the Lycée Jean-Baptiste Say. They spent a day in the school following their partners to lessons and tasting life in a French school and went out on various visits linked with their A-level coursework topic. The Musée Carnavalet was a favourite along with the visit to the Paris sewers and to the Assemblée Nationale. It was all rounded off with a visit to the Parisian equivalent of Covent Garden and to the theatre to see Molière's *Le Malade Imaginaire*. This was a very successful trip and the start we hope of a lasting link between our two schools.

In November we welcomed Herr Torsten Bovians, a visiting German teacher, for a three-week stay. During this time he was involved in producing a German magazine and he put on his own German Abend, in which he outlined where he was from and why he was here and showed us some superb slides. Again this evening was entirely conducted in German and was open to all year groups. The 30 or so who attended had a great time and also enjoyed the regional specialities which Herr Bovians provided.

In December the European Theatre Company paid us their annual visit with their production of *Cyrano de Bergerac* which was held in the Music Room. A wonderful initiation in French theatre for our Fifth and Sixth form linguists.

The Spring Term brought with it the German Eurolingua evening arranged by the German assistant, ARGV and AJJ. Again a quiz format was used with Roman Strecker as quizmeister and Chris Katthagen as translator from time to time – quite a double act! The evening also featured some sketches put on by our sixth-formers which proved amusing even to those with a limited grasp of the German being used! A few small German beers then were used to wash down some of the finest wurst I have ever tasted.

In the Summer Term it was the turn of the Hispanists. The Spanish Evening provided memorable moments including a version of *La Bamba* which will fortunately not be released for public consumption starring Hugh Arbuthnott, John Harris and David Parker and a wonderful musical interlude provided by the Zaldua family, their two guitars and various voices. The ubiquitous quiz returned and many Spanish and Colombian delicacies were sampled.

I would like to thank all three assistants, Emmanuelle Rouillé, Alex Camargo and Christina Mohr for their input into these events and for all their hard work throughout the year. They have certainly been wonderful value.

SJBA

## PITT SOCIETY

This year has seen the expansion of the Pitt Society, from a history-orientated discussion group to a broader group, to include Lower Sixth economists and art historians, as well as historians. The Pitt, as the society is known, is a group of about 15 students, selected from the three subjects, who meet in PVC's flat in Grenville twice or three times a term, to discuss broad topics, relating them to all three subjects. The meetings are introduced by a short presentation by a student, suggesting some ideas and points for discussion, before the topic is opened for discussion by everybody. The first meeting this term was centred around the broad topic of justice, which was introduced by Piers Craven, and encompassed many different aspects of justice, from social and economic justice, to the principle of a 'just war'. The second meeting was introduced by Alice Girardot and Alexa Clark, on the

topic of greatness, and the question that dominated the discussion was the distinction between greatness and goodness. The third meeting, and the last one before this article went to press, was on the subject of the impact of Christianity on art, history and society as a whole, which was introduced by Nick Buffini, bravely questioning that controversial and undeniably tricky subject of the justification of religion: can such a thing that causes so much war and conflict be reasonably justified in this day and age?

The Pitt Society starts each year for Lower Sixth members in the Spring Term, so the present group still has over half the year to run, but so far the meetings have been stimulating and thought provoking for all. If nothing else, the Society gives a very welcome opportunity to discuss intellectual topics beyond the confines of subjects and syllabuses. On behalf of all of this year's members, I would like to thank the members of staff who arrange and contribute to the Pitt: Mr Cottam, Mr Moule, Mr Ruben and Mr Robinson.

PIERS CRAVEN

## POETRY CIRCLE

After various attempts to found the Poetry Circle, we gathered for the first time in May. The society has the intention of giving potential S-level English students a deeper insight into poetry and its development.

Within the circle the young critics present and debate the intricacies of all manner of poems – from the works of Shakespeare right down to Larkin. Although only recently founded, the society hopes to be a flourishing forum for Stoics in the future.

DAVID HRANKOVIC

## SYMPOSIUM

Wednesday arrives, and although it is a full day with eight long lessons, the pain is lessened by the weekly Symposium held in the evening in the School Library. Evolved from the Twenty Club, the Symposium is a gathering of twenty 3rd and 4th formers where discussions and lectures, lasting an hour and a half or so, take place. The first term saw a broad variety of topics covered, ranging from Bridge strategy with Dr. Hornby to weird Science with Mr. Collins. In 'Spot the Logical Flaw', several masters talked to us in groups, and everybody had a chance to contribute. We were also invited to some Senior School talks, and especially memorable was Sir Peter Ustinov, whose hilarious narrative left us with tears in our eyes.

The next two terms dealt with the Renaissance and Enlightenment, with a different speaker or group leader each week. Mr. Ruben began the journey with a gripping account of late mediaeval Europe, and we went on to cover the arts, science, philosophy and religious change in these periods. Every three weeks we broke from the sequence and were presented with off-beat special presentations, such as Mr. Shuldiner on the origins of Hip-Hop.

You may be wondering what's so good about having yet another lesson when you've just had eight: but it isn't just another lesson. Apart from the coke and Mars bars, there is a real sense of a friendly social gathering, and though we cover a lot of ground, the sessions are more relaxed than ordinary lessons. We have heard The Pope and Luther debate in front of us (in costume), seen the night sky through a Renaissance telescope and studied the Art of the Italian masters. Our thanks to all the participating teachers for being so interesting and entertaining.

HUBERT BOURKE-BORROWES

## THE BEAGLES

Despite various ominous noises from both Westminster and Edinburgh about the future of hunting, at Stowe a great many people continue to enjoy this traditional country way of life into the new millennium. Our Beagle pack and the people who help to run it are a vigorous reflection of this interest.

Guy Pelly has been Master for most of the year until he stepped down at the start of the Summer Term to make way for younger blood and the joint mastership of Charles Carter and Nicholas Keyser, both of Grafton. It was they who helped to organise, under the all-seeing eyes of John Fretwell, our Kennel Huntsman, a highly enjoyable Puppy Show which took place on the Bursar's lawn on the South Front on June 10th. Other hunt staff this year have been William Mann, Edward Spurr, Chris McGee (all of Grafton) and Charlie Shirley-Beavan (Grenville) who have all acted as whippers-in. Chris McGee in being made a civvy whip this year is following in the footsteps of his father who was a past Master of the Stowe Beagles.

Our hunting tally was a very respectable nine brace with some excellent and highly varied days out. All our days out were special but particularly notable were our outings at Chetwode Priory, Three Shires Farm, Eydon Hall and our most memorable joint day's hunting with the Marlborough College pack. Over Autumn Half-term we ventured further afield to just over the Scottish border enjoying the generous hospitality of the Shirley-Beavans and having some outstanding days of hunting. John Fretwell and his team deserve great praise for his continuing success in the show ring and the 1999 season continued this trophy-strewn trend. The pack enjoyed great success at the Builth Wells, Harrogate and Peterborough shows. Palmer (96) won the reserve Champion Doghound class at Builth Wells while Tatler (97) was Champion Doghound at Harrogate. Dauntless (99) won the unentered Bitch Class at all three venues. Most impressive of all, however, was the pack's gaining of the Winner of the Points Trophy at the East of England Show at Peterborough for the Beagle pack which secured the most rosettes in the show.

CHJ





## THE CONTINGENT COMMANDER'S REPORT

This year has been another busy and successful year in the life of the CCF. It began with the arrival of Mrs Bennett to join the RAF Section. In January Squadron Leader Malling handed over command of the Contingent to Lieutenant Colonel Cottam after over three years of sterling service during which the whole proficiency programme was re-vamped. Luckily for the Contingent he stays on to run the Proficiency programme. The start of the new year also saw the arrival of Steve Llewelyn to help run the stores and to add some much-needed impetus to shooting. It has been, as ever, a year of varied activities, some of which are reported on in more detail elsewhere. All Sections of the Contingent have made the maximum possible use of Field Days and Camps. Given the short time we have during the week and the distances we are from ranges and other facilities, these are essential to the training of the Contingent.

This year has been a vintage year for competitions. The Coldstream Cup was a great success and is reported on elsewhere. The Casualty Cup was also keenly fought and was won in the end by Grafton with an excellent time of 2

minutes 16.19 seconds which set a new record. The record did not last long because they broke it themselves in the Coldstream Cup. During the year the Army Section entered two Patrol Competitions, one of which was run at Stowe by the Royal Green Jackets. The Stowe Competition has become a regular feature of the calendar and we are grateful for the support of 23 Pioneer Regiment in previous years. Although they can no longer support the competition they continue to run a Field Day for Proficiency in the Spring Term and provide instructors on other occasions. We are lucky to continue to receive regular visits from the Army Air Corps so that most of the Contingent get up in a helicopter every year. This year was no exception.

The Army went to Warcop for their Summer Camp and had a tremendous time. The varied programme included adventure training, range work, a march and shoot competition, combat first aid, leadership training, an excellent infantry exercise, a night exercise run by the contingent, watermanship and a morning on the skill at arms trainer. The weather was kind compared to the rest of the country – there was only a little rain and the windy overcast conditions kept the midges down and meant that dehydration was less of a problem. All those who attended had to work hard and by the end of the week had learnt a great deal, not least about themselves. The experience they have gained in an intensive week will make them better cadets next year. Later in the Summer the annual adventure training camp will take place in the Lake District. This is an experiment, as in the past, it has been run at Easter.

Next year will see some changes. The Proficiency course will be run as a tri-service course for the Autumn Term. This is to make better use of our facilities and instructors as well as to help improve recruiting into the RN and RAF Sections. There will also be a Junior Leaders Course for 12 selected 5th Formers. The aim of this course is to produce better trained and qualified cadet NCOs. It is hoped that these changes will help improve the quality of training and the standards of the cadets. It only remains for me to thank all the Contingent Officers and the cadet NCOs for their hard work during the past year. As ever we are all in the debt of Ray Dawson without whom most things would never happen.

PVC

## ADVANCED INFANTRY

This year's Advanced Infantry have had a fun and full year on learning and developing their skills.

Many tough and challenging events were organised throughout the year to give every cadet a deeper knowledge of the sorts of things which take place in the Armed Forces. Each cadet was given the opportunity in which to lead a section under pressure from the enemy, in many of the section attacks we had. This meant that the cadet had to think, plan, prepare and then lead his section through a task.

The year started in October with the Field Day which takes place every term. It took place on a cold October weekend in the Stowe woods. Each cadet was put in a section under a section commander and issued with a 24 hour ration pack together with a general purpose cadet rifle. Each section was then led by its section commander to a base camp where they had to build a bivis with ponchos under which they were to sleep. In the early hours of the next morning, section attacks took place with rapid fire coming from every direction and the odd thunder flash going off. For many of the cadets this was the highlight of the year.

In the Spring Term, the Stowe School Annual Patrol Competition took place, organised by the Royal Green Jackets. Stowe came second in the competition out of the four schools who entered. The Spring Term's Field Day took place at Longmoor training camp in Hampshire. This was another exercise to test the cadet's self-reliance skills. It was enjoyed by all.

In the Summer the military emphasis of the programme was changed. There was the annual Coldstream Cup, map reading exercises, boat races, and a trip to the National Army Museum in London. Overall the Advanced Infantry have had a fantastic year, with many enjoyable activities.

## THE COLDSTREAM CUP

The Coldstream Cup Competition was of exceptional quality this year and was certainly the best fought competition of recent years with Temple House winning by a narrow margin. Despite an afternoon broken up by some heavy showers, the overall standard set by the teams was very high. Of particular note was the performance of the two girls' teams. It is clear that they now

compete at the same standard as the boys. Indeed, Nugent came second overall and Lyttelton were the clear winners of the drill and turnout section. It will not be long before a girls' team wins the overall trophy.

The quality of the teams this year is underlined by the fact that three out of the four competition records were broken. Bruce broke the boys' record for the run, set by Grenville in 1999, by 25 seconds with a time of 2 minutes 5 seconds. Grafton broke the boys' record for the obstacle course, set by themselves in 1999, by nearly four seconds with a time of 2 minutes 12.34 seconds.



The death-slide at camp

Nugent broke the girls' record for the obstacle course, set by themselves in 1999, by nearly 19 seconds with a time of 2 minutes 38.43 seconds. The new Bruce and Nugent records were the result of truly outstanding performances and will be very hard to beat.

It has been decided to move the competition to the Autumn Term because of the increase in exams in the Summer Term. The competition is becoming contested with increasing determination each year. As a result the time put into training has increased. This change will avoid a conflict with exam commitments. The competition for 2000/2001 will therefore be run this October. Hopefully we will see the same commitment and enthusiasm that we have seen already this year.

The competition would not take place at all without the hard work of Ray Dawson and the staff of the CCF in organising the event and in helping train the teams. The sponsorship of the Coldstream Guards is, as ever, much appreciated. Particular thanks must go this year to Captain Mollo and Colour Sergeant Peberley for judging the drill and turnout and for presenting the prizes.



Richard Ward and Jack Mann

## A CADET'S REFLECTION ON HIS SERVICE IN THE CCF

I joined the CCF in 1996 and was not too sure about it all when our first session was spent ironing and polishing. However, it was not at all as bad as everyone had made out as we soon progressed through the basic drill and weapon handling tests. Field Days were always fun. In Proficiency for our first Field Day we went on a weekend trip to the battlefields of Normandy. This was followed the next term with a weekend spent with the Pioneers at Bicester. The highlights of this were doing a very muddy obstacle course race and firing on the indoor skill at arms trainer. In the Advanced Infantry I did a course which included advanced infantry skills, orienteering and survival. The Field Days became more demanding and even more fun with night patrolling exercises made more realistic with lots of pyrotechnics and blanks.

The main and most vital opportunity that the CCF gives you is the chance to develop leadership skills and teamwork. I know that my time in the CCF helped me a great deal when I became a School Prefect. During my four years in the CCF I also developed great friendships with everyone at the Armoury without whom we could not do any of the varied exercises and excursions that fill the CCF programme.

The highlight of the CCF year is the Coldstream Cup Competition which involves a team of seven from each house. Everyone in the team, both boys and girls, have to do a run which includes a log carry and a river crossing, there is also a shoot, an obstacle course and a drill and turn out test. Amazingly it



The victorious Lyttelton Drill Squad



Roddy McLauchlan

is the most competitive competition in the School and I have never trained as much or as hard for anything else. In the end, even if you are not in the winning team, there is still a great sense of achievement and team unity. In my view it highlights all that is best about the CCF. Looking back after four years, and a rather nervous start, I am so glad that I stuck with it. It was demanding but fun, it taught me a lot and I made some great friends.

HUGH ARBUTHNOTT

## SIGNAL SECTION

Two years ago a Signals Section comprised entirely of volunteers was formed at Stowe. When the Section first moved into the Signals Room it was confronted with what looked rather like a bomb-site. In two years we have managed to turn this room into a working Signals centre with proper work surfaces, dexion racking and, believe it or not, some radio equipment. We now also have a computer that will run a lot of our communications equipment through some very advanced software.

As well as spending time in the Signals Room we have also been working around the grounds producing an RF map of Stowe. An RF map is one that shows where there is good reception and where there are black spots. This was achieved using hand-held radios borrowed from the School Security team. In addition to this we have also provided the communications for the rest of the CCF on Field Day exercises. This helps the exercises run more smoothly, provides added safety and allows us to practise our signals whilst on the move.

Although we have made progress there is still a long way to go. We still lack a proper working base station kit. As a result we have survived by borrowing from all and sundry. We are hoping to acquire a pump-up antenna mast from Coventry but are having to wait patiently for it to be released to us. Once this arrives and has been mounted, our ability to communicate effectively will increase dramatically. It is on the equipment front that we need more support and we are hoping to be allocated some money from the CCF budget to start buying the extra equipment that we need.

All that said, it has been a good two years and my thanks go out to all those who have given us of their time and support. Our objective for the next year is to produce a fully operational base station.

NICK VERNEY



The final assault at camp

## REME SECTION

A year ago a small REME Section was started in the CCF with two of us. Our first problem was turning a rather scruffy store shed into a usable workshop. We managed to throw out nearly a skip load of rubbish and in the process discovered the remains of a previous REME section. This included a one man hovercraft with a trailer adapted for pulling it, numerous motorbikes and a home-made tank! We have purchased a full set of tools and are in the process of repairing and rebuilding the hovercraft. We are looking forward to some challenging projects for next year. As well as rebuilding the hovercraft and tank we intend to convert an old gun cabinet into a secure store for the CCF out-board motors. The most ambitious project of all is helping restore the motor cruiser outside the Armoury. Now that the Section is established, numbers should increase and this will help us to undertake projects.

EDWARD PITCHER

## RAF SECTION

This has been a fairly eventful year in the life of the RAF Section. It began with the arrival of Mrs Bennett as a second Section Officer. Field Day in the Autumn Term saw the Fifth Form members of the section take to the air in a VC10 refuelling aircraft from RAF Brize Norton on an operational flight over the North Sea during which a number of other aircraft were refuelled. The 4th Form went flying later in the Term from RAF Benson. In the Spring Term nearly all the section went to RAF Benson and got some more air experience. This was followed by a trip to the RAF Museum near Hendon. The Summer Term Field Day saw more flying plus a trip to the Enigma Museum at Bletchley Park. All in all the Section has got in a great deal of flying this year and thanks for this are due to Mrs Cope and Mrs Bennett. This Summer a number of cadets are attending RAF camps. The Section is starting to thrive and next year should be even better.

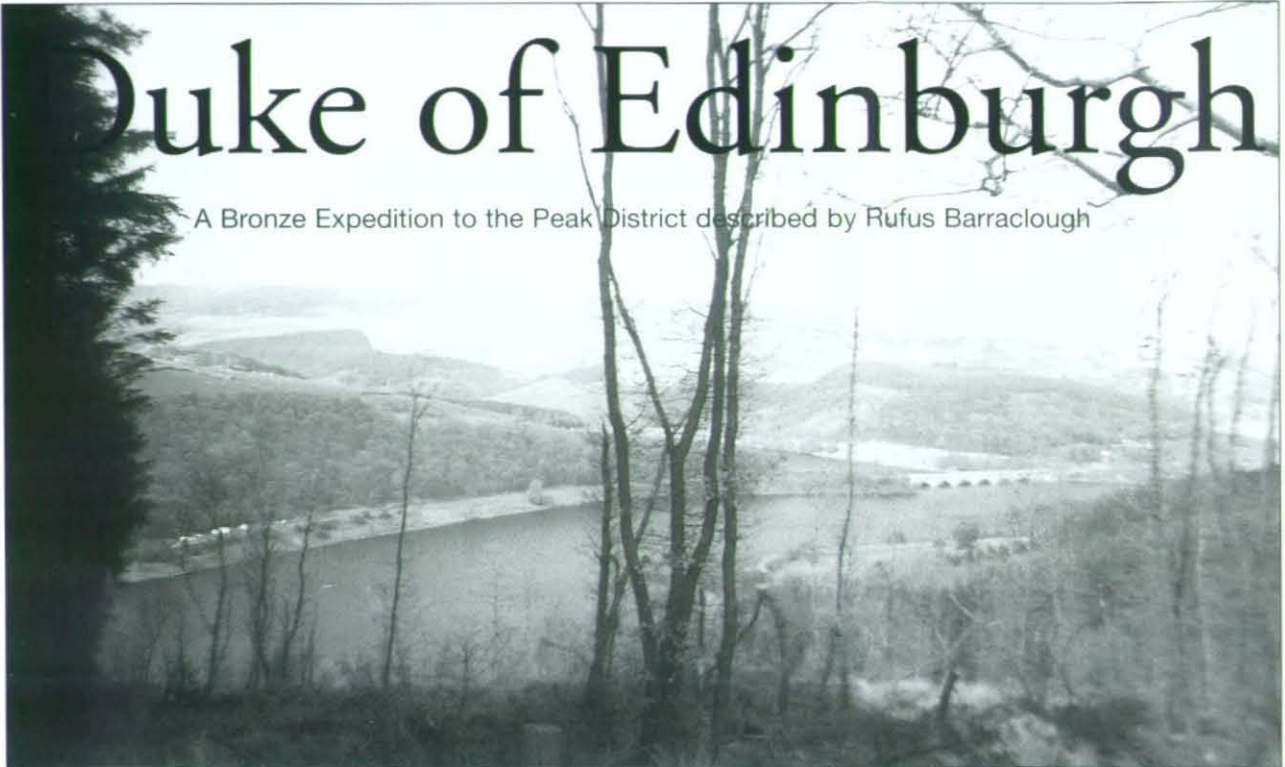
OLIVER HOGG



Patrol Competition

# Duke of Edinburgh

A Bronze Expedition to the Peak District described by Rufus Barraclough



## Day 1

The first day was very warm and humid. Most of the walking was fairly easy on grass and worn footpaths. The views were very interesting and it was easy to navigate around because of the good weather. There were many sheep around and – not so pleasant – dead ones lying around. Half way through the walk the terrain got more sticky, and after George Kent said “Hurry up. You won’t sink!” we spent 15 minutes trying to get out of a marsh and salvage our boots. Later that day we climbed into the hills and saw some spectacular views of the Derwent Reservoir. The next strange encounter was with a lost lamb. We thought that its mother might have deserted it. We eventually arrived at camp quite late and feeling very tired, but we had a beautiful view to see by way of compensation.

## Day 2

The main target for this day was Man Tor. It was quite a large hill and we could see it in the distance when we started the walk. But it proved a tough objective. Some of the members of the group were experiencing problems and needed some help to finish the walk.

The expedition was the most challenging I have done and also the most beautiful. The weather and views were excellent. We put a lot of effort into the trip and felt that we had achieved a great deal. We worked together well as a group and also managed to stay happy. The walk was a good experience.



George Kent & friend



Setting up camp



Top: View over the reservoir

Above: Muddy walking

Right: The Group – Rufus Barraclough, George Kent, Sam Tipper, James Norman, Jamie Savage and Ali Hussain



## Silver and Gold expeditions to Scotland

On Friday 30th June a large party of Stoics set off by coach to their Duke of Edinburgh Award expeditions. This year we had a very large number of Gold participants in 3 groups.

The Golds had to walk for 50 miles in 4 days through wild country. The Silver groups had to complete 30 miles in 3 days.

Two major calamities happened before departure, the first being the fact that we nearly forgot to pick up the chocolate cake from the kitchen. More importantly that coach had arrived without a video recorder. How would we cope? We arrived in Scotland after a nine-hour journey. We then had a leisurely meal in the local hotel before some of us trekked the 4 miles to the Bothy known affectionately as 'Cuilltemhuc'. Others caught the Roddy McLauchlan 4 x 4 bus. Camp was set up and we settled down for the night.

The first day was taken up with jobs, relaxation and talking to the Assessor ready for walking the next day.

Early in the morning the Gold groups set off for Aviemore. To do this the groups had to walk two miles to catch the coach. This proved more difficult for some and Gold 2 got lost. We were therefore 1 hour late leaving once we had found the group. This did not look too good for a group that was going to be left alone in the hills. However, all the groups did extremely well and the Assessor could not praise them highly enough. They had excellent motivation, teamwork, spirit and morale – the group also navigated with confidence. Although there were patches of bad weather the conditions were generally kind. The only problems that they had were the usual array of blisters.

The two silver groups set off later than the Golds. Matthew Johnson had a steep learning curve on one occasion. While walking around a waterfall he decided to go for a dip. I think he would

have benefited from taking off his pack and full kit before entering the water. Sliding 20 ft feet first did not help either. Silver 2 was quite slow due to the fact that they got up late. They were also short of food and when they encountered MDGW and KMN they entered into a trading session to stock up from MDGW's walking shop.

All of the groups arrived back safely and in good spirits and were all extremely pleased with the achievement they had made. There was the usual array of blisters and the MDGW Award for the Most Impressive Blisters had to go to Mr Ellis.

We travelled back to Stowe after a hearty breakfast in the hotel. We even had a video recorder! Everyone thoroughly enjoyed themselves even though there were aching limbs and sore feet. Thanks must be given to the base camp boss, Mrs Shahani, and to the other staff that gave up their time for the trip. It is the help and support that is given that allows these trips to take place.

MDGW



### Gold 1

Henry Watson  
Jonathan Witt  
Matthew Dalby  
Hector Ross

### Gold 2

Jeremy Bodian  
Mark Harper  
David Hyslop  
Duncan Pearce  
Charles Archer  
Apichatvorpong  
Sithisakdi

### Gold 3

Hester Cumming  
Kathryn Dancer  
Antonia Ford  
Alice Kent  
Daisy Lawson  
Caroline Tovey

### Silver 1

Michael Laing  
Luke Worrall  
Matthew Johnson  
William Maude-Roxby

### Silver 2

Tom Deane  
Jonathan Boyman  
Gregory Cushing  
Gareth Sharp  
Dominic Gordon



## EXPEDITION TO THE BRECON BEACONS



This year the traditional Autumn trip to the Brecon Beacons was unusually blessed with good weather and for the first time in a number of years we were able to enjoy the beautiful views. Usually the trip is memorable for driving rain and thick cloud cover, so it was lovely to see exactly what the Brecon Beacons are!

The Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme is as popular as ever and there was a good turnout of Stoics, all working towards achieving either their Bronze, Silver or Gold awards. There was a girls' Gold group for the first time and they enjoyed the challenge of what was for some their first experience of hill walking and camping.

All the Stoics camped beside a river and had to fend for themselves; this included cooking their own food. All seemed to enjoy themselves. Even the long walks!

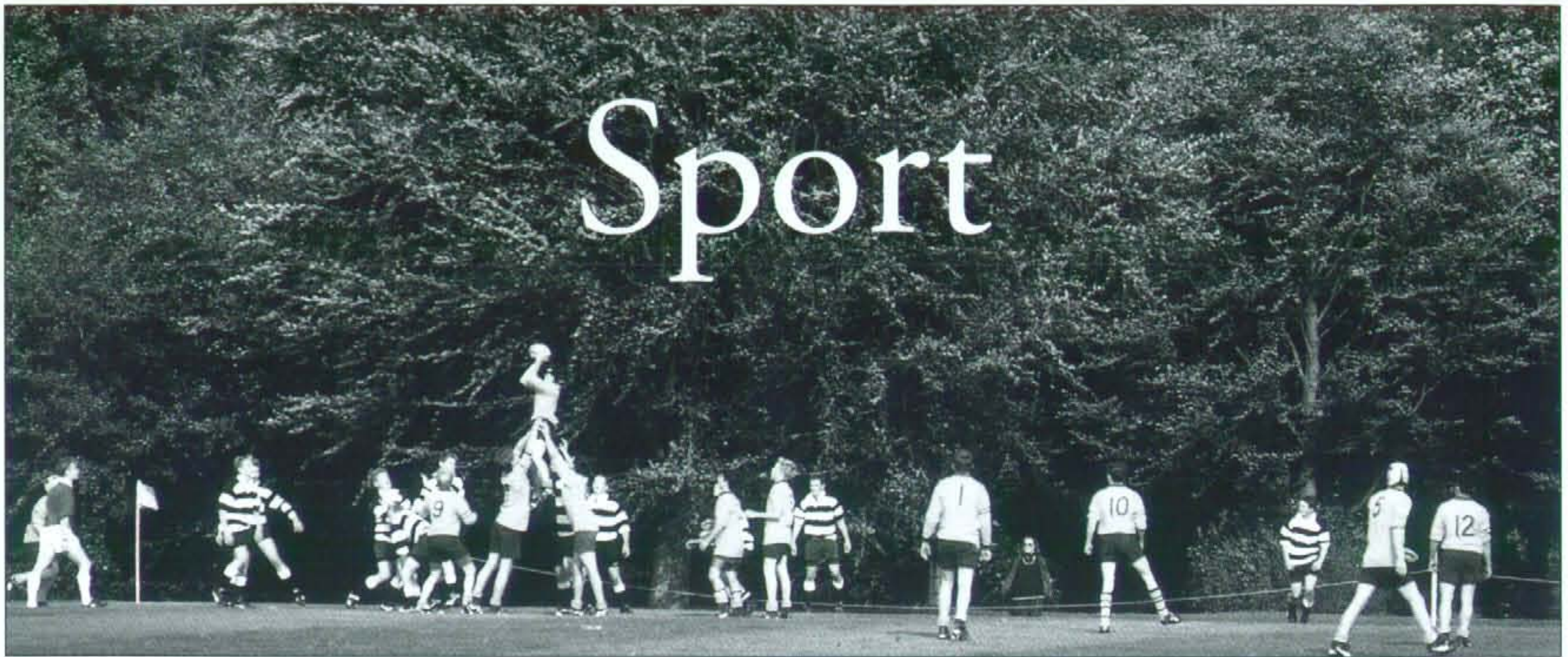
EGM



Top:  
Golds – David Hyslop, Duncan Pearce,  
Mark Harper, Charles Archer and  
Jeremy Bodian

Middle:  
The Girls' Gold Group  
with EGM and RCS

Bottom:  
Bronze group – Peter Tromans,  
Jamie Savage, James Norman  
and Tom Greenaway



## ATHLETICS

### SPORTS DAY

1st	Bruce	181 points
2nd	Temple	148 points
3rd	Grafton	125 points
4th	Grenville	114 points
5th	Walpole	105 points
6th	Chandos	88 points
7th	Chatham	75 points
8th	Cobham	64 points

#### Girls:

1st	Lyttelton	153 points
2nd	Nugent	135 points

#### Senior boys:

100m:	1 Peel 2 Trelawny 3 Alakija 4 Kavindele 5 Hyslop 6 Wilson
200m:	1 Hyslop 2 Filsell 3 Wilson 4= Bingham Kavindele 6 Turner
400m:	1 Douglas-Hamilton 2 Witt 3 McLaughlan 4 Kaye 5 Thomson 6 Barratt
800m:	1 Douglas-Hamilton, 2 Gaze 3 Karpov 4 Clark 5 Rebbeck
1500m:	1 Rogers 2 McLaughlan 3 Tull 4 Karpov 5 Clark 6 Dalby
110m Hurdles:	1 Pooley 2 Behlau 3 Arbuthnott 4 Laing 5 Keane
High Jump	1 Alakija 2 Zaldua 3 De Sales La Terriere 4 Gale
Long Jump:	1 Wilson 2 Behlau 3 Pooley 4 Zaldua 5 Ward 6 Douglas-Hamilton
Triple Jump:	1 De Sales La Terriere 2 Creek 3 Radmall 4 Partridge 5 Pooley 6 Ward
Discus:	1 Trelawny 2 Lake 3 Elphinstone 4 Stanton 5 Rogers 6 Worrall
Javelin:	1 Large 2 Worrall 3 Clark 4 Trelawny 5 Oliver 6 Keane
Shot:	1 Alakija 2 Oliver 3 Phipps 4 Lake 5 Stanton 6 MacLennan
Relay:	1 Grafton 2 Bruce 3 Temple 4 Walpole 5 Grenville 6 Cobham

#### Girls:

100m:	Garthwaite 2 Cheetham 3 Vallis 4 Rickards 5 Pritchard- Gordon 6 Dancer
200m:	Garthwaite 2 Rickards 3 Keyser 4 Burwood-Taylor 5 Glatzel 6 Durden
400m:	1 Dancer 2 Brahimi 3 Bonham 4 Schwind 5 Wainright 6 Inden
800m:	1 Newman 2 Tovey 3 Flower 4 Alexander 5 Girardot 6 Holloway
1500m:	1 Newman 2 Tovey 3 Flower 4 Holloway 5 Lamping
100m Hurdles:	1 Vallis 2 Burwood- Taylor 3 Beaumont 4 Jackson-Gray 5 Chambers 6 Tkachuk
High Jump:	1 Cheetham 2 Keyser 3 Chambers 4 Turnbull K 5 Turnbull E
Long Jump:	1 Dancer 2 Pritchard- Gordon 3 Glatzel 4 Burrett 5 Flower 6 Harper
Triple Jump:	1 Cheetham 2 Garthwaite 3 Vallis 4 Al-Said 5 Keyser 6 Newman
Discus:	1 Annfield 2 Bell 3 Ford 4 Clark 5 Weston 6 Al-Said
Javelin:	1 Bell 2 Tovey 3 Townsend 4 Clark 5 K Turnbull 6 von Schroder
Shot:	1 Rickards 2 Brann 3 Clark 4 von Schroder 5 Corbett-Winder 6 Weston
Intermediates:	
100m:	1 Tree 2 Morgan 3 Chauhan 4 Rainton 5 N Prince 6 Ashby
200m:	1 Brewin 2 Tree 3 Sua Kay 4 Morgan 5 Shah 6 Brown
400m:	1 Brewin 2 Legge 3 Sowerby 4 Pike 5 Driver 6 More Nisbett
800m:	1 Riley 2 Hervey 3 Gallimore 4 Ugland 5 McIntyre 6 Pike
1500m:	1 Riley 2 Hervey 3 Ugland 4 McIntyre 5 Gordon 6 Lyon
110m Hurdles:	1 Akroyd 2 MacLeod 3 Tromans 4 Thomas 5 More Nisbett 6 Brown

High Jump:	1 Laing 2 Sowerby 3 Gallimore 4 Warhurst 5 Thompson 6 Taittinger
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Long Jump:	1 Morgan 2 Sua Kay 3 Prince 4 Brewin 5 Tree 6 MacLeod
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Triple Jump:	1 Rainton 2 Thompson 3 Legge 4 Chauhan 5 E Prince 6 Shah
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Discus:	1 Offley 2 Chiu 3 Tate 4 Johnson 5 Vere Nicoll 6 Leggett
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Javelin:	1 Pak 2 Jones 3 Norton
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Shot:	1 Sowerby 2 Barbier 3 Offley 4 Pak 5 Tate 6 Dickens
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Relay:	1 Temple 2 Bruce 3 Chatham 4 Grenville 5 Chandos 6 Grafton
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#### Juniors:

100m:	1 Barany 2 Corner 3 Haskell-Thomas 4 Catlin 5 Downing 6 Hewitt-Jones
200m:	1 Barany 2 Corner 3 Seeböhm 4 Catlin 5 Forrester 6 Haskell-Thomas
400m:	1 Burrett 2 Stevenson 3 Jordan 4 Herabutya 5 Laing 6 Wilson
800m:	1 Leet-Cook 2 Jordan 3 Greenock 4 Brann
1500m:	1 Shann 2 Leet-Cook 3 Page 4 Laing 5 Carr-Gomm 6 Clutton
80m Hurdles:	1 Forrester 2 Downing 3 Bogh-Henriksen 4 Hanbury 5 Cobb 6 Oldridge
High Jump:	1 Bogh-Henriksen 2 Hirsch 3 Greenock 4 Brann
Long Jump:	1 Haskell-Thomas Jagger 3 Colvin 4 Brann 5 Shann 6 Downing
Triple Jump:	1 Corner 2 Forrester 3 Seeböhm 4 Page 5 Deletaille
Discus:	1 Hewitt-Jones 2 Tuely 3 Hall 4 Seeböhm 5 Sanchez 6 Leech
Javelin:	1 Whaley 2 Burrett 3 Lange 4 Jagger 5 Reynolds 6 Wilson
Shot:	1 Catlin 2 Sanders 3 Leech 4 Plowright 5 Burrett 6 Sanchez
Relay:	1 Bruce 2 Grafton 3 Walpole 4 Chandos 5 Chatham 6 Temple

## BADMINTON

Both the Senior and Colts teams put on a fine performance this season. Convincing wins were clocked up against The Oratory and Uppingham. Bloxham puts up a team which always challenges our players, being similar in standard. Both Home and Away matches were very close, Stowe winning one and losing the other. The Colts won both their matches against Bloxham. The season finished with a match against Rugby. The Seniors put up a valiant fight and were narrowly defeated. The Colts had a convincing 9-0 win. Both groups play with a remarkable team spirit, led by the very proficient Bird Chanprabhap of Walpole. Their determination and sportsmanship are most notable. Colours were awarded to Bird Chanprabhap and Robert Large.

The girls, busy with so many other commitments, found the going more difficult. Nevertheless, led by their determined and committed captain, Natalie Garthwaite of Lyttelton, they played some excellent games. Natalie proved an organised and efficient leader who knew the capabilities of all her team and did a fine job in keeping them involved. She was well supported by Latifah Al-Said. Both girls were awarded their colours for their outstanding efforts.

I would like to thank all the boys and girls who gave their support to the teams. Well done! And I look forward to the possibility of even more wins next season.

KMN

## BASKETBALL U16

For the third year in succession the Stowe U16 basketball team has had an unbeaten season. This year's team had a very strong starting five, who were blessed with height, speed and finishing power. This enabled the team to play at a high tempo with tight man-to-man defence and swift fast-break offence. The players were a little rusty against Harrow and came through a low scoring game to win 44-33. The small court at Rugby suited the 'big men' and boosted the confidence of Morgan (6) and Johnson (6) who were also very effective on the rebounds. Captain Dewitte helped himself to 17 points and led his team to a 53-25 win. Fanous (6) was up for the visit of Eton as he competed against some of his old team-mates. He dominated defensively but it was Dewitte (15) and Simon (12) who stole the show with some impressive finishing on the fast-break. Eton struggled against the man-to-man defence and went down 46-22. Arguably the most exciting game of the season was the 56-53 win against Buckingham School who had a 6' 7" England player in their team. Captain Dewitte did a superb defensive job on him; in fact it was so good that he spent most of the match away from the boards trying to shoot from outside. Dewitte (19) still managed to top score and in the home stretch took control of the game. He was well supported by Barbier (14) who played out of his skin, Fanous (12) and Pak (5) whose speed and penetration

at point guard clearly unsettled the opposition. The trip to Winchester proved fruitful although it was very tight in the early exchanges. Stowe's relentless pressure was too much in the end and a win of 67-45 was well deserved. Simon (20) top scored with the ever-reliable Dewitte (17) and centres Morgan (8) and U15 captain Green (8) wrapping up the inside game. The string of impressive performances continued and Bradfield were next to experience the Stowe machine. Stowe powered to a 58-36 victory thanks to Barbier (22), Dewitte (15) and Simon (10). Green had another fine game, coming off the bench to score a valuable 7 points. The final match of the season against Radley was a joy to watch as Stowe played some very impressive basketball to end up easy winners by 69-35. Dewitte (28) capped an outstanding season as player and captain; Simon (12) was the season's most improved player and Morgan (4) the best defensive rebounder. Hamilton (4) enjoyed his last match for Stowe and what was a most enjoyable basketballing experience for all involved in the U16 squad this season. IM

## U15

What a fine season these young men had! They won every match – and quite convincingly. Much of the success of the team was due to the unrelenting and positive attitude of the players, none of whom ever wanted to take time on the bench. Captain Max Green led the team in this respect, often playing full games without a break. Max's height, ball control and clear skill saw him break through any defence to capitalise on points, rejections and rebounds. He was clearly the highest points scorer and will continue to prove a most formidable player.

Forwards Pestov, Kent and Dickens went about the business of spoiling opposition play and were most valuable under the basket, where they put their height and drive into action. So, too, Habib was never shy to showcase his rebounding talent and Beith grew in confidence in every game, as evidenced in his increasing ability to drive and shoot. Manomaiphan continued to impress. His level-headed and disciplined manner saw him control back court play and make shrewd offensive moves, proving to be a most promising senior player.

Both Owen and Moon were solid all-rounders, unselfish in offensive play and



U16 Basketball

Back row: Ju Manomaiphan, Dmitri Pestov, Guy Barbier, Chris Hamilton, IM.  
Front row: Max Green, Mats Dewitte, Christoph Simon



most aggressive in defence, often stealing the ball and driving through towering opposition to put up the shot. The team was also supported by Farish and Harasani, who were both eager to become involved and develop skills.

The team never looked like losing a game throughout the season, despite the odd nail-biter. The clear skill and love of the game demonstrated by all concerned demonstrate that they will continue to be a force to be reckoned with in their senior years.

Squad: Nick Beith, Jonathan Dickens, Abdul Farish, Max Green, Robertino Habib, Majid Harasani, George Kent, Alex Lam, Ju Manomaiphan, James Moon, James Owen and Dmitri Pestov.  
ARVS

## U14

Stowe is certain to continue to retain its strength in basketball with young men such as these. The team was undefeated throughout the season and it was a pleasure to see each boy refine existing skills and develop new ones.

The team had an efficient and fast back court led by Sanchez, Arkwright, Herabutya and Dasuki, who pressed the opposition in defence and were never shy of driving into the key.

Catlin improved in ability and confidence with every game and will certainly be a force to contend with in the coming years. Colvin and Corner were the key rebounders, demonstrating their strength around the key as well as being always ready for the fast break which

often saw them convert the lay-up unchallenged. Jagger was most noted as a creative playmaker and talented shooter. He led well in back court play and was never shy of capitalising on his ability, most prominently through the outside shot.

The support from Newton, Bogh-Henrikssen and Cobb, who always gave their best, ensured that each game was a complete team effort. The enthusiasm for the game and every boy's drive to improve both made it a rewarding and enjoyable season for all concerned.

Squad: Harry Arkwright, Robin Bogh-Henrikssen, Sam Catlin, Rory Chichester, Harry Cobb, Robert Colvin, Ben Corner, A Dasuki, J.J. Herabutya, James Jagger, Ryan Newton, James Penny and Charles Sanchez.  
ARVS

## CLAY-PIGEON SHOOTING

The boys' A and B teams began the year with a flourish, coming second and third overall for both legs of the Heart of England Shoot, held at Garlands Shooting School, near Tamworth, Staffs. The girls showed that they were equally talented, being placed second in their section, a most excellent start. Notable scores were achieved by James Nettleton, Edward Balfour, Edward Pitcher, Alexander Tate, Taro Koka and Theodora von Schroder, helping the School to defray the expenses by winning a total of 1,500 cartridges, quite a haul!

Early March brought the Eley Eastern Region Championship at Sporting Targets, near Riseley, Beds., where we turned in another highly creditable performance, winning a further 200 cartridges and being placed third, frustratingly only one clay behind Kimbolton, Ed Balfour being our top scorer. A fortnight later came the Warwick Challenge at the nearby Wedgcock Shooting Ground and for the first time in the season we did not manage to finish in the first three, but this omission was redeemed once again by the unflappable Ed 'Hawkeye' Balfour, who emerged with the High Gun Trophy; a fine achievement.

In May we journeyed to Shugborough Shooting School, near Rugeley, Staffs., for the Eley Smiths Gore British Schools Clay Shooting Championship ('The Nationals') only to find that Robert Louis Stevenson's

comment that 'To travel hopefully is a better thing than to arrive' contains rather more than a grain of truth! For some unfathomable reason our teams did not live up to the expectation generated by our previous successes, although it must be stressed that there was no lack of enthusiasm, effort or concentration. 'It was just one of those days.' James Nettleton top-scored for the A team, Henry Warhurst for the B's and Theodora von Schroder for the Girls, her score neatly splitting those of the two boys mentioned, a great piece of shooting to brighten an otherwise unremarkable day. The A team came 12th/20, the B team 8th/12 and the Girls 5th/9. We have every intention of regaining our usual high position next year.

Speech Day weather had more in common with the mad days of March than the expected zephyrs of May, necessitating the cancellation of most outside sports and games; but ours is an all-weather pursuit and a good time was had by the attending Stoics, parents and Old Stoics, the last-named just losing to the School top team by a mere three clays; a narrow margin indeed. The Wyvill Cup ('for parent and offspring') was won by Edward Balfour and his father, a fitting conclusion to Edward's season, especially as he was also High Gun for the day. I am most grateful to David Pickavance (O.S.) for his admirable administration of the event, which ran very smoothly (even finishing in time for the School Speeches at 12.15), under the careful planning and organisation of our two coaches (of whom more, shortly!) and their thoughtful provision of what I can only describe as a portable gazebo, with-

out which our sporting ardour might well have been considerably dampened!

The final fixture of the term will be the Inter-House competition, which is always a hard-fought but amiable occasion, serious intent combining well with much robust banter and badinage; always a fitting end to our shooting year.

I offer my sincerest thanks to our Captain, Robert Prentice, who has been a most efficient and unfailing organiser and leader, not least by example, nothing ever being too much trouble for him. He has been assisted most ably by his Vice-Captain, James Nettleton, both lightening even the most leaden of days with their friendly and good-humoured approach.

In conclusion I must express my heartfelt gratitude to our long-suffering and expertly professional coaches, Chris Lockwood and Bob Spademan. Their great amiability and dry wit blend effortlessly and in seamless fashion with their natural authority, experience and complete mastery of the sport. We are indeed fortunate to have them with us.

Teams from: Edward Balfour \*, Vanessa Beldam, Georgina Birkett-Jones, Alistair Clutton, Daniel Ferris, Taro Koka \*, Mark Mackay-Lewis, James Nettleton, Hugo Pearson, Edward Pitcher, Robert Prentice, Charles Sargeant, Alexander Tate, Igor Tolstoy-Miloslavsky, Nicholas Verney, Theodora von Schroder \*, Oliver Warburton, Henry Warhurst and Nicholas Wills. (\* = Colours this year) Next year's captain will be Hugo Pearson and vice-captain, Mark Mackay-Lewis.

MW

# CRICKET

## 1ST XI

Our season got off to form, rain accounting for the first two fixtures, against Oakham and Northants. We had better luck the following weekend against Bradfield. We lost in what was a tense game which could have gone either way. The following day we played MCC. In the last two years we have come close to winning. This year was no exception. MCC declared at 176-7, Halliday making a fine 110 not out and Lester Smart – for the second year running – taking 5 MCC wickets (for 36). We replied with 169-9, Alan Bowman and Ashley Pearson making over 40 each. Our first win of the season came against Pangbourne, whom we dismissed for 51, with Lester Smart and Richard Worrall taking four wickets each. We won by six wickets.

Our most difficult game of the season is usually Radley, but this year we came very close to beating them and spoiling their four-year unbeaten record. Radley declared at 179-7, Richard Worrall taking 5-74. We replied with 156-6, Robert Large returning to form with 63. The Free Foresters game was called off and so too, on Speech Day, the game with the Old Stoics. We again had the better of things with The Oratory, making 204-7 declared, Oliver Cullingworth (in his first season) scoring 57 and Robert Large an excellent 71. Oratory replied with 152-8, Edward Clark bowling some good leg-breaks to take 5-56.

The wicket at Oundle was made for batting. Oundle declared at 230-4. Our brave reply in chasing these runs ended 12 short at 219-6. Again Oliver Cullingworth showed maturity beyond his years with a fine 83 and Nicholas Oldridge made batting look easy with a classical 50 not out. An excellent victory against Abingdon followed, Abingdon declaring at 196-4, a target we achieved in 36 overs, Ashley Pearson scoring the one hundred of the season, 103 not out. Our overseas visitors this year were Kloof, from Durban, South Africa. We put them in and bowled them out for 107, Lester Smart and Richard Worrall taking 4 wickets each. We then knocked off the runs for the loss of 4 wickets, Robert Large making 54 not out.

And so to the Festival. Our first game, against Bedford, was our poorest

performance of the season, with a score of only 186 from 50 overs. We then bowled so badly that Bedford scored the runs in 32 overs. There was a much better performance against Wellington, our hosts, resulting in a very close match. Wellington made 168 all out and we ended 16 runs short, a stand between Robert Large and Nicholas Oldridge almost winning the game. Oldridge timed his 50 well, as a Surrey coach came to see him.

The season wasn't as good as I expected. Lester Smart, our captain, didn't have the success of last year and one wonders whether being captain over A-levels took its toll. Richard Worrall made rapid strides, taking 22 wickets. Robert Large was again our main scorer, with Oliver Cullingworth having a fine first season. Ashley Pearson and Nicholas Oldridge showed sound improvement.

My thanks to Steve Curley and his staff for their hard work. We again had very good practice and match wickets. Steve's hard work was rewarded with Northants 2nds playing twice at Stowe. The food was again first class. My thanks to the catering staff and particularly Anne, who made it all work so well.

Ashley Pearson was made captain for next season with Nicholas Oldridge vice-captain and Edward Clark secretary. Colours were awarded to Lester Smart, Henry Coram James, Robert Large, William Dudley and Richard Worrall.

HJR

### Batting (7 innings or more)

	I	NO	R	HS	AVE
Oldridge	8	2	217	51	36.16
Large	9	1	267	71	33.37
Coram James	7	2	142	60	28.40
Pearson	10	1	230	103*	25.55
Cullingworth	10	0	238	83	23.80
Smart	9	4	89	21*	17.30
Dudley	8	0	91	23	11.37

### Bowling

	O	M	R	W	AVE
Worrall	115.8	22	388	22	17.63
Smart	132	27	375	18	20.83
MacLennan	79.5	14	275	11	25.00
Clark	101	21	322	12	26.83

## JUNIOR COLTS

Taking the Junior Colts was a real pleasure. It was good to see the side compete in each match with determination and endeavour, never really knowing the meaning of defeat until the final run had been scored or the final wicket taken. No match was lost heavily and, indeed, the overall record does not reflect the performance of the side. Many opposition coaches commented on the strength of their sides in this year group – Stowe was no exception

The season started with rain and the Oakham match was cancelled. This was a blow as preparation for the first national round of the Lord's Taverners' was curtailed. Eton were entertained and, without our main strike bowler and captain, Harry Sheppard (a few days too old to qualify), Stowe struggled to contain a strong batting side. A few early edges and a couple of missed stumpings saw Eton rattle up 225 for 7 off their forty overs, though that represented a good Stowe fightback from 162 for 1. Stowe lost wickets regularly and with Ed Prince going in at no. 7 because of a fielding injury, we were never in the game. However, a remarkable last wicket partnership of 85 (undefeated) between Ed (87\*) and Rupert Oldridge (7\*) saw Stowe to a respectable 164 for 9.

Bradfield slumped to 22 for 6, thanks to a marvellous spell of bowling from Harry Sheppard (6 for 18), and although Stowe allowed them to reach 107 and then slipped to 41 for 4, a solid partnership from the Prince twins saw a comfortable win by 6 wickets. A remarkable match at Uppingham saw Stowe reach 117 very slowly in the face of tight bowling with Sheppard scoring an important 31. Uppingham seemed very much in control at 91 for 3 only for Max Green (3 for 6) and Jonathan Dickens (3 for 23) to help Stowe to force a collapse and win by 9 runs. It was a superb spectacle and a real tribute to the side's determination.

Radley nearly suffered the same fate as Uppingham as they collapsed from 85 for 2 to 107 for 7 in reply to Stowe's 131 (N Prince 35, E Prince 31). However, some powerful hitting saw them win by 3 wickets with 8 balls to spare. Again, a wonderful match, in sharp contrast to the following week against The Oratory where both coaches were horrified by

the standard of batting. Their 61 all out looked an easy target but at 27 for 5, Oratory looked favourites. Solid batting (including 6 successive maidens) from Sheppard and Matthew Gracie eventually saw Stowe home by 4 wickets but it was a game best forgotten.

Sheppard's promotion to open finally solved the lack of runs at the top of the order and a 75 run partnership was encouraging but unable to lay a sufficiently sound foundation in the face of Oundle's 191, and Stowe lost by 35 runs. Batting again proved a problem against a very good Rugby side and Stowe's 90 all out, despite a heroic bowling effort, was not enough. The two wicket defeat was followed by a comfortable 4 wicket win over a poor Abingdon side and the scene was set for the final game against a Bedford side (about to play in the national quarter-finals) to determine whether or not it would be a winning season. A marvellous 77\* by Dickens, including 22 plundered from the final over, saw Stowe reach 146 but despite early wickets, indisciplined bowling allowed Bedford to reach the target and win by 5 wickets.

The standard of cricket was high throughout and the enthusiasm evident, if at times a little too boisterous. The side's talent went unrewarded and perhaps a little more thought about the game would help. However, they were a joy to coach and many will go on to do greater things. The side was ably captained by their best player, Harry Sheppard.

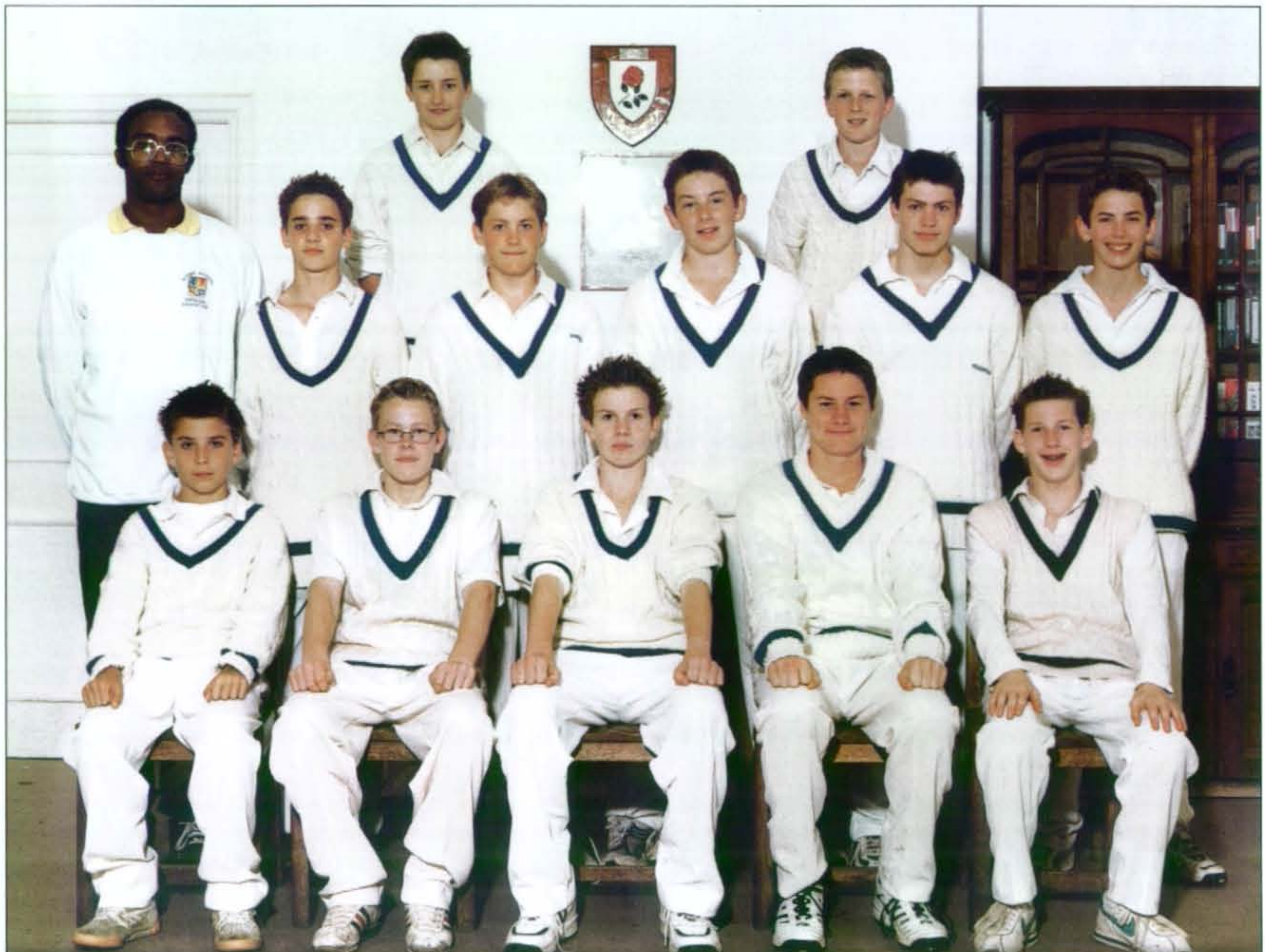
Squad: Oliver Thomas, William Gallimore, Ed Prince, Nick Prince, Jonathan Dickens, Matthew Gracie, James Finch-Knightley, Jamie Ryde, James Preston, Max Green, George Kent, Thomas Probert, Philip Hitner, Harry Sheppard, Jamie Cumming, Ju Manomaiphan, Greg Cushing, Will Consett and James Norman.

JSM

## YEARLINGS A

What promised to be a pretty good season turned out to be a great one; not just because so many matches were won but because there was great team spirit and self-belief, and so many of the team

matured as cricketers. Quite astonishingly the only match of the season which was rained off was the first against Oakham. The Bradfield game set the tone for the season in so far as Stowe looked dead and buried after scoring 83 for 9 in a 35-over match. To Bradfield's amazement Stowe rallied and the leg spin duo of Cussins (3 for 15) and Oldridge (2 for 10) tied the opposition in knots, leaving Shann (2 for 13) to polish off the tail and reducing Bradfield to 80 all out. The quest to strengthen the batting was really on after successive defeats against Uppingham by 5 wickets and Buckinghamshire U14s by 40 runs. Stowe went into the match against Radley not having scored over 100 in an innings in the first 3 matches. Some accurate bowling particularly from Brann (3 for 9) and some superb catching and fielding reduced Radley to 130 all out in their 35 overs. Stowe equalled that total losing 8 wickets on the way. Stowe looked likely victors when Lech (30) and Whaley (26) were at the crease. However, some suicidal running between the wickets tipped the



Yearlings A

Back row: Rob Berntsson, Tom Brann. Middle row: IM, Harry Shann, Hugh Wilson, Thomas Fillery, Nick Forrester, Harry Hirsch. Front row: Harry Cussins, James Whaley, Charlie Lech, Sam Catlin, Rupert Oldridge.

balance once more with Stowe the more relieved of the two sides with the result of a tie. In the next match against The Oratory it was a swashbuckling 41 from Bertssen which saved Stowe's blushes at 107 all out. Somehow with Oldridge (5 for 25) and Cussins (4 for 18) in fine form, victory was never in doubt as The Oratory were dismissed for 74. Oundle came with 5 straight wins and their classy batting side was bowled out for 137. Cussins (3 for 31) did most of the damage. Stowe seemed in command for most of the game when batting but a mix-up with the last few overs created panic in Stowe's batting, ending on 122 for 9 to draw the game. In the Rugby match Whaley (31) and Wilson (25) allowed Stowe to reach a respectable total of 126 for 8. Once again a superb fielding and bowling performance reduced the opposition to 109 all out with that man Cussins taking 4 for 24. Against Abingdon the batting improved again and Stowe totalled 159 for 6 with fine knocks from Hirsch (53), Fillery (44) and Bertssen (25). Abingdon in reply were bowled out for 135 with Oldridge (4 for 18) and Brann (3 for 21) the most effective bowlers. With confidence sky high Stowe visited Bedford and amassed 212 for 3 declared. Whaley, who was promising to for most of the season, smashed a magnificent 100 not out and was brilliantly supported by Lech (49). Bedford were unable to

make any in-roads on Stowe's total and were bowled out for 125. Cussins (4 for 31). In the County section of the Lord's Taverners Stowe defeated Aylesbury GS, Chesham CC and The Royal Latin GS but had a few problems scoring runs in the final against Dr Challoners and losing by 59 runs. Stowe hosted the Yearlings Festival at the end of term between Stowe, Ardingly, Merchant Taylors' School and Wellington College. In the first match Ardingly struggled to 89 all out and Bertssen (50) helped knock the runs off to see Stowe home by 7 wickets. It was Stowe's turn to have a disaster with the bat, all out for 62 and losing against Merchant Taylors' by 8 wickets. The last match of the Festival and season was against Wellington who had scored over 600 runs in their previous two festival games. After much discussion it was decided that the best chance of beating Wellington was for them to bat first and for us to bowl well. Stowe reduced Wellington to 108 all out with Cussins and Oldridge taking 5 wickets between them. However, it was Bertssen's two wickets after lunch to polish off the tail which significantly turned the match in Stowe's favour. Although it was tight Stowe held on to win the game by 3 wickets and at the same time were overall Festival winners. A great way to end a most entertaining and enjoyable season.

Squad: Harry Hirsch, James Whaley, Robert Bertssen, Charlie Lech, Hugh Wilson, Tom Fillery, Sam Catlin, Tom Brann, Nick Forrester, Rupert Oldridge, Harry Cussins, James Jagger, Nick Greenwood, Andrew Parsons, Casper Sheppard, Harry Shann

IM

## YEARLINGS B

Won 7 Drawn 1 Lost 1

A very successful season included wins over Radley, Oundle and Rugby. Success came because, instead of just a few key players holding things together, the whole team worked as a team. They have been hugely encouraging to one another and therefore made my job as a coach very rewarding. The excellent attitude was set by Nick Greenwood, the captain, who was always professional and workmanlike. He was supported in different matches by some notable performances from Edward Page, Alexander Farr, William Burrett and Andrew Parsons, to name but a few. I wish them all the very best for the future and look forward to them developing their skills. Well done!

## HOUSE CRICKET

Senior House Winners: Cobham

Runners-up: Grafton

Junior House Winners: Bruce

Runners-up: Grenville



Eton's batsmen return in the Junior Colt's Lord's Taverners fixture

## CROSS COUNTRY

This has been another very good season. The leadership of Jamie Douglas-Hamilton has been inspired.

The Intermediate team went through the term unbeaten, seeing off such opponents as Oundle, Radley, Rugby, Stamford, Oakham, Uppingham, Dr Challoner's and Aylesbury Grammar School. For the first time in recent memory the Intermediates won the County Championship. Malcolm Riley deserves particular mention. He is the first Stowe runner ever to be selected to run in the World Championship Trials. He performed very creditably at the event, held in Nottingham.

The Seniors struggled at The Knole early in the season but improved rapidly as the term progressed. We won the County Championship in a very close race thanks to good runs from Roddy McLauchlan and the captain-elect, Matt Dalby. 4th in the Midland and Northern Championships is our best result in more than ten years. The now customary second place at the South-Eastern Schools Championships rounded off a good year which included victories over Wellington, Oundle, Radley, Abingdon, Bradford Grammar, Epsom, Uppingham, Stamford, Sevenoaks, Tonbridge, Loughborough Grammar, Manchester Grammar, Harrow, Marlborough, Charterhouse, Ampleforth, Oakham and Rugby.

Eight runners were selected for the County team: Jamie Douglas-Hamilton, Matt Dalby, Caroline Tovey (the new captain of the Girls), Alex Rogers, Malcolm Riley, Rory McIntyre, Rory Cheyne and Andreas Ugland.

AMcD



In the Senior Cross Country Inter-House competition Vlad Karpov [top] chases ahead of Will Gaze and Charlie Tull but Jamie Douglas-Hamilton [left] outpaces them all and wins [right].





Alex Rogers leads the Intermediates away...

...and over Armoury Hill...





Harry Shann winning the Junior Race

Pippa Newman winning the Girls' Race



## FENCING



Fencing has continued to develop. The improving quality was underlined by a very hard-fought Individual Foil Championship in March. This was eventually won by Edward Baker with Tom Draper, Alex Steimetz, Zeno Trapp and Vladimir Kalinin not far behind. James Bowkett also played well. This was followed by a convincing victory over a club from Oxford. The year ended with a hard-fought triangular match against clubs from Abingdon and Oxford. Stowe came a commendable second.

PVC

## FIVES

The team has had a good season. Compared to last year, there has been a gradual growth in the numbers playing the game and matches which risked being lost were won. Hugh Arbuthnott was an effective captain and whilst a nucleus of Stoics, such as Nick Oldridge, Michael Patterson and Freddie Raikes, performed well, it was the development of players such as Louis Powell and Max Green which was particularly pleasing. Rupert Oldridge is clearly a very talented third-former and over the course of the year new players such as Charles Gardner and Harry Sheppard emerged, giving the squad greater strength and depth.

Relative to last year, the team showed more resilience against adult teams such as the Old Stoics, which have tended in the past to beat them comprehensively. At Cranleigh last year's defeat was avenged, with the 1st pair winning a very tight contest. In this match and against King Edward's they showed the ability to win matches against opponents who were technically stronger than themselves.

The House Fives competition held during the Summer Term revealed the dominance of Cobham and Grafton, with a very thin spread of players elsewhere in the School. The cup was won by Grafton.

Next year, with a number of talented players arriving at Stowe, the sport should go from strength to strength.

Results:

v King Edward's	won 2-1
v Old Stoics	won 2-0
v Eton Fives Assoc.	lost 1-2
v Cranleigh	won 2-0
v Summer Fields	won 3-0
v Sunningdale	won 3-0
v King Edward's	lost 0-3
v Old Stoics	won 2-1

PSR

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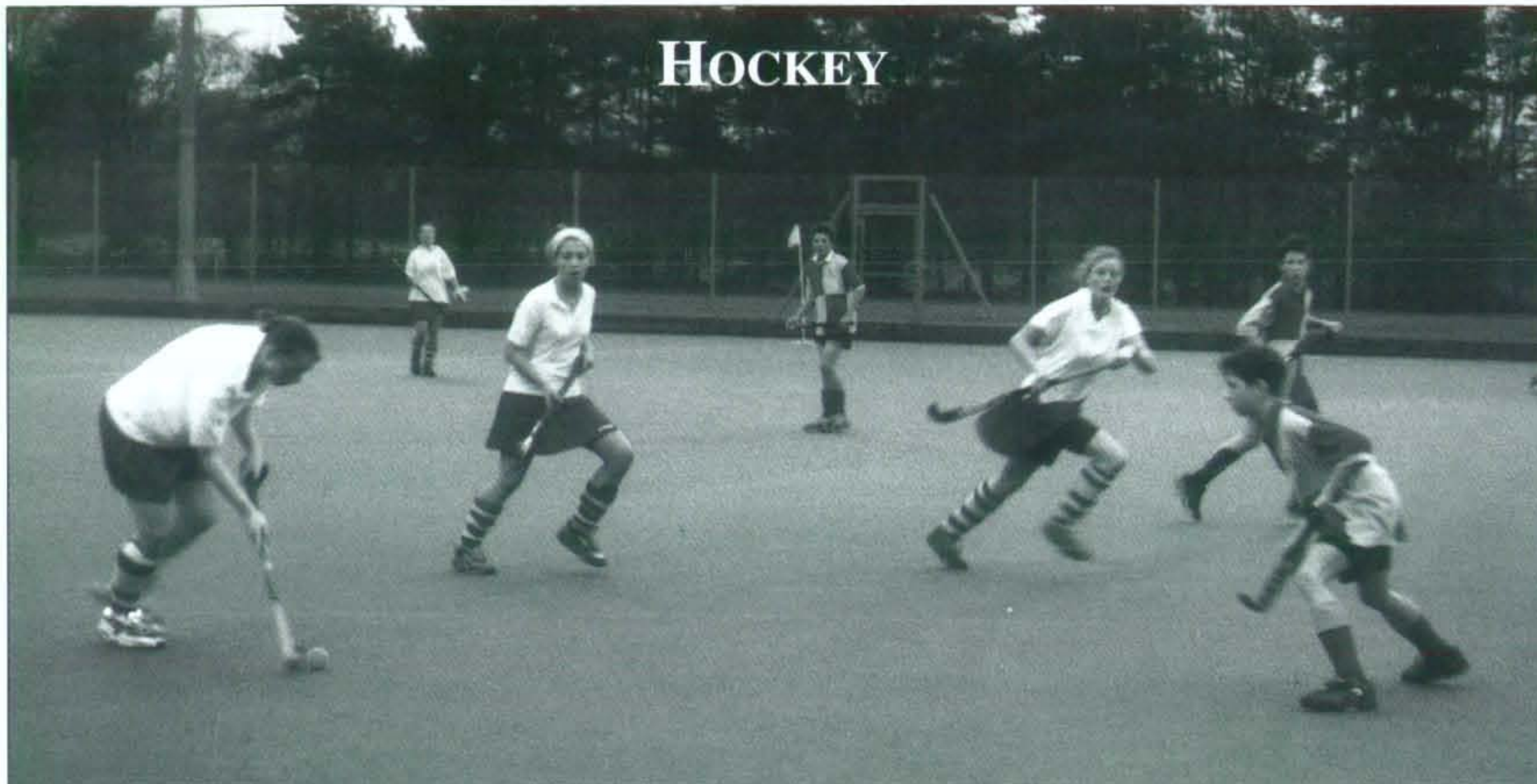
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# HOCKEY

Girls v Yearlings on the Bourbon Astroturf



Staff defending: DF, JAM, ADB, SGAH and SNA



Staff v School

# HOCKEY

## 1ST XI

Played 9 Won 2 Lost 7

Goals for: 8 Goals against: 42

This season was always going to be a struggle. With only a few players left from last year's XI building for the future was always the intention. Hockey professional Duncan Woods had put together a 5-year development plan, focusing on the lower end of the School. Now was the time to start building for next year at the top end.

Pre-season training indoors at The Leys was promising as far as levels of commitment were concerned but highlighted some technical weaknesses that were to prove costly over the season. The friendly game against The Leys showed us just how much we had to progress, as we conceded eight goals in four fifteen minute quarters.

Our first school match was against an athletic Radley side who played all-out attacking hockey. At 0-2 down we had a chance to pull back but failed to hit the target. From then on Radley threw everything at us and we could only

defend for so long! This was a pattern that was going to become familiar over the term: long periods of stout, but slightly desperate defending, a failure to convert chances that we did create (and there were plenty – we were excellent on the counter-attack until the final pass or finish), followed by floodgates opening when the opposition did finally score.

The game against Bloxham was probably the high point of the season. Not only did we win but we showed some real character, coming back from 0-2 down to snatch a 3-2 win. This was the only game where the side seemed really to believe that they could score goals and win matches, showing a real desire to achieve what they were capable of. The rest of the season ran very much as the first game against Radley. We were only 0-2 down at half-time against St Edward's but crumpled to a 0-10 defeat. We were level at half-time with Stamford, but disintegrated to 0-6. Often we made the situation worse for ourselves by losing discipline and ending up in the sin-bin. It is even harder to defend with only 10 on the pitch! The other highlight was the game against Merchant Taylors', where, by scoring

first, we suddenly seemed to come alive and in a twenty-minute purple patch showed what kind of hockey we really had the potential to play.

Overall the statistics speak for themselves. The side did not do itself justice. On the other hand, many of them will be returning next year and will have an insight into what is necessary as far as commitment and attitude are concerned for the side to succeed, so there are many positive aspects to build on. Unfortunately we lose the services of Duncan Woods, but his excellent scheme will continue and I have no doubt that next year I shall be writing this report with much more to celebrate by way of results.

Squad: Henry Cavill, Brett MacLennan, Angus Elphinstone, Kaunda Kavindele (captain), Simon Creek, Robert Prentice, Sami Robertson, Harry Trelawny, William Dudley, Jamie Peel, Jonathan Witt, Henry Coram James, Ashley Pearson, Rupert Kelton and Alan Bowman. Colours: Kaunda Kavindele and William Dudley.

PCA



1st XI

Centre back: Henry Cavill

Back row: Brett MacLennan, Harry Trelawny, Simon Creek, Angus Elphinstone, Jamie Peel, Ashley Pearson

Front row: Will Dudley, Sami Robertson, Kaunda Kavindele, Robert Prentice, Jonathan Witt

## 2ND XI

The season started with plenty of potential and it was clear as early as pre-season training that we were going to have a strong squad. With such a situation there was clearly going to be a certain amount of shuffling around at 1st XI and 2nd XI levels. We ended up with a 2nd XI that was exceptionally strong, talented and willing whilst playing.

The most consistent player was by far Piers Winton, the goalkeeper. Solid in defence, and occasionally making you wonder how he got to the ball, the 2nd XI had much for which to thank Piers. The combination of young and old worked well up front. Jack Mann (captain) was very effective at centre-forward, ably supported by spontaneously scoring wings in Alan Bowman and Nick Oldridge. Goals from all three came thick and fast, especially towards the end of the season. Midfield always seemed to pose difficulties with shuffling right up to the end of the season. The pick at the end of the season was a strong combination. Although not perfect, the strength of Sam Barratt, Jeremy Bodiam and Saxon Izatt proved the best combination. The back four were an extremely well worked and consistent unit. With Edward Webb, Charlie Hustler, Richard Worrall and Robert Prentice the team was complete. The back four were very successful in helping Piers keep the goal empty. All of these players could not have functioned as well as they did without the assistance of the reserves. Rupert Corbishley, Edward Heard, Harry Trotter and Henry Leon were constantly snapping at the heels of selection and frequently insisted that they be let on in their favoured positions. Each of the reserves played well, including a role as captain for Harry Trotter in the final match. The team finished the season with 6 wins, a draw and 2 losses. This has been a relatively successful season, therefore, and one that can be improved on in future years. Thanks in the coaching must go to Duncan Woods and Paul Armstrong.

DGB

## 4TH XI

The team started with an encouraging display against Radley on the wonderful grass surface of the North Front. With many players who were to play in the 3rd XI we pushed the visitors for much of the first half, only conceding

a goal just before half-time. Elliot Keane scored an equaliser early in the second half. Unfortunately Radley improved as we tired and they went on to score two more goals to win 3-1.

Several cancelled matches later the 4ths reappeared in March at home against Magdalen College School, this time on the Bourbon. In a keenly fought contest MCS scored first but we looked good on the break and went in at half-time all square. MCS forged ahead to lead 3-1 in the second half but we responded well to force an exciting finish by scoring a second goal five minutes from time.

Finally we travelled to Shiplake with a depleted squad but on a beautiful afternoon and a bumpy pitch and after a late start we showed great enterprise. Solid defence from Oliver Weston, Bertie Marsh and Mark Mackay-Lewis enabled Will Gaze, Nick Morris and Andrew Comber to overlap with Alex Papadopoulos, Ed Warr and Matthew Roche as we threatened regularly in the first half. Reward came when Ed Warr met a cross perfectly to send the ball high into the net. We held on to record a welcome victory.

Ever present this season were: Oliver Weston, Mark Mackay-Lewis, Alex Papadopoulos and Matthew Roche. Other regulars: Ben McCarey, Andrew Comber, Will Gaze, Bertie Marsh, Ross Griffin, Roddy McLaughlan and Ed Warr.

SJBA

## COLTS A

This season was one of disappointment and the final results certainly do not give an accurate picture of the wealth of talent and commitment that exists in this team. As I have come to expect from this squad, they trained with determination and dedication and never failed to work hard and for each other – an essential component of team sport. They were well led by captain Vadim Pak, who played well in midfield alongside John Rainton, whose work-rate, individual skill and awareness were outstanding. The defence of Jamie Leggett was excellent throughout the season and Tom Legge showed great potential for the future at centre-back. Without any doubt there is a considerable amount of promise within this team and I am certain that in the future they will learn to convert their chances into goals and achieve some excellent results.

I have been fortunate to coach them for two seasons and look forward to watching them progress further.

TLH

## COLTS B

Our season went well; of seven matches we drew one, won three and lost three. The first match was against Radley on their Astroturf. The match started well, but they made the initial score before Tom Butcher made a great goal to take us back on terms. After half-time, despite our best efforts, we could not manage to get another goal and Radley scored another two to make the final score 3-1. Our next game was against Bloxham away. The game started off quite scruffily but as we became more accustomed to the grass surface we began to play a lot better. The defenders in particular played well, especially Luke Worrall and Louis Powell. The first goal was scored by us this time but sadly they got one back by half-time. After half-time they were on the attack and the ball tipped a defender's stick and George Norton could not do anything about it. John Sayle then scored our second to give us a final score of 2-2. Our third match was against Abingdon at home and after a spirited performance we lost 0-2. In the next match against St Edward's, the midfield played very well, especially Matt MacLeod and Matt Johnson who were linking up well with both the attackers and the defenders. Gareth Sharp was also showing some silky skills. The final score was 1-2 to them. Our fifth match against Rugby was the start of something better. John Sayle played very well along with all the other midfielders and Louis Powell made a significant contribution. The end result was 7-2. Tom Butcher again had a great game and Ollie Dannatt also scored two goals. Our penultimate match, against Pangbourne, was at home on the North Front. We were missing Louis Powell as he had moved up to the As, but we found a capable replacement in Greg Cushing, who had a good match. Luke Worrall and Robert McKinnon also played well, clearing the ball off our lines on a number of occasions, to ensure the win. Our final match was against Magdalen College which we won 2-1. Everyone played well, especially Hugh Maclean who had been moved up to midfield, and this rounded off our season well.

Thank you very much to Mr Durrant for being a great coach and Mrs Bisp and



Monarch of Nugent

Mr Austen for umpiring some of the matches.

Squad: George Norton, Luke Worrall, Michael Laing, Louis Powell, Robert McKinnon, Hugh Maclean, Ben Lange, Matt Johnson, John Sayle, Matt MacLeod, Gareth Sharp, Greg Cushing, Ollie Dannatt, Hickey Bacon, Tom Butcher, Tom Campbell and Michael Pattison.

MICHAEL LAING

## JUNIOR COLTS A

This has been a very interesting and, in many ways, exciting season. Our first game against Radley was a classic encounter which could have had ten goals scored between us. It ended 2-4 in Radley's favour. After opening the score and winning a penalty stroke we were looking very strong and the Radley coach thought that they were in for a big loss at that point (he said afterwards). Despite the final score we played lots of good hockey and showed great potential for the future.

We then lost narrowly to Bloxham 1-2, after completely outplaying them but failing to put the ball in the net. The importance of this game was the emergence of a style of hockey that we were comfortable with and was difficult to play against.

A draw against Abingdon was solid enough and by now our strengths were starting to show. Will Gallimore and Ed Prince playing down the right side were unstoppable and Nick Prince was starting to show some striking talent.



The St Edward's goalkeeper waits for the next Stowe attack

Harry Sheppard was developing into a very good midfield player, switching play at vital moments from left to right. A solid back pairing of Jonathan Dickens and Philip Hitner began to look threatening, stepping up into the midfield and blocking out the centre of the field, cutting out any counter-attacks.

Next came St Edward's. This was a great game with end to end hockey and lots of goals. As we settled into our routine we won back a couple of 'soft' goals which we had conceded early on. We looked dominant in the final twenty minutes and created chance after chance, but just could not finish them off. It looked as if the game would end 3-3. But then in the 26th minute (of a 25 minute half) St Edward's scored a breakaway goal and we lost 3-4. This was disappointing for everybody but there was much that was excellent to take out of the game.

Our season then nose-dived with loss of key players and we lost to Merchant Taylors', Rugby and Pangbourne, struggling to compete. But with a full strength side we were hosts to Shiplake for the last game of the season. Everybody that day played his part. It was fast, aggressive, precise and fantastic to see. We won 6-1. It was a great exhibition of hockey to end on and, more importantly, for the team to see just what they could do when they got it right. So although the results sheet only shows one win, that does not do the team justice.

I honestly believe that next year this team could go a long way in the National Schools U16 Tournament. Ignore the results sheet and only winning one game. We know they could actually win much more!

PSJD

## JUNIOR COLTS C

The team was enthusiastic and maintained a high morale throughout the season. Their expertise and confidence grew, but they were sometimes unfortunate in being unable to produce all the goals they deserved. Nevertheless Freddie Raikes proved a terrific scorer, being responsible for all but one of the Stowe goals.

Played 4 Won 1 Drew 1 Lost 2  
Goals for: 5 Goals against: 11

Squad: J. G. Dawson (goalkeeper), A.R. Perry, S.V. Tiper, C.W. Brown, G.A. Borozdin-Bidnell, F.R. Raikes, C.J. Dalton, H.T.W. Hay, J.H.S. Cummings, J.P. Norman, E.C.J. Comber, T.G. Bromley-Martin, G.P.A. Barrie, T.H.C. Probert, J.T. Walker and O.R. Hogg.

MJB

## YEARLINGS A

v Loughborough	2-2
v Uppingham	0-5
v Oundle	1-4
v Stamford	0-5
v RGS High Wycombe	6-0
v Mill Hill	1-1
v Stantonbury	3-1
v Oundle	4-1
v Uppingham	2-1

Duncan Woods and I set up a programme of very solid basic training to groove the boys, arriving in the main with little hockey experience, into a style of hockey they would continue playing throughout their school careers. We realised that this might not bring short-term success, but we had the bigger picture in mind.

After a promising opening fixture against Loughborough came our three 'big' matches. It hurt to concede fourteen goals in those games and score only one. But this was an inevitable learning process for the team if we were to achieve what we set out to do. It would also make their dawn as a good hockey team all the more satisfying. And rise up in triumph they did.

We went through the rest of the season unbeaten, playing some superb hockey. In the next five games we scored sixteen goals and conceded only four. This was thanks to some clinical finishing from Darren Haskell-Thomas, backed up by goals from Tom Brann and others. The back four of Shann, Forrester, Whaley and Lech proved an unbreakable force and James Jagger stood tall in goal, making some outstanding saves which made the difference between winning and losing.

The second game against Uppingham was the bench mark of how far they had come in their first term of hockey. This amazing game had everything. End to end flowing hockey, a great crowd, goalmouth drama, excitement, encouragement and a mutual desire to win. Neither side giving an inch, by half-time there was no score. In the second half every member of the team contributed magnificently and it was no surprise when we scored the first goal. Though ten minutes later Uppingham equalised, we picked ourselves off the

floor and scored the winning goal with just five minutes to go. They had turned around that 0-5 loss in the early Uppingham fixture. It was an indication of just how much they had progressed over the season and an excellent sign for the future, not only for them, but for hockey in general at Stowe.

Team: James Jagger, Harry Shann, Nicholas Forrester, James Whaley, Charles Lech, Nicholas Greenwood, Tom Brann (capt.), Charles Leet-Cook, Edward Page, Darren Haskell-Thomas and Harry Arkwright.

PSTJD

## YEARLINGS B

The team evolved from the beginning of term Skills Testing and on the whole remained fairly constant throughout the season. Alex Farr and Bill Burrett emerged through the ranks, Alex possibly proving to be the most improved player of all.

The team played eight matches and were unbeaten in five of them, winning convincingly against Stamford (6-2), R.G.S. (12-1) and Mill Hill (7-0), with goals being shared by Robbie Clutton, Bill Burrett, Zac Jordan, Freddie Wynne, Harry Arkwright, Tom Fillery and Alex Farr. The team accumulated 31 goals and Freddie Champion-Awwad allowed only 14 to pass between his posts. Harry Arkwright captained the team competently for most of the season,

before his promotion to the A XI, when the captaincy was taken over by Freddie Wynne. The side demonstrated excellent team spirit and deserved their winning season.

Squad from: F. Champion-Awwad, B. Seebohm, H. Cobb, B. Corner, S. Catlin, F. Wynne, W. Burrett, J. Tedder, R. Clutton, T. Fillery, B. Holland, Z. Jordan, A. Farr and R. Rogge.

DCB

## YEARLINGS C

This squad improved greatly as the season progressed. Captain Alex Farr led a team which started the season from a modest skills base but which competed strongly and ended the term with several players who either forced their way into the top club or who will certainly compete for A and B team positions next season.

The high point for the boys was the return match against Oundle. Having lost a competitive game in the first weeks of the term 2-4, the team put on an impressive and comprehensive display of passing which enabled them to dominate the match thoroughly and win 5-1. This was satisfying in itself, although the quality of the hockey and the failure of Oundle to gain any significant possession might have led one to expect considerably more goals. And these, in truth, should have been forthcoming had the forwards' radar been functioning properly!

DF



Girls v Yearlings

## GIRLS 1ST XI

The girls' hockey season started off well with many promising new Lower Sixth-formers. Everyone trained hard as a group, taking fitness more seriously than ever! Team spirit and dedication were sustained throughout the season, despite some disappointing defeats and a number of injuries. Our coaches, Miss Hooker and Mr Woods, made the season very enjoyable and we ended it with convincing wins against Rugby, Haileybury and Uppingham, giving next year's team a head start. Players of the Season were goalkeeper Liz Weston and captain Munchie Hayward. The two Top Goal Scorers were Christina Glatzel and Willow Corbett-Winder and the Most Improved Player Award was given to Lucy Wright.

MUNCHIE HAYWARD

The squad improved greatly throughout the season, as the three emphatic victories in the latter part of the season would suggest. The team was extremely well led by the devoted Munchie Hayward and it was pleasing to see so much strength in depth. The excellent overall standard was shown in the outstanding level of the House match, both Houses fielding strong sides. An exciting and competitive game ended in a slightly unsatisfactory 1-1 draw. The Lower Sixth played an integral role in this year's squad and as a result the next season seems promising.

Colours were awarded to: Munchie Hayward, Liz Weston, Allegra Whittaker, Christina Glatzell and Willow Corbett-Winder.

TLH

## GIRLS 2ND XI

The girls' 2nd XI had another tough season with good results, especially against Wellington (1-1) and only just losing to Dame Alice (1-2) and St. Edward's (1-3). The team had excellent wins over Bloxham (2-0), Cheltenham (2-1) and Rugby (2-1).

## HOCKEY FOOTNOTE

At the end of term a new form of House competition worked really well, giving the players more hockey than in previous years. Each Pool was played on a Round Robin basis with 7-a-side, increasing to 11-a-side and longer games for the semi-finals and finals. The whole competition was played over two weeks, a distinct advantage. The finals were of a particularly high standard. Cobham beat a gallant Grafton side in the senior final and Bruce beat Grenville 1-0 in a very close junior final.

I would like to express my thanks for the continued support of the hockey staff (all nineteen of them) with Paul Armstrong getting the Stickability Award after his difficult season with the 1st XI when the support he could have expected was not always forthcoming. I would like to thank Steve Curley and his staff for all the pitch preparation, Geoff Higgins and his staff for the match teas and Ivy Watts in the laundry for all the kit washing. Thank you all.

DCB



Girls 1st XI v Haileybury

# RUGBY

## 1ST XV

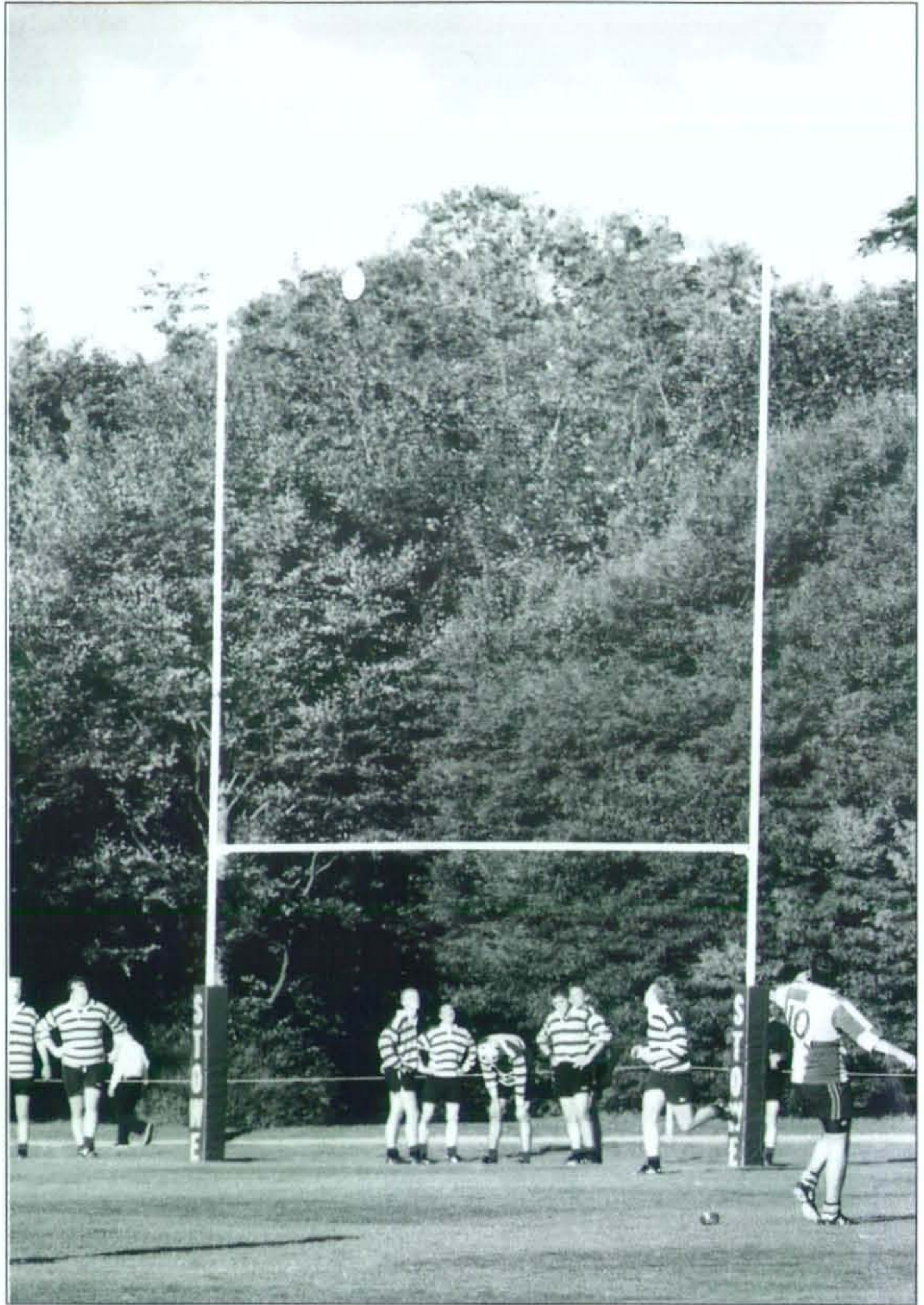
Played 15 Won 7 Drawn 1 Lost 7

The pattern of this season was similar to the last's. There was a good start but later on, after losing in the Daily Mail Cup, results were disappointing. This was also reflected in the matches themselves. We often made promising starts, playing fluent and enterprising rugby and establishing early leads, before losing the plot and letting the opposition claw their way back into the games as we lost confidence. The matches with Uppingham and Pangbourne were particularly like this.

The pack was often dominant and provided ample possession for the backs but, as was evidenced by the many individuals selected on the wings and at full-back, we didn't have the pace required to finish off a lot of good approach work.

For me the best performance of the season was the defeat against Uppingham. I could not fault the effort, aggression and solid defence demonstrated by the whole fifteen. It was a physically demanding match to which we rose magnificently. It was only the pace of the Uppingham back three which allowed them to win through 25-17.

Jamie Peel, the captain, missed a good portion of the season through a back injury and his pace and motivation were a loss to the side. Richard Worrall,





however, stepped into the breach and always provided a consistent service to the ever-present Rob Large. Tom Oliver and Kuanda Kavindele led the side in Jamie's absence, both of whom had impressive seasons.

Amongst a powerful pack Chris Reeves was an ever-present, Marcus Williams developed into an uncompromising openside and Angus Elphinstone proved to be a tower of strength in both the loose and the tight. Ed Lake and Charles Stanton never flinched from their defensive duties and it was good to

see the development of Jon Phipps and Will Hook, both of whom will be involved in next year's campaign. Others to feature consistently throughout the season were Harry Trelawny and Brett MacLennan.

Several Colts also made their debuts for the 1st XV and hopefully this early experience will stand them in good stead for next year when the team will probably have a strong presence of Lower Sixth-formers.

AH

**SENIOR SEVENS**

The School entered three competitions, the Bucks Schools Sevens, Douai Sevens and the National Sevens at Rosslyn Park. Whilst no trophies were won, the boys reached the final of the Bucks tournament and got to the second day of the Rosslyn Park event, where only 16 teams remain from the initial 150 which entered. This was no mean achievement, bearing in mind the squad had no out-and-out pacemen. What they



1st XV

Back row: Nicholas Oldridge, Babafunso Alakija, Brett MacLennan, Harry Trelawny, Robert Large, Nathan Witts.  
 Middle row: RCS, John Phipps, Alex Housley, William Hook, Lester Smart, Marcus Williams, Nico Heath, AH.  
 Front row: Charles Stanton, Kaunda Kavindele, Angus Elphinstone, Jamie Peel, Tom Oliver, Christopher Reeves, Edouard Lake.



lacked in speed they made up for in commitment, particularly in defence. Their tackling was immense and one notable game typified this at Rosslyn Park. Within four minutes of the kick-off against Rugby we had scored three tries, all originating from three big tackles on the opposition. In the last sixteen we drew Bryanston, last year's finalists, and on the wide expanses of the Rosslyn Park 1st XV pitch were unable to plug all the gaps and went down 17-34. Nonetheless the experience of reaching the last 16 is one they should all recall with some pride.

Squad: Tom Oliver, John Phipps, Ed Lake, Charles Stanton, Angus Elphinstone, Ed Kaye, Jamie Peel, Kaunda Kavindele, Harry Trelawny, Nick Heath and Brett MacLennan.

## 2ND XV

Played 10 Won 3 Drew 1 Lost 6

It can often be said that record books do not reflect the success of a season, and in this case these results do not do last year's 2nd XV sufficient justice. They were a much better side than their record suggests. However, all too often they lacked the necessary stamina and perhaps determination to hammer home a victory or finally break an opposition side. In so many games we got to a winning position and then lacked the ruthlessness to seal victory.

At moments in the season we played some fantastic rugby, led at first by the solid frame of James Kayll at hooker, and later on in the season by the terrier-like sniping scrum-half, Will Dudley. Both led the side with distinction and a certain brand of ambition to play expansive rugby. They had the personnel to aid in this goal. A solid front row set the foundations for a constant supply of first phase possession in most games. All three props, Hugo Harrison, Sam Musker and Teimur Ismailov were all dangerous around the fringes and all had a spell in the 1st XV. Sami Robertson in the second row was a major source of ball at the line out, with his salmon-like leaps, and giraffe-esque running in the back line. His absence was all too obvious in the game that he missed through injury. Sami was amply supported in the second row by Hector Ross and Tom de Serville. Our back row was also at times a solid team within a team. It was characterised by the pillaging rampages of Scotsmen Roddy McLauchlan and Alec Laing at blind side, and the

mad Welshman Ed Gambarini and Alex Housley at openside. All were fearless in the tackle and superbly fit. The two number 8s also put in some creditable performances. Early on in the season, the feline demeanor of Lester Smart was ever present at the back of the scrum, before he earned a well-deserved place in the 1st XV; not least for his specific brand of bone crunching tackles, striking fear into many an opposition fly-half. He was replaced by the bison-like physique of Jack Mann, who showed considerable grit and determination, often in difficult conditions and proved a more than adequate replacement for the talented Smart.

Our backs took longer to settle; yet many came through to be extremely accomplished players by the end of the season. Nico Heath at fly-half found his form, scoring a hat-trick against Mill Hill; a performance which was to elevate him to the 1st XV for the rest of the season in the full-back role. Taro Koka, Piers Winton, and Hugo Wilson all had their moments in the centre, aided by the blistering pace of our sharp-witted and quick-thinking wingers Chris Behlau, Jamie Douglas-Hamilton and Will Gaze. Lastly, in the full-back spot, was the ever present and hard-running Ian Grant Peterkin. After a brief spell in the 1st XV Ian proved invaluable to our three-quarter line. Notably in defence he was solid and more often than not his determined counter-attacking sparked positive forward moving play from quite difficult situations. His aggression in attack was outstanding throughout the season, most often witnessed in Ian beating two or three men before off-loading possession to his support.

This side deserves credit for their perseverance throughout the season, even after some particularly close defeats, which were hard to swallow. Many of these players will move onto further success in the ranks of senior rugby at their respective universities. I wish them well.

DGB

## 3RD XV

An interesting season. Initially there was a lot of changing between 3rd and 4th teams until a settled unit was formed. The first few matches reflected this and did not do the final team justice. Changes in the team reflected changes of leadership. Henry Cavill was the skipper for the first match, but had to relinquish

the captaincy after injury put him out for most of the season. Hugh Arbuthnott then held the captaincy until the natural leader of the group, Nick Brandram, took over.

The final team was a very capable unit. The front row forwards were Greg Filsell, Sam Barratt and Richard Bennett. They were backed up well by a very capable Ricky White, who had the ability to step into any of their shoes. The engine-room of the scrum contained the talented and capable pairing of Matthew Dalby and Max Lawrence. Back-rowers are an odd breed and with the ferocity of Charlie Tull, persistence of Richard Ward and leadership of Nick Brandram the pack was complete.

As with the forwards, the backs became a team in their own. The ball would find its way from Jake Davies' hands, through those of Hugh Arbuthnott, Hugo Rebbeck, Hugh De Sales La Terriere and finish with either Robert Prentice or Andrew Comber. If that last passage went smoothly then Patrick Bingham wouldn't need to clean up and we would most certainly score. A quick look at our results shows that the backs weren't actually that successful, but that was not for lack of trying.

The players were never faulted for their determination on the field, yet frustrations regularly found their way into the game. On more than a few occasions the team were within reach of victory at half-time only to be beaten by narrow margins. It was commonplace to be 3 points down at half-time and yet still be 3 points down at full-time. This comes from the fact that our play did not vary much from start to finish. More variety was needed and that has to come from commitment to training. It was only on one occasion that the whole team were training together on the same day.

Our reserves supported the team brilliantly well, especially when the 4th XV did not have a game. Coaching support came from SJBA and AMcD.

DGB

## COLTS A

Played 9 Won 5 Lost 4

A winning season! And well deserved! This was a season in which tactical awareness and teamwork developed significantly as it unfolded. A real sense of control had appeared in the patterns of play as tries were manufactured rather than scored by chance.

The first game saw us trounce a

weak Pangbourne side 34-15. But it clearly showed how tactically unaware our defence was and how much we relied on individual efforts to cross the line. We went to work on this straight-away and despite winning only four of our own scrummage balls against a formidable Bedford pack we managed to keep the score down to 7-34. A remarkable defensive display by the three-quarter line managed to annul much of the significant Bedford possession. To engineer a score in such a game was equally an achievement and some of the midweek work was bearing fruit early on. Away at Uppingham, with four B team players appearing for the first time in the As, a similar pack denied us any possession. Our defence grew in stature and experience. What should have been a 60 point defeat was maintained at 7-30, with Uppingham having to score the hard way through the dominance of their huge and powerful pack. Happy with the defence, the coaching moved to attack and various patterns were beginning to



appear in training. It came as no surprise that we were able to attack Bloxham with renewed confidence, winning 19-3. Having lost to Stamford by 36 points last year, the team impressively turned this score around to a 19-4 victory.

John Cleveland College gave us a tense match and one we should have won. The failure to convert one try gave Cleveland the edge and a 19-17 win. Mill Hill (67-3) and Magdalen College School proved to be easy opposition and the stage was set for The Oratory. They had been unbeaten all season with some impressive scalps under their belt. Everything we had learned had to come together in this final match. Despite the often difficult conditions and fate sometimes seeming to be against us, we showed style in attack and strength in defence. We were extremely unlucky not to finish the season on a high, for, whilst pressing the opposition hard, 14-16 down, a minor off-the-ball incident got whistled up and left us frustrated...

It is difficult to isolate individuals for mention in a season when each and every player has contributed well to the overall team effort. But we must note that Nathan Witts did extremely well to secure a place in the South West U16 side and Malcolm Riley developed good vision as he learned to look beyond the rucks and mauls. I would like to thank Malcolm and Matt for their leadership

on the field and for the significant parental support off the field. Thanks too to CJAT who managed to engineer totally secure lineout ball utilising a small pack and ensured that the tactical ability of the forwards maintained their competitiveness against bigger and more powerful opposition.

SHM

## COLTS B

Played 9 Won 4 Lost 5

This was quite a successful season in which each member refined and developed individual skills as well as working extremely well together as a team. Captain Alex Dietz led the way in commitment and skill, making his presence felt both in impenetrable defence and striking attack. He was also the major jumper in the lineouts, which proved to be one of the team's major strengths, both in tight defensive situations and when attacking the opposition's line.

The front row of Al Buhaisi, Islam and Davies provided skill and stability in all aspects of forward play. In particular Al Buhaisi's powerful running and scrummaging were rewarded with him being promoted to the A team late in the season. So too the combination of height, strength and drive of Vere-Nicoll, Daines, Percy and Barbier was the key to the team's success in ruck and maul

situations. Chauhan served the team well in the position of outside centre, always quick to break down opposition play and most willing to run with the ball. Scrum-half Kirk was a creative playmaker, stirred up the forwards and provided great service to the three-quarters. The team's most prolific try-scorer, Tattinger, and strong-running centre, Chiu, relished every opportunity to show their strength and speed when given the space. They are two players to look out for in coming years. Wingers Cheyne, Powell and Maclean were versatile players, contributing well to the back line, offering safe heads and solid defence.

The skills and confidence of the whole team lifted throughout the season and it was a pleasure to see such high-spirited young men focus their energy in such a positive manner, producing high quality rugby.

Squad: Mohammed Islam, Rupert Davies, Tariq Al-Buhaisi, Harry Vere-Nicoll, George Percy, Guy Barbier, Alex Dietz, Ben Sanchez, Oleg Papazov, Adam Daines, Hugh Vacher, Chris Lyon, George Simms, Tom Kirk, Gregory Cushing, Jeremy Chiu, Nikil Chauhan, Thibaut Tattinger, Rory McIntyre, Louis Powell, Rory Cheyne, Hugh Maclean, Oliver Cullingworth, James Keenan, George Norton, Michael Laing, Jerome Thompson.

ARVS



U16 Sevens Winners at Douai. Back row: Tom Legge, CJAT, Alim Jinnah, Nathan Witts, David Ashby, Ben Morgan, Malcolm Riley, RCS. Front row: John Rainton, Vadim Pak, Will Barker, Luke Brewin

## U16 SEVENS

We went to Newbury Rugby Club for the Douai Sevens without any match practice and won the tournament, beating Berkhamsted by over 50 points in the Final and accounting on the way for the likes of St Edward's, Pangbourne and Newbury. This achievement underlines the pace and skill which exists in this particular year group and bodes well for the future.

With this success behind us we went to the National Competition in good heart and duly amassed over 80 points in the first two matches but in the final group Dartford Grammar proved more than a match and the side was well beaten.

Squad: Ben Morgan, Tom Legge, Malcolm Riley, Nathan Witts, Luke Brewin, John Rainton, Tom Sowerby, Matthew Johnson, Alim Jinnah, Vadim Pak, David Ashby and Will Barker.

RCS

## JUNIOR COLTS

Played 12 Won 5 Lost 7

Our season started with a match against Pangbourne. After little training from our coach (Mr. Durrant), because the fixture was so near to the start of the new term we put out an unpractised side, which lost narrowly by five points. The following Tuesday with no more training, we played away against Bedford. Bedford were a very strong side, who beat us by thirty-eight points. Our third match of the season was against our great rivals Uppingham. We travelled to Uppingham with our minds focussed and with only one thing to do. We eventually did this in a close and hard-fought game, with Harry Sheppard and Rob Habib playing very well. We won by ten points.

The next match was against Bloxham at home on the South Front. The Stowe team went out on a high from the Uppingham game ready to add to our first win of the season. This was a great match as we started to show our potential, which resulted in us overcoming Bloxham with a convincing win. William Gallimore was on fine form with his boot and James Owen was running very well from deep.

It was at this stage of the season when we adopted a new style of flat line defence. This new method of defence worked in our next fixture, which was the Buckingham Derby against Royal Latin. We won this game by 24 points.

David Ashby scored twice and Nick Prince scored a lovely individual try from a chip and chase. Still using the flat line defence method we travelled to Abingdon. This was a match with a lot hard-fought, attractive rugby football and Ed Baker and Jamie Ryde put in top performances. The match was very close but due to giving away some silly penalties we were beaten by three points.

Then on the following Saturday we were up against Stamford. This was another close game but some lack of size in the Stowe team and an awful lot in the opposition's team, led to a narrow defeat by a try. However Ju Manomaiphan and Matt Gracie were putting in some fantastic tackles.

On a bit of a low after the last two defeats the Stowe side travelled the A5 to John Cleveland looking for a win to boost our morale before our first Daily Mail Cup fixture. On the day the weather was awful with a driving wind and due to some unforgivable handling errors we were defeated by a very heavy thirty-seven points.

Now was the big one, the first of our Daily Mail Cup matches against Burford. We went to the heart of the Cotswolds very much ready. Mr. Durrant brought into the squad three of the best third-form players, William Burrett, Ben Corner and Charlie Sanchez to strengthen our squad. Out on the pitch we played some very fluent attractive rugby. Having worked very hard we beat Burford by fifty points, in what was probably the best display of running rugby that we gave, thanks to Ed Prince who linked the forwards and backs very well at scrum-half.

Now with our first Cup match out the way we tried to get as many wins as possible to build us up for our second Cup game. Our next fixture was against Windsor SFB. This game was played on the South Front. Windsor SFB arrived with a very large side and after an extremely physical game they won by a converted try. John Dickens and Ollie Tree kept our heads up by showing the rest of the team big tackles and hard runs.

This left us with one normal game to play and as many Cup games as we could win. Our last non-cup game was to be fought out against Reading Oratory. This was played at home. It was a very fast game and with some excellent back moves and good support play from the forwards we won by seventeen points. James Norman and Charlie More Nisbett

played very well in both a defensive and attacking role.

The North Front was the venue for the second of the Daily Mail Cup matches against Sheldon. The weather was near enough perfect and the North Front was looking great with a massive number of Stoics on the sidelines willing us on. The full strength Stowe side were very much up for it! The match was a tough game and it could have gone either way but to our huge disappointment Sheldon had ended our cup dream by eleven points.

DAVID ASHBY

## YEARLINGS

Played 10 Won 2 Lost 8

The Yearlings this season found out how difficult the game is without having influential half-backs to dominate matches. Alex Farr and Tom Brann started the season and although both have potential for the future they lacked the control necessary at A-team level. Charlie Lech and Sam Catlin took over but the positions are demanding and it took time for boys learning the necessary skills to bed in. Both are talented players and show promise for the future.

The pack often found it difficult to come to terms with the size and mobility of their opposition. The strength in this year's team lies in the back row with Harry Cobb (capt) and Bill Burrett outstanding. Until he was moved to the centre Nick Forrester complemented these two with his work-rate and aggression. In the backs Ben Corner has natural athletic ability, but lacks the concentration and focus to implement this talent. He could, if he put his mind to it, be a tremendous asset.

Although their season in terms of results was relatively poor, they never failed to show enthusiasm for their task. This was characterised by the ever-present Eddie Ruggles-Brise, a gritty, tenacious hooker who gave every ounce of energy to the cause.

A special thank-you should be made to DGB, who provided much support and wisdom to the side throughout the season. As the side grows physically, it will compete much more favourably, providing many of the players work on their fitness levels at the same time.

AH

## SAILING

Blustery conditions provided some exciting sailing in the first half of term. It was good to see so many participants coping well, including an enthusiastic band of third-formers who have just joined the Sailing Club. The team made a good start to their inter-school matches with a convincing win over Magdalen College School. Thereafter public exams began to take their toll and it became difficult to maintain the same standards with sometimes less experienced sailors. As always, it makes a considerable difference if team members regularly race during the holidays. The House matches went particularly well this year with a high standard of seamanship from a large number of Houses, even though they had to be held within a week of the start of term and all on one afternoon. Thanks as always to TJE and DWJ for their invaluable help throughout the season.

House matches: 1st Bruce 2nd Chatham.  
Helmsman's Tankard: 1st Ollie Weston  
2nd George Percy. Junior Pennant  
Competition: 1st Tom Durston 2nd  
Richard Robinson

Team from: Daniel Ferris, Oliver Weston, Harry Heneage, Roddy McLauchlan, Michael Pattison, George Percy, Edward West, Freddie von Schroder, Henry Snagge, Charles Clark, Richard Robinson and George Duckworth.

MJB

## SOCCER

Played 6 Won 4 Drawn 1 Lost 1

The season started off with a game against the Old Stoics. We beat them 5-2 thanks to their lack of fitness and our lethal finishing. Our second game was against another set of Old Stoics, but these were the younger version who left only a few years ago. We managed to beat them convincingly 6-2. Our first school game was against Rugby. Dudley, the captain, opened the scoring with a 25-yard screamer. Large doubled the score and Stowe went into half-time 2-0 up. Rugby managed to pull it back to 2-2 with 5 minutes left, but we kept on believing and Riley came up with the winning goal. An excellent 3-2 victory.

Our first fixture in the Spring was the 6-a-side tournament at Wellington. We played in a group consisting of five other teams, mostly full-time football schools. Our very young squad

(including four fifth-formers) finished a commendable fourth. Highlight of the day was the 4-1 win over hosts Wellington and a 2-2 draw with a talented Harrow team.

Next came St Clare's, Oxford, an international college. An exciting game was predicted and it didn't disappoint, with a final score of 3-3. Kavindele, Brewin and Webb were the scorers. The only game we lost was against the adult amateur side Corinthian Casuals. Large got our goal in the 1-4 reverse against a talented and relatively young side. The last game of the season saw us away at Rugby, seeking revenge for the defeat in the Autumn. In a very exciting match Large grabbed the only goal of the game and we had done the double over Rugby and halted their unbeaten run.

This must have been one of the most successful seasons for some time. Many thanks to our coach, Mr Murray, for all his time and effort, and to Mr Melber and Mr Curley for refereeing. With five fifth-formers representing the side this year, the future looks bright. Congratulations to all!

Team from: William Dudley (capt.), Kaunda Kavindele, Robert Large, David Parker, Rupert Corbishley, Edward Webb, Adam Slater, Piers Winton, Nicholas Oldridge, Alan Bowman, John Rainton, Luke Brewin, Vadim Pak, Malcolm Riley, Rory McIntyre, Teimur Ismailov, Oliver Cullingworth, Charles Hustler and Sam Catlin.

WILLIAM DUDLEY

## TENNIS

This season has been one of promise and potential for the future with both the U14 and U16 teams having unbeaten seasons that included convincing wins against Uppingham, Rugby and St Edward's. The strength and calibre of the U14 team was reflected in a fiercely contested Junior Singles Competition (U15) in which three of the four semi-finalists were from the U14 team. The eventual winner of the competition was Hugh Wilson of Grenville, beating Rob Colvin 6-0, 6-4. The U15 team also had an excellent season, narrowly losing just one of their matches. James Norman and Rob Colvin will be representing the School in the U15 section of the National Schools Competition at Eton in July. The Junior House Competition was won by Bruce who beat Walpole in a close final.

Although the senior results were disappointing, the Senior House



Boys Junior Finalists

Robert Colvin and Hugh Wilson (winner)

Competition was strongly contested and Chatham eventually retained the title, beating Cobham. Rupert Davies was awarded the Astley Salver for the most improved player and he will be joined by Jake Davies, Tom Legge and Oliver Dannatt in competing in the U18 section of the National Schools Tournament.

The Girls have had a successful season, enjoying emphatic victories over St Edward's, Bloxham and Uppingham, to name but a few. The 1st VI was well led by Charlotte Devonshire, captaining the team and partnering Munchie Hayward as first pair. The other four members of this successful team, Kit Keyser, Sophie Bonham, Rebecca Cheetham and Willow Corbett-Winder, were all Lower Sixth and with the talent and determination they showed throughout the term there is again a great deal of promise for the future. The Girls' House match was won by Nugent and they retain the title for the second year running. Colours were awarded to all six girls mentioned above.

TLH



Lower Sixth Girls 1st VI

Hattie Rickards, Alexa Clark, Willow Corbett-Winder, Rebecca Cheetham, Kit Keyser and Sophie Bonham

# Worldwide

## THE MODEL EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

Lisbon Easter 2000

Following a rigorous selection procedure, we were invited to be members of the delegation representing the United Kingdom at the MEP in Lisbon over Easter. Before leaving we took part in a team building day with the eight other members to discuss European issues. Eventually, we were to meet and debate with 150 other delegates representing the 15 other member states of the European Community. We had expected it to be good, but in reality the experience far exceeded our original expectations.

Upon our arrival in Lisbon we were greeted by the organisers of the MEP, and there were arrangements made for paint-balling and beach rugby, but bad weather left us hanging around for the first couple of days. However, we still all managed to get on and make friends quickly.

On Sunday evening we were picked up by the guest families who were to act as our hosts for the rest of the week. Fortunately, they were very kind, and were some of the friendliest people we had ever met. On Monday, after the official opening ceremony, work began in the individual committees.

We participated in the two 'culture' committees. These dealt with issues such as the necessity for maintenance of individual national cultures, languages and heritage within

Europe, in the 'digital age' that we live in, as well as the necessity for a compulsory service to the community by every young citizen as part of his or her education. In three days of committee work, we developed resolutions which were then debated and voted on in the final two days of our stay in the General Assembly, which took place in the official Portuguese National Assembly. Working on these issues was enjoyable, but even better was the opportunity to meet people from all over Europe and discover how much we all have in common.

Throughout the week we enjoyed the hospitality of the British Ambassador to Lisbon, who one evening invited us to dinner at his house. We were also received by the President of the Portuguese Republic, as well as the Mayor of Lisbon. During the week we had the chance to discover Lisbon, which is a beautiful city, full of lovely people and excellent bars and clubs. On Saturday, after the final party, all were sad to leave and many were brought to tears in parting. Looking back on our experience at the MEP, we can safely say that it was one of the best weeks ever, and we would strongly urge everybody to apply to go if they can.

DAVID HRANKOVIC AND ROSS GRIFFIN



## THE MODEL EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

Luxembourg November 1999

Last November, a group of three Stoics, Roman Strecker, Diana Bojilova and I, joined eight other delegates and travelled to Luxembourg to represent the United Kingdom at the Autumn session of the Model European Parliament, or MEP, as it is more commonly known. We had all had to write an essay on a particular European issue, which was then discussed in interview to secure our places as delegates, but I have to admit that I was certainly unsure of what to expect when we reached Luxembourg. I didn't really think that I knew that much about Europe, or the particular topic that I had been assigned to debate in Luxembourg, which was the question of the Third World Debt, but I found that all the delegates were helpful and willing to share their knowledge, and thus this was not much of a problem.

On the first morning, we were all sorted out into our committees, and this was when the diversity of people struck me; they weren't all politically thinking Europeans, but simply normal people, who were interested and interesting, for the most part. Although I had quite a lot of trouble trying to master various umlauts and unpronounceable names (I still don't know how to say Georan), we all got on very well, and friendships soon became apparent, even within the committees. From the Monday until the Wednesday, we were all in our committees, debating over the topic that had been assigned to us, and although this was very tiring, it was actually quite fun as well. I found that, as the only native English speaking person there (apart from the Irish delegate), a lot of the work was assigned to me, although everybody's English was embarrassingly good. The aim of the committees is to come up with a resolution that can be proposed to the General Assembly at the end of the week, and one that will draw enough votes to allow passage through the Parliament. Although this may seem a somewhat futile exercise, there is in fact some point to it: if a resolution passes through the General Assembly, it will then be forwarded to the real European Parliament to be debated on there.

During the week, we stayed with host families in and around Luxembourg. I was lucky enough to be staying with a family whose mother was from Wimbledon, and therefore there was no problem with a language barrier. There was also an Italian boy staying with the family, with whom I shared a room, which gave yet another opportunity to make friends. On the Tuesday evening, we were received by the British Ambassador to Luxembourg, William Ehrman, and we stayed with him for dinner in his lovely house. The other evenings were spent mainly with the host families, and so we often went out with the son of the family to bars in Luxembourg, which gave welcome relief from the work during the day. We were also received by the Mayor of Luxembourg in the Town Hall for drinks, as well as being shown around the Luxembourg Parliament.

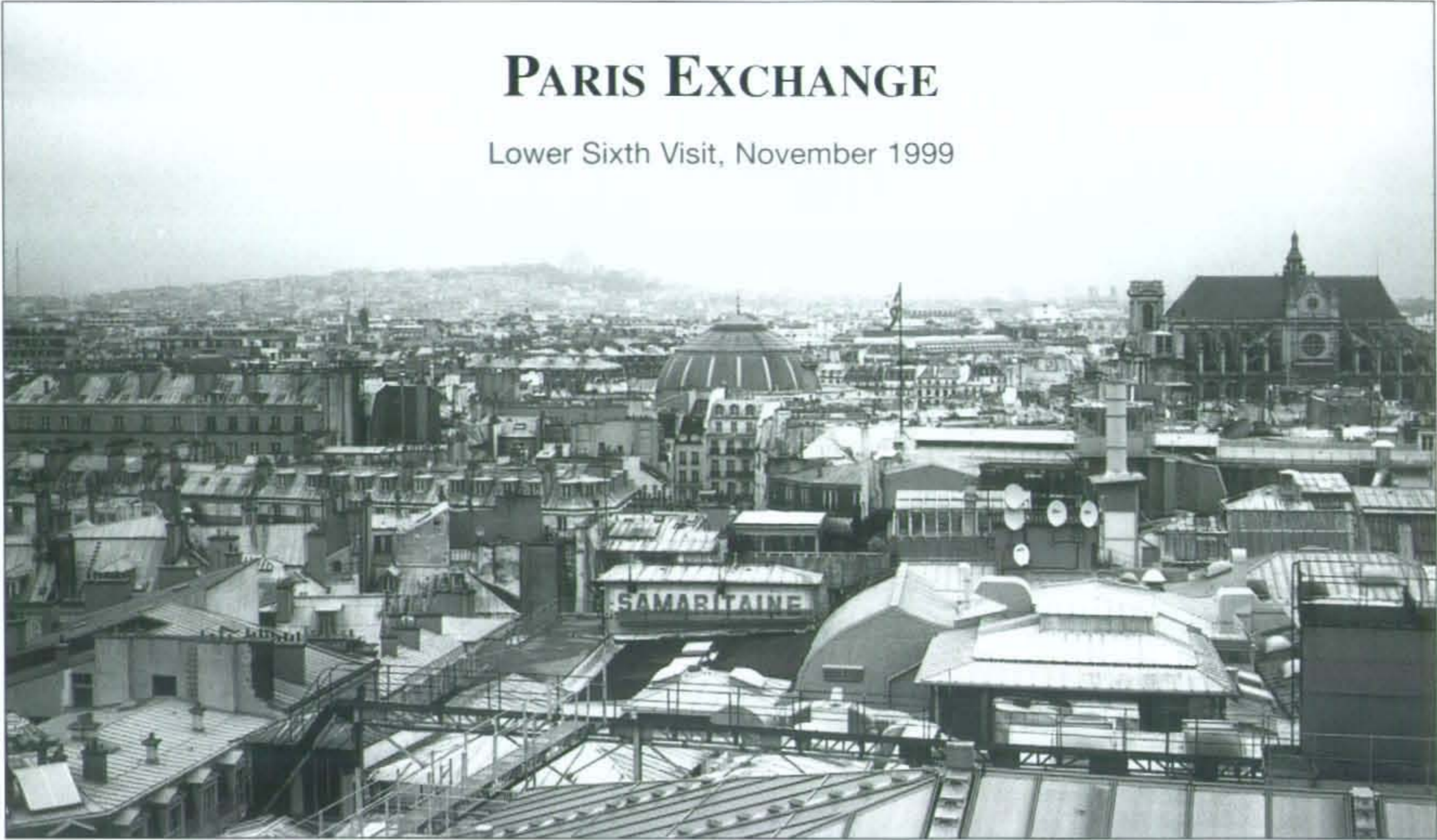
On the Friday, all 160 delegates assembled at the European Parliament building for the General Assembly. Here the resolutions of all 10 committees were debated and amended, in line with standard European parliamentary procedure, and finally a vote was taken on each to decide whether it was to be forwarded to the EP. Unfortunately our resolution did not pass, but this didn't really matter; we had all had a splendid opportunity to meet other Europeans, and discuss important issues with them. On the Saturday night, there was a farewell party at our host school, the Athenée de Luxembourg, where there was plenty of opportunity to say our goodbyes and exchange addresses before boarding the train to return to England the next morning. I think that we all enjoyed the trip very much, and I was certainly sad to be leaving. I made many friends, some of whom I have stayed in touch with, but I also relished the opportunity to discuss and debate European issues that affect our everyday life. It is hard work, but definitely worth it. It was an unforgettable experience, and I would highly recommend it to everybody who might be interested in going.

PIERS CRAVEN



## PARIS EXCHANGE

Lower Sixth Visit, November 1999



We left School, some with a little nervous anticipation, others wishing they'd had more breakfast, on Sunday morning to travel to Waterloo by train and then onto Paris on the Eurostar – a new experience for a lot of us. After 'brunch' at the International Terminal the Eurostar swiftly carried us to the Gare du Nord in Paris where we met our families. Everyone went off quite happily, some a bit more worried than others at the prospect of having to speak French solidly for the next twelve hours.

On Monday morning everyone arrived at the Lycée Jean-Baptiste Say. It was freezing, but everyone was still alive and had survived their first night. We then spent the day at school with either our exchange partners or their friends which was interesting, although by the end of the day we all felt a little overloaded with French. We were amazed at the more relaxed atmosphere out of the classroom – for example everyone being allowed to smoke – but also at the much more strict and formal approach in the classroom where the very different pupil/teacher relationships were so obvious compared to those which we are used to in England.

On Tuesday we spent the morning in the Gare Montparnesse where we saw the central control for all trains in Paris and also inside of a TGV – one of France's well renowned and extremely efficient high speed trains. I think only Mrs Morton understood all of the more technical details about how all the lines were controlled and how crashes were avoided (a hot topic of discussion just after the Paddington rail disaster). However, most of us were amazed at how much we picked up – all the practice we were getting with our families was clearly helping. At lunch some of us really got into the Parisian way of life and found a very typical local café. We successfully managed to converse with the waiters and order ourselves a lunch in our very best French and Piers and Boz grasped an excellent understanding of French currency when it came to paying.

In the afternoon we visited the Assemblée Nationale which is the equivalent to the Houses of Parliament. We successfully took the Metro without losing anyone. The Parliament was interesting, and quite a hot debate ensued

over the three hours we were there about the working week of thirty-five hours. The French Prime Minister was speaking, as well as many other important figures in the French political system. After this we had a question and answer session with the MP whom Piers was staying with which allowed us to air some questions which we had – some more excellent practice for our French.

On Wednesday we went to see 'Les Egouts' or, *en anglais*, the Parisian sewers. We didn't meet until 10.30 so some of us managed breakfast at the Eiffel Tower, or so they claimed...The sewers, however, were quite remarkable, an entire museum underground. Most of the information was given hanging from the roofs of the tunnels through which most of Paris' dirty water was travelling at speed. Once everyone had got over the horrible smell, we really enjoyed the museum and seeing how everything worked. In the afternoon we all had a free rein as to what we wanted to do. The Lycée has Wednesday afternoons off so we went our separate ways. Adeleine's mother took Willow and me to sample some of what is thought to be the best shopping in the world. In her company we felt a little underdressed although she was easy to spot in her Gucci trouser suit! However, we had an amazing afternoon, visited the likes of Gucci, Prada and Christian Dior and were really shown how the Parisians love their shopping. In the evening we met up in a café with some of the other students at the Lycée for a relaxed drink. We realised then how much more confident we were getting with our French.

On Thursday morning, however, we were brought back down to earth and realised that perhaps our French wasn't quite as good as we had originally thought as we had a French Literature lesson with one of the Lycée teachers on the novelist Gustave Flaubert. In the afternoon we had planned to attend an 'Airparif' conference on pollution in Paris, but this was cancelled so we were given a guided tour, courtesy of Mrs Tearle – tourist guide extraordinaire – who had lived in Paris herself for many years. We briefly saw Notre-Dame and Sainte Chapelle, as well as Le Louvre and some of the River Seine. We also visited a department store



where, from the top, you have an excellent view of most of Paris and after this we sampled the delights of some French ice-cream. In the evening we went to the theatre and although the performance was vibrant and lively we had quite a job following what was being said.

We continued our guided tour of Paris on the Friday. A train ride up the hill to the Sacré-Coeur gave us a brief glance at the 'red light' district of Paris, and saved us a quite gruelling walk. We then visited the Sacré-Coeur, which was quite stunning inside – the peace and tranquillity was overwhelming even though there were hundreds of people there. We also explored the shops in the Montmartre just at the foot of the Sacré-Coeur. I say 'explored' as we visited some of the most fantastic 'junk' shops which sold everything from mini 'Tour Eiffels' to elaborate cloths and exotic flavoured ice-creams. We returned in the late afternoon to our surrogate homes all well and truly exhausted. Some of us then stayed in for meals with our families while others went to watch *The Blair Witch Project* which was apparently just as scary *en français*.

On Saturday we had the last day to see and do whatever we wanted. Some insisted on supporting their national teams at rugby and so went and joined French rugby supporters to watch the game. Others went to see more of the famous tourist spots in 'La cité d'amour' with their families, while some continued to sample the Parisian shopping in one of the largest indoor shopping centres in Europe at Les Halles. In the evening most of us went to a surprise birthday party for one of the French girls to finish off the week on a social note and just add the final touches to our now excellent conversational French. It was an enjoyable visit and we are most grateful to all our hosts.

HANNAH DURDEN

Right: Eating ice-cream outside Notre-Dame.

Below: The whole group outside the Assemblée Nationale after Question Time and debate of the thirty-five hour week





## LYCÉE JEAN-BAPTISTE SAY AT STOWE

In the last week of the Summer Term a party of pupils from the Lycée Jean-Baptiste Say, Paris, stayed at Stowe as the first part of an exchange to be completed in the Autumn Term, when our Lower Sixth linguists go to Paris. The previous year's exchange is recorded on pages 104-5. The French organisers, Catherine Spiteri and Anne-Marie Bucquet, are pictured top right.



## PARIS ART TRIP

Twenty Stoic artists were fortunate to spend three days in Paris, the city of culture and romance. Full of *joie de vivre* we trekked through the Paris streets reaching an inconspicuous hotel, with a market atmosphere surrounding it. We were pleasantly surprised by its comfortable nature. Within two shakes of a lamb's tail, dropping off our bags in our rooms, we were off to the local metro, journeying to the Pompidou Centre. We were struck by the fabulous contemporary architecture, of the open functions of the structure. We headed for the modern works, our sketchbooks in our hands. We found ourselves in a heaven of contemporary art: Kandinsky, Dali, Picasso and Matisse, as well as the ground-breaking walk-in sculptures and experimental artists.

Next day we headed for the Louvre by metro, with its rich display of the Renaissance period and, in particular, Michelangelo and Leonardo da Vinci. After lunch we went to the Orangerie, which was sadly closed. Our spell of bad luck continued as we headed for the Rodin Museum to find out that it was also closed. However, after a long trek we managed to enter the Picasso Museum after a few disputes with the ticket office. Our group was taken through Picasso's work from the Blue Period to his Analytical Cubism. We thoroughly enjoyed this and waded back home via the metro filled with the awe of Picasso.

On the last day, we viewed the Musée d'Orsay. This fabulous museum, once a train station, houses a wide variety of art, including great numbers of Manet's finest work. Alas, it was our last stop. All too soon we were heading back to the Eurostar.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank CCR and KM for such an enlightening and enjoyable trip.

HENRY LEON & TOM KEMBLE



Inside and outside the Musée d'Orsay



\*Illustration copyright E.H. Sheppard and Methuen Children's Books Ltd\*

*The National Youth Ballet  
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**MILLENNIUM PROGRAMME**

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Ballet based on *Wind in the Willows* by Kenneth Grahame  
Music John Lanchbery  
Choreography Wayne Sleep

**Plus  
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\*\*\*\*\*

**PERFORMANCES**

The Lowry, Salford Quays  
23<sup>rd</sup> October 2000

Six Performances at The Ascroft Theatre, Croydon  
26<sup>th</sup> -28<sup>th</sup> October 2000

A Prestigious Gala Evening at Sadler's Wells  
Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> November 2000

## ART TRIP TO VENICE

Report and photographs by Tom Furse-Roberts

It was 5.30am and in pitch black, with the House quiet, I rose along with 51 other Stoics, to embark on the Art and Art History trip to Venice. Little did we know that getting up in the dark with Stowe quiet and serene was not to be the last of the surreal events on our trip. The October weather, albeit at this point without light, was typically British, a sort of half rain, wind and cold combination which prompted some smug speculation amongst the party that we would be leaving for hotter Mediterranean climes. How wrong they were.

After a series of delays at Stansted, borne Stoically, we arrived at Marco Polo Airport, Venice. With bags collected, the assembled company waited on the quay with the golden hues of the evening sun glistening on the Adriatic. The ferocious combination of Mr Robinson's Italian and Mr Melber's Middlesbrough charm skilfully negotiated the hire of the boat operators, and so we were despatched in groups of eight or ten to arrive in Venice, as any visitor should, by water. The launches equalled anything that Henley could produce and as we disappeared away from the modernity and functionality of Marco Polo it was obvious this was going to be something different. Through the late afternoon haze of the silhouetted skyline, finding its form and colour as we neared, we glimpsed the indefinite forms of gothic spires, bell towers and cupolas, pediments, columns, windows and balconies. Even Stoics, usually the most vocal of people, were quietened. As we travelled through the canals it was clear that this was an altogether different experience from anything Britain could offer. Stowe is a fine example of architecture but one that is an anachronism amongst the blended

mess of the Home Counties. In Venice, there was a coherent and harmonious style that was visible everywhere, with no modernist Science Block to contrast sharply and miserably with the old. The Stoics' silence was, for most people, one of sensual overload, overwhelmed by the paradoxical beauty of the decay, the variety of buildings, windows and views, the golden salmon-coloured sun, the low mist, the lapping water and that most distinctive of smells. We were in Venice.

Tired yet excited, overloaded with sensations yet craving more, we arrived at the hotel. After the initial ruckus for rooms, and with our arrival some five hours after we had planned, the night was young. It was clear, even from our first tentative steps in Venice, that we were in a world of paradoxes; the jazz bar played no jazz and the Irish bar was blissfully unaware of Terry Wogan.

The next day was rung in by the tolling of the church bells from San Geremia next door. Although the sound is distinctly Mediterranean, it remains slightly sinister to the English. Below our windows the bustle of the street had grown to a crescendo and with the opening of the pastel-coloured shutters we were greeted with torrential rain. Even this, however, did not register in the mind. Mere weather, at least at this stage, was not going to stand in the way of the Renaissance painting, so greatly worshipped and so poorly emulated by Stoic artists.

We were bemused and hungry to explore. Maps were issued, destinations set, and the walking (and wading) began. Our visits to the Scuola di San Rocco, the Frari and the Doge's Palace took us on a tour from Bellini to Veronese, encapsulated by the early religious works in the Academy which houses magnificent paintings glowing with colour by the pantheon of Venetian artists. We also discovered modern art in the contemporary works of the Peggy Guggenheim



Museum, housed in the remains of a palace on the Grand Canal itself. Whilst touring these and seeing other similar groups, we realised a major difference between ourselves and other tourists. This wasn't to do with the affected voices, the designer labels or the strange use of phrases such as 'dogging', it was in the way we were instructed. Rather than taking us on a set tour, both Mr Melber and Mr Robinson gave excellent instruction on everything from architecture to custom, while Mr Farquhar contributed both links to literature and his seemingly 'infinite variety' of life experience. Collectively, they actually achieved that which even the most highly striving of academics can only try to achieve. They inspired. What matters was not the fact that the Stoics could now walk down Cork Street, London, with enough terminology to get past the snooty gallery staff, but that they had become enthused and enthusiastic about art.

The trip included so many magical moments. For instance, the torrential rain which caused the worst flooding for five years on top of the infamous *aqua alta* (high water). This, however, did not dampen our experience but served to enhance it. After all, who would forget wading across St. Mark's Square with water up to their knees, grinning at a wedding party gingerly walking on duck-boards? Who could forget the sight of 51 Stoics (students and staff) wading through cold lagoon water in early November, their cases and bags on their heads and arms (naturally Mr Farquhar had Stoic bearers for his luggage)? Once a trip has ended there is always a frequent re-living and sharing of the experience. Usually this is a means of side-tracking the lesson but what became clear through these excursions was that most people think those three days were amongst the best of their school career. There are, of course, many things that perhaps most readers of *The Stoic* should not know, but to those Stoics fortunate enough to visit Venice on that occasion, there are many meaningful memories. The broken hearts, the reason why Rads failed to find his way back to the hotel, the reason Hugo has only one bushy eye brow, the way in which Behlau bruised his 'lower back' and the meaning of the word 'dogging' should perhaps remain known only to the initiated. It is not only the Stoics who will not forget Venice. Venice, herself, will not easily forget Stowe. And the sound of 'Libera Me, Domine', a hymn which Stoics seem unable to perform in the chapel, finally found an appropriate venue on the water-bus, much to the delight, albeit tinged with a slight fear, of the indigenous population.

I couldn't write an article without mentioning the day trip to Verona when we visited the Renaissance villa of Pietro Melloni (OS). This was, as so much of the trip, an awe-inspiring visit. Pietro's grandparents showed us exceptional hospitality and kindness, and provided the entire party with a traditional Italian lunch in the family villa, which nestles amongst the vineyards on the outskirts of Verona. Many will see the Doge's Palace but few will have the chance to experience the glimpse of real Italian life that Pietro and his

family provided. It was a privilege that we cannot repay and was an unforgettable experience. We ended the day by walking off our lunch by seeing around Verona, visiting Juliet's house and graffiti-splattered balcony (a nineteenth-century fake) and the famous Arena, before staggering back to Venice by train.

Although only four days long, our trip to Venice was packed full of many memorable and important moments. I could, if it were not for the editors' space restrictions, turn this *Stoic* into a *Country Life* style 'Venice number'. What Venice did was not just to teach us about art but also life and culture as a whole. It taught us to widen our perceptions. Modernity has proved many things but yet nowhere else in the world do you find civic pride, piety and beauty on this level. Why?



## LINGUISTS IN MUNICH

### Sixth Form View

In order to gain some insight into the topic for our course-work, those studying German for A-level were accompanied by the fifth-form Germanists, Mrs Tearle and Mrs James to Munich for four days at the end of the Spring Term.

The trip began with a day of sightseeing. We visited the beautiful Frauenkirche and other smaller gold-laden churches. Museums included that of the Residenz which was all about the monarchy in Munich. We also visited the market places of the Marienplatz and the Viktualienmarkt. Whilst sight-seeing we climbed the huge tower of the Alte Peter church, from the top of which we had a good view over the old town of Munich. One day took us to the Olympic Stadium, where we once again went up an enormous tower to have a spectacular view over the whole of Munich.

Having done that, we visited the BMW museum. This was interesting but slightly repetitive. After the museum we walked through the pretty English Garden to get a bus back to our basic but satisfactory hotel in order to get ready to go out to supper and then on to the cinema. After a delicious traditional Bavarian meal in an old restaurant we headed off to see a film in German. This was a new experience for most of us! This was our last evening in Munich so we made the most of it and took a tram back to the hotel!

On our last day, we visited the ancient and modern art museums, which were filled with pictures ranging from beautiful old religious paintings to extremely modern ones – quite a variety! That afternoon we left Munich and headed back to School for the last two days of term. The trip, although short, was very useful, as we now have a clear view of Munich in our heads. It is no longer simply a picture created through endless notes!

VANESSA BELDAM



### Fifth Form View

This trip was for most of us a first of its kind. So it was with curiosity and some apprehension that ten of us from the Lower Sixth and Fifth form packed our bags for a short Study Trip to Germany, to improve our chances at GCSE and A-level.

With six days left of school, a two hour mini-bus journey with 'Papa Smurf' seemed to be a small price to pay for four days abroad! Our flight left from Stansted at about seven o'clock and we were in München approximately an hour and a half later. Upon arrival at the airport, which due to the time of year was pretty empty, we got onto the 'S-Bahn' (underground), which is not dissimilar to our system in London, and this was to be our main means of transport for the four days. That evening we checked into a small hotel in the centre of town. Every morning, briefed by Mrs Tearle and brimful of bread rolls, we set out to discover München. As it was one of Britain's main targets during the war many of its cathedrals and churches had been destroyed. Despite this fact Mrs James managed 'accidentally' to stumble across every remaining piece of history that München had to offer, from chapels to art museums, some of which proved, once inside, to be pretty amazing. Although much of our time was taken up investigating such things, we did manage to make it to both Olympic Park and the BMW Museum, which proved to be well worth it.

At the end of it all we had had a great four days and I most strongly recommend going on such a trip to anyone who may have the opportunity in the future. The food was great, the people friendly and it does your speaking skills a world of good.

LOUIS BUCKWORTH



## CLASSICISTS IN ITALY

A few days before the end of the Easter Term a group of 18 Stoics and 3 staff set off for a whistlestop tour of the major Classical sites of Italy. An unusually civilised departure time of 7.30am meant the Stoics were all fresh and ready, excited by the prospect of some South European air. After a few little mishaps at the airport involving out-of date passports (not mentioning any names...) the group arrived safely in the Hotel Marco Aurelio, situated on the outskirts of Rome. Spirits were high as the Stoics set out to investigate the surrounding environs.

Breakfast early the next morning seemed to dampen the spirits a little (remember 7am Italian time was 6am English time) but the excitement was still palpable. After a bus trip around the city, passing the site of the Circus Maximus (the Chariot-racing stadium in Rome... you've all seen it reconstructed in *Ben Hur*, seating an alleged 385,000 spectators), the Castel San Angelo and across the oldest bridge in Rome, we came to the drop-off point and met our guide, an interesting character...! First stop was the Colosseum, an immense monument to the Roman games, site of the death of thousands of gladiators, and the execution of many criminals. This symbol of Roman imperial dominance still stands some 50 metres high, and reaches 188 metres in length at its longest point. Unfortunately entrepreneurial Romans have, over the centuries, stripped most of the marble seats from the auditorium, but you can still get a clear picture of what it must have been like with 50,000 spectators inside, all baying for blood!

From here we passed the Arch of Constantine and went along the *Via Sacra*, the Sacred Way along which triumphant armies marched on their return to Rome, and into the Forum, now a sprawling archaeological site, but once the humming, bustling centre of politics and business in ancient Rome. Here the Stoics tried to decipher the perplexing mass of remains,

of a once built-up area. Some buildings are clear – the *curia* (the senate house where the toga-clad senators met) and the House of the Vestal Virgins (priestesses who guarded the sacred flame that could never go out). Others are less easy to make out, with buildings built on the site of other buildings and the remains mixed.

A brief trip to Trajan's Forum and the other Imperial Fora followed, before we reboarded the coach to travel back across the Tiber to the Vatican City. After lunch in Roman style (or MacDonalds for many!) we entered St. Peter's, the largest-domed Christian church in the world. Security seemed very tight... but no-one really thought about it. Once we were inside the reasons for all the security became clear. Suddenly the great West doors opened and a massive peal of applause broke out. The Pope was walking down the aisle.

There was no time for hanging around, however. Next stop was the Vatican Museum and the Sistine Chapel (the cross-curricular part of the trip). It seemed odd sprinting through the Vatican Museum, full of an amazing range of painted ceilings and amazing tapestries in order to get to the Sistine Chapel, but it was all worth it. The Chapel has been fairly recently restored and the kaleidoscopic colours are simply awe-inspiring.

Enough for a day... not yet! A walking tour followed, though the Stoics were noticeably starting to flag. Finally we arrived at the Pantheon, the temple built by Marcus Agrippa, Augustus' right-hand man and son-in-law. Apart from being rebuilt by Hadrian in the early first century, the Pantheon is pretty much intact from Roman times. Of particular interest to the Stoics was the roof, an immense coffered dome, with a circular aperture in the centre. This, of course, was the inspiration for the Marble Hall at Stowe and the similarity is striking. Finally for the day it was off to the Spanish Steps, and from there onto the Metro back to the hotel.

The next morning saw another early start for the considerably-less-than-lively Stoics. Fortunately a coach journey of some 3 hours followed, as we made for the ancient



city of Pompeii. The Stoics put this trip to good use, catching up on some much-needed sleep. The ancient city of Pompeii (at the time of its destruction, the second biggest city in Italy) is an archaeologist's dream, an entire city entombed in volcanic ash from nearby Mount Vesuvius, providing us with a freeze-frame of Roman life some 2000 years ago. We spent the day roaming the site, visiting the forum, numerous villas, the two theatres, the amphitheatre, various bath houses, the shops and the brothel. The sheer size of the site really brings home the reality of what life was like in Roman times. It was a lively bustling city, not a few items we have dug up in isolation and put in a museum.

After a night in the seaside resort of Sorrento, we set off the next day on a boat trip to Capri, site of Tiberius' magnificent Summer Palace. After two very busy days, this was a more relaxed outing, including a trip in a tiny boat around the coastline of Capri (although sadly not into the Blue Grotto, because the sea was rather too rough). The weather was beautiful, by far the nicest day on the tour, and a thoroughly pleasant day was fully enjoyed by all.

Our final day of real sightseeing was to the site of Herculaneum, the coastal town, which, like Pompeii, was destroyed by the eruption of Vesuvius in AD79. Unlike

Vesuvius, however, the town was destroyed by volcanic mud-flow, rather than ash. As a result the remains are remarkably preserved, and Stoics were able to see many wooden objects, such as screens, ladders and clothes presses which were carbonised during the eruption, rather than burned.

The final thing to do was to climb Mount Vesuvius. In the fairly recent past there was a cable car to the summit, but unfortunately recent volcanic activity destroyed this, so after a hair-raising drive in the coach the last leg had to be walked. Once on top, however, the views over the Bay of Naples were stunning.

We returned to Rome, and our original hotel, and after suitable feeding and watering we set off for the centre of Rome and the Trevi Fountain. After various brushes with the rose-sellers and having thrown a coin in to ensure a safe return, it was time to pack for home.

And so, the next morning, it was off to the airport and the Easter Holidays. The party proved a cheerful and enthusiastic group, intent to get the most out of their whirlwind tour. I am very grateful to them for helping the trip run so smoothly, and also for the enthusiastic support of David Stephenson and Karen Dore. Here's to Greece in 2001.

PCA

Will Gaze and Harry Trotter write of their Myles Henry Expedition to

## VIETNAM

We arrived in Hanoi at the end of August. During our stay we visited the tomb of Ho Chi Minh, the previous leader of Vietnam, who the people all refer to as 'Uncle' and whose body is embalmed much like that of Lenin. We visited the famous old POW camps around the city in the sweltering summer heat: at one point, it reached 39°C.

After Hanoi, we took a bus to the north east coast, to a place called Halong Bay, with amazing white beaches, turquoise seas and limestone outcrops jutting from the sea. This place is partly famous for having been the location for some of the scenes from the film *The Beach* and James Bond films and partly for its incredible scenery. We visited various caves there too, including the largest in South East Asia: 1000 square metres!

From there we travelled to Hue, roughly half way down the country, and from there we did a day trip to DMZ, where we squeezed through the Vinh Moth tunnels, and saw some of the real artillery that had been used during the war here.

We then took a boat trip up the Perfume River, stopping at pagodas, lavishly decorated temples to be found along the riversides. After our short two day stop, we went on to Nhatrang, where we found more white beaches, and went on the infamous Lama Hund boat trip!

We then set off onto another bus for a further 10 hours, destined for Saigon, 'the famous bit' of Vietnam. Immediately we

set off to perhaps the most famous museum in Vietnam, the War Remnants Museum, and here the hostility that is still felt towards the Americans is obvious. Also while we were in Saigon, we went for another boat trip down the Mekong Delta, to the Cuchi fishing village, and down some more of the old Viet Cong tunnels.

Our two weeks in a country riddled with history, both good and bad, was definitely the greatest experience of our lives. Historically we gained valuable insights into the Vietnam War. Culturally we enlarged our own limited horizons. We would like to take this opportunity to thank the Myles Henry Trust for enabling us to embark upon such a fantastic journey.





## IN SEARCH OF THE ELEPHANT BIRD'S ANCESTRY

Dr David James writes with Dr Jim Bond on the biological and geological splendours of Madagascar

I had wanted to visit Madagascar since my arrival at Stowe in 1984 when John Dobinson (staff 1966-90) showed me one of the School's best kept secrets – an intact egg of *Aepyornis maximus*, an extinct elephant bird found only on the island. This huge flightless bird, thought to be the largest that ever lived, stood more than three metres tall and laid an egg big enough to make a good sized omelette for fifty people. Our own egg measures 31cm by 25cm and is therefore much bigger than a rugby ball. Indeed, remarkably, one visitor to Stowe a few years ago, having asked to see the egg, said that the last time she had seen it was during the Second World War when the boys were playing rugby with it down by the Octagon! You will gather that it is a fairly robust structure which is believed to have arrived at Stowe from Madagascar via Paris in Victorian times when it was fashionable for well-to-do people to have egg collections. This would indeed have been a prize exhibit.

My own interest in the egg was re-awakened during school expeditions to the Galapagos and involvement in an Open University programme which compared the origins and diversity of the fauna and flora of this archipelago with that of the more ancient island of Madagascar. A chance conversation with two doctors, who were restoring the Biology Department butterfly collection, led to a visit to the X-ray and CAT scan departments of Stoke Mandeville hospital. What a

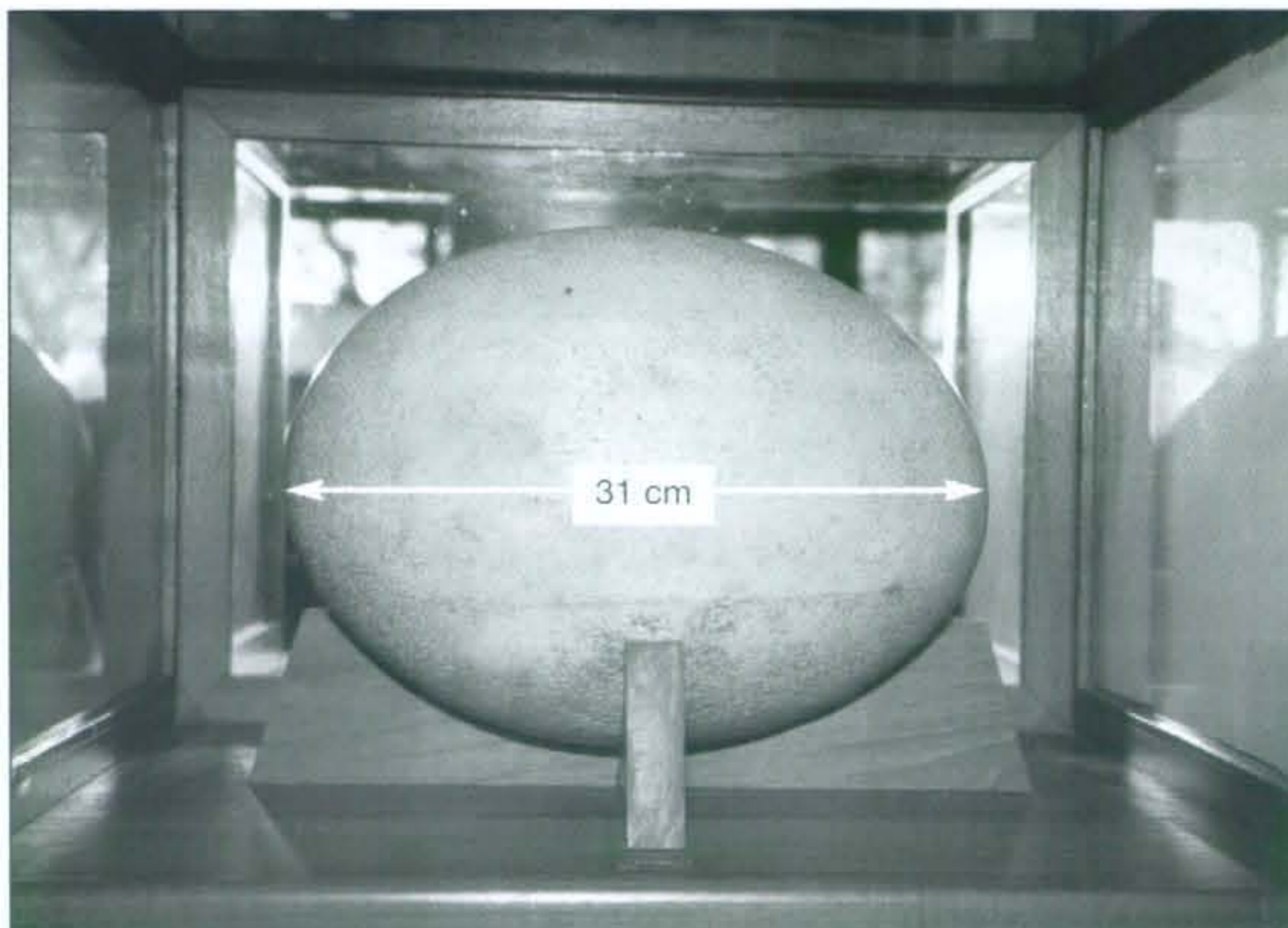
show stopper that visit proved to be! Imagine yourself sitting in the waiting room of an X-ray department with a huge cardboard box sitting in front of you. "And what is wrong with you?" asks your neighbour. "Actually nothing, I've come to have my egg X-rayed"! Almost inevitably, when news got round, the A & E department nearly came to a standstill with nurses and doctors fascinated by the contents of this cardboard box. As a result we have, I believe, the only X-ray and CAT scan negatives of an elephant bird egg anywhere in the world (but then there are only believed to be a handful of intact eggs anyway).



CAT scan of the egg in a cardboard box with woodshavings



Artist's impression of *Aepyornis* grazing in southern Madagascar



Stowe's *Aepyornis* egg – much bigger than a rugby ball

So what of the egg's past? Madagascar is the fourth largest island in the world and its unique wildlife evolved after huge chunks of Southern Africa broke away from the mainland. Sometimes regarded as 'nature's design laboratory' about 80% of its species of plants and animals are endemic. Unfortunately the growing human population, descended primarily from Malay-Polynesian mariners and therefore very different in culture and agricultural practice from those of their African neighbours, has put immense pressure on land resources. As in many other parts of the world slash and burn agriculture has destroyed much of the primary forest and many of the unique forms of life are either extinct or critically endangered. Sadly the elephant bird didn't make it beyond perhaps the 16th century but recent government policies have given conservation a high priority at last, not least because the financial benefits of eco-tourism have been realised.

We knew that Malagasy people are poor but our arrival at the capital, Antananarivo, nevertheless shocked and surprised us. Apparently less than 25% of the population of this city of 2 million have regular access to electricity and running water. Crowded, polluted and noisy, it would seem to have little to offer. But in reality its exceptionally friendly people and spectacular setting held much interest.

However, our main purpose was to visit the many and varied geological and biological sights of this huge country. The primitive road infrastructure and huge distances travelled to our first destination, the lowland forests of Andasibe, showed us why we would have to fly to



White fronted lemur – *Lemur fulnis arbifrons*



Ring tailed lemurs – *Lemur catta*



Verreauxi sifaka – *Propithecus verreauxi*



A fruit bat takes refuge in a cave



The ponderous step of one of the many chameleon species



Leaf tailed gecko – *Uroplatus fimbriatus*



Day gecko – *Phelsuma madagascariensis*



Stalagmite with quartz crystals



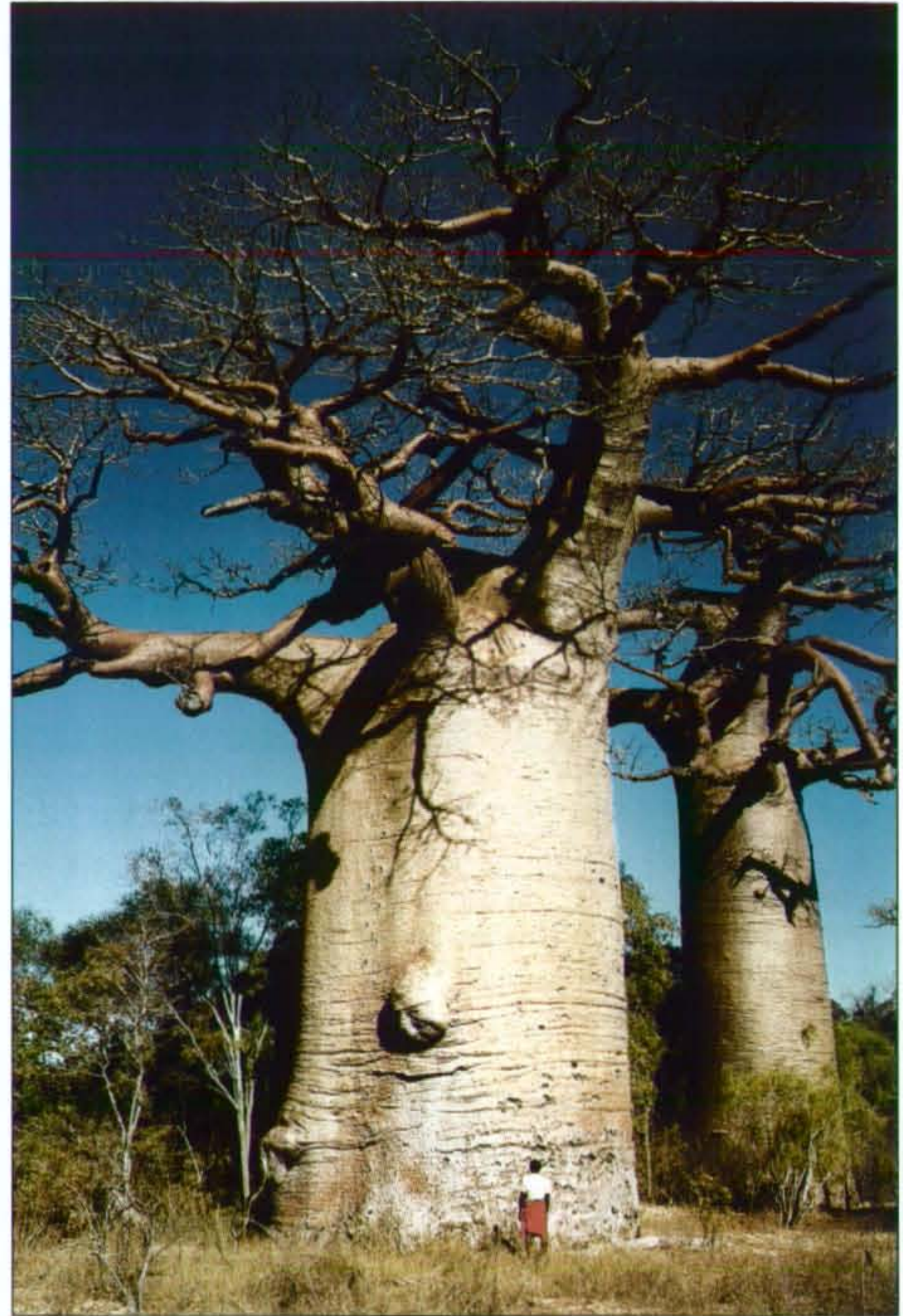
Tsingy (tropical limestone karst) Ankarana Reserve

most of our planned destinations. Madagascar is, of course, best known for its diversity of lemurs, which occupy the ecological niches not only of monkeys but those normally filled by mice, squirrels, bears and even woodpeckers elsewhere. Spiders, insects, frogs, lizards, snakes, chameleons and birds also abound, with many (such as the gecko *Uroplatus fimbriatus*) attracting acclaim for the effectiveness of their camouflage.

Before returning to our quest to investigate the origin of our rare egg I must briefly describe one of the highlights of our tour – the tropical karst scenery called 'tsingy' in the extreme north of the island. This extraordinary series of limestone outcrops which conceal a rocky system of caves, pot-holes and underground rivers, was apparently carved by the continued action of wind and rain, though it seems hard to believe on close inspection. Razor sharp edges to exposed peaks threaten to cut straight through the toughest boots, yet brown lemurs dance over them with gay abandon. Sparkling crystals adorn stalactites and stalagmites in underground caverns which then open without warning into deeply cut ravines.

Whilst in this area we were fortunate to meet Jim Bond, a doctor accompanying an expedition from the City of London School. When not practising medicine Jim's great passion is studying the flora of Madagascar, especially the famous baobab trees, 6 species of which are endemic to the island. More common in the south than the north, the fruits and leaves of these trees are apparently very rich in calcium. Jim was fascinated to hear that we had an intact egg of *Aepyornis* and went on to explain how one of the interesting conundrums for scientists has been to explain how female elephant birds consumed enough calcium to make the shells of their huge eggs. The majority of the shells have been found in sand dunes in the south of the island near where the most lime-loving species of baobabs grows best, whilst skeletons of both sexes are more widely distributed. It therefore seems possible that the birds could have migrated south at pre-determined times to feed on the fruits of this baobab. Since the extinctions of the elephant bird and the Madagasian giant tortoise, there are no obvious natural dispersers capable of breaking through the tough outer husks of these huge fruits to eat the pulp and spread the seeds of these magnificent trees. Whilst this hypothesis is unsubstantiated, the evidence we at Stowe have collected about the thickness, volume and density of the egg shell may well help scientists to pursue their theories further.

Sadly we were unable on this trip to visit the area in which the really giant baobabs grow as we had already arranged to spend some time in the tamarind gallery forest in the south east. Vaguely reminiscent of the African bush it is here in the private Berenty Reserve that the greatest density of the famous dancing sifakas and ring tailed lemurs live. It was here, in their small museum, that we saw one of the other remaining intact *Aepyornis* eggs, though it is smaller than ours! Although somewhat sanitized, this reserve, situated in the middle of a sisal plantation, has undoubtedly contributed to the welcome, new-found emphasis on maintaining what is left of the natural ecology of this magical island.



The huge baobab tree – *Adansonia grandidieri*



A sisal factory – the raw fibres



The local greengrocers in Perinet

## NEPALESE SCHOOLING

Last year Stowe was visited by Debendra Sharma, Headmaster of a school in Biratnagar, Nepal. This year Rosemary Shahani paid a reciprocal visit and here writes of her experiences.

### Biratnagar

Debendra Sharma was waiting for me with bouquets and garlands, together with the secretary of the Co-operative and a boy from the school. I was trundled off in a rickshaw. On arrival the committee were out in force to meet me with more bouquets, garlands and speeches, the whole school on parade. Mostly the speeches were in Nepali. I nodded wisely.

Debendra's school is in the process of being built and only the ground floor is in use. The construction of the upper floor continues. The playground has a concrete table tennis table, a cast-iron double swing and see-saw – dust is everywhere. The building has been rented for ten years and the school is hoping eventually to purchase it.

The twenty-strong committee of the Co-operative consists of the wife of the Ambassador to London and a number of local businessmen and the Mayor. The Co-operative has been running for six years and has six shops, including greengrocers, cement, animal food and live chickens, and they are about to open a goat meat shop. Membership of the Co-op costs £50 and then the member may benefit from a distribution of 10% of the profit. Anyone may buy from the shops, which are well run and able to sell at cheaper prices than elsewhere.

The cement shop is particularly profitable, and with the overall profits of the Co-op the committee decided to set up the school. With the rented building, gifts of furniture from local people and the support of the members, they already have sixty-five pupils in the first year and have nursery, kindergarten and four classes – in one room there are two



Welcome by Mr Devendra Sharma who visited Stowe last year



In a classroom at Biratnagar

classes being held simultaneously. The school is not state-aided. They employ three lady teachers, two men teachers, Dendra as Principal, a secretary and various maintenance staff. The fees are £2 per child, which includes a mid-day snack of perhaps a small banana and a sweetmeat, or a small jam sandwich. Private schools charge about £6 a month, so there is likely to be a demand for places so long as they



The children at the government school in the mountains with their new books and pencils from the Stowe Matrons. This was one of the five mountain schools which Rosemary visited.

provide a good education – which is all in English. Next year, when the upper floor is complete, the school will be able to cater for older children and numbers are expected to increase to two hundred with perhaps four extra teachers.

School starts at 10am and finishes at 4pm with an hour off. Friday afternoons and Saturdays are free. Sunday is a school day. The teachers were conservative, used old-fashioned methods (rote and chalk and talk) and always worked from a textbook, chapter by chapter. In the nursery children were confined to desks and told to sit with their arms folded for most of the day – completely suppressed. The children were clean, well clothed in uniform and well disciplined, but lacking in initiative. I was asked to undertake some teaching seminars and urged some changes and experimentation. Charts and pictures began to appear on some walls. I heard some laughter from the children and the teachers stopped shouting all day. So much more can be done. Debendra would very much appreciate some English volunteers to help in the school. The Gap organisation will only supply volunteers for a State school and the Co-op school does not qualify.

I was accommodated on the other side of town in Debendra's two-room flat. We rose at 5.30, when it got light, and went to bed at 9.00, when it was dark. Electricity is very expensive. Breakfast was at 9.00 and consisted every day of a huge mound of rice, a little mildly spiced vegetable curry,



The kindergarten refurbished and equipped by a Stowe Matrons' Cake Sale



The school bus

some very liquid lentil soup (dahl) and (sometimes) a glass of fully skimmed milk. Supper each day was identical – rice, veg and dahl. Cups of weak sweet tea were regularly provided.

One of the problems was the demotivation of the teachers. They earn only about £12 a month and the Co-op cannot afford more. I was also worried that as the classes increase next year, the teachers were going to become disillusioned. So I suggested to the committee a Bonus Scheme, whereby 50p per annum per child is set aside in a special fund. At the end of a year the teachers who have completed a full year may share the fund. By next year the bonus should be over £8. That sounds to us a very small sum, but it is more than half a month's salary and should be appreciated.

### Manoj

Debendra's son, Manoj (aged 26 and married with a daughter) is a teacher in another school and earning £10 a month, insufficient for his needs. His father helps support his family and they all share the same small flat. Manoj is keen on sport, but his headmaster cannot provide him with any equipment – not even a football, and he was very dejected. So we came up with some plans for a self-perpetuating sports club, separate from his school. Thirty boys are founder members. They have some ground where they can play. Paying 1p a game, they should have enough for replacement equipment.

Manoj also came up with the idea for a goat farm on some grassland available from his father-in-law. We were able to help get this going. It is called "The Good Goat Company".

Manoj would very much like to come to England for six months, to study kindergarten and infant education. Ideally, acting as a volunteer in a Prep School. [Stop Press: he is on his way.]

### A Private School

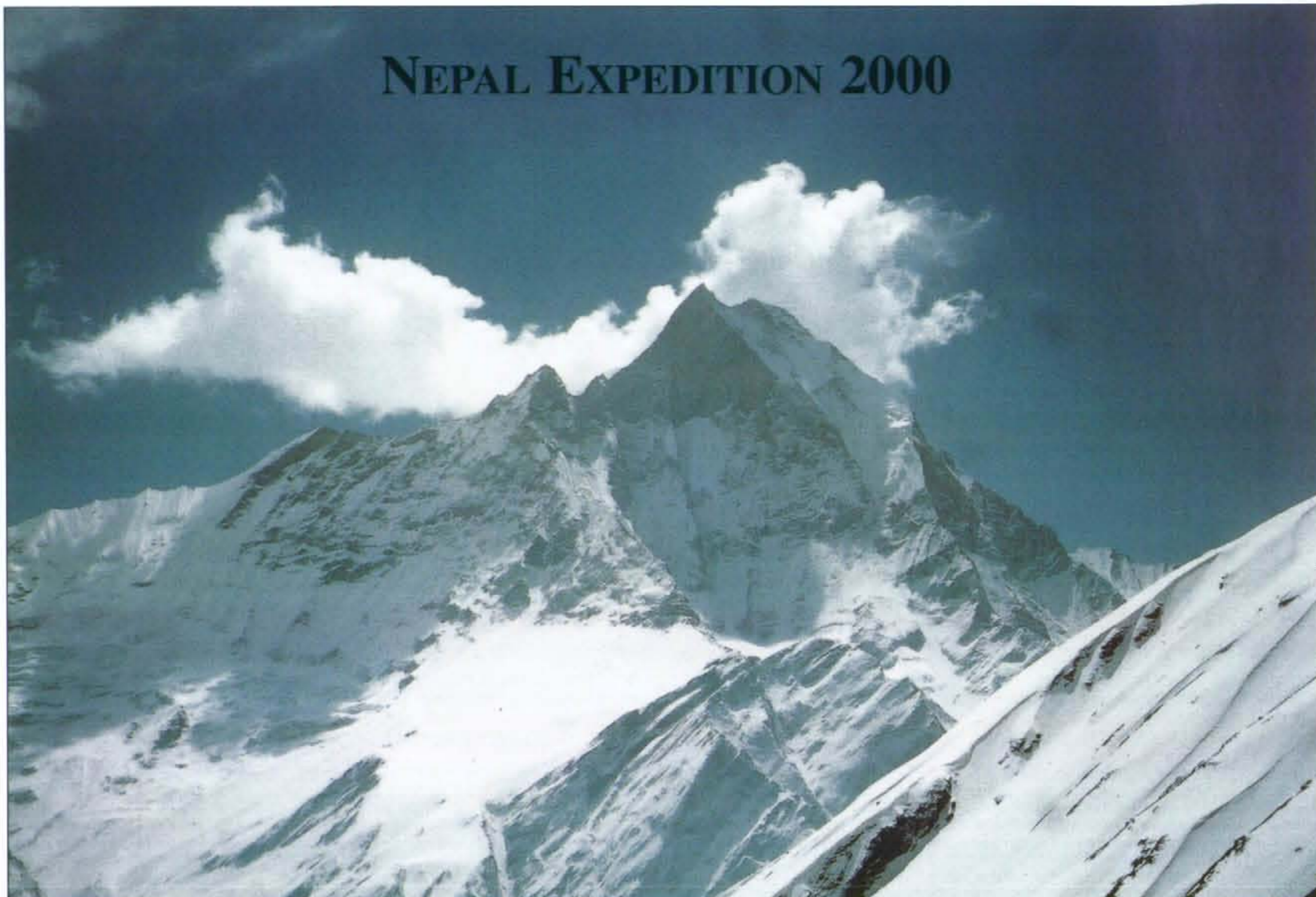
Near the end of my stay I saw round a private school. It was very security-conscious, as the children come from wealthy families, and there was a soldier with a gun at the gate. There are about five hundred pupils. I was impressed with the assembly in the morning and visited every crowded

classroom. They had a computer room with about ten computers. Their kindergarten was carpeted and had a few toys. However, the teaching was chalk and talk and the children were over-disciplined. I was invited by the headmaster to give a teacher-training session, which was good fun...

### Conclusion

The nine days were exciting, fruitful and hard. I spent all day rushing around the shops, observing classes, helping teachers in the classroom, giving seminars, visiting committee members, and at night I often worked by torch-light to prepare for the next day. We take so much for granted in England. I very much hope that pupils and staff at Stowe may further strengthen the Nepalese links now being forged with Dehendra Sharma.

## NEPAL EXPEDITION 2000



For three weeks during the Easter holidays, a group of 14 Stoics and six adults flew to Nepal, where, among many other things, we went trekking in the Himalayas for 11 days. We flew, via Doha in Qatar, to Kathmandu on April 1st, and even as soon as we arrived we were struck with the contrast of culture. Walking out of Tribhuvan Airport, we were all leapt upon by zealous beggars, determined to exploit our tiredness and inexperience of the local ways, but in spite of this, we were all excited by the prospect of three weeks in this magnificent country.

For the first two days we stayed in Kathmandu, to acclimatise to the temperature and altitude, for even Kathmandu is about 1500m above sea level. We stayed in the Kantipur Guest House, which was fairly luxurious, even if only in relation to what we were expecting on trek, and we were taken on a tour of the city. We visited the world-famous Swayambhu Nath Stupa, which is a huge construction overlooking the city from a hill on the outskirts, as well as the hectic Durbar Square, where everybody was again hassled by locals determined to make us buy some of the most useless things for extortionate prices. Kathmandu is a fascinating city, and I think that by the time we left, we all would have liked to have had longer to explore.

However, on our third morning, we were woken up early to catch a bus to Nayapul, where our trek was to begin, which was a hot, uncomfortable and hair-raising experience. When we arrived at Nayapul, we were met by the sherpas and porters, who carried our luggage to our first campsite, and our trek started properly the next morning. Thus, for the next ten days or so, we walked around the imposing Annapurnas. The contrasts that we met on our trek were striking: one day we would be walking in almost tropical forests of rhododendrons, and the next, we were thigh deep in snow, in Alpine conditions, surrounded by the sounds of avalanches. While we were on trek, we were looked after fabulously by

the sherpas, and thanks to their help the experience was made all the more pleasant; indeed, we were all rather embarrassed by the effort that they all made to ensure that we were fine. We trekked up to Macchupucchre Base Camp, at the foot of the mountain that is referred to as the 'Fishtail', before making our way painfully to the culmination of our trek: Annapurna Base Camp, at 4130m, or just over 13,000ft above sea level.

After our trek finished, we then boarded another bus to the Trisuli river, further south. After 3 hours on this bus, we arrived in the driving rain to find tents about half the size of those that we had been treated to on trek. Needless to say, spirits were not high, but soon a magnificent curry was presented for supper, and we somehow managed to get a fire going on the beach. The following morning, we went white water rafting, over rapids up to Grade IV, and everybody got wet somehow, whether they fell out or were dragged out by someone in another boat. It was a great day and one that everybody enjoyed immensely.

We were then transferred to Tharu Village, in the Terai region, which is less than 50 miles away from the Indian Border. Here we found a hotel, with a pool, set in lovely gardens with tree houses, which gave us all the opportunity to recover from the trek. After sleeping in proper beds for the first time in 11 days, we were given the opportunity the next morning to go for a horse ride in the early morning sun around the river, or we could go for a walk in the jungle. However, at about 10.30, we were all back to be taken in oxen carts to the river. When we got there, we were all ferried across in small canoes (only a couple of hours after having seen crocodiles in the same river), before being taken in Landrovers to the famous safari lodge Tiger Tops, in the Royal Chitwan park. We were met with iced tea upon our arrival, and then given the rest of the day to spend at our leisure, before meeting back at 5pm for our elephant safari.

We all mounted elephants and were taken off into the game reserve, where we saw rhinos, deer and a leopard.

Although I think we would have all loved to stay for longer, the next day we were taken over to a small airstrip, where we were flown back to Kathmandu in a very small plane, that seemed to rattle and shake a lot, much to every-

body's concern. We then stayed in Kathmandu for the final couple of days, when we could all go shopping for cheap pashminas and the like, before we finally had to return to sunny old England, on the 19th.

It was an amazing trip and one of the most enjoyable three weeks of my life. We were looked after very well by the company Tiger Mountain, who I think everybody would recommend to anyone thinking of travelling to Nepal. I would like to thank all the staff who accompanied us and made the trip possible: Mr Tearle, Mr Carpenter, Mr & Mrs Jahn and Mrs Nichols, but perhaps the most thanks of all should go to Dr James, who arranged the trip, and sorted out all the administration, but without the reward of actually going. Finally, I would also like to take this opportunity to recommend the trip to any of the new Lower Sixth: although it is not all easy, especially the trek, and it is certainly expensive, it was worth every penny. I think that anybody who went would agree with me and strongly urge everybody to go next year!

PIERS CRAVEN



## VISITORS FROM SUZHOU, CHINA

We are now well used to receiving many guests to Stowe from all over the world but it was a particular pleasure last October to welcome three pupils and a teacher from The Suzhou International Foreign Language School (SIFLS) in China.

SIFLS (established in 1995) was the brain-child of Steven Liang, an architect-turned-headmaster with considerable drive and flair. In less than five years, having masterminded the planning, building and staffing of this new school, he has a roll of over two thousand pupils.

The school sits on a quiet and beautiful campus spread over fifty acres. The buildings were designed to resemble historic European castles. With inexhaustible energy Mr Liang has now almost completed a second project to build a university for up to ten thousand students in the same area.

Our association with SIFLS began when first Guy Scott and then David Barr visited the school in an advisory capacity. The reciprocal visit took time to organise with frequent disappointments caused by abortive visa applications. It is difficult for adults in particular to gain permission to leave China and then only with a specific purpose.

The friendliness and charm of Mr Liu Yang and his three pupils, Shi Qi, Ma Liming and Dai Jing, was immediately apparent. Although hesitant at first, it wasn't long before all four were testing their linguistic skills to the limit. Sampling lessons in a variety of subjects undoubtedly challenged their understanding and they did take time to adjust to the different teaching style we adopt in this country. To be seen but not heard in lessons is the general maxim in China. (Some of us may long for such a regime here!) Practical subjects were of particular interest as the opportunity for hands-on experience is rare in Chinese schools, with classes often containing more than forty pupils. Involvement was not confined to the classroom, however, though what they made of Peter Ustinov's talk we will never know! A school debate, the house singing festival and a feature article in *The Voice* all helped to introduce them to the variety of activities on offer here. Games did not appear to be a great hit!

Because the opportunity to visit the United Kingdom is so rare, we spent a lot of time seeing places of interest. Oxford, Cambridge, Blenheim Palace and London are of course "musts", as indeed are the landscape gardens of Stowe! Fortuitously we visited London two days after the state visit of the Chinese President, so the Mall was decked with the flags of the two countries – a sight perhaps never seen before. One of the highlights of their time, however, was a visit to John Butler's dairy unit at Castle Fields Farm, where we watched and even lent a hand with milking.

For our part we not only enjoyed having such delightful people to stay but, through continual contact over a fortnight in lessons, boarding houses and general conversation, we also learnt a little more about the culture, beliefs and aspirations of one of the fastest developing nations in the world.

DWJ



The Suzhou International Foreign Language School designed to resemble historic European castles



Mr Liu Yang with his three pupils and the Headmaster in the Gothic Library



Enjoying practical biology – a rarity at the school in China



Helping with the milking at Castle Fields Farm



# THE CRETAN BULL.

Queen Pasiphae of Crete fell in love with the bull.



Then the monster, half bull, half man, that haunted the Labyrinth of King Minos, was born.



Heracles had to go and fight the bull for his 7th task.



The bull breathed fire out of his mouth but Heracles dodged it.



Then Heracles wrestled the bull on the ground and tried him up.



So Heracles took it back to Greece.



A Classical Civilisation cartoon by Champ Donovanik (III)

## FOURTH FORM ARTISTS IN LONDON

Fourth-formers write of a guided tour of the National Portrait Gallery and the Anna Maria Pacheco Exhibition in the National Gallery.

### The National Portrait Gallery

The first piece we saw was unusual for a 'self-portrait' because the artist, Laura Knight, had placed the emphasis on the model she was painting rather than herself. She painted herself in profile, with the visible portion of her face in shadow. The second was a portrait of T.S. Eliot, author of *Old Possum's Book of Practical Cats*, and there were many cats within the painting. It was very bold, with lots of contrasting colours. The third was a commission of the gallery for a self-portrait of Maggie Hambling, and was concerned with the various aspects of her character and past. It had lots of blank spaces implying the future and different images dotted around on the canvas.

After this we looked at a couple of statues by Eduardo Paolozzi, one of which I drew. They had machine-life structures fastened to them and looked in agony, as if suffering from human inventions. To me they were very frightening and bleak. The final piece was a self-portrait by an artist we have already looked at, Frank Amerbach. It was extremely expressionistic, with an enormous forehead. He only used different tones of one basic colour and the paint was applied very thickly with imposing brush strokes.

ANDREW DAVIES

Dame Laura Knight had her back to us, which was thought-provoking. She used striking colours to make the picture stick out at you, as did Patrick Proctor in his clever portrait of T.S. Eliot, *Cats and Oranges*. You saw his thoughts about poetry and cats. Eliot's face was almost cut in two. One half was normal and the other half was shaded and looked like it was on its side. This portrait showed two distinct sides to T.S. Eliot's character.

We moved on to a very entertaining and interesting self-portrait of Maggie Hambling. There were lots of images about her past life and how long she has left. I loved the shuffling of the cards, representing her fate. I liked how she expressed that she has so much to do in such little time by having three arms and these were slightly blurred to show that they were moving quickly. I personally loved this portrait. It was bright and it told the story of her life.

Finally, we looked at sculptures by Paolozzi. These suggested machines were taking over nature. They showed a lot of feeling.

FREDDIE BARRIE

### Anna Maria Pacheco

Anna Maria Pacheco is a Brazilian artist and in her work she reflects the way that she sees her homeland and some of the suffering that she herself has experienced in her life. Her sculptures were all in one big room. The walls had all been painted black and spotlights lit up the figures in the middle. They were all wood carvings that had been decorated with paint, glass, nails and porcelain. The central figure was a man kneeling down with a black sack over his head. Behind him was a pole to which his hands

were tied with thick rope. The man himself wore no clothes and had arrows sticking into various parts of his body. Standing around were a few people with black trench coats and black scarves, so that all that was revealed was the top of their faces. Viewing this scene were some women and babies. The expression of the onlookers was that of anguish while the look on the faces of the trench coat group was one of sick satisfaction. Even though the hooded face of the man shot with arrows could not be seen directly, his pain was obvious.

It was an incredible piece of work, a statement about human suffering which gave one a lot to think about.

FREDDIE VON SCHRODER

A room was filled with her sculptures and the public encouraged to walk amongst them. They were all very scary, with fixed expressions and unusual facial distortions. By character, most of them were fairly plain, but a couple were drastically disturbing.

I observed some interesting ideas, such as using nails for hair, and the personalisation of her style.

ANDREW DAVIES

The group of sculpture is called *Dark Night of the Soul*. It seemed to reflect the struggle between good and evil, with a subtext of Christianity. It is a moving insight into human suffering. This sculpture savagely attacks man's cruelty to his fellow man.

JOHN DAWSON

Her sculptures all have large heads which don't have any bone-line underneath. The skin is very smooth. It doesn't have any creases in it. The mouths are very dark red and the teeth are real. The eyes are very wide and are made of glass. The bodies are all very round and very tall. Scary caricatures of humans.

They are carved with a chainsaw for their basic shape and then they are carved with hand tools to make the detail.

FREDDIE BARRIE



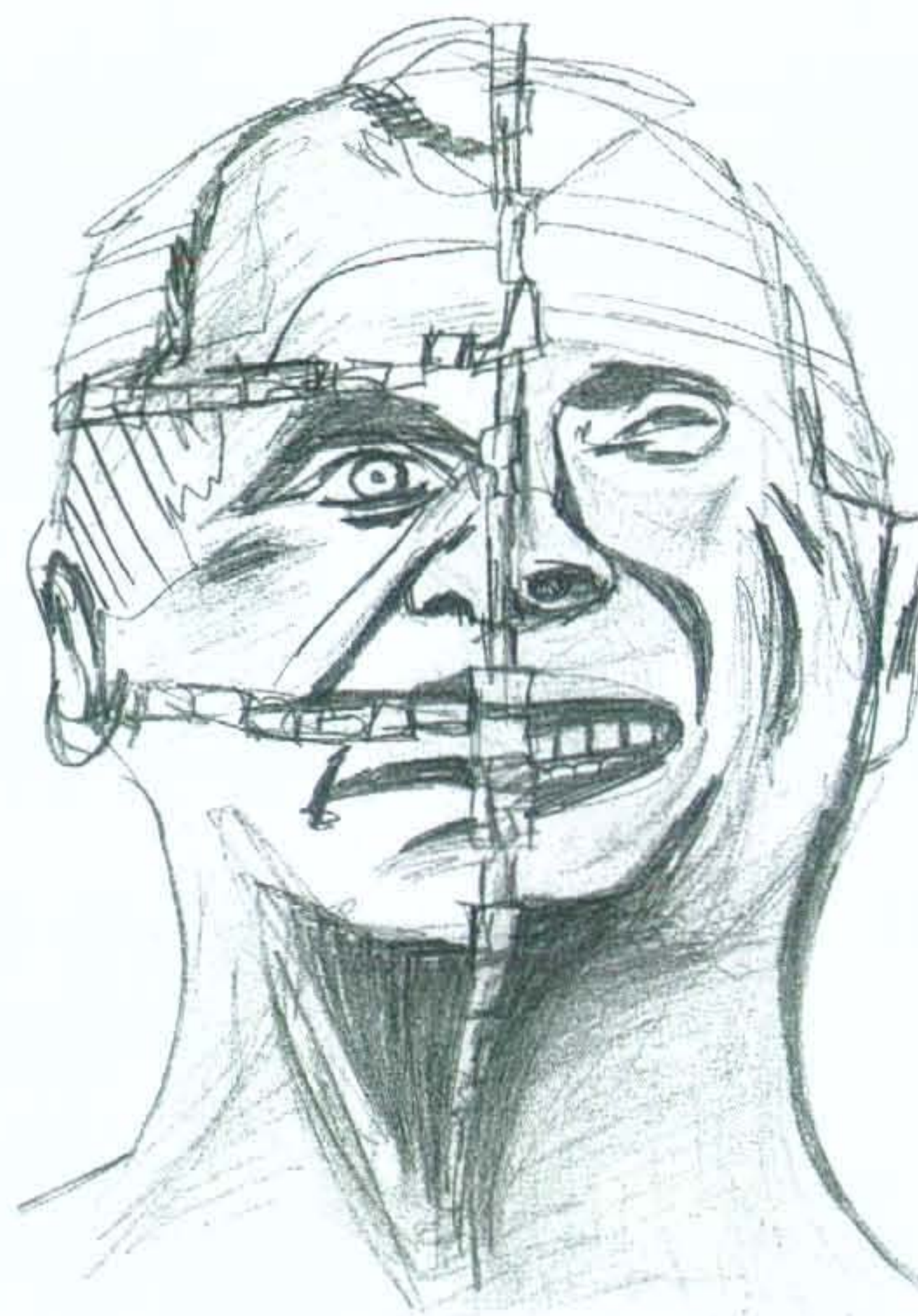
A Pacheco Head by Freddie Barrie

## FOURTH FORM ART: HEADS

The Fourth Forms have had a somewhat busy year of Art. Our first project was "Heads". Drawing or sculpting a head always used to be the ultimate challenge; somehow the perfect shape was never quite achieved. Some inspiration from the great masters was obviously going to help our cause and so we set out for London to see the National Portrait Gallery. This is a charming gallery splitting at the seams with portraits of great British personalities, a perfect place to learn and make studies, assisted by a lesson with one of the Gallery's own artists. This project lasted until near the end of the Spring Term and proved fascinating. Our second project for the year has been "Decay". My first feelings on the choice of topic were simple: 'Why at the start of Spring?' The one advantage of picking a topic of decay at the start of Spring was that the one thing you were not going to get was a group of identical drawings of trees in bud. No, this project was going to have things varying from social decay to cold coffee in a cracked mug.

This project also had a trip associated with it. This involved going to both the Tate and the Serpentine Galleries. The Tate had some truly striking pieces of art. The Serpentine, however, proved to all aspiring Stoic artists that no matter how bad or bizarre your art may be there is a roof in Hyde Park under which they can be displayed, a great source of comfort for myself.

FREDDIE VON SCHRODER



A Paolozzi head by Andrew Davies

## STOWE: A SENSE OF PLACE AND ATMOSPHERE

Lower Sixth Art Project

The Lower Sixth Form art project for the Spring Term and the first half of this Summer Term was 'Stowe: a sense of place and atmosphere'. We began by open-mindedly exploring ideas and possible themes for the project. By taking photographs and making quick sketches, we brainstormed for our personal inspiration. Soon into the start of the Spring Term, with some preliminary ideas formed and some sketches made, an outside artist, Alexandra Leadbeater, began her visits. Alexandra used various printing and painting techniques to create surfaces which hint at architectural detail and passing time. Her techniques were new and innovative for our project, and due to the relation of architectural details, these techniques could be related to our project. And so, for half a term, twice a week we explored and experimented with the techniques of Alexandra – while continuing with our other personal interest areas. We found the experiences with Alexandra new and different from other experienced techniques, and so took advantage of her experience and produced some novel and interesting work. As the term continued, still we explored and experimented – searching for our particular niche and theme.

We visited the Tate Gallery and the Serpentine Gallery, a third of the way through the project. The main aim was to gather information on linked artists and also find inspiration for our own project. Within the Tate Gallery we searched for particular artists that linked to our present work – and so we were also searching for relevant

techniques and inspiration. We linked such artists as Graham Sutherland and Paul Nash to our work, and once sketches and notes had been made we moved on to the Serpentine. Although the exhibition of Yayoi Kusama's yellow polka-dot installations, presently on at the Serpentine Gallery, had very little to do with our project, it was still both exciting and enjoyable – as well as being interestingly different.

After half-term another artist visited us, this time a painter. Mary Barnes paints to give a personal response to her environmental surroundings. Due to this aim, her work could related to our projects, as we also wish to give a sense of place and atmosphere – which must come from our own responses. So for the last half of the Spring Term Mary taught us twice a week. With Mary we experimented with charcoal, looking at such artists as Dennis Creffield, monoprinting, and finally painting. While still continuing with our personal interests and still gathering information for our projects, we finished the term with new added work and a final piece influenced by Mary.

At the beginning of the Summer Term we were ready for the final third part of the project. Once again we had a visiting artist, this time a specialist printmaker. Jane Corfield is well experienced in many areas of printmaking and so passed some skills and ideas over to us. Once we all had tried and tested various techniques, we decided on our last reflection of Stowe – and put it into print.

We greatly enjoyed this chance to muse upon Stowe as artists within a project, and are grateful for the wide variety of techniques and methods to which we have been exposed. Some divergent work has been produced and we've learnt to view our chosen areas of Stowe in our own personal ways.

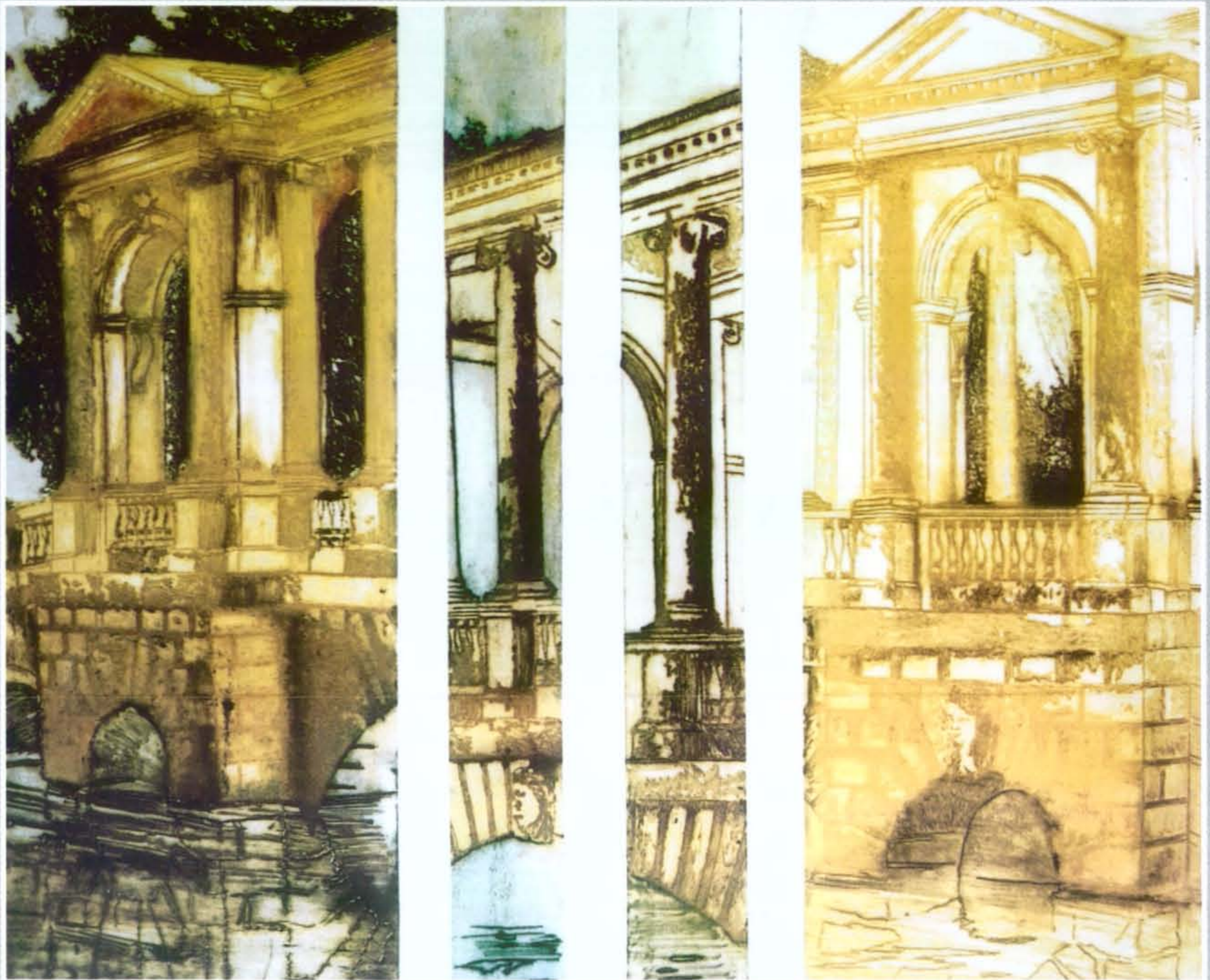
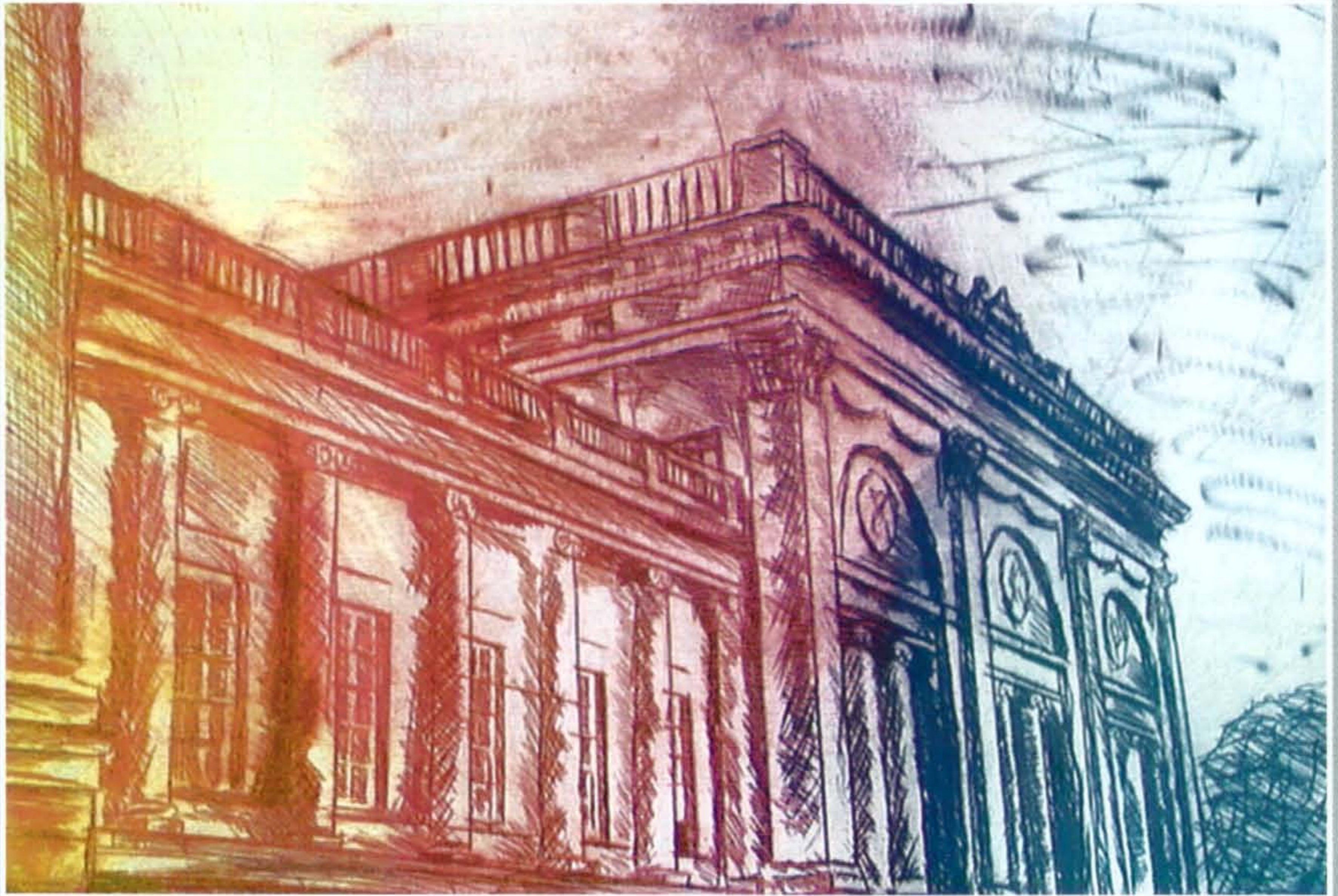
HENRY LEON



Above: Emma Elliott (Ancient Virtue)  
Below: Tom Kemble (Concord and Victory)

Right above: Alex Wilson (South Front)  
Below: Hattie Rickards (Palladian Bridge)





## CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE ROXBURGH PRIZE FOR VERSE

### THIS IS NO PICTURE

*Bright lights glare cruelly:  
No shadows allowed here.  
White walls surround flawless displays:  
No imperfections.  
An irritated silence dominates; broken  
By chic heels, pretentious talk and air-vents.*

*And it stops.  
I turn, forgetting noise, heat and conceit.  
This one, now this is different:  
No elephant dung or half bovines.  
Exuding warmth, giving light, it draws me.  
In a corner, forgotten it seems – but not forgetting.  
The image is precise, exact, and yet, not accurate.  
Who would have thought to portray  
Her so harshly?  
So drawn, guarded: lines adding their own  
cynicism.  
Yet the use of light, incredible.  
She stares absently: a cold, superior  
View of the outside world.  
I watch, entranced  
And utter a silent plea or resolution.*

*“Ridiculous, what they call art.”  
I glance, annoyed, at the source of criticism.  
A suited back recedes proudly.  
I smile as I turn again to my reflection.  
He is right perhaps: this is no picture.*

ANTONIA FORD (LVI)  
SENIOR WINNER

### THE LARGEST ORGAN

*The craters and canyons formed,  
By the erosion of  
Everyday life.  
The surface parched, and dried from  
The endless light beating  
Down on it.  
Then comes the night when the craters  
Rejuvenate themselves.  
100,000's of minerals  
And nutrients are sped to the dehydrated zones,  
The surface being seven  
Layers thick.  
Under which bubbling hot juices flow carrying  
Elements for life.  
From the craters  
Redundant insulators sprout sparsely.  
The canyons shudder  
Regularly to the  
Beat of pumping viscous liquid flowing under  
The protective layers  
of skin!*

HARRY BEAMISH (V)

### THAT PICTURE

*That picture of her on the wall mocks me still!  
'Tis of her and I whilst love was ours,  
Or so the fiend had me believe.  
But now I see what truly lay within,  
That glint in her eye, that smirk on her lips.  
I used to think her divine, holy, sacred,  
Could I have been more wrong?  
Now she has left, my blinkers are gone,  
My sight is restored.  
I see now what eluded me before:  
If e'er a demon walked the earth, 'twas her.*

CHRISTOPHER TURNER (LVI)

## THE PAIN-T

*A crude frame with a thickly covered canvas, slowly submerging under strata of settling dust, holds a richly coloured oil painting to our stare. It portrays, through a dark wooden window frame, a glance into a small, square room, from the sun-rich world outside that leaks its golden light through the glass pane.*

*The thick oils show the room contains a cosy bed, with covers swirling spirals of streaked paint, corn yellow, dolphin blue and pastel emerald in a lazy pile, unmade, amply sun-fed.*

*A metal desk lamp highlights with false sun the painted clustered clumps of paper pieces, broad books and clumsy armoury of pens protruding from a jar. All were drawn as delicate as a thick brush could allow, with paint so deeply deposited and layered, the articles actually lie atop each other in protruding piles.*

*A few vertical brush strokes suggest the spines of books, show a sparsely covered wooden bookcase, while the many tall, slender magazine spines and coloured waves depict ornaments too fine to determine. Buried beauty is cocooned behind such crude depiction of these ornaments, silent screams echo to their death. Sun-enriched colours hold the only elegance in this room.*

*A wooden cabinet in one sun-saturated side of the room has all drawers protruding, each to a different degree, like an inverted staircase. Twisted and congealed, colourful flows of clothes droop out and drip towards the cream-carpeted floor from these honey-coloured sturdy wooden plateaus, that hold these sticky rainbow reservoirs up to the sky.*

*A veneer computer table maintains the untidy appearance of the room. With chunky coffee mugs and junk blobs of all shapes, showing papers and packets, that garland the computer's sharp outline and slur its sophisticated style.*

*But wait! This painting is unfinished! The canvas has no paint in a portion of its bottom left corner. Huge walls of paint line the area, like a quarry in paint soil, a cut that exposes smooth trunk in a twisted swirling sea of ancient bark when a piece is torn from a tree.*

*It is the outline of a kneeling person that lies on the bare canvas. The colours flow fancifully round him, but do not smudge onto, or touch him. The texture and colours that give to the whole picture do not reach this place. No life touches his heart.*

*He is not part of that happy, coloured world, but of the truth. The canvas and not the room exists.*

*Perhaps we were wrong: it was not colour he painfully shielded from his heart, but the paint's thick, concealing lies that tried to make the joyful world exist.*

*I could not depict with paints the pain and despair, like a lethal, curdling cocktail that potently poisoned my saddened soul, on that day I lost their love.*

PETER TROMANS (IV)  
JUNIOR WINNER

## WHITE CROSSES & RED FLOWERS

*White crosses upon white crosses,  
Fields of death,  
The breeze a silent reminder of that referee's whistle which  
always gave a red card,  
As it whispers though lonely graves.*

*The white crosses, widows placing blood red flowers  
once a year,  
The stampede of thousands of feet charging to their ruin,  
The dogs of war feasting on each other.*

JAMES MOON (III)



Above: Sally Flower (The Hermitage)  
Left: Natalie Tkachuk (Grenville Stairs)  
Below: Amelia Annfield (Plug Street)







Above: Daisy Lawson (Rotondo)  
Below: Edward Oldham (Palladian Bridge)



Above: Camilla Ruggles-Brise (Ionic Columns)  
Below: Susanna Williams (Plug Street)



# THE GAVIN MAXWELL ESSAY PRIZE

## ~THE RETURN~

### OR, AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE CONFLICT OF CONSCIENCE AND OUR CURRENCY-BASED SYSTEM OF EMPLOYMENT

Outside the window a red double-decker accelerated by, jacketed in colourful adverts. Its growl echoed down the narrow street, bouncing repeatedly off the impervious walls of mass produced houses. But neither its sound, nor the thin strip which was visible really registered in my mind. A carnival in all its booming glory could have gone past my window without my noticing. I would have seen it, I would have heard it, electrical impulses would have travelled to my brain, the outside world could try as it might to make me acknowledge its existence but at that point in time there was nothing in my consciousness but the flickering screen in front of me, my sweaty hands on an out of date keyboard, and a feeling of emptiness deep in my stomach. What the hell was I supposed to write now? I'd got as far as:

Dear Sir \ Madam, I am writing in response to an advert for the vacancy of 'Economic Marketing Managing Assistant' at your firm which I spotted in today's issue of The Financial Times. Herewith I submit a short outline of myself and my experience....

Most subjects I could waffle on for hours about. I could write 'A Short History of High Street Chemists', 'An Introduction to Nepalese Philosophy' or 'The Essence of Monetarism, and its Roots in the European Union' but none of these would result in a job. None of these would get me out of the flat, out of the street, and into the unifying grind of a nine to five. I could write confidently on just about anything, or at least fantasise the facts and fill in the gaps with meaningless words. It was when I had to write about myself that my mind disintegrated. How could you write about someone you know so well? Where do you start? How can you possibly view yourself objectively like that, how would I even begin to communicate my soul to some brainless office worker? Come to think of it – do I really need a job? What is *sooo* brilliant about a job? You have to do what somebody else says, listen to them and their advice for life, suck up when you mess up, and pretend that you do really respect them and their character for some other reason besides the fact that they pay you. Actually the thought reminds me of my parents in my more youthful years. Why do I need a job? You don't need money if you live in the Peruvian jungle and live off Guroana leaves and raw Toucan meat. The Indians there have survived for centuries without qualifications, industry experience and CVs. The chief of the Yagua tribe never asked his hunters to display an understanding of market systems in the financial arena, nor did he ever dictate that tribe members must be able to type sixty words per minute or operate a fax machine. Out there in the jungle people lived by their wits and flair, not by having achieved a pass at English GCSE. But then again they didn't have nice'n'spicy pot noodles either. Back to the keyboard.

Time for a different approach: *be* subjective. This idea unfolded in my brain and produced a masterstroke of

genius: – lie. With that one little word in my mind I turned with new vigour to the battle with my tormentor.

#### CURRICULUM VITAE

NAME: Clarke F. Jackson

AGE: 26 years

MARITAL STATUS: Unmarried

QUALIFICATIONS: 8 GCSE passes, 3 A-levels (Geography, English and Biology) grades A A B, BA(Hons) in Experimental Psychology from Sussex University, School of Social Sciences.

EXPERIENCE:...

This is where the imagination really gets to frolic on the screen. Hhhmm, what would really catch the eye of an Economic Marketing Manager? Well, we'll start with the active gap year. Let's see:

...I spent three months of my gap year helping to teach Pakistani children English grammar and some of the social characteristics which distinguish British people...

This was true, I had a Pakistani\East Actonian friend with two younger brothers. Ahmed and I would spend much of our time reinforcing their basic rules of modern grammar; shorten everything as much as poss., replace all Ss on the end of wordz with Zs, make sure all appropriate ERs become As, and of course make up words as you see fit. By du end of du year dey was fully acceptable teenage pronounciatorz. We also instilled in them a deep respect for the British culture and way of life; underage drinking, underage sex, the buzz of vandalism, the wide availability of soft drugs and the beauty of having a 'free house'.

...I have a large stock of industry experience, having worked for three separate distribution firms...

(My paper rounds!)

... and have an expert knowledge of internal Marketing Economics.

(I did the accounts for the Happy Shopper down the road, which had a large section of its front window plastered in scruffy hand-written adverts selling anything from washing machines to stamp collections.)

And so it went on.

For nearly two hours I exaggerated, fabricated and often reduced myself to downright lying. It was fun, I could just imagine the fat-suited manager nodding his head in approval and me grinning at my own genius. I would manage to sell my menial self to a businessman at the cost of only a few hours' electricity and a phone call, I would give myself a job worth seventy-five thousand a year. What could be better proof that I really am the best Economic Marketing Manager available? As the creativity flowed, so did the tea and the cigarettes. The two went hand in hand. Inventiveness could not survive without the right fuel. But as I progressed so did a feeling deep in my gut. A horrible empty feeling I had felt earlier that day. By the time I had twisted and spun everything I could possibly think of, I realised something, the feeling had taken over my whole

abdomen. I couldn't go through with it. I couldn't actually send this trash down the phone line. I couldn't press that Send button, I couldn't actually hit the Return key, the button that would surely give me a wealthier, happier life... Why The Hell Not? What was to stop me? People lied on their CVs all the time. Why should Bloggs get the job while I can't? I'm sure he's going to lie anyway. Whoever gets the job is going to be the biggest, best liar – that's what marketing is all about anyway. The scrunching sensation was becoming overwhelming now, it was a bit like guilt or regret, something like that. I began to fight it. Yes, that was the way forward, tense the stomach and persevere with the

plan. I realised the time for decision was upon me. It was put up with that odd sensation and undoubtedly improve my existence or give in to the twisting and write something truthful. Return or Escape.

My fingers hovered for a second or two then slammed down on my future.

A few days later I received mail. And now I've got a nine to five, I work for forty six weeks a year, I've moved house, out of my old street and away from the temptation of the 'Local'. And the good news is... I never have to write a CV again.

BEN SMITH (LVI), SENIOR PRIZE WINNER

## A DEATH IN THE FAMILY

It was on my birthday that Tibbles ate my mother. The sadistic gnawing of Tibbles and the agonising bellow of Mother really dampened the atmosphere at my celebrations. Cats are mean to us mice, but on the other hand Humans are so very kind. They leave us cheese, our favourite, in easily accessible places, although one of the metal plates they left the cheese on killed my sister last week. It was quite disturbing to see what I had always assumed to be a dead object, a metal plate, suddenly jump with malicious enthusiasm and claim the life of my sister, when all she was doing was accepting a gift.

I am called Philip, and I have experienced three years of life. In all that time I had lived with my mother, father and sister under the dining room of the Smiths. I could therefore be forgiven for feeling a little distressed that a parent and a sibling had both been brutally murdered in the space of a week. My main worry was that both my mother and my sister were terribly good at obtaining food, and with both of these deceased one might say that we had a slight problem. My father, although a loveable character, is frightfully overweight, partly due to the dead part of the family being so efficient in acquiring the food, but mainly because he has been lying in the same spot since my birth.

I therefore was forced to take on the responsibility of providing food to sustain the obesity of my father, and my humble self. I constantly pondered what my father would do if I were to succumb to the jaws of the metal plate or the cat. Would he move, or would he continue to lie there like the proverbial log? This thought gave me the will to succeed, for if my father were to die the horrific smell culminating from this tragedy would surely kill all the inhabitants of the house!

My first journey into the dining room was moderately successful, although this experience taught me that I needed to grow human arms to satisfy the enormous eating power of my father. I managed to procure what I thought to be a large amount of cereal but I later learned that the amount I collected was but a fifth of my deceased relatives' best efforts. I was forced to take more risks in an effort to succeed.

As the weeks went by I became more and more efficient, and never once ran into any living metal plates or sadistic cats. However, my luck was turning. The owner of

the house became increasingly annoyed at the mishaps when I just couldn't make it to the toilet and he decided to go on a purge. The cat was sent to patrol the dining room. I now had to be ever so careful. Tip-toeing and swiftly moving from place to place allowed me to continue my successful missions. Last Tuesday I was in the process of extricating a particularly large and succulent morsel of Grandma's chocolate cake from the sofa, when I felt, rather than smelt, the aforementioned Tibbles.

The chase was quite spectacular. I had not expected to meet my mother's murderer quite so soon, but I was in no position to attempt any revengeful fight back. I swiftly dismounted the sofa and crawled elegantly under it. I was now in a position of remote safety, but, completely disorientated. I was also in a state of confusion. How would I get back to father? My worst fear about dying, in a way that must have been expected, now confronted me, although I had absolutely no idea what to do; If the cat saw where I lived, life from that point on would be torturous. I would have to wait for my opportunity before running.

I decided to run behind a tall, much valued, vase in the corner of the room to see whether I could spot the entrance to my house. I hoped I would reach safety without losing my tail, but unfortunately Tibbles' beady eyes spotted me scampering away and began a calamitous acceleration on the newly-varnished floor. I perched myself behind the vase and peeped around the corner, only to see the cat desperately trying to slow down to avoid smashing the irreplaceable piece. However, it was as hard to decelerate as to speed up and the cat came hurtling into the vase, shattering it into a million pieces. I managed to avoid the main brunt of the falling glass, and the noise brought the humans in. This gave me an opportunity to escape unscathed, with (I might add) Grandma's cake! Father enjoyed a good feed while I watched the human reaction to the unfolding catastrophe, which resulted in good news – they got rid of Tibbles on account of his explosive tendencies.

Life without Tibbles is somewhat different; food is easier to come by and therefore Father is getting larger and larger, so much so that we may have to build an extension! Every morning I get out of bed and go and fetch some breakfast, and before every meal we pray to mouse god in the hope that some day we will live in a place where mice are at the top of the food chain and killing cats is a sport!

MARK HARPER (LVI)

## DESIGN & TECHNOLOGY

There were a great number of excellent projects produced by the GCSE and A-level students for this year's exhibition on Speech Day. It was the culmination of many hours of hard work. The quality of the artefacts on display reflected the amount of time and care that each Stoic had put into his work, much of it in addition to the examination board's requirements.

It continues to be difficult to award the prizes due to the high quality of the work. The Worsley Prize was awarded to Ben Hart. He designed and constructed a novel-looking Wendy House for use by nursery school children. He came up with a number of imaginative designs before settling on this one.



The Friends of Stowe Prize for Design in Wood was awarded to Bertie Marsh. He designed a wonderful double bed. It was a simple design but the real technical excellence was in the clever construction of the end frames made out of plywood.

Nichola Eddery's passion for horses and riding inspired her to design and make an outfit for Ladies' Day at Ascot. The real beauty of this project was her stunning design work. For this she was awarded the Andrew McAlpine Prize for Technical Graphics. Some want to design big and Alec Laing did design big. For his Major Problem he designed and constructed a trailer to transport an Argo around the grounds. For the vast amount of excellent construction he was awarded the John Holland Prize for Design in Metal.

Above: Ben Hart's Wendy House.  
Left: Nichola Eddery's outfit. Below: Alec Laing's trailer





In addition to these prize winners a number of Stoics need to be mentioned for their outstanding work: Daniel Ferris's Gun box for Landrover, Tom Oliver's Futon for loft space, Sammy Barratt's Garden Bridge and Edouard Lake's Garden Bench.

This year the Lower School Prize for Design was again difficult to judge. There were a great number of excellent GCSE projects, many worthy of a prize. The eventual winner was Nicholas Wills who designed an oak gate-legged table to be put in the summer house at home. It was a beautifully constructed piece of work. There were excellent efforts from Will Barker (Clock Tower), George Percy (Ash Table), Hugh Vacher (Seating), Alex de Rivaz (Single Futon), Ed Black (Kitchen Table), Hugh Maclean (Kitchen Cabinet) and Thomas Legge (Beech Occasional Table). All of the exhibits displayed at this year's exhibition showed pleasing talent.

MDGW



Above: Upper Sixth designers. Right: Will Barker's clock.  
Below: Sammy Barratt and his garden bridge



## DESIGN & TECHNOLOGY COMPETITION

in the Luffield Schools Arts Festival, 2000

This year the Design and Technology Competition was hosted by Akeley Wood School, under the leadership of Howard Norris and Jerry Cochrane. Four pupils from each of the schools were randomly sorted into six teams, who had to learn to work as a team with strangers as well as solving the challenging technical problems. Ben Corner, James Jagger, Joel Kennedy, George Margesson and Charlie Sanchez ably represented Stowe.

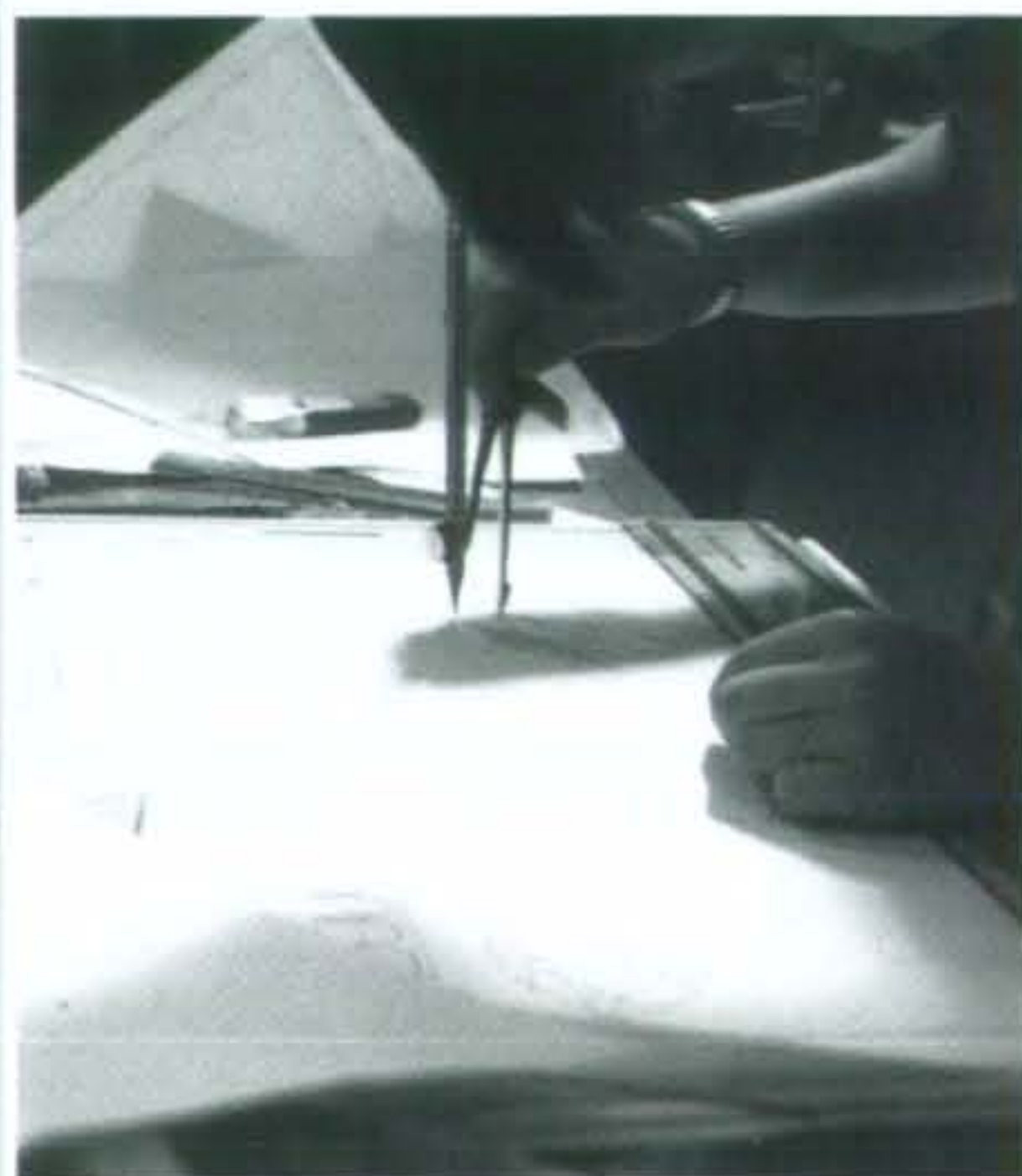
The task was to design and make a small wheeled vehicle powered by rubber bands, which had to travel 10 metres in a straight line as fast as possible. All the resources of the school workshop could be used. Marks were also to be awarded for team organisation and harmony, and for a graphical presentation of the thinking behind the prototypes.

The first day was spent studying the assessment criteria, planning, researching, experimenting and getting to know each other. The second day began to see materials being cut, and the graphic artists using lots of paper and colours. It was quite late on the second day that pupils began to think seriously about the relation between wheel diameter and rolling resistance. Others discovered that a powerful engine demands high friction tyres. There is still a problem with the compartmentalisation of knowledge. Although some of the pupils were good at physics they did not realise how their knowledge could help them design. Friction was the main problem (undesirable in bearings but essential in power transmission) – but also the design of bearings and pulleys.

The third day was spent building, rebuilding and testing the vehicles. At the allotted time the contestants all walked across the fields to Stowe, to set up the drag strip in the Marble Hall. The marble floor proved to have superior grip to the Akeley gym, and the cars gained extra zip. The track was marked out, and the time-keepers and marshals took up their position for the time trials. After two exciting (and sometimes hilarious) rounds, The Champions were declared The Millennium Design Champions.

All the pupils seemed to enjoy the opportunity to spend three intensive days on a difficult task whilst making new friends. Design is as much about communication, cunning and social awareness as the ability to wield a hammer with grace and delicacy, and this year's Festival got this message across.

AGE



## DARKER SHADES OF MEMORY

An ominous sky darkened as Ellen glanced out to sea. Warily, she looked back to the road, her eyes focussing instead on the first raindrops spattering the windscreen. She repeatedly reminded herself to concentrate on driving, mentally issuing a stern reprimand for allowing her mind to keep drifting off. It dawned on her that she had little idea of where she was going and she could hardly remember the last twenty miles she had driven. The dramatic events outside barely affected her – she smiled wryly, thinking how such violent weather inspired writers and romantics, yet all she knew was an aching emptiness, a hollow feeling which left no room for emotions other than despair. After all, she mused, she had lived on the coast long enough not to be under any illusion about pathetic fallacy of the outside climate. The thought shook her. When had she lived next to the sea?

Realising that driving was dangerous enough in the state she was in, nevermind the adverse conditions, she abandoned her trip and pulled the jeep over onto the side of a desolate stretch of road, barely noticing the old beach house backing onto the track.

Ellen closed her eyes, rubbing her temples, trying to settle her confused mind and follow the previous train of thought. As she did, she experienced a sudden searing pain across her forehead and a brilliant white light. Immediately, she clenched her teeth, forced her eyes to open and concentrate on the dashboard, while putting a tentative hand to the back of her head. The shaven skin and coarse stitches still faintly repulsed her but provided a necessary distraction until the pain subsided. The familiar feeling of helplessness overwhelmed: perhaps it had been a bad idea to come out on her own. Especially since she had not told anyone where she was going, although at the time she had not known herself, just taken the keys and fled. The inability to care for herself unnerved her limitlessly, and the recent dependence on her younger sister only served to emphasise the loss of her independence. It should be her taking care of her little sister Carrie, not the opposite. After all, their parents had certainly left her financially able to do so: not trusting Carrie with a large inheritance, they had entrusted the family property to their 'sensible' daughter. Now Ellen felt she had not only left herself down, but also her whole family. She brushed away hot tears at the thought of her beloved parents and climbed out of the jeep, slamming the door behind her.

She welcomed the streaming rain on her flushed face and leant unsteadily against the bonnet. As she closed her eyes, the white light glared again, for once not accompanied by the usual pain. As its brilliance faded, she saw an image, a haunting reflection of black figures and immediately felt the sensation of falling. Starting, she glanced around her, knowing she was trembling violently, yet did not feel cold. The incident caused her to question her state of mind even further, but not wanting to dwell on the worrying possibilities, she wrapped her arms around her soaked body and moved away from the jeep. She walked to the side of the road, and looking up, saw a large, dark building looming above her. In the turbulent weather it seemed more reminiscent of a horror movie set than a quiet beachside town. Ellen was surprised that she did not feel more apprehensive – the house was certainly eerie

enough – but all she felt was a curious sense of security and peace of mind. She sat down on the ground, sheltering beneath a large tree: perhaps not a good idea in a storm but at least she was protected from the wind and rain. A flash of lightning illuminated the house, and in an odd reflection within her mind, she saw again the brilliant white light. The same image of black figures followed, both shrouded in the ethereal light. This time she saw the figures more clearly, they appeared in some sort of scuffle, before everything went black and the sensation of falling came again.

Ellen had become used to the light but had not before seen the images and wondered whether it was a good or bad sign. The doctors had said that any reaction was unpredictable and in the mental recovery period, there may be differing responses to the episode: not that she knew what the episode was...

Thinking of the accident, a thought occurred to Ellen. She had considered it before, but always dismissed it readily. Perhaps the light was connected to the incident and even to her recovery. The last three weeks since the accident had been immensely frustrating, her memory of the months preceding it almost completely blank. However, it did not help that she still was not aware of exactly what happened that fateful evening, the doctors wanting her memory to recover by itself rather than simply tell her the details. Only Carrie had shown interest in her returning memory, always asking how much she could remember and trying to help piece together the fragments. It was strange, Ellen mused, that she had never appreciated how caring her sister was. They had never been close as children, but since the accident, Carrie had been very concerned for her, even offering to look after her once she came out of hospital. Ellen thought again of the bizarre images, relating them to the 'accident'. Maybe they were her memory of the incident. Had she had intruders and been involved in a fight, or was she now just clutching at wild ideas? If only she could go home, perhaps she would remember. However, she had moved recently before and she was meant to wait until she could remember her house before returning there. She had asked Carrie to take her there, but, oddly, she had hesitated before refusing, saying it was best to take the doctors' advice.

Sensing another flash of light, Ellen looked up to the sky to watch the lightning, but instead saw a glare of headlights pulling up beside her jeep. She cringed with anticipated embarrassment. How could she explain to a kindly motorist that there was nothing wrong with her car, she just felt like sitting in the rain? She stood up, ready to encounter a concerned stranger, but was surprised at what she saw. First Carrie climbing out of her new car, followed by Ryan – Ellen's long term boyfriend and fiancé. Two people most important to her in the world, but she only wished she could be on her own again. Ryan rushed forward, wrapping his jacket around her thin shoulders.

'Thank God we found you. Carrie phoned as soon as she realised you'd gone. We were so worried.'

Ellen looked in bewilderment from his concerned face to Carrie standing by, attempting a sympathetic look.

'But how did you, I mean, how come... what made you come here?' Ellen asked, confused, noting a hesitant look between them before Carrie ventured, 'We got lucky, I

guess. Just followed the road out towards the sea and kept going until we saw your jeep.'

Ellen looked to her jeep, hidden from the road by bush. She was about to object to the flawed reasoning until realisation dawned. They had not just 'got lucky', they had expected her to be here. But why should she be here? Again, she answered her own question – the house. That would explain why it felt so familiar to her, why they looked for her here and how they had found her so quickly – it was her new house. They just had not told her so that she could remember by herself – and she had. She turned quickly to Ryan, smiling radiantly, about to tell him that her memory was finally coming back. However, the sudden movement had adverse effects and she winced, closing her eyes against the pain.

This time the white light lasted only a few seconds before fading to the image of two figures. Almost as if in a dream, she could see herself in the events, separate from the other two. This was it, her mind screamed at her and she desperately sought to see the faces of the other people. She barely had time to see them before they pushed her and she fell – down the stairs of her own house. Again, blackness and falling.

She opened her eyes and stared down at the ground. Ryan placed a hand on her shoulder and gently caressed her back,

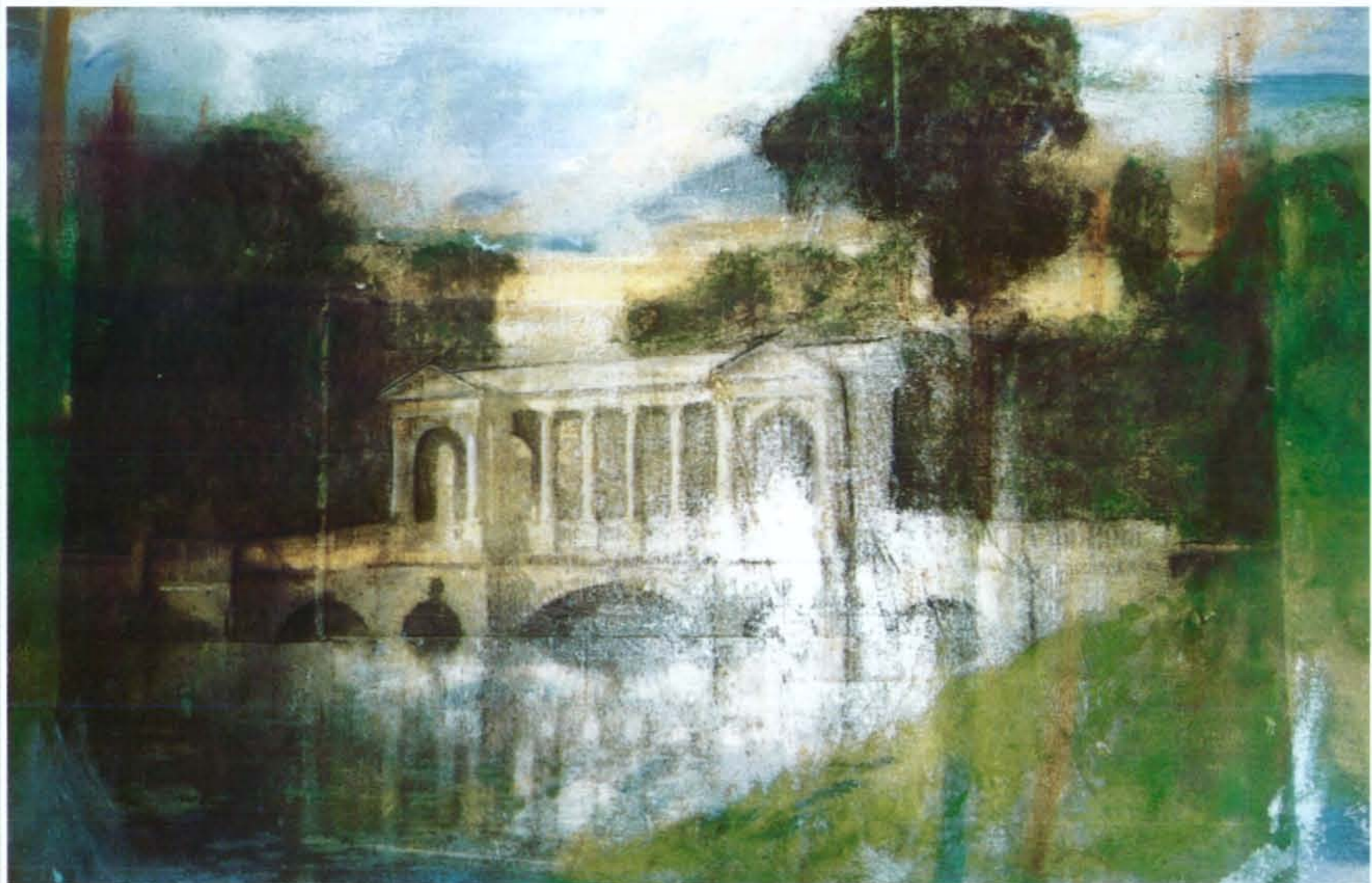
'What's wrong honey, are you in pain? Come on, let's get you home.'

Ellen whirled around to face him and Carrie. The glance at the faces in the flash had been brief – but it had been enough. She looked up at the two caring faces staring at her, sinking to her feet and not noticing her own scream of anguish. She looked up again – seeing the two faces etched on her memory reflected before her: the two people who loved her the most.

ANTONIA FORD (LVI)



Above: Edward Kaye (Ancient Virtue)  
Below: Edward Clark (Palladian Bridge)





## BEING PLAYED BY FATE

At the malleable yet inquisitive age of four, I had my first experience that the world was not the ideal place that my innocence had assumed. Each year my family would go to New England during August, spending a relaxing month in our house by the sea before we return home for the chaos of a new school year. We often went to a beach called Brewster, where by some geographical phenomenon still unknown to me to this day, the tide would retreat for three miles leaving an endless maze of pools and jagged rocks. However, towards the end of August in 1987, Hurricane Charlotte whipped off the Atlantic before any meteorologist could even blink and, as though fate was playing with me like a puppet, I found myself on the beach at Brewster. Brewster, as fate would have it, was the first place where Charlotte hit land. Before I knew what was happening my mother had me in the car and we were off. It was going to be a long time till I returned to Brewster Beach.

On that day I kept a secret that was going to affect the rest of my childhood. There was a boy on the beach that day and I said nothing to anybody as we left. His name was Michael and he was roughly my age, two months older to be precise. God, I even know his birthday. A year later I found out that he had drowned, from old newspapers found in our attic. My staggered reading and child's understanding came to the conclusion that I had killed Michael through my silence. Later on in my life I came to understand the fact I was not to blame and that anything I said that day would have gone unnoticed. But my initial conclusion stayed with me well until I was a teenager. After I had made this discovery, I wanted to leave New England. I started to have nightmares and would refuse to sleep unless my mother was in touching distance. That summer we had to leave early because of my behaviour.

Once home, my parents spent a fortune on a child psychologist in Harley Street. The treatment did not solve the problem but rather conditioned it. I don't mean to sound discourteous to those who help me, I was and still am very grateful to them but they did not solve my problem. I did not want to return to New England. This forced my parents to rent our house out for the next ten years.

Two summers ago, whilst my whole family, including myself, were enjoying a barbecue, my father proposed that we return to New England for the end of the summer. I had spent the last ten years trying to close the book on the first chapter of my life and my father's words had just thrown the unwanted pages wide open. I had to go back though for my family's sake. They had all made huge sacrifices for me in the past years and I felt that I now had the responsibility to repay them. With one very hard swallow I said with all the possible optimism that I could find in my body that I was happy to go.

The plane journey to Boston seemed endless, and twice I thought that I was going to be sick, but I said nothing. I did not want this trip to be focused around me. Since our house was still being rented out, my parents had arranged for us to stay in a friend's house overlooking Brewster Beach. I was happy that we were not staying in our old house, I think the memories would have crushed me, but still I found it hard to look out over Brewster, especially whilst the tide was out. The new environment, free from my past, allowed me to settle in albeit very slowly. My sisters, however, adapted very quickly. It seemed as though they

had never left and soon they were immersed in local gossip, having been invited to every beach barbecue for the rest of the millennium. And so I found myself on my own for most of the time. My parents had decided to give me all the space I wanted but welcomed any problems I had. I did not mind the solitude, as I hate being the centre of attention. My time alone gave me space to think. I wondered how fate had managed to knit me, Brewster, Hurricane Charlotte and Michael so closely together. I questioned whether our destiny was written by us or written for us, thus evaluating my position in the death of Michael. These thoughts did make me anxious but I still progressed with them.

Half-way through our stay my parents invited some old friends for tea, (a concept that the Americans find so amusing as they often eat only a few hours later). With my sisters out of the house and no great desire for small talk I excused myself and decided to go for a run.

Running had been my own personal therapy for the last two years. Much to the astonishment of my friends at school I actually enjoyed it. Whilst running I was focused only on finishing the course, allowing my mind to be free from all other cares. The beach was deserted, the tide was out but with the new courage that I found with my wandering thoughts, I set out onto the endless smooth surface of wet sand. The sun was setting but still the heat was unbearable. It came up at me reflected out of the white sand. Soon I found myself in a bath of sweat, and my calves ached from the extra resistance caused by the sand. I closed my eyes, ignored the pain and continued.

I lasted about a mile and then gave up to the never-ending burning sensation in my legs. I opened my eyes properly, which was difficult as my sweat irritated them. The sight that greeted me, though, made me struggle for breath. High rocks surrounded me on all sides and water was gathering at my feet. In despair I looked up and there silhouetted by the sun was Michael, unchanged, looking down on me. I felt small and defenceless again. I froze as Michael glided over the water. His face was expressionless but his arms were stretched out as though he wanted to grasp me. Just as he was about to touch me I closed my eyes again and screamed louder than I had ever done in the past ten years.

I was found by another runner just as the tides were changing. Having revived me with some sea-water, I managed to tell him where I lived and within half-an-hour I was back at home. The doctor blamed sunstroke for my fainting and advised me to go running before the sun had risen in the future. I said nothing about my vision of Michael, I did not want to bother nor did I want to cause it. However, I was curious to know where I had been found. 'Among the rocks on the edge of the beach. You must have run pretty well to get that far in such a short space of time,' my father said, his eyes filled with understanding. I knew it, the same place where Michael and I had first met. I gasped. I understood that over the years Michael had become part of me, a part, though, that I could not face. The vision had provided me with the opportunity to close, lock and seal that troubled period of my life and I had fate to thank for it.

And so I kept a second secret on Brewster Beach. I promised that I would never tell anyone about what happened that day. Since then I have only seen Michael twice. The first was a peer group induced experience that took place at boarding school which I will never repeat, and the other, well, the other is just between Michael and me.

BEN MORGAN (V), JUNIOR GAVIN MAXWELL PRIZE WINNER

## A PSYCHOLOGICAL ADAPTATION

Inside. How often do we hear this word? Used casually as a passing comment or a true feeling of the confinement within a prison, or indeed the solitary nature of a cell. For most, the term merely passes by without touching any part of their placid emotion or igniting painful memories provoking more than just curiosity. James Arnold Kilroy, or JAK as most people called him, served twelve of a fourteen year sentence at Smithfield State Penitentiary on a charge which in most cases would have received a slap on the wrist, if it hadn't been for the dope found in the lining of his Cadillac. Well, that and his physical confrontation with the district attorney, after a comment, which had 'supposedly' been made concerning his great aunt Rosa.

Many say that Jak was a peaceful man, yet there was without a doubt a certain part of him that had been suppressed and shut off from the outside world. I suppose it really depends upon what one associates with peacefulness; the tone of a man's voice, his style of dress or maybe the way he combs his hair. For face value Jak rated highly in these areas. He could even be said to look smart in a schoolboy-dressed-for-church kind of way. I feel, however, that with this man one had to look deeper, much deeper, past the partially deceptive dermis and into the true heart of one who appeared tranquil, if only for the benefit of our well-being.

Within a prison there are two doors, one for those who enter and one for those who return. Each leads to a very different life, and each, when walked back through, brings a harsh reality that leaves a man stranded, with nothing and no one but himself to turn to. The only true indication of a man's worth is where each door leads and where he is returning to. For Jak it was his home, a little town North West of Florida, where he had spent his relatively uneventful childhood alongside his mother. Like most families in the Langley district, his father had left him around the age of twelve and the last correspondence he received was from somewhere in the Canary Islands; a place Jak's father had always talked of visiting. Events such as these are never, in our day and age, the cause of disturbance in a man's mind nor are they truly reflected in his character. In fact, in the summer of 72, when he stood before that judge, he was the father of two, the possessor of a beautiful wife, the owner of a fishing boat and the director of a small real-estate agency just outside of town. These aspects of his life were, at that time, the sole importance of his being. They kept the dull little world his mother had left him in some sort of order that it seemed to make sense.

It was this life that Smithfield took from him. Like a cat playing with its catch, he was played with. Tormented and harrassed, he went about what soon became his normal life to find that nothing gets better in there, nothing changes, not even the people around you. Twelve years was a heavy price to pay for being in the wrong place at the wrong time. Although he never admitted it, it was quite clear that whatever he experienced within those four walls was more than any man can handle. There were stories that led many to believe that not only had he been beaten in there but starved for periods of more than a week at a time

so that in the end he gave up. Merely to gain nourishment he would disregard all moral standards and lower himself to a level that seemed inhuman, even for a man who was classed by those around him as no more and no less than them, but purely another in the circle of crime. This life, if you can call it that, had encompassed Jak to the extent that when the day came, he was, as the day he had entered, unprepared. It was a particularly windy day in August 1984. The new warden at Smithfield State came to him and stood outside his cell with the 'yellow envelope'. This was known well within the prison as a sign that you were on your way out, or in some inmate's cases merely a tormenting act by the warden. He was led by a guard three hundred and fifty yards, through twelve security gates to a room seen by him only once before, twelve years ago. Yet in this instance there seemed to be something missing from the picture. As he looked around he could see all but the comforting arms of his wife Matilda or the warm embrace of his children. Then it struck him that not only were they not there but he had not spoken to any of them in nearly seven years. It was this fact that gave him the initial taste of what life was going to be like from this day forward. As he stepped into the prison courtyard he took one last glance at the tall red-brick building that surrounded him before lowering himself into a cab.

Jak arrived in Langley later that afternoon and stood at the bottom of his garden watching as he saw a man in his early fifties embracing his Matilda. Strangely, the longer he stood there the less she seemed like his wife, until soon he was standing in the garden of a complete stranger. He belonged to nobody but himself. It was this image that finally killed James Kilroy. He was found later that year hanging from a tree that stood about half a mile out of town, dressed in nothing but a blue shirt with the number 24670 stamped on a patch in the top left hand corner. Matilda Kilroy received a letter that day saying merely this: 'With a prison there are two doors, one for those who enter and one for those who return. Each leads to a very different life, and each when walked back through bears a harsh reality that leaves a man stranded, with nothing and no-one but himself to turn to. The only true indication of a man's worth is where each door leads and where he is returning to'.

LOUIS BUCKWORTH (V)

### LIFE UNDERSTOOD?

*The balance, equality, the ying-yang  
Of the natural world –  
Darkness meets light  
Leaving us understood.*

*Black and white but no grey.  
Science is what religion is not.  
Genesis leads to Genes.  
Is destiny a path or a book?*

*The facts come, the facts go.  
I know who I am,  
But where do I go?*

BEN MORGAN (V)

# OLD



# STOIC

# PAGES



## LEAVERS 2000

Some of this year's Upper Sixth leavers, from top to bottom:  
Cobham House  
Temple House  
Grenville House  
Chandos House

## NORTH AMERICAN TOUR

Just before Easter, the Headmaster, Anthony Shillington (Development Director) and Cherry McInnes (Development Executive) set off to visit Old Stoics and Friends of Stowe on the North American continent. It was the first such visit for some fifteen years.

The aims were to form a North American Friends of Stowe group as a basis to closer links between Stowe and its North American alumni and well-wishers, and also to spread the word in person about the Campaign for Stowe, so that seeds would be sown which would lead to North America being the source of ten per cent of the total funds eventually raised. A good start was made to the realisation of both of these objectives.

Time, at a premium always during the School year, was limited to two weeks, so in the attempt to make contact with as many people as possible, we aimed for the venues most appropriate to our database of invitees. In between receptions we met with many other Old Stoics and people with an interest in Stowe.

Hardly surprisingly, the East Coast featured most strongly and receptions were held in New York, Washington and Boston. We also visited beautiful Monticello (the home of the Thomas Jefferson Foundation) to make closer our links with a number of heritage-loving individuals who had made the pilgrimage to Stowe last year in Thomas Jefferson's footsteps.

The venue choice for Canada was difficult as Canadian Old Stoics are so widely scattered. From the snow of Toronto we switched into more casual attire and headed west. The Huntington Library near Los Angeles was an essential stop and Mary Robertson, the curator, provided a small group of



Lunch al fresco in Washington with John Carter Brown



At The Brook, in New York, Anthony Shillington, David Johnson, Cherry McInnes, Hugh Williamson-Noble and the Headmaster



Judge George Sprague and his wife Lee who hosted the Boston event



At The Brook, our special guests the British Ambassador, Sir Jeremy Greenstock [left] and his wife, with Norman Eddy and the Headmaster



In Washington, [from left] Christopher Walton (Stowe Governor) with Mrs Walton, Brian Hecht, Jim Burns and Jeremy Nichols



At the home of Roberts and Kathy Owen in Washington, Anne Sakellariadis and Nick Kingsland [left], Nessa Kingsland and Spiro Sakellariadis [right]

Stowe-minded people with a wonderful but all too brief tour round the Stowe Collection, giving us a taste of the whole Museum and Gardens that left us hungry to return. Then finally to San Francisco, our last reception of the tour and a memorable finale it was.

Everywhere we went we encountered such optimism and enthusiasm for Stowe, and indeed for the Campaign, that it is difficult to pick out individuals. I hope that the selection of pictures taken during the tour will capture the essence of the goodwill and optimism which we felt.

CHERRY MCINNES



Skip Judd



At the Huntington Museum in Los Angeles, Mary Robertson [curator] and a volunteer assistant show off a map of Stowe dated 1843 to Diana Morgan, Julia Gardner-Laing, Noorna Eversole and the Headmaster



Matt Rader, our OS guide at



Jim and Paula Carney



Chez Peter and Sheena Levitt in Toronto. Nick Arden, John Wild and Nicholas Woodbridge



Kathy and Roberts Owen



The Tweedie brothers, Malcolm and Bronson



Chris and David Lerman flew in from Arizona to be at the San Francisco reception



Jack Balderston



Hugh Campion



D'arcy Dakin in Toronto



Peter Levitt against a "white out" in Toronto

Left: Relaxed drinks in San Francisco hosted by Johnathan Edwards (centre) and, left to right, Brian Tickler, the Headmaster, JE, Richard Saville, Peter Williams and Martin Dew

## A GAP YEAR IN INDIA

Tom Dent writes about his recent explorations of Indian music and culture.



When I decided to take a Gap Year, I knew it would have to involve music in some way. Whilst I had been at Stowe, music was my main hobby and my bands had recorded various 'demos'.

Indian music had always interested me. It was something that I could not really comprehend. There has always been a huge market for this calm beautiful music, and I wanted to be quite experimental. Eventually I tried mixing all kinds of music together. This was a huge task, as although this was not an original idea, as the Beatles had done the same thing, I still hoped to create an original sound.

So my Gap Year task was to travel from the southernmost point in India right up to Kashmir in the north, with the aim of absorbing Indian music by seeing concerts wherever I went and learning about the distinct different styles.

These ranged from Southern Indian music, which is dramatic and soft, to that of Goa, an integration of Portuguese and Indian music which could be described as folk. In the north carnatic classical music is played. This is where I studied the sitar, in Varanasi, for seven weeks.

Varanasi is the centre of Indian classical music, as well as being one of the holiest cities in India, as the river Ganges runs through it. This is definitely where I felt India's spirituality the most.

Life and death go hand in hand here, as the people believe that if you die in Varanasi and your body is placed into the river, you may go straight to heaven. So crematoria burn bodies on the side of the river. However, some people who cannot afford the wood for the burning are weighted and dropped into the water. At times bodies can be seen floating down the river. But at the same time wedding celebrations and christenings take place close by. It is the most exceptional celebration of life and death I have ever seen.

Every night down on the main ghat (or washing area) there would be a service, held by a priest, for the river Ganges, the mother of India, who brings life to the land. Here floating candles were put out on the river, each representing a wish or prayer. It was an amazing sight. Some nights hundreds of candles were out on the river. This celebration



intrigued me so much that I went nearly every night for seven weeks.

I studied in the International Music Ashram, a very famous school in the back streets of Varanasi. It is run by a big family, who invite students into their house. The house is five hundred years old and has been passed down from generation to generation.

My sitar teacher was eighty-four and had been studying since the age of fourteen, so he was incredibly good. He is a very small man, who hobbles around always chewing paan (tobacco), perpetually smiling to show blackened teeth and gums. If anything I saw in India was representative of India's mystique, he was it. I was very privileged to be taught by him.

I spent on average seven hours a day with him for seven weeks so, as you can imagine, we became very close. But it was very hard work and some days we would play until my fingers bled.

At night, I would hang out with the local musicians, and classical music concerts were our entertainment. These concerts were very personal, close and casual, unlike in the rest of India. This is where I was able to probe deeper into the music culture. I also had to re-learn musical scales as Indian notes are called Sa, Re, Ga, Ma, Pa, Dha, Re, Sa. Indian phrasing and beats are also very different from those of western music.

The sitar has seven strings, normally tuned in C, which are struck with the right hand. Depending on the type of sitar there are usually thirteen strings underneath, which are not struck but reverberate off the other strings. However, scales are only played on the bottom string. It's not as complicated as it sounds. I bought a sitar in

Varanasi, and although my Gap Year is over, I am still very much enjoying playing the sitar and the new avenue of music I have found.

As well as learning about music on my travels, I also did many other things, such as teaching 13 to 18-year-olds English in Goa. I also taught Tibetan refugees and Buddhist monks English in Dara Masala.

After leaving Varanasi I went to Nepal to go trekking in the Himalayas. I also went white water rafting, and learnt how to drive elephants in the Chitwan National Park. These are some of the highlights of the many things I did.

I must finish this short account of what I did with a huge "thank you" to the Old Stoic Society, whose Gap Year Award made the whole thing possible for me.



## LORD ANNAN

Pillar of the liberal Establishment who was not afraid to support a cause because it was highly fashionable – or deeply unfashionable

Through the long years of his retirement Noel Annan maintained a reputation as one of the most controversial academics of his time, and he was still dividing opinion at the end of last year with his essays about 'Mentors, Eccentrics and Geniuses' he had known, collected in his last book, *The Dons*. It was a sequel to the work for which he will probably be best remembered, *Our Age: Portrait of a Generation* (1990). Coming from such an Establishment figure – the epitome of the Great and the Good – that book had been a surprisingly waspish attack on those who, in the opinion of its author, had let down liberal values and been content to act as apologists for communism or just for socialism. It symbolised the ideological journey that Annan had made since the days in 1964 when, as still a relatively young Provost of King's College, Cambridge, he had been expected to join Harold Wilson's Labour Government as some kind of cultural or educational tsar.

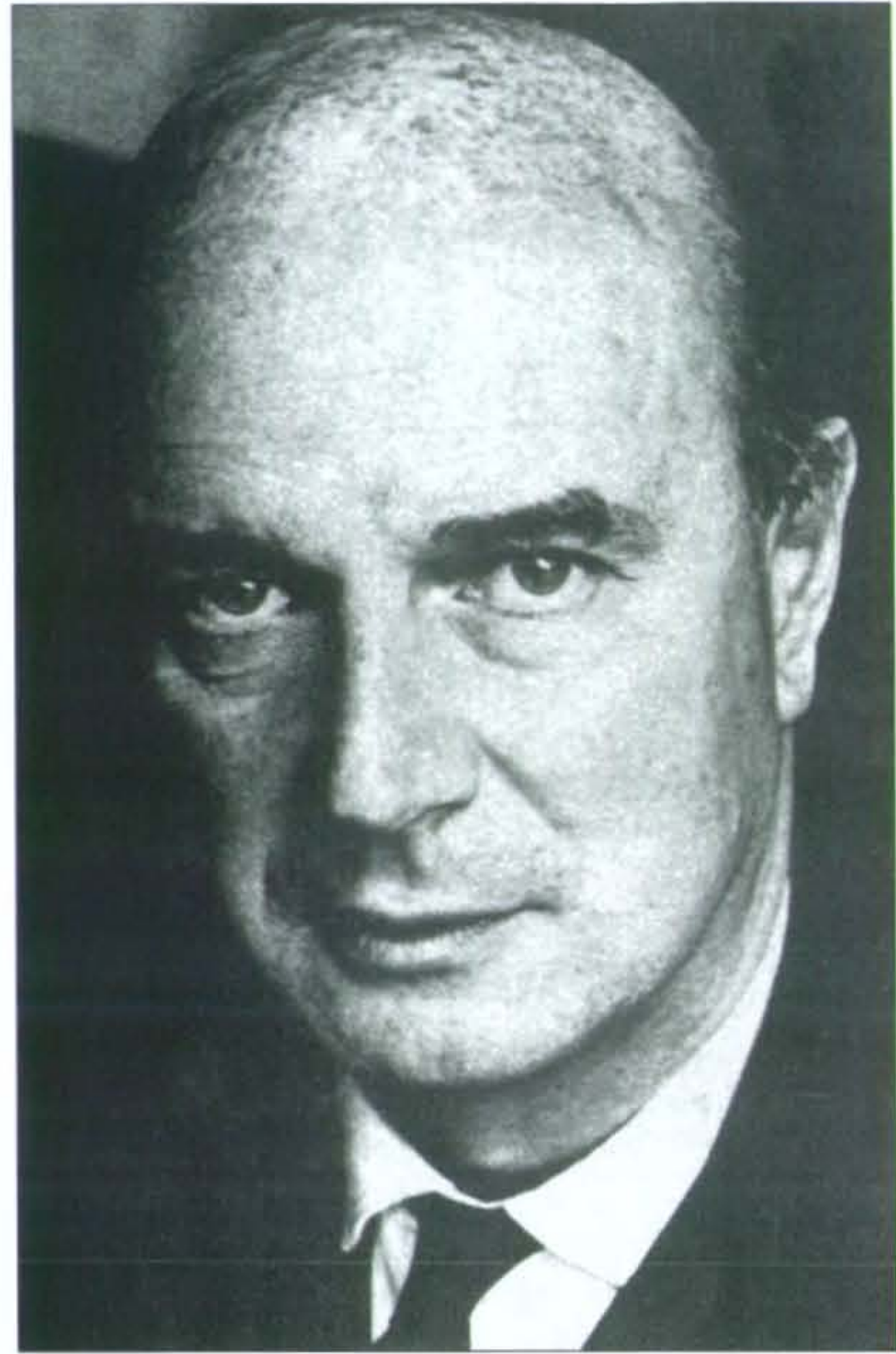
But in truth his move to the right had been going on much longer. During the Thatcher years his own regular assaults on such institutions as the universities and even the BBC led to his being accused, even by some old friends, of a *trahison des cleres*. Annan, though, robustly fought his corner – and he was a man with whom it was notoriously imprudent to tangle, particularly in the correspondence columns.

Noel Gilroy Annan (whose first Christian name derived from the date of his birth) was the son of Company Director, J.G. Annan. His mother was American, formerly Fanny Quinn of New York. He was educated at Stowe and was much influenced by its first headmaster, J.F. Roxburgh, of whom he wrote a perceptive biography in 1965. He later became a governor of the school for more than 20 years (1945-1966). He won an exhibition to King's and went up to Cambridge in 1935. After a double first in History, he stayed up for a further year and took Part 2 of the Law Tripos.

In 1939 he joined the Army, and for four years he served in Military Intelligence. He then joined the political division of the Control Commission in Germany, ending as a Lieutenant Colonel. In this role he did his best to persuade the military government of occupied Germany that the German politicians of the future must be allowed to emerge. He himself favoured Kurt Schumacher's Social Democratic Party, but he also intervened to have Dr Adenauer released from house arrest. Among the Germans whom he encouraged in those days was his future colleague at London University, Ralf Dahrendorf. His services were recognised by the award of the OBE (Military).

King's had elected him a fellow in 1944 on the strength of his reputation, John Maynard Keynes being one of his keenest supporters. In 1947 he was able to rejoin the college as an assistant tutor, and in the following year he became a university lecturer in politics. Tutoring involves close contacts with undergraduates, many of them in those days mature ex-servicemen, and Annan greatly enjoyed this, lecturing brilliantly.

He enhanced his reputation by appearances on *The Brains Trust* in the early days of the BBC Third Programme,



by his biography of Leslie Stephen (1951), which won the James Tait Black Memorial Prize, and by *The Intellectual Aristocracy*, a fascinating contribution to a volume of essays presented to G.M. Trevelyan in 1956. It was still, however, something of a sensation when, at the age of 39, he was elected Provost of King's.

The ten years of his provostship coincided with rapid changes in the university world. Never one to lag behind a trend, he became a leader in reforms in his own college, in the university at large and as, his reputation grew, in the world beyond. Within the university he was chairman of two committees which produced massive and radical reports on its administrative structure and on the relationship between university and college teaching. He also played an active part in the academic development of several of the new universities. He was chairman of a committee on the teaching of Russian in schools (1960) and from 1956 to 1960 he was a governor of Queen Mary College, which gave him his first experience of the University of London.

In 1966 he became a member and later vice-chairman of the Newsom-Donnison Commission on Public Schools, which reported in 1968 and 1970. He was made a Commander of the Royal Order of King George 1 of the Hellenes in 1962 and created a life peer by Harold Wilson in 1965.

King's, both before and after the war, was the deepest influence on his life; perhaps one should add his membership of the Apostles, but the two are hard to disentangle. He once summed the matter up in a newspaper interview: 'Two men at King's influenced me by their example. Morgan Forster taught more that if you forsake the private life of friends you debase yourself. But Keynes believed that you could combine



the private life with service in public affairs – and that if you heard the call to make your country a better place you have a duty to obey it.’

King’s was the easiest place to follow Forster’s precept, but Annan never sought an easy path, and love of his country was one of his deepest feelings. On Keynes’ principle he needed a wider field. Furthermore, when he accepted the provostship he told the fellows that since he had been elected so young, he would not remain in office until retiring age. For that reason – any political hopes he had nurtured having been disappointed – his transformation in 1966 to University College London, in succession to Sir Ifor Evans, was a natural one.

This was a multi-faculty college, equal in size to one of the smaller universities and in quality second to none. Annan’s vigorous scepticism exactly suited the college. So did his sympathy with students among whom he was always popular. He often disagreed with their current views, but they knew that with him they would always get a sympathetic discussion (not just a hearing) and a clear and reasoned answer. His tenure of the office, during a difficult period, was a success; and so was his contribution to the counsels of the university.

The year 1970 was a turning-point for him. In May the final and very radical report of Donnison committee appeared, and a few days later it was announced that Annan was to be chairman of a committee to investigate the long-term future of broadcasting. In June the Conservatives were returned to power; the Donnison report was shelved and his broadcasting appointment was cancelled. Resilience was one of Annan’s chief characteristics, and he was no more cast down by this than by Cambridge’s failure to implement several of the reforms his committees had recommended. In any event, the causes he considered most important were changing.

During his time at King’s the enemy was usually in the past, and his views roughly coincided with what was considered progressive in the educational sense. But he hated dogma and repudiated the label of ‘progressive’. He preferred to describe himself as a whig. During his London period, the causes which most needed support – and constantly got it from him – were high academic standards, discipline, hard work and a sense of what the individual owes to the community. In the somewhat clouded academic scene of that time he stood for useful frankness. He never shrank from actions or words which might have made things difficult for him, particularly with his student body, but usually didn’t, because his virtues were appreciated.

Examples of his willingness to help were his report on disturbances at Essex University, published in 1974, and his vigorous intervention in 1975 in the troubles of the North London Polytechnic, of which he knew nothing until he was asked to help by the forces of moderation.

When Labour came back to power in 1974 the Committee on the Future of Broadcasting was revived, and he was made chairman. This was a mammoth task, which was accomplished without apparent strain. The report, which set a new standard of style, appeared in 1977, and for a time he was busy defending it in speeches and on television: but the dust gathered on it, once again there was a change of government, and Annan moved on without regret to other things.

After long discussions the University of London had decided that it needed a full-time Vice-Chancellor, which it

had never had before. Annan was the obvious candidate, and he was appointed in 1978. It was a totally different job from the provostship of University College: less concerned with personalities and detail, more with organisation and policy. As such he found it a contrast, but it soon proved different in another sense, since his term of office coincided with the first impact of the Tory Government’s cuts in spending on universities.

As Vice-Chancellor, he was as active, radical and optimistic as before. His radicalism proved an advantage: he loved new ideas, conjured them up and he had them examined, so that when the financial storm was at its height various ways of battenning hatches had at least been considered and the concept was not a novelty.

Anyone worth his salt, Annan once said, could do two full-time jobs, simultaneously. The commissions and inquiries which he undertook during his 15 years at the University of London showed that he lived up to his principle. He also found time for other work that appealed to his personal tastes. He was a long-time director of the Royal Opera House; for 17 years he was a trustee of the British Museum and he resigned only in 1980, when the trustees of the National Gallery, to whom he had been appointed in 1978, made him their chairman.

He remained chairman of the National Gallery for five years, and it probably gave him more pleasure than any other appointment, even though he had to preside over the ludicrous proposal for a privately funded extension to the gallery which saw scheme after scheme founder. However, before the end of his chairmanship he had been able to set in train the far better scheme made possible by the generosity of the Sainsbury family.

Until he retired from London University even Annan could not find time to write another book, to his own regret and that of his friends. He kept his hand in by writing many articles and reviews in a style all of his own: scintillating and provocative, willing to shock but never ashamed to express deep emotions, both personal and public. These qualities can be seen at their finest in *A Man I Loved* – the title was typical of him – a celebration of Maurice Bowra in a volume edited in 1974 by Hugh Lloyd-Jones.

Once he had retired, he could get back to writing books. His first task was to produce a revised edition of *Leslie Stephen*, which was published in 1984. Much material had become available since 1951 and Annan’s own interests had developed.

Annan was a man of exceptional energy, physical as well as mental, sustained by regular tennis and swimming, for which he always made time. He was a fluent and persuasive speaker as well as writer. He was active in the House of Lords, where he often spoke, usually as an expert on subjects such as education, broadcasting and the arts, where he had specialist knowledge to contribute. Originally a Labour peer, he later sat on the crossbenches. Being so vigorous in debate, never despising the arts of showmanship or refraining from supporting any cause because it was either highly fashionable or deeply unfashionable, he acquired some critics and a few enemies, but his enemies were fewer than his opponents, and to most who knew him personally his company was a joy.

In 1950 he married the literary critic Gabriele Ullstein, who survives him along with their two daughters.

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# Book Reviews

## THE DONS: MENTORS, ECCENTRICS AND GENIUSES

Peter Farquhar reviews Lord Annan's last book

Lord Annan's survey of Oxford and Cambridge dons over the past two centuries will surely be judged by posterity as one of his most significant and enduring achievements. Published in November 1999, and completed only a few months before his death, it provides a remarkable insight into the evolution and workings of England's two oldest and most influential universities. Furthermore, given the current drive towards economy and egalitarianism in further education, it vindicates the élitism of Oxford and Cambridge in a rational and measured fashion, with all the authority of a former Provost of King's College, Cambridge, Vice-chancellor of the University of London, and eminent historian of ideas, as he demonstrates the immense contribution which the senior universities have made on both a national and an international scale.

The book begins with an analysis of the dynasties of intellectual families, as these emerged in the Nineteenth Century from the roots of evangelical Christianity, Quaker philanthropy and the philosophic radicalism of the Unitarians. These groups combined the twin objectives of intellectual freedom, irrespective of religious belief, and the creation of a public service which depended upon talent rather than patronage.

Thereafter, Lord Annan illustrates this process, and its development into the mid-Twentieth Century, through a series of individual portraits of a heterogeneous selection of celebrated dons who were generally larger than life figures and extremely influential teachers.

Annan confesses at the outset the difficulty in hazarding such a selection which is, of course, bound to be personal to some degree. If the book has a weakness, it is in the two chapters where Annan is closest to home and therefore at his least objective. The chapter on 'The Don as Scholar' is too preoccupied with the History Faculty at Cambridge and provides too easy an excuse for an attack on Geoffrey Elton.

Similarly, King's College receives too big a slice of attention, with excessive focus on the self-indulgent antics of a group of college eccentrics who cannot truly be compared with the great figures portrayed elsewhere in the book or, indeed, with some who were omitted altogether. Nevertheless, it is illuminating to see how homo-erotically inspired loyalty to young friends led to the King's tradition of Fellows perceiving themselves to be teaching 'men not subjects', acting as guides, philosophers and friends to the youths in their charge, and to the formation of the Apostles. Moreover, it is remarkable that a single College contemporaneously accommodated the homosexual geniuses of E.M. Forster, Maynard Keynes and Dadie Rylands. Again, one could quarrel over the matter of balance. It would have been interesting to have received more about Keynes' contribution to college and university.

The chapter on Rylands is brilliant and moving, explaining his influence in restoring the pronunciation of Blank Verse in Shakespeare, both for understanding the poetry and in dramatic productions. At Stowe, we recently heard Sir Peter Hall extolling the same virtue: testimony indeed to Rylands' educative influence. The close involvement of the three great

Kingsmen with the Bloomsburys also receives appropriate mention. It is fascinating that Lord Annan knew so many of his subjects as colleagues and personal friends. However, one must wonder if, occasionally, objectivity loses out to adulation. He concludes his chapter on Rylands by quoting Plato on Socrates:-

*Of all men whom we met at that time, he was the wisest, justest and best.*

Anyone reading English at Cambridge at any time between 1930 and 1960 will know that the dominant intellectual influence was not Rylands but Leavis. When I was up in the late sixties, few undergraduates in English outside King's had much heard of Rylands, whereas the Scrutiny School had influenced the teaching of the subject world-wide. It is disappointing that Leavis is given scant reference in this book, his primary mention being early in the chapter on Rylands, who saw Leavis to be too exclusive and to encourage mindlessly dismissive prig-gishness in the young. This criticism may have substance but the book seems incomplete without Annan's own more detailed observations on one of the primary intellectual influences in Twentieth Century Cambridge. As we know to our advantage at Stowe, Lord Annan was a passionate Kingsman, who could warm to his subjects with great intensity. It is due to him, more than to any other Old Stoic, that J.F. Roxburgh was established, probably justly, in posthumous reputation as the greatest public school headmaster of his day. The loyalty which Roxburgh earned from Annan was inherited by Rylands.

Not that the former Provost of King's and author of the Annan Report on broadcasting is not prepared to wield the knife himself. He vitriolically condemns Christopher Hitchens' posthumous questioning the distinction of Isaiah Berlin, snapping that when Hitchens 'tangles with Berlin's notions of pluralism and liberalism', he 'shows himself incompetent to handle either'.

Neither, more significantly, does Annan spare the late Warden of All Souls', John Sparrow, whose donnish wit Annan himself shares as well as appreciates. Annan, a brilliant and enlightened educational administrator himself, clearly sees Sparrow's appointment to the Wardenship of Oxford's most concentratedly distinguished academic fellowship as a disastrous misjudgement. His presentation of the disunity of the Fellows in attempting to make an appointment is rich in metaphorical humour:-

*Many names surfaced, like apples in a cask of brandy, only to be hit sharply on the head to sink to the bottom. A majority could always be found to keep someone out.*

Then, 'after a term of delectable intrigue', they appointed Sparrow, who clung on to the post for twenty-five years, lazy and selfish, 'the most notorious reactionary in Oxford', delighting in controversy for its own sake, dismissing his colleagues at All Souls' during the Suez crisis as 'a hot-bed of cold feet', and writing to the national newspapers suggesting that Oxford's traffic problems would be solved by diverting the Thames along the High.

It would, however, be outrageous to suggest that *The Dons* is simply a confection of adulation, anecdote and wit. The chapters on Newman at Oriel, Jowett at Balliol, Thomson and Rutherford (the two great scientists at Trinity, Cambridge), Bowra at Wadham and, most recently, Isaiah Berlin, are no mere vignettes. Rather, they are lucid and economic appraisals of these towering figures, both as individuals and in terms of their emergence from, and, at their greatest, redirection of, their varying ideological contexts.

Lord Annan provides a remarkable analysis of Newman's rhetorical and spiritual powers, of the influence of the Tractarian Movement, of the tension between Newman's 'Idea of a University' and his assertion that 'knowledge must be guided and purified by religion', of his determined aim that Oxford should 'guide and purify the church'. Annan shows how Newman's charisma was unmatched. With increasing specialisation and size, no future don would be able to appeal to a whole university as Newman had done. Both in this chapter and in the following one on Benjamin Jowett, the radical theological antithesis to Newman, who, according to Leslie Stephen, "stood at the parting of the ways, writing 'No thoroughfare' upon them all", Annan illustrates the extraordinarily exclusive triangle of power in Nineteenth Century England: the Government, the Church of England and Oxford University. He also goes on to show how, with the establishment of the Cavendish Laboratories in 1869, and the appointment of J.J. Thomson as Professor of Physics and Master of Trinity, succeeded by Ernest Rutherford, who, with Sir John Cockcroft, was to split the atom in 1932, Cambridge became the world centre of science.

The brilliance of Maurice Bowra and Isaiah Berlin are richly informed by Lord Annan's long friendship with both. Bowra, Warden of Wadham, was a polymath who ignored the Cambridge revolution in criticism effected by I.A. Richards, F.R. Leavis and William Empson in the 1920s. As President of the British Academy, Bowra had immense learning and declared that 'the rule of life was to read poetry, to live by it and with it and to turn to it for wisdom'. Annan is able to illustrate from personal experience Bowra's extraordinary powers of oratory, declaring that 'in invention, rapidity and fantasy (his wit) was heir to Sydney Smith' (also from Oxford). It is in this chapter that the author is himself at his most lyrical. We read that Bowra's 'conversation resembled a naval battle of old':-

*Like the 'Royal Sovereign' breaking the line at Trafalgar, all cannon double-shotted, he fired deafening broadsides. Spars ignited, mizzen top masts crashed to the decks, studding sails were blown overboard, splinters ricocheted, inflicting fearful wounds on friend and foe alike.*

Or again, when Bowra was giving an oration at a memorial service:-

*The air was so dark with the arrows he despatched, like Apollo spreading the plague among the Grecian host before Troy, that you half-expected groans to arise from the congregation and the guilty to totter forth from St. Mary's and expire stricken on the steps of the Radcliffe.*

One can only hope in this review, that such excerpts from *The Dons* might encourage others to share in the enjoyment experienced by this reviewer as he read Lord Annan's last great achievement. It is a joy to celebrate an Old Stoic as one of England's primary intellectuals in the latter part of the Twentieth Century.

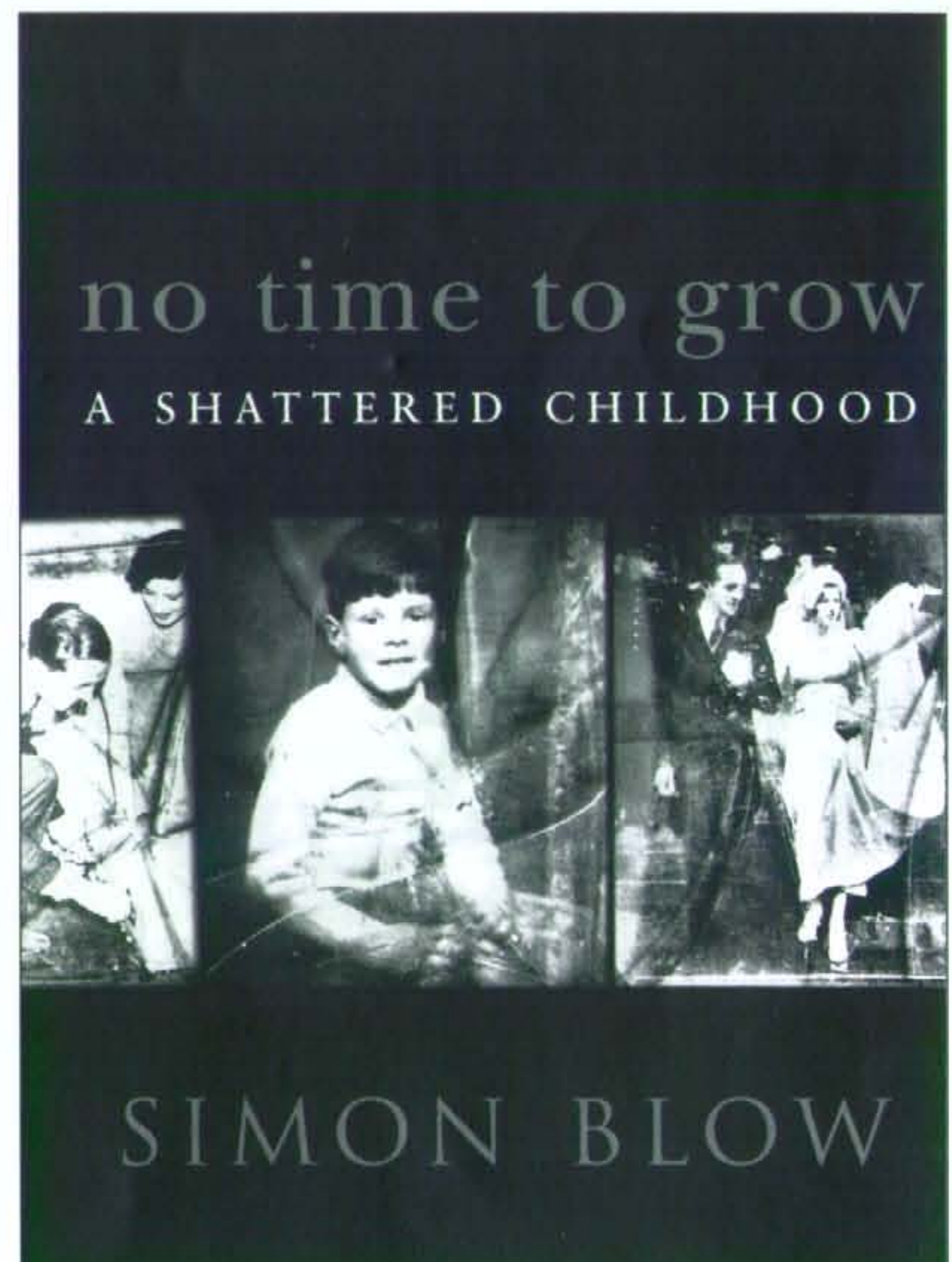
## NO TIME TO GROW

Simon Blow's volume of autobiography  
(John Murray, 1999)

As the subtitle, *A Shattered Childhood*, hints, this is an account of the pains of growing up without any of that basic family security which most of us take for granted. In particular it chronicles the violent alcoholism of the author's father and the devastating physical and mental effect it had on his mother. As the tragedy unfolds, Simon's rich, well-connected relations look on at a distance, largely pretending that it all isn't happening, like an uncomprehending ancient Greek chorus.

This sounds a harrowing, hard read. In fact it is a compelling one. The elegance of the writing balances the sadness of the subject matter. The no-holds-barred candour is leavened with a deep sensitivity. And the story is told – and this seems the book's greatest strength – from the eyes of the child. As he slowly grows up, so too his perspective on those around him changes, subtly and significantly. We find ourselves, therefore, growing up with him, becoming part of the family, and getting deeply drawn into all its conflict, pain and love. It is a very fine piece of writing. As Jilly Cooper put it, "It's terribly sad, terribly funny, beautifully observed and required reading".

AGM



## TALES FROM THE TAY

Brigadier Duncan Hyslop (Romvi Press, 1999)

This is a book of great wisdom and illumination, as one would expect from such an accomplished countryman. It brings Scotland vividly to life. You can almost smell the heather and hear the river roll along. Rich in wit and anecdote, and even in places distinctly racy, it is surely set fair to become a classic of its genre.

MWG

## WAS THIS MAN A SAINT?

Rebecca Fowler reviews a new book on Leonard Cheshire. Extract by permission of the *Daily Mail*.

As President Nehru waved goodbye to his shy afternoon tea guest, and watched him disappear down the drive, he was overcome with emotion. He turned slowly to the aide beside him with tears in his eyes. On the surface his meeting with Leonard Cheshire, some 42 years ago, appeared to have been a disaster. The Englishman had wanted to persuade Nehru to allow him rights to some Indian land, where he dreamed of building his latest home for the poor. But Cheshire was so overwhelmed with shyness he was unable to utter a word. Instead, their china tea cups had clinked awkwardly over the silence. No matter to Nehru. He had already read of Cheshire's remarkable dedication to lost causes; he had heard of the war-time hero's passionate conversion to Catholicism; and he was familiar with the hundreds of homes he had set up for the sick and unwanted. The meeting was just a formality. "That was the greatest man I have met since Gandhi," he told his aide, as he wiped his tears away. "Give him all the land he wants."

For a man destined for greatness, Leonard Cheshire had an unremarkable beginning. The son of a university don, he was born into a loving, middle class family in Oxford, in 1917. Although he was popular at school, with pupils and teachers alike, his reports cheerfully described him as "not terribly good at anything". There were few pointers to the extraordinary journey that he would later make; no hint of the feted war hero, who would witness the dropping of the atom bomb; or of the devout Roman Catholic convert who would turn his life over to God; or of the greatest, unsung champion of the poor.

Only now has the true extent of his courage and faith emerged, as his story is told in full for the first time in a new book. It shows how he shone a light on the world's most desperate people, and how those who knew him considered him a saint...

In his final year at Oxford all the lights began going out in Europe. After months of speculation World War II was a reality. Cheshire awaited his RAF call-up with all the impatience of an adventurous schoolboy. One day that exuberance would dissolve into agonising despair. But at the outset all he felt was a sense that war was little more than "legalised excitement".

In 1940 he flew his first sortie to France. It was a disappointment: not enough glamour. But his ardour for flying returned when he went on his debut night-time mission and came under gunfire. Cheshire was thrilled. "I understood suddenly the priceless, gripping attraction of night bombing,"

he said. He also learned, crucially, that he felt no fear. At last he could shine. Flying and combat were his passions and he had a gift for them...

Although the reality of war grew sharper by the day with each fresh casualty, Cheshire's nerves of steel protected him. After only 15 months in the air he was awarded the DSO. It was not until he lost his flying mentor that the darkness of war hit him. He was stunned when Frank "Lofty" Long did not come back. Cheshire had believed him to be one of the indestructibles, like himself...

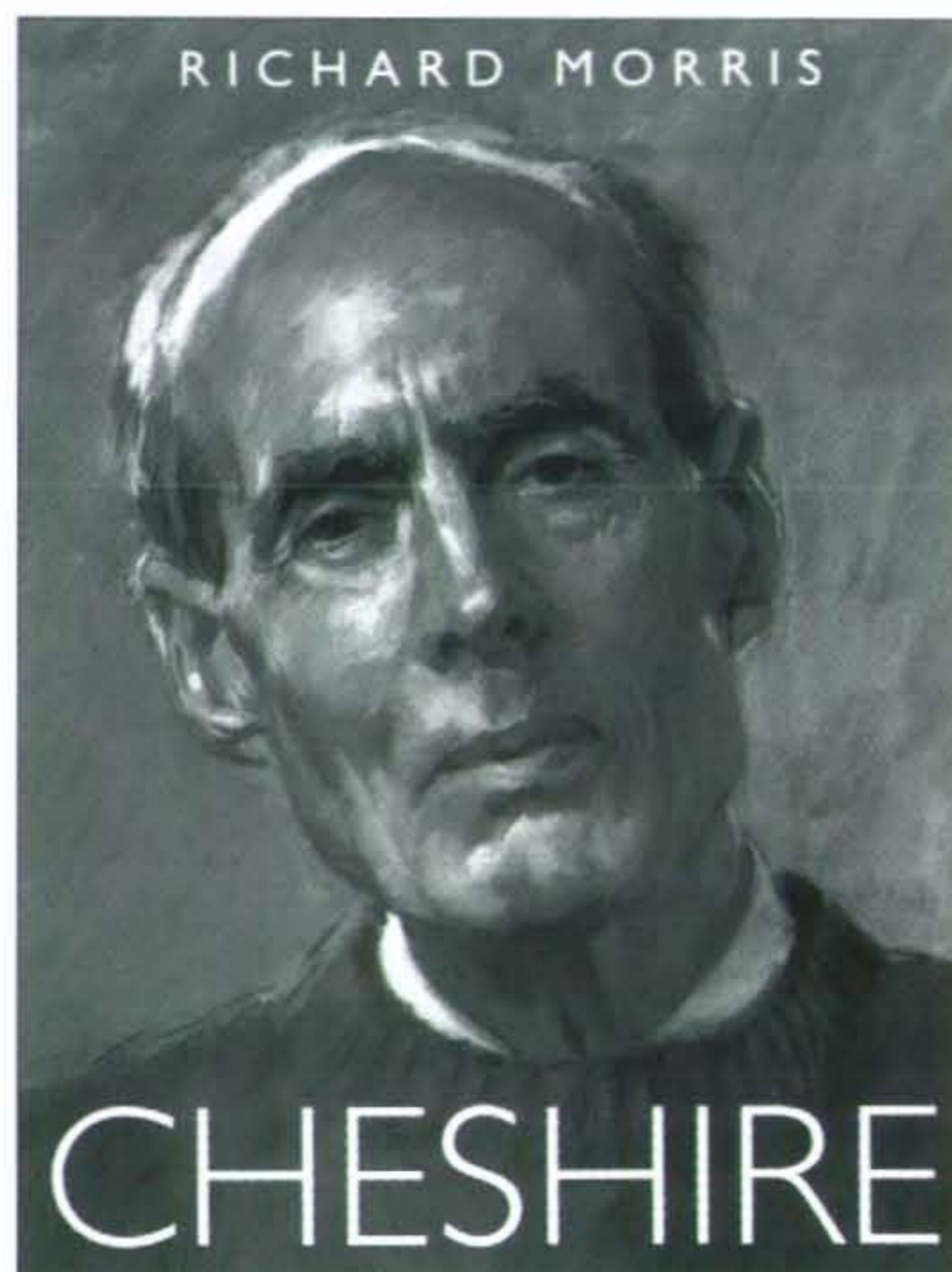
There were impressive promotions, awards and accolades. In 1943 he was hungry for an even more dramatic part in the action and he joined 617 Squadron, perhaps the most daring in the RAF. Within a few months they were faced with their most dangerous challenge so far: to bomb Munich. many considered it a suicide mission. After Berlin, it was the most heavily defended city in the Reich. Cheshire

summoned up every last bit of flair and instinct while flying over Munich. The bombs were dropped on target, and the city below lit up like an enormous pyre. Shortly afterwards he was summoned to London where, to his genuine surprise, he was awarded the Victoria Cross. He became a superstar overnight...

The turning-point came at the close of the war when he witnessed first-hand from a B-29 an atom bomb being dropped on Nagasaki. Cheshire wore protective sunglasses to watch the fireball rise up in a terrible beauty, as it annihilated half the city. The view was etched on Cheshire's soul for ever. By the time he returned to Britain he was on the verge of collapse. He was torn to shreds by the loss of innocence, the heartbreaking list of friends who perished, the

letters from their widows and by that last great light of the war which had wiped out 40,000 lives...

After the war, still disillusioned, Cheshire began to dream of a commune, where soldiers and their families would live together in self-sufficient harmony as "colonists" growing their own crops. The result was Gumley Hall, a rambling estate with 2,000 acres in Leicestershire. Although problems quickly surfaced he bought a second property, Le Court in Hampshire. Although he managed to raise the funds, the purchase brought him to the brink of ruin. His "colonists" had nearly all left and he had debts of £20,000. But an unannounced visitor was about to transform Cheshire's vision beyond recognition. Arthur Dykes was suffering from terminal liver cancer, had no family to speak of and no wish to spend his last days in hospital. Cheshire knew instinctively he should care for Arthur. He fed him, washed his pyjamas and sheets and sat for hours with him as he struggled with the pain. In those precious days Arthur, a committed Catholic, became his inspiration. Cheshire was convinced his homes had a new future. They should provide shelter for anyone, however sick or disturbed...



## THE SORCERER'S APPRENTICE

Al Bianco reviews a new book, a piece of autobiography,  
from John Richardson, Picasso's biographer

Provence is the setting for much of this volume of autobiography by Old Stoic art critic John Richardson. And, in particular, the Chateau de Castille in Provence, where he lived with the rich and controversial art expert, Douglas Cooper. "Picasso, Provence and Douglas Cooper" is the book's subtitle and the order is not insignificant. The portrait of Picasso is a riveting one: mischievous, predatory, constantly in need of reassurance of his greatness. And Richardson gives a most moving picture of the emergence of Picasso's new mistress, Jacqueline Roque. Provence too is brought fully to life, a haven for the complex circle of artists and socialites in which Richardson so adroitly seems to move. Paradoxically, the man who made the whole book possible, Douglas Cooper, emerges with the least rounded portrait, for all the vivid colouring. We get to know his colonnaded Chateau well, its walls covered by masterpieces by Braque, Leger and Juan Gris as well as Picasso. We follow the often tempestuous association of the two men, which began in London in 1949 and ended with Cooper burning Richardson's possessions on a pyre in the garden of the chateau some twelve years later. We meet a kaleidoscopic array of Douglas Cooper's more famous friends and acquaintances – from Jean Cocteau to Peggy Guggenheim – and we get given many examples of how fiercely Cooper, if crossed, would turn on his former friends. In short we can quite see why George Melly, in his review of *The Sorcerer's Apprentice* for *The Independent* declared Cooper "one of the most vicious and unpleasant men I have ever met". But we don't quite see enough of the better side of Cooper to understand why Richardson stuck by him for so long.

The writer is equally selective about himself. No mention of successfully running Christie's in New York in the Sixties and Seventies. A lifetime's journalism is barely touched on. It would be interesting to know, likewise, how the youthful Richardson, as "Richard Johnson", became a leading ballet critic. His dancing days, if they happened at all, must have happened after Stowe. And then there is his time as Slade Professor of Art at Oxford in the mid-nineties. It seems there is much material left for further autobiography.

This is only partly a book for art buffs. It is a wonderfully entertaining read for anybody who enjoys the human character in all its richness. Richardson has a wonderful eye for human weakness. Bitchy stories abound. He parades in front of us a whole host of eccentrics, the rich and not so famous, yet the amusing, sometimes lurid, text never loses our attention. Graham Sutherland, for example, comes out of it distinctly badly. His friendship, Richardson declares, "had always been a matter of strategy rather than affection" and he quotes Cooper's allegation "that Graham was such a poor draughtsman that his wife had to block in his sitter's features for him with an eye pencil". Her liking for champagne is as roundly rebuked as Winston Churchill's for lunchtime brandy.

He mentions his old school too. Indeed it was this which first brought the book to my attention. "Stowe plays a very important part in the book," his publisher wrote to me by way of encouragement. "Not that you may like it very much." After such an introduction, in the event, the Stowe section seemed somewhat tame. There was, it is true, a liaison in a temple, interrupted, Richardson claims, by the local hunt.

Stowe by the late 1930s was no longer the happily unconventional school of its early years, free-wheeling and fun. But the harshness of the period was made bearable by the several outposts of enlightenment. Richardson, for example, found his haven in the Art School where his lifelong enthusiasm for twentieth-century art was kindled. Robin and Dodie Watt (alas, he remembers her as "Dodo") would strew the Art School with avant-garde magazines like *Verve*, *Minotaure* and *XXe Siecle*, which, he says, triggered his obsession with Picasso. And Stowe's influence extended further:

*Everyday exposure to Vanbrugh's and Adam's facades and Capability Brown's landscapes engendered a taste for eighteenth-century architecture, which developed into a passion and provided the following pages with a subplot.*

This, then, is a richly entertaining memoir, the ideal antidote for any long and boring journey. John Richardson has written what the dust-jacket has promised us, "a unique saga from behind the scenes of one of the richest periods in European art".



## THE SORCERER'S APPRENTICE

PICASSO, PROVENCE AND DOUGLAS COOPER

JOHN RICHARDSON

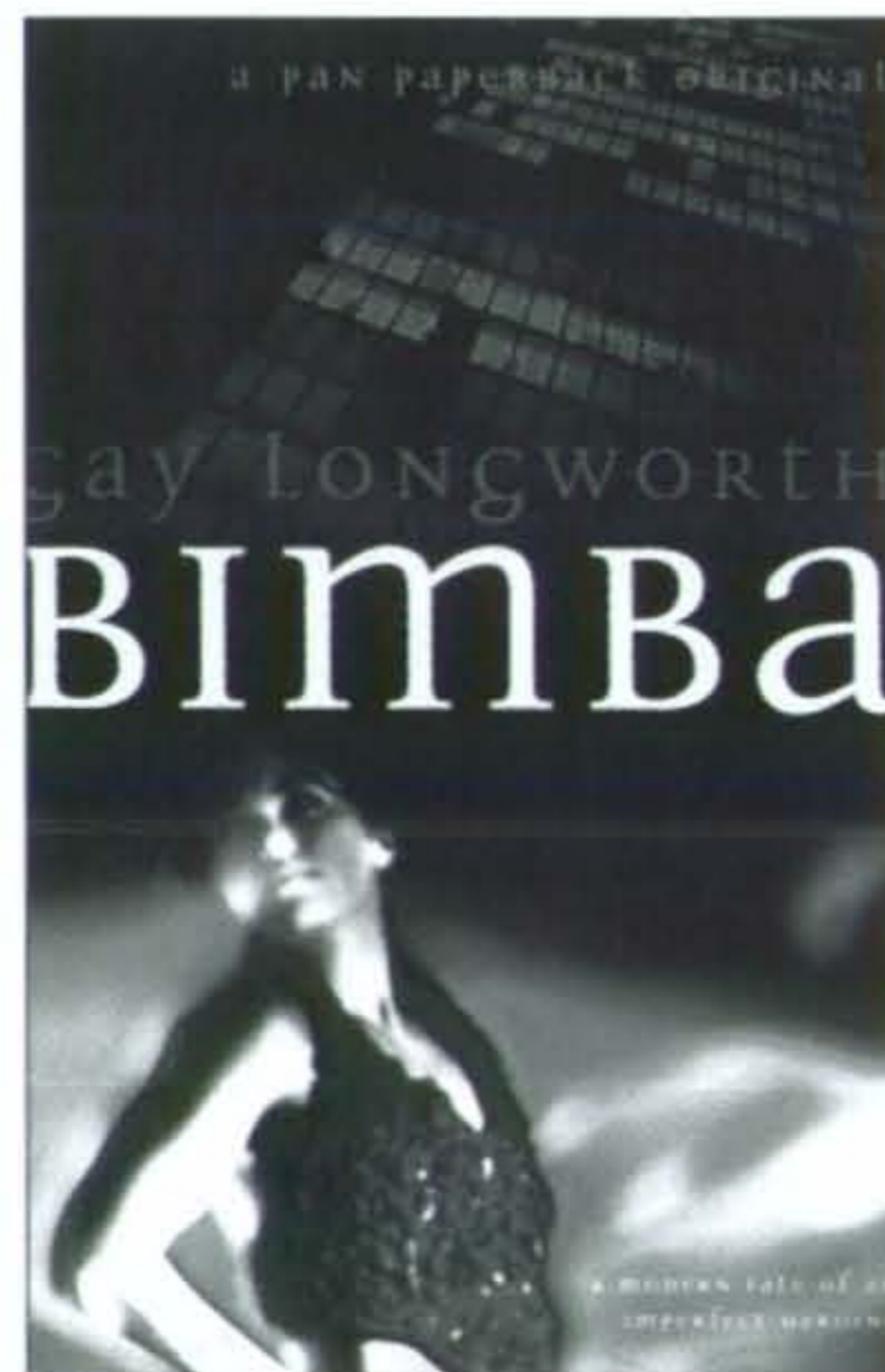
## INTERVIEW WITH GAY LONGWORTH – NOVELIST

Holly Middleditch and Alice Kent meet the Old Stoic whose second novel, *Wicked Peace*, has just been published.



At the end of last May we went to London to interview an up-and-coming authoress, Gay Longworth, an OS who left Nugent in 1986. Whilst reclining on a very comfortable sofa in Starbucks Coffee House, Notting Hill Gate, we were entertained by the antics of several young Old Stoics.

Gay meanwhile regaled us with stories of her time at Stowe, like the occasion she played Ophelia in bright blue knickers – which we can't possibly print! She said that the one good thing about Stowe was that it taught her to stand on her own two feet and to be an individual, something she needed not only at Birmingham University but also in her first job as a trainee oil trader. She felt that after Stowe she was well prepared for being the only girl amongst 15 men. Despite this, she had found the endless male environment very tiring and sought refuge in writing. She began by writing a sketch about a girl with a male boss who could say and do all the things Gay couldn't. This was how she created *Bimba*, the woman with all the perfect one-liners that in reality are always thought of too late. She gave the sketch to some friends from Stowe, who thought it worthy of becoming a novel and being published. She wrote every evening in the office as she worked until 9.30. One day her boss discovered her just as Gay was describing how all the feminine contents of *Bimba's* handbag had scattered in a puddle. Much to her embarrassment he read it to the whole room: she decided that



enough was enough. She didn't know why she'd even gone into the oil trade in the first place and so decided to pursue and complete *Bimba*. She began to plot her escape. She left her job, house and partner and flew to Hong Kong to stay with her sister. She felt very guilty towards her parents, feeling like she'd thrown her education away on a whim, but never once believed that she'd never make it: "I wished on every shooting star I saw in Asia for the success of *Bimba*, and there are a lot of them."

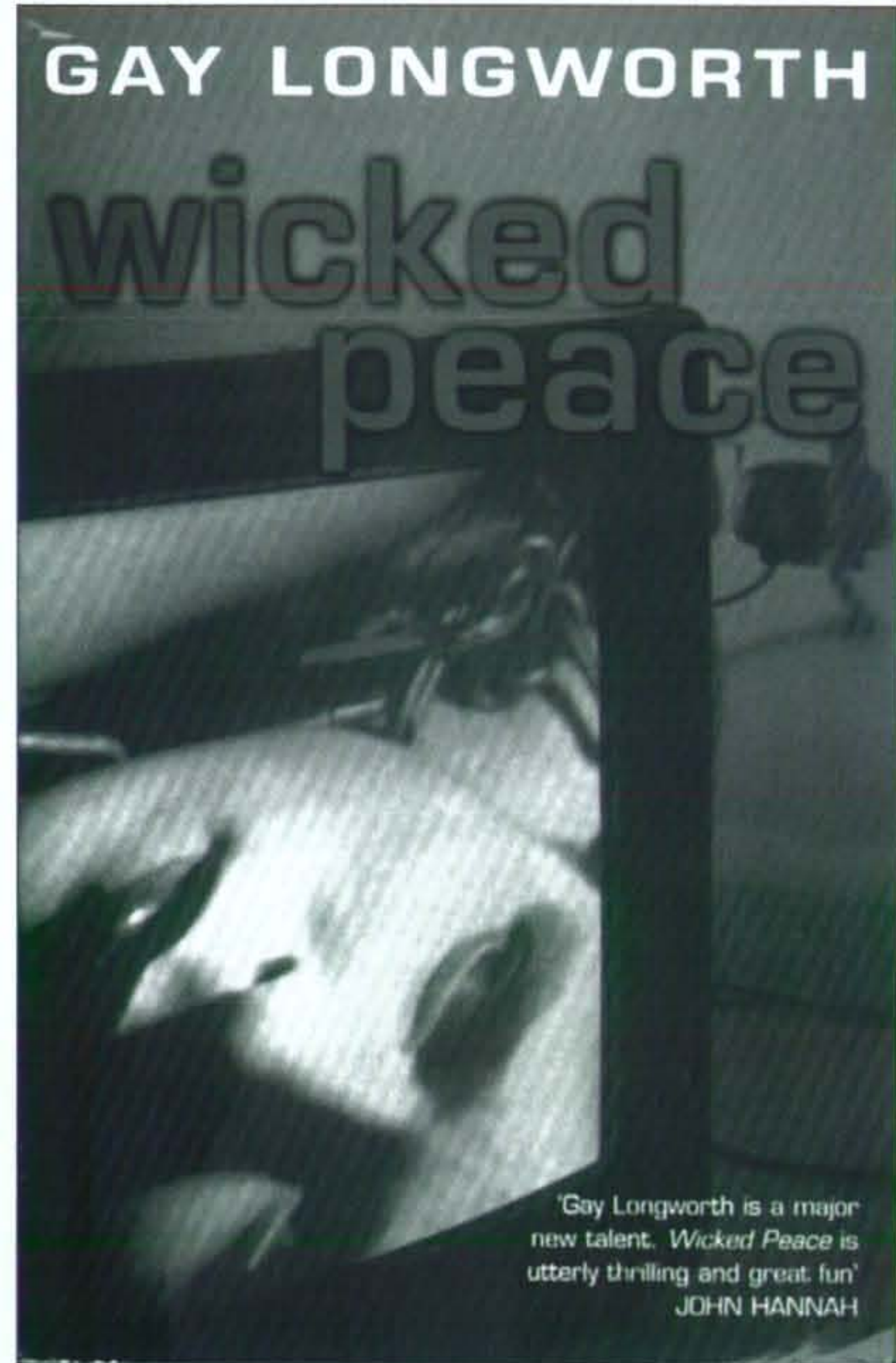
After two years *Bimba* was finally completed so she took it to Macmillan in person, to a publisher she had met in a club. As she had no agent she subsequently "got screwed on the publishing deal". However, it is a remarkable feat to have one's first

novel published and Gay has managed not only this but also to secure the opportunity of having it made into a film. *Bimba* is currently undergoing the pre-production stages, but it will still take another eight years to make it to the screen. It is being made by the producer of *Queer as Folk II*.

Gay was eager to emphasise the importance of plot and how eager she is to write good women's fiction with strong female roles. She is ashamed of contemporary female writers who write about being 32, single and desperate, with a plot of girl idealises marriage, girl meets boy, girl falls for boy and eventually they get married. Gay's opinions on marriage are also quite interesting; she warned us: "Don't do it, girls.

When it is good it's phenomenal, when it's bad it's horrid." Of her own marriage she said the first year was strange, she felt like she'd lost her identity, but the second year was brilliant.

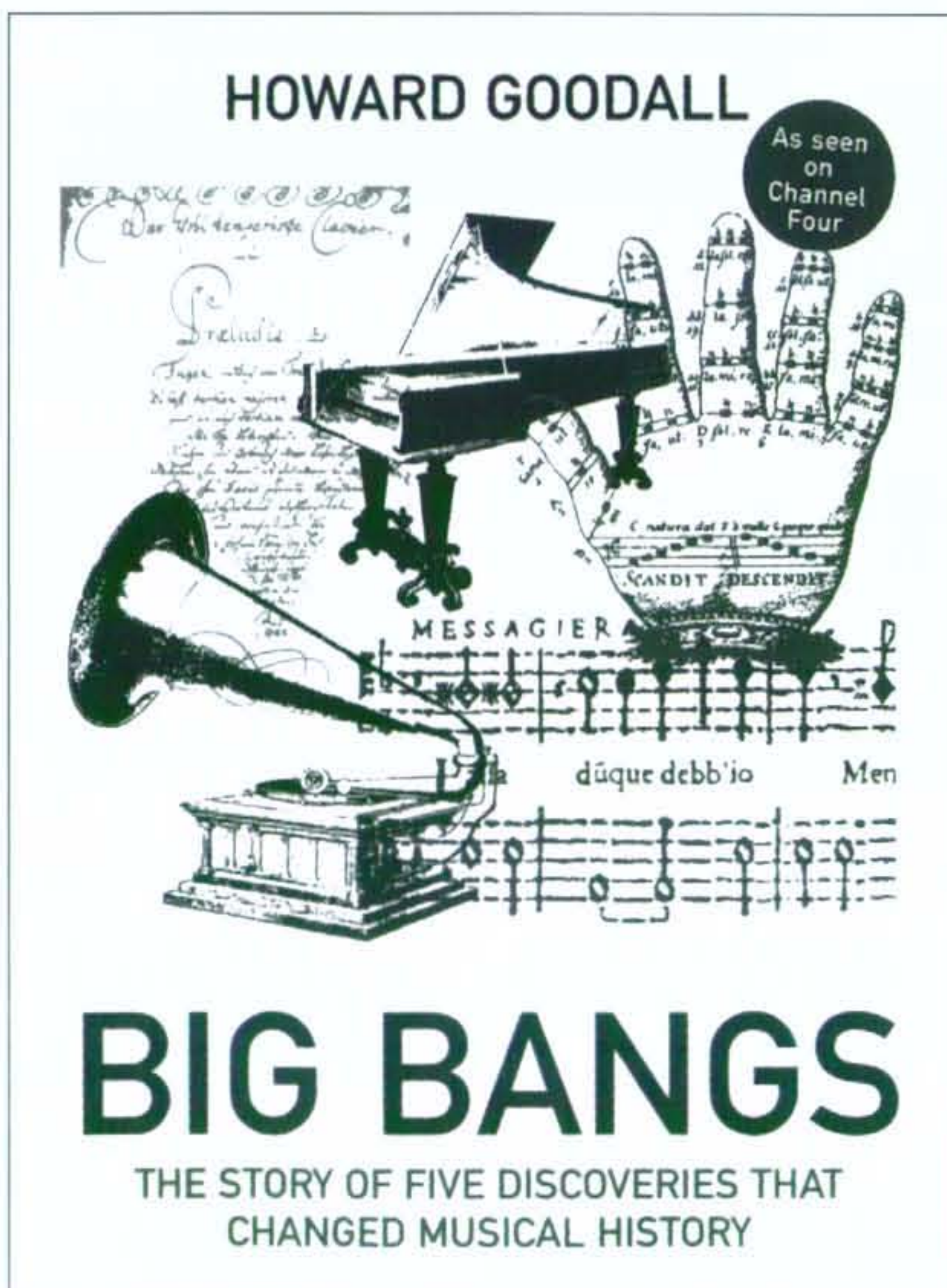
*Wicked Peace*, Gay's second novel, was published earlier this year, and when questioned about the S & M scene in the book she quickly defended herself by replying that her cousin told her about the large S & M scene and the raves in the Catacombs. We discovered that the evil policeman was named after a Stoic who insulted her persistently for two years and then confessed at the Leavers' Ball that it was because he fancied her. The theme of how easy it is for parents to lose track of their children's lives is echoed throughout the novel. Reflecting her concern for the danger of parents trying to be cool, she said she has always been amazed by the lack of parenting that occurs: her mother was never afraid to be "the bad guy". She explained how everyone assumed that this novel was autobiographical but told us that, first, if she had done everything in the novel, she wouldn't have confessed to such risqué activities in a book, and, second, if she wrote about her own life she'd have nothing left to write about. Judging by the stories this charming woman told us we cannot quite believe this to be true. We wish her all the best with her future play, *The Ladies*, and the rest of her career, and we are especially looking forward to the title and publication of her third novel.



"Gay Longworth is a major new talent. *Wicked Peace* is utterly thrilling and great fun"  
JOHN HANNAH

## HOWARD GOODALL'S BIG BANGS

A spin-off from his TV series of the same name



Stowe has produced a number of composers in its relatively short history. Stephen Dodgson, David Fanshawe and Howard Goodall have all contributed significantly to the corpus of twentieth-century British music. Goodall is perhaps best known for his racy signature tunes for programmes such as *Blackadder*, *Mr Bean* and *The Vicar of Dibley*, but he also composes 'serious' music and music for the theatre. His interests, however, transcend just composition. He is seen regularly hosting musical programmes on television and his latest series *Big Bangs* has caused quite some interest.

His central theme is that throughout musical history there have been several events that seemed to happen almost spontaneously, had enormous impact and thereafter altered (or at least significantly affected) the whole direction of music. I suppose one must allow a certain degree of latitude in creating such a theory. The image is a pleasing one so it is perhaps not really fair to nit-pick and suggest that some of Goodall's *Big Bangs* were not really quite as spontaneous as all that. Nevertheless without the invention of notation, the birth of opera, equal temperament, the piano and recording, composers may not have been able to develop their imaginations and vision in ways they have. Perhaps Goodall's next series could postulate how the history of music might have unfolded had none of these *Big Bangs* taken place. There again, perhaps they were all inevitable, so musing over what Liszt or Chopin would have done if the harpsichord was still the only available keyboard instrument, or speculating on what Wagner might have got up to if there had been no opera, are purely academic distractions, (fun though, for discussion on a cold winter's evening!)

PDH

One Friday afternoon last February, we went to interview Benji Mount, who has made a significant career in the music business. It was tough, having to go to London for the evening, but somebody had to do it...

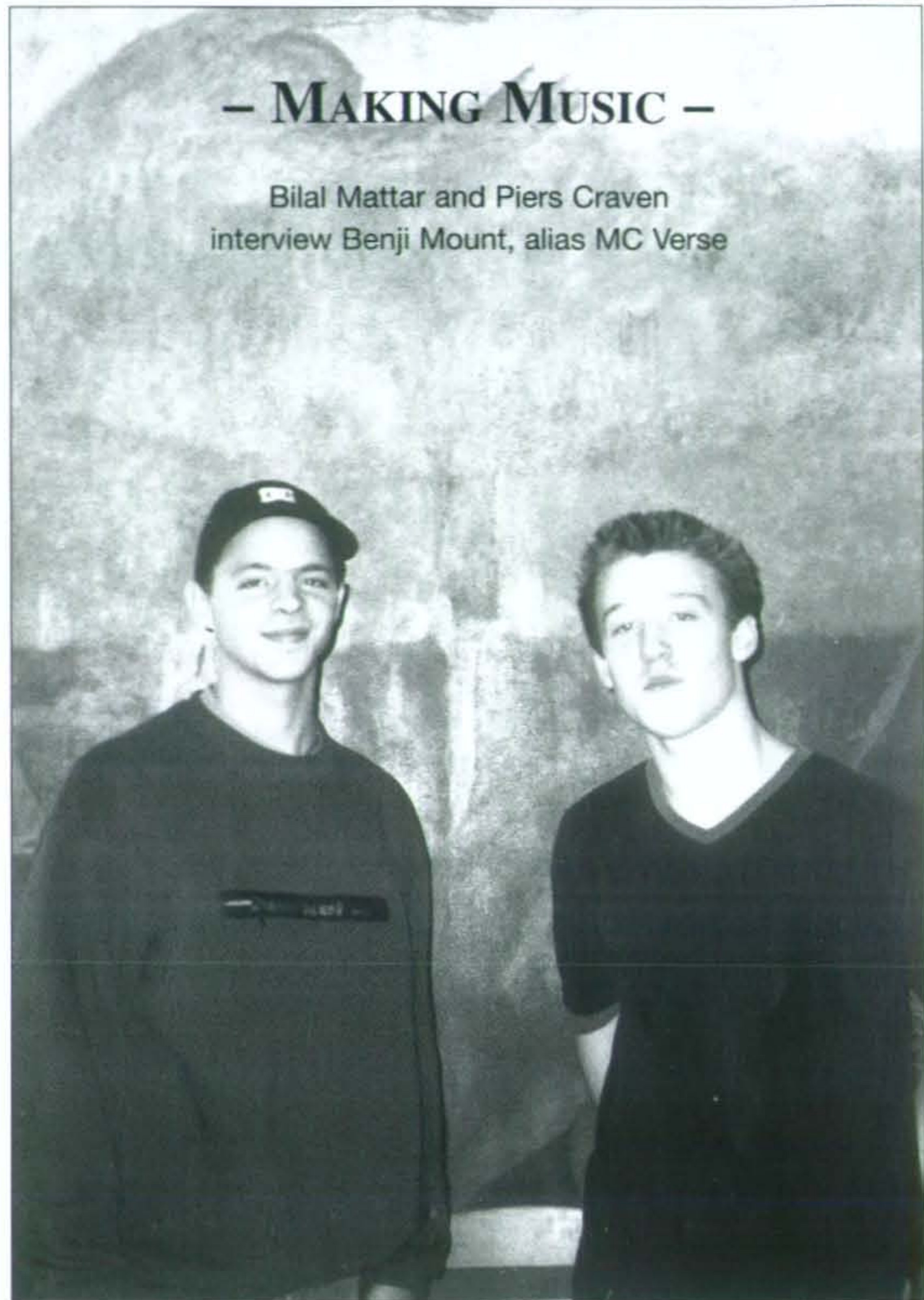
Since leaving Stowe, Benji Mount has been steadily furthering his career as MC Verse on the contemporary scene of drum & bass. Acting as compère alongside many of the A-list DJ's on the scene, Benji has played all over world, and most recently he has started producing music with some of the largest names in drum & bass.

His interest and passion for the music started and was nurtured while he was at Stowe, alongside peers such as Ian Armstrong, James Johnson and Hugo Reoch, and he had already started MCing by the time that he left in 1995. He then moved to London for a short time, but it wasn't until he started at Leeds University, reading History of Art, that his career really started to progress.

In 1996, Benji joined D.O.P.E., one of the first major drum & bass night clubs in the North of England. The residency at this club helped him to form the contacts and friendships that have helped him in his career and the D.O.P.E. connection also led to other things for Benji in the North, such as NY Sushi in Sheffield, but perhaps most importantly, it was at D.O.P.E. that Benji was spotted by Clayton, co-owner of the Trouble on Vinyl music group in South London, who then approached Benji with the prospect of being signed to Renegade Hardware, one of the labels of the TOV group. Benji dropped out of Leeds without a degree, mainly because the course did not appeal to him, but this was also crucial to his success: "Having left Uni after only two years, this [the music] was all I had, so I really had to make it happen. I've just had to keep at it... I saw a target and went for it."

Since joining Renegade Hardware, Benji has played in France, Japan, Germany and Switzerland, and has further international dates lined up; in March 2000 he is due to play at an event for 20,000 people in Miami, Florida and the week after we interviewed him, he was due to fly to Italy for four days on tour. He has broadcast live to a wide audience on the Internet, but one of the most significant and memorable moments of his career came in August 1999, when he performed in front of thousands of people at the 1999 Notting Hill Carnival, at the Trouble on Vinyl Stage, which caused an unprecedented roadblock at the corner of All Saints Road and Tavistock Road, and is now generally renowned as a defining moment in drum & bass history.

As well as his success as an MC, Benji has also now been producing music for around a year, alongside L Double and Revolver under the moniker of Northern Lights. His first tune 'The Matrix' was released on Flex Recordings towards the end of 1999, and he has more tunes prepared for release on



the forthcoming Flex album. He is also setting up his own label, Rollers Recordings, and plans to release tunes from such major producers as the Usual Suspects and DJ Reality, as well as his own material.

Although Benji enjoys what he does, he finds that there are downsides too. In a job that involves much travel, and that requires performances in the early hours of the morning, it can all get very tiring. The night that we interviewed him Benji was playing from 4 until 6 am! On top of this, Benji speaks of the pressure that he is always under to be at his best every time he plays, because you never know who will be watching! "It's not easy being white either. Back in the early days, I used to get so much stick, because there just weren't any white MCs." Benji has received quite a lot of hassles in the past, but says that this prejudice has died down. Because of these factors, it certainly hasn't been, and isn't, an easy life, but it is easy to see that there is nothing in the world that he would rather be doing!

Later on that evening, Benji was due to play at The End, one of the leading drum & bass venues in the world, and so that we could see him in action, he put us on the guest list for the evening. Having witnessed his unique ability to work up the crowd into a frenzy, and in light of the many projects that are in the pipeline, it is certain that the future will be bright and promising for MC Verse.





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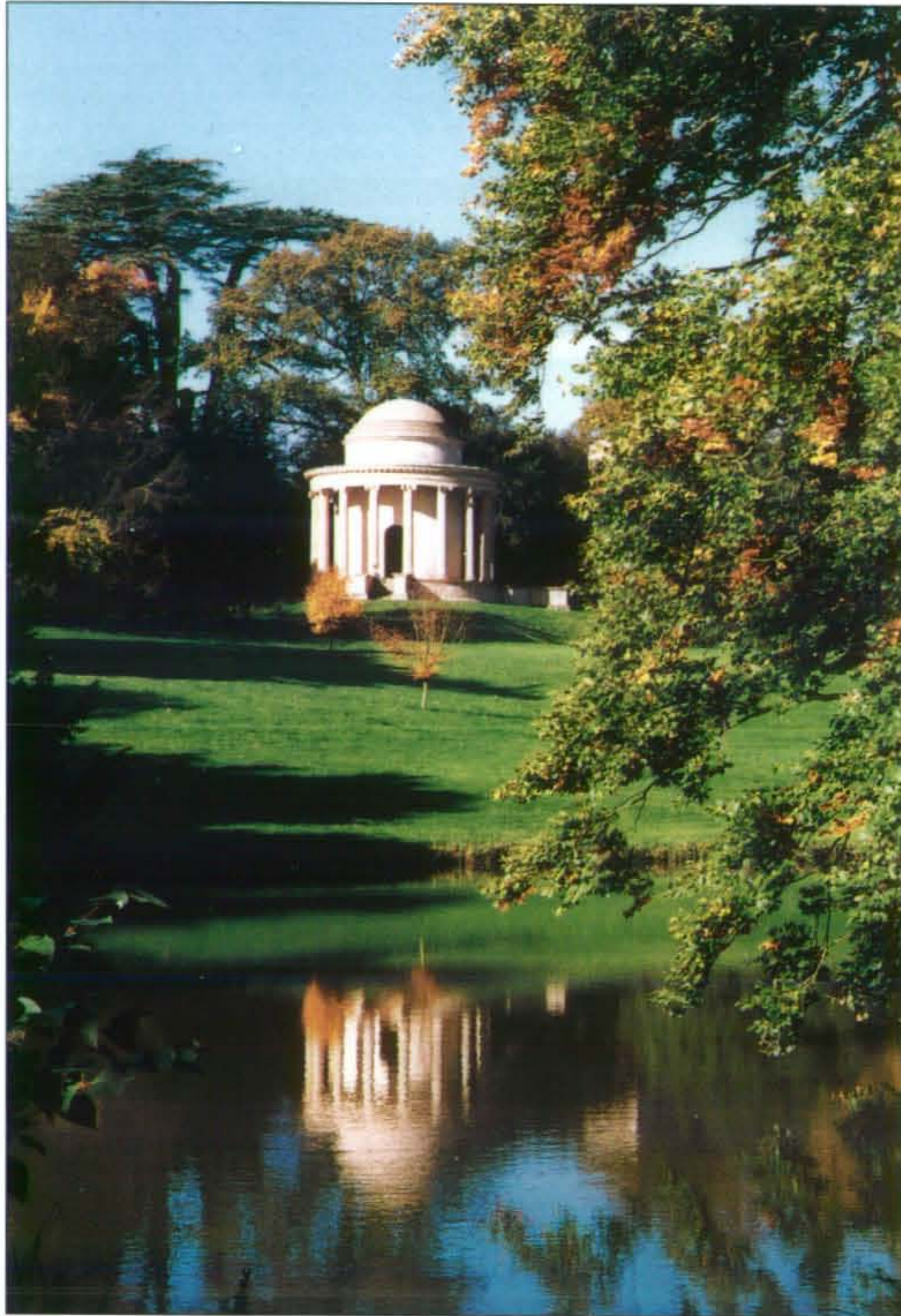
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